



AGENDA FOR THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee are summoned to a meeting, which will be held in Committee Room 4, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on, **15 September 2015 at 7.30 pm.**

John Lynch
Head of Democratic Services

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Despatched : 7 September 2015

Membership

Councillors:

Councillor Kaya Comer-Schwartz (Chair)
Councillor Nick Ward (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Alice Donovan
Councillor Rakhia Ismail
Councillor Michelline Safi Ngongo
Councillor Angela Picknell
Councillor Diarmaid Ward
Councillor Nick Wayne

Co-opted Members:

Vacancy, Church of England Diocese
James Stephenson, Secondary Parent Governor
Erol Baduna, Primary Parent Governor
Mary Clement, Roman Catholic Diocese

Quorum: is 4 Councillors

Substitute Members

Substitutes:

Councillor James Court
Councillor Alex Diner
Councillor Jenny Kay
Councillor Alice Perry
Councillor Dave Poyser

A. Formal Matters

Page

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest*** in an item of business:

- if it is not yet on the council's register, you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent;
- you may **choose** to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest that is already in the register in the interests of openness and transparency.

In both the above cases, you **must** leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If you have a **personal** interest in an item of business **and** you intend to speak or vote on the item you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent but you **may** participate in the discussion and vote on the item.

***(a) Employment, etc** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.

(b) Sponsorship - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of your expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of your election; including from a trade union.

(c) Contracts - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between you or your partner (or a body in which one of you has a beneficial interest) and the council.

(d) Land - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.

(e) Licences- Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.

(f) Corporate tenancies - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which you or your partner have a beneficial interest.

(g) Securities - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

This applies to all members present at the meeting.

3. Declaration of Substitute Members
4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
5. Chair's Report
6. Items for Call In (if any)
7. Public Questions

1 - 4

B. Scrutiny Items	Page
1. Update on the Youth Crime Strategy	5 - 20
2. Alternative Provision: Scrutiny Initiation Document and Introductory Report <i>(report to follow)</i>	21 - 22
3. Work Programme 2015/16	23 - 24

C. Urgent Non-exempt Items

Any non-exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

D. Exclusion of Press and Public

To consider whether, in view of the nature of the remaining item on the agenda, it is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt or confidential information within the terms of the Access to Information Procedure Rules in the Constitution and, if so, whether to exclude the press and public during discussion thereof.

E. Exempt Items for Call In (if any)

F. Urgent Exempt Items (if any)

Any exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

The next meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee will be on 9 November 2015

Please note that committee agendas, reports and minutes are available from the Council's website: www.democracy.islington.gov.uk

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Agenda Item 4

London Borough of Islington

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee - Thursday, 11 June 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on Thursday, 11 June 2015 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillors: N Ward (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), Donovan, Ngongo and Wayne

Co-opted Members: James Stephenson, Secondary Parent Governor
Mary Clement, Roman Catholic Diocese

Also Present: Councillors: Caluori

Councillor Nick Ward in the Chair

56 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (ITEM NO. A1)

Apologies for absence were received from Erol Baduna and Councillors Kaya Comer-Schwartz, Diarmaid Ward and Angela Picknell.

57 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (ITEM NO. A2)

None.

58 DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (ITEM NO. A3)

None.

59 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (ITEM NO. A4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

60 CHAIR'S REPORT (ITEM NO. A5)

The Committee asked for their congratulations to be recorded on the birth of Ignatz Charles Comer-Schwartz, the son of Councillor Kaya Comer-Schwartz.

The Committee thanked officers for their contribution to the review of Early Help services.

61 MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE (ITEM NO. A6)

RESOLVED:

That the membership, terms of reference and dates of meetings of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2015/16 be noted.

62 ITEMS FOR CALL IN (IF ANY) (ITEM NO. A7)

None.

63 PUBLIC QUESTIONS (ITEM NO. A8)

The Chair outlined the procedure for public questions and the filming and recording of meetings.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES (ITEM NO. B1)

Penny Kenway, Head of Early Years and Childcare, and Jason Strelitz, Acting Assistant Director of Public Health, made a presentation to the Committee, copy interleaved, during which the following main points were made –

