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## 1. Summary

At the Council's Annual General Meeting in April 2009, the Mayor reflected that rising unemployment and tight finances were making it much more difficult for young people to get into work. The global financial crisis, resulting economic recession and the current fiscal retrenchment is making it more and more difficult for young people to fulfil their potential and secure a prosperous future. Furthermore, increased competition within the labour market and demand for university places is also making it hard for young people to gain employment for the first time or continue into further education.

In previous economic recessions, the lack of co-ordinated and robust response at the local and national level led to an entire generation of young people being excluded from work, education and training opportunities. Research shows that this exclusion from the labour market and education can significantly increase the risk of young people becoming marginalised and socially excluded. Current economic conditions require a holistic and synchronised approach by the Council and its community partners in order to maximise available resources and ensure past mistakes are not repeated.

Faced with these economic difficulties and an increasingly challenging employment environment for young people, the Mayor established the Youth Task Force (YTF). It was composed of individuals with experience of: working with young people, representing youth organisations and the creative and cultural sectors. They were asked to investigate the challenges facing young people in the recession and to explore the opportunities, ideas and innovative practices which might inspire Lewisham's young generation (see Appendix 1 for the full list of YTF members).

The YTF was given a 12 month period from October 2009 to late September 2010 to conduct their work. External support for the group was commissioned via the Office of Public Management (OPM). The OPM facilitated the initiation of the YTF and the clarification of the terms of reference. They also continued to be active during the YTF work. The Council also provided officers to support YTF sessions and to liaise directly with YTF members.

In conducting its work, the YTF sought to be open-minded, forthright and innovative. The group focused on employment, training and volunteering for young people. A wide range of expert witnesses were invited to give evidence, including relevant senior officers within the Council and colleagues from frontline service providers, alongside local youth groups, representatives from the private sector, and people from the voluntary and community sectors. In order to form solid and purposeful recommendations that could be meaningfully implemented, the group analysed all the information presented, using discussions to focus, filter and refocus evidence through a process of iteration.

Key findings are organised under the following titles:

- Youth Led Approach – Securing Wider Engagement of Young People: The perception of young people and their role within the community.
- Volunteering – An Opportunity to Build Self-Confidence and Skills: The role of volunteering in young people's development and the importance of community work in building stronger communities.
- Apprenticeships – Creating Opportunities for Young People: The career opportunities presented by apprenticeships, and the possibility of extending apprenticeships across public contracts in Lewisham.
- Social Enterprise – Developing New Prospects: The role of the social enterprise sector as a pathway for young entrepreneurs.
- Wellbeing – Constructing Resilience: The importance of safety, security and a sense of well-being for young people.

This report aims to give a comprehensive overview of the activities of the Youth Task Force. It details the terms of reference agreed by the YTF. It draws together qualitative and quantitative research on the local and national social, economic and political background shaping the issues facing young people in Lewisham. It outlines the discussions and deliberations that took place during YTF sessions and it presents the recommendations put forward by the YTF for the Council and Local Strategic Partnership to consider for implementation.

## 2. Recommendations

### A) Youth Led Approach: Securing Wider Engagement of Young People

*The Youth Task Force recommends:*

- By building on established systems within the community, such as the Young Mayor, the Young Citizens Panel, local assemblies and area forums, the Council should explore how young people can increase their influence and actively participate in the decision-making process within those policy areas which directly affect their future prospects, health and well-being.
- The Council, youth-focused community stakeholders and young people should collaborate in the creation of a Young People's Charter for Lewisham. This charter should outline how young people understand their role as citizens of the borough, what the Council and its partners can do for them and what responsibilities they have towards the community.
- The Council, voluntary, faith and community groups should aim to strengthen the ambassadorial role of young people who contribute to their local community. Firstly, they should work with existing youth organisations and institutions, including the Young Mayor and the Young Citizens Panel, to enhance their presence and influence within the borough. Secondly, as young community activists and social entrepreneurs emerge, the Council's youth services and its partners should strive to reward and champion their achievements in order to create positive new role models. This could be accomplished either through existing awards ceremonies held by the council or new, specifically-designed events.
- Youth service providers within the community, including the voluntary and social enterprise sectors, work more closely with young people to capture their insights into the public sector and draw on these experiences to co-design services and improve delivery.
- The Council and youth service providers should explore options for creating a one-stop internet based communication portal to provide information about youth employment opportunities, volunteering and support services. This resource should be designed in collaboration with the Young Citizens Panel to ensure that it is relevant and attractive. The Young Mayor and other local publicity mechanisms

should then be used to maximise awareness and increase uptake. In developing this resource, it is anticipated that council officers would engage with young people to build upon existing social networks and utilise new other media.

