

Report of the public consultation on the Hackney Council Single Equality Scheme 2018-21

Executive summary

Introduction

The public consultation on the Hackney Council Single Equality Scheme took place between 25 July and 30 September 2018. This was preceded by a 'soft consultation' with representatives of voluntary and community organisations which took place during May and June 2018.

Online survey

Residents, staff, those working and owning businesses in the London Borough of Hackney were invited to complete an online survey, 35 responses were received. The findings from the online survey are outlined in Section 1 of this report.

Resident focus groups

In addition, three resident focus groups were held:

- Generic focus group, open to all residents attracting 11 participants;
- A focus group for people who are trans and non-binary, attracting 4 participants;
- A focus group for social housing tenants, attracting 6 participants;
- A focus group for people with learning difficulties (this was held on 17 October, just outside the timeframe of the official consultation to accommodate the needs of this client group)

A summary of the discussions each of the focus groups can be found in Section 2 of this report.

Co-production workshops for representatives of voluntary and community organisations

Prior to the public consultation, we organised a series of co-production workshops with representatives of voluntary and community organisations in different parts of the borough including:

- A workshop in Stamford Hill, attracting 3 participants;
- A workshop in Hackney Town Hall, attracting 7 participants;
- A workshop in Shoreditch, attracting 13 participants.

A summary of the discussion at each of these workshops can be found in Section 3 of this report.

It should be noted that the Single Equality Scheme has been developed on the basis of extensive desk research and statistical analysis as well as on-going dialogue with residents and voluntary and community organisations including Hackney A Place for Everyone - a major engagement exercise undertaken by the Council in 2015.

The Key findings section below brings together the main messages coming out of the consultation overall.

Key findings

Comments on the way the scheme has been developed and presented

Use of jargon and inaccessible language

Several respondents commented about the use of jargon and inaccessible language in the document. Even the idea of a "scheme" is not a familiar concept.

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Our response:

In the final draft, we have reviewed all sections, and edited to avoid jargon and inaccessible language. We will adopt a glossary in the final designed version which is published online.

Use of gender as a more inclusive term

There was some debate about the use of the term 'gender' – clarification was sought as to how 'gender' is more inclusive than 'sex'.

Our response:

Further explanation and clarification has been added as to why we, at times, use gender as a more inclusive term, particularly with consideration to non binary and intersex people. However we have also amended the Scheme to refer to sex and gender when appropriate.

Language used in relation to the Charedi community

One respondent found the language used in relation to the Charedi community more negative than for other communities.

Our response:

We have reviewed the section referring to health and economic inequalities in the Charedi community and compared it to sections which consider inequalities for other communities. We have made a few amendments in the paragraph about health inequalities to make the language more sensitive. However, overall, this section uses the same neutral language to articulate inequalities as is used in other sections.

Approaches to prioritisation and resource allocation

Participants in the voluntary and community sector workshops in particular felt the Council needed to have a more honest discussion with residents and staff, so they could better understand why certain approaches are being taken and have a more realistic sense of what is feasible under the current financial circumstances. One resident suggested that giving people more of a say in resource allocation and policymaking might help create a better sense of togetherness. The Women's Equality Party advocated a gender based approach to Council budgeting, to establish the different ways policies impacted men and women. There were also some views that more detail was needed on implementation and budgets for the scheme.

Our response:

The Scheme already includes an explanation of how it will be implemented:

Over the next four years, the Scheme will be used in two ways. Firstly, the Scheme, and the evidence base which has been developed to inform it, will be used to help sharpen our focus on equality as we develop and adopt future plans and strategies. Secondly, the objectives and outline actions in this Scheme will be developed further into a detailed action plan. The Scheme will replace the current one which has been in place since 2013.

As the Scheme sets out what can be delivered within existing mainstream Council budgets, not specific budgets are attached to the implementation. It would not be possible to disaggregate these costs.

Borough wide issues raised in consultation

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Housing

There was widespread concern about the lack of genuinely affordable housing and its impact on community cohesion, inequality and economic deprivation in the borough. Several respondents pointed out that this was impacting on households on middle, as well as low incomes, those with, and without children. There was concern that young people having to move away would increase the loneliness and isolation of older residents. There were views that, by approving certain schemes, the Council was encouraging gentrification.

Our response:

These concerns are already reflected in the Single Equality Scheme and full details of the Housing Strategy are provided to show what the Council is doing to respond to the widespread housing inequalities in the borough.

Poverty

There was support for and recognition of the need to support people who are long-term unemployed especially disabled people – including those with invisible impairments like mental health, young people and lone parents. Respondents also recognised that many of those in poverty are now in work and that more needs to be done to help people in low-skilled jobs to progress to better paid work, through quality apprenticeships for people of all ages, and access to adult education. Our response:

There are already sections in the Single Equality Scheme which focus on employment, particularly for disabled people and for poverty reduction.

Crime

Several respondents were concerned about crimes such as drug dealing and bike theft taking place in the open. There was concern that these were going unchallenged and unsolved, possibly due to Police cuts. There was a request that anti-semitism specifically was referenced.

Participants in the Learning Difficulties workshop talked about being ‘picked on’ especially when visiting neighbouring boroughs.

Our response:

Concerns about levels of crime, and the actions needed are already included within the plan. A specific reference to antisemitism has been included in Objective 3 in the existing section on Hate Crime.

Business

Respondents believed the Council could do more to encourage businesses to grow, e.g. by providing rent/rate relief and enabling local workers and young people to develop vocational skills. Some felt the Council could do more to encourage Hackney-based businesses to employ local people, especially non-white and older residents and to discourage practices like poor quality apprenticeships, low pay and zero hours contracts. Others especially those with learning difficulties highlighted the negative impact of cuts to bus services on their ability to access quality employment, shopping facilities, leisure and social activities.

Several residents pointed to a lack of shops selling affordable, healthy food in their area.

Our response:

There is already extensive reference to inclusive growth and employment which addresses these issues. Accessible transport routes are also referenced. A specific reference to concerns about the lack of shops selling affordable healthy food has been added.

Jobcentre Plus now regularly attend the Learning Difficulties Partnership Forum to ensure staff are fully aware of the needs of people with learning difficulties in accessing benefits and employment opportunities. The Council also has a specialist team to support employment of disabled people in the Council and beyond.

We will ensure that the needs of people with learning difficulties are fully aware of the range of advice provision available in the borough.

Transport

Several respondents to the survey and residents attending the workshop for people with learning difficulties highlighted the negative impact of cuts to bus services on their ability to access quality employment, shopping facilities, leisure and social activities.

Education

Respondents recognised the importance of affordable, accessible childcare as a way of helping children progress and parents to access work. A number of respondents raised concerns about proposed cuts to Special Educational Needs funding. Respondents also believed more attention should be paid to post 16 education for young disabled people. Residents who attended the workshop for trans and non-binary residents were concerned about the lack of support for trans pupils in secondary and further education. There was also concern about the high level of exclusions and the lack of accountability of academies.