- The Committee noted progress made on the First 21 Months programme, early education for funded two year olds, and the introduction of the integrated review.
- It was noted that the relatively high levels of deprivation in Islington had a negative impact on the education and health of children in early childhood. Although Islington did not compare favourably to other London Boroughs and nationally in areas such as tooth decay, obesity, learning and development and homelessness; Islington did perform favourably in levels of immunisation and breastfeeding.
- Immunisation levels had significantly increased since 2008. It was commented that this was leading to better outcomes for families and indicated that related publicity had been successful.
- Significant progress had been made on infant mortality, which had decreased from above the London and England average in 2003-05 to below average in 2009-11.
- Although Islington was behind national and inner-London averages in terms of children achieving a 'good level of development' at the end of reception, the percentage of children achieving this level had increased from 39% in 2009 to 58% in 2014. Whilst this was encouraging, the Committee commented that it appeared that Islington was consistently behind other inner-London Boroughs and enquired why this may be. It was suggested that the particularly high levels of deprivation in Islington meant that local children had to progress further to achieve the 'good level of development' standard.
- The apparent decrease in 'good level of development' performance in 2013 was due to changes to the early years foundation stage profile assessment criteria. Since this date the Council had worked with teachers to moderate their assessments and increase understanding of how children can be best supported to achieve their full potential against the assessment criteria. A particular focus on language and personal social development had been adopted, however it was noted that further work was required to increase physical mobility.
- It was noted that the issues most frequently presented to Children's Services included domestic violence, neglect, parental mental health, and parental disputes. Key factors identified in social care assessments included drug and alcohol abuse in addition to these. It was requested that exact figures be circulated to the Committee.
- An overview was provided of the services available to pregnant women, children at age 0-2, and at age 3-4. It was explained that universal activities at Children's Centres such as 'stay and play' sessions helped to signpost families to targeted and specialist services.
- The key challenges facing early years services were (i) information governance and consent for information sharing, (ii) further integration of services; and (iii) ensuring ICT systems enable the impact of services to be measured.
- A member suggested that due to the financial climate it was unlikely that the Council would be able to increase resources to services in the near future. It was therefore queried what cost-effective measures could be taken to support the work of early years services. In response, it was advised that the service recognised the difficult financial climate, however investment in ICT systems could lead to a more efficient and targeted service, which may both save money and improve outcomes.

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee - 11 June 2015

- It was explained that the relatively high levels of deprivation in Islington attracted early years pupil premium funding of around £300 per pupil per year.
- It was commented that the Committee could further investigate (i) if the most deprived families were accessing children's centres for the right amount of time; and (ii) the consistency of early years provision, as although all providers were committed to learning, it was thought that different providers gave differing levels of priority to literacy and numeracy. A member of the Committee suggested that publicly comparing providers on such measures may help to raise standards.
- A member of the public queried in which areas Islington children needed to make the most progress. In response it was advised that further work was needed to develop literacy, numeracy, and understanding of the world.

RESOLVED:

That the progress of the Council's early childhood services be noted.

65

EARLY HELP: DRAFT REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS (ITEM NO. B2)

The Committee considered the draft report and recommendations of the 'Impact of Early Help on Preventing Escalation to Statutory Services' review. A discussion was had during which the following main points were made –

- It was agreed that future scrutiny reviews would include regular reflection sessions for the Committee to take stock of the evidence received to date and reconsider their approach to the review as required.
- Reference was made to recent tragedies involving young people and the need for early help services to engage with adolescents. In light of this it was suggested that the Committee could further review the engagement of adolescents with support services.
- A discussion was had on the purpose of the recommendations. It was explained that some recommendations proposed specific actions, others requested that some areas be given further consideration, and others expressed political objectives. It was queried if future reviews should focus on specific actions to improve council services.
- A member of the public suggested that scrutiny reviews could be enhanced by inviting independent experts and members of the public to attend meetings. The Committee agreed that this proposal would be investigated.
- Some members expressed that the wording of recommendations should be revised for clarity and to make more specific points about the successes of the service and the particular actions suggested by the Committee. A discussion was had on this topic and the Committee considered each recommendation individually.
- It was agreed that a number of amendments should be made to the report before submitting to the Executive.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be agreed, subject to the following amendments:
 - a) That recommendation 2 be revised to read: 'That the Council's early help services' successes in creating safe and trusting relationships with families be noted, and consideration be given to how similar approaches to positive relationship building can be adopted by other services, including but not exclusive of schools and housing';
 - b) That the words 'through the Health and Wellbeing Board' be added to recommendation 5;
 - c) That the words 'To combat social isolation' be added to recommendation 8;

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee - 11 June 2015

- d) That the words 'and adolescent children themselves' be added to recommendation 10;
- 2) That Democratic Services further consider the use of reflection sessions and how independent experts and members of the public can be encouraged to attend future meetings.

66

SCRUTINY TOPICS 2015/16 (ITEM NO. B3)

A discussion was had and the following items were suggested for scrutiny:

- Alternative Provision – to consider the availability and quality of alternative provision; the attainment, aspirations and long-term plans of those in alternative provision; how the Council can make a meaningful contribution to this sector; and how effective alternative provision is at discouraging criminal behaviour. This work could complement another review being carried out by the Schools Forum.
- The Impact of SEN Changes on Children and Families – as deferred from 2014/15, to consider the impact of changes, the experiences of children and young people, and how services can be improved.
- The performance of BME children – to consider attainment and the provision of support services.

In addition, it was noted that the meeting had already suggested that the Committee could consider the consistency of early years provision and the engagement of adolescents with support services.

It was intended for the Committee to focus on one review topic and receive other reports on its areas of interest throughout the year. A member of the public queried why the Committee did not choose multiple topics for review. It was explained that the terms of reference of the Committee required a single topic to be selected and the Policy and Performance Committee could assign the Committee with additional scrutiny topics as required.

It was intended for the Committee's next scrutiny review to commence in September. Members indicated that they would welcome relevant reading material before this date.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That a review of Alternative Provision be undertaken, subject to approval by the Policy and Performance Committee;
- 2) That the Committee undertake any further reviews as instructed by the Policy and Performance Committee;
- 3) That the Committee intend to receive reports on SEN changes, the performance of BME children, the consistency of Early Years provision and the engagement of adolescents with support services throughout the year;
- 4) That a work plan and scrutiny initiation document be submitted to the next meeting.