- The Council and its community partners recognise that whilst voluntary groups, the third-sector and social enterprises are essential to tackling the economic and social problems facing young people, schools are best placed to ensure real progression is made in these areas and should have responsibility for promoting opportunities that exist for employment, training and educational in the local community.
- The council should develop an international exchange programme for young people through the Young Citizens Panel. Using the Council's international links gained from previous exchanges, project officers drawn from the panel would be responsible for approaching relevant youth councils, student unions or other citizen groups to secure an appropriate partner with whom to undertake the exchange. They would also need to secure funding both in the initial stages of the project and throughout the programme.

#### B) Volunteering – An Opportunity to Build Self Confidence and Skills

*The Youth Task Force recommends:*

- All possible avenues and techniques for emphasising the importance of volunteering are explored in order to foster positive attitudes towards the individual and community benefits. This should highlight its contribution to enhancing an individuals CV; its ability to build social and professional relations; the social networks it creates beyond a young person's familiar surroundings; and its potential role in improving the personal responsibility of young people and community cohesion.
- With London hosting the Olympic Games in 2012, the Council, schools, voluntary, faith and community groups should make it a priority that Lewisham's young people should be encouraged to become involved in the games and associated activities across the city, wherever possible.
- Public agencies should investigate the possibility of creating more work experience schemes and internship placements which match skills to job progression in order to create sustainable outcomes for young people.

### C) Apprenticeships – Creating Opportunities for Young People

The Youth Task Force recommends:

- During the re-tender of Council contracts, due consideration be given to the provision of employment for apprentices as well as other opportunities including work experience, work shadowing, etc.
- Eligible contractors be asked to outline their capacity for the delivery of positions for apprentices and that this should be used as part of the tender evaluation process.
- The Council's current provision for providing apprentices should be used to support the deployment of apprentices into partner organisations.
- The Council consider 'matched funding' for the delivery of the apprentice programme in the third sector, whereby the Council funds one year of an apprenticeship on the provision that the other year is funded by the host organisation through their own funds or through the draw down of central government funding.
- The management and development of apprentices should be included in the Council's overall management of its contracts.
- The Leisure Services contract be used as the first Council contract to specify the uptake of apprentices in its tender documents. The contract is in the process of being developed and it is due to come into force in October 2011.

### D) Social Enterprise and the Third Sector – Developing New Prospects

*The Youth Task Force recommends:*

- The social enterprise and third sector should work together to create a 'social enterprise mentoring academy'. This new service would provide advice and guidance to young people that encourages them to develop aspirations to start-up their own community schemes and business enterprises in the future. One essential function of the mentoring academy would be to forge links between businesses, professionals and those in the creative industries, and to pass these onto young people struggling to make their first business and industry contacts.

- The Council and its community partners should explore methods of broadening the commissioning of public services to extend their capacity to make use of the creative and cultural sectors such as UK music, sports and leisure industries. The social enterprise sector should also be encouraging young people to explore potential growth areas in the coming years, such as elderly and personal care.
- As the focal point of the local community, the Council should facilitate the creation of a forum for the third-sector and social enterprises to share success stories and evidence of what works in the local community. This will allow these sectors to improve the services they provide to young people by forming a framework of best-practice, and help avoid duplication of services. Moreover, it should also explore how the role of the social enterprise sector can be extended and expanded.
- Given the massive investment from the Building Schools for the Future programme, schools should be encouraged by the Council to open their new facilities to the wider community to create opportunities for social enterprises and the third-sector to make use of them. Given the economic climate surrounding education funding, schools should also investigate the possibility of creating commercial relationships with these sectors to make it economically viable for them to offer the use of their amenities.