Our response:

Child care is referenced in the Scheme. We have added an action to “Look further into equality and access issues in education for disabled people who are 16 +.” A more detailed section has been added on LGBT equality which includes a more rounded consideration of the issues in the schools setting. A section on Age focusing on Children and Young People has been added which refers to exclusions and behaviour management.

Community cohesion

Positivity about initiatives which enabled different communities to mix

Respondents tended to emphasise and support initiatives which enabled different communities to mix and which tackled loneliness and social isolation, such as Hackney Carnival, Bike Around the Borough and Playstreets. Some expressed support for increased taxation to support community services.

Our response:

The Council is committed to maintaining these types of events and a commitment has been added in Objective 3 to reference these types of community events.

Views about the cultural offer

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Festivals such as Black History month tended to focus on the Caribbean diaspora, rather than the wider black experience. Other respondents believed that characteristics like faith, disability and gender should feature more in the Council's cultural offer.

Our response:

There is a commitment in the scheme to "Deliver a communications campaign and cultural offer, aimed at staff and residents, which sets out our commitment to equality and cohesion and the actions we will take." Through this route, these observations will be fed back to those responsible for the cultural offer.

Enabling communities to run activities

There was some discussion in focus groups about how the Council could better enable communities to run activities in their communities, making it easier to hire space and run activities. Not all activities needed grant funding, and this could seem like the only route to securing support from the Council.

Our response:

A set of actions in Objective 3 has been added called "Making it easier for residents to contribute to community life and run activities in their local area." This includes developing our understanding of the sorts of informal social and community networks which are active in the borough, and also actions to make it easier for residents to run local activities and to volunteer.

Tackling key inequalities

Concerns about targeted work

There was some antipathy towards initiatives aimed at specific groups such as Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men. Others felt there was an over-emphasis on the LGBT community and one respondent felt that members of the Orthodox Jewish community were receiving preferential treatment and that this would lead to tensions. Some felt activities such as these increased division, there was even a perception that initiatives such as this was causing disadvantage for young white boys.

Our response:

The decision to undertake targeted work is based on there being clear evidence of complex inequalities which are unlikely to be addressed through a mainstream approach. So if we want to make Hackney a fairer, more equal borough, we have to put focused effort into tackling inequalities in specific communities. Furthermore, it is a requirement of the Public Sector Equality Duty to take proactive actions to advance equality for groups disadvantaged by their protected characteristic. Under Objective 2 of the Scheme, we identify the key inequalities, where targeted work is needed. The educational inequalities experienced by young white boys are specifically identified and in this case, the learning from the Young Black Men Programme will mean that we are better able to address the inequalities for this group. Targeted work does not mean that certain groups are unfairly receiving a greater share of resource or dedicated activities. For example, the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme is looking at issues in a focused way, but many of the improvements identified will be put in place in universal services, which everyone can access. The Spirit Level research clearly demonstrates that more equal societies are better for everyone, so ultimately tackling specific inequalities will benefit all communities. We have amended the

commentary under Objective 2 to add further explanation of what we are trying to achieve in this Objective.

The needs of smaller ethnic groups

Several respondents pointed to imbalances between communities in terms of political influence. For example, some smaller ethnic communities such as the Phillipino community tend to get overlooked.

Our response:

Political influence does not play a part in the way community needs are identified. After the last Census in 2011, the Policy and Insight team of Hackney Council undertook a detailed analysis of the community to identify all communities with significant populations in the borough. More recently, research was carried out into the needs of vulnerable migrants, considering those who were from ethnic groups that might have been overlooked. However we take on board the feedback about the Phillipino community and have added a commitment to continue to understand the needs of smaller communities that may face specific inequalities.

The needs of LGBT residents

The focus group with trans and non binary residents highlighted that the key inequalities for LGBT residents which were included in the draft scheme were quite limited.

Our response:

We have expanded on this section and on the actions we will take, drawing on the recently published Government's national LGBT Action Plan and Survey.

Gender inclusive facilities

There was some debate about the Council's attitude towards gender-inclusive facilities. A number of respondents were concerned about a negative impact on the privacy, safety and dignity of women. On the other hand, people have highlighted that where toilets and changing cubicles were single use, there was no need to designate them to men and women.

Our response:

The Council does not have a clearly adopted position on gender inclusive (or gender neutral) facilities. There is a corporate commitment within the Equality Scheme to develop a corporate position on trans and non binary inclusive facilities. This does not mean moving towards gender inclusive facilities (or gender neutral) facilities as a default. No position has, as yet, been adopted, and we will take on board the feedback from the Single Equality Scheme consultation. We will ensure that the privacy, safety and dignity of all groups is fully taken into account.

Disabled people

There were views throughout, that disabled people faced key inequalities. References were made to concerns about special educational needs cuts. The need for good employment support was stressed. **People with Learning Difficulties highlighted the need for support when applying for benefits and stressed the need for paid employment, rather than volunteering opportunities.**

The health needs of disabled people were highlighted including "co-morbidity." The importance of meeting the needs of those with learning difficulties was emphasised.

Participants in the workshop for people with Learning Difficulties called for more inflation to be available in Easy Read and large print. Participants had experienced difficulties accessing Council services such as parking permits online.

Our response:

The Scheme already identifies and considers these key health inequalities.

The Learning Difficulties Partnership forum has been established to improve dialogue between people with learning difficulties, council and other services to resolve any difficulties people with learning difficulties have in accessing these services.

Age

There were views throughout that the specific needs of older people were not adequately addressed, including those relating to employment and loneliness and isolation.

Our response:

A new section has been added in Objective 2, under “Age” which fully considered equality issues for older people.

Young people

There was concern about the lack of suitable activities for young people. Residents in particular felt the Council could do more to publicise available activities and opportunities, e.g. holiday work, but also that the Council needed do more to help communities deliver their own activities for young people and the wider community. There were also calls for more activities for young people aged 16-25.

Our response:

A section in Objective 2, under “Age” has been added that considers inequalities for children and young people. This considers what we do in relation to education and youth provision.

A set of actions in Objective 3 has been added called “Making it easier for residents to contribute to community life and run activities in their local area.” This includes developing our understanding of the sorts of informal social and community networks which are active in the borough, and also actions to make it easier for residents to run local activities and to volunteer.

Institutional issues within the Council

Inequality and discrimination in the Council

A number of respondents believed the Council should deal with inequality and discrimination within its own organisation and workforce.

Our response:

The second enabling objective in the Scheme, “Promoting a culture of inclusive leadership” addresses workforce equality issues.

1.0 Online Resident Survey

Some 35 responses were received to the online survey, of which:

- 30 were Hackney residents;
- 9 worked for Hackney Council;
- 8 were representatives of local voluntary and community organisations;
- one worked for a Hackney-based business; and
- 4 owned businesses within the borough.

(Respondents were able to select more than one answer)

Respondents were asked to state whether they thought the issues and actions outlined in the Single Equality Scheme overall, and each of its five objectives were the right ones, if there were any additional issues they thought should be dealt with and if any other groups should be prioritised.

The majority of respondents felt that the issues and actions outlined in the scheme overall and its various sections were the right ones (positive responses ranged from 71-57%). The table below summarises these responses for the Single Equality Scheme overall and for each objective.

