

London Borough of Hackney  
Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission  
Municipal Year 2025/26  
Date of Meeting Wednesday 10 December 2025

Minutes of the proceedings of the  
Children and Young People  
Scrutiny Commission held at  
Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street,  
London E8 1EA

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<b>Chair</b>	<b>Councillor Sophie Conway</b>
<b>Councillors in Attendance</b>	<b>Cllr Margaret Gordon (Vice-Chair), Cllr Alastair Binnie-Lubbock, Cllr George Gooch, Cllr Patrick Pinkerton, Cllr Sheila Suso-Runge, Cllr Lynne Troughton and Cllr Claudia Turbet-Delof</b>
<b>Apologies:</b>	<b>Cllr Clayeon McKenzie and Cllr Midnight Ross</b>
<b>Co-optees</b>	<b>Andy English, Duval Middleton, Jahnine Davis and Hashim Rawat</b>
<b>In Attendance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>DM Bramble, Cabinet member for Children Services &amp; Young People</b></li><li>• <b>Cllr Sizer Deputy Cabinet Member for</b></li><li>• <b>Jacque Burke, GD Children and Education</b></li><li>• <b>Sajeed Patni AD Finance Children and Education,</b></li><li>• <b>Shakeel Yasin, Interim Director of Finance;</b></li><li>• <b>Jacqui Burke, Group Director Children &amp; Education;</b></li><li>• <b>Diane Benjamin, Director of Children's Social Care;</b></li><li>• <b>Lisa Aldridge, Assistant Director, Families First Partnership Programme</b></li><li>• <b>Donna Thomas, AD Early Help &amp; Early Years</b></li><li>• <b>Sarah Broomfield, Head of Children &amp; Family Hubs and Early Help Systems</b></li></ul>
<b>Members of the Public</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Meet recording</b>	<a href="https://youtube.com/live/JuXfvbdYk_M">https://youtube.com/live/JuXfvbdYk_M</a>
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## Councillor Sophie Conway in the Chair

### 1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from

- Cllr Clayeon McKenzie;
- Cllr Midnight Ross;
- Lisa Neidich Hackney Schools Governors' Association.

### 2 Urgent Items / Order of Business

2.1 There were no urgent items of business.

### 3 Declarations of Interest

3.1 The following declarations were received:

- Jahnine Davis reported that she was a civil servant at the Department of Education.

### 4 Budget Monitoring 2025/26 - Children & Education Services (19.05)

4.1 Budget monitoring is a key aspect of the scrutiny function and a regular feature in the work programme of the Commission. Budget monitoring consists of reviewing in-year budgets and any management actions taken to address areas of overspend or underspend. The progress that services have made in delivering on agreed in-year savings was also assessed.

#### Finance Officers

4.2 (SP) Summarised the key aspects of the forecast financial position (2025/2026), including main budget challenges and risks across the Children & Education Directorate (CED).

- In terms of the over financial position the CED forecast is an overspend of £7.5 million before the use of reserves (£3.5m after reserves).
- Children and Families Service (CFS) forecast a net underspend of £0.6 million after allocated of specific ring-fenced reserves and receipt of 50% of the social care grant. Key overspend areas: Looked After Children and Leaving Care Services (£0.3m), Young Hackney (£0.2m), and the Direct Management Team (£0.8m) were mitigated by a circa £1.7 million underspend in Corporate Parenting.
- Hackney Education (HE) General Fund (GF) is forecasting an overspend of £4.1 million: Staffing Costs: £1.4 million overspend within the ACP assessment team and educational psychologists team; SEND Transport £1.1 million, and Early Years' Service £1.1 million overspend, primarily relating to unachieved savings linked to the reconfiguration of children's centres.
- Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is forecast to have a balanced financial position. The net SEND deficit brought into this financial year is £16.5 million, which represents a reduction of £2.6 million from 2024/2025. This deficit balance is predicted to remain at the £16.5 million level by the end of the current financial year.
- Management actions of £1.5 million were currently in place to mitigate budget pressures overall for the directorate.