#### E) Wellbeing – Constructing Resilience

##### *The Youth Task Force recommends:*

- The Council should create a specific support system for young people facing stress, depression, isolation and pressure at school. It is vitally important that our young people are equipped to deal with stress, anxiety and depression. Access to information about mental health should be readily available at schools and (where feasible) teachers should receive specialist training from the borough's mental health experts on how to help young people deal with well being and mental health issues.
- The Council and its community partners should work more closely with schools to ensure young people are given information and advice on issues which concern them. For instance, an information programme could be designed and led by young people as they are best positioned to relate to other young people about issues

affecting their generation. This work could be developed alongside third sector partners and the local NHS.

- Creating more opportunities for inter-borough and regional initiatives that encourage young people to travel and feel safe without fear of crime or attack. This should include the Council continuing to support and development the London Citizen's Safe Haven's project.

### **3. Terms of Reference**

The aim of the Task Force was to identify the issues and challenges faced by young people which prevent them from fulfilling their full potential as active citizens who are able to contribute to strong and cohesive communities. The YTF agreed a programme of work which would enable the them to explore how all local public agencies, community groups, voluntary organisations and other stakeholders should work together to engage young people and ensure they have access to the best possible opportunities. The YTF terms of reference set out areas of focus for the group. It was decided to:

- Explore ways to develop opportunities for young people to gain training, work experience and employment opportunities.
- Investigate how the ways in which young people approach employment and training opportunities might be enhanced by raising their own self esteem and attitudes towards their role in society.
- Look at ways to support young people to fulfil their potential.
- Consider how best to encourage young people to be positive role models in their local communities and beyond.

### **4. Young People in Lewisham and the Challenges They Face**

In order to understand the continuing impact of the recession on young peoples' opportunities, the YTF spent a considerable amount of time researching the current situation in Lewisham. Gathered through presentations to the YTF and additional research, the information presented below on youth unemployment; labour market conditions; the cost of social exclusion; levels of local deprivation; educational attainment and qualifications levels; has fed into, and influenced, the final recommendations.

## Youth Unemployment Nationally

Young people continue to be negatively affected by the effect of the recession in the private sector and the subsequent spending cuts in the public sector. In the 1990s recession employment rates for young people not only fell faster than for any other age group but also took longer to recover. Young people tend to be seriously disadvantaged by recession because, as uncertainty increases, organisations stop employing staff.

This pattern is reflected in the national unemployment figures from 2008 to the first quarter of 2010. By the end of 2008, 28% of 16 and 17 year olds were unemployed. In the first quarter of 2009, redundancy rates for younger workers were almost double those of workers aged 25–49. By the end of 2009, in total there were 952,000 16-24 year olds unemployed nationally; which represents a significant percentage of all those unemployed.

The recession and its subsequent repercussions on the labour market continues to be felt by the young. There were 728,000 18-24 years old unemployed in the three months to August 2010, up 16,000 from the three months to April 2010.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 342,000 were long-term (over 12 months) unemployed; a figure that has doubled since March 2008. The amount of young people who are not in full-time education or training has risen since January 2008 by 159,000 or 13.1%.<sup>2</sup> It is estimated that in the past year the number of young people aged between 18-24 that are unemployed for more than 6 months has increased by 21%, with 142 local authorities across the UK witnessing increases compared to just 78 where it has fallen.<sup>3</sup>

## Youth Unemployment Locally

In Lewisham, as the recession peaked between April 2008 to March 2009, unemployment for 16-24 year olds stood at 5,500, which is one of the highest numbers throughout the London boroughs. In August 2010, there were 2,135 18-24 year olds who were

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<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics. *Labour Market Statistical Bulletin - September 2010*. <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/lmsuk0910.pdf> and Office for National Statistics. *Labour Market Profile: Lewisham*. <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/2038431868/report.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Centre for Social and Economic Inclusion. <http://www.cesi.org.uk/statistics>

<sup>3</sup> Trade Union Congress. <http://www.tuc.org.uk/extras/youthunemploymentJune2010.pdf>

unemployed, which represents a rise of 155 JSA claimants on the previous month.<sup>4</sup> The situation is continuing to worsen in the local community, as it is across London.<sup>5</sup> The current figures have not reached the peak of 2,500 in September 2009 (the highest since October 1997).<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, the continuing upward trend in youth unemployment is worrying and it may continue to worsen as public finances tighten.