In addition, a range of suggestions were advanced for additional action – which are outlined in more detail under each objective.

Most respondents made the bulk of their comments in relation to the Single Equality Scheme overall, summarised in Section 1.1, and under the first objective, summarised in Section 1.2, so responses to Objectives 2 and 3 and Enabling Objectives 1 and 2, Sections 1.3 to 1.6, tend to be more fragmented.

1.1 The Single Equality Scheme overall

Overall 25 of the 35 respondents, 71.4%, felt that the issues and actions outlined in the scheme were the right ones, however 7 respondents disagreed and 3 were unsure.

Respondents were asked to suggest whether they felt anything was missing or should be given more consideration – 24 respondents suggested areas of potential omission and 26 suggested additional actions. Their responses are summarised below.

What is missing?

The document overall

Several respondents commented on the accessibility of the language used in the document – they felt the use of jargon was not inclusive. One respondent felt language used in relation to the Cheredhi community was more negative than that used for other communities.

The Women's Equality Party called for the use of hyperlinks, as opposed to referencing to aid readability and ensure source material can be accessed quickly.

A couple of respondents wanted to see more detail on how the actions would be implemented.

The Women's Equality Party suggested statistics are disaggregated by gender and that all objectives and actions are costed and SMART. Hyperlinks should be embedded, rather than references.

All statistics should be disaggregated by sex so the impact on women could be understood.

They were concerned that there was no mention of how the Council's budget will be allocated across the different objectives and ambitious actions. They advocated the adoption of a Gender Responsive Budgeting approach more details at [here](#).

The consultation process

The Consultation was not in accessible formats/community languages.

Need to involve people before making decisions, felt that politicians speak without any real understanding of community need.

Housing

Four respondents mentioned the high cost of housing, one also mentioned commercial rents. One respondent felt the Council was fuelling inequality by approving high cost new-build housing, another felt the Council was 'overpopulating the borough with young professionals, driving others out', another wanted to see more action to tackle homelessness and addiction, another wanted to see more key worker housing in the area. Another felt that single people without children were being sidelined, another raised a similar point with reference to non-white single people.

Poverty

A number of respondents stressed the importance of addressing the needs of people on moderate incomes, including single people. One respondent pointed out that, as a teacher on a moderate income living in the Private Rented Sector, they expected to have to move out of the borough eventually. Another respondent wanted to see more emphasis on reducing poverty among families with young children from all backgrounds. Another was concerned that the introduction of Universal Credit would put increased pressure on services.

Education

Three respondents mentioned cuts to Special Educational Needs funding and how this can lead to discrimination and disadvantage later in life. One respondent raised concerns about support for young disabled people in post 16 education. They felt admissions policies of sixth forms were putting up unrealistic barriers for young disabled people.

One respondent (a teacher) believed that looked after children and those with SEND should be able to access 30 hours of free pre-school care, rather than 15.

One respondent expressed concern about the lack of accountability of academies.

Vocational education

A number of respondents stressed the importance of vocational training and adult education in helping local people advance into higher skilled/higher paid jobs. One respondent stressed the need for people to be taught practical skills like book-keeping, to help businesses grow, and that available courses should reflect the jobs that are on offer. Another respondent highlighted the need for leisure and employment support for young people post 16. Another felt that children should be taught about money management and economics.

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Crime

A number of respondents mentioned the prevalence of crime, open drug dealing and fear of reporting crime. Cuts to police numbers were blamed by some. One felt a New York-style 'broken window' policy was needed, another felt the Council needed to be more courageous in challenging groups who undermine the wellbeing of others. Another respondent was particularly concerned about safety at their local park.

Integration and community cohesion

Several respondents noted a lack of opportunity for different communities to mix. One felt that this did not happen (other than at primary schools). Another felt that bringing residents together to have more of a say on Council policy and how resources are used would help bring communities together. Another believed that residents needed to believe that there would be real change, and should be empowered to make change happen.

One respondent noted the disappearance of free activities for young families, which would help address social isolation.

A further respondent observed that some ethnic communities, such as the Philipino community seem to get little attention from authorities and the voluntary and community sector, despite being of an equal size to groups like the Somali community. They felt the Council should do more to seek out, and engage with these communities by looking at the Census, electoral register and School Census.

Another respondent pointed out that Black History events tend to focus on the Caribbean community, rather than the wider black community.

Another felt that intersectional issues affecting the black community, such as race and sexuality, should be given more attention.

One respondent felt the Council should deal with discrimination within its own organisation first, another mentioned the need for the Council's management structure to reflect the wider community.

A further respondent felt that the use of terms like 'gentrification' and 'white privilege' was driving inequality and that organising specific workshops for BME staff as part of the Think Inclusive programme gave the impression that 'some were more equal than others'. They also felt that programmes like Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men were creating disadvantage among white children. They felt equality of opportunity should be offered, but it was not possible to achieve equality of outcome.

Another respondent believed that some communities were using arguments about discrimination to drive others out and felt the Council should be more courageous in standing up to elements who 'undermine the lives of others'.

Gender

Two respondents commented on the use of the term 'gender' rather than 'sex' in the document and stressed the need to highlight the concerns and rights of biological women. They sought clarification as to how the use of the term 'gender' is more inclusive than 'sex'. They stressed the need to uphold the privacy, dignity and safety of women, and urged the Council to push back against groups of trans-identifying men lobbying for access to single sex facilities. These issues relate to a wide range

of public services including refuges, prisons, care homes, leisure facilities as well as Council offices generally. They felt that unisex toilets should not become the norm in Council buildings, rather single sex facilities should be available in all buildings, with unisex facilities available to those who require them. Staff who raise concerns about these issues/refuse to use mixed facilities should not be victimised.

However, another respondent called for more understanding of the needs of residents who are non-binary and intersex when delivering services.

One participant requested online involvement in meetings, to facilitate the involvement of working mothers.

The Women's Equality Party stressed the need for more attention to the needs of lone parents – not just in employment but service provision, given their prevalence in the borough.

They encourage the council to review best practice and innovative initiatives undertaken in other boroughs.

Disability

One respondent felt there were too few proactive proposals for disabled people, especially those with learning difficulties.

1.2 Objective 1: Increasing Prosperity for All

Some 60% of respondents, 21 people, felt the priorities and actions outlined under this objective were the right ones, 34% of respondents, 12 people, disagreed, and a further 2 were unsure.

Twenty three respondents commented when asked to suggest additional activities, and 22 suggested groups to which activities should be targeted. Their responses are summarised below.

Council staff

One respondent felt Council staff needed better training on equality issues.

Employment

One respondent felt there was a lack of good quality jobs locally, but cuts to bus services were making it harder to travel to opportunities elsewhere. Cycling was not a satisfactory alternative for most. New start-ups should be encouraged to employ local people, particularly those from non-white communities and the over 40's. They also urged the Council to promote flexible working to other employers. The Women's Equality Party believe this should be a default position for all roles.

Another respondent wanted the Council to reduce ground rent and business rates to support local businesses. Another thought the Council could support businesses to set up apprenticeship programmes.