MEETING CLOSED AT 9.00 pm

Chair



Youth Crime Strategy 2015

We are committed to making Islington one of the safest boroughs in London. We want Islington to be a fairer place where every child has the best start in life and does not become either a victim or perpetrator of crime.

However, Islington has experienced a disturbing rise in youth crime, especially violence, which has caused widespread anxiety to residents, particularly families with children. We have all become very concerned about the safety of young people on our streets, in our parks and schools and on our estates.

This problem is not unique to Islington. All across London, violent crime committed against teenagers by teenagers has risen alarmingly in the past year. In Islington, our local community has been deeply shocked and saddened by the murder of two teenagers in the first half of 2015, incidents which have both horrified and angered our residents.

A minority of Islington's young people have been drawn into gangs that make money from burglary, robbery, theft of cycles, mopeds and smartphones. These crimes are all connected. Young people use cycles and mopeds to commit snatches or to transport stolen goods, weapons or drugs. They then use the money from these crimes to buy and sell drugs in a very lucrative market. Increasingly, those young people are using violence – especially knives – to settle their disputes or enforce deals. The impact of this small number of people's behaviour is very widespread.

Many of those resorting to such violence have themselves suffered trauma early in life – domestic violence, parental drug and alcohol dependency. They have grown up without the emotional tools that children should develop – like empathy towards others. They have often dropped-out or been excluded from school and have lost sight of their future lives and the consequences of their actions.

Fifteen years ago we did not understand the severity of what was happening to those children and the implications for their future. But we do now and we need to take action, both to control the current rise in youth crime and to prevent the same thing happening to those young children who are most vulnerable now.

We are certain about three things:

- We now have very good children's services that work effectively with children, young adults and their families; they identify children facing difficulty in their early years and our family interventions spot the problems and try to resolve them
- The number of young people entering the youth justice system is declining but this does not reflect the real picture – the number of youth crimes is increasing but at least half of these crimes do not result in a charge or prosecution
- Although 8 out of 10 who enter the youth justice system do not re-offend, we have London's highest youth re-offending rate. The total number is growing and a small cohort of young people are becoming even more prolific offenders.

We understand the scale and nature of the problem. So, this strategy sets out what the Council, police and others are going to do about it.

Firstly, we must deal with the current group of young people committing these crimes. We will establish a dedicated gangs team drawing together the police, youth offending, probation services and children's social work teams to:

- disrupt gang organisation and stop them recruiting young teenagers
- acquire intelligence about gang membership and activity and to share that information about at-risk teenagers more widely
- persuade gang members to change their behaviour by using new legal powers, family and children's services and to enforce against those who refuse to engage
- track-down and remove from our community the adults who are recruiting kids into gangs and who form a link with organised crime – the people who provide money for stolen goods and who supply the drugs.

Secondly, we must “turn off the tap” and prevent another cohort of young teenagers from being lured into criminal gangs by:

- shifting some of our youth service resource into detached youth work with individual young people who may be at risk
- strengthening our partnership with schools to make sure they refer children they are concerned about
- launching a new service for all children who are on “alternative provision” and not attending mainstream schools.

Thirdly, the Council and police cannot solve this problem alone. We have to work with the whole community to help cut crime. Parents, families, neighbours and young people themselves can discourage the low level anti-social behaviour and crime which later leads to more serious criminality.

Finally, we need some extra help from outside the borough. Central Government and the Mayor of London must understand that although Islington had been pretty low down the ranking of London boroughs experiencing violent crime, this has changed. The widening social divide in our borough is a contributing factor to the disaffection and alienation felt by some young people and the financial pressure on public services in Islington will only make it harder for us to respond effectively to rising youth crime.

Together with our partners and the community we will take a firm, united stand against the current rise in youth crime that has had such devastating consequences. And we will not rest until we have done everything we can to prevent those young children growing up today from entering a life of crime – spotting the early signs, intervening, supporting and always looking at the bigger picture so that those most vulnerable children can always choose a more positive path and reach their potential.

We are determined to drive real changes in youth offending including:

- less children becoming victims of violent crime, whether committed by other young people or by adults
- a reduced number of crimes and low-level disorder involving children
- a reduction in the number of children entering the criminal justice system for the first time
- fewer children already in the criminal justice system continuing to offend.

There is a strong community spirit in Islington and we have seen that demonstrated in the aftermath of violent crimes in previous years. Whether as residents, community groups, faith organisations, businesses, the police or the Council, we must all work together to prevent further harm to Islington’s children and young people.

Cllr Joe Caluori
Executive Member for Children and Families

Cllr Paul Convery
Executive Member for Community Safety

July 2015

Interventions, enforcement and reintegration

We need to stop this rise in crime as a matter of urgency – by bringing the perpetrators to justice and changing their behaviours.

Dedicated gangs team

We can only do this in partnership with the police and are setting up an integrated gangs team to deliver a more effective and targeted working with both boys and girls.

We need to become better at identifying the persistent perpetrators of crime and their families, with everyone intervening to stop them.

