

Appendix 2: Emerging Policy Issues January 2014 onwards

Outcome 1: Outstanding for all

Priority 1: Work with schools, early years and post 16 providers, to deliver high quality education for all Haringey children and young people

Ofsted inspection of good and outstanding schools: Ofsted's Chief Inspector has proposed that those schools currently judged good by Ofsted (60%) should no longer be subject to full routine inspections in the way they are now. Instead, they should receive more frequent, but light-touch visits every two to three years by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) - or a serving school leader working as an associate Ofsted inspector - whose job would be to engage in professional dialogue with senior staff. Sir Michael said these visits would be 'challenging but also constructive'. The findings of the visit would be sent to parents by letter.

Ofsted's first stand-alone Early Years Annual Report: The report finds that:

- pre-school children from poorer backgrounds need the support of professionally trained teaching staff to stop them falling behind as soon as they reach school age
- pre-Reception age settings best equipped to help break 'the cycle of disadvantage' are those focused on helping children to learn at the earliest age
- quality of provision in this sector has been rising in recent years – 78% of providers on the Early Years Register are now judged good or outstanding.

However:

- barely a third of children from low income backgrounds reached a good level of development at the age of five last year – and in some areas it was less than a fifth
- the current complexity and fragmentation of the sector means that neither the inspection, regulation nor information available about early years are clear enough for parents to compare quality across the different types of provision.

According to a [BBC report](#), more than 2,700 schools in England will need to **improve kitchens** to provide free meals for infant school children, to meet the pledge made by Nick Clegg. There are more than 16,800 state primary schools in England. The figures also showed that more than 1,700 schools had no kitchen at all. The Government is providing £150m to upgrade school kitchens.

Priority 2: Enable every child and young person to thrive and achieve their potential

Children and Families Act 2014: LGIU briefing on the Act which received Royal Assent on 13 March 2014. The Bill was introduced into the House of Commons on 4 February 2013 and has been amended to include people with disabilities. The Act covers:

- the work of children's services (for adoptions, family justice, special educational needs, childcare and the Children's Commissioner)
- local government legal teams (for adoptions and family proceedings) and
- HR teams (shared parental leave, paternal time off work for ante-natal care, and reform of law on requesting flexible working).

Special Educational Needs: preparing for the future: The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) has published assistance for local government in implementing the SEN provisions (Part 3) of the Children and Families Act by highlighting some of the problems that have occurred under current arrangements. The report focuses on parent complaints about SEN provision, pertinent to one of the aims of the legislation to give a greater voice to parents and young people.

Public health for children 0-5 years: The Government has announced that children's public health commissioning for 0 to five-year-olds will transfer from NHS England to local government on 1 October 2015. A task and finish group involving local and central government, NHS England and the public health has been set up to support the transfer.

Outcome 2: Safety and wellbeing for all

Priority 3: Make Haringey one of the safest boroughs in London

New Service Transformation Challenge Panel: The Chief Secretary to the Treasury and the Local Government Secretary have announced the creation of an [independent panel](#) to help identify and accelerate the changes local areas need to make to support vulnerable children and young people, prevent crime and get people back into work. [£410 million in funding](#) has been set aside to help councils transform the way they run local services to put the user first.

Early intervention in domestic violence and abuse (Early Intervention Foundation, 2014): The report finds that children and young women are particularly affected by domestic abuse:

- Experiencing and witnessing this at an early age can lead to difficulties forming relationships in later life, increased levels of violence, antisocial behaviour and lack of trust.
- Nearly a third of pregnant teenagers reported experiencing domestic abuse.
- Universal services like GPs and health visitors have a key role to play in identifying domestic abuse, supporting and educating those most at risk. The [Safer Dates](#) programme in the US is cited as good practice.
- The 'early intervention workforce' such as those working in schools or children's centres should receive training to help them act when they see cases of domestic abuse, guidance should be more consistent.
- Early intervention to prevent domestic abuse is central to local health, crime reduction, and children and young people's strategies. Other good practice sources include: [NICE guidance](#) on effective responses to domestic violence and lessons learned from the Early Intervention Foundation's 20 [Pioneering Places](#).
- Perpetrator programmes were found to work in some cases, but should be tailored to individual needs. Outreach services were also found to be effective.
- In addition, a recent report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) found, overall, [police responses](#) to victims of domestic abuse are not good enough.

Gangs and youth crime: The Home Affairs Committee has launched an inquiry to consider a range of issues to evaluate whether the 2011 Ending Gang and Youth Violence programme has been effective and whether it has been implemented adequately.