Questions from the Commission - Children's Social Care

4.3 The Chair asked if the key figures and areas of concern regarding agency staff and workforce establishment? The financial plan noted nearly 250 agency staff across children's and education services, with a projected cost of £8.8 million for the year.

Cllr Gordon asked for further details of the savings made for agency staff, particularly in relation to the new joint venture set up with an independent company. How is agency sign off undertaken and by whom?

- (DB) Actions taken to reduce agency spend included a focus on recruitment and retention to increase permanent members of staff. Implementing a London-wide agreement (London Pledge) that restricts agency staff from easily moving between different local authorities, which has been in place for three or four years and is proving effective. "Growing our own" staff, with significant investment in supporting social workers coming through the system to gain experience and stay permanently. All agency staff is authorised through the workforce board, where it was noted that not all requests were approved. It was acknowledged that there was however more work to be done in this space.

4.4 Cllr Gooch noted that Cabinet reports note an over-establishment of 22 posts in Children's Social Care, including 13 social workers. What are the reasons for this and plans to reduce this? What is the impact of the three-year rule for post-qualifying experienced (PQE) social workers?

- (DB) The over-establishment was a realisation post-restructure (business support and children's social care reviews) that extra capacity was needed due to changes in roles and the course of work. The directorate is actively working on reducing this establishment. The three-year rule is mandated by the DfE, requires social workers to have three years of PQE. The council is applying this, and it is having the desired effect, with 12 agency social workers confirming they would join the council permanently to gain the necessary experience. Close working with neighbouring boroughs on this issue was reported.

4.5 The Chair noted that finding appropriate residential placements for children with complex needs, often at short notice can be challenging especially when places are limited and other LA's are competing for these placements. How many local children are being placed in 'unregistered' residential care settings and what actions are taken to mitigate risks? How is Hackney working with other local authorities to prevent 'bidding up' the price of residential care and collaborative commissioning?

- (DB) Key challenges include high costs due to increased unit costs, the complexity of care for children, market competition with other local authorities, and seasonal variation (e.g., Christmas and summer holidays when more children enter care). The commissioning service focuses on negotiating placement costs and ensuring providers adhere to value for money and service principles like the STAR model (Systemic, Trauma-informed, Anti-racist). A provider engagement day was recently held to improve communication and understand the needs and expectations of the authority.
- (DB) A small number of children are in unregistered settings due to the market's volatility and the difficulty in finding suitable registered homes. These placements are monitored by Ofsted, and the council ensures monitoring visits and quality assurance measures are in place.
- Deputy Mayor Bramble (DMB) reported that the minister was setting up more regional cooperation in the commissioning of children's homes to bring better use of resources.

4.6 The Chair asked for an update on the council's plans to procure two new children's homes?

Cllr Turbet-Delof asked about the level of savings that the new children's homes will bring?

- (DB) Planning permission has been agreed for two new children's homes in Hackney which are expected to open in the summer of 2026. This initiative is

aimed at keeping children local and maintaining their connections with family and schools, though some children will still need to be placed outside the borough for safeguarding reasons.

- (DB) The homes are projected to bring a potential saving of £400,000 per year to the social care budget.

4.7 Cllr Binnie-Lubbock asked about the comparative costs of different types of children's social care placements (as there is no data on the costs of the in-house foster care placements over time in the report). Can officers set out what these are, how the Foster First approach is working and how the placements team overcomes barriers to uptake and usage of the in-house foster carer team?

- (JB) The council is starting an "Invest to Save" program which involves streamlining the process for assessing foster carers rapidly and looking at using a more sophisticated matching tool to enable greater use and improve the occupancy rate of in-house carers. It was noted that recruitment is challenged by London's high housing costs, fewer people having spare rooms, and the changed profile of fostering compared to decades ago. It was noted that the ask of foster families had evolved considerably which required training, development and support.
- (JB) There were currently 356 looked after children of which 40 were in residential care and the remainder with an in-house or independent foster carer (IFA). IFA costs are significantly higher than the in-house team. It was also preferable to have in-house local foster care.

