

Update on Response to Child Poverty Scrutiny Review Recommendations – 26th June 2023

Recommendation & Action	Lead & others to be involved	Timescale	Agreed Partially/ Agreed / Not Agreed	Comments	June 2023 Update
Strategic Approach					
1. That alleviating poverty be set as a key priority within the refreshed Borough Plan.	Jean Taylor, Head of Policy & Strategy	Pending	Agreed	<p>The council is committed to using all of its available levers to alleviate poverty in the borough. The council recognises the specific relationship between child poverty and a range of negative life outcomes. We are committed to mitigating the impact of child poverty as part of our wider strategic commitment to securing Haringey’s children and young people the best start in life.</p> <p>As such we would expect the next articulation of our corporate priorities to include a strong focus on how the council and partners use the levers available to them to tackle and prevent child poverty and mitigate its impacts.</p> <p>The priorities for the Borough Plan are agreed through a process of evidence gathering, engagement with residents and partners, and</p>	<p>Since the OSC child poverty review, a programme of work to respond to financial hardship resulting from the cost-of-living crisis has been stood up, with work being delivered across a range of income maximisation, cost reduction and crisis support activities. This has had a strong focus on mitigating the impact of cost-of-living crisis on children and young people.</p> <p>This work recognises that rather than being a short-lived crisis, cost of living pressures compound existing poverty, which disproportionately affects some resident groups in the borough, and will have an ongoing impact on them. To respond to this, work is underway to consider how we should tackling poverty using the levers available to us, prioritising those activities we understand to have greatest impact. The exact</p>

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				<p>discussion between Cabinet members and officers. The formal decision to treat poverty as a priority should be undertaken as part of this process.</p> <p>At the time the scrutiny committee's report was drafted, the assumption was that a new Borough Plan would be produced in 2022. This work is currently being paused as we assess and incorporate the implications of the Haringey Deal for how we work as an organisation, as this needs to inform any Borough Plan or similar document.</p>	<p>scope and status of this work is currently being discussed but we anticipate that there will be an opportunity to reflect on, and respond to, the committee's recommendations 1) and 2) through this work. There are also active conversations about what will follow the Corporate Delivery Plan which will influence how we articulate and implement our strategic priorities going forward.</p>
<p>2. That, as part of the refresh process for the new Borough Plan, a cross cutting review into poverty be undertaken that includes engagement with partners and residents to obtain a broader understanding of the</p>	<p>Jean Taylor, Head of Policy & Strategy</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>As outlined above, the council is committed to using all of its available levers to alleviate poverty in the borough. This is reflected in a significant programme of existing activity to mitigate the impact of poverty and the stigma associated with it, including an existing commitment to <i>cash first</i> approaches to support. This is</p>	<p>Please see above.</p>

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<p>issue and develop a strategic and coordinated response, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the availability of support will be communicated, including the role of schools, Children’s Centres and community organisations • How inequality will be addressed; and • How stigma will be avoided, including a “cash-first” approach to support. 				<p>reflected across a range of activity, including how we administer the Household Support Fund, with the aim of reaching people most effectively.</p> <p>A cross-cutting review into poverty links to the overall approach of addressing and tackling inequality which underpins the current Borough Plan and our Covid-19 Recovery and Renewal framework. We would expect these to remain central to any future plan.</p> <p>The development of any Borough Plan, as the document which sets out the priorities for the Council and partners, will be underpinned by a robust process of evidence gathering about what is most important to our residents, the issues affecting them and the change they want to see. The development of the plan should also be informed by a critical assessment of the interventions which will have greatest impact on</p>	

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				priority issues. It is anticipated that the process of exploring these could achieve the same outcomes as a cross cutting review recommended by the committee. The specific issues identified by OSC will be included as part of the scope of any such future review.	
Customer Services					
3. That the Council's Customer Services be reviewed with a view to making them easier to access and simplifying applications and that this includes consideration how to make services of equal accessibility and quality for people without digital access.	Andy Briggs, AD for Customer Services	Ongoing	Agreed	The Council's customer service operation is under constant review. Focus on easier access both digitally and in person continues, for example appointment system is in place in CS centres ensuring people get the time they need with advisors, the team also refer to Connected Communities for further detailed support and the financial support team to help with maximising support to individuals or families	Customer Services are working closely with Connected Communities to ensure where we recognise those residents that need support and are referred to the team so that they get responsive advice and appropriate financial support. A Partnership hotline has been set up and now live for some of our key stakeholders so that they can also access services quickly.
4. That the principle of "no wrong door" be adopted and a wider group of officers than those working in Customer Services be	Andy Briggs, AD for Customer Services	Ongoing	Agreed	The principle of no wrong door is being adopted via a resident's experience improvement plan currently in development. This starts initially with tackling the barriers to ease of access into	Customer services is working with various service areas as part of the Resident Experience Programme to enhance the digital offer including access to housing repairs, rents / service charge account related

