1. Purpose of Presenting the Report and Decisions Required

1.1 This is a report on a 10-week borough youth services mapping and review project provision, as part of the work programme for the upcoming Lost Hours campaign.

1.2 It created a database and a map of positive activities for young people in Barking and Dagenham which will enable all stakeholders- including young people, their families and professionals- easily identify services of interest.

1.3 It also provides recommendations on service delivery and future commissioning to senior leaders for their consideration and decision-making.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 It is recommended that the Community Safety Partnership Board:

   - Note the analysis in this report
   - Consider the recommendations of this report

3. Background:

3.1 A project to map and review positive activity provision for young people in Barking and Dagenham began in Jan 2020, with a focus on Upper KS2 up to KS4 – Years 6 to 11.

3.2 The project is part of the upcoming Lost Hours campaign, focusing on the hours between 3 and 7pm on weekdays. This is the time period between when schools close and many young people and their parents or carers return home.
3.3 The two main deliverables of the project are an online interactive map and this report with recommendations to inform future decision-making.

Stakeholder engagement

3.4 The initial scoping phase included meetings with various council services including Community Solutions; Community Safety; Participation, Opportunity and Wellbeing; Education Commissioning; Cultural Commissioning; Communications and Campaigns; Community Participation and Engagement; Adolescent and Youth Offending; and Children’s Care and Support, amongst others.

3.5 Other umbrella organisations in the community and voluntary sector were contacted, including BD Collective, Barking and Dagenham CVS, as well as several organisations in receipt of funding from the council or major grant givers.

3.6 As part of the project, visits were also made to young people in a range of settings and from diverse backgrounds to elicit their views and feedback on youth services in general, and to trial the map in particular.

3.7 Unfortunately, with the onset of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) and the associated COVID-19 disease, the engagement phase of the project was truncated which resulted in far lower numbers being engaged than planned.

3.8 At 30th March 2020, over 150 children, young people and frontline youth workers had been involved in the engagement sessions.

3.9 Both the database of youth service provision and the map have been designed.

4. Overview

4.1 There are 257 positive activities, within and outside the borough.

Categories

4.2 They are grouped into twelve categories, presented pictorially in Fig 1.

4.3 The twelve categories are:

(1) afterschool clubs (in schools), (2) community groups
(3) uniformed youth groups (4) youth centres/clubs
(5) information, advice and support (6) creative activities
(7) mentoring, training and therapy (8) leisure centres
(9) performing arts (10) sports
(11) alternative education and training (12) children centres/libraries
Costs

4.4 Commendably, 70% of activities are free, numbering 181 services.

4.5 71 are paid, and 5 include a free trial or introductory period, as shown in Fig 2.

Four tier schools and families approach

4.6 The Step Up, Stay Safe campaign has adopted the four-tiers of youth service provision. They, and their percentages of the total number of services, are:

i) Universal services - 75%
ii) Targeted services - 18%

iii) Intensive services - 5%

iv) Specialist services - 1.5%

4.7 It is immediately apparent that there are very few specialist services providing the sustained and high-level intervention needed by young people who have been excluded the farthest.

Fig 3 - Activities/Services for Young People: Tier

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universal</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age Groups

4.8 Services are divided into three age groups: Under-11, 11-18 and 18+. Due to organisation’s differing criteria, there is some overlap between groups.

4.9 The category of services targeted at ages 11-18 totals 191. The breakdown is illustrated in Fig 3.
5. **Analysis**

5.1 The analysis of the project’s findings is presented under five headings below.

   **A. Distribution of activities**

5.2 The distribution of activities within the borough by ward is shown below. Each ward is accompanied by its rank in population of 0-16’s e.g. Thames ward (1st) has the highest population, while Gascoigne is the ward with the 2nd highest.

![Fig 4 - Activities/Services for Young People: Number of activities by Ward](chart)

5.3 In Fig 4 above, the wards are set out in descending order by population of 0-16, as a proxy for number of young people between 11 and 18 which is currently not available on the borough ward breakdown.

5.4 It becomes immediately apparent that some of the most under-served wards include River and Eastbury, with one activity location each, despite being wards with the 3rd and 10th highest population respectively.

5.5 River ward is of particular concern because it has the 3rd highest proportion of under-16’s in the borough.

5.6 Gascoigne is also of serious concern because its number of activities is disproportionately low for the second highest ward population of the selected proxy young people population.

**Recommendation 1:** Future commissioning arrangements should take into consideration which wards are currently under-served in locating youth services.

   **B. Diversity of activities**

5.7 There is considerable diversity of activities available.

5.8 Fig 1 shows the numbers of services/activities across 12 categories.
5.9 Fig 5 shows adequate diversity across categories.

5.10 A few gaps are discernible, however. One of them is the shortage of creative activities involving science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM), and emerging applications such as virtual reality, artificial intelligence etc. Organisations such as Institute of Imagination are sector leaders.

5.11 Another under-represented category is alternative education and training provisions. This sector is very helpful in engaging young people who feel unable to participate in or are excluded from mainstream learning provisions.

5.12 Additional feedback on gaps identified by the young people themselves is presented in the next section.

**Recommendation 2:** The council should commission and introduce services that promote creative activities. Barking and Dagenham council could become a national leader in this area within a relatively short period of time.

**Recommendation 3:** There is a pressing need for additional services that provide alternate education, training and coaching experiences in a non-study setting. Pertinent examples are included below in voices from stakeholders.

