

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Policy and Oversight Board

Date: 11/12/2023

Subject: Youth Voice Update

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Responsible Director: Jacqui McShannon, Strategic Director Children's Services

SUMMARY

This report provides an update to Policy and Oversight Board on recent developments to strengthen the reach and impact of youth voice in Hammersmith & Fulham. It explains the approach adopted by the Youth Council (with support from officers and community partners) to research, define, and action the priorities of our young people on their key areas of focus:

- Inclusion
- Mental Health & Emotional Well Being
- Life skills (*preparation for adulthood*)
- Staying safe
- Work experience and work readiness

The report also outlines progress to date and next steps.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For the Board to note and comment on the approach and progress and agree how to support the next steps.
2. For the Board to identify a link Policy and Accountability Chair to support the young people with each of their priority areas.

Wards Affected: All

Our Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Creating a compassionate council	Through youth voice opportunities we aim to expand opportunities and possibilities in young people's lives so they feel valued, connected to their community and acquire transferable skills.

Doing things with local residents, not to them	Youth Voice in H&F means truly valuing the voices and lived experiences of our young residents to shape a happier, healthier and safer borough.
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Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

None.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Background

1. A collaborative youth voice strategy was launched in July in 2022. Co-produced with our Youth Council, Children’s Services Colleagues, and community partners – including the Young Hammersmith & Fulham Foundation – it aimed to streamline and strengthen the reach, influence and impact of youth voice and embed co-production with young people as *‘the way we do things’*.
2. Key priorities included:
 - Having an evidence-base of young people’s priorities that could be the driver for our strategic boards and partnerships.
 - Expanding the reach, visibility and impact of our Youth Council, further developing its diversity and representation of all of our young people.
 - A fun, inclusive, creative youth voice programme and calendar of activities, linking with our youth providers and targeted services.
 - To develop clear governance arrangements, feedback mechanisms and evidence of the impact.
 - A borough wide approach to driving forward the young people’s priorities with increased collaboration across our departments and community partners.

Progress to date

3. Following an outreach programme and open events throughout the borough, we have a thriving and more diverse and representative Youth Council, with over 50 active members. We continue to host outreach sessions throughout the borough and have an inclusive calendar of youth voice activities.
4. Evidence based policy training was delivered to the Youth Council by the Industrial Strategy Lead - Tom Perrigo.
5. The Youth Council have delivered a creative and inclusive borough wide research project in collaboration with our youth providers, targeted services,

and community partners. This has included arts and drama-based sessions, focus groups, online polls and surveys, social media, and video projects.

6. We have captured the views and experiences of over 2000 young people and have developed a core set of priorities for the key areas of focus.
7. Matt Sales, Assistant Director, Programmes, Assurance and Analytics, assisted with identifying strategic leads to support the young people from across all our council departments.
8. There have been two well attended meetings with the young people and strategic leads on 19 and 24 September 2023. The leads have shared the work already being delivered and proposed in relation to the young people's priorities and together we have identified any outstanding gaps.
9. Additional workshops are planned on Community Safety, Healthy Relationships & Volunteering for Young People, areas we feel need further discussion with the young people.
10. Youth Council presented this approach to Full Council on 1 November 2023.

Next steps

11. A report is being produced detailing the young people's priorities and the services, support and initiatives currently being delivered or upcoming that support these priorities and the identified gaps.
12. This will be shared with the young people and strategic leads at the next session on 12 December 2023, which will enable us to start to co-produce collaborative actions.
13. Strategic leads will be responsible for ensuring that the views of young people are taken into account within strategic priorities and service delivery. This will be monitored through present governance structures to ensure that actions are implemented.
14. Further sessions are planned in early 2024 to develop an action plan which can be presented at the next Policy and Oversight Board meeting.

Proposed involvement of the Policy Oversight Board

15. Youth Council will explain the approach to Policy Oversight Board and present their slides at the December meeting.
16. For the Board to identify a link to support the young people with each of their priority areas.
17. The strategic leads could give updates on how they are supporting with driving the young people's priorities forward at Children and Education Policy and Accountability Committee or other relevant meetings.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Youth Voice Update Presentation