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given responsibility and the tools for assisting residents with support queries, including benefits advice.				Customer Services and improving the customer journey in accessing, for example, housing repairs, benefits and welfare support. Roll out of Haringey Here to Help is widely promoted and improvements to the website are set for March 2023.	information which is due to be delivered in July 23. Some changes have been made to the existing website to Haringey Here to Help content. We expect to move to a new Website in Q3. The new website will have revised features making it easier for our residents to engage and interact with us.
Food					
5. That a progress report on the development of the Council's Food Strategy be included in the workplan for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2022/23.	Jean Taylor, Head of Policy & Strategy/ Gill Taylor AD Housing and Communities and Rob Mack, OSC Lead officer update: Florence Guppy, Head of Community Enablement	TBC	Agreed	Tackling food insecurity is an urgent priority for the council and its partners, particularly in the context of the cost-of-living crisis. The development of the Food Strategy, which will capture progress to far and our future commitments, is a priority for the council.	It was not possible to find suitable space in the Committee's workplan for 2022/23 for the Food Strategy to be addressed in what remained of the year after the recommendations of the review report had been agreed by Cabinet. However, it has been included in the work plan for the current year (i.e. 2023/24).
6. That the roll out of FSMs be extended further to make them universal and, in	Eveleen Riordan, AD Schools	NA	Partially agreed. Cabinet wholeheartedly	Haringey's local expanded free school meals policy extends free school meal eligibility to approximately 650 additional	From September 2023 every primary school pupil in London will be in receipt of a free school meal, as a result of the of the Mayor of

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<p>addition, further funding be provided for their provision during school holidays.</p>	<p>Lead officer update: Jane Edwards, AD Schools</p>		<p>supports the principle of universal FSM provision and is lobbying national government to fund this, recognising it is unsustainable for local authorities to do this in the existing financial context. See appendix B, letter to Kit Malthouse, Sec of State for Education.</p>	<p>children between the ages of 7 and 11. The scheme is targeted at children living in families who are structurally disadvantaged as a result of high housing costs, low incomes, and gaps in the benefits system. The Cabinet decision to develop this scheme included a commitment to funding it until April 2023. Ongoing funding to existing entitlement groups is being considered as part of the budget/MTFS process.</p> <p>The committee’s recommendation refers to “universal” provision, but this needs further definition. Children from reception to key stage 1 receive universal free school meals. Assuming this recommendation relates to universal provision for KS2 (junior) children in Haringey primary schools, the cost of the scheme would come at a cost per annum of approximately £5,000,000. A budget stream would need to be</p>	<p>London’s commitment. The council is working with schools to ensure that this policy is delivered, with an internal working group has been formed to oversee implementation. This includes consideration of what will happen when the scheme comes to an end.</p>

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				<p>identified to take this recommendation forward.</p> <p>Provision of free school meals for all that need them, funded by the national government, is now the subject of a national campaign, Children's Right2Food, led by the Food Foundation. The council supports this campaign, in recognition of the concerning increase in child poverty in the last decade and the urgency of the cost-of-living crisis facing Haringey residents.</p> <p>Regarding FSM holiday vouchers, this has previously been funded via the Winter Hardship Fund and other funding sources at a cost of approx. £130k per week of the school holiday. The Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme has also provided resources to feed children on FSM in holiday time and the government is set to continue funding this up to 2025. With</p>	

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				these central funding streams, and additional funding from our own holiday activity budget, we can continue the provision we have made across school holiday periods since summer 2020.	
7. That guidance for schools on effective school meal contracts be developed including ensuring that they are of high quality and nutritional value.	Eveleen Riordan, AD Schools Lead officer update: Jane Edwards, AD Schools	Academic year 2022/23	Agreed	The Haringey School Meals service was closed several years ago in the borough. Currently, our schools source their school meal delivery from a wide variety of private companies, and a small number provide their school meals inhouse. In 2020 a Haringey Paediatric Registrar in Public Health worked with us to produce a Whole School Food Policy Guideline and pull-out Packed lunch guide for parents as we know that for many, packed lunches are the cheapest form of lunch for our families. We will work with colleagues in commissioning and in Public Health to ensure that schools are supported to develop contracts	A survey has gone to Haringey schools recently to gauge interest in a joint procurement contract.