Everyone with a role will be asked to play their part in a joined up way. This means looking back at an offender's history and taking everything in the past into account, not just the current presenting issue¹. Where this is linked to our Stronger Families Programme we are already seeing that 97% have made significant improvements in their issues². This gives some grounds for optimism, but the challenge is significant and very tight control and oversight will be needed for some considerable time if we are to make clear inroads.

Over time the Youth Offending Team³ has not done this well enough and a refreshed multi-agency team is now in place that includes CAMHS, other health professionals and closer links with the Targeted Youth Support (TYS) staff who work more on the streets.

Tough action

We are adopting an enhanced set of powers, using Integrated Offender Management (IOM) to make sure all services are using a 'think family' approach to enforcing better behaviour, as every child is part of a wider network and family. IOM triages offenders into strands based on current offending and risk of reoffending. The most risky offenders are then subject to enhanced enforcement and supervision which can lead to:

- confiscation of belongings, such as cycles and mopeds, TVs and cars, where there is associated offending
- withdrawal of the residents support scheme for families that collude with offending behaviour
- issuing criminal behaviour orders and injunctions and obtaining parenting orders
- making full use of landlord powers, including serving eviction notices, within the law
- making full use of the new powers in ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014 to prevent or disrupt children and young people from engaging in crime and anti-social behaviour.

Managing the most entrenched young people

The police frequently arrest children and young people but take no further action (NFA)⁴. We recognise that multiple NFAs are a warning light and these need very close action and monitoring.

By the time many of these children have got to the age of 18 they have decided not to continue with criminal activity. But those that do continue are often hardened and actively grooming children into a life of crime. This helps them to avoid being caught themselves. The 18-24 team, as part of the integrated gangs team, will work on disruption and actively manage the most entrenched young people.

¹ <http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2015/06/YJB-CSPPI-report.pdf>

² 715 families

³ The YOS works with about 120 at any one time.

⁴ 43% of young people arrested (2014/15) have No Further Action taken

Key Actions

Tackling gangs

- Establish a dedicated gangs team drawing together the police, youth offending, probation services and children's social work teams to:
 - Disrupt gang organisation and stop them recruiting young teenagers.
 - Acquire information and intelligence about gang membership and activity and to share that information about at-risk teenagers more widely.
- Track-down and remove from our community the adults who are recruiting kids into gangs and who form a link with organised crime – the people who provide money for stolen goods and who supply the drugs.
- Work in partnership with the police to disrupt organised crime.
- Fund a specific intelligence resource to gather and share information about local activity among young people.
- Build close working with the Redthread youth workers in the hospital major trauma centres⁵.

Action and sanctions

- Persuade gang members to change their behaviour by using new legal powers, family and children's services and to enforce against those who refuse to engage.
- Make sure that all young people that come to the attention of the police are visited at their homes.
- Use the full range of court orders, e.g. parenting orders to support parents in bringing about changes in their children's behaviour.
- Use intelligence led lawful means of searching people and places for weapons.

18-24s

- The 18-24 team, as part of the integrated gangs team, will work on disruption and actively manage the most entrenched young people.
- Use our employment support to get more 18-25 year olds into work.

⁵ Youth workers who deal specifically with young victims of gang crime on admittance to hospital

Prevention and Diversion

We know that the earlier families receive support with problems, the more likely they are to overcome or avoid further difficulties.

Early intervention

Islington continues to have very challenging demographic factors and a high proportion of children and families living in poverty. Early help means (a) taking action at an early stage in a child's life or (b) taking action at an early stage in the development of a problem. It is about stepping in as early as possible either before a problem arises or at the first signs of a problem to prevent it from getting worse.

For many families facing problems with their child money is the overriding problem, followed by behaviour and setting boundaries. Much of our support is focused on family stability and we also help with tackling the impact of domestic abuse. Eight out of 10 of the families using our Families First service, report that they have made improvements in their areas of concern.

Our children's centres provide support for all new parents, helping to establish good routines and expectations and our health visitors are well placed to spot when parenting is not going well at an early stage and to find the right support. At the moment our children's centre family support workers tend to work with families with very young babies, but we need to refocus some of this work on targeting families with more complex needs, including identifying parents with mental health problems so that they can get the support they need.

Working with schools

It is often when children become teenagers that being a good parent can become a real challenge. Our schools have a strong focus on responsible and thoughtful behaviour and solid anti-bullying policies in place, giving most children a firm foundation from which to become confident, solve problems and behave well.

Early help referrals from schools about a wide range of family problems have increased, which is a positive step towards enabling us to work with more vulnerable families at an earlier stage. Mentoring for children who are siblings of offenders, and who live in offending families can be very successful in stopping a child from continuing a family pattern of criminal behaviour, but we have some work to do in making sure the right families are targeted in primary schools.

Schools are very actively monitoring children who are persistently absent from school, and are referring persistent absentees to Families First. Our 'think family' approach has been helpful in the majority of cases and persistent absentees have fallen from 3.9% to 2.5% in primary and 5.6% to 3.7% in secondary school (13/14 academic year).