4.8 Jahnine Davis asked how the council was ensuring that more children remained close to local networks in placement decisions? In addition, clarification was sought on the council's approach to Kinship Care and the additional 'flex' being allowed by the central government in this area?

- (JB) It was stated the need to strengthen what is currently being done, making the approach more targeted and intentional to support children remaining in their networks. This includes looking at best practice nationally and locally, and developing what the local offer will look like for these carers who have historically been a "hidden" cohort. It was important to assess the local offer to meet the needs of carers and have a strategy to deliver on those. The important role that carers play does need to be acknowledged.

4.9 Cllr Troughton asked about the status of the £1.7 million vacancy rate savings target across both HE and CSC?

- (JB) The performance against this target has been approximately the same for the last three years. The target is difficult to achieve in front-line services like social work and the EHCP teams within Education, as vacancies cannot be held there. Savings are therefore sought in other, non-front-line parts of the service.

4.10 The Chair asked for further details of the costs of semi-independent accommodation for care leavers and what changes have been made to reduce costs?

- (DB) The cost has risen exponentially from approximately £390 a week to £952 per week. Concerns were also raised about the variable quality of these accommodations. The commissioning service is profiling the cost-effectiveness of running the council's own semi-independent units to improve quality and manage costs, despite the challenge of not owning the buildings outright. Feedback from young people noted that improvements need to be made to provision. Given these ongoing concerns around the quality of commissioned services, assessments were being made about whether it would be cheaper to develop own commissioned semi-independent care in the borough.

4.11 The Chair asked how has the £2.59 million Children's Social Care Prevention Grant been spent to reduce demand for children's social care? What is the intended outcome of the Prevention Grant spending?

- (LA) The fixed-term grant is used as prime funding for significant change and transformation, including:
  - Funding the transformation team.
  - Strengthening the approach to Family Group Decision Making.
  - Creating Parental Advocacy for child protection conferences.
  - Developing new Child Protection Practitioner roles and moving to a neighbourhood model.
  - Cushioning caseloads during the transformation to manage risk.
  - Training the workforce for a whole partnership approach.
  - Resourcing community and voluntary groups to facilitate co-design with children and families.
- (LA) The investment is intended to get the service to an excellent position, create a shift in the balance of power dynamics in how the service works with children, and ultimately deliver a cost-neutral service in the long term by reducing future demand and costs.

#### Questions from the Commission - Hackney Education

4.12 Andy English enquired about the rising SEND transport costs, asking for details on the actions being taken to address budget pressures, any audits undertaken, and opportunities for improved commissioning arrangements.

- (JB) The representative for the local authority confirmed the widely-held challenge that virtually every local authority overspends on home-to-school transport for children with SEND. It was reported that the council's commissioning service had assumed responsibility for the strategic planning and negotiating of this service delivery. Other actions included: re-brokering expensive taxi routes and successfully transitioning more children from taxis to buses which led to an initial mitigation of the overspend in this service area from a projected £1.3 million to just under £1 million. Towards the end of the financial year, the expected mitigation was anticipated to be £500,000, rather than the previously forecast £300,000, demonstrating the financial benefit of the commissioning service's work.
- (JB) Independent Travel Training was being re-brokered and given a renewed push due to a low previous uptake. It was noted that this initiative has significant non-economic benefits, fostering children's self-worth and ability to travel the borough independently. In terms of the statutory override, the local authority participated in the government's Delivering Better Value program. Applying the principles of this program, including using the commissioning service for brokerage and adopting a 'right support at the right time' approach, had successfully reduced the projected deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) balance sheet from a predicted £21 million to £19 million at the end of the last financial year, and further to £16 million in the current year.
- (JB) The local authority acknowledged persistent overspend in the Education Psychology Service and the Education Health and Care (EHC) planning team due to the high volume of requests. It was specified that with approximately 3,800 EHC plans requiring annual review, the service would need an additional 49 staff costing £3 million purely for the reviewing function, resources which the council did not possess. Creative working methods are therefore being employed to manage the service without overextending staff and to ensure families do not wait too long for annual re-evaluations.

