

Overview & Scrutiny

Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission **DRAFT** Minutes of 6th December 2021

Official Attendees for the record

Cllr Sophie Conway (Chair)
Cllr Margaret Gordon (Vice Chair)
Cllr Katie Hanson
Cllr James Peters
Cllr Anya Sizer
Cllr Lynne Troughton
Cllr Sarah Young
Jo Macleod (Co-opted member)
Salmah Kansara (Co-opted member)

Connected Virtually

Cllr Caroline Selman
Shabnum Hassan
Steven Olalere (Co-opted member)

In attendance:

- Cllr Anntionette Bramble, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Children's Social Care
- Cllr Caroline Woodley, Cabinet Member for Families, Early Years, Parks & Play
- Cllr Soraya Adejare
- Jacquie Burke, Group Director of Children and Education
- Annie Gammon, Head of Hackney Learning Trust and Director of Education
- Mizanur Rahman, Head of Finance, Children & Education
- Naeem Ahmed, Director of Finance (Children, Education, Adults, Health & Integration)
- Donna Thomas, Head of Early Years, Early Help & Wellbeing
- Joe Wilson, Head of SEND

Cllr Sophie Conway in the Chair

The Chair welcomed members and officers to the meeting and those members of the public who were viewing the livestream.

The Chair reminded those attending that this was a hybrid meeting, with members of the Commission and officers attending both in person and connecting virtually and that the meeting was being broadcast live via the internet.

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from the following members of the Commission:

- Cllr Humaira Garasia
- Cllr Anna Lynch
- Michael Lobenstein
- Ernell Watson

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2. Declarations of interest

- 2.1 The following declarations were received by members of the Commission:
- Shabnum Hassan, was a Governor at a primary school in Hackney and a parent of a child with SEND;
 - Cllr Sizer was a trustee of Ivy Street Family Centre and also a parent of a child with SEND;
 - Jo McLeod was a Governor at a primary school in Hackney and a parent of a child with additional needs;
 - Cllr Peters was a Governor at the Garden Special School in Hackney.

3. Urgent Items / Order of Business

- 3.1 There were no urgent items and the agenda was as had been published.

4. Hackney Education Budget Monitoring

- 4.1 Budget monitoring is a key responsibility of the overview and scrutiny function. For this purpose, the Commission undertakes annual reviews of education and children's services budgets, including Hackney Education Service. Hackney Education submitted a report which represented the in-year budget position for Hackney Education Service for the financial year to April 2021 to September 2021.

- 4.2 The Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Children's Social Care introduced the item. Although Hackney Education has a total budgeted income in excess of £220m the majority of this is passported directly to local schools. Hackney Education has a net budget of around £23m, the majority of which is spent on early years (Children's Centres), high needs and operational services. SEND continues to represent a significant cost pressure within Hackney Education, and the Council alongside other boroughs and national organisations has continued to lobby central government for increased funding. Whilst Hackney Education will introduce measures that will help to ensure that local spending on SEND becomes more aligned to national funding, financial pressures within this service remain acute.

- 4.3 The Head of Finance, Children & Education introduced the report and highlighted the following key points:

- Hackney Education was forecasting a £5.2m net overspend at the end of the 2021/22 financial year;
- The most significant pressures lay within the High Needs budget (including SEND) where an overspend of £6.4m was recorded. The Council would be spending £5m more on SEND this year than last, an increase that is being driven by the growth in Education and Health Care Plans. Whilst the government had indicated that this overspend should not impact on Local Authority General Funds, additional funding has not been forthcoming.
- Education Operations budget was forecast to overspend by £375k mainly as a result of costs for maternity cover and the loss of income from the Tomlinson Centre. Early Years was also forecasting an overspend of approximately £330k mainly due less income derived from childcare fees.
- Hackney Education has a vacancy factor savings target of £850k to be achieved through staff turnover and recruitment for 2021/22. There is a likelihood that this target will not be achieved given lower than expected staff turnover.