Supporting children and families in Alternative Provision

Children who are not in mainstream school, in particular the 200 children on Alternative Provision, are a worry as they have too much unsupervised time, leaving them vulnerable to being drawn into crime. We are currently setting up a new way of working with schools and families for these children, which will mean they each have a family assessment and a plan that goes well beyond the minimum number of hours of education. We want to halve the number of children on this type of provision in the next 18 months, because all too often these children end up in very serious trouble over time.

Detached youth workers

We have a broad spectrum of out of school activities for children and young people, both in centres around the borough and organised by schools. These all reinforce and build good social skills. However, we know that most of the children who are vulnerable to crime do not participate. We intend to increase the number of detached youth workers who can do direct work with children, adopting a pop-up rather than building based service that could include street based health workers.

Key Actions

Early intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Make the Islington Family Intervention Team available to more families, especially those with teenagers with less serious problems.■ Focus the Family Support Workers in children's centres on families with more serious problems.■ Implement the new CCG funded parental mental health programme Growing Together.■ Intervene effectively to improve the mental health of the most vulnerable children.
Working with schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Strengthen the safer schools teams.
Alternative provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Establish a new team to support children on Alternative Provision by September 2015.■ Halve the number of children in Alternative Provision in the next 18 months.
Youth workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ensure we have sufficient high quality detached youth work to respond more in areas where children are being drawn into crime.

Community Engagement

We need the wider community to be part of the solution, share responsibility, lead by example and actively make our streets and outside spaces places where people can confidently go about their daily life.

Spotting the early signs

Neighbourhood based policing, assertive parenting, and communities that confidently challenge dangerous practices can make a difference to how many children and young people are violent and participating in criminal gangs. This happens best when any early signs are spotted and spoken about. For example, if a child comes home with unexplained gifts, or a new bike that has been “swapped” for something unexplained, being challenged by their parents can often nip things in the bud. As a community we need to actively discourage the ‘naughtiness’ and ‘mischief’ that can gradually escalate to serious behavioural issues and criminal activity. And we need the community to lead by example; if a child is able to sell stolen goods and drugs to an adult, this sends a message that this is acceptable. We know that smoking cannabis is inextricably linked to organised crime. We need to send a clear message that class B drugs are not a normal part of everyday life.

Setting boundaries

Parents sometimes tell us they are worried about the early signs of antisocial behaviour, for example young teenagers drinking spirits at parties and becoming ill. We can work closely with schools and parents to give them more confidence about setting boundaries, and communities themselves can help by being open about what is safe and acceptable.

Working together

Knowing the local area well is very important and we will work with the police to make sure the different teams all talk regularly and often to take action on crime. The Safer Neighbourhood Board, ward panels, MAGPIs and voluntary groups are a real strength that we can build on to make sure we respond well to our community and also use the significant resource it can bring to the issue.

We have prosecuted shops that sell weapons to children and will continue to be vigilant and active about this. Shopkeepers could do more that would help them as well as children and young people, by asking children why they are not in school during the school day, not allowing groups of children to congregate in and around their shops, and telling the neighbourhood police about their concerns. We also prosecute for selling alcohol to children and use the police cadets to do mystery shopping to find out where this is happening.

Our local voluntary sector is a strong support for making a change, as are the faith groups who could help with messages that do not tolerate crime. We support the Ben Kinsella Trust with premises and making sure schools visit the exhibition. We encourage and back groups of concerned residents like Islington Unites who want to make a difference.

Key Actions

Responding to early signs

- Make sure children and young people have the space and time to talk about things that are worrying them.

Working with the community

- Improve the neighbourhood structures so that residents can help to make communities safe by being vigilant, reporting crime and taking part in the safer neighbourhood panels.
- Make sure good avenues for communication are open to the wider community.
- Invite more local people to take part in Restorative Justice Interventions and become community volunteers.
- Campaign with the community against knife crime.
- Help the youth Council to exercise its leadership and representation role.

Working with partners and local businesses

- Engage local businesses to be part of the fight against crime, signing up to City safe havens, not selling knives, or alcohol to children.
- Work with Arsenal Football Club – a huge presence in our community – to attract vulnerable children and young people into positive activities.



Youth Crime Strategy

Appendix A

Youth Crime Reduction Plan – What is already being done?

It is important to know what is already being done to prevent and tackle youth crime so that as well as thinking about what we might need to build on, scale up or target differently we can think about what we should stop doing or do instead.

Early Help & Family Support

Early help can mean (a) taking action at an early stage in a child's life or it can mean (b) taking action at an early stage in the development of a problem. It is about stepping in as early as possible either at the first signs of a problem or before a problem becomes apparent to prevent that problem from getting worse.

Islington is an Early Help place, and as such our main aim is to ensure appropriate provision in universal settings. The Early Help and Family Support Strategy expects all individuals and organisations working with families to sign up to a pledge that will ensure that families receive the support they need.

Throughout Islington Children's Services, only evidence based programmes are commissioned, many in partnership with Public Health. The journey to good outcomes starts in early years and we have a strong focus on the first 21 months from conception and effective parenting skills at the earliest stage

From the age of five, a child in a family who needs support, will be allocated a service from Families First, and where the family profile fits may also be allocated support from the Troubled Families Programme known as Stronger Families in Islington. 12% of Islington's population benefitted from Early help last year. Every referral, from any agency or partner (including all the police referrals) comes through our Single Point of Contact (SPOC) so that a careful assessment can be made of the family's needs. Both Families First, which is a self referral service, and the Stronger Families programme, aim to break the cycle of offending and anti-social behaviour and to embed resilient parenting skills including by making referrals to other appropriate support mechanisms available.