A further respondent pointed out that the Council should discourage zero hours working, as it is not sustainable for people who cannot access benefits.

Others mentioned the need to support people with mental health problems, non-white people, long term unemployed and disabled people into work.

An additional respondent felt that working people who may not be entitled to benefits were often the worst off and most vulnerable to social isolation and mental illness. Another suggested more support with benefits.

Another suggested while there should be equality of opportunity, there would never be equality of outcomes as people have different abilities

Parenting

One respondent suggested the Council levy a small tax on working people to help fund free childcare. This could be linked to inter-generational issues like childcare in old people's homes.

The Women's Equality Party would like to see the Council promote family in all its forms in all the literature it publishes. They want to see the Council enact policies which encourage shared parental responsibility by providing gender neutral baby changing facilities. They want to see Local Economic Partnerships help firms with the costs of setting up remote working and assisting them in developing high-quality returnship programmes.

Those with no recourse to public funds

One respondent was concerned that undocumented migrants, those affected by the 'Windrush Scandal' and those with no access to public funds should not miss out on the activities proposed.

Education

Need to tackle antisocial behaviour and enviro-crime with education.

Housing

A number of respondents stressed again the impact of high rents as a driver of poverty and inequality and the need for more affordable housing.

Another mentioned homeless people in Hackney Central and the need for intervention on drug, alcohol and mental health issues.

A further respondent felt the Council should end its use of bailiffs who impact disproportionately on vulnerable residents.

The Women's Equality Party wished to see a definition of housing affordability which took account of wage differentiation including gender/race/disability pay-gaps. They suggested the Council feature concerns of women more prominently in its Better Renting campaign and prioritise single parents for new Council housing.

1.3 Tackling disadvantage and discrimination

Over half of respondents, 57.4%, 20 people, said they thought the objectives and actions under this priority were the right ones, but 10 respondents, 28.1% disagreed. The remaining 5 respondents were unsure.

Some 25 respondents suggested additional actions and 17 commented on additional groups whose needs should be addressed. Their responses are summarised below.

Sexual orientation

One respondent said there should be more emphasis on low level harassment, as well as more consideration of the needs of older and disabled LGBT people and transgender issues.

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Religion

One respondent asked whether any consideration had been given to Antisemitism?

Age

No mention of provision for older and lonely residents in Hackney.

Disability

One respondent felt the Council's supported employment service was being run dismally by untrained staff. Those with support needs are being overlooked especially those with invisible impairments.

Two respondents felt that young disabled people, especially those from BME backgrounds were at high risk of exclusion.

Ethnicity

One respondent commented that Turkish should be a specific category on Council/School equality monitoring forms to enable the Turkish community to effectively self-identify. They felt that Turkish-speaking disabled children would be particularly impacted by the proposed SEND cuts. A further respondent felt the Council should pay more attention to the needs of the Turkish/Kurdish community across the board and suggested the Council adopt a similar approach to the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men programme.

Another respondent stressed the need to improve employment opportunities for young disabled people from BME backgrounds more generally.

Another stressed the importance of engaging more deprived communities through education and community activity to prevent Antisocial Behaviour and Envirocrime.

Another respondent said that public bodies should undergo mandatory equality training so they understand the needs of Hackney's diverse communities.

A further respondent believed the Council should improve the ethnic mix of Hackney's workforce at management level. Another respondent wished to see racism tackled within the Council.

Another felt the Council should improve the collection of data on smaller ethnic groups and improving services accordingly e.g.

- Analysing Census data
- Analysing data on the electoral register (citizenship is recorded)
- Asking service users to give their birth as part of equality monitoring

And use this data to develop an audit of communities living in Hackney, explore which are not represented in VCS/advocacy services.

At least two respondents said that separating young black men and young white people was not helpful. They felt a policy which joins both would be useful. Concern that this is identity politics which promotes division. They would prefer to see a programme tackling inequalities for young/old people as a whole, rather than singling out a particular ethnic group.

Also the attention to Cheredhi community was felt to be disproportionate. Should this come under a more general section on race?

Another felt that language used for the Cheredhi community was felt to be noticeably more negative than other ethnic groups.

Others observed that the section on ethnicity was longer than for other equality groups and felt this was disproportionate.

Another respondent stressed the need to tackle racism within the Council.

Community cohesion

One resident prioritised the need to support the formation of new resident groups. Supporting those with mental health needs.

Another felt that providing more cultural events would bridge the gap between culture/class.

One respondent felt some groups used protected status to defend their own discriminatory and intimidating behaviour. This must be countered by the Council.

Another called for more Police, and stressed the need to tackle noise pollution.

Gender

One respondent felt we need to consider tackling impact of violence against men – 78% of all violent crime targeted at men. (Also claims 40% of all domestic violence victims male).

A further respondent highlighted the link between the availability of childcare and disadvantage experienced by women.

The Women's Equality Party responded that:

- Female health should be included as a priority area of health inequality.
- Protect and fund effective community and voluntary organisations to provide specialist health services, such as cervical screening clinics for survivors of sexual violence;
- Reverse cuts to specialist sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, extend the ring-fencing of the public health budget beyond 2019-20 and plan further services by need; reintegrating sexual health, reproductive health and HIV services that have been carved up since the Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Physical disability also includes disability as a result of health comorbidities. Clarification sought on the council's definition of disability;
- Concern about proposed 5% cuts to the Council's SEND budget and their impact on women as parents and carers;
- Include recent statistics on domestic violence, and sexual violence and harassment of women and girls in public places - both from official police records and community perception surveys of street safety, as well as clarification on extent to which survivors of domestic violence in Hackney are able to access refuges and temporary accommodation;
- Broaden areas of sexual assaults to include homeless women / day time etc;
- Asked for clarification on extent prevention and response services are meeting the needs of Hackney's residents

- Adopt the Mayor of London's Women's Night Safety Charter, which works across the four pillars of reporting, responding, responsibility and redesigning public spaces and work places to prevent and respond to street harassment;
- Gender identity and sexual orientation: It is important to include local data on gender and sexual identity as this is a key area for discrimination;
- The Key Actions listed are extremely weak and don't include any specific provisions for female victims of rape;
- Hackney must work to promote a positive portrayal of women which challenges gender stereotypes, including:
 - Include and report on gender as a dimension of hate crime data in the same way that is already done for race, disability, sexual orientation, religion and sexual identity;
 - Require local social media companies adhere to the recommendations set out by the Home Affairs Committee to respond to online hate crimes, particularly when gender based;
 - Require local advertising agencies refrain from using hyper-sexualised imagery that promotes a distorted version of the female body, as well as imagery that promotes violence against women;
 - Promote the use of varying female sample sizes within the local fashion industry;
 - Challenge local reporting that minimises sexual violence and/or blames victims and to promote female positive stories;
 - Deliver a communications campaign aimed at council staff and residents that sets out Hackney's commitment to challenging gender stereotypes and a negative/sexualised portrayal of women in the media. For example, the council could build on the campaign to promote the best female leaders within the borough, across employment sectors;

Age

One respondent felt the Council should enable more over 65's to access employment opportunities to improve health and wellbeing.

