

Report for: Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel – 9th September

Title: Haringey Youth Strategy 2025 – 2030 and Action Plan

Report authorised by: Ann Graham, Corporate Director: Childrens Services

Lead Officers: Jackie Difolco, Director: Early Help, Prevention and SEND
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Ward (s) affected: All

**Report for Key/
Non-Key Decision:** Not applicable

1. Purpose of the report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform members of Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel of the launch of Haringey Youth Strategy and to seek views on the strategy and associated action plan for implementation.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That members of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny panel note the contents of the report, directing any comments and observations to the Director for Early Help, Prevention and SEND.

2.2 That members of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel agree to receiving an annual progress report of the Haringey Youth Strategy.

3. Background Information

3.1 The Youth Strategy 2025-2030 outlines Haringey Council's commitment to implementing the Borough Vision Call to Action to support young people by focusing on two initial key priorities:

- a) Facilitate high-quality activities and spaces for young people: To meet the diverse range of interests, needs and experiences that our young people have.
- b) Hearing young people's voices: Encouraging young people's participation in decision making, civic and democratic life in the borough.

3.2 This strategy was developed in alignment with other local strategies focused on young people and in anticipation of the forthcoming National Youth Strategy, set to be published in 2026.

3.3 This strategy consolidates findings from recent engagement with young people, integrating various council initiatives in areas such as placemaking, culture and youth participation. It includes the publication of the Haringey Local Youth Offer, which encompasses both universal and targeted council services, as well as activities provided by the voluntary and community sector (VCS). An analysis of youth services and activities

in the borough provides a comprehensive overview of current provisions, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to inform planning, commissioning and delivery of services. This strategy reflects the current landscape of youth services in Haringey as of 2025, acknowledging that the provision and needs of these services may evolve over the coming years.

3.4 Furthermore, the strategy emphasises the importance of effective engagement with young people and outlines how their involvement in local decision-making will be enhanced. A series of recommendations are made to achieve the strategic outcomes detailed in the Borough Vision, accompanied by indicators to monitor progress and ensure the strategy remains responsive to the evolving needs of young people in Haringey.

3.5 Statutory guidance published in September 2023 for local authorities on services to improve young people's wellbeing stated that over 85% of a young person's waking hours are spent outside of school and formal education. Recreational and educational leisure-time activities provided during those hours can have a significant effect on young people's development and well-being. These activities can support young people to build their skills, improve trust and tolerance and help young people to become active members of society and champion their voice.

3.6 In November 2024, the government announced the development and co-production of the National Youth Strategy¹. Recognising that young people's needs have never been more complex, their strategy plans to improve the understanding of young people's priorities as well as run an ambitious and wide consultation. The strategy aims to better coordinate youth services and policy with participation of young people at the heart of the strategy.

4. Report

Haringey Youth Strategy 2025 – 2030

4.1 Haringey's Youth Strategy aims to address the gaps within our strategic context and decision-making, rather than developing a comprehensive strategy to address all the possible needs for young people today. This is in recognition of the fact that several of our existing strategies have interdependencies and include outcomes specifically for young people, actions and progress, which are already underway.

4.2 The National Youth Agency provided a self-assessment document that supported local authorities to respond to the new statutory guidance that was issued by Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) which outlines best practices for Local Authorities to deliver their statutory youth duty and advocated nine 'essentials' of a local youth offer. The findings from this assessment identified that in most areas, the council was partially meeting its statutory duty and has provided a crucial foundation for the development of our Youth Strategy to meet these duties fully. Refer to Appendix A: Haringey Youth Strategy 2025 -2030 (pages 12 – 13)

Key Issues for Young People in Haringey

4.3 While the Haringey Youth Strategy is focused on the provision of youth services and enabling youth participation in local decision-making, it is essential to recognise the broader context in which these services operate. Young people in Haringey face a range of challenges that extend beyond the immediate remit of this strategy. Understanding these key issues is crucial for developing a comprehensive approach to supporting the wellbeing and development of our young people and have informed the strategy and action plan.

