

Notice of Meeting

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 12 July 2023 - 7:00 pm
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Barking

Members: Cllr Glenda Paddle (Chair); Cllr Dorothy Akwaboah (Deputy Chair); Cllr Andrew Achilleos, Cllr Donna Lumsden, Cllr Fatuma Nalule, Cllr Ingrid Robinson, Cllr Paul Robinson, Cllr Muazzam Sandhu, Cllr Phil Waker and Cllr Mukhtar Yusuf

Co-Opted Members (for education matters only): Glenda Spencer, Sarfraz Akram, Sajjad Ali and Richard Hopkins

By Invitation: Cllr Saima Ashraf, Cllr Sade Bright and Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe

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Fiona Taylor
Chief Executive

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AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declaration of Members' Interests

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Members are asked to declare any interest they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting.

3. Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2023 (Pages 3 - 9)

4. Readiness for the SEND Area Inspection (Pages 11 - 31)

5. **Tackling Unemployment and Inactivity in Barking and Dagenham (Pages 33 - 51)**
6. **Heritage Services Overview (Pages 53 - 66)**
7. **Work Programme (Pages 67 - 69)**
8. **Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**
9. **To consider whether it would be appropriate to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting due to the nature of the business to be transacted.**

Private Business

The public and press have a legal right to attend Council meetings such as the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, except where business is confidential or certain other sensitive information is to be discussed. The list below shows why items are in the private part of the agenda, with reference to the relevant legislation (the relevant paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended). ***There are no such items at the time of preparing this agenda.***

10. **Any confidential or exempt items which the Chair decides are urgent**

Our Vision for Barking and Dagenham

**ONE BOROUGH; ONE COMMUNITY;
NO-ONE LEFT BEHIND**

Our Priorities

- Residents are supported during the current Cost-of-Living Crisis;
- Residents are safe, protected, and supported at their most vulnerable;
- Residents live healthier, happier, independent lives for longer;
- Residents prosper from good education, skills development, and secure employment;
- Residents benefit from inclusive growth and regeneration;
- Residents live in, and play their part in creating, safer, cleaner, and greener neighbourhoods;
- Residents live in good housing and avoid becoming homeless.

To support the delivery of these priorities, the Council will:

- Work in partnership;
- Engage and facilitate co-production;
- Be evidence-led and data driven;
- Focus on prevention and early intervention;
- Provide value for money;
- Be strengths-based;
- Strengthen risk management and compliance;
- Adopt a “Health in all policies” approach.

The Council has also established the following three objectives that will underpin its approach to equality, diversity, equity and inclusion:

- Addressing structural inequality: activity aimed at addressing inequalities related to the wider determinants of health and wellbeing, including unemployment, debt, and safety;
- Providing leadership in the community: activity related to community leadership, including faith, cohesion and integration; building awareness within the community throughout programme of equalities events;
- Fair and transparent services: activity aimed at addressing workforce issues related to leadership, recruitment, retention, and staff experience; organisational policies and processes including use of Equality Impact Assessments, commissioning practices and approach to social value.

MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 7 June 2023
(7:03 - 9:21 pm)

Present: Cllr Glenda Paddle (Chair), Cllr Dorothy Akwaboah (Deputy Chair), Cllr Fatuma Nalule, Cllr Ingrid Robinson, Cllr Muazzam Sandhu and Cllr Phil Waker; Sajjad Ali and Richard Hopkins

Also Present: Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe

Apologies: Cllr Andrew Achilleos, Cllr Donna Lumsden, Cllr Paul Robinson, Cllr Mukhtar Yusuf, Glenda Spencer and Sarfraz Akram

1. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2023 were confirmed as correct.

3. Update: How are we incorporating Race & Social Justice work into our schools' education programmes?

The Education Strategy Commissioning and Intelligence Lead and the Chief Executive of Barking and Dagenham School Improvement Partnership (BDSIP) presented an update on how the Council, BDSIP and schools in the Borough were incorporating Race and Social Justice work into their education programmes. The Culture and Wellbeing Lead also detailed the Borough's Cultural Education Partnership (CEP) initiative known as 'Inspiring Futures', which worked to nurture links between cultural organisations and the Borough's schools, embedding cultural leadership and strengthening pathways for training and employment for the Borough's young people, into the cultural creative industries. Overall, the presentation outlined:

- The context behind the Race and Social Justice programme, and its three key themes of student experience and inclusion; staff experience, including recruitment and progression; and curriculum;
- The key features of the programme, such as the Race and Social Justice Charter, which set out the tangible commitments made by schools, and the programme leadership;
- Programme highlights; such as a Facilitators' Network which shared best practice amongst schools, provided external training and identified challenges and priorities;
- The Inspiring Futures Conference, which had taken place in November 2022;
- Case studies from schools, who had shared their practice through the Facilitators' Network;
- The context behind the Cultural Education Partnership, its priorities and

- how these would be achieved; and
- Some of the work and initiatives achieved through the Cultural Education Partnership, such as the INIVA workshops, the Young Creators Makerspace, and close partnership working with Film Barking and Dagenham, to encourage young people to consider careers in film, and to diversify the industry at point of entry.

In response to questions from the Committee's co-opted Members, officers stated that:

- 45 out of the Borough's 60 schools were actively engaged in the Race and Social Justice programme. All schools had been approached to join, with the programme also having been promoted through events such as the Annual Headteachers' Conference, the Annual CEP Conference and the Governors' Conference; however, schools needed to want to participate of their own volition and could not be forced to take part. The 45 participating schools had also created a very close and collaborative network; it was suggested that forcing other schools to join this when they did not wish to, could potentially jeopardize some of this already close partnership working.
- Officers were grateful for current funding received, which could help to enhance the programme such as through enabling guest speakers to attend workshops; however, the most important aspect was that schools gave their time and energy to the programme, and were passionate about the project.
- The Facilitator Networks enabled schools to share case studies of their work; sometimes, this would revolve around the curriculum and other times this would detail broader issues, such as around staff survey feedback in relation to race and social justice issues, and actions to address this. Training was also provided around the curriculum, such as around diversifying learning opportunities.
- Officers had deliberately avoided setting monitoring and success criteria, as they were keen to ensure that as many schools as possible joined the programme and could begin from their own starting points. This approach had also been agreed with headteachers and those helping to lead the programme. It was key that the programme was viewed as an ongoing journey, rather than as a tickbox exercise. Officers regularly reported back to the Council as to key highlights and case studies from the programme; case studies were also a great way of encouraging other schools to consider their own approach and what else they could implement as part of their work.
- The one key metric to be highlighted was around engagement in schools, with work being done to increase further uptake.

The Young Mayor and the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum representatives expressed their concern that only 15 schools (only 2 of which were secondaries) had signed up to the Leeds Beckett anti-racism award, noting their own experiences with racism within schools and the importance of addressing this in children's school years, which were such a pivotal time in young peoples' lives. In response to questions, officers stated that:

- Every school had been invited to sign up to the Leeds Beckett anti-racism award. Paramijt Roopra, the Headteacher of Northbury Primary School and a lead for the Race and Social Justice Programme, had been instrumental

in promoting the programme to other schools; the fact that this message had come from another headteacher had been particularly impactful. Lead facilitators had been fundamental in promoting the programme, which also featured in a regular newsletter that was sent out to the Borough's schools.

- It was understood that this programme would not necessarily be the right tool for all schools, and so officers had deliberately avoided being prescriptive.
- Some schools had not joined the Leeds Beckett Award, such as All Saints Catholic School, as they had already put in place an award with another body, for example, to undertake an anti-racism equality charter.
- Officers were open to any suggestions from young people, their peers and colleagues in their schools as to how to expand the programme in schools.
- The Borough's special education schools, such as Trinity and Riverside Bridge, had been very engaged in the programme, with Trinity having also contributed best practice case studies as to their work at the programme's launch conference. This work had been particularly inspirational to other schools, as to how they could adapt their own work.
- In terms of encouraging young people to explore creative industry opportunities outside of the workshops, consistency of messaging and ensuring that the correct messaging was going out to schools, was vital. There were also continued professional development (CPD) opportunities for staff, such as to enable them to better understand these industries and then pass these messages down to pupils. The creative industry was one of the fastest growing in the country and was unlikely to be as hit by artificial intelligence (AI) as other industries in the future, meaning a greater robustness. Messaging also needed to support young people to find out information, as well as to empower their parents to feel confident about the opportunities in the industry.

In response to further questions from Members, officers stated that:

- There were lots of future opportunities for young people in the Borough, with the London food markets moving to Dagenham Dock and pathways being developed into the food and hospitality industries. It was therefore important to ensure that these opportunities were accessible to all schools and young people in the Borough.
- Lots of work was undertaken with cultural organisations on a strategic level, to ensure that Barking and Dagenham was seen as an attractive place to work, deliver programmes and be a partner organisation. As such, many of the initiatives offered to schools were free.
- Whilst not every young person would be interested in the film industry, it was important to recognise that there would be a need for related careers as part of this, such as for film and media law and film and media accountancy, as well as for skilled trades such as electricians, carpenters and metal workers. It was essential to help young people to best know their own pathways and progression routes and to support parents in this.
- Funding could prove a challenge, as the creative industry was often seen as a nicety rather than an essential. It was also important to talk to senior leaders in schools and explain how creative work linked to the wider strategic agenda, such as around its impact on the lives and the mobility of young people in their care.
- Where schools had not joined the programme, they were included in race

and social justice work through events such as Headteachers' Conferences, where race and social justice speakers were part of the agenda, to enable them to learn and to further encourage their interest.

- Schools had done great work around diversifying their curriculums, such as through incorporating more diverse books into these, and through hosting race and social justice talks for their children and young people. Members praised this work undertaken so far and highlighted the importance of amending the curriculum to include more information around race and social justice where possible.

Members, the Young Mayor and the BAD Youth Forum representatives emphasised the importance of children and young people learning about each other's cultures and experiences; whilst it was understood that there was a desire for each school to join the programme at its own pace, the diversity of the local community meant that there was a great need for schools to join, and that an opt-in voluntary approach, rather than a mandatory approach, meant that many young people were missing out on crucial learning and inclusion opportunities. The Young Mayor and the BAD Youth Forum encouraged officers to approach young people to hear their opinions and enable them to hold their schools to account; whilst officers had worked with groups such as the Peer Support Group (PSG) and Flipside in the context of 'Inspiring Futures', they had not yet engaged with the BAD Youth Forum around the Race & Social Justice programme and agreed to attend a session to seek the perspectives of its young people.

Officers, along with the Cabinet Member for Educational Attainment and School Improvement, urged Members to disseminate information about the programmes to schools (especially to those where they were parent governors), to encourage programme uptake and to further promote the importance of race and social justice work, as well as cultural education opportunities for young people. Officers also noted that the programme was not intended to be a "quick fix"; whilst lots of positive work and engagement had been undertaken over the past two years, more work was still to be done and officers requested that they return in a year to report back on progress, by which point it was hoped that further schools would have signed up to the programme.

4. Update: Quality of Schools' Recovery Post Covid-19

The Interim Head of School Performance and Partnerships (HSPP) delivered an update presentation on the quality of schools' recovery post-Covid-19. This detailed:

- The current cohorts of children and young people, and the great impact of the pandemic on their learning;
- Statistics from the Prince's Trust around young people's thoughts as to their futures, with an overwhelmingly negative outlook due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis in particular, as to their future work prospects, job security and life aspirations;
- The fact that whilst exam grades were now being graded as those prior to the pandemic and were "going back to normal", that normal still felt a very long way to go in schools;
- The general consensus that whilst all children and young people had been impacted by the pandemic, those youngest had been particularly affected;

- 2022 outcomes for primary, GCSE and post-16, with both positive and negative results;
- Information as to pupil attendance, Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET), suspensions and exclusions;
- Stresses on the system, such as increased numbers of children and young people suffering from mental health and anxiety problems, and a doubling of requests for Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessments, which were now standing at 500 per annum;
- Staffing issues as a result of the pandemic, such as higher absence rates and lower resilience, and severe recruitment issues for more specialised support;
- Positive OFSTED inspections of the Borough's primary and secondary schools, which spoke very positively as to their resilience and increased support for children and young people's wellbeing. 95% of the Borough's schools were rated as "good" or "outstanding", which was above the London average;
- The positive OFSTED thematic review of alternative provision in the Borough, which had taken place in March 2023; and
- Further positive approaches to supporting pupil wellbeing and learning, such as the introduction of the 'Best Chance Strategy'.

The Church Representative (Church of England) Co-optee praised the Borough's excellent alternative provision and its schools' OFSTED outcomes, having worked as a Headteacher in the Borough previously and noting the hard work and passion needed to achieve these.