1.4 Cohesive and Inclusive borough

As for Objective 2, 57.4% of respondents, 20 people agreed that this was the correct priority, 10 people 28.6% disagreed, three were unsure and two did not answer.

Some 22 people suggested additional actions and 16 suggested groups that might be included. Their responses are summarised below.

Disability

One respondent commented: 'The Council has recently put out billboards suggesting young disabled people are a drain on resources – completely unacceptable.'

Another said that young people with cancer need to be able to access Blue Badges and not have to wait for a PIP decision.

Children's play

One respondent suggested the creation of additional indoor soft play areas

Mental health

A further respondent suggested staff need training on appropriate treatment of clients with mental health needs.

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Community Cohesion

One respondent suggested the Council:

- Encourage people to form their own groups
- Easily accessible grants programme
- More publicity about services

Another wanted to encourage peer led organisations rather than top down solutions.

One respondent felt that people's concerns are disregarded by the Council leadership, which has a particular vision of how it wants the borough to be. They do not feel welcome in Hackney. People who lack financial resources are less able to adapt their lifestyle to respond to changes brought about by Council decisions. They felt this was negatively impacting trust in the Council.

Another observed that voluntary organisations have to find more and more money. Short term funding often exacerbates the problem.

Another felt that more joint work between the VCS and the Council was needed along the lines of the Volunteer Programme and joint work with the Community Safety team. More events along the lines of Pride 365 and Hackney Carnival – help illustrate Council policies in practice. Need more engagement to ensure residents understand how policy impacts decisions.

One respondent felt all policies could be reduced to treating all people with the dignity and respect they deserve. Concerned about over-emphasis on trans people, and felt encouraging 'inclusive' language was too proscriptive. Also wants to see all crime and ASB addressed, not just hate crime.

Age

One respondent commented on the lack of emphasis on older residents; needs – particularly loneliness and isolation.

Sex

One respondent believed sex segregation should be maintained as it is there to protect the privacy, safety and dignity of women.

Sexual orientation

Another said that services for lesbians as well as trans. people should be developed.

Transport

One respondent suggested:

- Improve accessible transport;
- Enforce speed limit in residential streets/install cameras at crossings;

2.5 Embedding prevention into service delivery

Some 57.4% of respondents, 20 people felt this was the right priority, with 20%, 7 people disagreeing and 8 people unsure.

Nineteen respondents suggested additional actions. Their responses are summarised below.

Age

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One respondent commented: 'Most of the initiatives relate to children – how do we link up with people not engaged with the Council?'

Another suggested: 'Early intervention with families, to halt cross generational problems.'

Another wanted to see more emphasis on: 'Planning for retirement – encouraging wellbeing, service take-up and volunteering.'

Council services

One respondent suggested mystery shoppers to name and shame poor services.

Another said that staff training should include intersectionality to ensure all pupils receive the same work/educational opportunities.

Another stressed the need to publicise services.

Another said that trust is vital and easily lost, every contact counts.

Another suggested the Council should lobby for more resources from Central Government. Improve communication between agencies.

Another said the Council should assess the needs of the individual and provide services based on that.

Community Cohesion

One respondent cited Bike Around the Borough and Playstreets as excellent initiatives to help community cohesion. Suggested that children who don't own bikes should be loaned them.

Shopping

One respondent was concerned at the lack of access to fresh, affordable food at supermarket prices in their area. The respondent does not have a suitable store for weekly shop within 30 minutes walking distance and has to go to several shops. It also takes time to travel to the nearest supermarket. Organic/wholefood shops are not suitable for those on moderate incomes.

Disability

One respondent stressed the need for early intervention for disabled children.

Race

Another pointed to actions to include Turkish/Kurdish communities

Another questioned the emphasis on Young Black Men, why not women, men from other races?

Mental Health

Another highlighted the need for suicide prevention.

2.6 Building a Culture of Inclusive Leadership

Some 60% of respondents, 20 people, said they agreed that this objective was the right one, 7 respondents disagreed, 20%, and 7 were unsure.

Thirteen respondents suggested additional actions – their responses are summarised below.

Training

One respondent observed that it was important to assess the effectiveness of training in creating meaningful change.

Another highlighted the need for measures to help women, BME, disabled and LGBT staff into leadership roles based on evidence regarding individual and institutional barriers.

Race

A further respondent was concerned about the perceived privileging of particular ethnic groups. Believes appointments should be based on merit.

Community cohesion

Another observed that feelings of self-worth come from family and school.

Another commented 'Councillors need to practice what you are preaching – anyone who doesn't fit in feels disenfranchised.'

Gender

One respondent said the Council should recognise that disadvantage against women comes from their sex and sexism, caring responsibilities and maternity.

The Women's Equality Party calls on the Council to promote female entrepreneurship in local growth initiatives and particularly within Hackney's growth sectors, in particular;

- Identify companies that discriminate against part-time roles and promote family friendly working hours within the council and local businesses, to encourage women to more senior roles;
- Produce records of local company ownership by gender to identify the sectors that are lacking female leadership and decision-making within Hackney;
- Positive actions to support progression of female staff to management and leadership levels within the council and other institutions, based on research and insight into individual and institutional issues and barriers;
- Provide advice at key career decision making points within the local education system, to promote traditionally male gendered professions to girls and the promotion of apprenticeships into these sectors.

Social class

One respondent said that inclusiveness should also include class. Many Council managers come from the middle classes and have a lack of first-hand experience of poverty and deprivation. There is a lack of awareness of the range of needs of service users and the barriers to people accessing services.

Another stressed the need to ensure the Council workforce reflects Hackney's community at all levels e.g. two in five of local population born outside the UK.

Another said there was a need to improve opportunities for working class staff who are white and from other ethnic groups.

Another respondent stressed the need to take out biases against BME staff and promote equal opportunities.

Communication

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One respondent commented:

- Remove outdated information from website – difficult to navigate;
- Telephone/face to face customer services officers not always approachable

2.7 Other comments

- One participant said: 'Please make our park safe';
- Another reiterated the need for more affordable housing;
- Another stressed the need for activities for children in the summer and also for post 16t's which is affordable.

2.8 Equality characteristics of respondents

Gender: Men were under-represented among respondents, only 20% of respondents were male compared with nearly 50% of the population overall/.

Gender identity: Some 2.8% of respondents said their gender identity was different to that assigned at birth – which is roughly in line with expectations for the population overall – a further 5 respondents did not disclose.

Age: The bulk of respondents were aged between 25-64. Those aged under 25 and over 65 were under-represented, 2.8% and 8.5% of respondents respectively.

Disability: Disabled people were slightly over-represented, with 17% of respondents compared with 15% of the borough's population overall.

Carers: Nearly a quarter of respondents had caring responsibilities compared with 7% of the borough's population overall.

Ethnicity: Black communities were under-represented among respondents, 14% compared with 22% of the borough overall, white communities were slightly over-represented – 57% of respondents compared with 54% of the borough overall, whereas residents of mixed heritage were over-represented, 11% of respondents compared with 6% of the borough population overall.