4.13 Andy English also questioned officers regarding the rising number of local authority maintained schools forecasting a deficit, with the total expected to exceed £8 million by year-end 2024-2025. Given the risk to the council's reserves, the commission asked what additional support and challenge was being provided to maintained schools to help contain and reduce budget overspends.

- (JB) The representative outlined a robust approach taken over the last 18 months. A new School Estate Strategy was introduced to ensure the

sustainability and financial sustainability of schools moving forward, specifically addressing the negative impact of falling pupil rolls. The strategy encourages schools to work together, exploring hard and soft federations to mitigate leadership, management, and shared operational costs.

- (JB) The council maintains an agreement of deficit recovery plans with relevant schools. Schools receive support from the school's finance team and school improvements team, which includes looking at staffing structures and assisting school business managers with budget management. To manage workforce changes, the council holds regular termly redundancy panels and provides funds for redundancy payments for restructures from the council's general fund, in line with relevant rules. A Schools Finance Monitoring Board is in place to help schools and regularly review their projected finances.
- (JB) It was highlighted that the most challenging situation is balancing the need to keep enough support staff for an inclusive environment with the reduced funding available due to fewer children, particularly with falling pupil rolls.
- (DMB) The area-based planning initiative, which underpins the broader education strategy, brings school leaders together to collaborate system-wide, focusing on all children, especially those underserved.

4.14 A number of members (Cllrs Gooch, Pinkerton, Binnie-Lubbock) noted that only about half of the proposed savings were on track and asked for the reasons behind the underperformance, whether these savings would be achieved in the next financial year, and specifically requested details on the transformation of the CE directorate and the financial savings related to Children's Centres (how much savings been delivered)?

- (JB) CE Directorate Transformation to stop role duplication. The saving was confirmed to be on track for delivery in the next financial year. The delay was attributed to staff fatigue and stress caused by the constant change program of nine restructures in the last year, which involved staff having to apply for roles, being ring-fenced, and assimilated. A review of the business support service was completed, and this line of saving is expected to be met by the end of the year.
- (JB) Savings for the children education commissioning function was delayed in being set up because the Group Director was away from work for several months. It is now on track to deliver the £250,000 savings by the end of the year.
- (JB) Children's Centres - Fees and Charges: savings against fees and charges for the day care aspect were being made, and there will be inflationary fee increases in the next year. It was noted that the council is one of only two London authorities that subsidizes pre-school childcare from the general fund, without ring-fenced grants. Determining the definitive impact on fees and charges, including income from government subsidies (e.g., free entitlement), will require waiting until the end of the year for a final report. The planned savings related to the reconfiguration of children's centres were not achieved because the restructure did not take place. This amount has been removed from the budget and represents a current budget pressure, with no plans to address it in the current financial year.

4.15 Cllr Suso-Runge requested an update on the Secretary of State's pledge to make it easier for children with SEND to attend schools closer to home and reduce transport costs.

- (JB) The local authority was pleased to announce the following achievements and commitments, Ickburgh special school capacity was being increased by an extra 48 places through the use of the previously closed Baden Powell school site, enabling children to stay closer to home.
- (JB) The administration was on track to deliver its manifesto pledge to increase the number of SEND places in schools by 300. This increase includes new provisions in maintained schools and through additional resource programs in academy schools. This strategy aligns with the long-term goal of increasing inclusivity, allowing the expertise within these settings to spill out into the rest of the school system. The commitment is to have children stay and be educated

locally, which helps to build parent confidence and reinforces the independence of the child.

4.16 The Chair thanked officers for attending and responding to questions from the Commission.

## 5 Families First Programme (19.55)

5.1 Following the Independent Review of Children's Social Care (the MacAlister Review, 2023), the government announced plans to reform children's social care via the Families First Partnership Programme. The Families First Partnership Programme provides guidance for the transformation of local children's social care services through early intervention and multi-agency collaboration. The premise of this programme is to ensure that local services are structured to provide earlier more coordinated support to families which may prevent the need for more serious interventions later.