Activities for Young People

No young person in Islington lives more than a mile away from facilities that can keep them off their computers and off the streets.

Platform and Lift are state of the art youth hubs with cafés and free space in the north and south of the borough, designed by young people for young people. They offer facilities for things like homework, careers advice, exercise and socialising; and they also offer drop in sessions and programmes of activity ranging from dance and drama to counselling support.

In addition young people have access to 12 adventure playgrounds in the borough offering a range of fun and creative indoor and outdoor activities during term-time and in holidays. Young people are also able to access 11 leisure facilities in Islington and can receive discounted rates for a number of activities with an Islington Swim Card or Junior Izz Card. Swim Cards are free.

Islington has 10 libraries offering books, music, games and toys, under-fives and baby bounce sessions, homework clubs and reading support. They also offer study spaces which can be used by students.

Schools

Islington's primary schools are among the best in the country and all of our secondary schools are rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted and pupils are achieving better exam results than ever before, setting them on the path towards further and higher education and job opportunities.

Overall schools provide a high level of support during the school day, and monitor absence carefully, and we are avoiding exclusions wherever possible in most of our schools. Schools have recently had their attention drawn to the report on Child Sexual Exploitation where absences after registration are a high risk factor, and are discussing how to tackle these and other issues relation to children missing education alongside other services. Chelsea's Choice a drama raising awareness about child sexual exploitation has been delivered in all secondary schools All Islington schools have behaviour policies and DfE guidance (Feb 2014) recognises that good schools encourage good behaviour through a mixture of high expectations, clear policy and an ethos which fosters discipline and mutual respect between pupils and between staff and pupils. Islington schools also use external support such as referring pupils to Chance UK's mentoring programme for 5 – 11 year olds where there are early signs of behavioural difficulties and the CAMHS service in schools funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

All secondary schools now have a Safer Schools Plan developed in partnership with the police and children's services.

After school clubs are also available in most schools and children are able to access music, drama, art and sport. They can also receive help with their homework or other academic and vocational extra curricular activities.

Employment Support

The Islington Employment Commission report published in November 2014 included a call to action that "all young people must get the support they need to get into a good career". In addition to the work that has begun to increase the employment options for young people there are specific recommendations to

- (a) Work with housing providers, youth organisations and voluntary groups to engage young people who are excluded from the system entirely (and therefore more likely to rely on crime for income);
- (b) Provide a tailored offer to students in Pupil Referral Units and Alternative Provision to ensure they get the opportunities that will give them the same chance as everyone else and that our best offers of support and opportunities are targeted to those who struggle to get into employment.

We also embed self-motivation and employability support in the targeted offer that already exists, for example careers guidance for children looked after and gang exit work.

In recent years the council has strategically led a number of employment programmes offering paid creative apprenticeships and internships to Islington's young people and worked in partnership with locally and nationally recognised arts organisations to deliver a wealth of services which support improved outcomes for young people.

Children's Services

Children's Social Care in Islington was rated as "good" with "outstanding features" by Ofsted in 2012 and educational attainment is higher than it has ever been. Children's services either deliver or take a strategic role in co-ordinating almost all provision for children and young people in the borough including working with schools, managing youth provision and delivering interventions with vulnerable young people including with children looked after, children in need, children in need of protection and young people involved in the criminal justice system.

Targeted Youth Service

Targeted Youth Support (TYS) works with young people aged 10 to 21 years old (12 – 21 for Youth Counselling), who require additional support to enable them to make informed choices and maintain positive pathways. The team includes specialist Substance Misuse Workers, a Youth Counselling Service and Targeted Youth Support Workers who can provide assessment, 1:1 and group work support, education, Return Home Interviews and care planning.

TYS undertake all out of court disposals in Islington and are piloting work with young people aged under 18 where they receive notifications of "No Further Action" (NFA) following involvement with the police. Visits to family homes are now carried out jointly with the police where there are 3 or more NFA's and increasing the success rate of these visits is a priority. This may mean referring the family for a service, or simply being clear about the consequences of further antisocial behaviour.

TYS teams also deliver work in local secondary schools covering issues such as substance misuse, positive and healthy relationships, keeping safe, gangs, weapons awareness and joint enterprise. Teams also work with partners such as Children's Social Care, IFIT and Families First to support the young person within the Children and Families Plan.

TYS retain a strong emphasis on community-based delivery providing support within local community settings and working with local neighbourhood services to enhance community cohesion and prevent escalation of anti-social behaviour (ASB). We deploy our youth trucks and detached teams across the borough based on intelligence and ASB reports, working with young people where they meet and congregate, encouraging them to participate in group work and connecting them into their local areas.

Youth Offending Service

The YOS inspections in 2011 and in 2014 judged the service to be “poor”. An improvement plan is in place which sets out actions to reduce re-offending; reduce first time entrants (FTE); reduce the use of custody; improve education, training and employment; improve health outcomes; strengthen safeguarding; strengthen the workforce; and strengthen leadership, management and governance. We aim to raise standards from poor to satisfactory by the next inspection in 2015, and eventually to good or better. The Youth Justice Management Board (YJMB) has been refreshed to oversee these improvements.

