

MINUTES OF MEETING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON MONDAY, 2ND MARCH, 2020

PRESENT:

Councillors: Erdal Dogan (Chair), Dana Carlin, Julie Davies, Josh Dixon, Mike Hakata and Tammy Palmer

Co-opted Member: Mark Chapman and Luci Davin (Parent governor representatives), Yvonne Denny and Lourdes Keever (Church representatives)

27. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda item 1 as shown on the agenda in respect of filming at this meeting and Members noted the information contained therein.

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Chiriyankandath.

29. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

31. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

32. MINUTES

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of 19 December 2019 be approved.

33. HARINGEY COMMUNITY GOLD - END OF YEAR ONE SUMMARY

Eubert Malcolm, the Interim Assistant Director for Stronger Communities, reported on the progress up to quarter four with Haringey Community Gold initiative. It was aimed at young people at risk of exclusion from school or on the fringe of criminality. A public health approach was used that focused on strengths. The aim was to turn lives around

and realise potential. Engagement had taken place with 1364 young people in 2019. There were also 309 young people completing activities out of original target of 500. A total of 452 young people had also engaged in aspects of the programme following initial engagement through the outreach team. Activities had also taken place in schools, including a number on employment issues. The ethnicity of the largest percentage of participants was Black British. Payment for the work undertaken as part of the initiative was based on results and £480k had been received so far.

There had been a number of challenges that had been faced in setting up the programme of activities. It had started late due to issues related to processes, recruitment, training and compliance. The programme had been led by voluntary sector partners, who had then invited the Council to lead the consortium. There had been alignment difficulties for the delivery of the programme due to the number and diversity of partners. The drive to engage large numbers of young people also created an influx of requests which presented capacity challenges to grass roots delivery partners. In addition, there were also challenges in ensuring that there was the capacity to deliver a service in multiple locations in order to support young people unwilling to travel.

There were a number of objectives for the second year of the programme. These included:

- Developing closer working relations with Bruce Grove Youth Centre, Project 2020 and Project Future;
- Continuing to promote the programme across Haringey and neighbouring boroughs;
- Finalising the development of the young people's shadow board to provide a strong voice to influence the delivery of activity; and
- Supporting employment, physical activity and sports activity to reflect feedback from young people and practitioners.

In answer to a question, Mr Malcolm stated that there were could be challenges in working with the community. In particular, it could be difficult addressing challenging behaviour amongst young people. An evaluation would take place following the second year of the initiative. This would include case studies that would focus on the changes that the initiative had led to the lives of young people involved. The initiative would contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Youth at Risk strategy and its associated 10 year action plan.

In answer to another question, he stated that many young people did not feel comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation and not trusting of figures of authority. Efforts were being made to involve girls and there were female detached workers undertaking specific work to address this. There were nevertheless challenges in identifying the sort of activities that young women wanted. He was happy to report back on progress with this. There were targets for levels of participation that had been set by the GLA for the three years of the initiative and it was likely that these would be exceeded.

In answer to a question, Mr Malcolm reported that the initiative was community led and it was partners who had selected the Council to lead the programme. The Council and its partners were always willing to consider the inclusion of new groups though. Some groups would need upskilling and there was also a need to support partners. Some

partners were already over providing. There was a clear project plan. If targets were not met, the Council and its partners would not be paid the grant funding.

Ann Graham, Director of Children's Services, reported that the project plan was extensive and included red, amber and green (RAG) ratings. There were regular meetings between partners and an early warning system in place for any performance issues. The consortium's aim was not just to receive the funding but to deliver outcomes.

In answer to a question regarding provision of activities in the south Tottenham area, Mr Malcolm stated that there were detached youth workers working in the area and consideration was being given to expanding activities there. In addition, some activities had been arranged with Gladesmore School. Staff would go to any areas of the borough where there was a need.