Priority 4: Safeguard adults and children from abuse and neglect wherever possible, and deal with it appropriately and effectively if it does occur

Implementation of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (House of Lords Select Committee, March 2014): The Act gave significant legal rights to those who may lack the capacity to make decisions, defining the rights of people with learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, senile dementia, brain injury and temporary impairment. The Committee found that:

- The Act was widely acclaimed as a step forward for people who may lack capacity but it has not met the expectations it raised. The rights it creates have not been widely realised and the duties it imposes are not widely followed.
- The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) are not well understood and are poorly implemented.

The Select Committee recommends the setting up of an independent body to oversee implementation of the Act and a review of the DOLS with a view to replacing them.

Adults convicted of acts of [emotional cruelty](#) against [children](#) in their care will face the same threat of jail as those guilty of physical neglect, under new laws being considered by ministers. The change will update existing laws in England and Wales that allow an adult responsible for a child to be prosecuted only if they have deliberately assaulted, abandoned or exposed a child to suffering or injury to their health. The new offence would make it a crime to do anything that deliberately harmed a child's "physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development". Campaigners hope the change in the law will be included in the Queen's Speech in June 2014.

[How safe are our children?](#) (NSPCC, March 2014): The report finds that children's social services are so stretched by financial cutbacks that they can often do little more than respond to emergencies. It also finds:

- An increased willingness to speak out about sexual abuse
- Child protection systems across the UK under immense pressure
- Signs of "rationing" of child protection services: a result of demand outgrowing expenditure
- Compelling evidence for early intervention, despite a considerable rise in reactive spending.

Alan Wood, president of the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and director of children's services in Hackney, responded to the findings saying, "*it is not correct to say that children's social care is effectively an emergency service only, local authorities are working hard to ensure that the needs of their children and families are met, but it is true that services do not look the same as they did in the days of plenty.*" He cited bureaucracy surrounding disparate inspectorates and called for the introduction of an objective, seamless multi-agency inspection model.

[From a distance: looked after children living away from their home area](#) (April 2014): the Ofsted report urges local authorities to improve the care and support given to young people and children placed in care homes remote from their families.

Priority 5: Provide a cleaner, greener environment and safer streets

[Delivering Change: how cities go low carbon while supporting economic growth](#) (LGIU briefing, March 2014): The Centre for Cities [report](#) sets out a framework with case studies to clarify the roles which UK cities can play to reduce CO² emissions while strengthening the local economy. It concludes that:

- a city's ability to reduce its carbon emissions are, in many ways, limited by the parameters of the national agenda
- nevertheless, there are many ways to work towards carbon reduction targets with minimal costs
- the inflexible nature of the current regulatory landscape is a barrier to Urban Development Funds.

Priority 6: Reduce health inequalities and improve wellbeing for all

[Health Committee Report on Public Health England](#) (LGIU briefing): The [Committee](#) is satisfied that some Public Health England (PHE) functions are operating well, but has concerns regarding PHE's policy work, the way in which policy priorities are identified and the nature of PHE's relationship with Government. Of particular interest to local authorities will be:

- misgivings expressed by the Committee that, in relation to emergency preparedness, there is a lack of clarity around the roles of local authorities, PHE's 15 local centres and national bodies
- the Committee's critical conclusions about PHE's production of a report on the health impacts of shale gas extraction (fracking)
- the Committee's views on the priority of the NHS Health Check programme, which is one of the mandatory public health functions of local government
- concerns about the future public health workforce.

[Health Committee Report on Public Expenditure on Health and Social Care](#) (LGIU briefing): The [report](#) includes the strategic commissioning and 'system leadership' role of health and wellbeing boards which the Committee believes should be strengthened. It concludes that:

- the NHS has provided savings during the first two years of the programme, but there is a question about how sustainable they are
- all possible straightforward savings have now been made
- the transformation of care that will be required to make the NHS sustainable in the future and able to deal with increasing demand has yet to take place.

[On the state of the public's health - surveillance report 2012](#) (published March 2014) ([LGIU briefing](#)): The Chief Medical Officer has looked in depth at a number of health issues which face local authorities in their public health role:

- sensory impairment – links with dementia and deprivation
- diet, physical activity and obesity – sugar and fast-food
- liver disease – impact of alcohol
- active travel – risks and benefits.

Blood sugar rush: diabetes time bomb in London: The London Assembly Health Committee reports that children living in the capital are more likely to be obese than elsewhere in England: 12% of 4-5 year olds in London and 22% of 10-11 year olds are at risk of being obese. In both cases, this is higher than the national average. The growth in the number of obese children in London is driving up demand for extreme courses of treatment to manage their obesity.