### Labour Market Competition

One of the consequences of increasing unemployment amongst the whole population is that 16-24 year olds have to enter a fiercely competitive labour market. Figures submitted by the Council to the YTF reveal that increased competition for jobs over the next five years is likely to disproportionately affect new entrants into the labour market. Lewisham has a far lower employment rate for 20-24 year olds (52.4%) compared to the overall working age population (71.4%); graduate jobs are becoming increasingly competitive with 69 applicants per job compared to 49 in 2009, 31 in 2008, and 28 in 2006; unemployment amongst graduates increased from 11% to 14% between 2006-2009. Moreover, changes to the benefit system will also increase competition for vacancies as the government seeks to move more claimants off Disability Alliance to JSA by 2015, possibly creating an additional 7,500 jobseekers in Lewisham.

Recent labour market research indicates that school-leavers and graduates will have a difficult task finding employment. It showed that only 14% of employers plan to hire 16–17-year-old school-leavers whilst only a third say they will employ school leavers aged 18 and less than half plan to hire a graduate. These figures are even more worrying considering that these statistics for young people are no better than those presented during the period of negative growth during 2009. The body that conducted the research concluded that even with the recovery under-way (according to official figures) weak growth and increased competition in the labour market is severely hampering the chances of young people.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Office for National Statistics. *Labour Market Profile: Lewisham*.

<http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/2038431868/report.aspx>

<sup>5</sup> Office for National Statistics. *Aged 18-24 – London Comparison*

[http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/2038431868/subreports/jsaad\\_compared/report.aspx](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/2038431868/subreports/jsaad_compared/report.aspx)

<sup>6</sup> Office for National Statistics. *Aged 18-24 - long time-series Lewisham (1992-2010)*

[http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/2038431868/subreports/jsaad\\_time\\_series/report.aspx](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/2038431868/subreports/jsaad_time_series/report.aspx)

<sup>7</sup> The Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD). *Labour Market Outlook. Quarterly Survey Report, Spring 2010 and Labour Market Outlook. Quarterly Survey Report Summer 2010*.

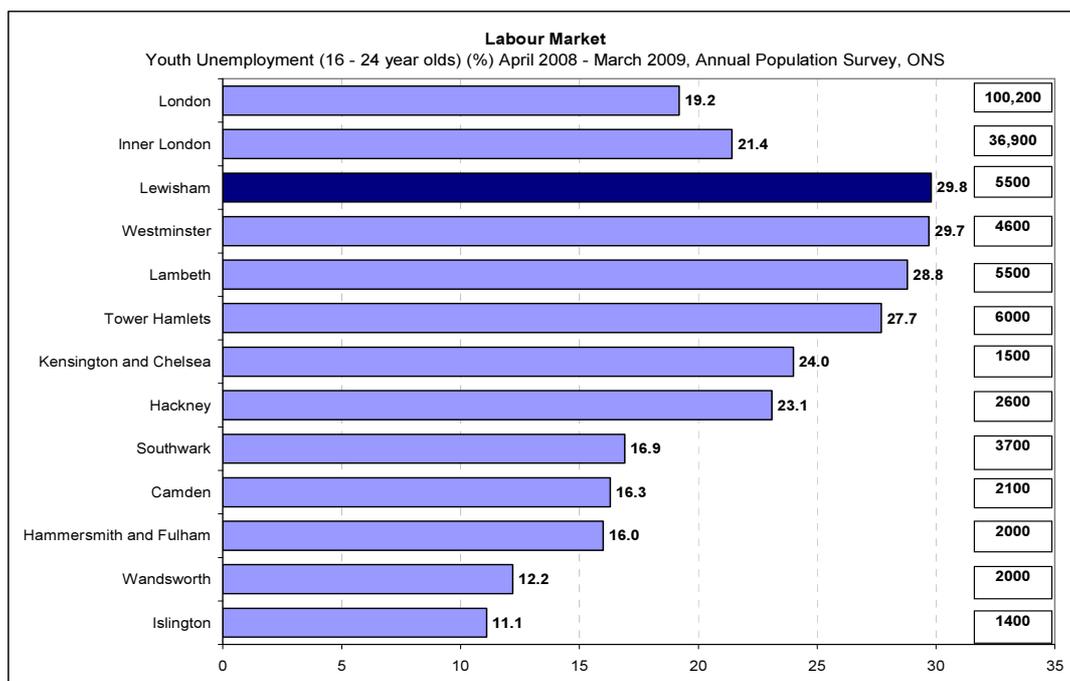
The uncertainty over the economic recovery, looming public sector cuts, the continuing growth of youth unemployment, and intensified competition in the labour market is problematic for Lewisham's young workforce. Previous recessions have left sections of the community excluded from the labour market and the possibility of losing a generation of young citizens to unemployment and disadvantage due to lack of opportunities in the labour market was of serious concern to Task Force members.