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- Cost reduction proposals for SEND are being developed which include additional in-borough provision which will reduce costs over the longer term. The borough was also planning to benchmark local SEND transport provision against other local authorities.

Questions from the Commission

4.4 Aside from increased demand for EHCPs, can further detail be provided on the cost pressures within the SEND budget and how this is impacting on other services in the directorate? What reassurance can be provided that local EHCPs are being met in full despite budget pressures?

- The main overspends in the SEND budget were as a result of increasing costs within independent non-maintained schools, where costs were expected to reach £15m this year. Other areas of spend within the SEND budget included maintained special schools (£13m), mainstream schools (and additional resource provisions) (£8m) and other out of borough LA SEND provision (£4m). Whilst the government has indicated that the SEND overspend should not affect the main LA balance sheet (General Fund), there was a risk that this money might not be fully reimbursed. It was noted that this is a nationwide problem where in London alone a £300m deficit across LA SEND budgets had accumulated.
- The Commission was reassured that every child would get what they were assessed to need under their EHCP as this was statutorily required. Where there are multiple options which can meet the needs of young people with SEND, then costs do become a factor in such decisions.

4.5 What work has been undertaken to assess the impact of trying to achieve the target vacancy rate saving? What is the impact of holding vacancies open? How is Hackney Education monitoring the impact that this is having on staff and services, and how are any effects being mitigated?

- Hackney Education was currently reviewing its position in relation to the vacancy rate where it was noted that it was unlikely to achieve the required target. Requiring staff to cover for vacant positions had evidently created additional service pressures, even when this has been on a temporary basis (1-3 months). After a number of years of budget savings, there was limited scope for further savings without more substantive reorganisation.

4.6 Whilst additional funding is expected from the central government in the longer term, cost savings were required more immediately. How are short-term cost pressures being managed in the interim ahead of possible increased funding and service re-organisations?

- In the short term, it is likely that spending on SEND will continue to increase as savings proposals will take some time to take effect. The local government settlement was due to be announced before the end of 2021 which would shed further light on how much additional funding might be available for this aspect of service provision. The continued growth in the number of local EHCPs agreed for children and young people is outstripping any increased government funding which was likely to result in growing deficits (both yearly and accumulated) for Hackney Education.
- Given the inadequacy of central government funding for SEND, there has always a strong emphasis on cost reductions and to find savings within this

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budget. To provide more financial certainty, it was expected that the Council would move away from responding to individual 1 year financial settlements and to develop a 3 year financial strategy. This would help Hackney Education to strategically address some of the cost pressures within the SEND service.

- With a £5m overspend predicted for this year (21/22), the accumulated deficit in Hackney for SEND provision would be approximately £14m. Central government was introducing a 'safety valve' to provide additional funding for local SEND services facing acute operational pressures and significant accumulated deficits. It was noted that the government had required development plans similar to what was being implemented in Hackney as a condition for additional funding. Council's were however understandably nervous about what conditions might be applied by the government for clearing accumulated SEND deficits.

4.7 Can further detail be provided on the £15m spent each year on commissioning Independent and Non Maintained SEND provision? How does this spend in Hackney compare to other boroughs? Whilst it was acknowledged that there were longer term plans to restructure SEND provision to reduce the need for commissioning independent provision, what other plans were there to reduce spend on SEND?

- The annual cost of SEND provision through an independent and non-maintained school was approximately £50k as compared to £35k for maintained specialist provision within the borough. Data on the comparative spends on commissioning independent provision was not at hand at the meeting but could be provided at a later date.

4.8 What can be done to help schools to identify those children with SEND earlier, and maybe prevent the need for parents to apply for an EHCP or indeed, prevent more costly interventions later on (e.g. school exclusions, AP placement).