### Children & Families Service

5.2 Officers presented a report detailing Hackney Children's Social Care plans to structure provision to the requirements of the Families First Partnership Programme.

- (LA) reported that the reforms mandated by the Department for Education (DfE) were seismic, representing the biggest change to services since the Children Act 1989. The authority had been learning from the experiences of ten national pathfinder areas to inform the local approach for development of mandated services:
- (LA) The DfE required the creation of a single, non-stigmatising Family Help Service. This service would integrate targeted early help, Child in Need (Section 17), and child protection statutory work to reduce transitions and maintain consistency of professional relationships for families.
- (LA) The DfE introduced flexibility for work at the Child in Need level to be undertaken by alternatively qualified practitioners (e.g., family support worker, youth worker, health visitor) as well as social workers. It was confirmed that the authority would retain accountability for all family help work internally, noting that few pathfinders had adopted this external flexibility due to risks.
- (LA) Delivery of the Family Help Service would transition to a neighbourhood model, with services co-located in existing children and family hubs. This change was expected to strengthen connections between family help teams and local schools, health services, and community partnerships.
- (LA) The authority was mandated to strengthen family group decision-making from the point of involvement onwards. This would involve training practitioners to undertake systemic inquiries to involve a family's wider network (e.g., neighbours, friends, faith leaders) earlier in the process.
- (LA) A Multi-Agency Child Protection Team was required, which must include Police, Health, Education, and the Local Authority. This team would introduce a Lead Child Protection Practitioner role, extended from the strategy discussion onwards, to oversee Section 47 child protection inquiries and chair child protection conferences. The team was intended to act as a second pair of eyes, working alongside the Family Help teams to strengthen partnership accountability and coordinate important decisions, with an aim to intervene at a lower level than a Section 47 inquiry where possible.
- (LA) The authority was in the scoping and design phase, with a requirement to begin implementation from April next year and complete full implementation by December 2028. Implementation of the neighbourhood Family Help Team was planned to be phased. Strong multi-agency commitment to the vision was reported despite financial challenges. Key work streams were underway, including: systems, structures, processes and roles for Family Health; strengthening the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH); Family Group Decision-Making; Workforce and Practice Development (focused on long-term

culture shift); response to extra-familial harm; digital and data work; and co-design with children, families, and community groups.

- (Cllr Sizer) The new model was welcomed as a culture shift towards early intervention, a more compassionate service, and a joined-up system led by one key person for each family.
- (DMB) Hackney has never really moved away from the Sure Start model of coordinated early help, so was in a good position to deliver on the required changes.

#### Questions from the Commission

5.3 Cllr Gordon asked officers to describe how will a family's experience with the service be different under the new model compared to the current one?

- (LA) The current system involves repeatedly passing families through various teams (Assessment and Planning, Family Support, Child Protection), which disrupts relationships and forces families to retell their stories during times of crisis. The new model will significantly improve this by allocating a family to a single lead practitioner in a Family Health Team. This person will support the family throughout their journey until support is no longer required. The approach will be relational, and the family will remain with the team, with joint work and a qualified social worker stepping out as risk diminishes.

5.4 Cllr Gordon asked how will the experience of a child protection social worker be different in the multi-agency model?

- (LA) The current system makes the social worker solely responsible for coordinating strategy discussions and gathering all necessary professionals (e.g., police, health, school), which is considered a single point of failure. The new multi-agency child protection team will share this responsibility, ensuring the right professional is brought in from health, education, etc. The social worker will benefit from a collaborative approach to information gathering and decision-making for strategy discussions.

5.5 Cllr Gordon asked how consultation and co-design with service users was being approached to ensure that the right approach is developed locally?

- (LA) The process is in the early design stages. The first step was to review all existing feedback from children and families to avoid asking repetitive questions. The focus is not on asking families to design the service structure but rather on co-producing the approach to practice, which is systemic, trauma-informed, and anti-racist. The team is building long-term, trusted relationships with community and voluntary groups, avoiding an "extractionist" model, to ensure the new approach is culturally competent and appropriate for families from different religious and cultural backgrounds. A launch event was planned for early 2026 to start off this long term piece of work.
- (DB) emphasised that the model would be introduced in an iterative way, piloting new ways of working, reflecting on impact and accessibility then further rolling that out if successful.