The role of culture and leisure in improving wellbeing (Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association, April 2014): The report aims to help providers of culture and leisure services in England better demonstrate how culture and leisure can help tackle unhealthy lifestyles, address the social determinants of health, offer creative, cost-effective approaches, and engage communities, families and individuals in activities conducive to wellbeing.

£5bn pooled budget for integrated health and social care: Care and support minister Norman Lamb has confirmed that council and NHS commissioners are to share the pooled budget. Speaking at the School for Social Care Research, he said the government's £3.8bn Better Care Fund will be supplemented by funding from local authorities and clinical commissioning groups, saying that patients don't want to "*feel like they are being pushed from one system to another. They don't make a distinction between health and social care.*"

The Care Quality Commission's (CQC's) plans for future inspections: the Care Quality Commission intends to rate care services as outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate, so that the public has clear information about services. As part of these changes, CQC will explore how its ratings can encourage services to improve and how they can influence the timing of future inspections.

Other plans and priorities in A Fresh Start for Adult Social Care include:

- From April 2015 and subject to the Care Bill becoming law, CQC will monitor the finances of an estimated 50 to 60 care providers that would be difficult to replace if they were to go out of business.
- CQC will take a tougher stance when registering care services by ensuring that those who apply to run them have the right values, motives, ability and experience. Also, CQC is committed to taking tougher action against services that do not have registered managers in place.
- CQC will discuss the risks and potential benefits of mystery shoppers and hidden cameras to monitor care, and whether they could contribute to promoting a culture of safety and quality, while respecting people's privacy and dignity.
- CQC will encourage those providing care in residential homes to explore how they can be involved in the local community and will work with Healthwatch to get its views on care homes locally.

The top ten changes highlighted in the document are:

1. More systematic use of people's views and experiences, including complaints
2. Inspections by expert inspectors, with more experts by experience and specialist advisors
3. Tougher action in response to breaches of regulations, particularly when services are without a registered manager for too long
4. Checking providers who apply to be registered have the right values, motives, ability and experience
5. Ratings to support people's choice of service and drive improvement
6. Frequency of inspection to be based on ratings rather than annually
7. Better data and analysis to help us target our efforts

8. New standards and guidance to underpin the five key questions we ask of services – are they safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led? – with personalisation and choice at their heart
9. Avoiding duplicating activity with Local Authorities
10. Focus on leadership, governance and culture with a different approach for larger and smaller providers

Outcome 3: Opportunities for all

Priority 7: Drive economic growth in which everyone can participate

Second child poverty strategy 2014-2017: The Coalition published its second strategy in February which is subject to consultation until 22 May. Key themes are:

- Helping families escape poverty through work
- Supporting living standards
- Preventing poor children from becoming poor adults
- Working with businesses and local areas

The Child Poverty Act 2010 placed a duty on local authorities in England to reduce child poverty.

Cities, growth and poverty: evidence review (Joseph Rowntree, February 2014): a review of the evidence on the links between growth and poverty in UK cities finds that:

- There is no evidence that rapid economic growth reduces poverty, although wages tend to be higher across the distribution in cities with high levels of output.
- There is a strong link between employment growth and poverty reduction, but the relationship between output growth and employment growth is unclear. High performing cities tend to boost earnings at the higher end of the distribution, and put pressure on living costs which worsens poverty.
- Among the initiatives pursued by cities are Living Wage campaigns, bespoke skills training and employment services targeted at large employment-generating projects. City councils have an important role to play in bringing together strategic partnerships.

Poverty in suburbia: a Smith Institute study into the growth of poverty in the suburbs of England and Wales: Research by the Smith Institute has found that poverty is growing faster on the fringes of cities than anywhere else. Suburban neighbourhoods are home to some seven million people struggling on or below the breadline - nearly six in ten of those considered to be in poverty in England and Wales. The report states that London, Newcastle and Manchester are the cities in which the income gap between inner and outer districts has narrowed significantly. Poverty has climbed in the outer London authorities of Ealing, Brent, Enfield and Croydon.

London: A Tale of Two Cities – Addressing the youth employment challenge (Work Foundation):

- Explores the causes of London's high youth unemployment rate and makes recommendations on how to improve outcomes for young people in London.
- Considers which groups of young people struggle to get into work in London.
- Finds that London's high youth unemployment rate is related to the characteristics of young people living in London, with high levels of poverty and deprivation in the city, particularly amongst some ethnic groups.
- Considers the level of competition for jobs in London and how wider labour market dynamics may impact on young people, and finds that young school leavers are most likely to struggle to compete against other highly mobile and skilled jobseekers.
- Assesses current policy, outlining some current initiatives that aim to support young people into work in London.
- Argues that London lacks a strategic vision for tackling youth unemployment and calls for stronger links between the education system and the labour market, and action to increase the employment rate of young people from ethnic minorities.

