

<p style="text-align: center;">Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9th May 2017</p>	
<p>Report of: Graham White, Acting Corporate Director Governance</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Youth Service Challenge Session Report</p>	

Originating Officer(s)	James Coumbe, Strategic Performance Manager
Wards affected	All Wards

1. Summary

1.1. This report submits the report and recommendations of the scrutiny challenge session on youth services.

2. Recommendations:

2.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- Agree the draft report and the recommendations.
- Authorise the Divisional Director Strategy, Policy and Performance to amend the draft report if necessary before submission to Cabinet, after consultation with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. The challenge session was carried out in the context of an ongoing consultation on a proposed reorganisation of the Integrated Youth and Community Service (“the youth service”).
- 3.2. The challenge session was prompted by concerns about whether the significant changes made to the youth service (i.e. the interim delivery model put in place from July 2016) and the larger changes to come as a result of service review and reorganisation, adequately address the “lessons learned” from previous shortcomings in service delivery and provide the right service for local young people.
- 3.3. The challenge session aimed to ensure that the future plans for the youth service have properly absorbed “lessons learned” from past work and have explored innovative approaches to achieving desired outcomes. Three main areas of focus during the challenge session were:
 - the resilience of the service,
 - the staffing of the service, and
 - the approach to outreach.
- 3.4. The investigations and reviews carried out by and into the youth service identified a range of practice issues that required addressing. These ranged from very serious allegations of fraud and malpractice to poor communication and engagement of young people in the borough.
- 3.5. A number of these practice issues were discussed during the challenge session in addition to other related topics. The report appended sets out the practice issues, lessons learned, and summary of discussion in relation to them, and recommendations arising from this.

Recommendation 1: The youth service should work with other Council departments, as well as other public and private sector employers, to take best advantage of potential apprenticeships as a means of offering work experience and career opportunities for all youth service users.

Recommendation 2: The youth service to work with the community and voluntary sector to develop a new performance and outcomes framework, that is aligned to the wider directorate and corporate frameworks, that includes activity, input, output, outcome and impact indicators; and which is more nuanced to the communities in which young people live and where youth activity is delivered.

Recommendation 3: The youth service should, as part of its regular consultation activity, ensure that the opinions and preferences of female service users are proactively sought.

Recommendation 4: Following implementation of the youth service’s new organisational model (and within a year) convene a focus group of service users to

assess the impact of changes to the service with a view to them reporting back to Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation 5: The youth service should work with its own internal youth workers, commissioned youth activity providers and independent youth activity providers to produce a joint timetable of youth activity for the benefit of Tower Hamlets' young people.

Recommendation 6: The youth service should ensure that all mainstream and commissioned provision of youth activity and services is appropriately connected, through referral mechanisms and relevant fora, to the services supporting vulnerable children and families e.g. early help services and social care.

Recommendation 7: The youth service should build on the successful pilot of joint-working between the Police, the Council's Rapid Response Team and commissioned providers or Council youth workers, and have a more direct role in the Anti-Social Behaviour tasking group.

Recommendation 8: The youth service should explore alternative funding sources to supplement the existing resources available in order further develop facilities and expand its offer to young people.

4. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

4.1 The youth service has a base budget of £5.8m in 2016/17 and is required to deliver savings of £1.8m in 2017/18 as agreed through the 2017/18 budget approved by Full Council on the 22nd February 2017. The recommendations within this report will need to be delivered in the context of these savings.

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

5.1 The Council is required by section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 to have an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to have executive arrangements that ensure the committee has specified powers. Consistent with this obligation, Article 6 of the Council's Constitution provides that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants and may make reports and recommendations to the Full Council or the Executive in connection with the discharge of any functions. It is consistent with the Constitution and the statutory framework for the Executive to provide a response and it is reasonable for the Committee to be provided with progress updates.

5.2 The recommendations set out in this report is consistent with a number of general duties of the Council. The Council has a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness by virtue of section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999. This is known as its Best Value Duty

- 5.3 Pursuant to section 507B of the Education Act 2006 the Council has a duty to provide facilities for education and recreational leisure time activities for all 13 to 19 year olds and some 20 to 24 year olds. This duty can be achieved either by in-house provision or under contract. The Council also has a duty under section 10 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 to exercise its functions so as to promote the effective participation of young people in its area who are under a duty to be in employment, education or training. The Council must ensure that when making decisions in respect of the design of Youth Services, it continues to comply with these duties.
- 5.4 When deciding whether or not to proceed with these decisions Cabinet must also have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristics and those who do not (the public sector duty). This must consider both the impact on service users, as well as the impact on staff.

6. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The focus of this review has been to ensure a good quality service for all young people in the borough. The recommendations note the need to ensure user feedback is sought and used to ensure that the service offer is appropriate for all users, and makes particular reference to the needs of female service users being addressed more actively.

7. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The recommendations in this report are made as part of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's role in helping to secure continuous improvement for the council, as required under its Best Value duty.

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 8.1 There are no direct sustainable actions for greener environment arising from this report.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from the report or recommendations.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The report considers the interface between the youth service and anti-social behavior and makes recommendations for how the service can support efforts to reduce ASB.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Youth Services Challenge Session Report

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- These must be sent to Democratic Services with the report