

# Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee Agenda

Thursday, 2 November 2017  
**7.00 pm**, Committee Room 4  
Civic Suite  
Lewisham Town Hall  
London SE6 4RU

For more information contact: Katie Wood - 0208 3149446

This meeting is an open meeting and all items on the agenda may be audio recorded and/or filmed.

## Part 1

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# Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee Members

Members of the committee, listed below, are summoned to attend the meeting to be held on Thursday, 2 November 2017.

Barry Quirk, Chief Executive  
Tuesday, 24 October 2017

Councillor Pauline Morrison (Chair)	
Councillor James-J Walsh (Vice-Chair)	
Councillor Brenda Dacres	
Councillor Colin Elliott	
Councillor Sue Hordijkenko	
Councillor Joyce Jacca	
Councillor Jim Mallory	
Councillor David Michael	
Councillor Pat Raven	
Councillor Paul Upex	
Councillor Alan Hall (ex-Officio)	
Councillor Gareth Siddorn (ex-Officio)	

## **MINUTES OF THE SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 21 September 2017 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors James-J Walsh (Vice-Chair), Brenda Dacres, Colin Elliott, Councillor Joyce Jacca, Jim Mallory and Pat Raven

APOLOGIES: Councillors Pauline Morrison, Sue Hordijkeno and David Michael

ALSO PRESENT: Gary Connors (Crime Reduction Service Manager), Jeff Endean (Housing Programmes and Strategy Team Manager), James Greenshields (Chief Executive, Tonic Housing), Chief Superintendent Rob Jones (Borough Commander), Barrie Neal (Head of Corporate Policy and Governance), Geeta Subramaniam-Mooney (Head of Crime Reduction and Supporting People) and Katie Wood (Scrutiny Manager)

### **1. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2017**

In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, nominations were sought to Chair the meeting. Councillor Dacres was duly nominated and seconded and voted to Chair for the duration of the meeting or until such time as the Chair or Vice-Chair was in attendance.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That Councillor Dacres Chair the meeting until the arrival of the Chair or Vice-Chair.

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 12 July be agreed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

### **2. Declarations of interest**

Councillor Dacres declared a personal interest in item 5 as she had a close family member who is a Police Officer.

### **3. Response to Referrals from this Committee**

There were no responses to referrals due at this meeting.

### **4. Evidence Session - Provision for the LGBT Community in Lewisham**

4.1 James Greenshields, Chief Executive, Tonic Housing, gave a presentation to the Committee, a copy of which will be included in the agenda documentation. James also presented a short film to the Committee which can be found on the following [link](https://vimeo.com/160863683). (<https://vimeo.com/160863683>).

4.2 During the presentation, the following key additional points were raised:

- Tonic Housing would be happy to submit additional data from their Business Plan on the LGBT community in London.
- Older LGBT residents faced distinct problems in retirement and as users of social care or in social housing. It was an age group who had experienced many past injustices because of their sexuality and were at risk of experiencing them again as they approached older age.
- 28% more LGBT people over 65 took recreational drugs than non-LGBT people in 2016 according to statistics from Stonewall in 2107.
- There had been a 75% increase in the number of transphobic crimes referred to CPS by the Police between 2014/15 to 2015/17 according to the CPS Hate Crime Report. (This represented 58 cases in 2014/15 rising to 98 in 2015/16).<sup>1</sup>
- A disproportionate number of older LGBT people lived alone compared to the population as a whole.
- Older LGBT people were reporting being scared about disclosing their sexuality to care staff. The research undertaken by Tonic Housing had been recognised by housing providers who reported that they didn't always have the resources to research or tackle the problem further.
- According to Stonewall, 45% of older LGBT people had felt discriminated against when accessing social services and 73% were anxious about disclosing their sexuality to care staff.
- Following requests from Tonic Housing to housing providers to identify the number of LGBT residents; 11 out of 12 housing providers reported they had no LGBT residents. This appeared to be statistically improbable and helped to demonstrate that part of the problem was that people were not being identified or supported.
- Opening Doors London and Stonewall Housing had been working on the concept of a kite mark system for recognising excellence in housing and social care for older residents.
- There were models for social housing for LGBT residents in the USA and in Germany but to date there was nothing in the UK despite the recognition of the needs of this sector of the community.
- Tonic Housing want to work with partners to build an LGBT majority mixed community retirement facility.
- There was also an aim to develop LGBT sensitive domiciliary care.
- Tonic Housing was working closely with, and had backing from their five funders: Barrow Cadbury Trust; Comic Relief; Joseph Rowntree Foundation; Trust for London; and The Tudor Trust.

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<sup>1</sup> Extract from CPS Hate Crime Report: "2014/15 was the first reporting year following the change to the Criminal Justice Act 2003 to incorporate transgender identity as an aggravating feature. The CPS is now able for the first time to report separately on its performance in relation to prosecutions involving transphobic hostility. Whilst two years does not provide a sufficiently robust basis on which to draw firm conclusions in respect of trend data, the fact that the CPS is now able to publish this data will be of reassurance to communities and will play a part in encouraging the confidence to report."

[https://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/cps\\_hate\\_crime\\_report\\_2016.pdf](https://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/cps_hate_crime_report_2016.pdf)

- They were also working with the development partner “Igloo Regeneration”.
- Tonic were actively looking across London for a site and had approached a number of local authorities. Tonic would be very keen for the site for their proposed LGBT majority housing to be in Lewisham. They had already been in discussion with the Executive Member for Housing and with officers in the Council.

4.3 During the discussion that followed and in response to questions from members of the Committee, the following additional points were raised:

- Following a question regarding the fear of “ghettoisation” of sectors of the community from an LGBT majority housing scheme; the Committee heard that the housing scheme was not looking to create isolated communities. Integration was very important to the project and working with local housing providers and the local community and local authority was key. The scheme would also be carefully looking at longevity and sustainability including being able to adapt to reflect different issues in the future as they emerged. This could include changing the percentage allocated to the LGBT community.
- Following a question on the financial sustainability of such a housing proposal and the costs to potential residents; the Committee heard that there was an aim of 50% of the units to being affordable. Tonic had also submitted funding bids and predicted the possibility of substantial legacy income in the future.
- Finding those most in need could be challenging particularly if people were not disclosing their sexuality. Lots of work with the local community and community partners would be necessary.
- **Councillor Walsh, Vice-Chair arrived and took over the role of Chairing for the remainder of the meeting.**
- Some members of the Committee stated that a new housing scheme in the borough would be very beneficial for residents and it would be exciting to be at the forefront of promoting equality for older LGBT residents. Other members of the Committee noted that it was important to look at inequalities across all of the protected characteristics and carefully assess where there was most need to ensure Council resources were allocated prioritising those most in need.

4.4 Councillors Jacca and Walsh highlighted to the Committee the summary of their visit to Manchester. During the discussion, the following key points were raised:

- Members of the Committee reported they had undertaken a very interesting visit to Manchester City Council and the LGBT Foundation where they had heard extensively about their work on equalities, LGBT provision, partnership working and their proposals for an LGBT retirement housing provision. They wished to particularly thank both organisations and the Scrutiny Manager for organising such an interesting visit.
- Manchester City Council had a system of Lead Members where both backbench or Executive Councillors were allocated with special

responsibilities and this included all protected characteristics from the Equalities Act many of which were further divided such as “Lead Member for Gay Men” and “Lead Member for Lesbian Women”. This helped to embed the importance of equalities across the Council.

- Councillors Walsh and Jacca were asked to consider what they felt were the most important lessons learnt from the visit. They stated that the very well established partnership between Manchester City Council and the community and voluntary sector was one key aspect of Manchester’s success as well as equalities being embedded across the organisation such as through the emphasis placed on the Equalities Impact Assessment in reports.

#### 4.4 **RESOLVED:**

That James Greenshields, Chief Executive, Tonic Housing be formally thanked for his presentation and for attending the Committee.

That during the recommendations stage of the in-depth review, consideration be given to making a formal recommendation to the Housing Select Committee to look at the evidence and the committee’s finding around housing provision for older members of the LGBT Community.

That the report be noted.

### 5. **Local Police Service Update**

5.1 Rob Jones, Borough Commander, presented to the Committee. During his presentation, the following key points were raised:

- Managing how to meet needs following recent events and threats at the same time as saving money were the ongoing priorities and challenges.
- Following on from item 4 on this agenda, the Borough Commander reported that the statistic on a 75% increase in transphobic hate crime was high but there was also a big problem with under-reporting. Lewisham Police were doing a lot of work to improve community relations and build confidence in the Police. There was a dedicated LGBT liaison officer. The increased incidences of transphobic hate crime could in part be due to better reporting and improved understanding.
- Recent serious events in London such as the terrorist attacks in London Bridge and Parsons Green had seen Lewisham officers amongst those on the scene. Many experienced anxiety as a result and supporting those officers was a priority.
- The Metropolitan Police were in the middle of an on-going savings process. An additional £400 million of savings was needed on top of £400 million that had already been achieved. The Estate Strategy was at the heart of the savings proposals and would see a reduction in estate to one quarter of those held in 2010. This would help to maintain officer numbers whilst fulfilling the savings obligations. Public consultations were due to start shortly and some Police counters would be closed. Lewisham Police Station would maintain a counter that was open 24 hours per day/ 7 days a week. There was also due to be a reduction in Borough Commander

numbers from 32 to 12 with Lewisham combining with Bexley and Greenwich.

- The Metropolitan Police were changing how they recruited to ensure they had a more diverse and representative Police force. This included new entry level detective posts which had encouraged a significantly higher number of female and BAME candidates than past recruitment.
- There had been very successful partnership working with the Community Safety Team including on tackling gangs and on weapons sweeps.

5.2 In the discussion that followed, the following key points were raised:

- Community Policing was still seen as vitally important. There had been a reduction in the number of officers across London from 32,000 to 30,000 and this would fall further with the continued budgetary pressures, however the force was emphasising reduction in management levels to help to protect numbers of “frontline” Police Officers.
- Every ward in London would have a minimum of 2 dedicated ward officers but this would be more in certain areas.
- Demand at the Deptford and Catford Police Stations was low with, on average, 1 - 2 crimes reported there per day. Most people now preferred to report online or via phone. The Police Force understood it was often a concern to local residents but maintaining Police counters was not efficient.
- Concerns were raised around the reduction in PCSOs and the valuable resource they provided to the community.
- Every school in the borough would have a designated Police Officer and these would become more visible.
- The Borough Commander would report back to the Committee on the figure for sexual offences in schools in Lewisham and whether this had risen over the last few years.
- Across London there had been an increase in moped and acid attacks but this had not been the case in Lewisham. All officers were now carrying water for immediate use in an acid attack and improvements were being made to responding to moped attacks.
- Members of the Council and the Committee were concerned and saddened regarding recent attacks on Police officers in Lewisham and thanked the Police for all the work they did.
- Knife crime was falling in Lewisham and the Police and community partners had been very effective in managing this. There were on-going challenges on the rates of domestic violence and burglaries.

5.3 **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted and Rob Jones, Borough Commander be thanked for attending and presenting to the Committee.

## 6. Safer Lewisham Plan

6.1 Geeta Subramaniam-Mooney, Head of Crime Reduction and Supporting People presented the report to the Committee. During her presentation and in the discussion that followed, the following key points were raised:

- The Safer Lewisham Plan priorities continued to shape the focus of work, this was focussed on all forms of serious violence including peer on peer abuse, and gender based violence. Appendix A of the report highlighted the Action Plan.
- Campaigns including “The Violence Stops Here” had been launched and a conference held in June 2017.
- The Council now had a detailed and comprehensive view of serious youth violence, safeguarding and criminal justice.
- The Universal Schools Programme would be working with Youth First later in 2017. The programme would include strategies for combatting drugs, knife crime and sexual violence and understanding appropriate relationships. In addition, there would be targeted interventions in Primary and Secondary schools working with pupils and parents.
- There continued to be on-going work around the Prevent agenda and on counter-extremism.
- Discrimination and disproportionality continued to be an important issues. There were still concerns in the community about injustices particularly with respect to stop and search.
- Removing stigma from parents seeking help through the schools programme was important. Mentoring, coaching and supporting were key.
- The Schools programme was an interactive 6 session programme with parents and students. In addition to this there would be youth workers in school for example during break times.
- Digital campaigns were important but it was important to monitor how effective they were. It should not be uniquely confined to social media.

## 6.2 **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

## 7. **Select Committee work programme**

7.1 Katie Wood, Scrutiny Manager, introduced the work programme to the Committee and highlighted that in addition to the items listed in the report for the November meeting, there would also be an item on the budget and savings proposals.

## 7.2 **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

That a proposal for an all member briefing on gangs and youth violence and on the trauma-informed approach be put forward as a suggestion for member training and development.

## 8. **Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet**

There were no referrals to Mayor and Cabinet.

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm



Chair:

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Date:

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Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee		
Title	Declaration of interests	
Contributor	Chief Executive	Item 2
Class	Part 1 (open)	2 November 2017

## Declaration of interests

Members are asked to declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda.

### 1. Personal interests

There are three types of personal interest referred to in the Council's Member Code of Conduct:

- (1) Disclosable pecuniary interests
- (2) Other registerable interests
- (3) Non-registerable interests

### 2. Disclosable pecuniary interests are defined by regulation as:-

- (a) Employment, trade, profession or vocation of a relevant person\* for profit or gain
- (b) Sponsorship –payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than by the Council) within the 12 months prior to giving notice for inclusion in the register in respect of expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member or towards your election expenses (including payment or financial benefit from a Trade Union).
- (c) Undischarged contracts between a relevant person\* (or a firm in which they are a partner or a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest) and the Council for goods, services or works.
- (d) Beneficial interests in land in the borough.
- (e) Licence to occupy land in the borough for one month or more.
- (f) Corporate tenancies – any tenancy, where to the member's knowledge, the Council is landlord and the tenant is a firm in which the relevant person\* is a partner, a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest.
- (g) Beneficial interest in securities of a body where:

- (a) that body to the member's knowledge has a place of business or land in the borough;
- (b) and either
  - (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that body; or
  - (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person\* has a beneficial interest exceeds 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that class.

\*A relevant person is the member, their spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom they live as spouse or civil partner.

### 3. Other registerable interests

The Lewisham Member Code of Conduct requires members also to register the following interests:-

- (a) Membership or position of control or management in a body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Council
- (b) Any body exercising functions of a public nature or directed to charitable purposes, or whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy, including any political party
- (c) Any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25

### 4. Non registerable interests

Occasions may arise when a matter under consideration would or would be likely to affect the wellbeing of a member, their family, friend or close associate more than it would affect the wellbeing of those in the local area generally, but which is not required to be registered in the Register of Members' Interests (for example a matter concerning the closure of a school at which a Member's child attends).

### 5. Declaration and Impact of interest on members' participation

- (a) Where a member has any registerable interest in a matter and they are present at a meeting at which that matter is to be discussed, they must declare the nature of the interest at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered. The declaration will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If the matter is a disclosable pecuniary interest the member must take no part in consideration of the matter and withdraw from the room before it is considered. They must not seek improperly to influence the decision in any way. **Failure to declare such an interest which has not already been entered in the Register of Members' Interests, or participation where such an interest exists, is liable to prosecution and on conviction carries a fine of up to £5000**
- (b) Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest they must still declare the nature of the

interest to the meeting at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered, but they may stay in the room, participate in consideration of the matter and vote on it unless paragraph (c) below applies.

- (c) Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest, the member must consider whether a reasonable member of the public in possession of the facts would think that their interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair the member's judgement of the public interest. If so, the member must withdraw and take no part in consideration of the matter nor seek to influence the outcome improperly.
- (d) If a non-registerable interest arises which affects the wellbeing of a member, their, family, friend or close associate more than it would affect those in the local area generally, then the provisions relating to the declarations of interest and withdrawal apply as if it were a registerable interest.
- (e) Decisions relating to declarations of interests are for the member's personal judgement, though in cases of doubt they may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

## **6. Sensitive information**

There are special provisions relating to sensitive interests. These are interests the disclosure of which would be likely to expose the member to risk of violence or intimidation where the Monitoring Officer has agreed that such interest need not be registered. Members with such an interest are referred to the Code and advised to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance.

## **7. Exempt categories**

There are exemptions to these provisions allowing members to participate in decisions notwithstanding interests that would otherwise prevent them doing so. These include:-

- (a) Housing – holding a tenancy or lease with the Council unless the matter relates to your particular tenancy or lease; (subject to arrears exception)
- (b) School meals, school transport and travelling expenses; if you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or a school governor unless the matter relates particularly to the school your child attends or of which you are a governor;
- (c) Statutory sick pay; if you are in receipt
- (d) Allowances, payment or indemnity for members
- (e) Ceremonial honours for members
- (f) Setting Council Tax or precept (subject to arrears exception)

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# Agenda Item 3

Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee		
<b>Report Title</b>	Response to the recommendations of the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee on the Library and Information Service Annual Report	
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	Item No 3
<b>Ward</b>	All	
<b>Contributors</b>	Executive Director for Resources (Head of Business & Committee)	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 2 November 2017

## 1. Summary

This report informs members of the response given at Mayor and Cabinet to a referral in respect of recommendations to the Mayor by the Select Committee following discussions held on July 12 2017

## 2. Purpose of the Report

To report to members the response given at Mayor and Cabinet to recommendations made by the Select Committee on July 12 2017.

## 3. Recommendation

The Select Committee is recommended to receive the Mayoral response to their consideration of the Library and Information Service Annual Report.

## 4. Background

- 4.1 The Mayor considered the attached report entitled "Response to the referral from the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee on the Library and Information Service Annual Report at the Mayor & Cabinet meeting held on October 4 2017.

## 5. Mayoral Response

- 5.1 The Mayor received an officer report and a presentation from the Cabinet Member for Health, Well Being and Older People, Councillor Chris Best.
- 5.2 The Mayor resolved that the attached response report be submitted to the Select Committee in answer to the referral.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Mayor & Cabinet minutes October 4 2017

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Kevin Flaherty, Head of Business & Committee, 0208 314 9327



<b>MAYOR AND CABINET</b>			
<b>Report Title</b>	Response to the referral from the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee on the Library and Information Service Annual Report		
<b>Contributors</b>	Executive Director for Community Services	Item No.	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date</b>	4 October 2017

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. This report sets out the response to the views and comments of the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee, arising from discussions held following the officer report entitled Library and Information Service Annual Report at its meeting on 12 July 2017.

## **2. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Mayor:

- 2.1. Approves the response from the Executive Director for Community Services to the comments of the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee.
- 2.2. Agrees that this report should be forwarded to the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee.

## **3. Policy Context**

- 3.1. Shaping the Future, the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy includes the following priority outcomes which relate to the work of the Library and Information Service and reflect the Council's aspirations for the service:
  - Ambitious and Achieving – where people are inspired and supported to fulfil their potential.
  - Empowered and Responsible – where people can be actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities.
  - Healthy, Active and Enjoyable – where people can actively participate in maintaining and improving their health and wellbeing.
  - Dynamic and Prosperous – where people are part of vibrant localities and town centres, well connected to London and beyond.
- 3.2. The Library and Information Service also contributes to the following Council Priorities:
  - Community leadership and empowerment – developing opportunities for the active participation and engagement of people in the life of the community.
  - Strengthening the local economy – gaining resources to regenerate key localities, strengthen employment skills and promote public transport.
  - Active, healthy citizens – leisure, sporting, learning and creative activities for everyone.

- 3.3. In December 2016, DCMS updated “Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021”, their future policy consultation document. The approach in Libraries Deliver will shape the way in which libraries work in years to come, as they aim to provide services that are:
- available to everyone, free at the point-of-use
  - appropriately resourced and sustainable
  - consistent and responsive to local needs and priorities
  - marketed effectively to promote use by the widest possible audience

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1. On 12/7/2017, the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee considered the Library and Information Service Annual Report. Following the Select Committee, a referral was made to advise Mayor and Cabinet of the following:

4.2. Referral 1

The Committee highlighted the need to properly resource support for the changing role of libraries. In particular, Members acknowledged the growing need for WiFi and WiFi access.

4.3. Response 1

Since the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee meeting on 12 July 2017, a Department Expenditure Panel form for the upgrade of the WiFi in the Hub Libraries at Deptford, Lewisham, and Downham has been approved. This will substantially improve WiFi access in libraries, bringing it in line with customers’ and members’ expectations. It is expected that the upgrade will be complete by the end of December 2017.

4.4. Referral 2

The Committee felt that the promotion, both internally and externally, of news stories connected to libraries, must be done in an accessible way (for example, a greater use of infographics).

4.5. Response 2

The Library and Information Service is working with the Council’s communications team to develop a communication strategy that will benefit from, among other tools, the use of infographics.

4.6. Referral 3

Members emphasised the need to connect the importance of libraries to the work being undertaken by the Poverty Commission.

4.7. Response 3

The Library and Information Service is working with colleagues to align its work to that of the Lewisham Poverty Commission. The Commission is aware of the positive work done by Lewisham’s libraries, as it is of other important community development work across the borough, including the local assemblies programme, Community Connections, and Lewisham Local. Support for people to develop their digital skills has been recognised as

particularly important to the cause of tackling poverty.

