

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON TUESDAY, 1ST DECEMBER, 2020**

**MEMBERS:** Councillors Birsen Demirel, Ergun Eren, Achilleas Georgiou, James Hockney, Bernadette Lappage, Derek Levy, Ahmet Oykenar and Glynis Vince

**Officers:** Tony Theodoulou (Executive Director People), Helen Baeckstroem (Strategy & Policy Team Manager), Victoria Adnan (Strategy & Policy Manager), Arzhang Yusefi (Strategy & Policy Manager), Penelope Williams (Governance & Scrutiny) and Susan O'Connell (Governance & Scrutiny)

**Also Attending:** Cllr Ergin Erbil (Associate Cabinet Member, Non Geographical)

### **1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for lateness had been received by Cllr Demirel.

The Chair welcomed Cllr Ergin Erbil, Associate Cabinet Member Non-Geographical covering young people.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Hockney advised that he serves as a member on the all-party parliamentary group enquiry into bullying and also on the DLGA as a sub for the children and young people's panel.

### **3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2020**

AGREED the minutes of the Children Young People & Education Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 10 September 2020.

Matters arising:

- It was queried following the reflection of the Youth Parliament Member under paragraph 12 of the minutes how this is being monitored in schools. A meeting had taken place with the Headteachers where it was raised with them that this issue had been raised by a young person. This will be picked up further as part of the exclusions item.
- The Chair invited Cllr Erbil to brief the Panel at a future meeting on how he sees his role, as this is a new role. Cllr Erbil confirmed that he is happy to provide an overview of his portfolio and the work he undertakes.

### **4. DRAFT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN (EMPOWERING YOUNG ENFIELD 2021-2025)**

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In addition to the report in the agenda pack a presentation was provided by Victoria Adnan, Strategy & Policy Manager, and Helen Baeckstroem, Strategy & Policy Team Manager.

### NOTED:

1. The new Children and Young Peoples Plan is called Empowering Young Enfield and will be running from 2021 to 2025 if it is approved by Full Council in January.
2. A significant piece of engagement was carried out with children and young people during the spring term. This was to ascertain what they liked and didn't like about living in Enfield; what goals they had for the future and what help they would need to achieve them.
3. This consultation focused on Safety, Health & Wellbeing, Education & Learning, Leisure & Play, Equality & Empowerment and Climate Emergency. This ran in schools during PHSE and Enrichment involving over 900 children and young people at 4 primary and 1 secondary school.
4. The main document includes quotes from children and young people on some of things they said about living in Enfield.
5. This evidence has been used to inform the development of the plan. It has also been developed based on evidence of local need, research, best practice and statutory guidance for achieving the best possible outcomes for children and young people. Extensive work has been undertaken across the council to ensure that the plan reflects the different objectives of the services that support children and young people to reach a lifetime of opportunities.
6. Empowering Young Enfield is an ambitious plan and requires working in collaboration with other partners and stakeholders and support from regional and national government to achieve the level of ambition in the plan.
7. Members were taken through the 6 priorities:
  - Priority 1 Children and young people are empowered, included and respected
  - Priority 2 Children and young people can thrive through effective early help, good housing and accessible and inclusive services and public places
  - Priority 3 Children, young people and their families are supported to achieve the best possible health and well-being
  - Priority 4 Children and young people have access to an excellent education, are ready to learn when they start school and leave with the skills they need for life and the world of work
  - Priority 5 Children and young people are safe and protected from harm in all places and spaces
  - Priority 6 Children and young people have an environmentally sustainable future.
8. Following feedback from the Executive Management Team, the youth participation focus has been strengthened of Priority 6. The new draft will include greater information about the 7 key areas of the Climate Action Plan. Priority 6 now focuses solely on youth led climate action. This is supported by the Enfield Earth Principles. The new draft will also reflect

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the emerging work being undertaken with schools, although this is at the early stages.