**Recommendation 4:** As seen in Fig 3, there is also a real need for more and tailored intensive and specialist services. The feedback from services such as Spark2Life’s specialist mentoring, Abianda project and the Safer London Gang Exit project, will be crucial to determine which such services are most needed by our young people.
C. Feedback from young people

5.13 The engagement exercise, limited by the outbreak of COVID-19, involved 142 young people in eight different locations, and 11 frontline workers.

5.14 The settings included a youth club, 3 schools including Mayesbrook Pupil Referral Unit, Lifeline sessions, Barking and Dagenham carers, young people's fora and the Tomorrow Starts Today activity centre.

5.15 Some of the young people’s feedback on trialling the youth services map has been incorporated into the final version, such as including a filter by cost.

5.16 Generally, young people were interested in accessing training programmes that lead to qualifications. The most frequently mentioned were:

i) An opportunity to win something or learn a skill

ii) Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSC) card,

iii) Sports coaching qualifications

iv) Health and beauty qualifications

5.17 The young people at Mayesbrook PRU engaged with as part of the project were particularly interested in:

i) Business training

ii) Modelling and hair/beauty

5.18 Other key suggestions from young people include:

i) More biking events in the borough, and a campaign: Knives Down, Bikes Up

ii) More organised activities in local parks

iii) More digital creative activities, 3D printing and digital content creative training sessions.

iv) Greater publicity of activities via map, website (Lost Hours) or videos embedded in the map

v) Outdoor activities such as parkour, skateparks, and wider availability of services such as trampolining

vi) Opportunities to review services on the Lost Hours website/map and rate by stars, and for the reviews to be available to help young people choose services.

Recommendation 5: More publicity for services that lead to qualifications or earning potential are needed to engage more young people on the fringes. More of such services will also be needed.

Recommendation 6: Actively promote opportunities for young people to rate or review services on the Lost Hours website or a council sponsored social media channel.
D. Feedback from frontline colleagues

5.19 Frontline colleagues in the Adolescent, Children’s care and support teams highlighted that the young people they work with are more likely to be interested in hair and beauty experiences or automobile engineering and go-karting than any traditional offering.

5.20 This view is shared almost without exception among colleagues who work closest to young people who have previously been in trouble with law enforcement and are unwilling to engage with our current offering.

5.21 The borough has one model hair and beauty training/life coaching setup in Ghost Hair Academy. More are needed.

5.22 There is no corresponding local provision that combines mentoring with automobile mechanic experience and training. The clear message from voices on the frontline, and the young people seldom heard themselves, is that we need one.

5.23 There are some offerings, e.g. Elutec; and there are opportunities, e.g. combining with providers such as Len Maloney of JC Motors with demonstrable success, which can provide a solid foundation.

5.24 There is a shortage of cultural activities that appeal to a broad base of young people in the council’s flagship cultural venues such as Valance House Museum and Eastbury Manor House. They are currently perceived as inaccessible to many of our young people. This needs to change.

5.25 The Cultural Policy and Commissioning Team along with colleagues managing the New Town Culture Bid are well placed to provide insights and collaborate in service design and commissioning that could use these venues for the good of all our young people.

5.26 Engagement with colleagues across services highlighted some recurring observations:

i) the need for increasingly joined up and strategic commissioning arrangements in services for young people, across divisions e.g. Community Safety, Education, Public health etc. so that needs are addressed holistically and service priorities are considered in tandem;

ii) the need for a volunteer offer in-house that promotes opportunities to share in positive activities for the council staff body, which could be allied to the Lost Hours campaign launch as another example of the council showing leadership and setting the pace.

Recommendation 7: Services that meet the identified needs of young people suffering exclusion should be commissioned, preferably as part of the Lost Hours campaign to ensure no one is left behind.

Recommendation 8: Commissioning and oversight of youth services should be both joined-up and strategic, resulting in a holistic appraisal of needs. The proposed recruitment of a Youth service programmes/commissioning manager is a helpful start.
E. Observations

5.27 Young people who have been victims of crime recommended that venues do well to be prepared for the possible scenarios that might arise when a victim of crime and the perpetrator both attend the same activity.

5.28 This could be incorporated into safeguarding training and awareness packs currently being designed by safeguarding leads to support youth service providers.

5.29 Looking ahead, the face of communal interaction post COVID-19 may differ considerably from the previous interpretation of normal.

5.30 Increasing numbers of providers will need to provide more and higher quality content over the internet. Some organisations such as BossCrows Productions based in Barking Library are offering support to other providers towards this end.

5.31 There is real potential in creating more opportunities to win activities or access to events. Some of the most attractive are gym memberships, opportunities to win vouchers and access to events of interest.

5.32 Wider and more creative use of the Capital Card currently used by some services working with young people would be a masterstroke. The card rewards young people’s positive behaviours with free access to meals out, driving lessons, go-karting experiences etc.

Recommendation 9: The Capital Card should be further developed and promoted as it has the potential to turbo-charge the Lost Hours campaign for our young people. It combines their desire to win and gain rewards with opportunities to access experiences that matter to them.

Recommendation 10: Increased publicity of any provisions to support service provider who seek to establish a base in the borough, perhaps a slot in a library or community centre. Over 50 services open to our young people are currently based outside the borough. Several are interested in working closer to their service users, or potential service users, in Barking and Dagenham.

6. Conclusion

6.1 The consensus from young people involved in the engagement exercise for this project is that the council is doing alright. That is heartening - but must not lead to complacency.

6.2 The launch of the Lost Hours campaign provides a signal opportunity to elevate their perception of positive activities available to them, and secure wider engagement.

6.3 The recommendations in this report will contribute towards reclaiming some of the lost hours, for many of our young people and our community.