Religion: Those with no religion were over-represented among respondents – 57% compared with 28% of the borough's population, whereas Christians and Muslims were considerably under-represented. There were no responses from the Jewish community.

Sexual orientation: Seventeen percent of respondents were lesbians or gay men – considerably higher than the borough estimate of 5%. There were no responses from those identifying as Bisexual.

Pregnancy and maternity: Six percent of respondents, 2 people, had been pregnant or on maternity leave during the past two years.

Section 2: Notes of resident focus groups

2.1 Focus group open to residents who are trans and non-binary – 18 September 2018

Gender

One participant observed that there was nothing about trans in the gender section, just in the sexual orientation section. Domestic violence services need to consider the needs of trans and non-binary residents.

Another asked: 'Is there a statement that explains what we mean by gender, not just male and female?'

The group preferred the term, gender inclusive, rather than gender neutral.

Facilities

The group felt that all single cubicle toilets should be non-gendered.

Staff training

Need to roll out to all staff, as trans and non-binary group likely to get bigger over the coming years.

Overall approach

The group felt we need a holistic approach, not just about toilets. There is also a need for information – didn't find out about this through Council.

Some find the way documents such as this are written quite intimidating.

One participant suggested an equality panel established to bring different groups together.

One commented that the notice with this consultation should have said that the venue was upstairs, but that there was a lift.

Another suggested we should not use 'preferred pronouns'.

Education

A trans student attending the workshop said that young trans people needed support, Need to get information out to teachers.

They said they were allowed to wear male uniform at school, but there was no explanation to other pupils – outed by my uniform. But they had friends who came from religious backgrounds who received no support from the school. They believed that uniforms should be gender-neutral, or it should be clear that there is a choice. Schools tended to see pupils one-dimensionally e.g. Turkish.

They felt that information for trans and non-binary students and their parents/carers should be available on the Learning Trust website. Trans/non-binary issues should be covered in sex and relationship education. Other schools should follow the example of Stoke Newington and Urswick.

They also felt there was a lack of support in FE sector (Hackney College)

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Housing

There was consensus among the group that there is a link between diversity and housing. Participants said they it was noticeable in the changing nightlife in the borough.

They believed there was a need to ensure that landlords are LGBT inclusive – ‘people have been evicted for being trans’. Suggested the Council talk to London Renters Union.

Health

The group felt that accessing appropriate treatment can be expensive. Council could help signpost to trans-friendly GPs.

One participant observed that many GP’s do not have non-binary option on registration form. Also, often don’t see the same doctor twice. Many register out of borough.

One asked whether there is there a local clinic that proscribes Prep?

Another observed that sexual health clinics don’t understand needs of trans patients, assumed they were sex worker.

Another believed lesbians were at high risk of pregnancy – need for better sexual health information.

Doctors/chemists need to understand contraceptive needs of trans people.

Crime

One participant felt the Council and other agencies needed to understand rise in male rape, is it linked to Chemsex?

Business

One participant observed that people are investing in the borough, but the money is going into one sphere of people.

Another suggested we look at Premier League – Bronze, Silver, Gold standard for inclusivity.

2.2 Focus group open to all residents – 20 September 2018

This focus group consisted of 9 residents.

Housing:

There was strong feeling from the group that this was a key concern. There had been an increase in new builds, but there hasn't been a balance of social and genuinely affordable homes. Need to ensure private sector developments are 'tenure blind'.

One participant asked: 'Will parents be able to hand over tenancies to their children?'

Another was concerned that their grandchildren will have to move away. This will lead to loneliness and isolation. Need to understand the impact of this.

Another observed that 'People in the private rented sector are often worse off. Scarcity leads to bitterness and jealousy.'

Young People:

This was another major concern for the group. Participant felt we need a lot more for young people to do. Young people hanging around a lot.

One said we used to have gifted and talented programmes sponsored by the Learning Trust. Talented young people are being left behind as they have no one to encourage and support them.

Another said they tried to set up a kids club but little interest from other parents – many of whom are working and busy. Applying for funding from the Council became a barrier. Council could work with neighbours on estates to encourage grassroots community activity.

Another observed that youth provision needs to be more relevant. Young people are glued to their screens. Need to encourage more community action.

A number of participants felt there used to be a lot of voluntary action – all the onus is on the Council now.

Social Care:

One participant observed that people are living a lot longer but provision is being cut back. How are we going to sustain older people? They stressed the need for greater mobility and access for disabled people.

Another suggested that people with mobility impairments could be given a badge like for pregnant people on TFL.

Adult Education:

A number of participants felt there was a need to help those e.g. older manual workers/those who did not get good qualifications first time round, who are in low paid work progress to more skilled jobs, as institutions like City Lit now often charge for courses which were free.

Others commented on the need to offer apprenticeships to older, as well as younger people.

Others observed that apprenticeships for younger people can sometimes be low paid, with no job at the end.

Community cohesion

One participant observed that we don't want to disadvantage those who are already disadvantaged. Sometimes a big effort is made to support one group at the expense of others. Sometimes 'he who shouts the loudest'

Participants felt they would like to see the Council helping communities develop their own activities.

Some would be prepared to pay a little more Council Tax to improve services.

Participants agreed that people in poverty are often working. It doesn't matter how hard you work and how much you accomplish you still won't be able to afford to live here. This is such a negative message to send.

'At what point does this become unsustainable. People are miserable and there is no way out of that misery. People are sad, fed up and trying so hard to be upbeat.'

Another observed that we need to provide a sense of belonging to tackle loneliness and isolation, as well as promoting access and mobility to enable disabled people to fully participate.

Business:

One participant observed that they now have 6 barbers in their area lots of fancy shops, but need shops that sell affordable goods.

NHS:

One participant noted that more and more people were using private healthcare. More free services may need to be cut.

2.3 Focus group for residents living in social rented accommodation – 26 September 2018

This focus group consisted of six residents

Housing

One participant observed that larger housing was going to certain types of families

Another observed that the Council had limited powers to affect Private Rented Sector and Housing Associations. Tenant Management Organisations are frequently undemocratic

Education

One participant said she had been told that school rolls were falling because of the unavailability of affordable housing (children start in a school and commute from out of the borough but parents remove them from the school when they decide that they will not be returning to Hackney. This particularly affects families in Temporary Accommodation. This was included in a letter from a Primary School Head teacher and parents.)

Another observed that the school day is too short for working parents and activities should be provided up to 5pm. They also felt the holidays were too long. They were not aware of opportunities for young people to work during school holidays.

Another felt there were inequalities between LA schools and academies in terms of funding, responsibilities, acceptance of Hackney children. There was concern that SEND funding is being used by academies to fund other parts of their budget.

Youth provision

Consensus among parents that there were limited opportunities for young people aged 16-25.

A couple of parents believed that Young Hackney did not provide enough choice for young people. Focussing on supporting the most vulnerable children/young people often means hubs are not welcoming places for other young children who are worried about the behaviour of their peers.

One felt particularly strongly that the Summer holiday is very long and the lack of diverse youth provision and inability to work can be very limiting for young people (e.g. aged 10-16). Opportunity to learn from National Citizen Service.

