

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.30 P.M. ON THURSDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2023

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL

Members Present in Person:

Councillor Bodrul Choudhury
Councillor Abdul Wahid
Councillor Ana Miah
Councillor Leelu Ahmed

Members In Attendance Virtually:

Councillor Amina Ali

Apologies:

Councillor Shahaveer Shubo
Hussain
Dr Phillip Rice Church of England Representative
Abena Adeji
Ashraf Zaman
Nafisa Ahmed

Officers Present in Person:

Katie Cole (Associate Director of Public Health)
Filuck Miah (Strategy and Policy Officer, Strategy, Improvement
and Transformation Service)
Sumaira Tayyab Public Health Programme Manager
Justina Bridgeman Democratic Services Officer (Committee)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Shubo Hussain, Dr Phillip Rice, Church of England Representative, Ashraf Zaman and Abena Adeji, Parent Governor Representatives.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Sub Committee meeting held on 8 December 2022 were approved as a correct record of proceedings.

4. CESSC ACTION LOG

The action log was circulated for attendees.

5. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.1 Youth Provision

Councillor Maium Talukdar, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education introduced Susannah Beasley-Murray, Director of Supporting Families and Kelly Duggan, Head of Youth Justice and Young Peoples Services, who gave a brief overview of the youth provision current and proposed offer, then invited the sub committee to discuss how improvements can be made.

The presentation included three main components of the proposed service, the key deliverables in achieving this, desired timescales from March 2023 until January 2024, and details of when the workforce model will be in operation. Representatives of Osmani Trust were also in attendance and discussed how the girls youth club has made a positive impact in supporting approximately 148 young women in the borough so far this year.

Further to questions from the sub committee, Susanna Beasley-Murray and Kelly Duggan;

- Clarified that the demographic breakdown of 70/30 relates to commissioned work undertaken. Young residents and families are encouraged to participate in youth clubs in the borough.
- Explained that self-referral forms are available on-line, and referrals are received from schools. The Family Hub Project also promotes the service and engagement is ongoing regarding new ways to publicise and alleviate family safety concerns. Consideration will be given to an app throughout the communication group workstream process.
- Noted that a Girls Leadership Programme has been established to recruit secondary school age young girls to the service, and partners also provide youth provision within Tower Hamlets.
- Clarified that details of ethnic categories are provided by the children who self-define their ethnicity when completing the registration form. This ensures accurate data is provided. At this time data from four Somali providers is pending. An update will be provided to the sub committee once received.

- Noted that ensuring the right staff are recruited to work with young people is paramount to the youth provision service, as is breaking down issues with 'postcode conflicts' in neighbouring areas. This will promote community safety with assistance from the Integrated Detached team service and Exploitation Awareness staff.
- Explained that this model differs from the former Rapid Response team, as more integration with other aspects of children's services using a modern streamlined approach will be taken. Consideration will be given to weekend provision of the service in specific areas with assistance from schools.
- Clarified that there is a dedicated work stream for finance and quality assurance to ensure the budget is spent and governance is documented robustly. This is an improved version using lessons learnt and best practice from the previous in-house model and will be in line with youth work national standards.
- Noted that borough residents have requested further investment in safe and diverse youth provision, to combat increased crime within the borough. Stringent monitoring and KPI's will be implemented and scrutiny by the sub committee is welcomed to ensure high standards are maintained.
- Clarified that an update on staff turnover figures will be provided to the sub committee. A development workstream has been established to deal with training and retention, to guarantee the right managers are in place to support frontline staff and safeguard children.
- Explained that there are risks with changing the current staffing model and incremental changes with sustained engagement are preferred. The commissioned services and voluntary sector are committed in providing quality provision to the residents.

RESOLVED that

1. An update on the background and ethnicity of children using the service will be provided to the sub committee.
2. An update on the staff turnover figures will be provided to the sub committee.
3. That the presentation be noted.

5.2 Safe East School Health Service

Katie Cole, Associate Director of Public Health for Children and Families and Sumaira Tayyab, Programme Lead, Children and Adolescence, gave a brief

overview of the children aged 5-19 and adolescents public health programmes. The presentation focused primarily on the School Health and Wellbeing Service, which is delivered by the GP Care Group and Integrated Young People's Health and Wellbeing Service (Safe East).