- Schools were still referring children for assessment for EHCP as was indicated by the numbers plans being authorised. This is a statutory requirement which is unaffected by budgetary constraint.
- In relation to school exclusion, it was clear that children who may have been experiencing behavioural difficulties may not have been assessed for additional support. With the new Early Help offer being developed it is hoped that schools will utilise multi-agency assessments to help identify young people in need earlier and to provide them with required support.

4.9 What factors were driving demand for increased levels of commissioning independent and non-maintained SEND provision? Was it that there is insufficient capacity locally, or the needs of young people could not be met through the range of provision available locally (or both)? What role does parental choice play in this situation, with parents simply choosing to send their children to out of borough provision?

- Given the range of individual needs of children with SEND, there will always be a requirement for some level of independent commissioning for more specialist educational and support needs. There are children with ASD who could be supported locally if there was additional capacity.

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- 256 children who attend out of borough settings were from the Orthodox Jewish community, and thus attend these for religious reasons as well as for SEND needs.
- Some parents may prefer to send their children to independent provision when their needs cannot be met locally, in particular those children who have dual diagnoses of needs (ASD/SEMH). Excluding children from OJC, the majority of externally commissioned independent provision was for children with SEMH.

4.10 What modelling has been undertaken around forward projections for SEND needs and independent provision? Also, what does the service understand about levels of unmet needs in SEND, particularly in relation to the OJC in primary educational settings?

- Hackney was in a relatively unique position in relation to the OJC. It was acknowledged that in some school settings, the SEND response was underdeveloped and further work was necessary to improve provision. Whilst the service was working with mainstream schools to upskill staff to help them develop a more graduated response in supporting children with SEND, Independent schools (which support the OJC) are not required to participate. There is more work to be done with these independent settings.

4.11 Given the lower than expected income derived from childcare fees for Children's Centres, are there any plans to revisit the fee structure for this service?

- This would be addressed by the Cabinet member for Families, Early Years, Parks and Play in the next item.

4.12 There is very little detail on the cost reduction proposals for 2021/22 within the report for SEND, particularly the value of identified cost savings. Whilst it was noted that the majority of independent and non-maintained schools commissioned, were to support children with complex SEMH, does the SEND team envisage this type of provision increasing in-borough?

- It is hoped there will be new specialist provision for children with SEMH in-borough as a result of the emerging School Estates Strategy. Although this additional capacity will not enable all young people with SEMH to attend in-borough provision, it will be substantially more children than are supported now.
- It was likely that such additional SEMH provision would be provided through an additional resource provision (ARP) within a local school. Here it was noted that Gainsborough Primary had recently opened an ARP for children with SEMH and that a further ARP of this nature was expected within the School Estates Strategy.
- It was also hoped that additional SEMH capacity could be provided through New Regents College as this provision had considerable experience and expertise in this area of provision.

4.13 It was noted that SEND transport was an important issue for local special schools, as many children required additional support to enable them to access provision. Is the benchmarking exercise a prelude to service reduction?

- There was a perception that the current local SEND transport offer to local families was generous and that there were a number of young people who,

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with the correct support, could access SEND provision independently. It was acknowledged that high spend in this area was attributable to the volume of placements which were commissioned external to the borough.

- The review would seek to develop and extend travel training for young people, to ensure that young people can operate independently wherever possible. The review would also assess external travel arrangements to identify whether improvements can be made for commissioned bus/ taxi services. In addition, there would also be a sustainability aspect to the review to assess whether there were more greener less polluting transport methods suitable for young people (e.g. walking groups for summer months).

4.14 In the [Council Budget for 2021/22](#) an additional £300k was earmarked to 'improve attainment of young people over the next four years, specifically for groups that have historically underachieved, to reduce exclusion and assist with the transition from primary to secondary'. Can Hackney Education outline how this additional investment has been used and which groups of young people have been supported?