4.4 These issues encompass various aspects of health, safety, education and socioeconomic conditions, and they highlight the complex and interconnected nature of the factors affecting young people's lives. By acknowledging and addressing these broader challenges, we can better tailor our interventions and support services to meet the diverse needs of Haringey's young people.

Coordination of the Local Youth Offer

4.5 In order to support and coordinate the offer, the council has developed a detailed directory of youth services and activities which operate throughout Haringey, including those provided by the VCS. Using the Commonplace digital engagement platform, this directory has been translated into an interactive map of the borough which showcases the services and activities on offer. Refer to Appendix A: Haringey Youth Strategy 2025 – 2030 (page 23- 24).

Range of Youth Offer

4.6 Haringey Council is committed to providing a comprehensive and inclusive youth offer that caters to the diverse needs and interests of all young people in the borough. The youth offer aims to ensure that every young person has access to a wide range of high-quality services and activities that promote their personal, social and educational development.

4.7 The range of the offer includes centre based youth provision, providing safe and welcoming spaces for young people to relax and socialise, outreach services taking the youth offer to locations across the borough, youth mental health, arts, culture, music, sports and careers and skills development. There is also a focus on providing targeted youth support services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), young carers, faith based, care leavers and those involved in or at risk of serious youth violence. Underpinning this offer is the engagement of young people in civic participation and influencing decision making and delivery of services.

Analysis of Provision

4.8 Youth work is a skilled profession with its own code of practice, and it is important that youth workers have the right qualifications and training to help them support young people to the best of their ability. Youth workers build voluntary, trusted relationships with young people, away from many of the other pressures they may be facing in their lives. They usually work with young people aged between 11 and 19 but may support young adults up to the age of 25 depending on their needs.

4.9 The provision of youth services can be categorised into formal and informal provision, with formal services typically delivered by professionally qualified youth workers following

a structured curriculum, such as PHSE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) education. Informal youth provision, on the other hand, may include targeted projects and sessions which may not be delivered by professionally qualified youth workers and play a crucial role in engaging young people. It is important to recognise the value each type of provision brings to the overall youth offer.

4.10 One of the major strengths of Haringey's local youth offer is the diverse range of services and activities available, allowing for the different needs and interests of young people to be met. Key headlines include:

- a) Sport and recreation were identified as the primary purpose of 40.4% of mapped activities, with an additional 15.2% for the provision of safe spaces and social activities.
- b) There is also a clear understanding of the importance of support for vulnerable groups, with 10.1% of identified services dedicated to supporting young with SEND. This provision of support and resources is crucial for creating an inclusive and equitable environment for all young people in the borough.
- c) Of the 99 services and activities included in the mapping, 87 have a clearly identifiable fixed location which allowed for mapping analysis to be conducted on a ward-level basis, highlighting 45% located in the east, 32% in the centre, 11% in the west and 12% flexing across the borough. The higher concentration of services in the more socioeconomically deprived east suggests that provision is directed to where need is greatest, which can help to address inequalities and provide support to disadvantaged young people. The east of the borough also has a disproportionately young population relative to the west.
- d) Almost 70% of services and activities are open access, ensuring the majority of what is on offer is available to all young people.
- e) Over 30% of the local youth offer being targeted provision ensures that vulnerable or marginalised communities received the tailored support they need.
- f) Of the services and activities identified during the mapping, almost 40% are free of cost. This is not an exhaustive figure because a further 49.5% of activities lacked clear, publicly accessible information on whether there was a cost involved. Most services offer free or subsidised rates for families where there is a low income and all council-run youth services are free of charge, demonstrating the strong commitment from the council to support youth development.

Areas for improvement

4.11 Although there is a wide variety of services and activities available, some types of provision are noticeably underrepresented relative to others. The proportion of services or activities whose primary purpose is civic participation is 2%, while for environmental initiatives and volunteering opportunities this is as low as 1%. Previous engagement has indicated that these are areas that young people in Haringey are interested in, demonstrating a potential gap in provision.

4.12 While the concentration of services in more disadvantaged areas with higher numbers of young people is a strength, just 11.1% of those identified by the mapping are in the west of the borough. This could mean that young people in these areas are not as easily able to access local services, leading to disparities in participation.