In response to questions from the Committee's co-opted Members, the HSPP stated that:

- Whilst schools' data did not always look positive, despite their achievements, the OFSTED framework itself no longer put a huge value on data. When OFSTED went into schools in the Borough, it saw that the schools were performing very well in the context in which they were operating. This included looking at wellbeing, what happened both inside and outside of the classroom, extracurricular activity and what happened to support young people when they were not doing so well. Whilst schools needed to continue to be ambitious for their young people, ensuring that their results were as close to or beyond the London and national averages, OFSTED recognised that education was holistic, and that schools brought multiple strengths.
- A report published by the Government on 7 June 2023 noted that the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged young people had reverted to where it had been 10 years prior to the pandemic. Whilst exam results were important, pupils needed to be supported holistically.

The Young Mayor noted her own experiences of the pandemic and its effect on her education, highlighting the disparity that would very likely be seen in the upcoming exam results. She noted that the education system felt very rigid and unsupportive in some aspects, rather than being holistic, and discussed some of her own experiences in relation to pupil attendance, noting the various reasons as to absence for students, such as through feeling unsupported in their school environments when facing issues. She also highlighted the difficult working

conditions for teachers, which contributed to issues with staff retention and expressed her concerns around the impact of this for future pupils who would sit exams. The HSPP expressed her concern as to the negative experiences of the Young Mayor. She noted that the OFSTED framework was a national comparator, which reflected the different experiences in schools across the UK. She also echoed the difficulties in the teaching profession, highlighting the impact of Covid-19 and the support that schools worked to provide, despite recruitment issues in terms of specialist support.

In response to questions from Members, the Commissioning Director for Education stated that:

- The Council has around £50m in its high needs budget that it spends broadly on children with additional and special educational needs. The allocations are agreed at Schools' Forum, which includes Headteacher representatives. We have to make the best use of the resource in a context where there are not enough specialist placements across the country. We aim to educate locally as far as is possible. In 2022 the number of Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessments being requested doubled. School budgets are under pressure owing to rising costs and recruitment of specialist support staff is challenging. There are many children who need an Additional Resource Provision (ARP) placement or a special school placement. The local authority continues to increase places but at the moment more are still needed owing to increased demand.
- Barking and Dagenham is one of the few local authorities in the country that do not have a deficit on its high needs block and do not have to make savings or cuts to high needs provision. Whilst there are lots of stresses in the system, there are positives and strengths. There is funding (although never enough), schools are highly inclusive, there are 34 ARPs (one of the highest proportions in the country), meaning that many children can be in a mainstream school alongside getting specialist support). There is a very strong Culture of LBBDD schools working together.
- Barking and Dagenham has created 160 additional special school places in the last couple of years, with another 36 becoming available from September 2023. To give an indication of the pressure 19 children have come into the borough from other parts of the country since January 2023, requiring a special school place, highlighting the difficult context that schools and the local authority were working in.
- Barking and Dagenham has put together a commission of around £400k to pay for private speech and language therapists and occupational therapists, to address the gaps in health provision for our children.

Members praised the response of schools to the Covid-19 pandemic and their work in supporting the Borough's pupils. The Chair requested that officers return to update the Committee as to schools' recovery progress, in one year's time.

5. Readiness for the SEND Area Inspection

This item was deferred to the Committee's 12 July 2023 meeting, to enable it to receive the necessary time and attention from the Committee.

6. Draft Work Programme 2023/24

The Draft Work Programme for 2023/24 was agreed.

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12 July 2023

Title: Readiness for the SEND Area Inspection	
Report of the Commissioning Director Education	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Jane Hargreaves, Commissioning Director Education	Contact Details: E-mail: jane.hargreaves@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Jane Hargreaves, Commissioning Director Education	
Accountable Strategic Leadership Director: Elaine Allegretti, Strategic Director, Children's and Adults	
<p>Summary</p> <p>Barking and Dagenham is expecting a SEND area inspection within the next 12 months. It is an inspection of the arrangements within the local area, which includes Education, Health and Social Care.</p> <p>The new Inspection Framework was first implemented in January 2023. The first inspection in London took place in March. Areas are expected to undertake a self-evaluation (SEF) of strengths and areas for improvement. Our SEF and action plan are working documents which are regularly updated and can be discussed with the Committee as requested.</p> <p>The new inspection framework will be challenging for Barking and Dagenham and for many other areas given the pressures and staff shortages across the system. The presentation attached sets out the main areas for improvement which we have identified and key actions which partners need to take. It also provides feedback on the Thematic Review of Alternative Provision (AP) led by Ofsted, which took place over three weeks in March and actions we are taking to improve readiness.</p> <p>Ofsted's letter to us following their Thematic Review visit is attached as Appendix 1.</p>	
<p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:</p> <p>(i) Note the improvement priorities and inspection requirements; and</p> <p>(ii) Use their role to support the improvement priorities, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving the local offer for children, young people and families with SEND; and - Improving training and employment opportunities for young people with SEND. 	

Reason(s)

The improvements set out in the presentation, SEF and Action Plan are necessary not just for inspection, but because of the impact that they have on the lives of children and young people with SEND and their families.

The work programme supports the Council's aim of no one left behind. It supports the corporate priorities of supporting residents to live healthier, happier, independent lives and to prosper from good education, skills development and secure employment.

1. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Kofi Adu, Group Finance Manager

- 1.1 The Local Authority is expecting a SEND Area inspection within the next 12 months. Additional temporary staff have been recruited to provide support in preparation for the inspection. Funding provision has been made from the High Need budget to assist with any financial commitments in preparation for the inspection.

2. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Nicola Monerville, Principal Solicitor, Safeguarding

- 2.1 Ofsted and the CQC carry out joint inspections of local areas at the request of the Secretary of State for Education under section 20(1)(a) of the Children Act 2004. At their discretion, they may also carry out monitoring inspections of local areas using their power in section 20(2) of the Children Act 2004.
- 2.2 The SEND Area inspection is to ensure that local area partners are complying with relevant legal duties relating to children with SEND.

Those relevant legal duties are contained in the Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010, Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND code of Practice.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- [SEND Area Inspection Framework and handbook](#)
- [Special Educational needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) and Alternative Provision \(AP\) Improvement Plan](#)

List of appendices:

- Appendix 1: 'Readiness for SEND Area Inspection' Presentation
- Appendix 2: Ofsted Letter: Thematic Review of Alternative Provision (AP)

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**Readiness for SEND Area Inspection
Wednesday 7th June**

Jane Hargreaves – Commissioning Director Education

one borough; one community; no one left behind

The SEND Local Area Inspection Framework

Two main areas of focus:

- The impact of its Local Area Partnership's SEND arrangements on the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND.
- How the Local Area Partners work together to plan, evaluate and develop the SEND system.

Local Area SEND Inspections Key questions

- Children and young people's needs are identified accurately and assessed in a timely and effective way
 - Children, young people and their families participate in decision-making about their individual plans and support
 - Children and young people receive the right help and support at the right time
 - Children and young people are well prepared for their next steps and achieve strong outcomes
 - Children and young people with SEND are valued, visible and included in their communities
-
- Leaders are ambitious for children and young people with SEND
 - Leaders actively engage and work with children, young people and families
 - Leaders have an accurate, shared understanding of the needs of children and young people in their local area
 - Leaders commission services and provision to meet the needs and aspirations of children and young people
 - Leaders evaluate services and make improvements
 - Leaders create an environment for effective practice and multi-agency working to flourish

Local Area SEND Self Evaluation Form (SEF) and Action Plan

3 key questions:

1. What do you know about the impact of your arrangements for children and young people with SEND?

2. How do you know it?

3. What are your plans for the next 12 months to improve the experiences and outcomes of CYP with SEND?

Local Area SEND SEF – Priorities

Within these eleven areas, we identified six Main Priority Areas:

- **Strengthening the SEND Processes**

To continue to strengthen the SEND Team through improved substantive staffing in order to improve timeliness. To improve induction procedures and improve the retention rates through more effective staff development and support. To improve communication procedures with families, partners and providers

- **Joint Working**

The Board needs to address the critical shortage of specialist health professionals' advice and support. There must be greater use of joint commissioning leading to effective provision of therapies. Recognising that staff shortages are having an impact and improving recruitment and retention. We will also work more closely with parents, carers and young people and establish genuine co-production

- **The Guiding Principles (Assess, Plan, Do, Review. – meeting needs in mainstream without an EHCP)**

We need to ensure that there is effective identification of needs at the earliest possibility in the life of the young person. To ensure that the graduated response of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle is implemented fully across Education, Health and Social Care.

Local Area SEND SEF – Priorities cont'd

- **Improving the Local Offer** Recognition that the 'Local Offer' is more than information but is the offer that is available to all members of the community who have additional needs from 0-25 years of age across Education, Health and Adult Social care. As we develop provision in the Borough, we will invite co-production over the descriptions and how to access them, through an information rich system to allow easy research to everyone.
- **Sufficiency of Places and associated resource** To meet the increase in demand which has led to significant pressures on available provision, we will continue to work creatively and positively with schools and partners to increase local specialist places in line with our commitment to inclusive education.
- **Data collection and analysis** To understand the demands and how they are being met, we need to improve data gathering and analysis systems relating need and provision to the demographics of the Borough. We need to understand health, social care and education issues and provision, particularly with SEND. This will allow greater planning to meet future need.

Local Area Action Plan

The Action Plan has been written as a direct response to the issues raised in the SEF. They are gathered within the eleven Area Inspection areas and cross referenced to the six main priority areas

The issues have had actions identified along with those responsible for the actions. There are then expected outcomes for each action, along with timescale, and these will be 'RAG rated' and monitored closely by the SEND Area Board.

1. Children and young people's needs are identified accurately and assessed in a timely and effective way						
What we need to Improve and how we will do it						
Linked Areas to the SEF	Action	Lead	Programme Timescale	Impact	RAG	
Priority Area 1 Strengthening the SEND Processes						
Timeliness of EHCPs – address deterioration during 2022 from previously good performance.	Implement recovery plan to clear the backlog with additional staffing.	SMc	Jan-Dec 2023	Increasing numbers of EHCPs are produced within the 20 week deadline (see recovery plan for targets)		

Thematic Review of Alternative Provision (Ofsted, CQC and Social Care)

Oral Feedback – main messages

- We think you are doing this right.
- Ambition and care for each child ensures nearly every child gets back to mainstream or has appropriate provision.
- There is high quality alternative provision – the generosity of shared expertise of Mayesbrook is a key feature.
- Vulnerable children & young people are nurtured, supported and achieve well in Barking & Dagenham.
- Children here know that they are missed if they are not present.

Priority Actions

- Working systematically for the rest of this year to clear the backlog of EHCP assessments and improve timeliness.
- Appointing to key posts – Head of Statutory SEND Services
Virtual Headteacher SEND
Family Liaison post
Post 16 lead
- Keeping up with creation of new specialist places
- Work with parents and partners to improve Post 16 opportunities – and avoiding the cliff-edge at 25 – including re-establishing relationships with leadership of Barking and Dagenham College
- Improving support for parents and families – through Early Help/Heathway Centre
- Working with partners to improve access to therapies & recruit to Educational Psychologist vacancies

Inspection Preparation

- The SEND Area inspection is resource heavy – confirmed by the experience of the Thematic Review.
- Graham Pirt – An experienced consultant has helped us to prepare 3 key documents:
 - SEF, Action Plan and Strategy for the partnership
- Next priority is to appoint some inspection coordination capacity to draw together significant data and information required from the partners – as set out in Annex A of the inspection framework and to make sure we have the right documentation where there are gaps.

In summary

There are considerable – especially in practice in schools and settings – very high needs of inclusion.

There are many pressures and strains in the system including shortages of therapists and Educational Psychologists and we continue to work to increase the resources in the EHC team.

We mainly keep the focus on priority actions to address areas of weakness and combine our support for crosscutting areas – the Local Offer, Post 16 opportunities, support for families and the sufficiency of key staff.

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24 April 2023

Elaine Allegretti, Strategic Director, Children and Adults
Zina Etheridge, CEO ,NHS North East London Integrated
Care Board
CC: Mark Aspel, Diane Jones

Dear Ms Allegretti and Ms Zina Etheridge

Ofsted and CQC visit to Barking and Dagenham

Following the Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) joint visit to Barking and Dagenham, I write on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills and the Chief Inspector of Primary Medical Services and Integrated Care of CQC to summarise the visit's findings. Thank you for the time you made available to participate in this thematic visit on alternative provision (AP).

Ofsted carried out this visit under a section 118(2) request from the Department for Education. The CQC provided assistance to Ofsted under paragraph 9(1) of schedule 4 to the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

The visit was carried out as part of a thematic review, the outcome of which will be aggregated into a national report to support whole-system improvement. This national report will be published on Ofsted's and CQC's websites. It was not a graded inspection.

Thank you for contributing valuable information. During the visit, we spoke to local area leaders, children and young people attending AP, their families, and the education, health and care professionals who work with them. We examined relevant documents and visited a sample of alternative providers.

