

# Improving outcomes for young black men

## Sharing lessons learnt

Sonia Khan

Head of Policy and Partnerships

London Borough of Hackney



# Improving outcomes for young black men

## Sharing lessons learnt

Overview of programme

Sharing wider lessons learnt:

Leadership

Practical approaches

Co-production



# Improving outcomes for young black men

- Since 2015, the Council has worked with voluntary sector umbrella HCVS and a multi agency partnership (e.g. police, NHS) on a 10 year programme
- Led by the Deputy Mayor, this responds to the fact that young black men tend to fare worse than their peers in many ways.
- Piecemeal responses have not had the impact needed- e.g. looking at educational achievement, youth justice and mental health. Our approach brings the voluntary and community sector together with the statutory sector, young black men, parents and the wider community to develop solutions
- The project is overseen by an officer group and steered by a multi-agency partnership
- A group of young men have been trained as inspirational leaders to engage other young people in positive activities and to support co-production of the programme

<https://hackney.gov.uk/young-black-men>



**Black children have a higher chance of being in care**

45% of looked after children are black despite only accounting for 29% of the population

**Black boys are more likely to be excluded from school**

Between 2012-2017, 7-8% of pupils were excluded from Secondary School. For Black-Caribbean and Black-African boys this ranged from 13%-19%

**YBM are more likely to be unemployed**

The unemployment rate for men of Black and Black Mixed Heritage aged 18-24 years old is significantly higher than the male average – 42% compared to 28%. This is the highest unemployment rate for all male ethnic groups.

**Black Children are more likely to be obese than other ethnicities**

In Reception year 19% of Black children are obese compared to 16% of Mixed race children and 11% of White children

**Black boys achieve a slightly lower level of educational attainment**

In 2016 Caribbean boys received the lowest level of educational attainment of all male ethnicities at GCSE. African boys achieved a slightly lower level of educational attainment at GCSE than the male average

**Disproportionate number of young black men on probation**

50% of those on probation were in the young black men 18-34 cohort despite only accounting for 19% of the population



**Rate of infant mortality in Hackney is the highest in London**

There is a high rate of infant mortality among babies of Black Caribbean and Black African women compared to other ethnicities

**BAME groups in Hackney identified as at risk of poverty**

This is especially the case for children from African/Caribbean backgrounds

**Black or black mixed race households are significantly overrepresented amongst lone parent households**

49% of all lone parent households are of YBM ethnicity compared to 26% of all households

**Pay gap between graduates**

17% pay gap between white and black graduates when pay penalties are taken into account. This is equivalent to £3.90 an hour, or over £7,000 a year for a full-time employee

**Black residents are overrepresented in mental health settings**

Patients of Black ethnicity are overrepresented amongst patients detained in mental health settings. The Black population of Hackney represent 42% of all detentions and 23% of the total population

Is there disproportionality? Is there a racial dimension to inequality?

**2014**

**Initial research & scoping**

**Key issues identified at scoping stage**

Trust & resilience

Access

Critical points

**Leadership steer**

To be bold & radical

What are the inequalities? What is driving disproportionality?

**2015**

**Open exploration of what it means to be young, black and male in Hackney**, talking to young people, parents and stakeholders

**Qualitative responses** synthesised with local data and national evidence

**UEL Evaluation** of partnership and theory of change development

What responses are needed?

**2016**

**High level narrative theory of change:**

Aims and objectives

Background and context

Assumptions

Actions to consider

Enablers

Initial actions

**2016 -2018**

**Delivery**

Delivering cross cutting workstreams

Developing enablers e.g. inclusive leadership culture

Process evaluation set up

KPIs agreed

# Improving outcomes for Young Black Men- Theory of Change

Improving life chances for black boys

Focus on education: achievement and exclusions

Improving family health and wellbeing

Focus on early years help

Empowering young black men and the wider community

Empowering the community:

Youth led programmes

Community led programmes

Parent led programmes

Culture and identity

Celebrating success

Valuing heritage

Challenging negative behaviour, culture and lifestyles

Improving outcomes for young black men

Keeping young people safer & support for ex offenders

Mental health – earlier help

Engagement about regeneration and creating employment opportunities

Cross cutting enablers

Building trust between the community & the statutory sector

Addressing institutional culture & cultural competency

Honesty about how racial identity & culture drives inequality

Involving the whole community – not just the black diaspora

# Some examples of achievements so far...

- A group of headteachers have been leading work to address inequalities in exclusions, behaviour and achievement. They will be sharing their findings with other schools at a conference in February 2019 and will make the case that change is needed in all schools. Work has also been shared with other authorities.
- A new way of supporting mental wellbeing has been developed- based on a strengths based approach- this is demonstrating how young black men can be engaged in early help and support.
- We have developed a new approach to engaging young people on issues around employability. The programme worked with 123 young people, 58% of whom had positive job outcomes. The programme learning is now influencing the work of the Racial Disparity Unit and DWP plans ( Hackney has now been identified as a challenge area)
- East London Business Alliance are delivering the corporately funded Parity Programme offering bespoke employment support to young black men; the Greater London Authority have launched a programme about inclusive employment, again citing Hackney's work as an influence.



# A new strategic approach: 2018-2022

## Priority workstreams:

- Early years and education
- Mental health
- Reducing risk of harm

## Fundamental strands

- Employment
- Children and family wellbeing

## Institutional enablers

- Inclusive leadership
- Culture and identity

## Community engagement

- Inspirational leaders - young black men who are peer facilitators
- Parental engagement
- Community empowerment





# YBM Graduate Trainee Role

- A Graduate Trainee role has been established to support programme management, policy support and project development
- Restricted as a General Occupational Requirement to a Black Man
- Designed to recruit on potential - an exacting set of questions replaced the usual supporting statement, followed by a group assessment to identify leadership potential and a final interview stage
- 118 applications received, mostly from applicants who had grown up in inner London and had been through the state school system. About 40 were strong. One third of those who made it to the last 15 were from Hackney
- By the end of the first day this had been circulated extensively by word of mouth and through social networks such as Whats App group. Just under half found out about the role through word of mouth or networks, including careers focused Whats App groups, with only 11 coming through the Guardian advert



# Lessons learnt - culture and leadership

- Creating a safe and open space for partnership working (and a “no blame culture” where partners can talk about uncomfortable issues), where different perspectives are listened to and valued
- Encouraging a culture that develops solutions in a multi-dimensional way, looking at what can be changed at an individual, community, institutional and societal level, along with a recognition that the current ways of working, whether in the community or public sector are not fully tackling the issues
- Adopting an open approach that has brought different stakeholders around the table from the outset, and put young people and the community at the heart of the work, so that there is a transparent round table approach to developing solutions
- Being steered by rich insight and intelligence, rather than being led by strong voices
- Developing our confidence as a partnership to talk confidently about race and consider how it might be driving inequalities alongside other factors. Research has shown that the public sector is very unconfident and fearful about having conversations about race and racism, including institutional racism



# Lessons learnt - practical approaches

## Getting over the challenge of long term thinking and the inertia it can bring

- Take an open ended non linear approach to proposals, by focusing on the change you want to see and working backwards to consider the best way to get there, based on evidence and on different perspectives (e.g [theory of change approach](#)); identify enablers as well as actions
- Develop an iterative, phased approach setting medium term measures of success and actions

## Take the focus away from resources

- Budget of £150k has lasted three years and has been spent on engagement and evaluation; not having a larger operating budget has avoided £££ being the distraction
- Instead we have identified the systems leaders that need to work under one approach and the levers and resources they have

## Recognise we do not have all the answers to intractable problems

- Discovery and exploration: gather insight and engagement to understand issues better
- Design: Engage all stakeholders in co-producing solutions
- Workforce diversity and acquired diversity (inclusive leadership culture) is very important



# Lessons learnt - impact of co-production

## Overall

- Brought home the powerful impact that racial stereotyping and racism has on young people's outlook and world view

## Education

- Sharpened focus on parental engagement and on the curriculum

## Mental health

- Provided insight into how to engage young people and into the urgent need to do so
- Contributed to solutions about how to make services more accessible

## Culture and identity

- Young people identified this as a key cross cutting issue

## Employment

- Stressed the importance of engaging with businesses to address stereotypes