- 4.13 The fact that 49.5% of youth activities have no clear publicly accessible information on costs is a significant disadvantage. This lack of transparency can create uncertainty and deter potential users from approaching providers. Clear information on costs is essential for ensuring young people and their families can make informed decisions, and VCS organisations should be encouraged to improve communication and update online resources.

Opportunities

- 4.14 Haringey's designation as the London Borough of Culture (LBOC) for 2027 presents a unique opportunity for young people to engage in cultural activities, develop new skills and showcase their talents. Programmes and events tailored to youth interests could inspire creativity, promote social interaction and provide valuable learning experiences.
- 4.15 There may also be additional national funding to support local authorities to build back lost capability and improve youth offers. While it is unclear as of yet how this funding will be distributed, it is possible that having a dedicated Youth Strategy and an up-to-date local offer will put Haringey in the best position possible to make use of this opportunity.
- 4.16 The current youth offer delivers across a range of settings within the community, this strategy will support the opportunities to deliver youth services from wider community settings such as libraries.

Risks

- 4.17 The local funding climate could deteriorate further, given the unprecedented demands being placed on statutory services such as social care and temporary accommodation. This could force difficult decisions such as reducing spending on youth services, which the council wants to avoid if at all possible.
- 4.18 Given the extensive role that the VCS has in providing youth activities in Haringey, a reduction in provision could result if VCS groups experience financial difficulties. This threat is exacerbated by the rising operational costs associated with employer national insurance contributions and the increase in the minimum wage, which could threaten VCS organisations with paid employees and lead to closures or reduced capacity.
- 4.19 The limited available funding from national sources could also make it challenging for Haringey to secure the necessary resources to maintain and expand its youth services. Likewise, any changes in national policy, funding priorities or regulatory requirements could impact the capacity of Haringey Council to deliver youth services. Staying adaptable and responsive to policy changes will help to mitigate this threat.

Engagement

- 4.20 Over the past few years, Haringey Council has actively engaged with young people across the borough to understand their needs, aspirations and challenges. Through a series of consultations, surveys, focus groups, and workshops, we have gathered valuable insights that have shaped the development of our youth strategy. Approximately 450 young people have taken part in recent reengagement events and bespoke workshops designed specifically with Haringey Youth Panel for this strategy.

4.21 Key themes and feedback we have received from young people include:

- a) identifying priorities for safer streets, good quality and affordable activities, reducing youth violence and safe travel across the borough and reducing social isolation,
- b) improving access to information through social media and updated websites. They also expressed engagement fatigue, with a perception that their responses to consultations are not acted upon with the council should act as a facilitator for information sharing, potentially through a centralised directory of services/activities,
- c) young people should be involved in shaping change and designing places for them,
- d) young people are interested in making the area greener and safer, with an emphasis on introducing more play and exercise opportunities,
- e) through the development of the action plan to support the delivery of the 'Young People at Risk Strategy, young people felt strongly about the need for appropriate forums to convene, identify issues and collaborate on actions, the importance of youth services and having youth workers from the local area, a focus on the impact and influence of social media and having a neighbourhood to be proud of is important.
- f) during the development of the Arts and Culture Strategy 2024-2028, young people consulted, stated that they wanted more affordable and accessible cultural opportunities, more youth clubs and cultural clubs and support where there are barriers faced by young people wanting to enter the arts and creative profession.

4.22 Youth Panel survey ambassadors were recruited to promote the survey within schools and communities. The survey remained open for eight weeks until the 10th of March 2025 and received a total of 138 responses. Young people accounted for 83% of responses, with parents and carers making up 17% and VCS groups making up 5%. Key Headlines are outlined below; the full response can be found within the strategy. Refer to [Appendix A: Haringey Youth Strategy 2025 – 2030 \(pages 27 -29\)](#)