Another commented that playgrounds are being used by older young people to groom younger children. Could playgrounds be supervised or restricted to under 12s.

Crime

One participant commented that bike theft is limiting movement around the borough. The behaviour of young people can be intimidating. A curfew for children was mentioned.

Cultural activities

A number of non-white participants felt that Black history month is repetitive and not fun and that there was an over-emphasis on the experience of the Caribbean community. There was a lack of emphasis on other black groups as well as Turkish/Kurdish and faith communities.

The group felt that cultural programmes should try to encourage cultural dialogue between different groups and think about intersectionality e.g. race and sexual orientation.

They suggested a universal approach to cultural events designed to promote pride – not limited to LGBT, Black history or Carnival (Afro-Caribbean).

One participant said they did not feel welcome in some businesses e.g. some pubs – suggested diversity education for businesses.

2.4 Focus group for people with learning difficulties – 16 October 2018

Members of the group made the following comments and suggestions:

Representation and communication with the Council

Members of the group expressed a desire for an on-going forum where they could talk about their concerns with the Council. A number of participants advocated an independent, Council-funded self-advocacy group. Questioned by there had been no Equality Impact Assessment carried out when decisions were made in relation to the Advocacy Review.

Members of the group were keen to see the Council and other organisations like the NHS and Jobcentre Plus produce information in Easyread, large print in line with the Government's Accessible Information Standard – a statutory duty for health and social care services.

Signage within public buildings was often poor.

One participant felt customer service within the Council was patchy. Sometimes staff did not get back to you.

Suggested a dedicated team to help navigate services might be helpful.

Members of the group had been involved in mystery shopping exercises at the Homerton – these no longer happen.

Concern at lack of accessibility at GP practices and continuity of care.

Increasing prosperity

Most members of the group would welcome the opportunity to do paid work. Several participants commented that voluntary organisations are happy for them to do voluntary work but not so keen to provide paid opportunities.

There was uncertainty about how much people could work without loss of benefits. There was also a feeling that Jobcentre Plus is removing support for disabled people who want to work.

There was also a lot of concern about the Benefits System. Several participants talked about difficulties when having to be reassessed for Personal Independence Payments. One commented that the form was very long. Another said he had to go over to Marylebone for an assessment and that it took the assessors four months to arrange a taxi.

One participant said she no longer had a support worker so turned to staff working for voluntary organisations or Council staff to help her navigate the benefits system. There was a lot of uncertainty about Universal Credit and the challenges participants might face when they have to transfer to this benefit.

Support when moving home

One participant remarked on challenges they faced when moving home. They had to obtain parking permits for both their existing and future address for the removal service. To do this they had to provide proof of both residences – which took seven weeks to sort out, during which time they had to pay rent on both properties. The parking permit was difficult to navigate as they could not use the online system. Suggested Hackney Housing should enclose parking permits for both the new and old addresses in their Welcome Pack.

Complaints

One participant was concerned that policies were not always implemented in line with policies. Complaints were resolved, but the Council did not seem to learn from them.

Transport

There were widespread concerns about the impact of transport cuts. One participant who lived in Queensbridge Rd said this area was only served by the 236 bus and that the 48 should be diverted to go down Queensbridge Rd to improve links with employment and social opportunities in Mare St and the City.

One participant pointed out that bus drivers often do not put the ramps down for people with mobility difficulties.

One participant had heard that some Crossrail stations would not be accessible. Need to engage with TFL and Transport for All.

Access and mobility

Participants said they preferred LED lighting to traditional street lighting. They commented that crossings often did not allow enough time to cross.

Safety

A number of participants commented about being 'picked on' especially when visiting neighbouring boroughs.

Access to leisure and social activities

At least one participant said they felt isolated. More thought needs to be given on how to enable people with learning difficulties to access sporting, leisure and social activities available in the borough. A further participant wanted to see more support/activities offered over special holidays such as Christmas.

Section 3: Summary of Co-production workshops with the voluntary and Community Sector

3.1 Hackney North Workshop: 22 May 2018

Present: Batya B. M. Whiles (Chixuk), Ida Scoullas, Hawksley Court TRA, Andreas Michaelides, Hackney Cypriot Centre.

Top Priorities

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Document Name: Report of Public Consultation on the Single Equality Scheme 2018-21 - October 2018

Mentoring for BAME staff – improve senior staff representation to reflect the community it serves.

Provide VCS orgs with an opportunity to help co-design practical steps in the Single Equality Scheme not just the vision/policy

Reduce VCS dependence on HCVS. Funder and representative roles often in conflict. Work directly with us.

Don't fund organisations to run services in non DDA compliant buildings

Understand that many activities of the council undermine equality and cohesion and address this.

Learn more from good practice. Ie Bridge Academy behavioural standards of pupils.

Inclusion should enhance choice not restrict it, ie run BAME only and mixed provision.

Housing

Concern about the lack of genuine affordable housing (when we quote the number of homes built does this mean genuinely affordable ie social rent levels or does it also include the Government definition of 'affordable' or shared ownership?)

Concern that some shared ownership schemes come with high management fees and ground rents (£4,500 per annum in the case of Woodberry Down Wetlands scheme).

One participant felt that quality of housing is a growing concern. Basements are being turned into flats, some of which are very poor quality. Severe overcrowding is causing stress.

Costs for leasehold owners arising from improvement schemes. Consider the financial impact on low income home owners.

Are we using all the levers available to improve the housing situation?

Race

Need to find ways of better estimating the size of Hackney's communities. The Cypriot Centre arrived at an estimate by looking at names on the electoral register, found 2,100 people, mainly living in single person households, likely to be older, isolated people whose relatives have moved to outer London and beyond.

Develop a more comprehensive evidence base on smaller communities that are harder to measure in national data sets. If you don't know about smaller communities they are ignored.

Need to find ways of supporting smaller communities and smaller community organisations. Allocation of resources is often not fair.

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Large additional demographic studies are expensive, but we should consider how we can improve our understanding of the needs of smaller communities in Hackney who are often marginalised.

Bargees

One participant was particularly concerned about the need to consider needs of established Bargee families. How can they settle their children into school if they are constantly being forced to move on?

What is role of the Canal and River Trust? Enforcement heavy handed and new mooring unaffordable. Development also reduced the amount of canal side public space.

How are the council fulfilling its responsibilities to traveller communities? i.e providing transit sites
Examine the Council's response to the Canal and River Trust Moorings Strategy and consider what could be incorporated from this.

Childcare

Concern about the inadequacy of available free childcare. Number of hours not sufficient to allow parents to work for sufficient hours to make work pay, travel to and from the childcare venue to collect children on time.

Community Cohesion

Supporting community networks and encouraging peer support – safeguarding needs common sense, it is often hard for people to do favours for their neighbours as too many restrictions placed in their way.

Cypriot Centre has had success with peer support schemes around Stroke, Diabetes etc., but these tend to be pilot projects receiving short-term funding. This needs to be sustained over a longer time-period. There is little planning around sustainability. Something works and is valued and then ends, moving on to the next set of priorities.