5.6 Cllr Binnie Lubbock asked how will the voice of the child be preserved and promoted within the new system?

- (LA) The Children's Rights service, which provides advocacy, will be making a direct offer around Family Group Decision-Making and child protection conferences. Furthermore, the design of the new single Family Health Assessment and Plan includes specific questions, developed with clinical input, to capture the child's perspective and compare it to the parent's, ensuring that a "family voice" incorporates multiple viewpoints.

5.7 Cllr Binnie Lubbock asked if local IT infrastructure is sufficient to support the new approach, and what are the cost implications?

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- (LA) While the Department for Education is coordinating national changes with system providers like Liquid Logic and Mosaic, further local improvements are necessary. This includes considering a portal system for families to access and add notes to their file. Further investment is required, although the long-term aim for the program is to be cost-neutral.
- (DB) The concept is to reduce the number of children entering care or being subject to court proceedings, but definitive evidence on savings is not yet available from pathfinder programs.

5.8 The Chair asked if the FFPP can be linked to the review of the support for young parents?

- (JB) Reported that a meeting was taking place with the Homerton Hospital to discuss the extended health visiting service and there was a good response to this. Children and Family Hubs were a key part of this service redesign as they shared the service footprint and the early help.

5.9 Cllr Gooch asked what has been the initial response and what are the main concerns from the workforce regarding these changes?

- (LA) Workshops have been held to gather feedback on the strengths and worries of the vision, with staff also co-developing solutions. Concerns are practical, and centred on the transformation process itself, new aspects of specific roles, and logistical complexities, which are actively being addressed. Despite these worries, the strength of the vision ensures that the vast majority of the workforce is supportive.

5.10 Cllr Gooch asked if the changes are anticipated to impact on recruitment and retention of staff, particularly social workers?

- (LA) It is currently difficult to predict the full impact on recruitment and retention as the new structure has not been designed. However, since this is a national reform, staff cannot simply move to a local authority that is retaining the old structure. The current approach is a phased, slow, and steady implementation to ensure the workforce is brought along with the changes.

5.11 Cllr Turbet-Delof asked what is the strategy for engaging the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), especially given their financial context?

- (LA) The team acknowledges the financial pressures on VCS partners. A policy has been established to ensure small, vulnerable, and often Black and Global Majority community groups are engaged and compensated for their time and involvement (they need to be resourced), as they are key to reaching families that statutory services may struggle to access. The aim is to strengthen long-term relationships and networks around families, not just to extract information. Furthermore, a grant-based funding model has been implemented for children's social care commissioning to support smaller organisations.

5.12 Cllr Suso-Runge will the disability service be discrete or integrated into the new model?

- (LA) The service has chosen to retain the disabled children's service as a specialist, discrete team to avoid dispersing expertise across neighbourhood teams. It is being updated to the Disabled Family Health Team to be more inclusive and will include alternatively qualified practitioners alongside qualified social workers, mirroring the wider family health team. For the time being, it will remain a single team delivering across the whole borough.

5.13 The Chair noted that FFP places greater emphasis on family networks and family group decision making to support children and their families. Can officers clarify how family group decision making (FGDM) will work in practice and how this model will be developed in Hackney reflect the needs of local communities (e.g. Charedi Community, Black Caribbean Families, Turkish).

- (LA) The FGDM offer is planned as a blended model. All family health practitioners will be skilled in systemic, trauma-informed, and anti-racist approaches to network navigation. For cultural competence, community groups are being consulted on how the practice should look and feel for various ethnic and religious groups. The intention is to commission (spot purchase) and train community organisations to coordinate Family Group Meetings and Child Protection Advocacy, allowing families to choose a coordinator from either the council's core group or a community partner.

5.14 Cllr Pinkerton asked what are the key learnings from the national local authority pathfinders - especially as those located in London?