Context

The purpose of this series of visits is to aggregate insights from across the AP system, to learn from existing practice and to identify opportunities for improvement.

You can find more information about how inspectors carried out the visit at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/thematic-reviews-of-alternative-provision-in-local-areas>

Inspectors shared detailed information at the end of the visit. This included:

The role of alternative provision

We were told:

- In Barking & Dagenham the purpose of AP is to improve mental health, behaviour, and attendance alongside ensuring that CYP are engaged in education attainment rather than being suspended or excluded. The focus is on CYP aged 4 - 16. However, you acknowledge that preparation for post 16 is a significant step for many CYP attending AP on a long-term basis.
- The borough has established arrangements to differentiate between specialist and alternative provision through the 'hot clinics' which hold the multi-agency expertise to triage CYP to the provision best able to meet their needs, whether that is primarily education, health, or social services. Further assessment is increasingly undertaken on admission to ARPs, to ensure that CYP are in the right place at the right time.
- You have developed an outreach programme that aims to keep CYP in mainstream education. These interventions focus on supporting those with mental health and/or social emotional difficulties. Thrive and Trauma Informed approaches are closely allied to the programmes. A very small proportion of AP is commissioned directly by schools. In these cases, quality assurance is maintained through the support structures in place in each designated area.
- Most parents and carers understand the purpose of AP in Barking and Dagenham. However, you have recognised that some parents need additional access to information and advice that will be developed through your plans for a renewed website and an inclusion charter.

Strategic planning

We were told:

- Since the pandemic, strategic planning has developed significantly in response to an increase in the numbers needing access to AP and has been tackled with a sense of energy and purpose. The AP strategy is an integral component of Barking and Dagenham's Best Chance Strategy.

- Education, health, and care work together to plan, oversee and commission AP that meets the needs of CYP. There are suitable vehicles for communicating the strategy with partners, including schools. School leaders are equal stakeholders in the AP strategy. However, you are aware that the strategy has not yet fully considered child and parent voice.
- The strategy is designed to make sure that the area has the right type, quantity, and range of AP to meet the needs of CYP, but it is not a strait jacket. There is the flexibility to recognise emerging needs, identify the gaps to be filled and to consider where that requires additional provision. The forums in place enable information sharing from a wide range of services, including MASH, CAMHS, police. All key commissioning decisions are made through these forums.
- All commissioned providers, whether registered or unregistered, know the standards required of them. Providers that offer full-time provision for KS4 CYP must support them to achieve 5 GCSEs including English and mathematics. These providers must employ qualified teachers.
- There are clear pathways and thresholds to access the right service at the right time. These are underpinned by a shared understanding of the vital importance of safeguarding across all partners. The annual audits of all providers are an important tool that informs commissioning of a range of resources.
- You report good outcomes for CYP because partners work and plan together. For instance, regular collaborative learning days enable partners to share, learn and reflect.
- Most parents are very happy with the quality of the AP offered to their children. However, many do not agree that they are consulted before this takes place, as part of the decision-making process.

Commissioning decisions

We were told:

- Commissioning decisions are made in order to meet individual needs. All partners are involved in those decisions because the starting point of CYP referral is the shared reflective space provided through the hot clinics. These triage and ensure that those needing AP are progressed to the relevant expert panel. CYP with the highest and most immediate need are fast-tracked to the most appropriate assessment service, e.g., CAMHS
- The development of a shared online AP system enables providers to regularly upload the pupil level information required. B&D use this to review and

benchmark outcomes for each CYP. This informs the next round of commissioning.

- You explained that AP partners strive to ensure that B&D can provide for the needs of all your children through the commissioning process. Providers are only commissioned when oversight arrangements assure suitable quality and an ability to work within the vision set out by the framework. Non-LA commissioned AP is rare, and usually only where a child presents with a need not previously seen. Schools discuss these commissions with their Education Inclusion partners so they are included in the reporting and reviewing structures set up as part of the AP strategy. This means that new and emerging needs can be identified and included in the commissioning process.
- Any unregistered AP is carefully vetted through a stringent application process. It is only commissioned where it meets identified needs in the borough.
- The strategic arrangements for the delivery and oversight of B&D AP framework mean that sometimes commissioners commission their own provision. Most commissioners are also stakeholders in some way. You are considering how to assure independent oversight of commissioning decisions and how to respond to challenges.
- Commissioning processes are flexible enough to take account of emerging needs. Those schools that do occasionally commission their own AP can also commission the Flexilearn service. This is part of your AP framework offer which will complete quality assurance checks on behalf of schools. Schools have great trust in this service because it offers the same level of quality assurance that is required of LA commissioned provision.

Oversight arrangements

We were told:

- B&D strategy ensures that schools maintain oversight and responsibility for their CYP through dual registration. The aim is to keep CYP within their school community regardless of where they may be learning. Communication between schools and APs is frequent and focused on the suitability, safety, and quality.
- B&D have oversight of all CYP from all schools and in all AP. This includes out-of-area placements. AP providers report a range of measures to the LA regarding the quality and impact of their provision. AP partners review the information to measure the effectiveness of the AP strategy against their key measures of attendance, suspensions, reintegration, and emotional well-being.

Appendix 2

- Partners have clear criteria by which to measure the success and impact of each AP. Currently there is no comparison across different types of AP in order to assess which has the most impact. This means that weaker provision is not necessarily identified.
- QA processes for assessment of quality and impact are not yet holistic across education, health, and social care. Each partner holds their own data which is dependent on the processes they follow to measure impact and the measures they select to monitor. They do not bring it together to consider the bigger picture.
- Although B&D have suitable systems in place to monitor those CYP in AP out of borough, you are aware that these are stronger for LAC than non-LAC. Evidence at this point, including that from parents, suggests that oversight of those who are provided with home tuition as part of the whole of their AP package is less effective.
- The very small group of CYP that do not achieve positive outcomes are those who have the most complex emotional needs, including LAC, alongside delays in identification of EHCP needs and delays in assessment such as those for ASD and ADHD. This is also the group that is most likely to have the least successful AP option of home tuition.
- Leaders feel that the relative weakness of home tuition provision is a national issue which would benefit from further investigation and information.

Transition

We were told:

- Transition and re-integration to mainstream is not an add-on here. It is an integral part of the AP plan for each CYP. APs have a longer reach than their on-site work. They work hard to establish the trust needed to successfully work with CYP, which supports their ability to maintain long term contact at times of stress or difficulty.
- Some providers go well beyond their brief to support their vulnerable learners to make a successful transition at post 16, maintaining contact and support for two or more years.
- Those APs that provide FT or long term for KS4 CYP all have transition to post 16 plans. However, these nearly always stop at the front door of the post 16 placement. You have noted that this potentially leaves some very vulnerable CYP without the access to support that they need to successfully maintain their placement. You are currently considering how the most successful approaches can be developed further. You felt that it would be useful to have more government guidance about funding and support for post-16 transition from AP.

Enabling factors and barriers

We were told:

- We saw clarity of vision and high quality AP supported by strategic planning and outcomes-based commissioning. You explained that this helped to ensure that the borough had the right type of AP and the right amount, even as the school-age population continues to increase alongside an associated increase in need.
- A shared strategic and operational commitment from all partners means provision is well-matched to need and allows for continuous development to ensure that remains the case. You are thinking about how to help commissioned providers to develop their offer through changes to funding.
- Leaders spoke of their ambition for and care of each and every child and the aim that the vast majority either return to mainstream or access an appropriate specialist setting. Where APs offer long term full-time provision, they are required to support CYP to achieve a minimum of 5 GCSEs. Only those providers who employ qualified teachers are commissioned by the partnership.
- You and your partners are proactive in identifying next steps. The collaborative approach is increasingly enabling gaps to be recognised and a proactive response to immediate and emerging needs.
- You have put processes in place to assure yourselves that all AP in B&D is of high quality. The generosity with shared knowledge and expertise across all educational providers is a feature of this partnership and its impact on CYP.
- Systems are in place to track those LAC in AP to out of borough placements. However, the quality of this tracking has many variables to contend with and the resources are not yet well-enough established to tackle some of the issues these raise, such as completion of significant assessments that are needed to inform decisions about AP that will meet these CYP's needs. Leaders felt that this is exacerbated by the lack of national standards or guidance in relation to information and resource sharing for LAC nationally.

Impact of arrangements on children and young people

We were told:

- Vulnerable CYP are nurtured, supported, and achieve well in AP. A measure of the impact on CYP is the significant reduction in suspensions and permanent exclusions so that more CYP are in education and achieving their potential.
- B&D CYP know that they are missed if they are not there. They know that someone will always check where they are and how they are. Records show

that the impact of this is increased engagement demonstrated through increased attendance.

- LAC and those known to YOS who are referred to AP are expedited where neurodevelopmental assessments are indicated which ensures timely assessments and diagnosis. In addition, all vulnerable children are risk assessed against their increasing needs and risks in respect to expedition for assessment. As a result, they get the support they need and the placement they need quickly.
- The needs-based offer from the B&D AP partnership reflects the broadest range of interests of CYP including those who enjoy space, practical skills, and nature. As a result, CYP can engage in education in ways that enable them to succeed.
- CYP with SEMH in AP have a range of very effective support across the three B&D partners. Thrive and Trauma Informed approaches in schools are increasing. Highly targeted support for the most emotionally vulnerable means that CYP who may not be in school at all can achieve well in their education and in their lives.
- There is a shared understanding across all partners, that the needs of the family are be taken into account as part of the support provided to the CYP. The hot clinics are a key enabler in this, ensuring that there is a holistic approach to meeting needs that starts with the cause rather than the symptom.

Next steps

We will use the information we have gathered when writing the national report that sets out our findings. We plan to publish this in Autumn 2023.

Yours sincerely

Mel Ford

His Majesty's Inspector, Ofsted

Louise Hocking

His Majesty's Inspector, Ofsted

Sarah Smith

Children's Services Inspector, CQC

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12 July 2023

Title: Tackling Unemployment and Inactivity in Barking and Dagenham	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Aspiration	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Tess Lanning, Strategic Head of Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills	Contact Details: Tel: 07789 008 235 E-mail: tess.lanning@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Tess Lanning, Strategic Head of of Inclusive Economy, Employment and SKills	
Accountable Strategic Leadership Director: James Coulstock, Strategic Director of Inclusive Growth	
Summary	
<p>This report responds to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s request for information about the Council’s approach to employment support, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we better focus the service and which types of residents are we aiming to support? • What else could we be doing to support residents into employment? • How could we look at improving communications to residents around employment support? How could we best engage with our different communities? <p>The paper summarises the latest data on who is affected by unemployment and inactivity in Barking and Dagenham and the findings from recent reviews exploring how to improve support for those who need it most. It then sets out the current approach to tackling these issues, led by the Council’s Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills service, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The support available through the job brokerage service and targeted outreach and support programmes for those with more complex needs – including details of a new Supported Employment programme for people with learning disabilities and a ‘whole-household’ approach to supporting people struggling with the cost of living; - Support to develop residents’ skills and create clear pathways to work through the Adult College, specialist construction training centre and a series of growth sector programmes; - Work to promote the London Living Wage, apprenticeships, flexible working and other inclusive employment practices that support sustainable job outcomes for residents; - Key challenges and areas for development. 	

Recommendation(s)

The report asks the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide feedback on this work and advise on the priorities and targets for employment support going forward – including the right balance between targets to reach large numbers of people and the need to focus and deepen support for harder-to-reach groups in the context of limited resources.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Barking and Dagenham has long had high rates of worklessness, rooted in its post-industrial economy, which is characterised by a large number of jobs in the lower paid service sectors. Many of these sectors were those on the frontline during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the borough's unemployment rate rose to the highest in the country in 2021 and the number of people that were economically inactive increased by 10,000 from a quarter to nearly a third of the population. These figures have since fallen, with economic inactivity back to pre-pandemic levels, but are still higher than the London and national average. The latest data shows that:
- 4.9% of working age people in Barking and Dagenham are unemployed, compared to 4.4% in London and 3.9% in the UK;
 - A quarter (24.8%) of people in the borough are economically inactive (more than 5,000 of which say they would like to work), compared to 20.2% in London and 21.5% across the UK
 - There are only 0.51 jobs for every working age resident in the borough, compared to 1.2 in London and 0.85 in the UK
- 1.2 Long term unemployment and inactivity can drive and exacerbate wider challenges, with the impact felt across different Council services. Income and employment [have been found](#) to have a causal effect on mental and physical health, for example, while job loss, unemployment, insecurity and poverty are risk factors for [homelessness & problem debt](#). This situation has been exacerbated in recent years by the pandemic and cost of living crisis. The number of people approaching the Homeless Prevention Service in 2022/23 rose by 13% on the previous year, and rent arrears among Council tenants increased from £3.2m at the end of 2018/19 to £8.6m at the end of 2022/23.
- 1.3 Improving employment outcomes among disadvantaged communities is key to delivering the Borough Manifesto pledge to drive more inclusive growth, where no one is left behind, and meeting commitments in the 2023-26 Corporate Plan to support residents to access secure employment and ensure they benefit from growth and regeneration. In 2022 unemployment was also designated one of four priority issues that the council needed to tackle to support a more resilient local population and mitigate rising pressures on services in the years to come.
- 1.4 To support these goals, an integrated Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills team was established in September 2022. This brought together the economic development team in Inclusive Growth – responsible for overseeing business and sector programmes to improve the quality and quantity of jobs available in the borough – with the job brokerage service and Adult College (previously in Community Solutions) working to support residents into these and other opportunities. Funded largely through external grants and endowments, the team is

responsible for driving the Council's ambition to support at least 1,000 residents into work each year, with an expectation that at least 20% have been unemployed for at least 6 months.