- a) young people who responded to the survey reported high levels of satisfaction with the current youth services provided in Haringey. A majority (61%) said that they were either very satisfied compared to 31% who said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 8% who said they were fairly or very dissatisfied. Satisfaction with the local youth offer was significantly lower amongst parents than amongst young people, 23% responded that they were satisfied, 33% said neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 39% said dissatisfied,
- b) young people who self-identified as having SEND were asked if they believe that youth services in Haringey adequately. Of the 13% of young people who identified as having SEND, 32% answered yes, 22% answered no and 45% said they were unsure,
- c) barriers to engagement in provision included lack of time (24%), lack of interest (19%) and cost (18%). Of the activities that they do participate in, the most popular types were sports and physical activity (39%), arts and culture (12%) and educational support (11%),
- d) types of services and activities they would like to see more of, include sports and physical activity (28%), arts and culture (17%), spaces to socialise (12%), educational support (11%) and mental health services (10%). This was similar to the views of parents and carers,

- e) preferred ways to engage young people in decision making are school visits and presentations (29%), email (15%), online surveys (15%), Instagram (11%) and community events and workshops (10%),
- f) barriers to engagement with decision making included topics not being of interest, conflicts with school, work or other commitments and lack of information in how to get involved or a lack of confidence in expressing opinions,
- g) parents reported that the main reasons for non-engagement had differing results to the survey of young people. Parents and carers identified an insufficient range of options (26%), travel distance (13%) and lack of information (13%).

Engagement with partners

- h) responses from the VCS (5.2%) identified that the main gap within youth service provision is an insufficient range of options (22%), lack of information (19%), affordability (13%) and a lack of quality (13%), while responses from parents represented just 12% of the total respondents, they provide an indication of parents' perspectives. Satisfaction with the local offer was significantly lower amongst parents than amongst young people, 23% responded that they satisfied, 33% said neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 39% said dissatisfied,
- i) better collaboration includes support with promoting and signposting to services, improving skills to access funding opportunities,
- j) expand shared activities across the borough and strengthen community links through initiatives like football tournaments,
- k) addressing diverse needs, improving mobility and accessibility, and establishing a structured digital information sharing system were also key points,
- l) emphasised the importance of engaging parents and improving inclusion for underrepresented groups of young people, such as those with SEND and those from socioeconomically deprived backgrounds,
- m) a shift from reactive to proactive youth work and better internal mapping to avoid service silos were recommended.

Engaging young people in decision making

4.23 When discussing current trends in youth engagement, it was noted that young people have a strong awareness of wider societal issues such as housing, the cost of living, gentrification and mental health. However, they also feel disengaged from current systems and institutions such as the council which are meant to work on these wider issues, partially as a result of consultation fatigue and not seeing the impact of previous engagements.

4.24 Building strong relationships and trust was emphasised, along with creating focus groups for youth input and valuing their knowledge by compensating their contributions. Participants encouraged a shift from a top-down approach to shared decision-making and involving young people in local governance and recruitment. Training young people in public speaking, debate and conflict resolution were also recommended. There was a preference for hands-on community action rather than passive discussions, and it was suggested to break down engagement into incremental steps. Combining activities with discussions, such as running a basketball session before a conversation, was also recommended.

4.25 Participants highlighted several strategies for reaching seldom-heard groups. It was suggested to use digital outreach methods, such as podcasts and social media, to connect with young people. Meeting young people where they are, including in their communities and online, was emphasised. Involving schools, which are currently not well engaged, was noted as crucial for broadening reach. Gaining the trust of parents to improve participation and encouraging peer networking and information sharing were also recommended as effective ways to engage seldom-heard voices.

4.26 The council's Children and Young People's Participation Framework is integral to the success of this strategy as it sets out the approach of Haringey Council to involving young people in planning, service delivery and decision-making. The framework is designed to support council officers in engaging young people effectively and meaningfully, ensuring their voices are heard and acted upon.

Measuring and Tracking Impact

4.27 Setting clear aims, objectives and conducting regular evaluations were highlighted as essential steps to evaluating the effectiveness of youth work. Participants suggested using a balance of qualitative and quantitative data, as well as using peer research and storytelling to track personal progress. It was also suggested that the council could facilitate the formulation of a standardised impact tracking form which partner organisations could use to monitor long-term progress. When asking young people for feedback on the impact of council activities or services, the importance of using accessible language and being clear on the scope of the topic was noted.