JSA Claimants to Vacancy Ratio, Inner London, May 2010

Local authority	JSA claimants	Vacancies	Claimant: Vacancies ratio
Hackney	9,663	404	23.9
Haringey	9,910	13.9	14.2
<b>Lewisham</b>	<b>9,196</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>13.9</b>
Waltham Forest	8,596	692	12.4
Lambeth	11,631	3,202	11.8

Source: Trade Union Congress Analysis of Office for National Statistics Labour Market Statistics, May 2010.

Youth Unemployment, Inner London Boroughs, April 2008 to March 2009



[http://www.cipd.co.uk/NR/ronlyres/D9A7378B-4364-4575-8083-D58BAD9D9785/0/5221\\_Labour\\_Market\\_Outlook\\_Spring\\_2010.pdf](http://www.cipd.co.uk/NR/ronlyres/D9A7378B-4364-4575-8083-D58BAD9D9785/0/5221_Labour_Market_Outlook_Spring_2010.pdf)

London Borough Comparison Youth Unemployment 18-24 Year Olds – August 2010

Source: Office for National Statistics Official Labour Market Statistics, August 2010

London Borough	Total Number	% of total JSA Claimants
Tower Hamlets	2,830	27.7
Croydon	2,665	27.9
Newham	2,615	25.9
Enfield	2,360	26
Southwark	2,260	23.1
Lambeth	2,230	20.3
Haringey	2,150	22.2
Lewisham	2,135	22.7
Hackney	2,030	20.8
Greenwich	2,005	26.9
Waltham Forest	2,000	23.8
Ealing	1,960	22.5
Brent	1,940	21.2
Redbridge	1,765	26
Barking and Dagenham	1,665	28.1
Islington	1,630	22.8
Barnet	1,455	22.1
Hillingdon	1,425	26.3
Bromley	1,340	25.5
Havering	1,340	27.3
Hounslow	1,330	26.3
Wandsworth	1,265	20.7
Bexley	1,225	27.8
Camden	1,160	21
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,050	21.6
Harrow	1,015	24.7
Westminster	980	19.6
Merton	895	24.5
Sutton	840	25.7
Kensington and Chelsea	570	17
Kingston-upon-Thames	470	23.3
Richmond-upon-Thames	430	20.7
City of London	30	34.5

Consequences and Costs of Youth Unemployment

The experience of unemployment can have serious lasting effects on the economic and social prospects of young people. Independent research indicates that the recessions of the 1980s and 1990s, and subsequent rises in youth unemployment (30.8% in 1981), severely affected the future employment prospects of those exposed to the poorest labour market conditions.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, according to the Department for Education, a young person not in employment, education or training (NEET) is thought to cost the public £97,000 on average over their lifetime in resource and public finance costs.<sup>9</sup>

If unemployment and youth inactivity persist, the effects of social exclusion can become exacerbated. Recession and unemployment negatively affects emotional welfare and mental health as well as financial security and wellbeing. Conditions arising from, or made worse by, economic recession range from worry to clinical depression and anxiety, which have a negative impact on confidence and self esteem. In a presentation to the Task Force, a Childrens' mental health expert from the South London Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust outlined some of the contributing factors to mental health problems – key among these are: work, family situation and education. Furthermore, they summarised the various risk factors as well as protective elements in people's lives which contribute to mental health. For instance, you are less likely to suffer from mental health problems if you: display a positive sense of discipline; have supportive social networks; live in good housing and engage in a range of sport and leisure activities.