- 1.5 The service recently commissioned a review to understand which residents are most in need of support, their needs and expectations, how we could best engage them and what else we could do to support them into work. The work built on an earlier review and work with other Council services to improve referrals, engagement and support for those with more complex needs.
- 1.6 This paper sets out the findings from these reviews and provides an overview of the work led by the Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills team to support improved employment outcomes for residents. It sets out key challenges and asks for feedback on the current approach and guidance on the right balance between the desire to reach as many people as possible and the need to support those who need it most.

2. Review of Employment Support Needs in the Borough – Findings

- 2.1 The 2021 Census provides the most recent and comprehensive overview of Barking and Dagenham's population, including factors that are likely to impact on employment outcomes. Analysis by the Council's Data Insights team has found, for example, that the borough has a higher than average proportion of households with dependent children; the highest proportion of lone parent households with dependent children in England & Wales; and the 4th highest proportion of economically inactive residents who were looking after home or family in England and Wales (8.2%). Two in five (42%) people aged over 16 had never worked – the 3rd highest proportion in England & Wales.
- 2.2 The data also shows that Barking and Dagenham has the highest proportion of people with no qualifications in London (22.7%) – although education rates have improved significantly over recent decades and analysis suggests the relationship between unemployment and qualification rates is not simple, with structural inequalities also a significant factor. The Census, based on data collected on a single day in 2021, showed that:

White/White British males and females were those most likely to have no qualifications and least likely to be qualified to Level 4+.
Black/Black British females were those most likely to be qualified to Level 4+, followed closely by Black/Black British males and Asian/Asian British males and females.
The highest rate of unemployment in Barking & Dagenham was amongst residents of mixed ethnicity (both sexes) and Black/Black British residents (both sexes).
The lowest rate of unemployment was amongst White British females and White Other males.
On Census Day, only 2.5% of males were economically inactive because they were looking after home/family, compared to 13.5% of females. This rose to one in four (24.7%) Asian/Asian British females and one in five (19.6%) females from 'other ethnic groups'.

A higher proportion of White British residents (both sexes) were economically inactive due to long term sickness or disability compared to residents of other ethnicities.

A significantly higher proportion of White British residents were retired compared to residents of other ethnicities.

2.3 The Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills team has recently commissioned research to help the Council to better understand the factors underpinning high unemployment and inactivity, and how to improve employment outcomes among those who need it most. An earlier review by the Learning and Work Institute also looked specifically at how to improve outcomes among those known to social services. Together these included:

- A review of administrative data and trends in the Council's job brokerage service;
- Qualitative interviews with out-of-work residents already accessing the Council's employment and skills services and those accessing other Council and community services – including people with caring responsibilities, mental and physical health conditions, learning disabilities and those struggling with the cost of living;
- Interviews and workshops with frontline officers in the job brokerage service, Adult College and other council services including Care and Support, Education and Community Solutions.
- Interviews with local employment, training and community partners.

2.4 Key findings suggested that:

- There is a lack of awareness of the Job Shop and Adult College generally, and of the vacancies, support and courses that they offer, among out-of-work residents accessing other Council services.
- Some people are aware of the offer but not engaging because they are not interested in actively seeking work – but this can be associated with confidence issues, low self-esteem and fear of losing benefits or coping with the pressures of the world of work, particularly for those with poor mental health and those that have been out of work for long periods of time.
- Additional administrative processes across services can be a barrier to engagement, particularly where someone doesn't have the required ID or information for registration;
- The lack of recent work experience for the long term unemployed and those that have never worked is a key challenge.
- The lack of affordable childcare and part time jobs are key issues for parents.
- Carers and those with health issues are also seeking flexible (part time and remote) work, with those with disabilities concerned that not enough employers are aware of the support they can access to assist and adapt jobs for disabled people.

2.5 The reviews also included scoping of wider good practice and evidence of ‘what works’ to improve employment outcomes for harder-to-reach groups and those with complex needs. This highlighted that:

- **Outreach** should take place in locations and with organisations that residents already know and trust.
- **Successful co-location** requires strong leadership, trust and relationships across services, shared systems and processes and data sharing arrangements.
- **Referral and engagement pathways** should aim to make the process as smooth as possible for service users – including by obtaining permission from service users to pass information between organisations to reduce bureaucracy.
- **Strong partnership working between different organisations**, including local community sector organisations, is important to enable an integrated support journey, clear and effective referrals, support through key transitions, and embedding the expectation of securing employment across other services.
- **Successful employment support for people with more complex needs** is tailored to the individual, joins up multiple sources of support, provides consistent support over extended periods of time, benefits from strong relationships between services users and staff, provides autonomy for staff over how they work, and involves service users in producing their own action plans.
- **Relational models** of support, where service users have a long-term relationship with a single point of contact and receive **support tailored to their needs**, are more effective than transactional models where every service user receives the same provision and works with many different members of staff.
- Relational models can **involve family members, friends and others in the community** to build social capital and support better employment outcomes. Examples include **peer support** such as job clubs, the use of **Community Engagement Champions** to build awareness among diverse communities, and a **‘whole-household’ approach** to employment support to tackle complex needs, where people from the same household are offered the opportunity to come together and solutions are sought that meet the needs and barriers of the household as a whole
- **Supported Employment models** are particularly effective for disabled groups, and have also been successfully used with other groups facing disadvantage in the labour market including young people and those with mental health conditions. These are characterised by parallel support for employers and candidates to ensure successful job matching. A detailed understanding of the individual’s skills, needs and aspirations is developed alongside work with employers to adapt recruitment processes and jobs. In-work support is also provided for the employer and employee.
- **Well-resourced employer engagement and support** teams are crucial to brokering good jobs for residents, advocating for their needs, promoting responsible employment practices and supporting employers to adapt and improve jobs where possible.
- **In-work support** for both the employer and employee is critical to ensuring sustainable job outcomes – particularly in the early phase after someone enters

work, for those with limited previous work experience (such as young people), and those requiring adaptations. In-work support can also include work to support progression opportunities for lower paid employees – such as through career ladder and skills escalator approaches.

- **Councils are well-placed to** play a strategic leadership role in the local employment and skills ecosystem, including developing and sharing understanding of the local labour market with partners; working with partners and employers to build pathways into training and good quality work; acting as an exemplar employer around opportunities such as supported employment, good work and apprenticeships; leading on employer engagement and sharing the benefits of its employer relationships with other partners.

The rest of this report outlines our approach – highlighting the existing strengths, challenges and areas of development, based on the review findings.

3 LBBD’s approach to tackling employment and inactivity

The Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills team drives the Council’s work to build a more sustainable and inclusive economy, working to upskill and support more residents to access employment opportunities, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, while also working to improve the quantity and quality of jobs available in the borough. Appendix 1 provides an overview of the team’s structure and approach, which is centred around five areas of activity:



3.1 One-to-one employment support for out-of-work and low paid residents:

The Council’s job brokerage service is delivered through two ‘Job Shops’ based in Dagenham Library and Barking Learning Centre. During the pandemic eligibility criteria was expanded to make the service available to all borough residents, including those who are in work as well as those with no recourse to public funds.

A team of about 15-20 job brokers support residents with job search techniques, CV-writing, mock interviews and benefits advice, as well as referrals where relevant to training and skills courses. All advisers are trained in information, advice and guidance (IAG) to the Matrix quality standard. They provide clients with an in-depth initial assessment and complete action plans at every meeting. Once in work, people continue to receive monthly texts/calls from their job broker for three months.

The service seeks to strike a balance between preventing more newly unemployed people from becoming long term unemployed, and focusing support on those who need it most – against a target for at least 20% of service users to be long term (6 months+) unemployed.

To meet this, the Job Shop conducts marketing and outreach work to increase awareness of the service across different communities and improve referrals from external partners and other council teams and services. The majority of service users self-refer through the website, followed by referrals from Jobcentre Plus and teams in Community Solutions. The service is currently seeking to raise awareness of the offer as part of the Council’s response to the cost of living crisis – with a broad marketing campaign and work to engage residents through co-location and partnerships with other services, faith groups and community organisations.

The table below shows the service outcomes over the last four years – including the impact of the pandemic, which led to a sustained fall in the numbers registering and entering work.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022-23
Registrations	1635	802	844	1061
Job Starts	1251	765	856	885
Sustained (3 months)	483	282	332	365
Apprenticeship starts (excluding construction)	39	24	27	34
Volunteering	38	16	32	40
Traineeships	N.A (<i>target not in place</i>)	N.A (<i>target not in place</i>)	20	11

Registrations have been increasing since the COVID-related restrictions eased. The period has seen an increase in the number of people registering with the service who are in work and those with qualifications at Level 3 (upper secondary) and above. At the same time, there has been a significant increase in the number of people registering with the job brokerage service that are long term (6 months+) unemployed, rising to 40% of Job Shop service users in 2021-22. The numbers increased again in 2022 to 2023, although a significant rise in the number of newly unemployed residents (0-3 months) meant that the proportion of long term unemployed fell to a third (33%) of service users. The table below sets out job outcomes by length of employment. Those unemployed for more than six months

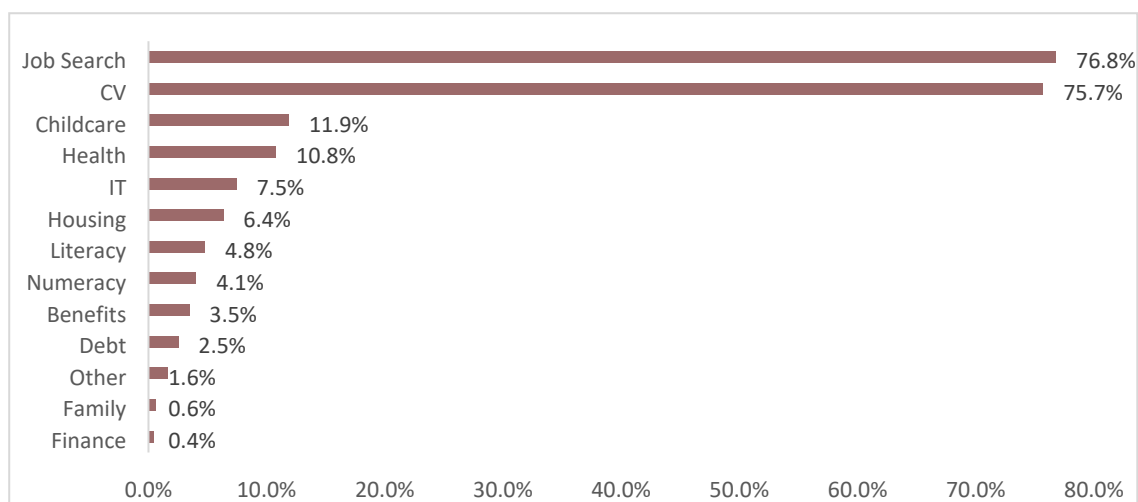
accounted for about a third of all job outcomes in both 2021-22 (34%) and 2022-23 (32%) – see table below – well over the service target of 20%.

Length of unemployment	Job starts Apr 20 - Mar 21	% against total job starts	Job starts Apr 21 - Mar 22	% against total job starts	Job starts Apr 22 - Mar 23	% against total job starts
Never Worked	39	10%	61	10%	55	9%
0 - 3 months	146	37%	145	25%	148	24%
3 - 6 Months	47	12%	46	8%	54	9%
6 - 12 Months	42	11%	84	14%	44	7%
1 year+	65	16%	119	20%	151	25%
Currently Working	57	14%	134	23%	160	26%

The increase in long term unemployed service users has also been associated with a rise in the number of people with more complex barriers to work, including health, caring and housing needs. Recent Job Shop data shows that nearly a quarter (23%) of those that registered in 2022-23 reported having a health condition, up from 17% in 2021-22. One in ten (10%) reported having a mental or physical condition that has a substantial and long term affect on their ability, compared to 7% in 2021-22. More people are also registering with caring responsibilities. Between 2019 and 2022, over one in ten people (12%) registering with the Job Shop indicated that childcare was a barrier to work, rising to over 20% among women and those aged between 30 and 49.

The job brokerage service provides a dedicated programme for people in receipt of housing/council tax benefit, living in a council property or at threat of arrears and homelessness into employment, funded by an annual grant from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). In 2022-23, the Job Shop supported 289 people under this programme – or 27% of total registrations. Of these, 21% were in rent arrears, temporary accommodation, hostels an/or at risk of homelessness. Nearly two-thirds (61%) were supported into work.

The majority of service users are seeking support with job search (77%) and CVs (76%), citing these as the main ‘barriers’ they face. While a much smaller proportion of service users cite basic skills (literacy, language, numeracy, IT) and housing and debt as barriers, job entry outcomes among these jobseekers and those unemployed for long periods of time are lower than for other groups. Of the residents who present with a literacy, numeracy or ‘other’ skills needs (including ESOL), only 3 in 10 go on to achieve a job outcome.



Self-reported barriers to work – data from 2019-2022

Analysis of service data since 2019 suggests that females are more likely to access the job brokerage service than males, representing 58% of service users in 2022-23. More than two-thirds (69%) of those registering with the job shop were under 45 in 2022-23, compared to 75% between 2019-22. This difference was driven by a large increase in the number of people aged 16-24 during COVID due to the Council’s Kickstart scheme, which provided six month paid placements for young people as part of a national programme. More broadly, customer trends appear to mirror some of the wider trends and demographics across the borough:

More than two-thirds of those registering with the Job Shop are from racially minoritized communities, with Black African and Black Caribbean residents registering at a higher rate than represented in the LBBB population.

Black African and Asian (Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Indian and ‘Asian other’) residents are registering with Level 4+ qualifications most frequently, while White British/Irish residents are doing so least frequently.

One in ten White British/Irish and ‘White Other’ residents registering with the Job Shops have no qualifications – the highest of any group.

There is a relationship between areas with high benefit claimant counts, hostels and higher numbers of Job Shop registrations.

Overall, the changing profile of those accessing the Council’s job brokerage service means that the average time candidates are taking to secure employment has increased significantly. This, in turn, has an impact on the service’s resourcing and ability to hit the target to support 1,000 people into work. For example, those receiving support under the housing programme took on average 375 days to enter work after registration in 2022-23. Based on analysis of staff time (assessments, support sessions and administrative time etc), the actual cost of this support was, as a result, £200k higher than the amount paid by the HRA. There is a need to examine the priorities for the team within the context of rising need and limited resources.

3.2 Targeted outreach and support for harder-to-reach groups

In addition to the core employment offer, the service supports a number of targeted and specialist initiatives to improve employment outcomes among harder to reach

groups – with a focus on economically inactive people that are receiving support from other council teams and services. This seeks to:

- a) take advantage of the Council's ability to engage these groups, who are unlikely to be in touch with other mainstream employment services;
- b) support work to prevent wider service and cost pressures within the Council by improving the wellbeing and independence of those with more complex needs;
- c) support the Council to meet statutory duties to track and support improvements in the number of young people not in education, employment or training and improve the wellbeing, including through employment, of those in receipt of social care support.

3.2.1 Improving outcomes for those known to social services

The Council has a number of targeted initiatives in place to fulfil its statutory responsibilities relating to young people that are not in education, employment or training (NEET) and those known to social care:

- The Education team oversees two dedicated careers advisers for young people with EHC Plans and coordinates activities to track and engage young people who are NEET and those whose whereabouts is unknown – with performance overseen by a quarterly board bringing together key stakeholders. The approach has been associated with a significant fall in the number of NEETs and 'unknowns' in recent years. The Care Leaving team also coordinate a case review panel for care leavers that are NEET.
- The Vocational Support Service in Community Solutions provides support to help people with diagnosed mental health conditions and learning disabilities towards sustainable employment. This includes a dedicated job broker commissioned by the Disability service to support people with learning disabilities in receipt of social care support, with a caseload of 25. The pandemic led to a drop in engagement for this group, but since 2021 there have been small but steady increases in the number of Disability service users supported into work, although more resources are required to move closer to the London average of 5.2%.

3.2.2 A new Supported Employment programme for people with learning disabilities

The Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills team supports the specialist initiatives supporting those known to social services by leading on strategy, fundraising and efforts to secure suitable employment opportunities. In 2022, the team commissioned the review by the Learning and Work Institute to identify how to improve outcomes for these groups. This recommended developing a Supported Employment programme for people with learning disabilities as a priority – with scope to extend to those with mental health conditions.

Following a successful bid to the Department for Work and Pensions, supported by match funding from the job brokerage service, a new Supported Employment programme launched in November 2022. It will support 100 people over 2 years, with a target of 30 employment outcomes.

The work to identify, engage and support people with learning disabilities is being coordinated by the Vocational Support Service, enabling the recruitment of a

coordinator and additional job broker to support people with learning disabilities. This will provide more resources for the existing work with Disability service users, but also enable additional preventative work with younger people with special educational needs and disabilities, and engage for those not eligible for support through adult social services.

The job brokerage service is leading the parallel work to engage more employers to offer flexible and Supported Employment opportunities for those with disabilities. This includes work to design and promote supported internships and apprenticeships for people with disabilities within the Council and its major contractors. These seek to build on an unpaid Supported Internship scheme (REACH) delivered by Barking and Dagenham College – providing 40+ internships with 9 employers since the programme began in 2019 – by providing follow-on paid opportunities.

A quarterly forum brings together internal and external partners to coordinate activities to improve employment outcomes for people with learning disabilities, monitor performance and support continuous improvement.

3.2.3 A 'whole-household' approach to supporting people with complex needs

In 2022, the job brokerage service was allocated 12 months' funding through the Council's Welfare Reserve Fund to improve income and employment outcomes among those struggling with the cost of living crisis.

Drawing on the review of best practice into effective employment support for those with complex needs, this has led to the development of a new programme that trials the 'whole-household approach' to employment support. Residents will be invited to attend with another person from the same household, with work to find solutions that meet the needs of the whole-household, not just one individual.

The new programme launches in July 2023 and will embed two new Outreach and Support Brokers from the job brokerage service in other council and community services working with people struggling with the cost of living, starting initially with people accessing the Homes and Money Hub for debt advice. It seeks to provide longer term, more relational support for those with complex needs, minimising administrative processes across teams and tackling wider barriers where necessary before engaging in job search activity.

In addition to this pilot led by the job brokerage service, which has funding until March 2024, Community Solutions have funded a separate pilot with an external employment support organisation to support people in temporary accommodation to move into sustainable work and housing solutions. Both of these will be reviewed to explore how good practice can be extended or embedded into the Council's employment support offer.

3.3 Improving the skills and confidence of out-of-work residents

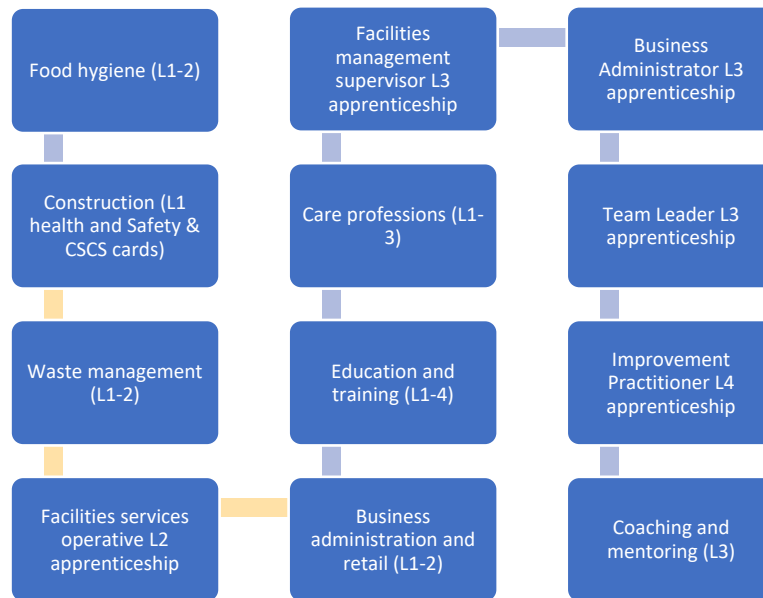
Another key vehicle for engaging diverse communities and harder-to-reach groups is the Adult College, which was integrated with the job brokerage service in 2018 and supports all learners to progress through learning and towards employment, providing courses to build confidence, develop functional and employability skills, and support pathways into work.

Funded by a grant from the GLA, the College supports on average 1,700 learners and 3,500 course starts a year, with targets to engage unemployed learners (50% of the total) and those with no qualifications (20% on enrolment). They achieve high satisfaction scores and 94% retention on average. Their last Ofsted rating was Good, with the next one due imminently.

More than half of course starts at the Adult College are currently in **community learning and wellbeing**. These free courses range from courses for parents to support their children's schooling, online safety, and household finances; to creative activities for adults and children, as well as mindfulness, yoga and meditation; and courses about living with dementia, anxiety and depression. These courses can often be a first step into learning for residents, before moving into accredited courses and those supporting a pathway towards employment. They also reflect the broader role adult colleges have historically played supporting personal development and improving local health, wellbeing and social cohesion.

The Adult College is the main provider of courses to build **functional skills** among adults in the borough, supporting residents that need to improve their English language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills to help them to move towards employment. The College has recently secured additional resources to enable an expansion of this provision to meet high demand, with a particular focus on digital skills and numeracy. This includes three-year's funding through the government's national Multiply scheme to embed numeracy in vocational courses and support residents with money management and budgeting skills in light of the ongoing cost of living crisis and deprivation indicators in the borough.

Finally, the Adult College and job brokerage service deliver a range of work-focused courses, with a target to support at least 400 people a year into **employability** courses. These are free and include CV and job search support, as well as two sector-based work academy programmes designed to help jobseekers to access jobs in the civil service and health care sectors. The offer includes a small number of **vocational qualifications** (summarised in the diagram below) in food, care, education, administration, facilities management and leadership, some of which are fee-paying. In 2022, the service built on this by launching a new specialist construction training facility (the Barking Riverside Innovation Centre - BRIC) to improve pathways into jobs in construction and the green economy. This currently provides entry level construction health and safety courses to ensure candidates are site-ready, waste management training and energy awareness courses. The centre has been established as a CSCS card accreditation test centre – due to launch to the public shortly.



Continuing professional development courses are also available in areas such as paediatric first aid and SEND, dyslexia, mental health and deaf awareness that incur a small fee.

3.4 Creating structured pathways into good jobs in growth sectors

In addition to the vocational course offer available through the Adult College and job brokerage service, the Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills team oversees a series of strategies in growth sectors to secure more good work and development opportunities for residents. The programmes seek to connect residents to work opportunities in higher paying, higher skilled sectors linked to major new developments, but also work to improve the quality of jobs in the ‘everyday’ economy sectors where many people work:



FILM: Launched in February 2022, the Make It Here programme was set up to ensure residents benefit from the new film studios. It is creating careers activities in schools and developing accredited training pathways for young people as well as shorter bootcamp courses to support local workers and job-seekers to access opportunities in film. So far it has supported over 1,600 young people to understand careers in film and brokered 2 London Living Wage jobs at the Wharf Studios and 50+ paid placements with visiting productions for local people.



FOOD: We worked with Be First to secure Section 106 funding and commitments from the City of London to ensure residents benefit from the relocation of the food wholesale markets. These will support pathways into good jobs in food through a new Borough Food School and support for local food businesses and entrepreneurs to grow, underpinned by a new food hub in Barking town centre and a Good Food Plan and Partnership to improve access to healthy, affordable and sustainable food. The Plan includes work with the Council-owned school catering service to ensure more schools provide nutritious, sustainable meals for children, delivered by staff paid at least the London Living Wage.



CARE: We are working with the Adult Care and Support commissioning team to deliver a joint Action Plan to improve job quality and standards in the

local care sector. As a result of this work, all future contracts will require care providers to pay staff on council-funded provision the London Living Wage. The work has also led to an uplift to enable carers paid through personal budgets to earn the London Living Wage. We are now working with Council-funded providers to improve recruitment and progression pathways for care workers and the approach to flexible working, and with social services to fill a key skills gap in occupational therapists.



CONSTRUCTION: We implemented the Council's commitment to adhere to the Unite Construction Charter – ensuring workers on Be First sites are paid the London Living Wage, employed on PAYE and have access to trade union representation. We also negotiate, monitor and support Be First contractors and other developers to meet their Section 106 local employment, skills and supply chain commitments, with dedicated job brokers to support residents to access work experience, apprenticeship and job opportunities in construction. We are currently working to improve awareness and access to these opportunities through a coordinated programme, including work to develop the BRIC's training offer.