Action Plan

4.28 This strategy makes a series of recommendations for how the council can meet the priorities outlined within the strategy as outlined below detailing specific actions, timelines and responsibilities. The action plan will outline how the council will implement these recommendations, measure progress and ensure accountability, reporting progress to Children and Young People's Scrutiny. Refer to Appendix B: Haringey Youth Strategy Action Plan, please note this is currently draft.

5. Contribution to Corporate Delivery Plan 2024 - 2026

5.1 The objectives of the youth justice service are aligned with the priorities within Haringey's Corporate Delivery Plan' specifically:

Theme 3: Children and young people

- Outcome 2 Happy Childhoods - All children across the borough will be happy and healthy as they grow up, feeling safe and secure in their family networks and communities.
- Outcome 3 Successful Futures - Every young person, whatever their background, has a pathway to success for the future

Theme 7: A Safer Borough

- Outcome 1: A borough where all residents and visitors feel safe and are safe.

6. Carbon and Climate Change

6.1 In March 2019, Haringey Council declared a climate emergency, with the bold ambition of becoming a net-zero council by 2027 and a net-zero borough by 2041. The Haringey Youth Strategy will provide opportunity to embed environmental sustainability throughout our delivery and planning.

7. Statutory Officers comments

Finance

9.1 The report introduces Haringey's first Youth Strategy for 2025 - 2030 in line with Government's announcement to develop and co-production of National Youth Strategy.

9.2 It is not anticipated that any costs will arise from implementing Haringey's Youth Strategy and the action plan that underpins the strategy, should any costs occur, they will be contained within existing budget resources.

Director of Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer)

9.4 The Director of Legal & Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

9.5 Pursuant to section 507B of the Education Act 1996 (as amended by Education and Inspections Act 2006) a local authority must, so far as reasonably practicable, secure in the authority's area, access to sufficient educational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of young people's well-being, personal and social development and sufficient recreational activities for young people aged 13 – 19, (or up to 25 for young people with additional needs).

9.6 Statutory Guidance for 'Local Authorities on Services to Improve Young People's Wellbeing' published in September 2023 pursuant to s507B Education Act 1996, requires local authorities to have regard to this guidance when exercising their statutory duties under s507B. The activities can include sport and informal physical activities, cultural activities, outdoor residential or weekend or holiday time activities, special interest clubs and volunteering activities. The guidance sets out the practical and reasonable steps local authorities must take, so far as reasonably practicable, to meet the duty whether they are directly providing, funding, commissioning, coordinating, or maintaining oversight of the local youth offer.

9.7 Local Authorities are required to consider designating a lead official, with suitable seniority, who is responsible for compliance with the duty and can coordinate engagement with young people, youth providers and other partners. Primary responsibility for meeting the duty is likely to fall within the remit of the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services.

9.8 Scrutiny review panels are appointed to examine designated council services and will refer their findings or recommendations in the form of a written report, with the approval of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to the Cabinet and or the council as appropriate.

Equalities

9.9 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act,
- b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not,

- c) foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

9.10 The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty. Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

9.11 The strategy is underpinned by guiding principles of access, equity, and representation: to provide all young people with the opportunity to benefit and participate in a local youth offer. It is therefore anticipated that the strategy will have a positive impact on those with protected characteristics, by fostering good relations through youth service provision and advancing equality of opportunity for those who share a protected characteristic and who do not, through more collaborative ways of working and transparent commissioning. In particular, it is anticipated that young people from diverse and ethnic minority backgrounds, and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds will be positively impacted. The strategy shares the vision for youth services in Haringey, supported by an action plan that will be delivered with young people and the wider youth sector.

9.12 A comprehensive EQIA of the strategy identified positive impacts across all protected characteristics, with the exception of marriage and civil partnership for which a neutral impact was recorded. The EQIA can be found as an appendix to this report.

10 Use of Appendices

10.1 Appendix A: Haringey Youth Strategy 2025 -2030

10.2 Appendix B: Haringey Youth Strategy Action Plan

11. Background Papers

[Cabinet Report 17 June 2025 Haringey Youth Strategy Item 9](#)

11 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - Not applicable.