One participant felt the Council should relax parking restrictions for parents who are forced to send their children to school neighbourhoods other than their own/where parents are disabled and unable to walk their children to school.

VCS provision

Concern that lunch club contracts have been split into BAME and non-BAME – doesn't make sense to split them, should all receive equal funding.

ESOL provision in many community settings have been removed.

Concern about reach of HCVS (3,000 organisations on their database, 8,000 organisations in the borough). Participants queried some of the funding decisions made and quality of support to VCS organisations.

Customer Service

Council could do more to improve Customer Service e.g. all staff should set up their voicemails so that if they are not at their desks people can leave a message. Emails should not be encrypted.

Single Equality Scheme

Ensure there is an action plan outlining who is doing what, by when.

Ensure easy read version is available for public consultation

3.2 Hackney Central Workshop: 28 May 2018

Present: Rob Merthwaite, Patricia Charlesworth, Hackney People First, Jackie Brett, Andrew Skipper, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Francesca Fadda-Archibald, Young Hackney.

Members of the group made the following observations and suggestions:

Objective 1: Increase prosperity for all

The Council could sponsor work placements for disabled people with local groups.

New team to support disabled people into employment welcomed, but how many of the team are disabled. Need disabled role models to challenge employers' low expectations of disabled people?

The Council needs to promote the London Living Wage more and ensure that local young people have access to employment opportunities that enable them to earn a decent living.

Ensure local green spaces are open to all, including people with physical disabilities.

Invite parents to Inspiring Young Women events so they can support their daughters.

Promote educational opportunities to women returning to work, especially those who had young children.

Promote employment opportunities to young people and schemes that enable young people to be work ready – rather than just using websites, perhaps the Council could consider using an app as many only have internet access via smartphone.

Posters advertising apprenticeships with the Council tend to only feature males – this is gender bias.

Clearer career pathways, especially apprenticeships for older people.

Ways into Work difficult to work with, keep employers to themselves, need a more joined up, collaborative approach

Objective 2: Tackle discrimination and disadvantage

Need for all staff to have a good understanding of equality (equality training should be mandatory) especially the social model of disability. Felt that staff were polite to disabled people, but that they did not fully understand disability rights.

IT should have more of a role in facilitating access for disabled people either to the built environment or to things like written information. Adult Social Care could consider how they can make better use of technology to enable people to become more independent

It is not possible to purchase reduced priced parking permits online (Blue Badge holders are entitled to a reduction). Holders have to come into the Hackney Service Centre, which is inconvenient.

Would be good to have a celebration of disabled people as part of Disability History Month, possibly involve the Making it Real group and prominent local disabled activists such as Richard Rieser?

Not sure how accessible leisure services are for disabled people. Would be useful to employ some disabled people to do mystery shopping. Worried that sometimes Better Gyms are unstaffed.

How does the Council ensure that contractors are meeting their commitments in relation to equality?

Need to acknowledge that carers are often disabled people themselves, with their own needs.

Should the Council set itself a target to employ a certain number of disabled people by a certain time?

Objective 3: Inclusive and cohesive borough

The Council should upgrade its property portfolio so that it is physically accessible. This will allow more disabled people to gain employment opportunities

Invite disabled people into schools so young people have better understanding.

Men in Sheds – using making and mending things as a way of engaging middle aged men.

Age appropriate engagement on hate crime which could include schools, community groups, TRA's – encourage reflexion and conversation and explore social action ideas.

Enabling Objective 1: Embed prevention into service delivery

Increase collaboration to facilitate more youth provision on estates.

Raise awareness of mental health issues

Improve access to services and employment opportunities for people who do not have English as a first language.

Use volunteering as a means to help more marginalised groups gain access to employment.

Campaign for more affordable housing and more resources;

Enabling Objective 2: Build a culture of inclusive leadership

There needs to be a change of culture

- No wrong door, improve approach to signposting
- Can do not can't do - meet needs, not just impart messages
- Long term investment in staff – rewards system
- Financial inclusion should also involve schools, colleges
- Digital hubs, access to IT, especially when Universal Credit comes live

Economic inequality arising from Welfare Reform. Not enough money to live on. Debt prevention, not debt management.

Could inclusive leadership training be open to voluntary and community organisations.

3.3 Hackney South Workshop – 11 June 2018

Present: Caroline Nelson, Choice in Hackney, Peter Allen and John Siddique, Hackney People First, Rosemary Janara, Beersheba Living Well, Sammy Odoi, Wipers Youth CIC, Paul Yasine, St Mary's Secret Garden, Florence Amah, Gahu Dramatic Arts, David Mary, Neil Presley and Roger Davey, SSAFA, Lisa Raine Hunt, Hackney Council Community Safety Service.

Members of the group made the following observations and suggestions:

Overall approach to equality

Some discussion about the extent to which the Council should focus on providing universal services and compartmentalise people into special interest groups.

Recognised that achieving equality means treating everyone differently, meeting individual needs but that this is a challenge at a time of diminishing resources.

Prevention

Need for more preventative services – there are people who fall just below the eligibility criteria e.g. people who are not quite 50. But some early intervention might prevent the need for costly care later on.

Health and fitness activities are often unaffordable e.g. £47/month to join local authority gyms.

Noted that exercise activities on estates for £1 tend to take place during the day when many are at work.

Service provision

One participant felt that decisions of managers needed to trickle down to frontline staff.

Inclusive design – need input of disabled people, coproduction element important.

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The group felt strongly that Council needs to be more honest with us. £4m cuts to supported housing are being badged as 'making services more flexible'. We know this is about reducing the amount of services available so why not say so.

Come and meet the real people. The Council gives the impression that it is out of touch.

Compare Hackney's approach with Tower Hamlets which had signs up illustrating the hard choices the Council was having to make.

There is a need for plain English and to engage children in schools in what is going on locally.

VCS Grants

There was some discussion about the Voluntary Sector Grants Programme.

Participants felt that the form and process were overly complicated, with a perception that funding goes to the same groups, and that larger/national organisations who employ professional fundraisers tend to benefit at the expense of smaller, grassroots organisations.

Support available from HCVS appears to have changed with the new fundraising manager saying he is unable to help in areas the former manager might have assisted with.

Concern that it will be harder for VCS organisations to attract funding as the borough becomes more affluent.

Community cohesion

Need to take an asset based approach. Communities seen as problem waiting to be solved.

Perhaps we need to challenge some of the middle class incomers and businesses a bit more, create an element of completion – who can do most for the local community. Maybe publish stats on the number of local people they employ?

Can we make it a condition of planning consent that they employ local people?

Education

Concern about school exclusions, are they causing young people to become involved in gangs.

High level of aspiration which young people are not able to meet – one participant told of seven-year-old selling drugs to pay for his mum to get her nails done.

Are people being set up to fail? What do young people think when they see the price of flats in the area?

Anecdotal information from the Children with Special Educational Needs Parents Network suggests that the highly disciplined environment in local schools is disadvantageous to children with autism.

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Betting shops

Concern about the rising number of betting shops and the risk of young people getting into gambling.