GREEN ECONOMY: During the pandemic we secured government funding to establish a local Green Skills, Green Jobs programme to help residents to understand and access job opportunities in the green economy. Over 300 residents have attended information sessions (including targeted sessions for Ukrainian refugees), 87 have gained qualifications, and 58 have secured 'green' jobs as a result of the programme. Education and job outcomes were below target due to the lack of relevant training and jobs available. We are exploring how to build on this work when funding for the programme runs out in Summer 2023 to secure more green jobs for residents and build the relevant training pathways.

All the sector strategies promote job opportunities through the job brokerage service and work with key local education institutions – local schools, Barking and Dagenham College and CU London, as well as the Adult College – to provide careers activities and support accredited training pathways to meet gaps and opportunities.

3.5 Promoting inclusive employment practices to support sustainable job outcomes

Finally, the Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills team oversee a range of policies, programmes and services to create work opportunities and promote inclusive employment practices across all employers and sectors, with a view to supporting more sustainable job outcomes.

3.5.1 Engaging employers to recruit locally and offer apprenticeships

The Employer Engagement team in the job brokerage service provides a free recruitment service for employers that hire locally – aiming to engage 250 new and 45 returning employers each year. During the pandemic the team worked with 40 employers to create paid Kickstart placements for over 200 local 16–24-year-olds. When this closed in March 2022 they developed a partnership with a DWP-backed initiative to support local SMEs set up high quality apprenticeships and cover training costs through the Council's Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Scheme. The team play a key role in promoting opportunities secured through the sector programmes, and run

regular job fairs across the borough. In May 2023 a job fair with 14 employers in Barking Town Centre was attended by over 500 people.

Going forward, the team is seeking to develop their role in tackling the structural issues facing residents by promoting job quality improvements and accreditations such as Living Wage and the Mayor's Good Work Standard. They are leading the work to promote more Supported Employment opportunities for those with disabilities, and alongside this are working with flexible working experts Timewise to develop a broader job design offer to support employers to meet candidate needs and expectations around more flexible and family-friendly working patterns since the pandemic. Timewise will also train all job brokers in how to support candidates seeking flexible work to better advocate for their needs at the point of recruitment.

More widely, the Inclusive Economy team oversees the Council's Business Forum and drives work to ensure the Council is using its planning, procurement, convening and other powers to promote good working practices, with a particular focus on encouraging employers to hire locally, offer apprenticeships and pay the London Living Wage. This has included:

- Working with Procurement and commissioning teams to develop the Council's policy and strategy to secure Social Value from major suppliers and ensure contracted service providers pay the London Living Wage. In 2022-23, Social Value clauses secured 35 work experience/volunteering roles and 26 paid jobs and work placements for residents from contractors, among other community benefits.
- Working with Be First to modernise commercial space and strengthen the borough's Section 106 Employment, Training and Supply Chain policy in the new Local Plan. This requires all major developers in the borough to hire at least 25% local people, offer work experience and apprenticeships, and buy 25% of all goods and services from businesses based in the borough – and to contribute financially to support employment elsewhere if targets are not met.
- Overseeing a programme to mitigate job losses in the worst-affected sectors during the pandemic, and designing a programme to support local businesses to access supply chain opportunities at the Council and other local anchor institutions, including help to understand and meet requirements to pay the real London Living Wage, due to launch in September 2023.

4 Issues and challenges

4.1 The recent reviews of the employment support offer have highlighted a number of ongoing challenges including:

- **Balancing different priorities:** There is an increasing tension between the Council's desire to support 1,000 people into work each year and the focus on more vulnerable groups that require more support before moving into work.
- **Visibility and awareness:** The work of the Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills service lacks visibility. There is only basic information online, and the team has limited social media presence or marketing resources. These factors limit awareness of and access to the service, and restrict its ability to attract

suitable candidates that meet the needs of employers. To address this we plan to develop the digital presence and information about the work of the Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills team including the job brokerage service and Adult College through a new dedicated microsite in the coming months.

- **Funding:** The reliance on external funding means the offer is vulnerable to changes in policies and priorities elsewhere and can make it difficult to establish a sustainable offer for those with more complex needs, who require longer term support to achieve job outcomes. Eligibility criteria set by external funders can focus on those closer to the labour market and limit the Council's ability to conduct preventative work, such as engaging young people known to social services in education or those in-work who are struggling due to caring responsibilities or health issues. The current funding provided through the Welfare Reserve is enabling the job brokerage service to develop targeted pathways in line with council priorities, but is only temporary. The service is in the process of exploring other sources of funding to enable this work to continue.
- **Coordination:** There are pockets of employment support activity across the council. Some of this reflects strong cross-council partnerships and is coordinated by or with the job brokerage service. But some of it has been developed separately and risks missing opportunities to pool resources, develop a joined up approach, and enable monitoring and reporting of outcomes across the council. The service is exploring how to improve touch points and improve accountability across different initiatives and is convening two forums to ensure strong cross-sector coordination around employment support for people with learning disabilities and the whole-household support pilot.

4.2 The report asks the Executive team/OSC to provide feedback on this work and advise on the priorities and targets for employment support going forward – including the right balance between targets to reach large numbers of people and the need to focus and deepen support for harder-to-reach groups, and how this can be effectively resourced.

5 Consultation

5.1 The reviews to inform the Council's approach to employment included interviews and co-design workshops with multiple stakeholders including representatives from teams across the council (including those overseeing the development of Community Hubs and education, debt advice, youth offending, disability, mental health, care leaving and unpaid carers teams) and external employment, training and community partners including Community Resources, CAB, CVS, DADB, the Out and About Service, B&D College, CU London, Jobcentre Plus and Maximus.

5.2 The reviews included qualitative interviews with those directly affected by unemployment and inactivity – including people with learning disabilities, caring responsibilities, mental health conditions and those accessing the council's debt advice service and other community services supporting residents with the cost of living. Feedback is also sought from service users at the Adult College and job brokerage service on a regular basis to inform the approach.

5.3 The approach has been discussed and is regularly reported on to the Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Aspiration, Cllr Sade Bright.

5.4 It was considered and endorsed by the Executive Team at its meeting on 22 June 2023.

6. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Gina James, Finance business Partner

6.1 The report does not have direct financial implications, however, as there is heavy reliance on external funding, it means the service needs to consistently explore other sources of funding to enable the priorities and targets for employment support to be achieved. In the event funding is not secured, or insufficient, it can potentially have a knock on effect on existing budgets.

7. Legal Implications

Implications completed by

7.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

8. Other Implications

8.1 **Risk Management** – There is an ongoing need to manage risks relating to funding and sustainability of the Council's economic development and employment programmes – particularly where they support vulnerable groups. Fundraising and scoping of opportunities are conducted on an ongoing basis to mitigate these risks.

8.2 **Corporate Policy and Equality Impact** - Improving employment outcomes among disadvantaged communities is key to meeting commitments in the 2023-26 Corporate Plan to support residents to access secure employment and ensure they benefit from growth and regeneration. The Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills service drives this work and supports the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty by:

- Supporting access to lifelong learning and employment support for diverse communities across the borough – with targeted outreach, engagement and programmes to support groups and communities with lower employment levels including those from Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic communities to upskill and access employment support and opportunities in growth sectors.
- Improving employment support and opportunities for people with more complex needs including those with disabilities and caring responsibilities (affecting women in particular).
- Creating structured pathways into good jobs for young people (who are disadvantaged in the labour market when compared to older and more experienced workers) through the food and film sector programmes in particular.
- Promoting the London Living Wage and improving pay and progression in local school catering and social care services – sectors dominated by women doing skilled work that is undervalued.

8.3 **Safeguarding Adults and Children** – The Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills service is supporting work to improve the wellbeing of vulnerable adults and reduce inequalities through targeted programmes to improve employment outcomes for people with learning disabilities, mental health conditions, and those struggling with the cost of living.

8.4 **Health Issues** – The Inclusive Economy, Employment and Skills service is supporting an increasing number of people with mental and physical health issues to move towards sustainable employment. This will increase their resilience to economic shocks.

8.5 **Crime and Disorder Issues** – The job brokerage and NEETs teams work with the Youth Offending team to improve employment opportunities for young offenders. Access to secure employment can reduce the risk of re-offending.

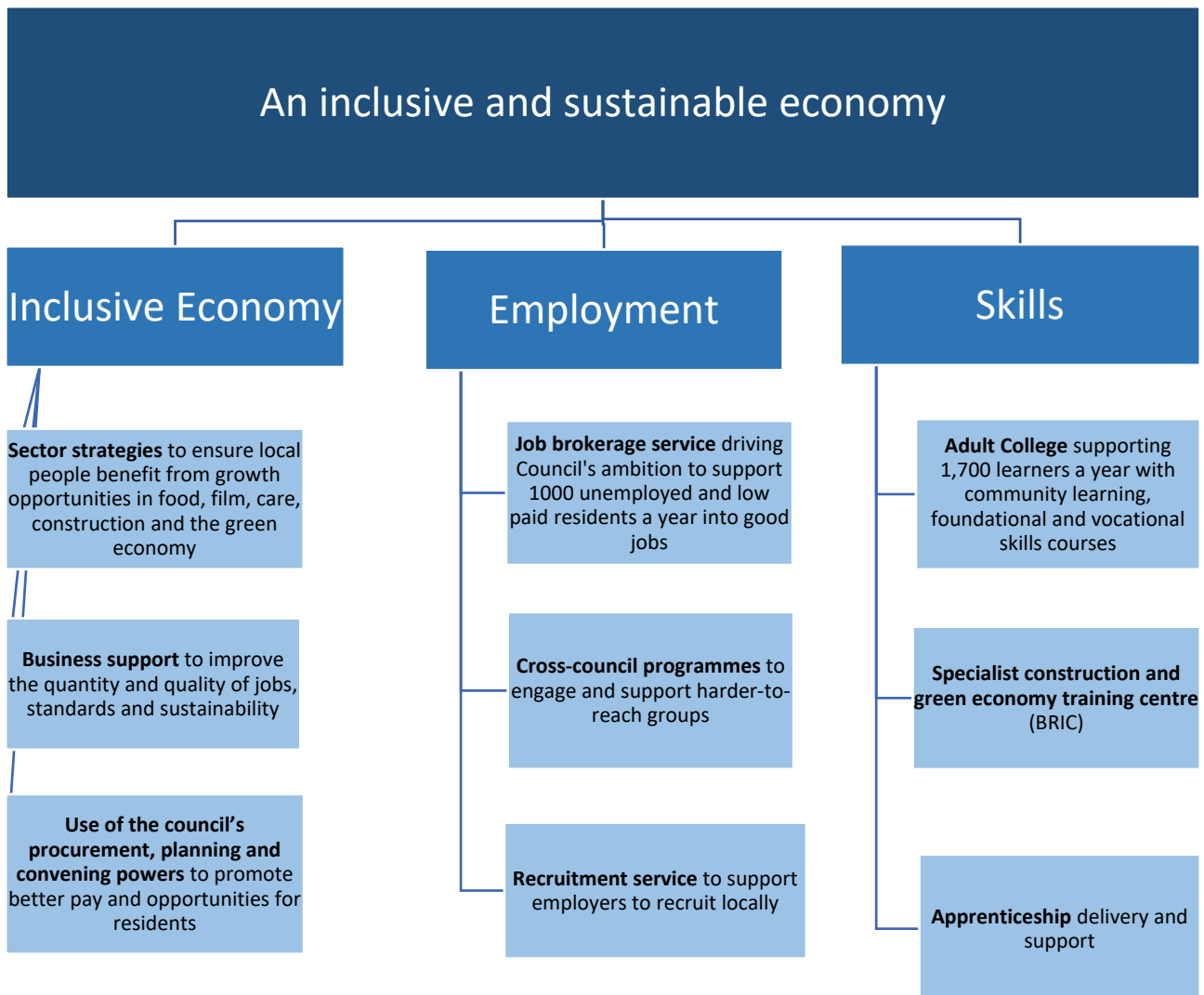
Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- None

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 Inclusive Economic, Employment and Skills – overview of structure approach

Appendix 1. Inclusive Economic, Employment and Skills – overview of structure and approach



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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12 July 2023

Title: Heritage Services Overview	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Community Leadership and Engagement	
Open Report with Appendix	For Information
Wards Affected: None	Key Decision: No
Report Author: AnnMarie Peña, Head of Culture and Heritage	Contact Details: E-mail: annmarie.pena@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Strategic Leadership Director: James Coulstock, Strategic Director of Inclusive Growth	
<p>Summary</p> <p>Barking and Dagenham is a vibrant and diverse Borough with a strong and evolving history we are proud of. As our local community grows and changes, we need to adapt our Heritage provision to meet the needs of everyone, and to ensure all local residents feel welcome across our cultural and local history sites. Eastbury Manor House (Barking), Valence House Museum and Archives (Dagenham) and the future Women's Museum (Barking Wharf Square) each hold within them the potential to courageously celebrate the mix of identities, experiences and perspectives we represent through our diversity, and these sites are fertile platforms for fostering creativity and building understanding amongst local people. Despite ongoing financial pressures and setbacks that have plagued our sites (and the Heritage Service more widely) over the past decade, it is our vision to commission an aspirational and inspiring curatorial and public engagement programme where people learn about, respect and celebrate each other's heritage.</p> <p>Keys areas of focus into the coming 3 years include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solving historic and ongoing issues of chronic underfunding to our heritage sites which manifests as ongoing losses to Barking and Dagenham Council - Creating resilient and solvent business models at our heritage sites which include new and improved income streams that are well networked with initiatives and priorities across the Borough - Growing our Heritage Education provision to ensure all school children in the borough have access, and to build schools visits from outside the Borough - Improving our commissioned projects, exhibitions and partnership opportunities to maximise the full potential of our Heritage provision across the borough and build visitor numbers - Improving access (including digital and physical) and representation for local people across all Heritage facilities and platforms - Managing and actioning urgent conservation works and repair issues across key heritage sites to meet our statutory responsibilities. 	