- Hackney Education has created a Systems Leadership role centred around improving parental engagement for those cohorts of students who have traditionally underachieved. Specifically, the Systems Leader will engage and support parents who may not have a detailed understanding of English Education Systems or who themselves may have had poor experiences of education or where there is a poor relationship between the school and the parent. This role was focused on providing additional support to schools in their engagement and involvement with parents, rather than any additional capacity for front facing support for children. This was a 4 year project and an appointment had been made, and an update was planned at the March meeting of the Commission. The appointee has already begun work and has met with a number of local parent groups.

4.15 The Chair noted by concluding that it was important for the Commission to continue to monitor and review budget spending in children services as these are areas of high expenditure for the Council, and overspends in both SEND and children's social care are significant and that these overspends impacted not only on other children's services, but on other services across the Council. The Chair thanked officers for attending and responding to questions from members of the Commission.

5. Cabinet Q & A

5.1 The Cabinet member for Families, Early Years, Parks & Play is invited to attend each year to respond to questions within this portfolio. The Commission has sought to focus questioning on two areas as set out below:

1. Children's Centres

The planned closure of Hillside and Fernbank Children's Centres in September 2022 was paused on 17th November 2021. The Commission have therefore asked the Cabinet member to update in respect of:

- The plan and time frame for future decision making;
- Plans for future consultation and engagement to underpin the above.

2. Social, Emotional Mental Health (SEMH)

The diagnosis of SEMH in children represents an increasing proportion of local

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SEND needs.

- What is known about the social and demographic profile of young people diagnosed with SEMH?
- Are there any intersecting factors or issues which may underpin increasing prevalence of children diagnosed with SEMH?
- How are local SEND services responding to the SEMH needs of young people?
- How are the cumulative SEMH needs of this cohort of young people driving / shaping service provision?

5.2 The Cabinet member for Families, Early Years, Parks & Play responded to questions on local Children's Centres:

- The consultation on the Early Years Strategy and the reconfiguration of local children's centres closed on 16th November. The consultation team were analysing responses which would be ready by the end of December 2021. The final consultation report will be published and distributed to local parents, staff and other local stakeholders.
- The emerging headlines from the consultation were summarised as follows:
- There were almost 900 responses, and whilst there were many positive comments about Children's Centre provision there was a lot of criticism of the survey and the consultation process.
- The proposed closure of both Fernbank and Hillside Children's Centres had been paused to enable a fuller consultation to take place. The Mayor and Cabinet member would also be visiting both centres in the New Year to hold discussions with parents and staff.
- Plans for the development of Early Years hubs would continue as would the conversion of 5 children's centres into Family and Welfare Hubs (0-19 years).
- There would be a further assessment of the fees and income for children's centres as part of a wider council review of fees and charges.
- A minimum 3.1% inflationary increase was likely to be applied for all childcare provision in children's centres for 2022/23. This would generate an additional £100k for the service.
- Part 2 of the revised fees structure agreed in 2019, would be implemented in 2022 (having been delayed by the impact of Covid). This would reduce the childcare subsidy to parents on a sliding scale.
- The cost of running 11 children centre nurseries was £4.5m and childcare costs were subsidised up to 63% for lower income families (below £35k) reducing to 28% for parents earning over £100k. These subsidies would be reduced if part 2 of the fees restructure was implemented.

SEMH

5.3 The Cabinet member presented a short report to the Commission. Key data from the cohort of young people with a SEMH primary SEND need:

- The greatest primary SEND need was ASD for all age groups (under 5, 5-10 years, 11-15 years and 16+ years).
- SEMH comprised of 16% of primary SEND need of 5-10 year olds, 27% of 11-15 year olds and 27% of 16+ years;
- The number of children on SEND support (with SEMH) has decreased from 1,068 to 942, an 11.8% fall. Comparative figures show a smaller decreases

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across London (-2.5%) whilst there has been a corresponding increase nationally (16.5%);

- The number of children with EHCP for SEMH has increased from 117 in 2016/17 to 184 in 2020/21 (+57.3%), which corresponded to regional and national figures;

5.4 The most common causes of SEMH are believed to include attachment history: lack of emotional response and positive feedback by a caregiver. SEMH may also be related to trauma history such as abuse, domestic violence, bullying, exclusion and crime.