The Health sub-group of the YJMB has started to make improvements to address the findings of the inspection, including a revised health pathway to improve the timeliness of and access to assessment and intervention.

The number of first time entrants to the youth justice system shows good improvement and is on target to reach the lowest number recorded over the last decade. Equally, the process of triaging young people away from the youth justice system is also positive in regards to the number who do not return once the triage process had finished.

The issue for Islington is that we need to improve even faster than we have so far in order to keep up with other similar boroughs. What we know about the young people who do reoffend post triage is that a small minority of them (15%) went on to more serious crimes, while the majority did not reoffend at all. We are also building upon the restorative justice work already taking place to ensure that victims of crime, especially young victims, are given a voice.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Islington Safeguarding Children Board established a Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Sub group in April 2012 which produced a comprehensive strategy and action plan based on the Promotion, Prevention and Protection of children being abused through sexual exploitation. This includes targeted prevention programmes with young people at risk of involvement in peer on peer abuse and/or using violence and abuse in their relationships. We have improved our response to children who run away from home or care or are missing from education, and are alert to signs of gang involvement. As a result we have seen a significant year on year rise in the number of CSE referrals which demonstrates the progress made across the partnership in identification and response to CSE. Safer London Foundation continue to provide a CSE Advocate post to work with young people at risk of CSE, and is based within Children’s Social Care and Youth Offending Service.

18 to 24 Gangs Transition Service

The 18-24 Gangs Transitions service proactively targets and engages young adults age 18-24, who are of high risk (either to themselves or others) of perpetrating gang related violence. The service aims to reduce reoffending and gang violence by supporting young adults to exit gangs and offending lifestyles. We work with partners to offer specialist services such as Safe and Secure to enable gang members to move out of Islington if they are serious about changing their behaviour and need a fresh start to make the transition to a non-criminal lifestyle.

The service has been highlighted as good practice by the Home Office, and the Centre for Mental Health and it has particularly attracted interest for its innovative approach to mental health when working with young adults involved in gangs and serious youth violence.

Considerable improvement has been seen in the levels of offending of those managed by the 18 – 24 team. Proxy re-offending data has indicated that only 36% (14 individuals) of the tracked cohort were arrested in Islington during 2014/15 compared to 64% (25 individuals) in 2013/15. Additionally, there was a decrease in the number of offences that the cohort was arrested for with a 23% reduction in arrests in 2014/15 compared to the previous year.

The 18-24 Team also work with a number of partners to deliver specialist work e.g. the STAR project for young women who get one-to-one support in a safe space to talk about violence, abuse and relationships in the context of gangs with a view to supporting young women to develop the practical skills they need to better negotiate the risks they face on a day to day basis.

Integrated Offender Management (IOM)

Integrated offender management (IOM) is a multi-agency approach, applied to prolific and priority offenders that seeks to turn round offending behaviour and protect the public from harm. Young people aged between 10 and 17 with an ASSET score of 33+ and those aged over 18 with an Offender Group Reconviction Scale (OGRS) score of 75 or more are in scope for IOM. At present 43 of the YOS cohort and 35 of the 18 to 14 team cohort are in IOM.

Offenders are risk rated using a Red, Amber and Green system according to whether they are continuing to offend or illegally at large (red), engaging to some extent with rehabilitation (amber), or fully engaged with rehabilitation (green). The aim is to move all offenders to Green through a mixture of enforcement, sanctions and support. At present the RAG spread for young people is 36%, 42% and 21%.

In Islington we are building on the principle of gripping the whole family among all relevant partners for both early help and tackling criminal behaviour. The Stronger Families programme has been highly successful, with 97% of families turned around. Many of these families had anti-social behaviour or offending as one of their issues. The Youth Offending team were found to be good at ensuring the sentence is served when the service was inspected and now need to employ more sanctions to add to their powers.

Health

Islington residents have access to a variety of health services mainly through Whittington Health but also the council and other public sector partners. A number of the health initiatives are targeted at young people and parents.

The 'Growing Together' programme aims to provide therapeutic support to mothers and fathers and their children aged one – five years. The team is a multidisciplinary in nature, providing a range of interventions to address both parents' mental health difficulty and the way they understand and relate to their child. The service provides therapy for parents as well as parent-child interaction work. The team also provides services for professionals including consultation regarding family mental health and training.

Additionally Islington has a significant Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAHMS) which is available in all secondary and primary schools in the borough. The core offer to schools has continued to be delivered in the form of CAMHS clinics located in each school: one half day clinic a fortnight in primary schools and one day a week in secondary schools. Many schools also commission additional CAHMS resources. The CAHM Service maintains close relationships with councils' services also working with young people and children such as Families First where there have been exciting joint enterprises in preventative work for mental health difficulties in schools. Overall no Islington family lacks the ability to access mental health services whether it is in schools through CAHMS or in the community through Growing Together.