- Recommends support for in-work progression to open up entry-level positions and support young people to enter sustainable employment.

Priority 8: Deliver regeneration at priority locations across the Borough

[Making the most of HS2](#) (LGIU briefing): the briefing focuses on:

- [HS2 Plus](#), a review of the project by the new chairman of HS2 Ltd, David Higgins, including his thoughts on the progress made so far, its ongoing development and his plans for the future.
 - [Maximising the growth and benefits of HS2](#), the Growth Taskforce's March 2014 report.
- The reports include consideration of the positive and the challenging potential impacts for London and the South East such as housing, development of workforce skills and employment, and impact on other transport systems and infrastructure.

Priority 9: Ensure that everyone has a decent place to live

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is consulting on:

[Review of local authority role in housing supply](#), seeking ideas, evidence and good practice into how councils can help to increase housing supply.

[Planning performance and planning contributions](#): criteria for identifying under-performing planning authorities and the circumstances in which affordable housing contributions can be sought.

[Tenant Engagement and Welfare Reform](#) (LGIU briefing, March 2014): The LGIU/Mears 2013 report [Strong Foundations: Building better relationships between tenants and landlords](#) looked at the impacts of wide socio-economic developments on registered social landlords (RSLs), as well as the effects of changes to welfare provision. The LGIU briefing provides feedback from a series of roundtable meetings to discuss the challenges within various regional contexts, including:

- The necessity for building different relationships with tenants.
- The evolving role of RSLs encompassing commercial and social aspects.
- The challenge for RSLs to make intelligent and effective use of data to bring about effective engagement with tenants.

[Review of property conditions in the private rented sector](#) (LGIU briefing): Despite the quality of homes in the sector improving overall, there remains a small percentage of landlords and lettings agents whose properties and practices fall below acceptable standards. The LGIU view is that perhaps the most potent suggestion contained in the government discussion paper "[Property conditions in the private rented sector](#)" is that of selective licensing of landlords. This would enable councils to target only the poor landlords in their area either to improve or to leave the sector. Councils could then use their powers to enforce repairs and take over management of those homes.

[English Housing Survey 2012-13](#) (DCLG, April 2014): Following publication of the DCLG survey results in February, an [LGIU briefing](#) notes that:

- Overall, households in the social rented sector (SRS) rarely make the transition to another tenure.
- This is most likely to result from practical barriers, for example, childcare demands may prevent the 16% of lone parent households in the SRS accessing a sufficient full-time salary to be able to afford the higher rental costs in the private sector.
- While there is considerable overcrowding in the SRS, nevertheless a significant proportion of properties are under-occupied.
- The report does not appear to provide sufficient statistical data to explain the issue of supply, for example, it does not state of the range of property sizes required for the overcrowded and under-occupying households.

Outcome 4: A better council

Priority 10: Ensure the whole council works in a customer focussed way

Priority 11: Get the basics right for everyone

Priority 12: Strive for excellent value for money

Challenges faced by the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in supporting local services and developing resilient communities (LGIU briefing): the briefing considers the role VCS organisations play, particularly in collaboration with local authorities.

Universal Credit implementation: Monitoring DWP's performance in 2012-13 (LGIU briefing): The Work & Pensions Committee [report](#) (9 April 2014), assesses some of the implications of the delays in Universal Credit (UC) implementation for claimants, for value achieved for public money, and prospects for more effective delivery of the UC programme. Delays in implementation have important consequences for local authorities with responsibility for the administration of Housing Benefit. Further difficulties have been created for local authorities over the lack of clarity in the funding and purposes of the Local Support Services Framework (LSSF) which is meant to support vulnerable claimants during the transition to the new system.

Support for housing costs in the reformed welfare system (Work & Pensions Committee, 2 April): Among the more important conclusions are that the reforms are impacting severely on the most vulnerable, particularly the disabled, who cannot easily respond by changing their circumstances. Among the more important recommendations is that anybody living in a home that has been significantly adapted for reasons of disability be exempt from the social sector size criteria. It is also recommended that all recipients of Carers Allowance be exempt from the benefit cap, as should occupiers of temporary accommodation, in part because of the high financial burden temporary accommodation places on local authorities.

As of January 2014, 38,600 households had been affected by the cap, 47% in London. Those most likely to be capped were families with several children, and those who live in high rent areas or expensive accommodation (such as temporary accommodation). Almost half of all capped households (47 per cent) have been in London. The Committee heard concerns about the impact on levels of child poverty; Women's Aid expressed concern that women and children attempting to escape abusive situations may be prevented from doing so because exempted accommodation may not be available. It recommended that all refugees be considered exempt.