5.5 Hackney has high aspirations for all young people. It was noted that two dedicated ARPs for 20 children have been developed at Gainsborough and Queensbridge Primary Schools, the former being dedicated to children whose primary SEND need is SEMH. 50 additional places have been developed at The Garden School and 14 at Ickburgh meaning that there has been a net gain of 84 SEND places in Hackney to 2022.

5.6 There are 474 pupils placed in independent and non-maintained special schools at a cost of £13.8m. Of these around 150 children and young people have SEMH as a primary SEND need. Using an invest to save model, Hackney Education will seek to reconfigure provision where there is more internal capacity. Data is projecting an increase of around 400 additional EHCPs every year until 2026.

5.7 There is also a new vision for New Regents College to include early help placements to avoid exclusion, utilisation of additional capacity in the school to deliver SEMH support, an outreach response to prevent exclusions in primary schools and the creation of a nurture unit on a mainstream school site.

Questions from the Commission

5.8 What preventative work is being undertaken locally to address the underlying factors which may be behind the rise in children with SEMH? What is being done to address maternal mental health issues which may precipitate attachment issues?

- The Council was in the process of developing an Early Help Strategy which would help identify and support children in need much earlier. This would eventually be a partnership strategy (Education, Social Care and Mental Health) with a multi-disciplinary assessment at its core. The aim is to eventually divert spending away from acute support to more early help and preventative work with families.
- Attachment is a key aspect of the approach of early years services and there is work taking place to ensure that local settings and staff are attachment aware and trauma informed. There is also emerging evidence in relation to racial trauma and local practice development is being informed by this.
- In relation to maternal mental health, the HWB, WAMHS and Public Health understood the pressures in early parenthood, this has been picked up by relevant teams with a view to improving perinatal services. The Cabinet member for Health and Social Care would also respond to this issue further.

5.9 Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder can be an area which may be overlooked in addressing children's mental health issues, particularly as this may be confused with

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ASD. What is being done to identify such cases locally and what support is available?

- This issue was acknowledged as an area of concern by officers and had been highlighted in other forums and would be investigated further.

5.10 Is there any additional data for Early Years or nursery provision and children with SEMH? Is there any preventative work being undertaken with families in the Early years sector?

- There was little data for under 5's (Early Years) as the EHCP's are funded through two different processes. Additional needs are supported through the Early Years Inclusion Fund (top-sliced from High Needs budget). The EYIF supported 260 children across a range of settings during the last financial year. Any of these early years settings can apply for funding to support children with emerging needs to provide adjustments to enable them to access the curriculum or provide additional support. This is often a precursor for more formal EHCP. In reviewing the EYIC it was apparent that settings were not applying early enough for an EHCP to support the child's transition to school and the guidance is being adjusted accordingly.

5.11 Children with SEMH may exhibit a wide range of behaviours (withdrawn, isolated, challenging, disruptive) which reflect a number of underlying mental health difficulties (e.g. anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders etc). In this context, what role can positive behaviour management strategies play in local schools (as well as early years) in helping to identify and support children with SEMH?

- Schools are being supported to develop a graduated response to SEND which is based around a broad holistic support offer which does not see such needs in isolation. This was crucial in helping to identify and support children and families in a wider way.
- It was noted that the WAMHS project has been instrumental in raising awareness and supporting schools to develop their mental health and broader wellbeing offer to pupils. WAMHS has been important as it has helped a broader range of professionals to contribute to decisions around children's education, learning and welfare. It was noted that WAMHS work could develop further through a lens of race.

5.12 How many schools were accessing training around ACE and does this training encompass the connections between mental health, neuro-diversity and unconscious bias?

- There has been a good engagement by local schools and headteachers with recent SEND events hosted by Hackney Education, which underlines their commitment and support for this work (e.g. SEND Conference).
- All schools have a WAMHS worker on site regularly to support their work and all schools have had access to ACE training.
- Hackney Education has also been working with HiP to develop more inclusive behaviour policies in schools and that these recognise the needs of children and young people with SEND. It was hoped that if a gold standard can be developed, this could guide and inform development across schools, including local academies.

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- 5.13 Is there any further detail on children with SEMH with other demographics such as temporary accommodation?
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- 5.14 Is Hackney using any of the voluntary programmes which aim to develop emotional language and literacy in families via experienced parents? There are a number of schemes in other neighbouring boroughs, and as these schemes are not directly connected to schools, parents may engage more openly.
- Hackney has been using Homestart, a charity to support parents in the home environment. A number of housing providers and charities such as Shelter and other similar organisations have dedicated family and outreach workers which support families in the home on local housing developments. Many of the statutory services available to support local families are firmly embedded within a wider voluntary offer of support.
- 5.15 The Chair thanked officers for attending and responding to questions from the Commission.

6. Outcome from School Exclusions

- 6.1 The Commission has completed its review into the outcome of school exclusions and the final report was submitted for review and agreement.
- 6.2 The Chair of the Commission thanked officers, local agencies and of course parents and young people for their support for this work on school exclusions. The Chair highlighted the following key issues from the report:
- The report also notes that within this cohort of permanent exclusions some groups of young people are disproportionately represented. There are self-evident disproportionalities in Hackney's exclusion data - in terms of SEND, ethnicity and gender. In terms of ethnicity the rate of black Caribbean children excluded in Hackney has been rising - against national and regional trends. In addition, almost $\frac{2}{3}$ of excluded young people have an SEND (many with SEMH) which should lead us to question the effectiveness of interventions to support these children in the mainstream settings. Given that these disproportionalities are longstanding, there needs to be a more fundamental and systemic challenge to those exclusion processes which create such inequalities
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 - From this work, the Commission is aware that many of the young people who are permanently excluded from school often have unmet needs (educational, behavioural, emotional) which may have contributed to their exclusion from school. In the deep dive undertaken by Hackney Education 60% of children who were permanently excluded had some form of special educational need. But critically, what the Commission learnt from our discussions with parents, the Pupil Referral Unit and with individual Alternative Providers, was that in many cases these additional needs are not diagnosed until after their exclusion. This would suggest that more can be done earlier to help young people and maybe prevent them from being excluded in the first place.
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- As an authority we now have a greater understanding of those children who are at risk of exclusion from school and we need to work with schools and other local services to support children earlier to help address additional needs / and or vulnerabilities which can enable children to stay in mainstream education. The report clearly shows that targeted help does work given the success of the Re-Engagement Unit in Primary Schools. This approach now needs to be applied to secondary schools, as this can help to identify and support young people in need, help them re-engage with school, help them re-build relationships with schools and maintain their place in mainstream education.
- Schools not only improve education and learning outcomes of children, they are an important part of the safeguarding framework for children. Schools help to maintain oversight of children, they keep children connected to statutory support services and they help to keep them safe. A recent serious case review has shown that children who have been permanently excluded have not been effectively safeguarded which has led to serious harm to young people. The report makes clear that a more detailed safeguarding assessment needs to happen before an exclusion decision takes place in school.
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- Given that Alternative Provision is looking after some of our most vulnerable children, as the responsible authority we need to be sure that we are providing all the support necessary to meet the needs of these children. To this end, the Commission recommends that Alternative Provision is more included within the family of local education services, so that their learning and understanding can be shared with the wider schooling community, and to encourage schools to engage with and be more involved with AP providers. The authority has a system of Local Improvement Partners which work to develop and improve local schools and the Commission would like to see these working with local Alternative Provision to support the quality of local provision. Furthermore, as a Local Authority we are too reliant on what AP is actually available rather than what is needed to support local young people. The Commission therefore recommended that the LA take a more active role in shaping and supporting the local AP landscape so it can best respond to the needs of excluded young people.