The Panel noted that the target for the total number of participants in the initiative was 1500 for the year. There were key performance indicators (KPIs) which could be shared with the Panel in future reports on progress. It was possible to refer participants in activities to a range of partners. The Exodus scheme was still in operation in the borough. Consideration was being given an exit strategy including income streams so that activities could continue when the initiative finished. Significant funding would be required to ensure sustainability and, in addition, members of the community would need to be provided with the necessary skills. The summer programme was separate from the initiative.

In answer to a question, Mr Malcolm stated that the earlier that interventions took place, the better. Workshops were being undertaken in schools and partners were happy to visits schools that would like ones arranged. The largest cohort of young people involved in the initiative were those between 14 and 16.

The Panel felt thanked officers for the report. They felt that start of the initiative had been positive and demonstrated good joint working. It was important that provision was sustainable and alternative sources of funding needed to identified, such as from the National Lottery. They requested further reports on progress in due course, including monitoring data.

AGREED:

That further reports on progress with the initiative, including monitoring data, be submitted to the Panel.

34. EQUALITY OF ACCESS TO LEISURE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Andrea Keeble, Commissioning Manager for Active Communities reported that the UK's Chief Medical Adviser had recommended that all children and young people received 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Evidence from Sport England's Children and Young People's Active Lives Survey of 2017/18 indicated that 46% nationally and 43% in London of children and young people were meeting the recommended level. The figure for Haringey was slightly below this at 41%.

There were inequalities in levels of activity, with wealthier individuals tending to be more active. However, there was a lack of data currently and efforts were being made to address this. It had nevertheless been possible to obtain some data on current levels of participation within Haringey for the report. This had shown large increases in the number of under 16s using Council leisure centres since 2016. The proportion of children and young people from disadvantaged groups using them was also quite high. Many children and young people accessed centres without a membership or leisure card. There were inconsistencies in the data from leisure centres and some areas of concern. In particular, black and minority ethnic (BAME) children were under represented but there was an even balance between genders in accessing facilities. It also appeared that disabled children and young people were using facilities but a lot did not have leisure cards. The National Benchmarking Survey of leisure centres had shown that, whilst Tottenham Green performed well, Park Road needed to attract more children and young people from ethnic minorities.

Ms Keeble stated that the report had shown that there were a number of areas where action was required. In particular, there was a need to encourage the use of leisure cards and increase the robustness of data. Targeted work was also required to increase use by under represented groups.

The Panel noted that the summer programmes of 2018 and 2019 showed positive outcomes. These included reductions in crime and referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). However, work was required to increase participation amongst girls. In addition, the quality of monitoring data needed to be improved and, in particular, that relating to equalities.

Panel Members felt that the current concessionary schemes could be simplified. In addition, concerns were expressed about the quality of service provided at Tottenham Green leisure centre. It was also felt that the centres did not always provide all the activities that people wanted.

Ms Keeble stated that it was recognised that there were challenges at Tottenham Green and Council officers were working with Fusion to address them. Some of the Issues relating to concessions were the Council's responsibility and there was a need for simplification. The provision of additional activities was being considered and further work would be done regarding this, particularly in respect of the summer programme.

Panel Members felt that some leisure centres were not being utilised as much as they could be, particularly New River. It was also felt that the processes required to obtain the concessionary rate could be challenging for some families. In addition, more outreach could be undertaken in schools. It was also suggested that the level of concession could be looked at.

Ms Keeble reported that there would be a major marketing exercise when changes to the concessionary scheme were brought in. Outreach already took place in schools and consideration could be given to signing up children and young people for leisure cards within schools. Whilst Fusion could be encouraged to review the level of concession, care needed to be taken to not adversely affect their income levels as they needed to make enough for the contract to remain economically viable. There was

additional funding for the summer programme though and this could provide a degree of additional flexibility.

35. ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION AND UNREGISTERED SCHOOLS

Eveleen Riordan, Assistant Director for Schools and Learning, reported that there had been an increase in the number of children who were being home schooled. There had been just under 350 in 2018 but this had dropped down slightly last year to 184. Of these, 68 were girls and 116 were boys. None of these were currently subject to a child protection plan. There were a number of reasons why parents might choose to home educate and these might include religious or philosophical considerations, bullying, medical issues and to avoid exclusion. Children with an Education and Health Care (EHC) plan were also able to be home schooled. There was flexibility regarding what could be taught although there was an expectation that English and Maths would be included. The Council provided an advisory teacher who provided advice and guidance to parents. Visits were also undertaken to monitor the progress of children. However, parents were not obliged to provide access. Action could nevertheless be taken where it was determined that children were not being educated adequately. In respect of unregistered schools, there had been one in the east of the borough but there were currently none.

In answer to a question, Ms Riordan reported that numbers fluctuated but tended to increase towards the end of the school year. It was acknowledged that the role that local authorities had could be challenging. However, home schooling could deliver some good results. One option that could be used was flexi-schooling, where children attended school for part of the week and were home schooled for the remainder. This was subject to the discretion of head teachers. Ms Graham reported that whilst home schooling could be rich and nurturing, there were also risks and there had been some cases where it had gone badly wrong.

Panel Members stated that there were unregistered schools in neighbouring boroughs and these could be accessed by Haringey children. In particular, a recent report had shown there to be significant numbers of unregistered schools in Hackney. Ms. Riordan reported that the Council was in contact with neighbouring boroughs and able to raise concerns with them.

In answer to a question, Ms Riordan reported that there were not the resources to support the development of networks amongst home schooling parents to share good practice. However, they were aware of some networks that already existed and could signpost parents. There had been an increase nationally in the number of home schooled children and she would investigate whether there was any further information or research to explain why this was happening and, in particular, whether there were any particular religious groups who were over represented. However, the proportion within Haringey was broadly similar to other boroughs. There was no evidence that schools were pressurising some children and young people to be home educated in order to remove them from schools rolls. Such actions would be viewed seriously were they found to be occurring.

AGREED:

That the Assistant Director for Schools and Learning be requested to provide further information for the Panel on the reasons for home schooling and, in particular, if there were any particular patterns within the borough or religious groups that are over represented.

36. UNREGISTERED/UNREGULATED AND SEMI-INDEPENDENT HOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Beverly Hendricks, Assistant Director for Social Care, reported that there had been an increase in the level of demand for accommodation outside of family homes in recent years but the amount of suitable placements had not kept up with demand. Providers who offer support and accommodation for young people over the age of 16 were not required to be registered and therefore did not come under the monitoring remit of Ofsted. There were now 16 semi-independent providers within the borough but these were largely used by other local authorities. Engagement was taking place with them and this included support and training on safeguarding issues. The Council's brokerage team was also working with these providers to determine whether they were suitable for use by Haringey. It was important that there was confidence in providers and extensive quality assurance was therefore undertaken. Consideration had been given to the borough joining the West London Alliance consortium of local authorities to commission providers but it had been felt that the spread of accommodation available did not currently meet the needs of Haringey young people. Haringey had placed 73 young people in semi-independent provision in the past year.

Panel Members expressed concerns regarding the educational impact of semi-independent living on young people between the ages of 16 and 18 as it was felt that the level of support that could be provided was not as great as that which could be provided in the home. This could impact on A Level performance. Ms Hendricks stated that this concern was shared. However, there was key worker support available to each young person. She was happy to draft a note outlining the support that was provided. In addition, she felt that it would be useful to undertake an audit to see how young people had benefitted. In respect of costs, Ms Hendricks reported that provision ranged from £320 to £1000 per week which compared favourably with the position elsewhere.

AGREED:

That a briefing note outlining the learning support that was provided to young people between the ages of 16 and 18 in semi-independent accommodation be circulated to the Panel and that this includes an audit of how young people had benefitted from what is currently provided.

37. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Panel noted that there were a number of outstanding issues within the current plan and agreed that the following issues be prioritised for inclusion on the agenda for the first Panel meeting of the new Municipal Year:

- School estates and action being taken to address maintenance issues; and
- Nurseries and the two and three year old offer.

CHAIR: Councillor Erdal Dogan

Signed by Chair

Date