9. The Earth Principles are:
  - Empower children and young people with information and opportunities to develop their knowledge and support them to positively contribute to youth-led climate action
  - Ask them to share their opinions and ideas about how we can work together to combat climate disaster
  - Respect and listen to their opinions and ideas.
  - Take climate action that considers and includes the voices of children and young people and develop opportunities for young people to actively contribute to decision making
  - Have a positive impact on our community, the local environment and our planet.
10. This plan will be monitored by keeping track of the progress towards the priorities. Analysis will be drawn together from a variety of relevant policies and their action plans. Throughout the document there are various strategies and policies signposted and will be utilising those action plans and assessing and keeping track of the progress using the Council's Corporate Scorecard. As part of the annual review process an annual report will be published with the first one scheduled for January 2022.
11. The Safeguarding Children's Partnership will have responsible for overseeing the successful delivery of the plan.
12. The Youth Parliament and the Young Mayors as elected representatives of young people will have the opportunity to review the Plan's progress with either the Leader of the Council or the Cabinet Member for Children's Services.
13. The Youth Parliament and Young Mayors will also be encouraged to make recommendations during the annual review to the Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
14. Since completing the draft, officers have concluded some targeted engagement including focus groups and feedback from the following groups:
  - Members of the Parent Engagement Network
  - Members of the Enfield Youth Parliament
  - Young people who take part in the Young Leaders Programme
  - Young people attending Very Important People Services (VIPS)
  - Young People attending SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service)
15. The draft has also been shared with Headteachers at 14 schools who had initially registered their interest in taking part of the first phase of engagement. Covid 19 reduced the number of schools who took part during the spring term.
16. The draft has also been shared with; Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Vulnerable Young People Meeting and Voluntary Sector Strategy Group (VSSG) and will be shared with the Corporate Parenting Board.
17. The next steps now are to review feedback on the draft and enhance the Plan were needed. Examples of feedback received to enhance document are; including more support for young carers, including more on sexual

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health and making sure that the language used in the plan is easy to read and young people friendly.

18. The final stage will be to seek Full council approval in January 2021.

Questions, comments and queries raised:

- Following a query on why only 14 schools had been involved, officers advised that the lesson plans (developed in collaboration with 3 schools) was circulated to all schools in the borough. Initially 14 schools signed up, unfortunately not all could participate in the spring term due to Covid 19 and the closure of schools. The draft document has since been shared with those 14 schools who had initially registered their interest in taking part in the first phase of engagement. Headteachers and their staff and pupils were invited to comment.
- How did officers manage to engage with over 900 young people given the challenges of Covid 19; did this take place in school or online? Officers advised that the engagement took place in person in the classroom during PHSE and Enrichment lessons in the spring term prior to Easter.
- This is a very aspirational document, given the changes brought about by Covid, concern was expressed that there will be multiple issues for young people that perhaps have not been picked up. It was suggested to undertake a post Covid review of the consultation to ensure that the ramifications of the way that young people's lives have been affected have been taken into account. Young people have experienced lots of issues such as not sitting exams, not seeing their friends and anxiety. How will this be dealt with? Officers advised that there has been an enormous spike in the number of referrals into Children's Services since schools returned in September. This level is now starting to normalise again. It is recognised that children and young people have been significantly impacted, their education has been affected to keep everyone else safe. The level of mental health support has been increased such as through online therapeutic tools. There has been an increase in children citing loneliness, isolation and anxiety. The schools are very aware of these issues. Officers are also concerned about the number of children perpetually being sent home because of an infection and the impact this will have on their aspirations. Especially those children who do not have access to computers or the internet.
- It was queried whether the promised computers were received. It was confirmed that these were received and have been issued. They were not for all children and were for very specific age groups. The government had to prioritise who got them. This means that there are lots of children in the borough who do not have laptops, or have multiple siblings and are sharing the same device or having to undertake homework on their parents' mobile phone.
- How is this work measured? Officers advised that the document is an overarching document bringing together lots of work, other strategies, policies and plans across the Council and these will have associated action plans. The points in the document will be built into these action plans and will also be using the Council's Corporate Scorecard which has a range of key performance indicators (KPI). The scorecard records information on a quarterly basis and once a year publishes this on the