6.3 Members of the Commission also responded to the report. The following is a summary of key issues raised.

- The report provides a strong and clear narrative for the voice for children and young people who have been excluded. The experiences detailed in the report clearly show the trauma that they feel at being excluded from school and that this for many was a life changing event.
- Additional training and support should be given to the school governors for their role in the school exclusion and providing challenge.
- There should be a much wider examination of best practice to school exclusion across London.
- The report needs to ensure consistency in references to 'national' and regional data.

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- It was hoped that an update from Hackney Education would be brought to the Commission in the next municipal year on the progress in implementing the agreed recommendations.

6.4 The Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Children's Social Care welcomed the report and thanked the Commission for its work on this issue.

- Although Hackney had some of the best schools in the country, more needed to be done to reduce local school exclusions.
- Given the disproportionalities in school exclusion data, the authority must be more comfortable talking about race and racial inequality. Local school exclusion data which showed higher levels of black children being excluded could not be ignored.
- Primary schools have a good track record with no exclusions for the past few years. The emphasis to drive down exclusions now needs to move to secondary schools.
- The fact that many young people who are excluded from school are subsequently diagnosed with SEND demonstrates that there were failures within the system, with young people, particularly young black boys, not getting the right help that they need.

6.5 The Group Director for Children and Education welcomed the report, and highlighted the following in response and to the recommendations.

- The report highlights disproportionalities in exclusion data, an issue which the Council was very much concerned about and was responding to. These disproportionalities are evident across a range of services and it was important that the Council develop a system wide response. The Council has a key role to play in shaping and influencing the values which underpin local systems e.g. anti-racist practice, tackling unconscious bias.
- An important theme in the report was the need to provide early help and ensure young people get the right help sooner.

6.6 The Director of Education made the following points in responding to the report and its recommendations.

- The report highlighted many areas of good practice already in place in the authority in tackling school exclusions, but also noted areas where further improvement and action was necessary. It was recognised that a small minority of young people were not well served by local education systems and that this disproportionately included black boys.
- Hackney Education would respond to the review and recommendations with the Cabinet member and draw up an action plan to support the implementation of the recommendations.
- Recommendations which support earlier multi-disciplinary assessment and support for young people in need were particularly welcomed, as this would help more young people to maintain their placements in mainstream schools.
- A number of recommendations were already in-hand and Hackney Education would welcome the opportunity to report back to the Commission.

6.7 The Chair thanked members and officers for their comments on the report. The Executive would now develop a response to the report which would be presented for agreement at the next meeting of Cabinet. The Cabinet response would be

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published in a future agenda of the Commission, at which time members would agree monitoring arrangements.

Agreed: The Commission agreed the report on the Outcome of School Exclusions.

7. Response to Children Centre Consultation

- 7.1 A public consultation was launched on the new Early Years Strategy and the proposed reconfiguration of Children's Centres on 15th September 2021. As has been noted in an earlier item, this consultation has since been paused. For transparency, the Commission's response to the consultation was published for members to note.

8. Work Programme

- 8.1 The latest version of the work programme for the Commission was presented where it was noted that there were no additions to the work programme for January to March 2022.
- 8.2 The scope for the Commission's review 2021/22 on adolescents entering care was being finalised and would be presented at the next meeting (January 2022) for agreement by the Commission. Members have been sent a draft outline of the scope and comments and suggestions were welcomed. Work would commence in late January and throughout February. It was hoped that this would be 'scrutiny in a day' exercise, but this may now need to be held over a series of meetings. The Commission will work with members and officers to agree dates and times of sessions.

Agreed: Work Programme 2021/22

9. Minutes of the last meeting

- 9.1 The minutes of the 1st November 2021 were agreed.

Agreed: Minutes of the 1st November 2021.

10. Any other business

- 10.1 There were no other items of business.

Meeting closed at 9.50pm