**5. Financial Implications**

5.1. There are no specific financial implications arising from this response.

**6. Legal Implications**

6.1. There are no specific legal implications arising from this response.

**7. Crime and Disorder Implications**

7.1. There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this response.

**8. Equalities Implications**

8.1. There are no specific equalities implications arising from this response.

**9. Environmental Implications**

9.1. There are no specific environmental implications arising from this response.

**Background papers**

Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee Referral to Mayor and Cabinet – 12 July 2017

[Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee Referral to Mayor and Cabinet](#)

**For further information on this report please contact  
Liz Dart, Head of Culture and Community Development on 020 8314 6115.**

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Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee			
<b>Title</b>	LGBT Provision in Lewisham – Evidence Session	<b>Item No</b>	4
<b>Contributors</b>	Scrutiny Manager		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date</b>	2 November 2017

## 1. Purpose of paper

- 1.1. The Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee agreed to undertake a review looking at Provision for the LGBT Community in Lewisham as part of its work programme for 2017/18. This report, coupled with evidence provided at the meeting, will provide information for the Committee to discuss as part of its review.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Select Committee is asked to:

- Receive evidence from Danny Ruta, Director of Public Health
- Receive evidence from Adam Bowles, Head of Organisational Development and HR
- Note the content of the report and consider the information presented at Committee
- Note the date of the telephone conference with Leicestershire County Council which will take place on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November at 8.30am.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. At the meeting of the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee on 26 April 2017, the Committee resolved to undertake an in-depth review looking at LGBT provision in Lewisham. At its meeting on 26 June 2017 the Committee approved the scoping report for the review.
- 3.2. The scope for the review proposed the review include information on a wide range of issues relating to the LGBT community and to consider good practice. This evidence session allows the Committee to increase understanding of the Lewisham context. Members of the Committee are also invited to participate in a phone conference with Leicestershire County Council which will take place on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November at 8.30am. This will be to gather evidence on the work they have done to become the highest rated local authority in 2016 and 2017 in the Stonewall Top 100 Employers Survey<sup>1</sup> (7<sup>th</sup> in 2016 and 36<sup>th</sup> in 2017).

<sup>1</sup> Stonewall Top 100 Employers Survey 2017  
[http://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/top\\_100\\_employers\\_2017-web.pdf](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/top_100_employers_2017-web.pdf)

- 3.3. The Committee invited Stonewall to provide evidence to the Committee. In response Stonewall highlighted the following resources and publications which they felt would be important for the Committee to consider as part of their evidence. The first is a new guide they produced [LGBT in Britain](#) which focusses on LGBT experiences in public spaces. The second was their [service delivery toolkit](#) which they encourage organisations to use in understanding and mapping the journey of an LGBT person whilst using their service.
- 3.4. The Committee requested information on community value assets be provided to the Committee. This is a new right under the Localism Act 2011 and came into effect on 21 September 2012. It means that an eligible local voluntary or community group can ask the Council to list certain assets as being of value to the community by making a nomination. If an asset is listed and then comes up for sale, the new right will give an eligible community interest group that wishes to be treated as a potential bidder to purchase the asset, 6 months to put together a bid to buy it. This right is intended to give communities an increased chance to save shops, pubs or other local facilities which are of community value. The Assets of Community Value Regulations 2012<sup>2</sup> provides additional information on the process.
- 3.5. These concerns were raised by the Committee in response to the loss of many LGBT venues across London in the last 10 years. Research by University College London<sup>3</sup> highlighted that since 2006 there had been a 58% fall in the number of LGBTQ+ nightlife venues across London (125 in 2006 to 53 in 2016). Which was significantly higher than the fall in UK pubs overall (25% in the same period) and other London “grass roots” venues (35% fall).<sup>4</sup>

#### **4. Presentation**

- 4.1 Danny Ruta, Director of Public Health, will give a presentation to the Committee, Committee members will have an opportunity to ask questions.
- 4.2 Adam Bowles, Head of Organisational Development and HR will give a presentation to the Committee, Committee members will have an opportunity to ask questions.

#### **5. Further implications**

- 5.1. At this stage there are no specific financial, legal, environmental, equalities or crime and disorder implications to consider. However, each will be addressed as part of the review.

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<sup>2</sup> The Assets of Community Value Regulations 2012  
[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/2421/pdfs/ukxi\\_20122421\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/2421/pdfs/ukxi_20122421_en.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> LGBTQ+ Cultural Infrastructure in London: Night Venues, 2006-Present, UCL UrbanLab 2017  
[https://www.ucl.ac.uk/urbanlab/docs/LGBTQ\\_cultural\\_infrastructure\\_in\\_London\\_nightlife\\_venues\\_2006\\_to\\_the\\_present.pdf](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/urbanlab/docs/LGBTQ_cultural_infrastructure_in_London_nightlife_venues_2006_to_the_present.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

## **Background Documents and References**

[LGBT Provision in Lewisham Scoping Report](#) (26.06.17)

**LGBT in Britain, Hate Crime and Discrimination**, Stonewall, 2017  
[https://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/lgbt\\_in\\_britain\\_hate\\_crime.pdf](https://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/lgbt_in_britain_hate_crime.pdf)

**LGBTQ+ Cultural Infrastructure in London: Night Venues, 2006-Present**, UCL UrbanLab 2017  
[https://www.ucl.ac.uk/urbanlab/docs/LGBTQ\\_cultural\\_infrastructure\\_in\\_London\\_nightlife\\_venues\\_2006\\_to\\_the\\_present.pdf](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/urbanlab/docs/LGBTQ_cultural_infrastructure_in_London_nightlife_venues_2006_to_the_present.pdf)

**Stonewall Service Delivery Toolkit**, Stonewall, <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/service-delivery-toolkit>

**Stonewall Top 100 Employers Survey 2017**  
[http://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/top\\_100\\_employers\\_2017-web.pdf](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/top_100_employers_2017-web.pdf)

**The Assets of Community Value Regulations 2012**  
[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2421/pdfs/uksi\\_20122421\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2421/pdfs/uksi_20122421_en.pdf)

If you have any questions about this report, please contact Katie Wood, Scrutiny Manager (ext. 49446)

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<b>SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE</b>		
Title	Working together to tackle poverty in Lewisham – Final report of the Lewisham Poverty Commission	
Key Decision	No	Item No. 6
Ward	all	
Contributors	Executive Director for Resources and Regeneration	
Class	Part 1	Date: 2 November 2017

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 Mayor and Cabinet agreed on 7 September 2017, following a recommendation by the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee, to establish a Commission to review poverty in the borough and develop recommendations to tackle poverty.
- 1.2 The Lewisham Poverty Commission was established and held its first meeting in February 2017. Attached is the Commission’s final report “Working together to tackle poverty in Lewisham”. The report contains recommendations to Lewisham Council, other public sector bodies in the borough, partners in the borough’s voluntary and community sector and national government.
- 1.3 This report will be presented to Mayor and Cabinet on 15 November. The report to Mayor and Cabinet provides an outline of the scope of Lewisham Poverty Commission, its focus for preparing recommendations and the process that was followed to come to these recommendations. The report to Mayor and Cabinet contains recommendations for Mayor and Cabinet to respond to the Commission’s report.
- 1.4 Below follows the text of the draft Mayor and Cabinet report. The Safer Stronger Communities is recommended to note the “Working together to tackle poverty in Lewisham” report.

## 2. Recommendations to Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to:
  - Welcome the challenge and insight provided by the Lewisham Poverty Commission and thank the Commissioners for their time and expertise
  - Note the final report of the Lewisham Poverty Commission and its recommendations
  - Note the report to Mayor and Cabinet presenting the final report of the Lewisham Poverty Commission

## 3 Recommendations to the Mayor

- 3.1 The Mayor is recommended to:
  - Welcome the challenge and insight provided by the Lewisham Poverty Commission and thank the Commissioners for their time and expertise

- Note the final report of the Lewisham Poverty Commission and its recommendations
- ask officers to develop a detailed response to the report's findings and recommendations including an action plan
- retain a Cabinet Member with responsibility for overseeing Lewisham Council's actions to tackle poverty, including presenting a yearly report to the Council's scrutiny and executive functions so progress can be tracked.

## 4 Policy context

- 4.1 Lewisham's Sustainable Communities Strategy (2008-2020) sets out a vision of a resilient, healthy and prosperous borough. The Strategy informs the direction of Council policy and it guides the process of decision making. One of the governing principles of the Strategy is the ambition to 'reduce inequality and narrow the gap in outcomes for citizens'. It is recognised in the Strategy that '...deprivation and poverty can limit people's prospects (and) some of our communities are more likely to experience their effects than others'.
- 4.2 In addition, the Council has a number of corporate priorities, three of which are particularly relevant to the commission's work: Community leadership, Decent Homes for All and Strengthening the local economy. The Commission has made recommendations for action in each of these areas.
- 4.3 The final report of the Lewisham Poverty Commission makes recommendations to Lewisham Council and its partners on how poverty can be alleviated, how its negative effects can be mitigated against and how people's resilience can be strengthened. The Commission recommendations therefore contribute to the aims of Lewisham's Sustainable Communities Strategy and to the three corporate priorities of the Council as outlined above.

## 5 Lewisham Poverty Commission

### *The Commission*

- 5.1 The Lewisham Poverty Commission was set up to combine expertise about poverty with expertise about the local area. Its members were:
- Alice Woudhuysen, Child Poverty Action Group
  - Bharat Mehta, Trust for London
  - Bill Davies, Head of Policy, Central London Forward
  - Claire Mansfield, New Local Government Network
  - Debbie Weekes-Bernard, Joseph Rowntree Foundation
  - Gloria Wyse, Lewisham Citizens
  - Councillor Joe Dromey (*Chair*), Cabinet Member for Policy and Performance
  - Dr Simon Griffiths, Senior Lecturer in Politics, Goldsmiths
  - Councillor Brenda Dacres, Lewisham Council
  - Councillor Colin Elliot, Lewisham Council
  - Councillor James J-Walsh, Lewisham Council
  - Councillor Joan Millbank, Cabinet Member for Third Sector and Community
  - Councillor Joyce Jacca, Lewisham Council

### *Scope of the Commission's work*

- 5.2 Poverty is complex and multidimensional. The Commission has used the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's definition, where poverty is a situation in which 'a person's resources (mainly their material resources) are not sufficient to meet their minimum needs (including social participation)'.<sup>1</sup> In this definition, 'needs' encompass both basic material goods and the ability to participate in social life. The term 'resources' refers to the financial and in-kind means necessary to meet these needs. In-kind resources may be formal goods and services (those provided by a local authority, for example) or informal goods and services (accessed via social networks or community organisations, for example).
- 5.3 The Commission was set up to draft recommendations that aim to alleviate poverty, mitigate against its negative effects and strengthen people's resilience. At its first meeting, the Commission discussed the need to be targeted in its approach to the issue, as poverty is such a broad concept. The Commission has also been aware of the limited time available to them. As a result, the Commission agreed to focus on policy areas and recommendations that could have a genuine impact for people living in poverty in Lewisham.
- 5.4 Many of the Commission's recommendations have been directed at Lewisham Council. The Commission has recognised that local authorities have a significant impact on the lives of their residents through the many services they provide, commission and facilitate. The Commission has also recognised the good work Lewisham Council has been doing for many years to tackle poverty and support its residents who are dealing with the consequences. However a local authority by itself can only do so much, particularly given the government's decision to cut two third of Lewisham Council's funding since 2010; cuts which are set to continue. In this context, the Commission has worked to create recommendations to the Council that are ambitious but realistic.
- 5.5 The Commission has been keenly aware that local authorities also have a significant role to play in their local area by bringing local partners together to tackle pressing issues. The borough contains many significant publicly funded institutions aside from the Council including a world class university, social housing providers, a large further education college as well as a large NHS trust. All provide important services for the citizens of Lewisham including education, housing and care. These organisations also make up a significant proportion of local employment and are significant sources of investment in the local area. The Commission's final report therefore sets out ambitious actions for Lewisham Council with its local partners to take to make a real difference to the lives of local people.
- 5.6 Finally, some of the barriers faced by the poorest Lewisham residents could only be removed through changes in policy by national government. The Commission has therefore also called on national government to play their part: to support people that desperately need it and to create the conditions that enable individuals, local communities and local organisations to solve poverty.

## **6. The Commission's areas of focus**

*Supporting residents to access well-paid, secure jobs inside and outside of Lewisham*

- 6.1 The main and sustainable route out of poverty is getting people into well-paid and secure jobs. Lewisham is situated on the doorstep of London, a growing and thriving city, and three in five residents work outside of the borough. While the London employment market is easy for residents to access, the growth in jobs has been at the

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/definition-poverty>.

high and low end of the labour market, with comparatively few jobs in-between. There has also been a growth in insecure employment. Given this, and the Government's cuts to funding for training, it can be difficult for residents in low-paid and insecure jobs to progress to higher-paid and secure work. Lewisham's local economy is comparatively small, with the lowest number of jobs per capita of any London borough and a high proportion of jobs in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs).

- 6.2 Supporting, growing and attracting businesses in Lewisham will be important to increase job opportunities for Lewisham residents. In the absence of large private employers, Lewisham's public sector institutions play an important role not just as providers of public services, but as major employers too. These partners working together to increase employment opportunities for Lewisham residents and opportunities to develop their skills so residents can advantage of the local and London-wide labour market have therefore been an area of focus for the Commission.

#### *Tackling child poverty by supporting parents into decent work*

- 6.3 Lewisham is among the 20 local authorities with the highest levels of child poverty in the UK. Child poverty has a direct impact on the life chances of young people, limiting their ability to achieve their potential. Children in lone parent households are more likely to grow up in poverty as lone parents often struggle to find flexible and high quality employment that fits around childcare.
- 6.4 The Commission has recommended ways to improve the availability of flexible and high-quality job opportunities in the borough and opportunities for parents to develop their skills, ways to improve the affordability but also accessibility of child care and finally, access to advice about entitlements to child care as well as general advice about benefits.

#### *Improving the local housing market*

- 6.5 The cost of housing is an important factor in London's and Lewisham's higher poverty rate. Over one in four Londoners live in poverty after housing costs are taken into account, compared with one in five nationally. House prices in Lewisham are lower than the London average, but they have risen sharply, and the median house price is 14 times greater than the median income. Given high housing costs and a shortage of social homes, more residents are living in the private rented sector. Rents are rising fast, and many residents are subject to rogue landlords and insecurity.
- 6.6 The Commission has made recommendations about ways the Council can enhance its housebuilding programme, influence the private rented sector to improve conditions for residents, and work to prevent homelessness. Finally, the Commission has looked at changes to national policies that would increase the Council's ability to invest in social housing and help prevent residents going into rent arrears.

## **7 Engagement with residents, partners and stakeholders**

- 7.1 The Commission has been keenly aware of how important it is to include the Council's partners but particularly our residents in their work. The Commission has prepared their final report following several months of research and public consultation. The process involved a qualitative study of the lived experience of poverty in Lewisham; analysis of quantitative data and existing literature on poverty; discussions at local assemblies across the borough; an online consultation; a summit which brought together communities and wider stakeholder representatives from across the borough.

- 7.2 The Commission has held four meetings during the course of its work. At the first meeting on 28 February 2017, the Commission discussed its scope and focus. The Commission was also presented with data about Lewisham's population and the nature of poverty in the borough. The second meeting on 4 May provided the Commission with a paper on the experience of life in Lewisham for people on low incomes as well as information on the Council's work in their areas of focus, as well as examples of positive work done elsewhere. The third meeting was the Lewisham Poverty Summit on 12 July, to discuss the Commission's thinking with partners, stakeholders and residents, and get feedback. At their final meeting on 28 September, the Commission has agreed its final report and recommendations.
- 7.3 The voices and experiences of those who are or were experiencing poverty are particularly important to the Commission. People themselves will (often) know best what would help them, but engaging people can be challenging. The approach taken was to allow people to comment and provide their ideas while genuinely listening to them.
- 7.4 All Lewisham Councillors have also been informed about the project as it progressed and approached to provide comments. The Commission was aware that local Councillors have a wealth of knowledge about their local area and their residents, so are seen as important partners.

#### *Lived experience paper*

- 7.5 The Commission has considered a paper on the experience of life in Lewisham for people on low incomes. The paper provided some qualitative material to complement the quantitative, policy-focused picture in the other background papers. The material was gathered from conversations and informal interviews with Lewisham residents, who were approached via a number of voluntary and community organisations in the borough.
- 7.6 Much of the material was gathered from people who are 'getting by', rather than those destitute or in crisis, and the paper shows some of what enables residents to 'stand on their own two feet', to borrow one resident's words. Conversations with residents highlighted the precariousness of life for many in the borough (the fact that everyone is 'only a pay check away from poverty', as one put it), the importance of access to advice and support networks, and the value of a sense of place and community. In their discussion of the paper, Commissioners noted the high levels of physical and mental health problems in Lewisham and the associated barriers to employment and social participation. However, they also recognised the importance of building on residents' existing skills, interests and desire to contribute to their communities.

#### *Website and online call for evidence*

- 7.7 The Commission has a webpage at [www.lewisham.gov.uk/povertycommission](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/povertycommission). It contains information about the Commission's work including papers for its meetings as well as a call for evidence. The page also contained a short survey where people as well as organisations could submit their views, experiences and suggestions for change. The questions asked in the survey were:
- What makes it difficult to make ends meet in Lewisham?
  - What can you and your community do to help make it easier to get by?
  - What can the Council and its partners do to help?
  - Is there anything else you would like the Commission to know about?
- 7.8 The webpage and survey have been promoted via the Council's social media

accounts and were included in the Lewisham Life email several times.

#### *Local Assemblies*

- 7.9 All Councillors were invited to add an item on the Lewisham Poverty Commission to the agenda for their assemblies in this period. These sessions have allowed the assemblies to discuss the work of the Commission and poverty in the borough generally. A toolkit for the discussion session was developed in advance and provided to all Councillors. Six of the borough's local assemblies have taken up this opportunity: Crofton Park, Grove Park, New Cross, Blackheath, Catford South and Evelyn.

#### *Visits*

- 7.10 A number of visits to drop-in centres have been arranged to hear about residents experiences and thoughts, both for officers working on the project and for Commissioners. The organisations or projects visited have been the Council's housing options centre, two of the borough's Children's Centres, the provider of employment support for the Pathways to Employment programme, a community library, the Whitefoot and Downham Community Food Project, a employment support programme by a local housing provider, Lewisham Credit Union, a local church and a session of the Council's Young Advisors meeting.

#### *London Boroughs*

- 7.11 All London Boroughs were written to, so they were aware of the Commission's work and so they could share examples of good work in their areas. Those Councils that had experience of organising their own Commissions on fairness, equality or poverty were also specifically asked to share lessons they had learnt. The responses were incorporated in some of the papers presented to the Commission at their last meeting.

#### *The Lewisham Poverty Summit*

- 7.12 The Lewisham Poverty Summit took place on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July. The Summit was an opportunity to discuss the Commission's work with the Council's partners and stakeholders. More than 70 people attended, including representatives from partner organisations, the voluntary and community sector, faiths organisations and residents.

## **8 The Council's response**

- 8.1 The Lewisham Poverty Commission has functioned as an advisory body to the Council. Its membership has combined expertise about poverty with expertise about the local area. Following the extensive consultation processes described in section 7, it has now made recommendations to Lewisham Council in each of the policy areas described in section 7. The Commission has worked to make recommendations that are realistic but ambitious, and fit the specific circumstances of poverty in the London Borough of Lewisham.
- 8.2 The Mayor is now asked to note the "Working together to tackle poverty in Lewisham" report and ask officers to develop a detailed response to its recommendations for Lewisham Council. This response should include an action plan.
- 8.3 The Commission is aware that tackling poverty will not happen overnight. The Commission has therefore requested that a Cabinet Member retains specific responsibility for overseeing Lewisham Council's actions to tackle poverty, and

recommends that this Cabinet Member present a yearly report to the Council's scrutiny and executive functions, so progress can be tracked.

- 8.4 Finally, the Mayor is asked to thank the members of the Commission for their time and expertise, and the insight they have provided to the Council.

## **9 Financial implications**

- 9.1 There are no financial implications following from this report.
- 9.2 The Lewisham Poverty Commission has been focused on improving and coordinating existing work by the Council and its partners as opposed to recommendations that would require additional financial resources.
- 9.3 Financial implications may arise when it comes to the implementation of the recommendations in the Working together to tackle poverty in Lewisham – Final report of the Lewisham Poverty Commission. However, any decision to spend money would then be subject to the Council's formal decision-making.

## **10 Legal implications**

- 10.1 There are no specific legal implications for this report, save for noting the obligations imposed pursuant to the Equality Act 2010.
- 10.2 The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) introduced a public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty). It covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
  - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

It is not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct, or to promote equality of opportunity or foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. It is a duty to have due regard to the need to achieve the goals listed above.

- 10.3 The weight to be attached to the duty will be dependent on the nature of the decision and the circumstances in which it is made. This is a matter for the Mayor, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. The Mayor must understand the impact or likely impact of the decision on those with protected characteristics who are potentially affected by the decision. The extent of the duty will necessarily vary from case to case and due regard is such regard as is appropriate in all the circumstances.
- 10.4 The Equality and Human Rights Commission has issued Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty and statutory guidance entitled "Equality Act 2010 Services, Public Functions & Associations Statutory Code of Practice". The Council must have regard to the statutory code in so far as it relates to the duty and attention is drawn to Chapter 11 which deals particularly with the equality duty. The Technical Guidance also covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty. This includes steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The guidance does

not have statutory force but nonetheless regard should be had to it, as failure to do so without compelling reason would be of evidential value. The statutory code and the technical guidance can be found at:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-codes-practice>

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-technical-guidance>

10.5 The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has previously issued five guides for public authorities in England giving advice on the equality duty:

- [The essential guide to the public sector equality duty](#)
- [Meeting the equality duty in policy and decision-making](#)
- [Engagement and the equality duty: A guide for public authorities](#)
- [Objectives and the equality duty. A guide for public authorities](#)
- [Equality Information and the Equality Duty: A Guide for Public Authorities](#)

10.6 The essential guide provides an overview of the equality duty requirements including the general equality duty, the specific duties and who they apply to. It covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty including steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The other four documents provide more detailed guidance on key areas and advice on good practice. Further information and resources are available at:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance#h1>

## **11 Equalities implications**

- 11.1 The Commission has worked to challenge some of the systemic inequalities existing in the borough. Its recommendations are aimed at tackling poverty and preventing the negative impacts it has on people's lives, such as lower educational attainment, a persistence of intergenerational poverty, and poor physical and mental health outcomes.
- 11.2 The Commission has made every effort in its work to draw views and ideas from across the community, but particularly from those residents living in poverty in Lewisham. The process of engagement followed by the Commission is described in section 6 of this report.
- 11.3 Any decisions that arise from the implementation of the recommendations in the Commission's "Working together to tackle poverty in Lewisham" report will be subject to the Council's formal decision-making and an assessment of the equalities implications of those decisions will be made then. Poverty is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, as per paragraph 10.2.

### **Background documents and originator**

Appendix A: Working together to tackle poverty in Lewisham – Final report of the Lewisham Poverty Commission

Appendix B: Working together to tackle poverty in Lewisham – Final report of the Lewisham Poverty Commission, Executive Summary

Further information about the Lewisham Poverty Commission and its work can be found here: [www.lewisham.gov.uk/povertycommission](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/povertycommission)



For further information, please contact Simone van Elk, 020 831 46441

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# Working together to tackle poverty in Lewisham



The final report of the Lewisham Poverty Commission

October 2017



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## Foreword

Lewisham is a great place to live, with a strong and diverse community. Yet, despite being situated in the heart of London, on the doorsteps of one of the wealthiest cities in the world, tens of thousands of Lewisham residents live in poverty.

There is a wealth of evidence of the damage poverty does. We know child poverty is associated with lower educational achievement, and it prevents kids from fulfilling their potential. We know poverty is linked to poor physical and mental health, and to shorter life expectancy. We know poverty is often inter-generational, with people growing up poor being more likely to suffer from poverty later in life. And we know that high levels of inequality; with significant wealth alongside poverty, is a cause of significant social ills. A fundamentally unequal society can never be a good society.

Lewisham has a proud record of fighting poverty. We are proud that we were the first council to become an accredited Living Wage employer, and since we introduced a business rate incentive, the number of Living Wage employers locally has rocketed. We've seen strong employment growth, with the Council helping hundreds of residents into work in recent years.

Yet despite our efforts, poverty in Lewisham remains stubbornly high. And we know things may get worse. The Government's failure to tackle the housing crisis has been a driver of poverty in London. Their welfare freeze has led directly to an increase in poverty both for those who can't work, and those in work on low pay. And the Government's huge cuts to Lewisham Council's funding limit what we can do to tackle poverty.

But we know there is more that we can do. That's why the Safer Stronger Select Committee called for a Commission to review our approach. This report is the outcome of the Lewisham Poverty Commission. It has involved a new approach; with Councillors working alongside local stakeholders and national experts to look at the nature of poverty in Lewisham, assess what we're currently doing and what other councils are doing, and develop a comprehensive plan to tackle the scourge of poverty. We've spoken to residents affected by poverty, we've sought input from across the community, and we've come up with some recommendations which we think are ambitious but practical and which we hope can make a real difference.

We've focused on four areas; supporting residents to access decent work; tackling child poverty; improving the local housing market; and strengthening support within communities. In each area, we've made recommendations which we hope the current Mayor and the next Mayor will implement. But we can't do this alone. If we are to make a real impact, we will need to work with local partners, and we will need to continue to push for changes in Government policy.

I am grateful to Safer Stronger Select Committee for proposing this commission, to our Mayor Sir Steve Bullock for asking me to Chair it, to everyone who fed in and to our fantastic officers for their support – particularly Simone van Elk. But most of all, I'm hugely grateful to all our commissioners who gave their time and their significant expertise.

We all share a commitment to tackling poverty. It's what drives us. We hope that the work of the Lewisham Poverty Commission can help us tackle the scourge of poverty in our community.



Councillor Joe Dromey, Chair of the Lewisham Poverty Commission

# 1. Introducing the Poverty Commission: a realistic but ambitious approach

## The Commission

Tackling poverty, deprivation and inequality is at the heart of Lewisham Council's vision for a resilient, healthy and prosperous borough. With this in mind, Lewisham Council agreed to convene the Lewisham Poverty Commission to understand and tackle the poverty faced by residents and communities in Lewisham, bringing Council representatives together with partner organisations of the Council.

The Commission is a group of local councillors and poverty experts that have come together to consider how poverty can be tackled in the borough. Its members are:

Alice Woudhuysen (Child Poverty Action Group)	Bharat Mehta (Trust for London)
Bill Davies (Central London Forward)	Councillor Brenda Dacres
Claire Mansfield (New Local Government Network)	Councillor Colin Elliot
Debbie Weekes-Bernard (Joseph Rowntree Foundation)	Gloria Wyse (Lewisham Citizens)
Councillor James J-Walsh	Councillor Joan Millbank
Councillor Joe Dromey ( <i>Chair</i> )	Councillor Joyce Jacca
Dr Simon Griffiths (Goldsmiths)	

## Focusing on poverty

Poverty is complex and multidimensional. The Commission has used the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's definition, where poverty is a situation in which 'a person's resources (mainly their material resources) are not sufficient to meet their minimum needs (including social participation)'.<sup>1</sup> In this definition, 'needs' encompass both basic material goods and the ability to participate in social life. The term 'resources' refers to the financial and in-kind means necessary to meet these needs. In-kind resources may be formal goods and services (those provided by a local authority, for example) or informal goods and services (accessed via social networks or community organisations, for example).

The principal aim of the Commission has been to agree recommendations to alleviate poverty in Lewisham, mitigate against its negative effects and strengthen people's resilience.

The Commission has prepared this final report following several months of research and public consultation. The process involved a qualitative study of the lived experience of poverty in Lewisham; analysis of quantitative data and existing literature on poverty; discussions at local assemblies across the borough; an online consultation; a summit which brought together communities and wider stakeholder representatives from across the borough.<sup>2</sup> This report summarises the Commission's findings on poverty in Lewisham and presents their recommendations to the Council and partners.

<sup>1</sup> See [www.jrf.org.uk/report/definition-poverty](http://www.jrf.org.uk/report/definition-poverty).

<sup>2</sup> A full methodology can be found as Appendix 1.

## **The role of Lewisham Council in tackling poverty**

Many of the Commission's recommendations are naturally directed at Lewisham Council. The Commission recognises that local authorities have a significant impact on the lives of their residents through the many services they provide, commission and facilitate – examples include children's centres, the provision of temporary accommodation and employment support programmes. The Commission also recognises the good work Lewisham Council has been doing for many years to tackle poverty and support its residents who are dealing with the consequences. However a local authority by itself can only do so much, particularly given the government's deep cuts to local government budgets since 2010; cuts which are set to continue. In this context, the Commission has worked to create recommendations to the Council that are ambitious but realistic.

## **Action at a local level**

The borough contains many significant publicly funded institutions aside from the Council including a world class university, social housing providers, a large further education college as well as a large NHS trust. All provide important services for the citizens of Lewisham including education, housing and care. These organisations also make up a significant proportion of local employment and are significant sources of investment in the local area. The Commission has therefore also looked at positive steps these organisations, together with the Council, can take to tackle poverty.

## **Working together to tackle poverty**

The Commission has been keenly aware that local authorities also have a significant role to play in their local area by bringing local partners together to tackle pressing issues. This report therefore sets out ambitious actions for Lewisham Council and other local partners which we hope can make a real difference to the lives of local people.

Nevertheless there are limits to what local organisations can do by themselves to tackle the problem of poverty in Lewisham. Some of the barriers faced by the poorest Lewisham residents can only be removed through changes in policy by national government. The Commission therefore also calls on national government to play their part: to support people that desperately need it and to create the conditions that enable individuals, local communities and local organisations to solve poverty.

Poverty can be tackled but only if we all work together.

## 2. Poverty in Lewisham

### Lewisham and its people

Lewisham is a successful, diverse and inclusive inner London borough. The borough has good transport links to the rest of London, excellent primary and improving secondary schools, attractive residential neighbourhoods and an active voluntary and community sector.

Lewisham has a population of 306,000 people. It is the 15th most ethnically diverse borough in the country. From the 2011 Census, 46.4% of Lewisham's people are from a Black, Asian, and, Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. 14.4% of Lewisham's residents described themselves as living with a long-term health condition in the Census, compared to 17.6% for England. It also a very young borough as a quarter of its residents are less than 20 years old. Lewisham is characterised by the energy and diversity of its local communities and shares several characteristics with both inner and outer London. Yet, despite its many assets and rich history as a leader in debates surrounding social justice, Lewisham continues to have high levels of poverty and deprivation.

### The impacts of poverty

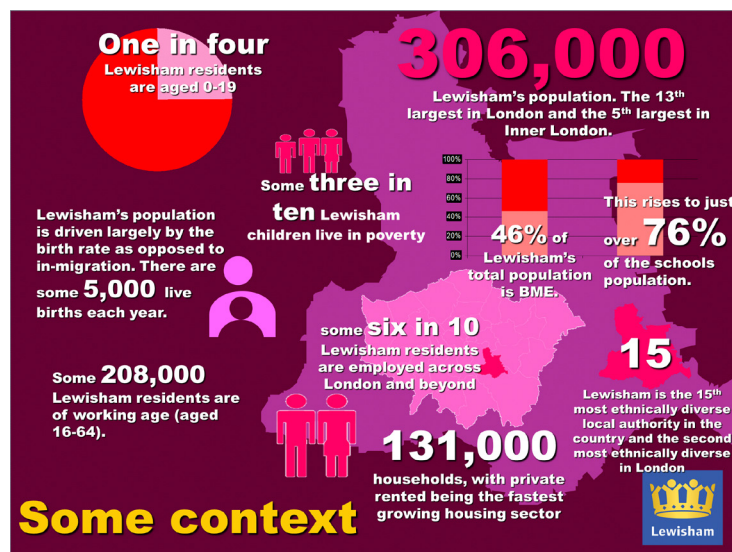
There is a wealth of evidence of the negative impact of poverty on people's lives.

#### Educational attainment and intergenerational poverty

Children growing up in poverty have far poorer educational outcomes than other children. Pupils who receive free school meals (FSM) are significantly less likely to achieve good GCSE results. In England, 43.1% of children on FSM score a grade C or better for English and maths GCSEs, compared to 63% of all children. The numbers in Lewisham are 45.9% for children on FSM compared to 56.2% overall.<sup>3</sup> Nationally, just one in five (22%) young people on FSM progresses to university, compared to two in five (39%) young people who did not receive FSM.<sup>4</sup>

Partly as a result of the large gaps in educational attainment between those who grow up in poverty and those who don't, there are high levels of intergenerational transmission of poverty, where poverty is transferred from one generation to the next, and low levels of social mobility in the UK.<sup>5</sup>

Figure 1. An overview of the demographics of Lewisham



<sup>3</sup> Department for Education, 2016 at [www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/](http://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/)

<sup>4</sup> Department for Education (DfE), Widening participation in Higher Education, England, 2016

<sup>5</sup> Office for National Statistics, Intergenerational transmission of disadvantage in the UK and the EU, Sept 2014



Children growing up in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods in the UK are at least 10 times more likely to be taken into care or put on a child protection plan than children in the 10% least deprived neighbourhoods<sup>6</sup>. In Lewisham, the number of looked after children per 10,000 population is 65.1, compared to 60 nationally.<sup>7</sup>

### **Physical health and life expectancy**

People who are poor tend to die younger than people who are not. In England, the wealthiest women live on average 6.6 years longer than the most deprived. For men, the gap is 7.7 years.<sup>8</sup> This is particularly relevant for homeless people who are sleeping rough. Their average life expectancy is 42, compared to 79 for women and 76 for men nationally.

Poverty also has a significant impact on people's physical health. People living in poverty have increased rates of cardio-vascular diseases and lung cancer as well as respiratory illnesses related to cold housing.

### **Mental health and wellbeing**

Reduced income, income inequality, unemployment and unaffordable housing have all been associated with poor mental and physical health outcomes.

Stress, anxiety, depression, substance misuse disorders and minor psychiatric illnesses have all been linked to different aspects of living in poverty, such as being in debt, experiencing a decrease in household income or being unemployed. Some studies have shown that the risk of death by suicide was two to three times higher for unemployed people compared to those with jobs.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, those working in insecure and low-paid jobs are more at risk of suffering from stress, and job insecurity has been strongly associated with depression.<sup>10</sup> This was born out in interviews with Lewisham residents and community organisers:

*'People begin at a place where they, you know, if they got a job they probably wouldn't be able to cope because they don't have the correct coping strategies around anxiety, around saying what they think, around turning up for things on time, that kind of thing. And a lot of that is around mental health... I mean some weeks we'll have hardly anyone here and when you ask people why, it's because they were really depressed and they couldn't get out of bed or that kind of thing.'*

**Reverend, Church in Downham**

<sup>6</sup> The Child Welfare Inequalities Project, led by Coventry University at [www.coventry.ac.uk/Global/08%20New%20Research%20Section/Researchers/CCSJ/CWIP%20Summary%202015.pdf](http://www.coventry.ac.uk/Global/08%20New%20Research%20Section/Researchers/CCSJ/CWIP%20Summary%202015.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Report on Lewisham Council's children's social care budget from September 2017 at <http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s52583/04%20Childrens%20social%20care%20budget%20270917.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Public Health England, 2016

<sup>9</sup> Giuntoli, 2011 at <https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/unemployment-mental-health-full.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> The Marmot review, 2010 at <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/fair-society-healthy-lives-full-report.pdf> and Meltzer et al (2010) Job insecurity, socio-economic circumstances and depression in Psychological Medicine.

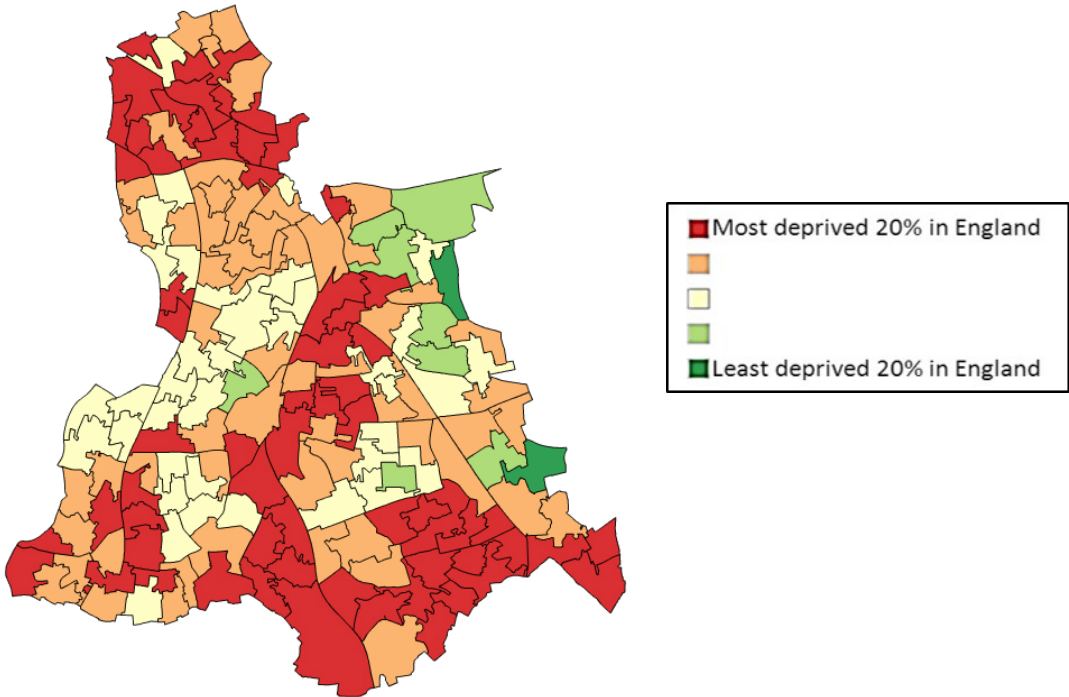
## Quantifying poverty in Lewisham

Lewisham is situated close to the centre of London, one of the wealthiest cities in the world. Yet as with many London boroughs, Lewisham’s community still suffers from high levels of poverty and inequality.

According to the Department for Communities and Local Government’s 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), the borough ranked 48th out of 326 local authorities (1st being most deprived). This is a marked improvement from 2011 when it was ranked 31st, yet Lewisham remains well within the most deprived quartile of local authorities.

There are significant variations by area in Lewisham. Two of Lewisham’s neighbourhoods are in the least deprived 20% in the country, while 63 of the borough’s communities (37%) are in the 20% most deprived in the country. Areas of significant wealth exist alongside areas with high levels of deprivation. There are concentrations of deprivation in the far north and the far south of the borough.<sup>11</sup>

**Figure 2.** A map showing Lewisham’s Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) scores by LSOA<sup>12</sup> (Source: DCLG 2015).



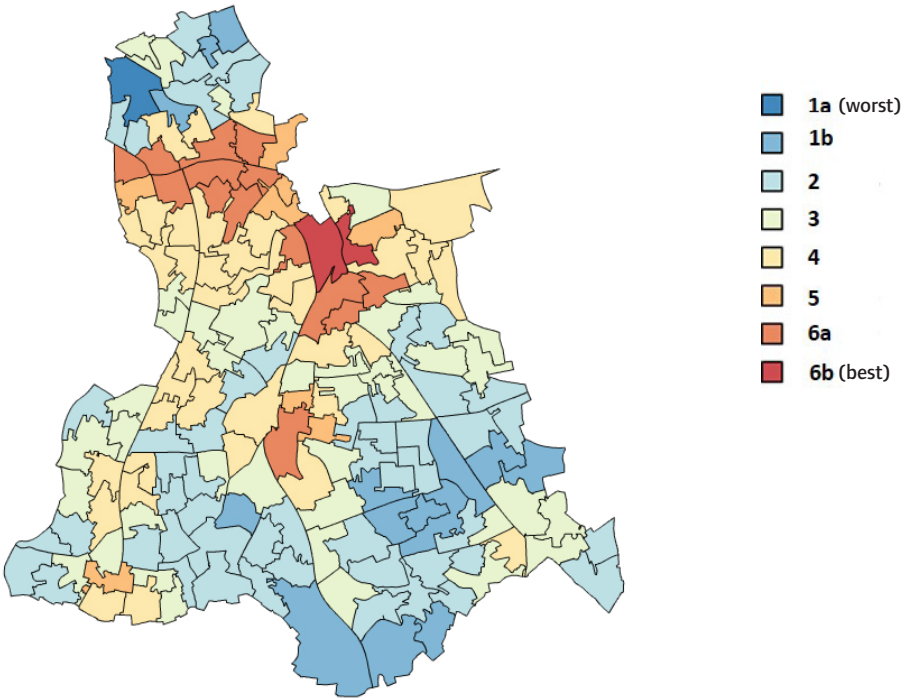
<sup>11</sup> The IMD measures relative deprivation across 7 domains: income; employment; education, training and skills; health deprivation and disability; crime; barriers to housing and other services; and the living environment.

<sup>12</sup> Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are geographical areas with an average population of 1,500 people used in the IMD. Lewisham has 169 LSOAs spread across 18 wards.

In the Trust for London’s 2017 London Poverty Profile, Lewisham ranked among the bottom 25% of all 32 London boroughs for the average across all indicators. The Trust noted that Lewisham is in the worst four boroughs for numbers of out-of-work benefit claimants, the average size of income loss from Council tax support and proportion of 19 year olds lacking level 3 qualifications.<sup>13</sup> The borough was worst amongst London Boroughs for pupils receiving A\*-C grades in English and maths.<sup>14</sup>

In the north of the borough, high housing costs and low incomes combine to produce high levels of deprivation, but there are good connections to the rest of London. In the south, housing tends to be marginally more affordable but incomes are low and residents are more likely to be unemployed and in receipt of out-of-work benefits. One of the key challenges across the south of the borough is poor transport connectivity, with low Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTALs)<sup>15</sup>, as illustrated by Figure 3. There is a significant overlap between poor transport accessibility and concentrations of deprivation in the borough.

**Figure 3.** A map showing PTAL’s across Lewisham.



*‘The cost of public transport’ [makes it difficult to get by]*  
**Grove Park Local Assembly**

<sup>13</sup> For information, level 3 qualifications are, or are similar in level to A-levels. For details of what different qualification levels mean, see [www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels](http://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels)

<sup>14</sup> [www.trustforlondon.org.uk/data/boroughs/borough-overview/](http://www.trustforlondon.org.uk/data/boroughs/borough-overview/)

<sup>15</sup> PTAL is a measure of connectivity of an area by public transport. PTAL values range from 0-6, with 6 representing the best connectivity. Data for London can be found here: <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/urban-planning-and-construction/planning-with-webcat/webcat>

## The difficulties in getting well-paid, secure work

While unemployment has fallen, and while average incomes in Lewisham are higher than the UK average, high levels of inequality and high housing costs lead to high levels of poverty.

*'Alright, they say you can get round it. You can do cheap meals, yeah I do now that. But it's just that little bit of extra money, little bit of pocket money that you can go and buy a pair of shoes [with] or something like that. That's all it is, really, just having that extra bit of money. And that's what the government don't understand.'*

**Woman, part-time employed**

Median weekly earnings in the borough in 2016 were £620.80 for full time workers compared to £632.4 in London and £541.80 for England and Wales.<sup>16</sup> Men in Lewisham earn £641.4 a week, which is below the London average for men but above the England average, whilst women at £586.8 a week are above both the London and England averages for women.<sup>17</sup> The median household income across the borough is £29,848, 15% lower than the London average. There is also significant income equality in Lewisham, reflected in Figure 1 above. In four wards (Evelyn, Bellingham, Downham and New Cross) the median income is below £25,000.

Unemployment in Lewisham has fallen steadily for the last six years and now stands at 5.7% of the working age population. This is in line with the London average (5.7%) but higher than the national average (4.7%). Lewisham has higher levels of people on out of work benefits than the rest of London (9.1% compared to 7.2%). The numbers of adults claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) has fallen in recent years, though at 1.7% it is higher than the London average of 1.2%. While the number of JSA claimants has declined, the numbers for Employment Support Allowance and Incapacity benefits claimants have largely staid the same, with 5.7% of the population on these benefits compared to 4.8% across London. The number of lone parents claiming out of work benefits is also higher; 1.5% compared to 1.0% in London.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> NOMIS, official labour market statistics by Office for National Statistics, Labour Market Profile Lewisham, 2016 at <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157254/report.aspx?town=lewisham>

<sup>17</sup> <http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s48217/06CESAnnualReview2016Safer080317.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> NOMIS, see footnote 13

The government's welfare freeze will have a significant impact on these groups.

*'It is extra hard for some – if you have a disability, if you aren't white, if you are queer – poverty isn't just about resources, it's racism, homophobia'*  
Crofton Park Local Assembly

There are significant differences in the employment rates among different groups of residents. Unemployment is far higher among men in Lewisham at 6.5% than among women at 4.1%. This is above the London average for men, whereas for women it is significantly below<sup>19</sup>. Across the UK the unemployment rate for people from a BAME background is 8.2% compared to 4.3% for people who self-identify as white ethnic. For Lewisham the numbers are 8.1% for BAME residents and 4.1% for white ethnic.<sup>20</sup> There is also a significant disability employment gap nationally, with just 48.3% of disabled people aged 16-64 in employment in the last quarter of 2016 compared to 80.5% of non-disabled people<sup>21</sup> and 9% of economically active disabled people are unemployed across the UK.<sup>22</sup> In Lewisham, 22.4% of people who are economically inactive are long-term sick, compared to just 16.7% across London.<sup>23</sup> Some people will be part of more than one group that is disadvantaged in the labour market and this can compound any difficulties they face in getting well-paid, secure work.

While Lewisham has seen significant falls in unemployment in recent years, it has also seen a significant rise of in-work poverty. In 2015, it was estimated that 27% of Lewisham's residents were earning less than the London Living Wage (£9.75 per hour since April 2017). This is higher than at any time since 2008, suggesting that wages are not keeping pace with rising living costs.

Lewisham has a very small economy, with a predominance of small and micro businesses and very few larger businesses. Lewisham's public sector institutions are the major employers in the borough. It is well connected by transport links into Westminster, the City of London, Canary Wharf and Southwark and over 60% of Lewisham residents work outside the borough. Job density – the number of jobs per working age adult – is 0.40 in Lewisham, lower than all other London Borough.<sup>24</sup>

Lewisham was the joint first local authority in the country to become an accredited Living Wage employer.<sup>25</sup> Lewisham has also introduced a business rate discount to incentivise other local employers to become accredited Living Wage employers. The number of Living Wage employers in Lewisham has risen from 5 in 2015 to 33 in August 2017.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>19</sup> NOMIS, see footnote 13

<sup>20</sup> Annual Population Survey, April 2016 - March 2017

<sup>21</sup> House of Commons briefing paper nr 7540, Key statistics on people with disabilities in employment, Dec 2016

<sup>22</sup> Office for National Statistics, A08: Labour market status of disabled people, 16 August 2017

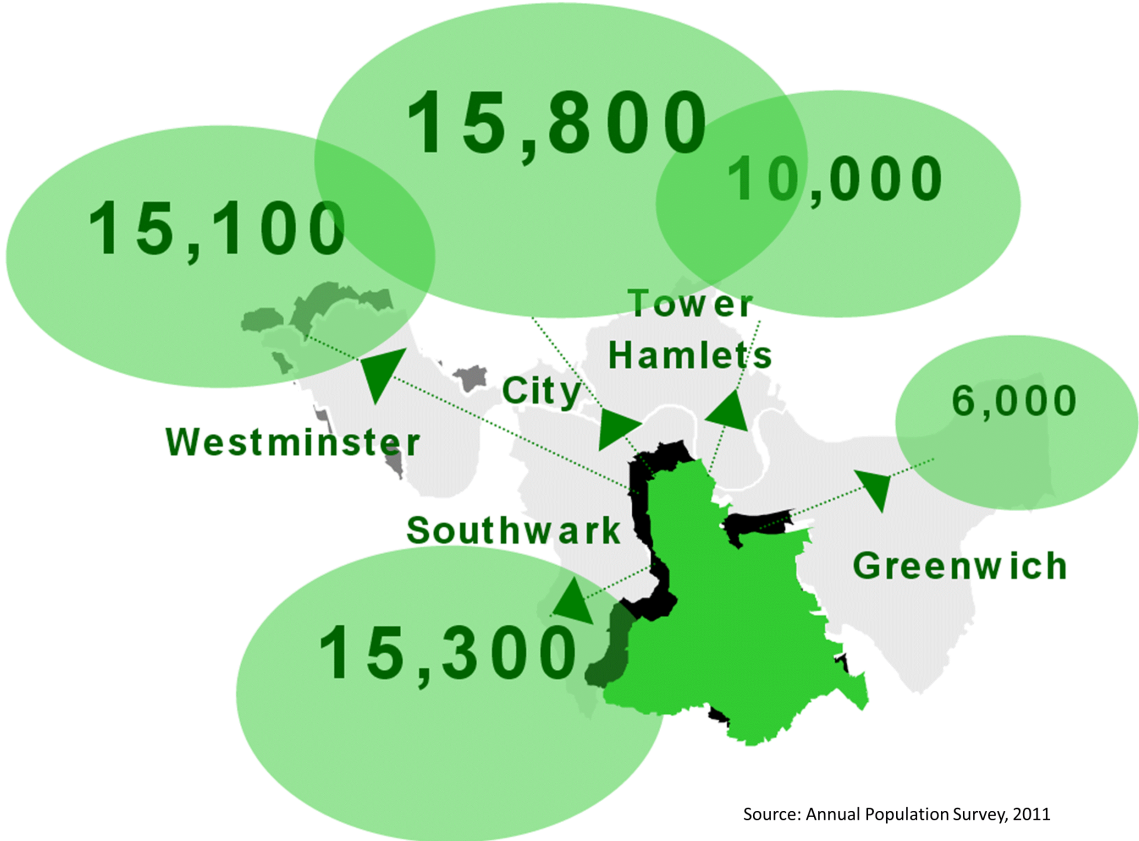
<sup>23</sup> NOMIS, see footnote 13

<sup>24</sup> Job density is a measure of the number of jobs in an area divided by the resident population aged 16-64. For example, a job density of 1.0 would mean that there is one job for every resident aged 16-64.

<sup>25</sup> [www.livingwage.org.uk/news/first-london-living-wage-boroughs-announced](http://www.livingwage.org.uk/news/first-london-living-wage-boroughs-announced)

<sup>26</sup> [www.lewisham.gov.uk/news/Pages/Living-Wage-employers-rise-by-560-per-cent.aspx](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/news/Pages/Living-Wage-employers-rise-by-560-per-cent.aspx)

Figure 4. Commuter flows from Annual Population Survey, 2011.



The opportunities available in the wider London economy are vital for Lewisham’s residents, but there is a growing concentration of jobs both at the very high end of the skills spectrum and at the extreme lower end. This makes it difficult for people with low level qualifications to progress into well-paid jobs. While the London employment market is easy for residents to access, 6.3% of Lewisham’s working age residents having no qualifications and 35.9% have qualifications at Levels 1, 2 or 3.<sup>27</sup>

Well-paid, secure jobs are the main route out of poverty. This has therefore become an area of focus for the Commission.

<sup>27</sup> <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/qualifications-working-age-population-nvq-borough>.

## Children living in poverty

Lewisham is in the top 20 of local authorities in the country with highest levels of child poverty.<sup>28</sup> Child poverty has a direct impact on the life chances of young people, limiting their chances of succeeding at school and going on to find secure employment. Child poverty is also associated with a wide range of health-damaging impacts, including adverse long-term social and psychological effects. The poor health associated with child poverty limits children's potential and development, leading to reduced life chances in adulthood.<sup>29</sup>

Education and training are vital routes out of poverty. Lewisham has excellent primary schools, but it has the worst GCSE results in London and high numbers of young people with no qualifications. In Lewisham only 45.9% of pupils eligible for free school meals achieve 5 GCSEs at A\*-C, compared to 56.2% of all pupils. The pupil cohort that performed the least well (by March 2017) were black, white, and disadvantaged pupils.<sup>30</sup> The need to improve standards and raise educational outcomes, especially in secondary schools, was at the heart of the recommendations made by Lewisham's recent Education Commission.<sup>31</sup>

In 2015, it was estimated that 18.5% of children aged 0-15 in Lewisham lived in households in which a parent or guardian was claiming out-of-work benefits, the seventh highest of all 32 London boroughs. At the same time, being in work is no guarantee of escaping poverty. In 2015, the Institute for Fiscal Studies found that nearly two thirds of children in poverty lived in working households.<sup>32</sup> Low incomes, changes to the benefit system and the rise of insecure part-time work can put immense pressure on working parents with dependent children, especially in larger households.

Children in lone parent households are more likely to grow up in poverty as lone parents often struggle to balance work and childcare and are therefore more likely to be on low incomes. According to the last Census, 11% of households in the borough are lone parent households, compared to an average of 8.5% in inner London. The overwhelming majority (91.5%) of lone parent households in Lewisham are headed by women.

*'Financially, we get help with our rent, we get help with DLA [Disability Living Allowance]. But although we are probably getting a little bit more money than everyone else because of DLA, it's still a struggle on a day-to-day basis because, you know, all the kids go to different establishments. This week, for instance, it's Red Nose Day, so one has got own clothes day on Friday, they're needing a pound for that, the other one has got a play next week and they're needing a new t-shirt and new tracksuit bottoms for that, the other one has got a trip so they need a packed lunch, you know. There's always something.'*

**Mother of son with autism**

<sup>28</sup> After housing costs have been taken into account.

<sup>29</sup> See, for example, <http://adc.bmj.com/content/early/2016/02/08/archdischild-2014-306746>.

<sup>30</sup> <http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s48217/06CESAnnualReview2016Safer080317.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> The Commission's final report is available at <http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s44260/Lewisham%20Education%20Commission%20Report.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/7880>.

### The price of unaffordable housing

The cost of housing is an important factor in London and Lewisham’s higher poverty rate. London and Lewisham have a higher than national average income but the cost of housing is such that 27% of Londoners and 31% of inner London residents (including Lewisham) live in poverty after housing costs are taken into account, compared with 21% nationally.<sup>33</sup>

House prices in Lewisham are currently lower than the London average, but the median house price is still 14 times greater than the median income in the borough. Private rents in Lewisham are below the inner London average but are rising faster than elsewhere in London, increasing by 40% between 2011 and 2016. This means many tenants pay more than half their income in rent. The median market rent in the borough also exceeds the maximum Local Housing Allowance (LHA) that can be claimed, and LHA rates have been frozen till 2020.

Affordability is an issue across all types of tenure.



*The Median Market Rent in the borough significantly exceeds the maximum Housing Benefit that can be claimed.*

Source: Valuation Office Agency, Inner London Housing allowance

### The Commission’s focus

The Commission also heard from people in Lewisham about what made it difficult to make ends meet in addition to a range of evidence on Lewisham’s population, London’s economy, the housing market, child poverty in the borough, and links between poverty and health outcomes.<sup>34</sup> From this evidence, four key areas of focus were chosen:

- Supporting residents to access well-paid, secure jobs inside and outside of Lewisham;
- Tackling child poverty by supporting parents into decent work;
- Improving the local housing market; and
- Strengthening support within communities.

<sup>33</sup> [https://data.london.gov.uk/apps\\_and\\_analysis/poverty-in-london-201516-2/](https://data.london.gov.uk/apps_and_analysis/poverty-in-london-201516-2/)

<sup>34</sup> A full methodology can be found as Appendix 1.



### 3. Supporting residents to access well-paid, secure jobs inside and outside of Lewisham

*'The kind of clients that we see, even where they are employed, they tend to be on low incomes, on zero-hours contracts, so the money that is coming in is not enough... but it's also not stable, it's not money that they can rely on... So yes, these cases are real in Lewisham... People don't have job security, they don't have well-paid jobs and, in most cases, they really are, you know, on the edge.'*

**Citizens Advice Bureau caseworker, Lewisham Advice Bureau**

#### **Works, skills and the role of anchor institutions**

While Lewisham has a low jobs density, London has a thriving economy with an immense range of employment opportunities. The challenge for the Council and other local public sector partners is to equip residents with the necessary skills to ensure that they can benefit from the projected growth of London's economy by finding secure, well-paid jobs, with opportunities for personal fulfilment and progression. This is particularly important as Universal Credit will extend conditionality within the benefits system to claimants who are already in work and earning below a certain threshold.

Jobcentre Plus administers benefits and provides advice on finding employment, with the Work Programme supporting those who have been long-term unemployed. This has been relatively effective in supporting those on JSA into work, but it was far less successful with those on incapacity benefits. In this context, Lewisham has been working with Lambeth and Southwark to deliver the Pathways to Employment programme, a council-led employment-support service which has helped people with complex employment support needs into work. In its first phase, the programme helped 25% of participants into work,<sup>35</sup> compared to 3.9% for ex Incapacity Benefit ESA claimants after a year on the Work Programme.<sup>36</sup> In total the programme has now supported 380 residents into work.

The Work Programme is soon to be replaced by the Work and Health Programme. In Central London, the programme will be known as Central London Works. This will be more devolved, and support will be more focused on those who face greater challenges, including health and mental health conditions. However, the budget for the programme will be far smaller, with £554m over the lifetime of the Work and Health Programme, compared to an estimated £1.5bn spent on disability employment through the Work Programme and Work Choice.<sup>37</sup> It therefore risks being unable to meet the levels of demand and provide support for those in Lewisham who may need it.

*'There are no big businesses in Lewisham, or trades young people can be apprenticed to'*  
**Grove Park Assembly**

<sup>35</sup> <http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s58339/Report%20Pathways%20to%20employment%20phase%202%20-%20contract%20award.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmworpen/363/363.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/work-and-pensions-committee/news-parliament-2015/future-of-jobcentre-plus-report-published-16-17/>

While Lewisham has a highly qualified population, residents who don't have high levels of qualification face poorer employment outcomes and often lack support into training. The number of adults aged 19 and over starting a further education or skills course in Lewisham declined by 27.5% between 2012/13 and 2015/16.<sup>38</sup> This was broadly in line with the decline seen nationally (28.0%) and it followed a 35% reduction in spending on adult skills in the last parliament.<sup>39</sup>

The number of apprenticeship starts among Lewisham residents jumped from 530 in 2007/8 to 2170 in 2011/12.<sup>40</sup> Nine in ten apprenticeship starts in Lewisham are at level 2 or level 3, with nearly half (43.6%) being among those aged 25 and over. It has remained relatively stable since then. From April, the government's apprenticeship levy came into effect, under which large employers have to pay 0.5% of their payroll into a digital account, with the funds only being redeemable against apprenticeship training fees. Given Lewisham's employment profile, only large public sector employers will pay the levy, and much of the levy funds may go unspent. The levy may stimulate investment in training by large employers across the rest of London but there are concerns it may lead to lower apprenticeship recruitment among smaller non-levy paying employers as some aren't willing to pay the 10% co-investment contribution.<sup>41</sup> This could have a particular impact in Lewisham, given the predominance of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the local economy.

The reductions in funding for further education and for adult education provided by local authorities combined with the reduced footprint for employment support under the Central London Works programme, will make it difficult for many adults – both those unemployed and those in work on low pay – to access the training and support they may need. It also raises questions over how people who will be subject to in-work conditionality in the future under Universal Credit, will be able to access the training they may need to improve their income.

While there are immense opportunities in the London economy, the low jobs density in Lewisham means there are fewer high quality local employment opportunities for residents than in other boroughs. As well as supporting residents to access opportunities in the Lewisham and London economy, Lewisham Council should also seek to promote business growth and high-quality jobs locally. In addition, if existing proposals for the extension of the Bakerloo line through Lewisham and Catford to Bromley Town Centre as well as Hayes are implemented, residents living in the south of the borough would gain significantly better access to job opportunities across London.

*'We need to do more to reach the working strugglers'*  
**Blackheath Assembly**

<sup>38</sup> DfE and Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Further Education (FE) Data Library, 2017

<sup>39</sup> Associations of Colleges submission for July 2015 budget at <https://www.aoc.co.uk/sites/default/files/AoC%20submission%20to%20the%20Budget%205%20June%202015.pdf#page=28>

<sup>40</sup> DfE and ESFA, FE Data Library, 2017

<sup>41</sup> Association of Employment and Learning Providers and Warwick Institute for Employment Research, The impacts of the apprenticeship levy, 2017.

Beyond this, there is an important role for ‘anchor institutions’ - bodies such as local authorities, hospitals, universities, housing associations and large private sector organisations - in tackling poverty and promoting inclusive growth.<sup>42</sup> As Lewisham has no large private employers, all of these institutions are public.

Through the money they spend procuring goods and services, the number of local people they employ, and their ownership of public assets, these institutions make significant contributions to the local economy. The table below provides staff numbers for some of the bigger public organisations in the borough allowing for a rough indication of their impact as local employers:<sup>43</sup>

<b>Anchor institutions</b>	<b>Full-time equivalent staff (2016)</b>
Lewisham Council	2,038
Goldsmiths	1,156
Lewisham Southwark College	398
Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust	6,065
Lewisham Homes	468
Phoenix Community Housing	158

These anchor institutions can have a significant impact on the local workforce and employee conditions by the training they provide their staff, the working conditions they offer such as opportunities for flexible working, and general support they provide their staff, particularly those with health conditions. The amount spent on procurement by such bodies can be used to negotiate social value in contracts, such as training opportunities and pay conditions. Finally, there are also wider benefits such as working with the borough’s large and diverse voluntary sector and existing programmes such as Lewisham Local.<sup>44</sup>

**Recommendations**

**Anchor institutions**

- **The Council and its public sector partners**, as the borough’s main employers and biggest spenders in terms of procurement, should cooperate closely to support local economic growth. This group of anchor institutions should work to establish a ‘Lewisham Deal’ which outlines joint commitments to improve opportunities for residents and support inclusive local economic growth. The Lewisham Deal could include:
  - A coordinated approach to apprenticeships to promote opportunities for residents, including maximising the local spend of the apprenticeship levy for upskilling and in-work progression, building on the strength of the Council’s existing apprenticeship programme.

<sup>42</sup> See, for example <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/we-can-solve-poverty-uk> and [https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/pdfs/reports/rsa\\_inclusive-growth-commission-final-report-march-2017.pdf](https://www.thersa.org/globalassets/pdfs/reports/rsa_inclusive-growth-commission-final-report-march-2017.pdf).

<sup>43</sup> The information has been taken from respective organisations’ statement of accounts, annual accounts or annual employment profiles. This information can’t be easily compared, as a number of these organisations work across borough boundaries and their financial years end on different dates. It also doesn’t contain information about the organisations’ overall spend either as direct provider of services or through procurement.

<sup>44</sup> For more information about Lewisham Local, see <https://www.lewishamlocal.org.uk/>

- A shared commitment to London Living Wage accreditation and promotion, flexible working and opportunities for job progression for employees.
- A shared commitment to support good mental health in work by committing to the 'Time to Change' Employer Pledge,<sup>45</sup> by developing an action plan that normalises conversations about mental health in the workplace and ensures that employees who are facing these problems feel supported.
- A shared commitment to generating social value through procurement, for example by negotiating for the provision of apprenticeships and job opportunities for local residents.
- A commitment to investigate whether the organisation's procurement processes could create opportunities for local, often smaller, businesses to provide goods and services, to enable more money to stay in the borough.
- A shared strategic approach to the skills and local economic development agenda, including training, employment opportunities and business engagement. This could enable the skills shortages in the NHS and wider public sector to be met through higher level apprenticeships, pre-employment support, training while in employment and routes through to Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE).
- A coordinated approach to encourage staff to contribute to local communities by linking staff and service users with local volunteering opportunities.
- A joint commitment to supporting the community and voluntary sector by building on existing work by Goldsmiths, Voluntary Action Lewisham and the Lewisham Local collaboration.
- A commitment to engage with local schools and FE colleges to raise aspirations of their students and provide information and advice about apprenticeships and further/higher education or work experience opportunities.

### **Improving the work and skills landscape locally**

- **The Council** should work with Lambeth, Southwark and Jobcentre Plus to build on the success of its joint Pathways to Employment programme to develop a pilot that supports career progression for residents who are in work, but in poverty.
- **The Council's adult education service** should work with partners, including **housing providers**, to support those furthest away from the job market to develop soft skills by providing access to pre-employment training.
- **The Council and its partners** should continue to prioritise the improvement of Lewisham's secondary schools to offer young people the best start in life, building on the work of the Lewisham Education Commission.
- **The Council and its partners** should explore ways to raise aspirations and provide good quality careers advice in schools by linking industry, public sector institutions, professional trade bodies and HE and FE providers with local schools. The Council and partners should start a pilot where their staff, via their staff volunteering programmes, are encouraged to volunteer

in support schools and FE colleges with careers advice and mentoring programmes. This can be expanded to include people working elsewhere in Lewisham and London.

- **The Council's Pension Investment Committee** should use its influence as an investor of roughly £1bn to open discussions about pay, working conditions and job opportunities for London residents with the businesses it invests in across London.
- **The Council** should use its procurement processes to ensure that all components of the Social Value Act (2012) are geared towards the needs of the most deprived members of the borough. The Council should include statements on the social value offer in the reports it uses in the Council's formal decision-making processes including for its Mayor and Cabinet meetings, for decisions to go to tender or to award a contract.
- **The Council** should encourage business growth in the borough, particularly in growth sectors of the London economy. This should build on the success of the existing Council created Dek co-working business spaces <sup>46</sup> and investigate the potential to introduce a local currency – the Lewisham Pound – to support local businesses.
- **The Council** should continue to champion the Living Wage in Lewisham. It should continue to provide an incentive in the form of a business rates discount to employers that become accredited London Living Wage employers.
- Regeneration should deliver not just the homes that Lewisham needs, but high quality jobs too. **New residential developments** should look to provide space for businesses, particularly new and small businesses, so employment in the borough can be stimulated.

### **Regional and national changes to work and skills**

- **The Council** should work with **Central London Forward and other London partners** to ensure that the devolved Central London Works Programme offers the support local people need to overcome barriers to employment and access high quality jobs. Where possible, the Central London Works Programme should link to existing infrastructure, communities and local partner organisations, building on the success of the Pathways to Employment programme.
- **Transport for London** should extend the Bakerloo line from Elephant and Castle beyond Lewisham to Hayes as a minimum but also to Bromley Town Centre to improve access to job opportunities across London for residents living in the areas of concentrated deprivation in the south of the borough.
- **The Council** should lobby central government to ensure that London boroughs can use unspent apprenticeship levy to invest in business support and the wider skills development of their residents alongside their employees.

*'Do something to stop the delay in benefits'*  
**Catford South Local Assembly**

<sup>46</sup> [www.lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/business/business-spaces/Pages/About-the-enterprise-hubs.aspx](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/business/business-spaces/Pages/About-the-enterprise-hubs.aspx)

- **Central government** should pause the roll out of Universal Credit and review its design and implementation, particularly the 6-week wait for an initial payment which is causing many recipients to fall into debt.<sup>47</sup> The **Council** should also lobby central government for an end to the welfare freeze which are impacting on those who are out of work and those who are in work on low incomes, pushing both further into poverty, and for a reversal of the cuts to Universal Credit.

## 4. Tackling child poverty by supporting parents into decent work

*'We young single parents aren't getting the help that we're supposed to. There is work out there, but the work that you want to do, who's going to look after the children or pick them up for you?... Once we can get help, there is cleaning jobs out there, there is evening jobs out there. If I could get somebody, I would go. It's not as though I don't want to work. I'm happy to work because I'm having it hard.'*

**A single mother and Phoenix resident.**

### Child poverty, child care and lone parent unemployment

Parents in Lewisham face two major and inter-related challenges to being able to increase their incomes. One is finding suitable employment; another is finding affordable and suitable childcare.

Part-time and/or flexible employment opportunities are vital in enabling lone parents, and parents in general, to juggle childcare with work. Only 27.7% of lone parents in Lewisham are in full-time employment and another 27.8% in part-time employment, leaving 44.6% not in employment. There is evidence that single parents want access to flexible work, but are not always able to find it.<sup>48</sup> Research suggests that nations with higher maternal employment rates – more mothers in work – are more likely to have employers that offer flexible work options, including the ability to set some of your own hours or to use accumulated hours to earn leave.<sup>49</sup>

The other major challenge facing all parents is suitable and affordable childcare. Access to flexible, affordable childcare can reduce pressures on family income and help parents to participate in work, education or training. According to research, four in ten mothers identify childcare costs as the single biggest obstacle to work (42 per cent of those in work and 41 per cent of those not working).<sup>50</sup> Childcare has to be affordable, sufficiently flexible and available at the right time to enable parents to combine work and family life.

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/how-citizens-advice-works/media/press-releases/citizens-advice-responds-to-news-universal-credit-roll-out-will-not-be-paused/>

<sup>48</sup> [http://www.gingerbread.org.uk/file\\_download.aspx?id=7866](http://www.gingerbread.org.uk/file_download.aspx?id=7866).

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.resolutionfoundation.org/media/press-releases/two-in-three-mothers-say-high-cost-of-childcare-is-a-barrier-to-working-more/>.

<sup>50</sup> See the Resolution Foundation report cited above.

Lewisham has a broad mix of childcare provision and a good reputation for the high standard of its early years provision. There are good working relationships between the Council and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) providers across the sector that have been established over a long period and a strong shared commitment to delivering high quality provision.

The challenges for Lewisham are to promote high quality, well-paid, flexible job opportunities, and ensure the provision of flexible and high quality child care by promoting innovative models of childcare. The Council also needs to ensure that parents have access to high quality, up to-date advice about childcare provision in the borough. Parents may also need support understanding their childcare entitlements, especially the new 30 hours entitlement for three- and four-year olds which has recently been introduced as well as the existing entitlement for some two-year-olds of 570 hours of free early education or childcare per year. Finally, information about and access to benefits is crucial for parents who are not in work and for those parents who work but are on low incomes.

## Recommendations

### Opportunities for flexible working and skills development

- The Council should set an example by improving its offer of flexible working opportunities. The Council should become an accredited Timewise employer<sup>51</sup> and work with the Timewise foundation to develop an improvement plan that ensures it offers good quality flexible working opportunities to its employees. The Council should encourage its partners to do the same.
- **The Council** should work with its public sector partners to promote flexible working across the borough to support parental and lone-parent employment, including by engaging with local businesses.
- **The Council** should work with employment and skills partners to support lone parents to develop the skills that will enable them to take jobs that offer flexible working opportunities.
- **The Council's adult education service** and **the local FE college** should work together to help parents with childcaring responsibilities to access opportunities that allow them to upskill and support their career progression. This could be done by creating flexible and/or family friendly learning opportunities that lead from the Adult Learning Lewisham through to more formal learning in a college setting.

*'Access to relevant learning opportunities'*  
Evelyn/New Cross Local Assembly

<sup>51</sup> <http://timewise.co.uk/what-we-do/accreditation/>

## Access to information and advice

- **The Council's** Family Information Service (FIS) directory should be improved so that it provides easy-to-use to contain up-to-date information on childcare provision in the borough. The directory should include information on the provision of childcare, including out-of-hours provision, holiday provision, schools' breakfast clubs and after-school clubs. It should include information on eligibility criteria for that care, including advice on childcare entitlements, eligibility criteria for financial support for childcare and information on which providers accept childcare vouchers. The FIS should allow parents to enter their postcode, select the type of providers they are interested in and the geographical area they would like to search, and then be provided with a list of available care providers. The Council should make sure the FIS keeps up-to-date records of extended schools services in the borough.
- **The Council** should launch a targeted information campaign to promote the 30 hours entitlement to child care being introduced in September 2017 to maximise take-up, as well as provide information on the existing entitlement for some 2 year olds. The Council should work with its Councillors and partners such as **Children's Centres, private providers, schools, Jobcentre Plus and GP surgeries** to get the message out to parents, including those who do not have access to the internet, and those with literacy issues. Information about childcare should be routinely offered to parents who access other council services such as the housing options centre or employment support services.
- **The Council, children centres, schools, private, voluntary and independent nurseries** but also organisations such as food banks should work with **Advice Lewisham**, the network of the main free advice providers in Lewisham<sup>52</sup>, so parents are helped to access free, expert advice about benefits and their entitlements.

## Childcare provision

- **The Council** should work with **Children's Centres**, providers and parent groups to explore ways to encourage parents and extended family to participate in the provision of childcare, including by exploring options for co-operative childcare clubs, community-led and community-owned nurseries. Parents, extended family and other members of the community participating in these forms of co-produced child care can then also be supported into related careers.
- School buildings should be used for the provision of breakfast and after-schools clubs, either by **schools** providing these services directly or by schools making their buildings available for childcare provision by other providers. Parents should be encouraged to participate in the breakfast and after-schools clubs at their children's schools, which could be run as social enterprises.
- **The Council and the Early Years Partnership Board** should work closely with private, voluntary and independent nurseries, schools and childminders to increase out-of-hours provision of childcare, including encouraging flexible childminders that can provide care at short notice.

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.advicelewisham.org.uk/>



## 5. Improving the local housing market

*'We have to stay where we are because the rent that we get charged is the rent that we got charged when we first moved in because the landlord is so bad, he just leaves things... But we physically can't afford to move anywhere else because if we do, and if they accept housing benefit, they are wanting a massive deposit. Where are we going to find that?'*

**Mother and full time carer**

### Housing in Lewisham

Lewisham has relatively affordable housing compared to the London average, but the average house price is still 14 times the median salary in the Borough. Affordability is an issue across all types of tenure. The focus of the council has been to increase the number of housing units to help tackle Lewisham and London's housing crisis and the Council has exceeded its London Plan targets year on year. The Council is delivering on its commitment to secure 2,000 new affordable homes in the borough by 2018, of which at least 500 will be new Council homes, but even more affordable homes are needed.

A growing number of households in Lewisham – including those on low incomes – are in the private rented sector (PRS). The number of Lewisham residents in PRS has doubled in the last decade. Private rents in Lewisham are below the inner London average but are rising faster than elsewhere in London, increasing by 40% between 2011 and 2016. This means many tenants pay more than half their income in rent. In addition, Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs) offer little security and fixed periods of as little of 6 months. Many Lewisham residents live in poor quality rental properties and may be reluctant to report problems for fear of revenge evictions.

In June 2017, there were just over 1,900 Lewisham households in temporary accommodation, less than 500 of which were in temporary accommodation. The Council has been working to increase the quality of temporary accommodation its offers by increasing the units available in the borough. This is being done by acquiring properties on the open market, converting existing properties such as a former care home and a long term empty office block, and by developing PLACE/Ladywell<sup>53</sup>. PLACE/Ladywell offers 24 modular apartments almost entirely constructed off site, and as a result built quicker and cheaper than standard construction methods. The structure sits on currently vacant Council land while longer-term regeneration plans are being developed, and can be moved to another vacant site in the borough after several years.<sup>54</sup>

Homelessness in Lewisham is largely driven by evictions from the private rented sector. The Council uses Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to help those affected by the benefit cap and works closely with the Lewisham Credit Union to provide bridging loans to households to prevent homelessness. In future the Council want to increase the number of households accessing housing support before reaching crisis point, and has developed a landlord licensing scheme for homes in multiple occupation above commercial premises to drive up quality in the private rented sector. Early support by housing providers for people with mental health

<sup>53</sup> <http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s47627/04%20Temporary%20accommodation%20pressures%20250117.pdf>

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/regeneration/lewishamtowncentre/Pages/placeladywell.aspx>

problems, where there can often be links to housing issues including worries over rent arrears and (anticipated) threats of eviction, is important as well.

However, major challenges in the housing market remain for Lewisham. Supply is a key concern as it is across London and for most parts of the UK, with housebuilding in the capital only now picking up after decades at an all-time low. The other main concern is the ability of the Council to have a positive impact on the affordability and quality of homes in the Private Rented Sector. The challenge remains for the Council to secure better outcomes for residents in the private rented sector, and prevent homelessness.

### Recommendations

#### Building the homes Lewisham needs

- **The Council** should build as much social housing as possible, and continue to press national government to lift restrictions on local authorities’ abilities to use their capital funding, to allow local authorities to retain Right to Buy receipts in order to invest in new social housing, and to lift the borrowing cap on the Housing Revenue Account.

*‘Build more social housing and retain ownership of it, lobby central government for a rent cap and ban leasehold on new builds’*  
**Online Consultation**

- **The Council** should prioritise the building of units with more secure tenancies at rents that are affordable in relation to people’s wages as opposed to units at market rent. The Council should also continue to negotiate to increase the numbers of social and affordable housing units and other benefits from developers.
- **The Council’s** land should be used more ambitiously to build mixed developments at greater density and scale, recognising that most often more market-rate properties need to be developed to deliver affordable units. Joint ventures, land-sharing arrangements, community land trusts, partnerships with housing associations and new forms of ownership should all be explored. Exploring the broad range of options above will best enable the council to balance the needs of those that require new housing, particularly those on the Council’s housing waiting list, with the needs of current residents. Plans should be developed in consultation with local communities.
- **The Council** should promote new types of housing, especially step-down units for older residents to ensure people that want to move to smaller properties are able to.

## Influencing the Private Rented Sector

- A social lettings agency should be operating in the borough that works with mainstream landlords to offer more secure tenancies at the lower end of the market. This agency can provide a convenient way for tenants to provide feedback about the quality of rental properties in the borough. **The Council** could look to expand the work of its existing lettings agency or encourage an existing social or ethical lettings agency to operate in the borough.
- **The Council** should demand that lettings agents operating in the borough provide tenants with an information pack at the start of tenancies about their rights as tenants and how tenants can access Council services to help enforce those rights.
- A local tenants' union should be established in the borough to offer advice services, help tenants enforce their rights and organise campaigns. **Lewisham Citizens, Goldsmiths' students union** and **existing tenant and residents associations** could be asked to develop the union.
- **The Council** should consider investing in the enforcement of quality standards in the PRS to create wider changes to the behaviour of bad landlords as they perceive the risk of enforcement against them to increase. Newly introduced powers that allow local authorities to use civil penalties against landlords in breach of certain conditions could be used to fund this increased service.
- **The Council** should look into expanding the current landlord licensing scheme, and make the case to government for this.

*'Provide more advice on what people should do with rent arrears'*  
**Crofton Park Assembly**

## Preventing homelessness

- **The Council** should work to identify those at risk of homelessness at an early stage by greater use of local data and using lessons from behavioural economics to engage with residents to prevent homelessness.
- **The Council** should create a single point of contact for private landlords to discuss the implications of universal credit and to help safeguard tenants during their transition to universal credit, and proactively reach out to landlords via letting agents operating in the borough.
- **The Council** should extend its programme of developing units such as PLACE/Ladywell and acquiring properties to increase the quality of temporary accommodation it offers.
- **National government** should lift the cap on Local Housing Allowance rates which is driving up homelessness and instead tie it to median market rents.
- **The Council** should also join calls for a pause to the rollout of Universal Credit, pending a review of the system. It should call for an end to the 6-week wait for an initial payment is pushing people into rent arrears.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Evidence submitted to the Work and Pensions Committee's Universal Credit Rollout inquiry, Sept 2017 at: <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/work-and-pensions-committee/universal-credit-rollout/written/70154.pdf>

### **Regional and national policies for the Private Rented Sector**

- **Government** should consider introducing an insurance product for tenants to replace deposits. This insurance product would cover legitimate costs for the landlord up to a maximum amount in a similar way to how deposits are currently used. This would replace the need for tenants to pay expensive deposits at the start of tenancies.
- **The Council** should lobby for the Mayor of London and local authorities to have greater powers over regulation of the private rented sector. This could include powers to review developers' viability assessments; to implement rent controls; to mandate quality standards in the PRS; to make it more difficult for people to be evicted from private rental properties; and to monitor and prevent discrimination in the PRS.

## 6. Strengthening support within communities

*'We are quite lucky [on this] estate... when we get together, it's a melting pot of amazingsness. You know, everybody... if you're not good at one thing, there's always someone that is. If you need support, there's always someone that can help. If you are struggling with a situation or a bit of paperwork, there's always someone that can [do it]. That, for me, is magic and it's got me through...'*

**Mother of son with autism**

### Increasing community resilience

Strong social networks can play an important role in helping to protect people against poverty and deprivation and to mitigate against its effects.<sup>56</sup> Where people can tap into both formal and informal networks, they are more likely to be able to access goods and services such information, advice and support. They are also better able to opportunities to develop their skills, find work and to feel connected to and invested in a place. A key element of strong social networks or resilient communities is their ability to adapt to at times unexpected, changing circumstances and successfully bounce back from adverse situations.<sup>57</sup>

From speaking to residents, the Commission knows how valuable support within communities can be for people facing difficulties. Lewisham has strong communities, and a long history of civic activism. At present, there are over 800 active voluntary groups and more than 200 individual faith groups, with a recent survey revealing that 35% of Lewisham residents had volunteered over the past 12 months.<sup>58</sup>

Together, these individuals and organisations do a huge amount to support Lewisham residents in managing the challenges of poverty, particularly in areas of childcare, employment and housing. The third sector plays a particularly important role in supporting people with often multiple, complex issues. The challenge for Lewisham is how such resilient communities can be grown and supported.

<sup>56</sup> See Social networks: their role in addressing poverty, 2011 at <https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/poverty-social-networks-full.pdf>.

<sup>57</sup> See RSA, Connected Communities: How Social Networks Power and Sustain the Big Society (2010: p. 47): <https://www.thersa.org/discover/publications-and-articles/reports/connected-communities-how-social-networks-power-and-sustain-the-big-society>, and CLES, Understanding community resilience (2013: p. 16) at <https://www.barrowcadbury.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/CLES-UNDERSTANDING-COMMUNITY-RESILIENCE-2013.pdf>

<sup>58</sup> See more at: <http://www.valewisham.org.uk/blog/state-sector-survey-takeaways>

### **Whitefoot & Downham Community Food + Project (wdcfplus) case study**

*wdcfplus exists to combat deprivation, alleviate food poverty and build caring communities in its local area. Initially providing a food service for those experiencing hardship, the project now also works with other agencies to offer advice and support relating to health, nutrition, housing, employment, training and money management.*

*The project also encourages volunteering as a means for local residents to connect with others, prevent social isolation and build togetherness in the community. The project has mobilised over 50 volunteers from all sections of the community and several volunteers are former service users. wdcfplus has helped build confidence for some to enter employment and training, or it has been a lifeline for others where their benefits have been frozen or stopped.*

*One former visitor and volunteer said his time with wdcfplus was “the first time in several years that my skills were being used... The project gave me that confidence to get up and find a job”.*

By their nature, resilient communities are to a significant extent self-reliant while also being well-connected to formal organisations across public, private and social spheres. However, despite the less formal structure of many social networks, they can still be supported by public and private bodies alike. Small bits of funding, from planning obligations or by crowdfunding, and the sharing of existing facilities, such as Lewisham’s library service including the community libraries and the existing local assemblies programme, can make big differences to informal and often small groups. Public bodies can also make efforts to become better connected to existing community groups to share information and opportunities. The growing practice of social prescribing where GPs and other care professionals can refer patients to a range of local (non-medical) services may be one such way. These referrals happen alongside treatment for medical issues and exists to support people with a wide range of social, emotional and practical needs.<sup>59</sup> This can include referrals to debt advice services or legal advice as well as volunteering and befriending as ways to tackle social isolation.

Existing, more formalised, community organisations have seen significant pressures in recent years which are constraining and changing the way they operate. A significant proportion of Lewisham’s charitable sector is financially vulnerable, as many organisations have had to use their reserves in the last year, and 22% not holding any reserves. While Lewisham Council continues to prioritise community activity, cuts to council budgets have impacted its grants programme, with a reduction of 15% in 2017 alone. To adapt to this new environment, 79% of Lewisham community organisations are delivering services in collaboration or partnership, with 76% of community organisations interested in co-location should the opportunity arise.

*‘It needs to be easier for people to know how they can volunteer’*  
**Blackheath assembly**

Nevertheless, the tight operating context for community organisations means that many local charities and groups are focused on survival rather than extending their reach into the wider community or fundraising. With this in mind, a range of local partners have established

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/social-prescribing>

Lewisham Local, a place-based sharing and giving initiative which is a catalyst, to increase local giving and champion local involvement to encourage civil society growth.

The challenge for Lewisham Council is to find ways to improve the resilience of local communities. The borough's third sector need to make the most of different funding opportunities and increase collaboration by building on the good work already under way. Coordination of existing activities and sharing of information is particularly important in this regard. Beyond this, wider community participation needs to be supported and promoted to ensure that no individual is left behind.

## Recommendations

### Supporting community activity

- **Lewisham Local** should consider developing an anti-poverty fund to fill the current gap in micro-grants to support local community activity. This could be funded by using relevant financial contributions from planning obligations.
- A 'vulnerability audit' should be conducted by the **Community Connections Service**,<sup>60</sup> that identifies where there are 'invisible needs' and where resilience is lowest across the borough to ensure services can become more targeted towards the borough's most deprived residents.
- **Local Assemblies** should be encouraged to function as spaces in which the community sector can develop partnerships, share learning and share information on local activities.
- **Lewisham Council** should work with **Lewisham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)**, **Lewisham GPs** and **the borough's third sector** to enable GPs to take up Social Prescribing across the borough.

### Increasing people's access to advice and support

- **Lewisham Council** should build on its work with Go On Lewisham<sup>61</sup> to support the most deprived parts of the community gain basic digital skills by supporting and prioritising community activity which helps develop people's digital skills, with due consideration of where these services are located.
- The activities by the **borough's community sector** should be actively promoted to residents and amongst community organisations by:
  - Developing a consolidated and live register of community activity
  - Promoting Voluntary Action Lewisham (VAL) contact information in Lewisham Life
  - Promoting local community activity more in the local press

<sup>60</sup> The Community Connections Service is delivered by Age UK Lewisham and Southwark and a consortium of voluntary sector partners to increase people's wellbeing and link them to local services. More information can be found here: <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/lewishamandsouthwark/services/community-connections/>

<sup>61</sup> <https://local.go-on.co.uk/groups/34/>

## The benefits of volunteering

- **The Council** should improve and promote its employee volunteering policy to encourage council staff to volunteer in the borough's most deprived communities by working with **Voluntary Action Lewisham** and using the evidence from the 'vulnerability audit' described above. The newly launched employee volunteering policy could then be used as an exemplar for **Lewisham Local partners** to promote to businesses inside and outside the borough, and encourage best practice.
- **Lewisham Local**, working with employers inside and outside the borough, should work towards supporting people who are not ready for work into volunteering opportunities which allow them to develop transferable skills and provide training on how to communicate or translate this in practice.

## A stronger voluntary sector

- **The Council** should work with **VAL** and **Lewisham CCG** to support the borough's voluntary and community sector to access contract opportunities by organising 'meet the commissioner days' and committing to early notification when contracts go to tender.
- **The Council** should use its procurement processes to ensure that all components of the Social Value Act (2012), including community engagement, are geared towards the needs of the most deprived members of the borough. This could be achieved by:
  - Ensuring that all procurement processes are brought to the attention of the Social Value Officer in time to develop relationships with providers
  - Including statements on the social value offer of all new contracts and all decisions to go to tender in the reports used in the Council's formal decision-making processes including for its Mayor and Cabinet meetings.
  - Making community consultation and service user engagement a key component of social value

*'Coordinate and publish a list of people willing to do DIY and repair jobs for other members of the community to save money when jobs need to be done'*

**Catford South Assembly**

## Assets

- **Lewisham Council** should continue to support the local voluntary and community sector to use their assets (such as community buildings) more efficiently and wherever possible, co-locate.
- **The Council** should work to ensure that there is a good provision of community resources in new residential developments by supporting developers to work with local community organisations.

*'Stop the loss of community assets by conversion to residential'*  
**Crofton Park Assembly**



## **7. Working together to tackle poverty: next steps and implementation**

### **An immediate response**

This report will be presented to Lewisham Council's executive Mayor and Cabinet meeting in November 2017. The Commission expects Lewisham Council to adopt these recommendations and to begin implementing them as soon as possible.

### **Change across the community**

The Commission will also be asking other organisations in the borough to contribute, and we'll be writing to Lewisham and Southwark College, Lewisham Homes, Goldsmiths, Phoenix Community Housing and Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust to ask for their response. The Council should convene a meeting with these partners to discuss this report and the Commission looks forward to receiving their response to our recommendations. The Commission will also be writing to Voluntary Action Lewisham as the central membership organisation for charities, community groups and social enterprises in the borough, and asking VAL to distribute this report amongst their members.

### **Advising national government**

Furthermore, the Commission will be writing to:

- the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to set out our concerns over Universal Credit and the welfare freeze
- the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to highlight the impact of council cuts on deprived communities
- the Housing Minister to call for changes to the LHA, to greater freedoms to borrow to invest in social housing, and for greater powers to regulate the private rented sector.

### **Staying the course**

This report contains suggestions that can be implemented quickly, such as improvements to the Council's Family Information Service and signing up to Timewise, but some will take much longer time to implement, such as the building of more social housing.

The Commission therefore requests that a lead member at the Council remains responsible for overseeing Lewisham Council's actions to tackle poverty, to ensure that these long-term changes are enacted. The Commission encourages this Cabinet Member to present a yearly report to the Council's scrutiny and executive functions so progress can be tracked.

# Appendix 1:

## Listening to Lewisham's people and its organisations

### Our approach to consultation and engagement

In early commission meetings, we considered data on Lewisham's population, London's economy, the housing market, child poverty in the borough, and links between poverty and health outcomes. This helped establish the commission's focus and the four core themes. We considered where we could add value to the work already being done in Lewisham, reviewed examples of best practice, and explored new approaches. We have also looked at what we could learn from the work of other commissions on fairness or equality.

We have engaged with local residents, representatives from community organisations and faith groups, partner organisations and stakeholders by:

**Lived experience paper** – Early on, we organised visits to drop-in sessions at voluntary and community organisations where officers have spoken to a small number of residents about how they experience life in the borough and how they're getting by.

**Website and online survey** – The webpage contains information about the Commission's work including papers for its meetings. There is also a survey where anyone or any organisation can submit their views, experiences and suggestions for change. The Commission's work has also been promoted via the Council's social media accounts and its Lewisham Life email service.

**Press** – A number of articles about the Commission's work have appeared in local media.

**Local Assemblies** – Local assemblies are open meetings organised per electoral ward for anyone who lives, works or learns in the borough. All local assemblies were asked to discuss the work of the commission, so residents and Councillors could contribute their thoughts on causes of poverty and their ideas for local solutions.

**Visits** – Visits have been organised for the Commission to local services such as the Council's housing options centre, a provider of employment support and a Children's Centre to speak to residents and observe provision of services.

**Young Advisors** – Members of the Commission have attended a meeting of Lewisham's Young Advisors to discuss their thoughts on poverty and potential solutions.

**London Boroughs** – All London Boroughs have been approached to provide examples of work they are doing to combat poverty or its effects, and their experiences if they had hosted a similar Commission themselves.

**Poverty summit** – The Commission organised a summit to explore the issues of poverty and its effects on residents' lives on 12 July. More than 70 people, including local residents and

representatives from community organisations and faith groups, came together to discuss the challenges facing those living in poverty in Lewisham. The summit was an opportunity for us to listen, learn and take away ideas from participants on what could be done to tackle the issues around poverty.

### **Further data and evidence**

This report has been deliberately kept brief. Papers with further evidence and data we considered can be found here: [www.lewisham.gov.uk/povertycommission](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/povertycommission)

## Summary of comments received from residents

The following is a snapshot of the comments received from residents during local assembly meetings and from the online survey following some broad questions on poverty and living in Lewisham.

### What makes it difficult to make ends meet in Lewisham?

*'The cost of public transport'*

Grove Park Local Assembly

*'Jobs in Lewisham tend to be poorly paid'*

Blackheath Local Assembly

*'The cost of school meals'*

Crofton Park Local Assembly

*'The feeling of shame about being poor means isolated communities don't look for help'*

Grove Park Local Assembly

*'Rogue landlords and extortionate rent and fees'*

Catford South Local Assembly

*'Families being broken up and sent to other parts of the country leaves no support networks'*

Catford South Local Assembly

*'Fear of crime, anti-social behaviour'*

Evelyn/New Cross Local Assembly

*'Long term health conditions make it difficult for people to work and make ends meet'*

Crofton Park Local Assembly

*'A lack of awareness about what help is available'*

Evelyn/New Cross Local Assembly

*'There are no big businesses in Lewisham, or trades young people can be apprenticed to'*

Grove Park Local Assembly

*'Low income, parking problems and unfair tickets being issued to vulnerable groups, poor housing and ineffective pressure on poor landlords to fulfil housing requirements from single older houses'*

Online Consultation

*'Lone parents being treated as second class citizens'*

Evelyn/New Cross Local Assembly

*'It is extra hard for some – if you have a disability, if you aren't white, if you are queer – poverty isn't just about resources, it's racism, homophobia'*

Crofton Park Local Assembly

*'A high percentage of work is outside of the borough which creates transport poverty'*

Blackheath Local Assembly

*'Access to relevant learning opportunities'*

Evelyn/New Cross Local Assembly

*'We need more access to free food, and places to get healthy food'*

Online Consultation

## What can you and your community do to help make it easier to get by?

*'Free to use skill sharing events to help build resilience and a more joined up sense of community. The idea being to encourage different sides of the community to help each other e.g. city lawyers and marketing professionals offering tips to community services or initiatives'*

**Online Consultation**

*'Where can I donate food?'*

**Grove Park  
Local Assembly**

*'Help people improve their diets'*

**Crofton Park  
Local Assembly**

*'We need event venues for parties, dancing and drinking for young adults'*

**Catford South Assembly**

*'We need the CAB to be free to do more campaigning'*

**Blackheath  
Local Assembly**

*'It needs to be easier for people to volunteer'*

**Blackheath  
Local Assembly**

*'I support Lewisham Foodbank by donating food. They gave out 4850 3 days of emergency food last year. They need more publicity and support'*

**Online Consultation**

*'Coordinate and publish a list of people willing to do DIY and repair jobs for other members of the community to save money when jobs need to be done'*

**Catford South Assembly**

*'Can the council help publicise the credit union?'*

**Blackheath Local  
Assembly**

## What can the Council and its partners do to help?

### Housing

*'We need real council housing – social rent'*

**Grove Park Local Assembly**

*'Build more social housing and retain ownership of it, lobby central government for a rent cap and ban leasehold on new builds'*

**Online Consultation**

*'Ensure that the housing associations that don't come up to scratch are held to account and do inspections and put pressure on them to fulfil their responsibilities, especially where tenants are being harassed'*

**Online Consultation**

*'Please ensure builders contracted by housing associations are registered with the council and therefore bound by a code of conduct - and that they are not exploited or forced labour'*

**Online Consultation**

*'Support more community led housing by making land available'*

**Crofton Park and  
Grove Park Local Assembly**

*'Do more to address the challenges of rogue landlords'*

**Catford South Local Assembly**

## Community

*'Stop the loss of community assets by conversion to residential'* Crofton Park Local Assembly

*'We need a council kite mark for approved services so people know where to go and who to trust'*  
Blackheath Local Assembly

*'Please ensure the contract for the Ladywell Tower goes to the presentation that offers the greatest community capital and not just private profit'*  
Online Consultation

## Changes to service delivery

*'We need more action on and awareness of mental health issues'* Evelyn/New Cross Local Assembly

*'People need help using IT to access services'*  
Evelyn Local Assembly

*'Provide more advice on what people should do with rent arrears'* Crofton Park Local Assembly

*'Recognise that not everything can go online – sometimes you need to speak to a person'*  
Catford South Local Assembly

*'Please ensure that where there are unclear parking restrictions resulting in penalties to people who live in those areas these are addressed as soon as possible. A specific councillor should be given the lead on investigating these issues and then asked to account about progress towards change'* Online Consultation

*'Make claiming and reclaiming benefits easier for those who have no access to the internet'*  
Crofton Park Local Assembly

*'We need more flexible care options and better transportation'*  
Evelyn Local Assembly

*'Help people get out of debt by making it clearer where to get advice'*  
Grove Park Local Assembly

## Benefits and taxes

*'A council tax relief fund would help ends meet'*  
**Blackheath  
Local Assembly**

*'Do something to stop the delay in benefits'*  
**Catford South  
Local Assembly**

*'We need to do more to reach the working strugglers'*  
**Blackheath Local Assembly**

*'Have a special council tax rate for pensioners living alone'*  
**Catford South Local  
Assembly**

## The local economy

*'Create more opportunities for adult work placements'*  
**Catford South  
Local Assembly**

*'Internationally, organisations such as LendwithCare use interest free loans provided by supporters such as me to lift people out of poverty. Could this model be adapted by councils for the UK?'* **Online Consultation**

*'We need a forum whereby residents are encouraged to meet with officials to talk about their concerns'*  
**Catford South Local  
Assembly**

*'Attract more businesses through a positive policy plan for new business'*  
**Blackheath  
Local Assembly**

*'Create subsidies or a local investment fund for new local businesses - incentives for employing local people'*  
**Online Consultation**

*'People need to be empowered to look for a job'*  
**Catford South Local  
Assembly**

*'Provide more cheap loans through the credit unions'*  
**Crofton Park  
Local Assembly**

N.B. This report contains a number of quotes from residents. All names have been anonymised.

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# Working together to tackle poverty in Lewisham

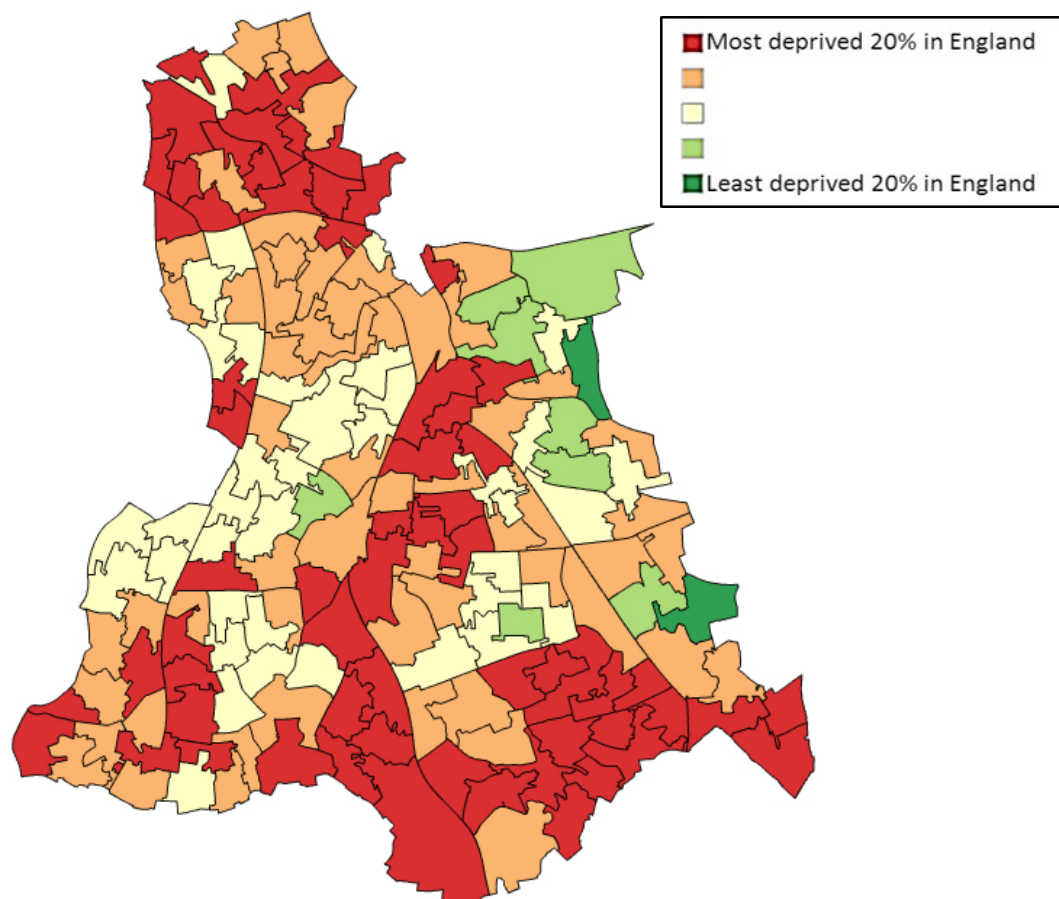
## The final report of the Lewisham Poverty Commission, September 2017 Executive summary

### Poverty in Lewisham

Lewisham is a successful, diverse and inclusive inner London borough. The borough has good transport links to the rest of London, excellent primary and improving secondary schools, attractive residential neighbourhoods and an active voluntary and community sector. Yet, despite its many assets, its proximity to Central London, and the efforts of the Council and other partners, Lewisham continues to have high levels of poverty and deprivation.

Unemployment in Lewisham has fallen significantly in recent years and incomes are higher than the national average. However, high levels of inequality and high housing costs contribute to high levels of poverty. Lewisham is in the top 20% most deprived local authorities in England, with particular concentrations of poverty in the north and south of the borough. One in four people working in Lewisham earn less than the Living Wage, and Lewisham has amongst the highest levels of child poverty in the country.

Figure 1. A map showing Lewisham's Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) scores by small areas.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> DCLG 2015. The IMD measures relative deprivation across: income; employment; education, training and skills; health deprivation and disability; crime; barriers to housing and other services; and the living environment.

Poverty is complex and multidimensional. The Commission has used the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's broad definition, where poverty is a situation in which a person's resources are not sufficient to meet their minimum needs, including social participation.<sup>2</sup> Poverty blights lives. It is associated with lower educational attainment, with poor health and mental health, and with shorter life expectancy. Children who grow up in poverty often go on to suffer from poverty in adult life.

The Lewisham Poverty Commission was set up by Lewisham Council to investigate the extent of, causes of, and solutions to poverty in Lewisham. Made up of local Councillors and national experts, the Commission has heard a range of evidence on poverty in Lewisham, including the lived experience of residents who are struggling to make ends meet. From this evidence, four key areas of focus were chosen:

### **A) supporting residents to access well-paid, secure jobs inside and outside of Lewisham**

Well-paid, secure jobs are the main route out of poverty. Lewisham is situated on the doorstep of London, a growing and thriving city, and three in five residents work outside of the borough. While the London employment market is easy for residents to access, the growth in jobs has been at the high and low end of the labour market, with comparatively few jobs in-between. There has also been a growth in insecure employment. Given this, and the Government's cuts to funding for training, it can be difficult for adults in low-paid and insecure jobs to progress to higher-paid and secure work. Lewisham's local economy is comparatively small, with the lowest number of jobs per capita of any London borough and a high proportion of jobs in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). In the absence of large private employers, Lewisham's public sector institutions play an important role not just as providers of public services, but as major employers too.

*'There are no big businesses in Lewisham, or trades young people can be apprenticed to'*  
Grove Park Assembly

#### **Recommendations:**

- The Council and its public sector partners, as the borough's main employers and biggest spenders in terms of procurement, should cooperate closely to support local economic growth and good jobs. This group of anchor institutions should work to establish a 'Lewisham Deal' which outlines joint commitments to good work and inclusive economic growth. This should include a commitment to fair pay, flexible work and investing in training.
- The Council and its public sector partners should develop a shared approach to skills and local economic development. Building on the strength of the Council's existing apprenticeship programme, this should include maximising spending of the apprenticeship levy to support access to high-quality employment and better career prospects.
- The Council should support inclusive growth and good jobs in the local economy. It should support the creation and growth of new businesses, including by increasing the availability of high-quality business premises, through the provision of co-working spaces, and through a local currency to stimulate local demand. The Council should continue to promote fair pay, including through incentives for local employers to become accredited Living Wage employers.

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/definition-poverty>.

## **B) Tackling child poverty by supporting parents into decent work**

Lewisham is in the top 20 local authorities in the country in terms of child poverty. Child poverty has a direct impact on the life chances of young people, limiting their ability to achieve their potential. Children in lone parent households are more likely to grow up in poverty as lone parents often struggle to find flexible and high quality employment that fits around childcare.

*'We young single parents aren't getting the help that we're supposed to. There is work out there, but the work that you want to do, who's going to look after the children or pick them up for you?... Once we can get help, there is cleaning jobs out there, there is evening jobs out there. If I could get somebody, I would go. It's not as though I don't want to work. I'm happy to work because I'm having it hard.'*

**A single mother and Phoenix resident.**

### **Recommendations:**

- The Council should take the lead on providing flexible and high-quality employment opportunities for local residents, including those with childcare responsibilities. It should become an accredited Timewise employer, and encourage other local employers to follow its lead.
- The Council should raise awareness of and increase the use of local high-quality childcare provision. The Family Information Service (FIS) directory should be improved to include detailed information on available childcare and information on eligibility criteria for that care. This should be provided through an accessible digital platform.
- The Council should work with Children's Centres, providers and parent groups to explore ways to encourage parents and extended family to participate in the provision of childcare, including by exploring options for co-operative childcare clubs and parent-led nurseries. Parents participating in these forms of co-produced child care can then also be supported into related careers.

### **C) Improving the local housing market**

The cost of housing is an important factor in London's and Lewisham's higher poverty rate. Over one in four Londoners live in poverty after housing costs are taken into account, compared with one in five nationally. House prices in Lewisham are lower than the London average, but they have risen sharply, and the median house price is 14 times greater than the median income. Given high housing costs and a shortage of social homes, more residents are living in the private rented sector. Rents are rising fast, and many residents are subject to rogue landlords and insecurity.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The Council should continue to deliver as much affordable and social housing as possible, as part of mixed communities. It should push developers to maximise the amount of affordable housing and push the government to lift the cap on borrowing from the Housing Revenue Account.
- The Council should establish a social lettings agency in Lewisham to work with mainstream landlords in order to offer more secure tenancies at the lower end of the market. This could be done either through expanding the work of its existing lettings agency or encouraging an existing social or ethical lettings agency to operate in the borough.
- In order to protect tenants in the private rented sector, the council should seek to expand its landlord licensing scheme and a local tenants' union should be established in the borough to offer advice services and organise campaigns. Lewisham Citizens, Goldsmiths' students union and existing tenant and residents associations could be asked to develop the union.

*'Provide more advice on what people should do with rent arrears' Crofton Park Assembly*

## D) Strengthening support within communities

Lewisham has a strong community and a long history of civic activism. At present, there are over 800 active voluntary groups, with a recent survey revealing that 35% of Lewisham residents had volunteered over the past 12 months. From speaking to residents, we know how valuable support within communities can be for people facing poverty. Where people can tap into both formal and informal networks, they are more likely to be able to access goods and services (including information, advice and support), to find work and to feel connected to a place.

### Recommendations:

- The Lewisham Local collaboration<sup>3</sup> should consider developing an anti-poverty fund to fill the current gap in micro-grants to support local community activity. This could be funded by using relevant financial contributions from planning obligations.
- The Council should improve and promote its employee volunteering policy to encourage council staff to contribute to local communities. This employee volunteering policy can then be used as an exemplar for Lewisham Local partners to promote to businesses inside and outside the borough, and encourage best practice.

*'It needs to be easier for people to know how they can volunteer'* Blackheath assembly

## Working together to tackle poverty

The Commission encourages Lewisham Council to adopt these recommendations and to begin implementing them as soon as possible. The Commission recommends that the next Mayor appoints a lead member on poverty, and that they report back on an annual basis to scrutiny and the executive on progress in tackling poverty in Lewisham.

However, the Council can't do this alone. If we are to make a real difference in tackling poverty, we need to work together with local partners, and we need policy change from national government.

The Commission will be writing to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, and the Housing Minister to start a conversation about improvements to the welfare system, to prevent people going into debt, and improvements to local government finance, to increase the building of social housing.

Poverty can be tackled but only if we all work together.

<sup>3</sup> For more information about Lewisham Local, see [www.lewishamlocal.org.uk/](http://www.lewishamlocal.org.uk/)

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SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE			
Report Title	Counter Extremism Strategy – Community Coordinator		
Key Decision	No	Item No.	7
Ward	All		
Contributors	Head of Public Protection and Safety		
Class	Part 1	Date	2 November 2017

## 1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Committee is asked to note the priorities of the Government’s Counter-Extremism Strategy.
- 1.2 The Committee is asked to note the introduction of a new Community Coordinator role in Lewisham who will work to support and coordinate Lewisham’s response to the priorities of the Counter-Extremism Strategy.

## 2. Overview

- 2.1 The UK has worked hard to counter the violent extremism that is directly linked to the terrorist threat this country faces. That work will continue and increase to match the growing threat from ISIL and associated terrorist groups as they seek to radicalise increasing numbers of people in the UK to join them.
- 2.2 That is why the Government has introduced the new statutory Prevent duty, so that all local authorities, schools, universities and colleges, NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts, police, probation services and prisons are clear that they must take action to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.
- 2.3 This Counter Extremism Strategy (published in October 2015) builds on that work, but it also recognises that we must go further. We must counter the ideology of non-violent and violent extremists alike. We must continue our efforts to tackle neo-Nazi as well as Islamist extremism and respond better to the growing problems of hate crime in our communities.
- 2.4 Just as important is addressing the underlying problem of segregated and isolated communities that can provide an environment in which extremism can take root, and allow the continuance of illegal, violent, cultural practices such as FGM.
- 2.5 To deal with the broad challenge of extremism the Strategy proposes out that we will focus on four areas:
  - **Countering extremist ideology** – We will continue to confront and challenge extremist propaganda, ensuring no space goes uncontested, including online, promoting a better alternative, and supporting those at risk of radicalisation.
  - **Building a partnership with all those opposed to extremism** – We will go further to stand with and build the capacity of mainstream individuals, community organisations

and others in our society who work every day to challenge extremists and protect vulnerable individuals.

- **Disrupting extremists** – We will create new targeted powers, flexible enough to cover the full range of extremist behaviour, including where extremists sow division in our communities and seek to undermine the rule of law.
- **Building more cohesive communities** – We will review, understand and address the reasons why some people living here do not identify with our country and our values. A new Cohesive Communities Programme will help those communities most at risk of isolation.

### 3. Countering extremist ideology

- 3.1 There is no single model of radicalisation: the process is unique for each individual. However, in general terms three elements are present: a vulnerable person will be introduced to an *extremist ideology* by a *radicalising influencer (typically an extremist individual)* who in the absence of protective factors, such as a supportive network of family and friends, or a fulfilling job, draws the vulnerable individual ever closer to extremism.
- 3.2 Islamist extremists are driven by a core ideological need to overthrow the foundations of modern society and rid it of what they perceive to be un-Islamic elements, not only non-Muslims, but also Muslims who do not conform to their warped interpretation of Islam. There is a clear distinction between Islam – a religion followed peacefully by millions – and the ideology promoted by Islamist extremists. In order to understand and therefore defeat the ideology of Islamist extremists, it is important to understand how it draws on and distorts particular elements of Islamist thinking.
- 3.3 Extreme Islamists draw on the supposed incompatibility between liberal democracy and their interpretation of the Muslim faith to promote the idea of a “war on Islam” to create a “them and us” narrative and stoke division. Their ideology includes the uncompromising belief that people cannot be Muslim and British, and insists that those who do not agree with them are not true Muslims.
- 3.4 ISIL is a particularly grotesque manifestation of an extreme Islamist narrative, which seeks to impose a new Islamic state governed by a harsh interpretation of Shari’a as state law and totally rejects liberal values such as democracy, the rule of law and equality.
- 3.5 But extremism is not just Islamist. Extreme right-wing and neo-Nazi groups use their ideologies to drive a core hatred of minorities, or to promote Islamophobic or anti-Semitic views. These ideologies are typically based on the superiority of one racial and religious group to the detriment of all others. Such extremists often argue that Western civilization faces an impending “race war”, or that a multicultural society will lead to “white genocide”. These ideas are used to instil fear, in order to convince the white population that different races or religions threaten their way of life. A number of extreme right-wing and neo-Nazi groups operate in Britain, including Blood & Honour.
- 3.6 These extreme ideologies can prove very attractive, offering conveniently simple, though false, solutions to fundamentally difficult problems. They can appear to offer a sense of belonging and purpose, self-respect and an opportunity for reinvention or personal renewal. Feeding off the vulnerability of their audiences, extremists use their ideologies to radicalise and recruit.
- 3.7 Advances in modern communications have enabled extremists to become far more sophisticated and adept at spreading their ideology, acting at a pace and scale not previously seen whilst targeting specific individuals. While AQ often targeted its communications quite



narrowly – frequently using Arabic, closed forums and regarding itself as a vanguard organisation – ISIL seeks to reach a far wider audience. It harnesses the opportunities provided by the internet, and particularly social media, producing highly professional online content that can reach large audiences with the aim of recruiting in large numbers.

3.8 The Government will implement a counter-ideology campaign at pace and scale focused on:

- Contesting the online space
- Strengthening our institutions
- Supporting individuals at particular risk of radicalisation
- Building a partnership with all those opposed to extremism

### 3.9 Contesting the online space

The past couple of years have seen a remarkable shift in the way extremists use the internet to spread their ideology and radicalise and to counter this the Government are already working in partnership with industry and the police to remove terrorist and extremist material. Cooperation with industry has significantly improved in recent years. Removals at the request of the police have increased from around 60 items a month in 2010, when the unit responsible was first established, to over 4,000 a month in 2015, taking the total to 110,000 pieces of propaganda removed in 2016.

However, a fundamental shift in the scale and nature of our response is required to match the huge increase in extremists' use of the internet. This will involve close partnership with the public and industry to do two things: first we need to empower people to use the internet to challenge extremists online; and second we will work with social media and communications providers to ensure extremists do not have open access to their platforms.

To empower those who wish to challenge extremists online, the Government will continue to:

- support a network of credible commentators who want to challenge the extremists and put forward mainstream views online;
- train a wide range of civil society groups to help them build and maintain a compelling online presence, uploading mainstream content so that the extremist voice is not the only one heard;
- run a national programme to make young people more resilient to the risks of radicalisation online and provide schools and teachers with more support to address the risk posed by online radicalisation; and
- build awareness in civil society groups and the public to empower internet users to report extremist content.

### 3.10 Strengthening institutions

As we have seen, important public institutions can be targeted by extremists eager to spread their ideology to an audience that can be both vulnerable and captive. The new Prevent statutory duty ensures that specified institutions have a responsibility to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when carrying out their day-to-day functions. We need to ensure no institutions can provide an uncontested space for extremist ideology to be propagated.

The Strategy sets out how this will be tackled through **schools, colleges and Universities, Local Authorities, the National Health Service, Prisons and Faith Institutions.**

### 3.11 **Working with those most at risk of radicalisation**

Most of the Government's counter-ideology work will happen pre-emptively, as they seek to protect people from extremist ideology before it gains traction and harms them and those around them. But specific action is needed where an individual is at risk of radicalisation. Channel is a voluntary programme which provides tailored support to help move individuals away from radicalisation.

Individuals further down the path to radicalisation need a particularly intensive type of support. When necessary this support will be mandatory. The Home Office will therefore develop a new de-radicalisation programme to provide this support. This scheme will be available to be used in conjunction with criminal sanctions.

## 4. **Building a partnership with all those opposed to extremism**

4.1 Across the country countless organisations and individuals are standing up to fight extremism and the harm it causes. Too often though a small number of strident extremists drown out the mainstream majority, both in person and online.

The Government is determined to support the individuals and groups who have credibility and experience fighting extremism within their communities, by amplifying their voices and helping them where required.

### 4.2 **Delivering a new partnership**

The Home Office will develop a new network, linking individuals and groups around Britain who are already standing up to extremists in their communities. Working with local partners, including local authorities, we will identify the most impactful and relevant groups already doing important work to protect communities. They will work with all those committed to defeating extremism.

Bringing such a diverse range of partners together will be worthwhile in itself, enabling them to share best practice and learn from each other. They will therefore create forums in which peer-to-peer support can be provided and new contacts developed. Working at a local and national level, government will use this network to listen to issues and experiences from the front line and to learn about innovative and effective local interventions.

The Prime Minister's Engagement Forum is a high profile example of this new network. It will give Ministers the chance to hear directly from those challenging extremism and allow a broad range of people to discuss their experiences and work with the most senior people in government.

In addition, they stand ready to support those in our network who seek our help. This could include – for example – providing social media training, technical assistance to enable a small charity to set up a website, or targeted funding for specific projects. This will help our partners to expand their campaigns, allowing mainstream voices to reach a wider audience. In short, we will enable our partners to use every means and tool to combat extremists who do the same.

### 4.3 **Not engaging with extremists**

We must be careful to only give a platform to the right people. The Government are absolutely clear about the people and groups they will not deal with because they find their views and behaviour to be so inconsistent with our own. They will not provide funding or support which inadvertently gives extremists a platform or sense of legitimacy.

Building on measures taken since 2010, they will ensure that the public sector consistently avoids giving extreme groups the air of legitimacy by meeting or working with them. They will therefore set out publicly the principles that will guide the whole of government when deciding whether to engage with individuals and groups in this country. This work will primarily be led by the Home Office, in consultation with other departments, and will help to build capacity across Whitehall and the wider public sector.

#### 4.4 **Role of broadcast media**

Television and radio have enormous power and influence in ensuring that the huge number of mainstream voices who represent liberal values in local communities are given a proper platform and their messages are heard. In his speech on 20 July 2015, the Prime Minister issued a direct challenge to the broadcasters in our country. While making it clear that they are free to put whoever they want on the airwaves, and acknowledging that extremists can make for exciting, rating-friendly broadcasts, he emphasised that they should exercise their judgment to shape debates in a positive way.

They will continue to press home this message with broadcasters, including smaller broadcasters with reach into local communities. They will challenge broadcasters whenever extremists have been given a platform to preach harmful messages and falsehoods without critical challenge. Government will work with broadcasters, publicly funded and commercial, large and small, to understand the challenges they face and to support them in amplifying mainstream voices

### 5. **Disrupting extremists**

5.1 The majority of the strategy is about countering extremism by working in partnership with others, using our values – such as free speech – to confront and challenge extremist ideologies head on. However, in a small number of the most dangerous cases it is necessary to go further, and to use the law to deal with those facilitators and advocates of extremism who pose the greatest threat to others.

5.2 There are already in place a range of powers to help us disrupt terrorism, the application of which are subject to an annual independent review. But there remain extremists in our society who cause an immense amount of harm, while being careful to stay just the right side of the law. In addition to strengthening our use of existing powers against such extremists, they will introduce new, carefully targeted powers to challenge the most active and persistent individuals and groups.

#### 5.3 **Using existing powers**

#### 5.4 **Immigration, asylum and citizenship**

The Government already uses immigration powers to protect the public from extremists. This includes the power to exclude foreign hate preachers from entering the UK. Since May 2010, the Home Secretary has excluded more hate preachers than any other Home Secretary in history. The Counter-Extremism Strategy sets out how they will further use these powers, whilst also reviewing rules on citizenship and granting VISAs.

#### 5.5 **Addressing hate crime**

All police forces currently monitor and report hate crime and much has been done in recent years to build community trust and better address hate crime. Reporting crime data is particularly important: it helps the police to target their resources and enables the public to hold them to account. The police already monitor anti-Semitic crime nationally, yet to date anti-Muslim hate crime has not been recorded consistently across the UK. The Government will work with the police to ensure all forces report anti-Muslim attacks in a consistent way.

## 5.6 **Tackling extremist broadcasts**

Some extremists are sophisticated communicators who seek to exploit television and radio services to broaden their reach. A lively public debate is essential to expose the myths at the heart of extremist ideologies. But they should not stand by where extremists are given a platform to preach lies without critical challenge.

The public are already vigilant about reporting concerns, and Ofcom has strong powers to respond, but the Government must ensure that they remain robust. Ofcom is strengthening the Broadcasting Code to ensure that broadcasters are clear about their responsibilities to tackle extremist content and we will legislate in this Parliament to ensure Ofcom's existing powers to immediately suspend TV services that broadcast unacceptable extremist material also extend to all radio services.

They will also work with Ofcom to look at any potential issues in relation to content which is broadcast through internet-provided TV channels, and consider if any changes are required.

## 5.7 **New legislation to protect the public**

Targeted powers to prevent and stop extremist activity - The police have a range of powers to deal with extremists. However these powers are neither comprehensive nor are they always flexible enough to respond to the risk. For example it is not currently possible to ban groups which stir up racial hatred, or to stop the activities of extremists who deliberately set out to sow divisions between communities and encourage young people to reject the fundamental values and institutions on which our society is based.

They will therefore introduce new powers to: ban extremist organisations that promote hatred and draw people into extremism; restrict the harmful activities of the most dangerous extremist individuals; and restrict access to premises which are repeatedly used to support extremism.

There will be strong safeguards to ensure these powers are only used in the most serious cases. They will be designed so that they can only be used where it is necessary to prevent the activities of groups and individuals who pose a clear threat to the safety of individuals or society more generally. The powers will not be able to be used against privately held views or people expressing their religious beliefs. They will not they close down debate or limit free speech: these are rights we will always protect.

The measures will be subject to a high level of judicial scrutiny. Any action will need to be approved by the High Court. We will also produce guidance for the police, prosecutors and local authorities which will clearly set out the exceptional nature of the powers and the circumstances in which they can be used.

The Government appreciates that any new powers will have to be carefully designed and supported by clear evidence of the harm they are intended to address.

## 5.8 **Helping the public to report extremism**

Local people have a key role in identifying extremist behaviour and alerting the relevant authorities. Government will support those who want to stand up against extremism in their community and support victims.

## 5.9 **Protecting vulnerable people**

In order to help parents protect their children from radicalisation, they have set up a scheme so that parents can cancel their child's passport where they are at risk from travelling overseas to join a terrorist group. This scheme has already helped protect several children under 16 years old.

They will also strengthen the role of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to enable employers to identify extremists and stop them working with children and other vulnerable groups. The DBS helps employers in sensitive areas of work to safeguard their workplace by disclosing information about employees and if necessary barring them from certain roles. They will review eligibility for DBS services to ensure they cover the full range of activity where vulnerable people and young people are at risk from extremists.

They will introduce measures for the DBS to notify eligible employers if it has new information about extremism relevant to an employee. They will also introduce changes to make anyone with a conviction or civil order for extremist activity subject to the DBS's automatic barring arrangements. This will mean that we can bar the most harmful extremists from working with vulnerable people.

## **6. Building more cohesive communities**

- 6.1 Britain is a successful multi-racial, multi-faith country. It is open and welcoming and success is achieved not in spite of our diversity but because of it. Yet in some areas, some people feel less of a sense of belonging and are leading isolated lives, separated from the mainstream. This lack of integration can limit educational achievement and access to employment, particularly for women and young people. It is estimated that this costs the UK economy £1.5 billion as a result of long term unemployment, and £700 million due to under-employment and blocked opportunities.
- 6.2 Where opportunities are limited, divisions between people of different backgrounds can grow and be exploited by groups or individuals, who seek to stoke divisions and fuel hatred. Such isolated communities will be less resilient to the threat posed by extremism.
- 6.3 Such division in our communities can also be exploited by extreme right-wing and neo-Nazi groups to stoke tensions and fuel hatred. These can in turn reinforce others' desire not to identify with our country, its institutions and values, leading to reciprocal radicalisation.
- 6.4 At the same time, values, structures and authorities can gain prominence, creating conditions in which a range of harmful behaviours can occur. This includes behaviour which is deeply discriminatory to women and girls, such as limiting equal access to education, justice and employment creating an environment where a range of illegal cultural practices including so-called Honour-Based Violence, FGM and Forced Marriage are perpetuated.
- 6.5 To respond to the challenges of isolated and segregated communities the Government will build on existing programmes, such as National Citizen Service and English language training which can help break down the barriers between communities. They will continue our work to eradicate illegal and harmful cultural practices such as FGM and Forced Marriage. But they need to do more. That is why the Government asked Louise Casey to conduct a major review into the issues around opportunity and integration in those communities most separated from the mainstream.

## 6.6 **National Citizen Service**

They will continue to broaden the work of National Citizen Service (NCS) and encourage greater participation. The programme has proved extremely popular, helping more than 130,000 16 and 17 year olds since its launch in 2011. NCS aims to help young people engage with their wider community and become more active and responsible citizens. More than 80% of participants report that it helped them feel more positive about those from different backgrounds.<sup>49</sup> They will encourage more young people from isolated communities to benefit from the scheme and will expand the opportunities for NCS graduates to focus on interfaith youth work.

## 6.7 **English language training**

The ability to speak English can have a transformative effect. It gives people the means to integrate with wider society, helping them in the workplace, making it easier to access vital public services, and allowing them to support their children's education. The ability to understand and communicate in English is also central to people's ability to question extremist ideologies and to hear the alternatives. Government already spends around £125 million each year to support English language training, with the majority of this taking place in areas with high levels of social deprivation and isolation. Training ranges from support and help to learn in the local community, to helping people to gain nationally recognised qualifications. Yet over 750,000 people in England do not speak English, or do not speak it well. One in ten British adults born outside the UK has below average or poor command of English, and one in four of this group has lived in the UK for more than 20 years.

As they look to build more cohesive communities they will be reviewing how best to provide English language training and support local partners in those places where they focus our efforts.

## 6.8 **Illegal cultural practices**

The Government is already taking stringent steps to clamp down on these practices including through our strategy to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls and they are already actively delivering a comprehensive programme to prevent FGM and forced marriage.

This includes a new Female Genital Mutilation Unit, based in the Home Office, to co-ordinate action against FGM and provide targeted local support to survivors and those at risk, legislation for new protection orders which came into force in July 2015, and a £3 million national FGM Prevention Programme delivered in partnership with NHS England to support thousands of frontline professionals improve the NHS response.

Alongside these efforts to tackle FGM, the Government's Forced Marriage Unit in the UK – where support is provided to any individual – and overseas, providing consular assistance to British nationals and dual nationals. But more still needs to be done.

They have committed to toughen regulations, so schools have to report children who go missing from school rolls mid-year, some of whom may face risks such as Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Child Sexual Exploitation, and falling prey to radicalisation.

And whilst they already have lifetime anonymity for victims of FGM and rape, they are consulting on how to bring parity for those individuals who are victims of forced marriage.

Finally, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary is conducting a force-level inspection on the police response to so-called Honour-Based Violence, including FGM and Forced Marriage this year. This will create an evidence base for policy making and an improved operational response.

#### **6.9 Boosting opportunity and integration**

The Government has asked Louise Casey to conduct a review into how we can boost opportunity and integration in our most isolated communities. This review will be wide-ranging, developing our understanding, engaging with communities and identifying a range of interventions that civil society and government can implement. These may include housing and education, along with developing and teaching English language skills and boosting employment outcomes, especially for women.

Government will use this report to inform funding for a major new Cohesive Communities Programme in 2016/17. This programme will provide central funding in support of local interventions targeted at local needs. They have seen how intensively focused, multi-agency support has helped in other areas, for example the Troubled Families Programme. They will learn from this and other interventions both here and overseas.

### **7. Community Coordinator Role**

- 7.1 The Home Office Counter-Extremism unit has offered 12 month grant agreement to the London Borough of Lewisham to employ a Community Coordinator, whose role is to oversee the coordination of activity to implement the priorities of the Counter-Extremism Strategy.
- 7.2 The Lewisham Community Coordinator, based within the Crime, Enforcement & Regulation Service, has been in post since May 2017. Although directly employed by local authorities, community coordinators are very much ambassadors of the counter extremism strategy, working across their local areas with a variety of groups, organisations and partners to support the counter- extremism agenda. Community Coordinators will develop an expert understanding of extremism locally, build strong relationships with local partners and then support those partners by signposting them to support opportunities which will consolidate and amplify their message.
- 7.3 The main purpose of this Community coordinator post will be to:
  - To build an extensive understanding of issues and challenges with extremism of all forms in Lewisham, utilising excellent communication skills to represent the

Council at internal and external forums, working closely with senior officers, elected Councilors and central Government.

- To build good working relations with the Home Office and Metropolitan Police and work to implement, advocate for and advance community cohesion and counter extremism.
- To develop an excellent local knowledge of the drivers, prevalence and wider harms of extremism of all kinds in Lewisham and an understanding of those affected by this.
- Lead, engage and increase the resilience of communities and organisations/institutions challenging all forms of extremism, including the promotion of hatred and division.
- Identify and build a local network of trusted individuals and organisations who are involved in building stronger communities and/or countering extremism and promoting cohesion. The post holder will support these groups and organisations by identifying what help they require to expand their reach, including by signposting them towards and helping them submit high quality bids for the national competitive process for accessing both in-kind support and grants.

7.4 The role goes beyond challenging terrorism to challenge those who target the vulnerable, including the young but seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

#### 7.5 **Support on offer for Communities**

A main function of the role of the Community Coordinator is to commit to supporting groups and individuals working to protect their communities from extremism.

In September 2016 a national programme called 'Building a Stronger Britain Together' (BSBT) was launched offering in-kind support and grant funding for community groups to:

- Empower those who wish to challenge extremism.
- Support and network of "credible commentators" who want to challenge extremist narratives and promote mainstream views online.
- Train a wide range of civil society groups to help them build and maintain a compelling online presence.

There are two types of support available:

- In Kind Support helps organisations build their capacity to reach larger audiences and expand their reach. For example through design and delivery of specific campaigns, professionally built websites or social media training.



- Grant offer targeted funding for specific projects that support delivery of the Governments CE Strategy.

The 'Building a Stronger Britain Together' programme will support civil society and community organisations who work to create more resilient communities, stand up to extremism in all forms and offer vulnerable individuals a positive alternative. This programme is a partnership between Government and groups and organisations who want to see extremism defeated. Organisations can bid for grant funding and in-kind support for specific projects that deliver this goal.

In-kind support can provide valuable assistance when focused upon improving the reach of local community organisations; this could take the form of technical assistance to improve an organisations website, training for their staff on social media or, perhaps, capacity building work to amplify their voice or broaden its reach.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The Home Office Counter-Extremism Unit monitors the funding towards to Community Coordinator post.

## **9. Legal & Human Rights Implications**

- 9.1 The Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 is about countering all forms of extremism: violent and non-violent; Islamist and the neo-Nazi. It will improve our understanding of the causes and impacts of extremism and do more to:

- counter the extremist ideology
- build a partnership with all those opposed to extremism
- disrupt extremists
- build more cohesive communities

- 9.2 The strategy also explains how the government will work in partnership with everyone who wants to defeat extremism.

- 9.3 The Council is under a number of statutory obligations to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the Council to formulate and implement a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder; the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 requires the Council as a local housing authority to have policies and procedures for dealing with anti-social behaviour and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places the Council under a duty to have, when carrying out its functions, due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between persons of different racial groups.

- 9.4 The Local Government Act 1999 places a duty on the local authorities to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised having regard to the combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

9.5 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 empowers the local authority to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of all or any persons within the local authority's area.

## **10. Equalities Implications**

10.1 Developing safe and secure communities is central to the work of the Council as a whole and in particular to the Community Services directorate. Reducing and preventing crime, reducing fear of crime and supporting vulnerable communities is critical to the well-being of all our citizens.

## **11. Crime and Disorder Implications**

11.1 Section 17 places a duty on partners to do all they can to reasonably prevent crime and disorder in their area. The level of crime and its impact is influenced by the decisions and activities taken in the day-to-day of local bodies and organisations. The responsible authorities are required to provide a range of services in their community from policing, fire protection, planning, consumer and environmental protection, transport and highways. They each have a key statutory role in providing these services and, in carrying out their core activities, can significantly contribute to reducing crime and improving the quality of life in their area.

## **12. Environmental Implications**

12.1 Key decisions made which may have environmental implications. Environmental services are consulted about all agreed activity before proceeding.

## **13. Conclusion**

13.1 The Crime, Enforcement & Regulation Service, along with key partners will continue to review its implementation of the Counter Extremism Strategy in Lewisham to ensure that all activity is in line with the sustainable communities' strategy, and the Safer Lewisham Strategy as well as having links to children's and young person's board and the health and wellbeing board and safeguarding Boards.

**For further information on this report please contact Geeta Subramaniam-Mooney Head of Public Protection and Safety, Community Services Directorate on 020 8314 9569.**

<b>Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee</b>		
Title	Select Committee work programme	
Contributor	Scrutiny Manager	Item 8
Class	Part 1 (open)	2 November 2017

## 1. Purpose

To advise Committee members of the work programme for the 2017/18 municipal year, and to decide on the agenda items for the next meeting.

## 2. Summary

- 2.1 At the beginning of the new municipal year, each select committee drew up a draft work programme for submission to the Business Panel for consideration.
- 2.2 The Business Panel considered the proposed work programmes of each of the select committees on 22 May 2017 and agreed a co-ordinated overview and scrutiny work programme. However, the work programme can be reviewed at each Select Committee meeting so that Members are able to include urgent, high priority items and remove items that are no longer a priority.

## 3. Recommendations

3.1 The Committee is asked to:

- note the work plan attached at **Appendix B** and discuss any issues arising from the programme;
- specify the information and analysis required in the report for each item on the agenda for the next meeting, based on desired outcomes, so that officers are clear about what they need to provide;
- review all forthcoming key decisions, attached at **Appendix C**, and consider any items for further scrutiny;

## 4. The work programme

4.1 The work programme for 2017/18 was agreed at the Committee's meeting on 26 April 2017.

4.2 The Committee is asked to consider if any urgent issues have arisen that require scrutiny and if any existing items are no longer a priority and can be removed from the work programme. Before adding additional items, each item should be considered against agreed criteria. The flow chart attached at **Appendix A** may help Members decide if proposed additional items should be added to the work programme. The Committee's work programme needs to be achievable in terms of the amount of meeting time available. If the Committee agrees to add additional item(s) because they are urgent and high priority, Members will need to consider

which medium/low priority item(s) should be removed in order to create sufficient capacity for the new item(s).

## 5. The next meeting

5.1 The following reports are scheduled for the meeting on Wednesday 13 December 2017:

Agenda item	Review type	Link to Corporate Priority	Priority
<b>Capacity in the Voluntary Sector 6-month update</b>	In-depth Review	Community leadership Inspiring efficiency, effectiveness and equity.	High
<b>Provision for the LGBT Community – Draft Report</b>	In-depth Review	Community leadership	High
<b>Youth Offending Service Action Plan</b>	Performance Monitoring	Safety, security and a visible presence	High

5.2 The Committee is asked to specify the information and analysis it would like to see in the reports for these items, based on the outcomes the Committee would like to achieve, so that officers are clear about what they need to provide for the next meeting.

## 6. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## 7. Legal Implications

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, all scrutiny select committees must devise and submit a work programme to the Business Panel at the start of each municipal year.

## 8. Equalities Implications

8.1 The Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act included a new public sector equality duty, replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6 April 2011. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

8.2 The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

8.3 There may be equalities implications arising from items on the work programme and all activities undertaken by the Select Committee will need to give due consideration to this.

**9. Date of next meeting**

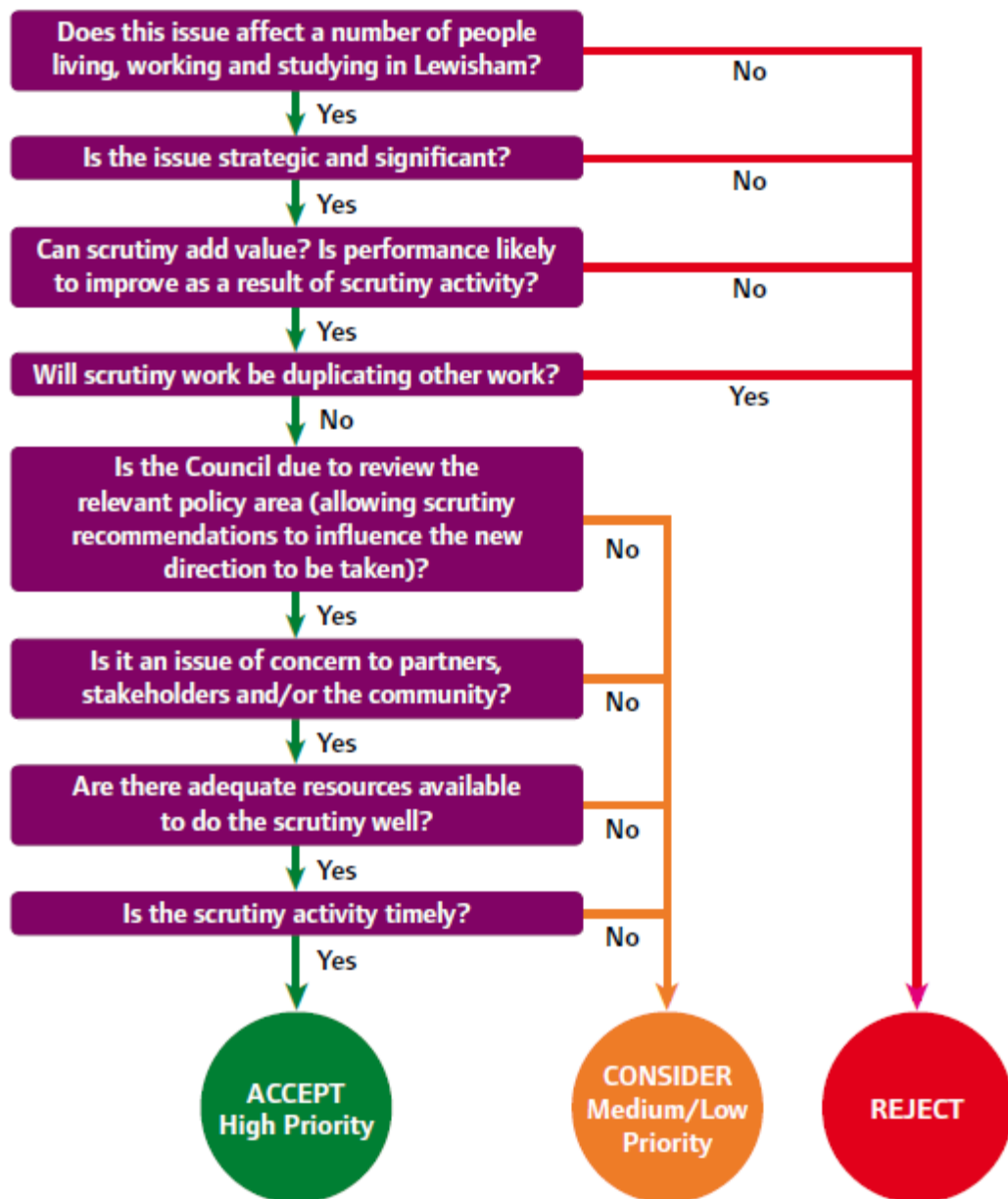
The date of the next meeting is Thursday 25 January 2018.

**Background Documents**

Lewisham Council's Constitution

Centre for Public Scrutiny: the Good Scrutiny Guide

## Scrutiny work programme – prioritisation process



Work Item	Type of review	Priority	Strategic Priority	Delivery deadline	26-Apr	26-Jun	12-Jul	21-Sep	02-Nov	13-Dec	25-Jan	07-Mar
Lewisham Future Programme	Standard Item	High	CP10	Apr-17					SAVINGS			
Election of Chair and Vice-Chair	Constitutional requirement	High		Apr-17								
Select Committee Work Programme 2017/18	Constitutional requirement	High		Apr-17								
Demographic Change	Rapid Review	High	CP1	Apr-17	Evidence Ses	Final Report						
Capacity in the Voluntary Sector - response to recs	Response to recs	High	CP1	Apr-17		Response				6-month update		
Provision for the LGBT community	In-depth review	High	CP1 and CP10	Dec-17		Scope		Evidence	Evidence	Report		
Implementation of employee survey action plan	Policy Development	High	CP10	Jun-17								
YOS inspection action plan	Performance Monitoring	High	CP4	on-going								
Draft Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2017-2021	Policy Development	High	CP4	Jun-17								
Poverty Commission	Policy Development	High	CP10	Nov-17			update		Final Report			
Library and Information Service Annual Report.	Performance Monitoring	High	CP10	Jul-17								
Local Police Service Update	Performance Monitoring	High	CP4	Jul-17								
Council's Employment Profile	Performance Monitoring	High	CP10	Jul-17								
Update on Main Grants Programme	Performance Monitoring	High	CP10	Jul-17								
Community Cohesion (inc extremism strategy)	Policy Development	High	CP1,CP4 and CP10	Nov-18								
National Probation Service and community rehabilitation company	Standard Item	High	CP4	Jan-18								
disproportionality in the criminal justice system	Policy Development	High	CP4 and CP10	Jan-18								
Safer Lewisham Plan	Performance Monitoring	High	CP4	Mar-18								
Implementation of the CES	Performance Monitoring	High	CP1	Mar-18								
Local Assemblies	Performace Monitoring	High	CP1	Mar-18								

	Item completed
	Item on-going
	Item outstanding
	Proposed timeframe
	Item added

Meetings			
1)	26-Apr		5) 02-Nov
2)	26-Jun		6) 13 Dec
3)	12-Jul		7) 25-Jan
4)	21-Sep		8) 07-Mar

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## FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

### Forward Plan November 2017 - February 2018

This Forward Plan sets out the key decisions the Council expects to take during the next four months.

Anyone wishing to make representations on a decision should submit them in writing as soon as possible to the relevant contact officer (shown as number (7) in the key overleaf). Any representations made less than 3 days before the meeting should be sent to Kevin Flaherty, the Local Democracy Officer, at the Council Offices or kevin.flaherty@lewisham.gov.uk. However the deadline will be 4pm on the working day prior to the meeting.

A "key decision"\* means an executive decision which is likely to:

- (a) result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates;
- (b) be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards.

September 2017	<b>Business Rates - London pooling</b>	25/10/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
August 2017	<b>Discretionary Business Rates Scheme 2017/2018 Revaluation Support</b>	25/10/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Kevin Bonavia,		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			Cabinet Member Resources		
August 2017	<b>Lewisham Homes Business Plan</b>	25/10/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member for Housing		
August 2017	<b>Introduction of a new Public Space Protection Order</b>	25/10/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Janet Daby, Cabinet Member Community Safety		
September 2017	<b>Addition to Lewisham's Local List - No.7&amp;8 Bell Green Gasholders</b>	25/10/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
September 2017	<b>Extension of Existing contract plus contract variation for the delivery of day services at the Calabash Centre</b>	25/10/17 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Joan Millbank, Cabinet Member Third Sector & Community		
September 2017	<b>Single Tender Action for Warm Homes Fund</b>	07/11/17 Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Rachel Onikosi, Cabinet Member Public Realm		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
March 2017	<b>Achilles Street Regeneration Proposals</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member for Housing		
May 2017	<b>Transfer of the Applications Support Function to the LB Brent Shared Service</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
June 2017	<b>Joint Strategic Depot Review</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Rachel Onikosi, Cabinet Member Public Realm		
September 2017	<b>Adoption of Lewisham Cycling Strategy</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
June 2017	<b>New Precision Manufactured Homes: Edward Street</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member for Housing		
September 2017	<b>Precision Manufactured Homes</b>	15/11/17	Kevin Sheehan,		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
	<b>and GLA Innovation Fund Update</b>	Mayor and Cabinet	Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member for Housing		
	<b>Update on Fire Safety in Lewisham</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member for Housing		
August 2017	<b>Fostering Strategy</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
June 2017	<b>Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan Update</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
June 2017	<b>Ladywell Playtower: selecting a restoration partner</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
	<b>Lewisham Poverty Commission</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			Councillor Joe Dromey, Cabinet Member Policy & Performance		
	<b>New Homes Programme Update Parts 1&amp;2</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member for Housing		
September 2017	<b>Consultation on removal of subsidies for Day Care meals</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Chris Best, Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Older People		
August 2017	<b>Response to Consultation regarding changes to Targeted Short Breaks Provision</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
	<b>Cutting Energy Costs through new local energy supply models</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Rachel Onikosi, Cabinet Member Public Realm		
	<b>Wide Horizons refinancing</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and		

<b>FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS</b>					
<b>Date included in forward plan</b>	<b>Description of matter under consideration</b>	<b>Date of Decision Decision maker</b>	<b>Responsible Officers / Portfolios</b>	<b>Consultation Details</b>	<b>Background papers / materials</b>
			Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
	<b>Disposal of the former Saville Centre</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
September 2017	<b>Main Grants Programme</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Joan Millbank, Cabinet Member Third Sector & Community		
September 2017	<b>Contract Award and Approval to Proceed with 1 FE expansion at Ashmead School</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
	<b>School Kitchen Facilities Maintenance</b>	15/11/17 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
September 2017	<b>Business Rates - London</b>	22/11/17	Janet Senior, Executive		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
	<b>Pooling</b>	Council	Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
September 2017	<b>Financial Regulations and Directorate Schemes of Delegation</b>	22/11/17 Council	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
May 2017	<b>Report of the Barriers to Participation Working Party</b>	22/11/17 Council	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Suzannah Clarke, Chair Planning Committee C		
September 2017	<b>LGO finding against the Council</b>	22/11/17 Council	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
	<b>Lewisham Poverty Commission</b>	22/11/17 Council	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Joe Dromey, Cabinet Member Policy & Performance		
	<b>Appointment Process for a</b>	22/11/17	Adam Bowles, Head of		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
	<b>Chief Executive</b>	Council	OD & HR and Councillor Alan Hall, Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee		
	<b>Northgate Contract Extension</b>	28/11/17 Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
September 2017	<b>Review of Implementation of the Armed Forces Community Covenant</b>	06/12/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member for Housing		
September 2017	<b>Financial Monitoring 2017/18</b>	06/12/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
May 2017	<b>Lewisham Future Programme 2018/19 Revenue Budget Savings</b>	06/12/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
September 2017	<b>School Deficits</b>	06/12/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and		



**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
September 2017	<b>Brownfield Land Register</b>	06/12/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
September 2017	<b>Planning Service Annual Monitoring Report 2016-17</b>	06/12/17 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Alan Smith, Deputy Mayor		
September 2017	<b>Contract Awards for Support Services for Young People with Housing and Support Needs</b>	06/12/17 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Chris Best, Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Older People		
September 2017	<b>Contract Extension for Shared Care Adult Substance Misuse Services</b>	06/12/17 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Janet Daby, Cabinet Member Community Safety		
September 2017	<b>Contract Extension Provision of Homecare Services (Lead Provider)</b>	06/12/17 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Chris Best,		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

Date included in forward plan	Description of matter under consideration	Date of Decision Decision maker	Responsible Officers / Portfolios	Consultation Details	Background papers / materials
			Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Older People		
August 2017	<b>School Improvement Partnership</b>	10/01/18 Mayor and Cabinet	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
September 2017	<b>Council Tax Base</b>	10/01/18 Mayor and Cabinet	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources & Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
	<b>Schools Minor Works Programme</b>	10/01/18 Mayor and Cabinet	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
April 2017	<b>Proposed revision to the contract structure of the Downham Health &amp; Leisure Centre PFI</b>	10/01/18 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Aileen Buckton, Executive Director for Community Services and Councillor Joan Millbank, Cabinet Member Third Sector & Community		
September 2017	<b>Council Tax Base</b>	17/01/18 Council	Janet Senior, Executive Director for Resources &		

<b>FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS</b>					
<b>Date included in forward plan</b>	<b>Description of matter under consideration</b>	<b>Date of Decision Decision maker</b>	<b>Responsible Officers / Portfolios</b>	<b>Consultation Details</b>	<b>Background papers / materials</b>
			Regeneration and Councillor Kevin Bonavia, Cabinet Member Resources		
June 2017	<b>Deptford Lounge &amp; Tidemill Academy Facilities Management and Centre Management Contract Award</b>	07/02/18 Mayor and Cabinet (Contracts)	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		
	<b>Update on Fire Safety in Lewisham</b>	28/02/18 Mayor and Cabinet	Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director for Customer Services and Councillor Damien Egan, Cabinet Member for Housing		
September 2017	<b>Agreed Syllabus Review and Syllabus Launch</b>	21/03/18 Mayor and Cabinet	Sara Williams, Executive Director, Children and Young People and Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		

**FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS**

<b>Date included in forward plan</b>	<b>Description of matter under consideration</b>	<b>Date of Decision Decision maker</b>	<b>Responsible Officers / Portfolios</b>	<b>Consultation Details</b>	<b>Background papers / materials</b>