Islington alongside its partners also operates the C-Card Scheme which allows young people to have free access to contraceptives reducing the prevalence of unwanted teenage pregnancies and STI/D's. Young people can also get advice and guidance about relationships from the youth hubs mentioned previously.

With regards to overall physical health there are 37 GP practices in Islington. The care and treatment that children and young people receive takes account of their special physical, psychological and social needs, and is provided in partnership with parents or guardians in a safe and child-friendly environment. All disabilities are provided for by general practice. All practitioners looking after children and young people in the service are regularly involved and are appropriately skilled and qualified in the care and treatment they are providing to them.

Voluntary and Community Sector

In addition to arts, for which Islington is famous, the borough has an abundance of voluntary organisations working with a diverse range of people from many different backgrounds offering advice, guidance, sport and other activities which young people can get involved in. For instance the Islington Boxing Club provides recreational and competitive boxing training to young people. There are also organisations working with specific ethnic groups such as African-Caribbean, Cypriot and Somali people, as well as specific lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) and Disabled communities. All in all the community based opportunities are many and varied and includes a number of community centres which the council funds

Intelligence Gathering and Sharing

The council and its partners have robust information sharing processes in place. We will continue the focus on high quality assessments informed by all the available intelligence where young people are managed by the YOS or 18 to 24 gangs transition team, and continually review and respond to changes in the young person's circumstances be they positive or negative, in order to inform the support we offer. We will also further align our gang risk stratification process with the Met Police Gang Matrix in order to better understand where our young people and groups are ranked compared to the rest of London.

SCRUTINY REVIEW INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID)

Review: Alternative Provision

Scrutiny Review Committee: Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Director leading the review: Mark Taylor

Lead Officers: Gabby Grodentz and Jeff Cole

Overall aims of the review:

1. To identify how we can reduce the numbers of children on alternative provision.
2. To identify how we can ensure that provision is of the highest quality.
3. To make recommendations to further improve the outcomes and accountability for those in alternative provision.
4. To identify how schools and academies are ensuring the best possible outcomes for the most vulnerable children and make recommendations about how best practice can be in place in all schools and Academies.
5. To evaluate the quality, standards and value for money of alternative provision providers.
6. To identify how early intervention and 'Think Family' approaches can be mainstreamed once the pump priming funding is no longer available.

How is the review to be carried out:

Scope of the Review

The review will focus on:

1. The national and local context

- The role and responsibilities of Schools and Academies, and the Local Authority

2. The reasons why children are in alternative provision

- The profile of AP students including attainment, attendance and other outcomes
- Trends in family histories
- The child's journey into and through the AP system

3. The local AP arrangements

- The role of schools
- The local method for delivering alternative provision
 - Current AP providers
 - Current performance
 - Quality of providers
- Funding and value for money

4. Opportunities to make local arrangements more effective

- The use of early intervention (i.e. the new wraparound service, IFIT, approaches used by schools)
- Strategies to ensure schools take full ownership of children on AP
- Outcomes in individual schools with contextual data such as exclusions

Types of evidence:

1. Documentary evidence including

- Contextual report/presentation
- Anonymised audit of young people in alternative provision
- Case studies
- Government guidance and officer briefing notes
- Service plans, performance indicators and update on impact

2. Witness evidence including

- Officer presentations (e.g. IFIT, project lead for new wraparound service)
- Secondary schools and Academies, and New River College
- Effective providers of alternative provision
- Other 'good practice' local authorities e.g. Lincoln
- Young people in alternative provision and their parents

3. Visits

- A 'good practice' local authority

Additional Information:

Programme	
Key output:	To be submitted to Committee on:
1. Scrutiny Initiation Document	15 September 2015
2. Draft Recommendations	12 April 2016
3. Final Report	9 May 2016

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

15 SEPTEMBER 2015

1. Work Programme 2015/16
2. Alternative Provision: Scrutiny Initiation Document and Presentation
3. Update on the Youth Crime Strategy
(to cover the engagement of adolescents)

9 NOVEMBER 2015

1. Alternative Provision: Witness Evidence
2. Islington Safeguarding Children Board: Annual Report
3. Executive Member Questions
4. Review of Work Programme

11 JANUARY 2016

1. Alternative Provision: Witness Evidence
2. The Impact of SEN Changes on Children and Families
3. Child Protection Annual Report
4. Executive Member Questions
5. Review of Work Programme

3 MARCH 2016

1. Alternative Provision: Witness Evidence
2. Education in Islington: Annual Report 2015
3. The Educational Attainment of BME Children
4. Executive Member Questions
5. Review of Work Programme

12 APRIL 2016

1. Alternative Provision: Draft Recommendations
2. Engagement with and the Consistency of Early Years Provision
3. Executive Member Questions

9 MAY 2016

1. Alternative Provision: Final Report
2. Executive Member Annual Presentation
3. Scrutiny Topics 2016/17

As requested at the June 2015 meeting, the work programme includes regular opportunities for the Committee to review its work programme. These are intended to allow the Committee to reflect on the scrutiny review, take stock of the evidence received to date and reconsider the approach to the review as required.

The work programme also includes a regular item, 'Executive Member Questions', which will allow the Committee to ask the Executive Member for Children and Families questions relating to the Committee's work. To enable a detailed response to be given, questions will be invited in advance of each meeting.