Recommendation(s)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (i) Note the planned trajectory for future Heritage provision in Barking and Dagenham across key sites, commissioning platforms and our Heritage Education programmes;
- (ii) Note the possibility that sites will be impacted by ongoing financial and budgetary pressures; and
- (iii) Note that significant fundraising will be required in the next 2-5 years to meet our statutory responsibilities for our listed heritage sites and the borough archives.

Reason(s)

As outlined in our 2023-2026 Corporate Plan Priority 5 “*Residents benefit from inclusive growth and regeneration*”, improving our heritage offer in the Borough will allow us to continue to positively transform communities and encourage local businesses to grow, supporting and attracting long term investment that benefits our residents. The National Trust has identified the Borough as a key area of development into the future, whilst Arts Council England has identified Barking and Dagenham as a priority for investment as part of its work to support skill development and future economic growth in the arts and heritage sectors.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 In September 2022, the Culture and Heritage Services were formally amalgamated and restructured to provide better strategic, financial and artistic leadership across our related programming strands and sites in the Borough. Since then, we have begun to re-set the priorities, policy and programming direction of our community-focused arts and heritage initiatives. Identified as a “Priority Place” by Arts Council England in 2022 and more recently as a key development area for the National Trust, our primary heritage sites across the Borough include Eastbury Manor House, Valence House Museum, the Women’s Museum (opening November/December 2023) and the Borough Archives. Additionally, the Service leads a vibrant Heritage Education programme which focuses on delivering local history provision for local schools across Barking and Dagenham.
- 1.2 What is clear across our heritage assets is we have both historic and ongoing financial issues which impact our ability to appropriately manage the sites, and to properly meet our statutory responsibilities in caring for these important listed buildings. For more than a decade there has been a chronic underfunding of the Heritage Service and this has manifested as: a skeleton staffing structure across Eastbury Manor House and Valence House Museum which limits site opening hours and opportunities to develop more community-focused programming; a long list of urgent conservation and building works which have not been dealt with over the past years and which are currently being fundraised for; and ongoing financial losses to Barking and Dagenham Council which can no longer be carried forward in the current difficult economic climate.

- 1.3 To meet these urgent needs and pressures it is important to prioritise: fundraising and new income generation opportunities across sites to bring in additional resource; grow our volunteer base which was depleted during Eastbury Manor House's years of closure and due to the impact of Covid-19 across both key heritage sites when local residents were unable to visit; and to develop new models of community and sector partnerships where we will be able to maximise resources and share in our custodianship of our heritage with the local community.

2. Background to Key Heritage Sites:

- 2.1 **Eastbury Manor House:** Eastbury Manor House is a Grade I listed Elizabethan gentry house set in historic gardens owned by the National Trust which is leased and operated by London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. The site reopened to the public in April 2023, following a long period of closure due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Currently the site is open 4 days a week: Wednesday – Friday 10am-4pm, and Sundays 11am-4pm.

The Culture and Heritage Service is in the process of strengthening its relationship to the National Trust to ensure better management and collaboration of the site is put in place following years of neglect and under resourcing which has impacted the ability of the site to function at a proficient level. The broader site requires extensive repair and conservation works to maintain an appropriate standard of custodianship to meet our statutory responsibilities and to improve the visitor experience (See Conservation Management Plan, Appendix 2). A new curatorial vision for Eastbury Manor House will explore both the site's historical and contemporary significance. With historic links of both national and international importance (including ties to the gunpowder plot, East India Company and centuries of farming practices), Eastbury's public programmes will include learning opportunities for adults, children and young people, exhibitions, research and collaboration with local and national communities. The new programme at Eastbury Manor House will address critical issues relevant to our residents including anti-racism, gender identity and the decolonisation of our heritage sites.

Key areas of focus we are developing in consultation with the National Trust include:

- Greater support for community-led programming and custodianship; further development of a volunteer base running from the site
- Activation and improvement of greenspaces and outdoor areas of Eastbury Manor House, networking these with broader LBB and NT initiatives (including Stoneford Cottage, Valence House Museum and other heritage/green spaces in Barking and Dagenham) to build a stronger focus on sustainability, growing spaces, environmental conservation, and wellbeing
- Support in addressing conservation issues and developing sustainable long-term financial and operational models to build greater resilience and profitability at the site

Key projects in the planning stages for 2023-25 financial years include:

- development of a community-led café at Eastbury Manor House, linked to heritage gardens onsite and broader growing spaces in the Borough; this project will evolve through input from LBBD Good Food Collective and other local food/growing based initiatives; development of the café will also be supported through LBBD's Food Sector Development work focused on ensuring local access to affordable, healthy and sustainable food
- development of a film-based programme, linked to curatorial initiatives outlined above and LBBD's *Made in Dagenham* programme, which could include Eastbury hosting: film-based workshops, community clubs, screenings and special events which tie to broader heritage education programmes in the Borough as well as the Borough's vibrant film industry
- From 2023 – 2027 a PhD studentship will be based at Eastbury Manor House, fully funded through the TECHNE programme and led in partnership with Kingston University's School of Art and Architecture. The purpose of the studentship will focus on development of community gardens within the site. Supervision for the PhD will be jointly shared by the Head of Service and the Senior Curator of Cultural Programmes.

2.2 Valence House Museum: Valence House Museum, Grade II* (1954) was first registered as a museum in 1997. The museum is set within landscaped grounds that includes a herb garden, Second World War vegetable plot, traditional fruit orchard and apiary. The site, which also includes an accredited Local History Archives, a café and two education spaces, is surrounded by a medieval moat and situated within Valence Park on the Becontree Estate in Dagenham. Immediately adjacent to the site are Valence Primary School and Valence Library, a locally listed building designed as a civic space for the estate in the 1930's. The Museum and broader Valence Park site is well-loved and sits at the heart of the local community with an enormous amount of untapped potential.

Valence House Museum's core collection totals 20,000 objects, consisting of a range of artefacts which reflect the history and development of the community of Barking and Dagenham from Prehistory to the modern day. The museum holds archaeological finds of national significance from the local area. Currently the site is open 5 days a week: Tuesday – Saturday 10am-4pm.

The broader site requires extensive repair and conservation works to maintain an appropriate standard of custodianship to meet our statutory responsibilities and to improve the visitor experience of the site. Works deemed urgent following consultation with heritage specialist architects are as follows:

- 2020/21 condition surveys identified urgent repairs to the listed Manor House, which prioritise works to failing lime render and window repairs as being critical to address urgent degradation to the building fabric. Other urgent works are reparation to leaking roof in the visitor/education centre coupled with upgrading to building services namely, air control systems & sustainable energy supply, which will improve the thermal performance of the building

- Heritage landscaping of gardens (herb, kitchen & sensory), reparative works to the medieval moat & decontamination of the lake (currently closed to public)
- Provision of wider site interpretation, coupled with new wayfinding signage to promote greater understanding and engagement with the heritage fabric of the site
- Budgetary restrictions have compromised sustainable conservation & digital storage with c2k objects awaiting accession
- Condition survey of the Fanshawe collection (2021) identified urgent attention and greater preservation of the Glindoni Folio, a key asset in the Borough's collection
- Following a dedicated access survey, the site must adopt principles of inclusive design to rework main routes ensuring greater accessibility and connectivity of site, including Valence Library, Valence Primary School (Ramps, landscaping, wayfinding); wider heritage landscape and accessibility proposals are forming part of a master planning process that was commenced in early 2023

Our ambition for the broader site aims to exceed statutory minimums of accessibility, whilst also making us financially & environmentally efficient through reducing energy use, optimising green spaces & future proofing our heritage assets. This will increase visitor footfall whilst generating earned income through hires, secondary spend (café/shop) and new grant revenue potential for public programming. It will lay the groundwork to furthering our 2021 Conservation & Management Plan (Appendix 1). In creating a coherent cultural & learning hub we will prioritise access measures and remove barriers to build community and agency, particularly for 33 local schools, elderly residents, disabled and a greater diversity of visitors.

2.3 Borough Archives and Local Study Centre: Barking and Dagenham Archives and Local Studies Centre collects, preserves and performs our statutory duty to provide access to informational resources on the place and people of Barking and Dagenham. The archive collection comprises the minute books, departmental records and plans of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and its predecessor authorities dating back to 1558. The archive holds deposited papers, including correspondence, diaries, and printed ephemera, as well as oral histories, photographs, and films, relating to local organisations, businesses, schools, charities, families, and individuals with connections to Barking and Dagenham. The local studies collection is made up of printed books, periodicals, newspapers and maps. Urgent repairs are required to the current purpose-made building housing the Borough Archives, and a workplan to address this is being developed to address this as part of the wider Masterplan of the Valence House Museum and Park site.

2.4 The Women's Museum: This new heritage site for the Borough located at 4-5 Barking Wharf Square will be a satellite exhibition and community space led by LBBD Borough Archives and Valence House Museum local history collection. Funded through SCIL (formerly granted to the East End Women's Museum), the Museum will platform the history and stories of both local women and their sisters beyond, and is being developed as an inclusive space open to all, including those identifying as transgender, intersex, non-binary, male and female. The Women's Museum will

showcase exhibitions, projects, events and workshops which platform the enormous historic achievements of women, whilst also providing a contemporary space for dialogue and gathering to consider critical issues pertinent to our collective contemporary experiences. Our inaugural exhibition focusing on the history of the Abbesses of Barking Abbey is being developed in partnership with a number of local and sector-related partners, and will open in late November 2023.

Ongoing fundraising is urgently required to create a resilient budget to staff and resource the ongoing programme and overheads for the site. Currently there is no dedicated budget for the running or programming of this new heritage space, with funds currently being drawn from other Culture Commissioning strands and resulting in reduced cultural activity across the Borough. Currently exploring grant funding and sponsorship possibilities, which would secure a baseline financial model to cover overheads for the Museum ensuring long-term viability of the space into the future.

3. Proposal and Issues

3.1 Our deliverables and strategic priorities over the coming years 2023-2026 include:

- Community-led programming and custodianship platforming the rich cultural heritage and contemporary cultural landscape of Barking and Dagenham
- Supporting delivery of aspirations for the upcoming new Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy which embodies a vision of “working together to give the best chance in life to babies, children, young people and their families”
- Increasing number of participants across initiatives and heritage sites by 10% annually 2023-2026
- Vibrant commissioning models, participatory frameworks and programmes representing diversity of the Borough, and supporting local organisations including: The White House, Company Drinks, BDYD, Greenshoes Arts
- Activating greenspaces and outdoor areas of Eastbury Manor House and Valence House Museum, networking these with broader LBBB and National Trust initiatives to build a stronger focus on sustainability, growing spaces, environmental conservation, and wellbeing
- Greater access to digital facilities across the Borough meeting needs of residents
- Establishment of culture and heritage sites in the Borough as young people’s safe-spaces in collaboration with LBBB Children’s Social Care and our Cultural Education Partnership, local schools, and cultural organisations, allowing young constituents living in the Borough free and unquestioned access to the Centre at designated after-school hours throughout the year
- Engagement programmes to connect residents with new spaces like the Women’s Museum in Barking Wharf Square

3.2 The significant key issues which may prevent us from achieving our aims include:

- A lack of financial resilience and insufficient core budgets at our heritage sites; the new Women's Museum space currently has no formal budget allocation at all
- A deficiency in meeting our statutory requirements due to neglect and a lack of funds, including addressing urgent conservation issues at our two key listed sites.