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council website. There will be an annual report published on the plan showing what progress has been made against the 6 priorities. The Youth Parliament and the Young Mayors will have the opportunity to review the Plan's progress with either the Leader of the council or the Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

- Officers reiterated that this is being looked at from 2 angles, the first is numerical measuring KPI's and looking at how the council is doing. The second part from the plan is enabling young people to have a voice, provide feedback on when they use services or whether they feel that they are being included enough. Officers have started work on a Young Enfield Engagement Policy and this is listed as one of the actions in Empowering Young Enfield which will enable the council to make sure that it is engaging in the right way.
- An observation was made that this is an overarching document which is hugely aspirational. This document provides details of the what and the why and the real issues are the how's and the when's. Hope the practical steps that officers take meet with the intentions of this document and those tasked with listening to feedback both on this document and the actions follow up/act on this feedback. The Council will be judged by the actions taken and how well we listen to people.
- It was raised that the 2 strategies on the agenda covered different time frames. The first one was 2021-2025 and the second was 2020-2025 is this a mistake. Officers confirmed that both documents should be 2021-2025 and this will be corrected.
- How will this be funded at a time when the local authorities have been hit quite substantially over the past 10 years and that there are further financial challenges due to Covid. There is a lot within the report that requires funding to be able to deliver. Examples of this given were; page 32 of the agenda pack priority 3- Make sure every child and young person has access to healthy food 365 days a year; same page- Create opportunities to get more children and young people visiting and enjoying our leisure centres; page 39 of the agenda pack priority 5- Fund additional Police officers for the borough who provide additional support for council housing estates. The report also mentions funding or providing additional youth services. What is the cost of that and how will this cost be met?
- Over the years the Council found funds within the HRA to fund police officers on estates (14 officers from the HRA). Will these further police officers in the plan be funded by the HRA and this why it mentions council housing estates, council tenants will need to agree to this. How will this be achieved?
- Undeniable that the council has very significant financial challenges. Everything on the plan where it states that 'we will' over the course of the 4-year plan, has been negotiated with individual Directors or Heads of Service. There is nothing in the plan that someone within the council has not agreed is an achievable realistic target. For example, the additional police officers have been discussed with Joanne Drew about the use of the HRA going forward. It is unlikely in the current climate that more money can be invested in council run youth services. However, there are grants available. An example was given of the young Londoners Fund where the council was awarded £1.3m. There are various types of

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organisations across the borough delivering on youth provision with the aim of providing positive activities and helping young people achieve their goals. The government has recently announced large grants with the expectation that the council provide holiday activities for Easter, Summer and Christmas 2021 for young people and there is a focus on food. Part of these activities will be teaching children and parents how to cook, access to healthy food does not necessarily mean that the council will be buying healthy food instead will be empowering families teaching them about healthy eating.

- In order to list these priorities officers had to have authorisation from everybody, some will be carried out using existing resources (current and planned as in officer hours) and some will be through funding from external grants
- A lot of this is at no extra cost to the council except the police officers which are an extra cost to the HRA, will this be reflected in the budget setting meeting with an item aligned on this? Officers advised not clear at present what the budget report will say. It was agreed that officers will follow up with Joanne Drew.
- There will be some on costs, the whole of London will be competing on grants. The outside world has changed significantly so concerned at how this can be delivered. The Panel was advised that the annual review provides an opportunity to refine the plan, should the council's financial situation take a dramatic turn for the worse or better would need to adjust the plan accordingly.
- The plan has great aspirations and it is hoped that this will be achieved. Some numbers would be helpful for example if there is to be a KPI for police- how many and by when and similarly for Leisure centres. It was suggested that when this is presented at Council it would be useful if the speakers in the debate picked out a bullet point or two and gave an example of the kind of action that might sit underneath it and that this would give substance and depth

Officers were thanked for their report and members commended the report and the aspirations within the report.

### 5. DRAFT EARLY HELP FOR ALL STRATEGY

In addition to the report in the agenda pack a presentation was provided by Arzhang Yusefi, Strategy & Policy Manager, and Helen Baeckstroem, Strategy & Policy Team Manager.

#### NOTED:

1. This strategy was first drafted to set out the approach to provide effective early help with Children and Families..
2. During discussions it became obvious of the need to extend early help as is not just for children and families it is important for other areas as well. So, this runs across the council at a high level and with partners to deliver effective early help to children, young people, families and vulnerable

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adults. This strategy will replace the previous Family Resilience/ Early Help Strategy.

3. This is an ambitious strategy looking to coordinate the work of council services and work with partners including voluntary and community services. Over the next 4 years the system will be far more coordinated so that when anyone accesses help, they can receive the right support straight away ensuring that every contact counts.
4. It is important not only to provide support at the initial contact point but to support individuals to build their resilience. The initial part is supporting them, and the second point is working actively with them and their families to build resilience. This is a prevention-based approach.
5. Early Help is one of the cross-directorate areas within the Council's Plan. This does not sit on its own it is built on a number of other strategies and all our responsibility.
6. In order to develop this strategy, a process of research and consultation was undertaken. This has included; benchmarking with our boroughs; reviews of national and local evidence and latest research in the area of early help. Once the strategy is approved at full Council in February, the Early Help Board will develop annual action plans to deliver on the priorities of the strategy.
7. The vision is to work with our communities and partners to help everyone in Enfield to be resilient, overcome challenges and lead happy and fulfilling lives. The priority areas are:
  - Provide Clear information, advice and guidance
  - Empower communities
  - Establish an effective early help plan
8. The last priority is a prerequisite to achieving the other 2 priorities.
9. Under each priority area there are a number of associated specific action areas agreed with the relevant services.
10. There are 4 levels of need:
  - Level 4 Critical needs (specialist services)
  - Level 3 Complex needs (integrated/targeted service)
  - Level 2 Additional need (Early help/targeted service)
  - Level 1 Universal needs (universal services)
11. This strategy is at Level 2 and if the strategy is successful the number of people being referred to Level 3 and 4 will be reduced
12. Discussion is still ongoing on outcome measures for the strategy. Indicators will measure how many people are receiving level 3 services; how many people are moving from Level 3 down to Level 2. Ideally if Early Help is run well and effective, we should see in Level 2 services referred back down to Level 1 (universal services). However, this only tells us about the movement not how outcomes for individuals and families have shifted.
13. To measure the outcomes within Children and Families services, the STAR assessment is used with children and families this shows progress and highlights the direction of change. This is one area of the council only. Next year we will be looking to work with specific families within a pilot to find out what changes they have been through and the ways in this can be measured. This can then be trailed/rolled out as the service is developed. Part of the development of the service will be bringing together a single

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assessment system and measurement is a key component in this development.

14. Supporting new communities such as Meridian Water need to be considered, this will be a whole new community, some people will be transient and have come for work and won't necessarily have support networks around them.
15. The Early Help Strategy Board will retain oversight and actively drive the delivery of the strategy. This board will be accountable for implementing the strategy's action plan and reviewing the measures of success on a quarterly basis. This board will report to the Safeguarding children Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board on an annual basis.
16. Engagement on the strategy has been undertaken using; presentation and discussion, SNAP online survey, focus groups and paper copy questionnaires. This has been with the following groups: Parent engagement Network, Every Parent, Every Child, Early Help Strategic board, Safeguarding Adults Partnership, Health & Wellbeing Board, Voluntary Sector Strategic Group, Faith Forum, other voluntary Community Service organisations and Department Management Teams and Senior Management Teams. A short survey is live and will run until 10 December.
17. Once the engagement process is complete the strategy will be refined and finalised based on this feedback. The strategy will then go to Full Council for approval in February 2021.
18. The strategy document sets the expectation for the workforce to intervene as early as possible in the life of children or families to prevent the escalation of need. Resources are critical during the years of austerity many of the earlier intervention services are no longer there. If we do not do this the councils' costs will increase substantially

Comments, questions and queries raised:

- An observation was made that this is a really important document, early intervention in all services, prevention is better than cure. Even more so with all the financial pressures on the council. It is thematic going across all departments and service areas. This is about a culture shift within the staff, educating all staff at all levels on need to work and think about early help. The document was highly commended the fundamental point about early help is critical.
- Page 8 of the document refers to increases in temporary accommodation with Enfield the second highest provider in England. How do we mitigate this increase and turn this situation around? Officers provided some feedback as part of the discussions on the strategy the Housing Service has put together a Housing Advisory Service. This is a new service that is the direct result out some of the previous strategies and research that has been undertaken (Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025). This will look at preventing people from becoming homelessness, empowering people to access tenancies that are appropriate for them. There is also a bigger piece of work being undertaken by the Housing Department on ensuring that there is more supply of affordable housing. The Housing Advisory Service looks at those who are unable to access or are at risk of homelessness and work with the

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community to access early help such as ensuring that they access welfare and get the right benefits.

- Is this report going to be discussed with housing colleague councillors? Officers confirmed it will be discussed with councillors and discussions have been held with the Cabinet Member for Social Housing. Following a request, it was confirmed that it will be discussed with Cllr Smith, the conservative lead for housing.
- An observation was made that the strategy has a big emphasis on working with the voluntary sector to achieve its aims why is this? Officers advised that Covid 19 provided the opportunity to show how the community and voluntary sector can support one another. The strategy will build on this strength and capacity that the voluntary sector demonstrated and keep up this momentum. In one of the focus groups it was raised that they want to do more and contribute more. When working with families at this stage it must be a voluntary and some families prefer to engage with the voluntary sector organisations rather than the council. There is potential within the voluntary sector to provide bespoke support to particular communities.
- Volunteering groups in Enfield will have their own financial pressures and seen their funding cut sometimes from the council. Voluntary groups were advised and supported by the council to seek funding elsewhere. Will the voluntary sector need financial support to undertake actions within the report? Is the Council in a position to be able to offer financial support? Officers advised that the voluntary sector will need financial support and it is unlikely the council will be in a position to provide this. The voluntary sector has more opportunities to apply for funding than the council. This strategy has been consulted with the voluntary and community sector organisations through an online survey most respondents that were received were from voluntary organisations that they would like to undertake a larger role.
- Do they have the resources to do what the council is asking of them? The Panel was advised that a mapping exercise will be undertaken to look at what resources we have including looking at community assets such as community hubs to see if there is the capacity there. Firstly, this will map the services we currently have and understand what access to early help currently looks like in addition to identifying recognised providers. Alongside this will be looking at how this will be delivered and what assets are available. We may need to look at how the voluntary sector can also deliver from some of our community assets. Upskilling the voluntary sector so that if they do apply for funding they can make strong applications.
- An observation was made that the council has looked at opportunities for various groups to use libraries in the past and some groups could not afford this. The council may need to subsidise this.
- Does the council have any figures for people at the different levels of need at present that can be used to measure how the plan progresses? Officers confirmed that broadly speaking that there around 5k children at level 3 and 4 at any one time. The overwhelming majority of children are at Tier 1 with the only services they receive going to school or to the doctor or libraries. Most of the money is spent of those in levels 3 and 4
- Due to the pandemic new regulations are in place meaning that the tenants who cannot pay their rent or are not paying their rent cannot be

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taken to court to be evicted. Concern was expressed that there are local landlords in the private sector who are not being paid rent and unable to take action but as soon as the restrictions are lifted more numbers will come through children services as these families who have children could be evicted and pressure will be on the council. What are we doing now to find out who are these families and what safeguards can be put in place once regulations lifted by government to allow landlords to take individuals or families to court to be evicted? This will cause financial, emotional and health burdens to these children. Officers are also concerned what might happen once these restrictions on landlords are eased. It was suggested that this issue is referred to the Housing Scrutiny Panel as an area of focus.

Officers were thanked for their presentation.

### **6. CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21**

The work programme was noted. Members were asked to come back to the Chair by the end of the week with any suggestions on what the Panel should be looking at on the agreed February and Marchs work programme items.

An email will be sent round regarding an extra meeting in January members are asked to respond as soon as possible so this date can be confirmed

### **7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The dates of future meetings were noted