- (LA) The team has closely followed the ten pathfinders. A key learning is the need to avoid a "big bang" approach, as seen in Redbridge, which resulted in significant system instability. The council is adopting a phased approach to implementation, similar to Luton, to test and learn on a small scale before rolling out, ensuring the model works and using early adopters to support wider network change.

5.15 The Chair asked what steps are being taken to ensure service user engagement is successful?

- (LA) The team is moving away from a concept of "failure to engage" by a parent, recognizing that a family's lack of engagement is often a communication about their experience of structural oppression. The service is embodying a systemic, trauma-informed, and anti-racist approach to adapt its method of engagement. This includes addressing the power dynamic from the first contact by proactively asking families who they want to be present (e.g., a community group, faith leader, or neighbour).

5.16 The Chair thanked officers for presenting on this important new development and for their work in implementing changes to date.

## **6 Sexual & Reproductive Health Services for Young People (20.45)**

6.1 In September 2023, the Commission reviewed sexual and reproductive health services for young people. City and Hackney Public Health department produced a report which focused on two specific areas of interest to the Commission:

- The decommissioning of CHIPS (the dedicated sexual and reproductive health service for young people in Hackney; and,
- The draft Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy.

6.2 Following this meeting, the Commission produced a response to the relevant Cabinet members in February 2024. The response highlighted a number of key issues including:

- Variability of young people's local experiences of sexual health and relationship education in schools;
- The need for further integration and further partnerships in delivery of sexual and reproductive health services;
- Concerns around provisions for U16's and U18's in the absence of CHIPS.

6.3 The Commission followed up on these issues at its meeting in June 2025 and produced a short response with some further suggestions for development and improvement. The Cabinet member provided a formal response to these issues.

6.4 Members noted the Cabinet response.

## **7 Hackney Education Strategy 2025-2028 (20.50)**

7.1 At its meeting on 13th October 2025, the Commission reviewed the draft Hackney Education Strategy 2025-2028, together with summary findings of the public consultation. The Commission agreed to provide a response to the draft strategy ahead of planned its agreement by Cabinet in December 2025. The Commission produced a response which was submitted to the Cabinet member for Children Services and Young People on 21st October 2025.

7.2 Members noted the Commission's response.

## **8 Behaviour Management & School Inclusion (20.55)**

8.1 The Chair updated member members on the review:

- Call for Evidence - the success of the Commission's review is centred on the number and quality of responses to the Call for Evidence.
- Focus Groups update -
  - Head teachers 14th / 15th January
  - School governors 7th January
  - Parents - 19th and 21st January
  - Young people 22nd and 29th January

8.2 Members noted the updates.

## **9 Work Programme (21.10)**

9.1 In light of the publication of the City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Safeguarding Practice Review into Mossbourne Victoria Park Academy, the Commission will take this report at the next meeting on 12th January 2026. The Commission is in the process of securing attendees for the meeting, including the Department of Education.

9.2 Ofsted recently undertook a SEND area inspection in Hackney, the outcomes for which will be published early in 2026. The Commission will accommodate the published report in its work programme when it is published.

9.3 The Commission agreed to reconfigure the work programme to accommodate the above changes.

- DM Bramble Q & A will now move to March 2026.
- SEND Area Inspection Report to be presented in March 2026
- The planned item on young people not in education, training or employment for March 2026 will be deferred.

9.4 Given the attendees for the MPVA report on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026, the CHSCP Annual Report will now also be taken at the same meeting but as a brief update.

9.5 The work programme for the remainder of the municipal year 2025/26 was noted by the Commission.

## **10 Minutes**

10.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were not ready for publication for this meeting and will be published at the next meeting.

10.2 There are 3 follow up information requests from the 15th September meetings which are attached for members to note:

- Update on Affordable Childcare Commission
- Update on Ernst & Young Children Centre recommendations

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- EQIA - update on EQIA to support decision to change banding subsidy structure.

10.3 Members noted these responses, but requested that further time be found for further discussion of this additional information.

## **11 Any Other Business**

11.1 There was no other business.

11.2 The next meeting of the Commission is on the 12th January 2026

Duration of the meeting: 2hrs 5min