4. Options Appraisal / Actions to be taken forward:

- 4.1 Urgent fundraising exercises are currently underway to meet the consider financial gaps in Heritage budgets which prevent both Valence House Museum and Eastbury Manor House from being solvent. To move forward in effectively running our heritage sites and the future Women's Museum, we require an addition £200,000 - £300,000 GBP annually to be either redirected from other budgets to the sites, or to be sought through grants.
- 4.2 Additional fundraising is required to meet our statutory responsibilities around custodianship and conservation of our heritage buildings. Following the Masterplan development for Valence House Museum and consultation with the National Trust around our maintenance responsibilities for Eastbury Manor House, we expect fundraising targets to exceed 2.3 million GBP to meet our basic requirements; this target will rise considerably as we undertake a full redesign of the Valence Park and Valence Library site.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 As part of the Masterplan exercise at Valence House Museum, a resident and community consultation recently concluded on 31st May 2023. This was undertaken to gain valuable insight from local people around their key priorities and views of the heritage site and broader park area. We are currently distilling data from over 400 residents who have contributed their views. Further consultation will take place with Members, Officers, and key stakeholders throughout the Masterplan process.
- 5.2 Ongoing consultation in relation to the future Women's Museum site is taking place both with residents, schools, and key stakeholders both in the Borough and across the sector.

6. Implications

As this report is not for decision, there are no direct legal or financial implications arising from it.

- 6.1 **Risk Management** – The Culture and Heritage Service will respond to and prioritise key recommendations from Conservation Managements plans and Quinquennial inspections for Eastbury Manor House and Valence House Museum to ensure we fulfil our statutory responsibilities to listed heritage sites under our custodianship.

6.2 **Contractual Issues** – In 2021 specialist heritage-focused Project Managers Greenwood Project were appointed to lead management of repair and conservation works at Valence House Museum. With LBBB’s Heritage Commissioner they are overseeing the Masterplan development work for the site with heritage consultants Caroe Architecture, who tendered and won the contract for this work in 2021/2022 through LBBB’s procurement process.

6.3 **Staffing Issues** – As we consider improvements to management of our heritage sites, any changes to staff schedules which may result in a reduction of hours will be consulted upon with staff and Trade Unions, with all relevant LBBB HR processes being followed.

6.4 **Corporate Policy and Equality Impact**

The Culture and Heritage Service has developed an equal opportunities statement designed to implement the commitment of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham to equal opportunities and dignity at work. It is the responsibility of every employee, working on or off site, to ensure their own conduct conforms to the expected standards reflected in this statement. The aim of the statement is to encourage dignity, equality and respect amongst individuals as outlined in our 2023-2026 Corporate Plan, and to promote good working practices across culture and heritage programmes, with a view to maximising inclusion of residents and visitors at our borough-operated Culture and Heritage sites and across all related programming and commissioning streams.

We are doing this by:

- **Communication:** We are working to ensure all our communications are more inclusive and reach a greater diversity of residents and visitors to our sites, making it easier for people to share their views and to increase their participation in the arts, heritage, and culture around them
- **Improving access for people of all ages and abilities:** We are working on installing ramps, accessibility devices and investing in improved pathways, sensory spaces, and signage at the places we care for
- **Free and safe access:** We will be increasing awareness of the free access to our sites and programmes, particularly focusing on improving access to the community during after school hours and at weekends, removing - wherever possible - any social or economic barriers which prevent local people from experiencing arts, culture and heritage
- **Increasing access to our greenspaces:** We are working with our Park Rangers, local partners and other national organisations to help everyone access and enjoy the outdoors

6.5 **Safeguarding Adults and Children/ Health Issues** - Through our work across the Culture and Heritage Service, we are supporting delivery of aspirations for the new Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy which embodies a vision of “working together to give the best chance in life to babies, children, young people and their families”.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

None.

List of appendices:

- Appendix 1 [Conservation Management Plan for Valence House Museum and surrounding area](#)
- Appendix 2 [Conservation Management Plan for Eastbury Manor House](#)
- Appendix 3 [Quinquennial Inspection Report 2020](#)
- Appendix 4 Culture and Heritage Service Equalities, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement (draft)

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LBBB Culture and Heritage Service

EQUALITY STATEMENT

This statement relates to all programmes and culture and heritage facilities led and operated by London Borough of Barking and Dagenham's (LBBB) Culture and Heritage Service.

This equal opportunities statement is designed to implement the commitment of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham's Culture and Heritage Service to equal opportunities and dignity at work. It is the responsibility of every employee, working on or off site, to ensure their own conduct conforms to the expected standards and reflects this statement. The aim of the statement is to encourage dignity, equality and respect amongst individuals, and to promote good working practices across culture and heritage programmes, with a view to maximising inclusion of local residents and visitors at our borough-operated Culture and Heritage sites and across all related programming and commissioning streams.

Barking and Dagenham is a vibrant and diverse Borough, which is something we are proud of. As our local community grows and changes, we need to evolve to meet the needs of everyone and ensure they continue to feel welcome across our culture and heritage sites. The Culture and Heritage Service recognises, respects and values difference. We believe that diversity, through the mix of identities, experiences and perspectives we represent, is a fertile platform for fostering creativity and building understanding. We value the diversity of people who live or work in and visit the Borough, and it is our vision to commission an aspirational and inspiring curatorial and public engagement programme where people learn about, respect and celebrate each other's differences.

We are doing this by:

- Communication: We are working to ensure all our communications are more inclusive and reach a greater diversity of local residents and visitors to our sites, making it easier for people to share their views and to increase their participation in the arts, heritage and culture around them
- Improving access for people of all ages and abilities: We're working on installing ramps, accessibility devices and investing in improved pathways, sensory spaces and signage at the places we care for
- Free and safe access: We'll be increasing awareness of the free access to our sites and programmes, particularly focusing on improving access to the community during after school hours and at weekends, removing - wherever possible - any social or economic barriers which prevent local people from experiencing arts, culture and heritage
- Increasing access to our greenspaces: We're working with our Park Rangers, local partners and other national organisations to help everyone access and enjoy the outdoors
- Improving online and offline accessibility: We are dedicated to improving access to our Museum collections and Archives for residents of the borough and beyond, as well as developing online resources and toolkits to ensure our culture and heritage is available for everyone; we are particularly committed to improving experiences for people with disabilities and different needs

- Connecting with families, children and young people: We will be increasing our engagement with children and young people to understand how to better connect with them through history and the arts, and to ensure they have a say in the work we commission and do
- Inclusive and transparent commissioning practices: We are working to ensure our commissioning of arts, culture and heritage programmes include, represent and platform the diverse experiences and talent across the borough, and that we share our commissioning practices to include local organisations and people in decision-making processes wherever possible

We aim to be an exemplar employer and a vital part of this is ensuring we are a truly inclusive organisation that encourages diversity in all respects. The Culture and Heritage Service is committed to achieving these goals by ensuring our employment practices do not discriminate against a group or individual on any unjustifiable grounds. When possible, we support a model of flexible working and have a variety of working arrangements that allows for this.

We strongly welcome applications from people who represent the diversity of Barking and Dagenham, those who have faced socio-economic barriers and those currently underrepresented in arts and heritage sectors. We strongly welcome applications from people from the global majority. We guarantee an interview to those with disabilities and/or chronic and long-term health conditions who meet the essential requirements for the job as detailed on the person specification. We strongly welcome applications from those who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Intersex. We are a Defence Employer Recognition Scheme employer, welcoming applications from members of the armed forces and guarantee them an interview if they meet the essential requirements for the job as detailed on the person specification.

As part of this commitment:

- LBBD's Culture and Heritage Service recognises and accepts its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Under this Act, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation are protected characteristics.
- LBBD's Culture and Heritage Service will endeavour to provide a working environment free from unlawful discrimination and seeks to employ a workforce that increasingly reflects the diverse community at large because the council values the individual contribution of people irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- LBBD undertakes to review its employment practices, policies and procedures, including opportunities for training and promotion, pay and benefits, discipline, selection for redundancy and retirement, to ensure that it avoids all forms of unlawful discrimination in the workplace.

Appendix IEquality, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan

We have identified several significant areas of new work to help us deliver the aims of this Statement, which we will take forward over the next four years. Key areas of development around staffing, communications, access, programming and curatorial priorities will be addressed through the following actions:

Action	Lead	By When	Methodology
Ensure posts are advertised in places that community from the global majority, and those under-represented in the museum sector will look	HR Consultant HR Business Support Officer Communications Team	October 2022 onwards	Internal review
Review the support that is given to managers to ensure that recruitment exercises are fair and equitable. This takes the form of either training or guidance. Ensure in particular that job descriptions and person specifications are written in plain English	LBBB Training HR Consultant Head of Culture and Heritage	July 2023	Internal review Staff away day and bespoke training sessions focused on LBBB DRIVE values and recruitment
Engage the next and future generations with Museum sites, programming and collections by developing a strategy for working with young people	Senior Curator, Culture Programmes Museum and Collections Curator Community Engagement Officer	September 2024	Stakeholder workshops and facilitated discussion, internal and external
Undertake a diversity audit of our current programmes	Culture and Heritage Commissioner Senior Curator, Culture Programmes	June 2023	Internal audit and external consultation with Fourth Street
Recognise a more representative and diverse heritage through our programming and exhibitions	Senior Curator, Heritage Commissioner, Archivist, Museum and Collections Curator	July 2023 – March 2027	Internal audit and stakeholder consultation
Give a wider range of people the opportunity to contribute to Culture and Heritage programming and initiatives, providing greater representation	Culture and Heritage Commissioner Head of Culture and Heritage	2023 onwards	Initiation of Masterplan Community Consultation and establishment of VHM Community Steering Group

Appendix 4

from the diverse population of the borough, particularly those representing the global majority			
Create key messages about how our commitment to equalities and diversity is reflected in practices, exhibitions, collections mandate and public programming	Communications Team Culture and Heritage Commissioner	2023 onwards	Stakeholder workshops and facilitated discussion internal and external
Find new ways to mark and commemorate the diverse heritage of the borough, platforming local history past, present and into the future	Culture and Heritage Commissioner Museum Collections Curator Events Team	July 2023	Stakeholder workshops and facilitated discussion internal and external
Improve online and offline accessibility	External Access Auditor LBBB Access Officer Communications Team	September/October 2022	Internal audit and access audit with independent consultant
Improve site access, including surrounding greenspaces, for those visitors with barriers to accessing arts, culture and heritage	External Access Auditor LBBB Access Officer LBBB Public Health Parks Commissioner Consulting Heritage Architects	Summer 2022	Internal audit and access audit with independent consultant

Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Work Programme 2023/24

Officers must ensure reports are cleared by the relevant internal board and include legal and financial implications at least

Meeting	Agenda Items	Officer(s)	Cabinet Member/Presenter	Executive Board Deadline	Governance Service's Final Deadline
13 September 2023	The Housing Offer for Vulnerable Groups	Chris Bush and Rebecca Ellsmore	Councillor Worby and Councillor Ashraf	12pm, Thursday 17 August	12pm, Friday 1 September
	Adult Social Care – CQC Assurance and Improvement Update	Joanne Starkie	Councillor Worby		
	Waste (Provisional)	Leona Menville	Councillor Haroon		
11 October 2023	Working with Faith Communities in Barking and Dagenham	Monica Needs/Rhodri Rowlands	Councillor Ashraf	12pm, Thursday 14 September	12pm, Friday 29 September
	Medium-term Financial Plan	Strategic Director Finance	Councillor Twomey		
8 November 2023	Flytipping	Rebecca Johnson	Councillor Haroon	12pm, Thursday 12 October	12pm, Friday 27 October

	Parks	Rebecca Johnson	Councillor Haroon		
5 December 2023	Metropolitan Police Item (Update on actions arising from Baroness Casey Review/progress of Metropolitan Police Turnaround Plan)	Borough Commander/Superintendent Rhodes/Gary Jones	Councillor Ghani	12pm, Thursday 9 November	12pm, Friday 24 November
24 January 2024	Budget Scrutiny BDTP and BDMS Update Report	Strategic Director Finance Leona Menville	Councillor Twomey Councillor Ashraf	12pm, Thursday 14 December	12pm, Friday 12 January
14 February 2024	Compliance Update Report: 2 years on (from self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing)	Leona Menville	Councillor Ashraf	12pm, Thursday 18 January	12pm, Friday 2 February
13 March 2024	TBC			12pm, Thursday 15 February	12pm, Friday 1 March
17 April 2024	TBC			12pm, Thursday 21 March	12pm, Friday 5 April
12 June 2024	Update: How are we incorporating Race & Social Justice work into	Jane Hargreaves/Natasha Cock/Martin Russell/Ben Spinks		12pm, Thursday 16 May	12pm, Friday 31 May

	our schools' education programmes? Update: Quality of Schools' Recovery Post Covid-19	Jill Baker/Jane Hargreaves	Councillor Kangethe		
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