Further to questions from the sub committee, Katie Cole:

- Clarified that a joint strategy needs assessment is one of the methods used to reduce inequalities children face in the borough. The current challenge is accessing effective data which records ethnicity for accurate analysis, as not all health service partners keep this type of data.
- Noted that a BAME inequalities workstream is in development to increase the data and diversity within the workforce to mirror the community. An apprenticeship scheme has been introduced, and new public health posts have been filled by staff living in the borough.
- Explained how the 'Healthy Weight for Tower Hamlets' initiative, looks at the environmental and community factors leading to child obesity and the ways families can improve the food consumed on a community level.
- Clarified that many families found correspondence informing them that their children were overweight did not give enough clarity. After discussions with families, a culturally appropriate toolkit is now used to effectively engage with parents and modifying the programme, leads to a more streamlined approach to the service.
- Explained that further work with children and young people has been adapted for additional health and wellbeing support. Details of the uptake of Safer East outreach sessions will be brought to the sub committee outside of this meeting,
- Clarified that consideration is required by the school's health services and partners to support children's mental health. The 'Tower Hamlets Together' programme details comprehensive work around reducing inequalities between ethnic groups and other subsections. Further details on the programme can be submitted to the Sub Committee outside of this meeting, as these are monitored quarterly.
- Noted that additional funding has been given to the free school meals improvement programme, currently in development.
- Explained that there is a shortage of school nurses, and a national recruitment drive is in progress to increase and retain staff across the country. Work around North East London is currently taking

place to create training opportunities and career progression for the sector.

- Clarified how the youth centres promote the service via posters, word of mouth referrals and visits schools within the borough during assemblies and through social media. One of the core values lies in enabling young people to be positive around their mental and physical health and wellbeing.

RESOLVED that

1. The uptake level figures of Safer East outreach sessions will be brought to the sub committee outside of this meeting.
2. Further details on the Tower Hamlets Together Programme can be submitted to the Sub Committee outside of this meeting.
3. The presentation be noted.

5.3 Challenge Session Report: Increasing women and girls access and participation with sports provision and physical activities in the borough

The Chair introduced the report findings and recommendations held in November 2022 for the sub committee. The following were considered;

- Key barriers that's stopping women and girls from taking up on sustaining access to sports provision and physical activities in the borough.
- Key challenges that the Council and its partners face in increasing woman and girl access to sports provision, physical activities in the borough.
- Policy solutions needed to address the challenge and have a positive impact. Who needs to be involved? How do we need to approach this?

After consideration the sub committee **APPROVED** the six recommendations:

- Community Engagement
Using the co-design framework, the Council's Sports and Physical Activity Service (CSPAS) will set up a steering group to engage women and girls on their needs for accessing sports provision and physical activities.
- Affordability
CSPAS should work in partnership with the borough's sport delivery

partners, Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and grass root sports to ensure that access and participation in sports provision and physical activities is both affordable and is actively encouraged to women and girls.

- Campaign and Publicity
CSPAS should consult the Council's Corporate Communication Service alongside partners' comms services to positively promote women's sports provision and physical activities borough wide.
- Female Friendly Infrastructure
CSPAS will collaborate with key partners to develop dedicated female friendly infrastructure and includes location, timetable of facilities, build in competitions and develop scope for employment and training pathways for females to work in the fitness sector.
- Quality Monitoring, Intelligence Capture and Audit
CSPAS will develop robust systems to capture and measure key diversity, equality and usage performance information across all provisions for women and girls. Monitoring should also include, policy reviews, mystery shopping and pulse audits to ensure that the sports provision is relevant, and sustainable.
- Women and Girls Safe Routes to Sports Provision and Physical Activities
CSPAS will use the feedback from women and girl (on safe routes to sports venues) and engage and work with key partners such as Transport for London public realm and regeneration, to ensure that any policy or access redesign takes on board and reflects the views women and girls.

RESOLVED that

1. The Challenge Session recommendations be approved and noted.

6. ANY OTHER UNRESTRICTED BUSINESS CONSIDERED TO BE URGENT

None.

The meeting ended at 8.10 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Bodrul Choudhury

Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee