

## APPENDIX E – EVIDENCE FROM SCHOOLS WORKSHOPS

The Young Mayor's Team designed a democracy workshop for Lewisham students, which was tested with the Young Mayor's Advisers. The team (including the current Young Mayor, Adam Abdullah) then delivered this workshop at the following secondary schools:

- Haberdashers' Aske's Knights Academy (27<sup>th</sup> November 2018)
- Addey & Stanhope (28<sup>th</sup> November 2018)
- Prendergast Ladywell School (11<sup>th</sup> December 2018)
- Prendergast Hilly Fields (18<sup>th</sup> December 2018)

The issues and ideas identified during these workshops have been summarised and collated under the three themes of the review.

### Understanding Local Democracy

Council	Councillors	Rights & Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students described Lewisham Council's role as bringing local benefits to people in the area. One student said 'whenever you are in need, [the Council] helps you'</li> <li>▪ Most students lacked awareness about what services are provided by the Council, other than waste and bins, schools, housing and libraries. Some students knew that their parents paid Council Tax which funds local services</li> <li>▪ Students had an understanding of public services but limited knowledge of the Council's role compared to central government or the GLA</li> <li>▪ A minority of students knew what wards were; when shown a map of the borough, students referred to wards as 'towns' or 'areas'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students were able to guess what a councillor's role was when asked, but struggled to name any Lewisham councillors. There was also confusion about the difference between a councillor and an MP</li> <li>▪ Some students described councillors as 'someone who speaks up for you', 'someone who rules Lewisham' and 'a local representative'</li> <li>▪ Very few students recognised the current Mayor, but many were able to name his predecessor. However, most students knew the name of the Young Mayor and were familiar with the Young Mayor's programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Many students recognised voting as an essential aspect of democracy. They also defined democracy in terms of equality and 'everyone having their say'</li> <li>▪ Some students related the concept of democracy to representation, freedom of speech and the sharing of power and opinions</li> </ul>

### Theme 1 – Openness & Transparency

Issues	Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nearly all students knew that the Council had a website, but very few students had ever accessed it</li> <li>▪ Students suggested they would use a search engine to find out information about the Council, go to the Town Hall or use a library</li> <li>▪ After learning about the role of the councillor, many students said they would write to their councillor to access information</li> </ul>	

### Theme 2 – Public Involvement in Decision-Making

Issues	Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students were aware of the issues facing the borough and demonstrated an interest in making changes within Lewisham, offering suggestions about how to improve youth crime, homelessness, housing, transport and the environment</li> <li>▪ Students were largely unaware of the many ways to participate in decision-making. Many suggested contacting a councillor, the Mayor or the Young Mayor if they wanted to be involved in decision making. Some students said they would go to the Town Hall or talk to teachers, police and community groups</li> <li>▪ None of the students said they would fill in a consultation, get involved with their Local Assembly, go to a councillor’s surgery or attend Full Council/committee meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Many students wanted to the right to vote at aged 16 and some went as far to suggest that all secondary school students should be able to vote</li> <li>▪ A number of students suggested that councillors and officers should run talks and workshops in schools in order to give young people an opportunity to understand, discuss and offer feedback on Council policies</li> <li>▪ More generally, many students wanted adults to ask young people about what matters to them. Some students suggested ways for the Council to do this: an improved online presence and use of social media, more surveys (online and in places young people spend time) and better publicity about the different ways young people can have their say</li> <li>▪ Students also wanted more contact with their local representatives to debate policy and ensure their views were heard. Some suggested there should be more opportunities for young people to do work experience or internships at the Council in order to increase their understanding of and involvement in local democracy</li> </ul>

### Theme 3 – Effective Decision-Making

Issues	Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students participated in a mini-budgeting activity where they pretended to be councillors deciding the Council budget. However, their 'budget' was reduced by 50% halfway through the exercise</li> <li>▪ Overall, students tended to prioritise education, housing, health and youth services. Most students claimed this activity was challenging, especially after the budget was cut – one student said 'It was difficult because people have different views on things so it was hard to make everyone happy', others asked why they 'couldn't just have more money'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students agreed that decisions should be made by debating and voting. They also valued fairness and the right for everyone's views to be heard. Some students used the word 'responsibly' when describing how decisions should be made</li> <li>▪ There were mixed opinions about referenda: some students thought it was a good idea to have votes on particular issues whilst others used Brexit as a negative example, stating that referenda 'divide' communities</li> <li>▪ Students also enjoyed the budgeting activity and thought that similar activities would be a good way to involve the community in decision making</li> </ul>