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				which are effective in terms of quality and nutritional value. This ties in with the Healthy Schools Agenda and the work that schools do to ensure value for money across all services.	
Schools					
8. That work takes place with schools to reduce the cost of the school day by promoting greater awareness of the financial impact of policies and initiatives on poorer families and, in particular, hidden costs.	Jean Taylor, Head of Policy and Strategy and Eveleen Riordan, AD Schools Lead officer update: Jane Edwards, AD Schools	Academic year 2022/23	Agreed	Uniforms, school trips, school lunches, gym kits, pencils and pens, and dress down days can be difficult to afford for families. Schools are already keenly aware of the pressures on families in this regard and we are committed to working with schools to ensure that cost is not a barrier to every pupil fully engaging and not feeling or looking different because of affordability. This includes providing information to schools on how to reduce the cost of school for parents and carers and to also signpost to resources including those provided by the Child Poverty Action Group and, if needed, to local charities.	No further update.

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<p>9. That the Haringey Education Partnership works with schools to explore how they may engage more effectively with parents and carers that are hard to reach, including drawing on successful initiatives from elsewhere and consideration of the commissioning of external research.</p>	<p>Ann Graham, Director of Children’s Services</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>Parental engagement is an everyday activity for our schools who do this with individual parents, and through a variety of regular communications including newsletters, text messages, coffee mornings, parent /carers evenings, open evenings on the curriculum, fundraising events etc. Children’s Services supports this, for example through the SEND newsletter, the holiday activity booklets, reception and secondary admissions guides, information on childcare places etc. More broadly, initiatives by the Council to reach out to Somali and other communities are aimed at ensuring an inclusive approach to community engagement. Working with our schools we want to support parents in financial hardship or in need. The expanded free school meals scheme and the Household Support Fund are examples where the provision of a discretionary funding pot assists schools in supporting families where they identify need.</p>	<p>No further update.</p>

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				<p>We recognise the work of the Haringey Education Partnership which is a not-for-profit schools owned; schools led school improvement company. As such, the principal focus of their work is on supporting member schools to raise outcomes for children and young people, so their achievement is at least as good as, or better than, anywhere in the country. This school improvement work includes support to schools with parental engagement on the curriculum and education attainment, wider engagement around poverty and need links back to a broader partnership with the Council.</p>	
Leisure & physical activity					
10. That a commitment be made to provide permanent funding for youth	Eubert Malcolm, Director Environment & Neighbourhoods,	Ongoing	Agreed	The council recognises the important role of youth provision and services, particularly for children and young people from	Rising Green Youth Hub is thriving with between 60 and 80 young people attending regular youth sessions.

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programmes and services.	and Jackie Difolco, AD Early Help & Prevention			<p>lower income families, who may not have access to the same opportunities and who may be more likely to benefit for specific types of support. Investment in youth services will continue to be a priority.</p> <p>The specific nature of services provided will need to be informed by range of factors, including how and where the council expects to have greatest impact.</p> <p>Decisions about future funding need to be undertaken by Cabinet as part of the budget setting and MTFS process. It is recommended that Cabinet notes the committee's recommendation.</p> <p>Rising Green Youth Hub in Wood Green was successfully launched on 1 August 2022, with up to 50 – 70 young people attending each session. A partnership Manager appointed to develop Rising</p>	<p>A charging policy for partners and organisations using the building has been implemented to generate income to offset against running costs from April 25.</p> <p>A restructure of the youth service incorporating Haringey Community Gold is almost complete which will enable funding for staffing until April 25. This has been reflected within the MTFS process whilst work continues to explore external funding opportunities.</p>

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				<p>Green's community offer and secure longer-term funding.</p> <p>There is currently a robust youth offer in place with a range of both temporary and permanent programmes funded by a range of sources including the Holiday and Activities Food programme.</p> <p>Supporting Families Funding has been secured for a further 3 years, some of which will be offset against youth work delivery. Unfortunately, we were not successful in our application for Youth Endowment and not eligible for Youth Investment Funding. Plans are underway to merge Haringey Community Gold (HCG) within the Haringey Youth Service, retaining its branding and remit. Work is ongoing to secure longer term funding.</p>	

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11. That the feasibility of longer-term funding for successful initiatives undertaken as part of Haringey Community Gold be explored.	Eubert Malcolm, Director Environment & Neighbourhoods, and, Jackie Difulco, AD Early Help & Prevention	Ongoing	Agreed	VRU funding for the Community Element of HCG has been secured for a further 3 years, Youth Outreach will be considered as part of longer-term planning outlined above.	The youth outreach element is being incorporated into the youth service restructure which has recently completed. Funding has been secured until April 25. This has been reflected within the MTFs process whilst work continues to explore external funding opportunities.