Alongside the decline in physical and mental well-being, unemployment and social exclusion may be linked to increased crime rates. Three in every 10 men and 1 in 12 women who had been NEET between 16 and 18 are involved in criminal activity before they are 30, which is three times the general population rate.<sup>10</sup> Socially excluded young people also become the victims of crime. Young people, especially those experiencing poverty and unemployment, stand a far greater chance of being the casualties of knife

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<sup>8</sup> Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion. *The Class of '81: The effects of early-career unemployment on subsequent unemployment experiences*, London School of Economics, December 1999.

<http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/dps/case/cp/CASEpaper32.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Statistic Obtained from Confederation of Business and Industry,

<http://www.cbi.org.uk/ndbs/press.nsf/38e2a44440c22db6802567300067301b/bc2bef176a3c6580802576190035f9fc?OpenDocument>

<sup>10</sup> Confederation of British Industry,

<http://www.cbi.org.uk/ndbs/press.nsf/38e2a44440c22db6802567300067301b/bc2bef176a3c6580802576190035f9fc?OpenDocument>

crime. According to the 2006–2007 British Crime Survey (BCS), the risk of becoming a victim of violent crime is 3.6% for a British adult. However, the available figures for children and young people provide a striking and stark contrast. For young men aged 16 to 24 the risk was almost four times greater: 13.8% experienced a violent crime of some sort in the year prior to their BCS interview. Moreover, people who are unemployed have a BCS violence victimisation rate more than double the national average, and those living in ‘hard pressed’ areas are also over twice as likely to be victims of violence than those in wealthier areas.<sup>11</sup>

Some of the most pioneering work on youth unemployment was commissioned by the Princes Trust in 2007. Its report, ‘The Cost of Exclusion; Counting The Cost Of Youth Disadvantage In The UK’ provides evidence on both the economic and social costs of youth unemployment and crime. The key findings are summarised below:

#### *The Cost of Youth Unemployment*

- In 2007, before the recession, almost a fifth of young people in England, Scotland and Wales were not in education, training or employment. OECD data showed that the UK compares very poorly to other countries in this respect.
- The productivity loss to the economy as a result of youth unemployment is estimated at £10 million every day (£4.7 billion per year) and this is without taking into account people who are classified as ‘inactive’ for other reasons.
- There is also a substantial cost to the exchequer of youth unemployment and inactivity: it costs the state around £20 million per week in Job-Seeker’s Allowance.
- The personal cost of not being in education, training or employment goes beyond foregone earnings in the longer term: youth unemployment has been estimated as imposing a wage scar on individuals of between 8% and 15%.

#### *The Cost of Youth Crime*

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<sup>11</sup> Justice for Crime and Justice Studies. ‘*Knife Crime*’ A review of Evidence and Policy. [www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/opus439/ccjs\\_knife\\_report.pdf](http://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/opus439/ccjs_knife_report.pdf)

- The estimated total cost of youth crime for Great Britain was in excess of £1 billion in 2004.
- The rate of imprisonment is higher in England and Wales than in 12 other European countries. England and Wales also have the highest percentage of prisoners under 18 and the second highest percentage between 18 and 21.
- Prisoners are much more likely to be socially excluded than the general population: they are 13 times as likely to have been in care as a child; 13 times as likely to be unemployed; 10 times as likely to have been a regular truant; and 2.5 times as likely to have had a family member convicted of a criminal offence.

### *The Cost of Educational Underachievement*

- There has been little change since the mid-1990s in the percentage of young people aged 16-24 with no qualifications. In 2005, these figures stood at 12.6%, 12%, 8.3% and 19.9% in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- The percentage of young people with low-level or no qualifications in the UK compares very unfavourably to France (for all age ranges) and Germany (for the age range 25-28 and older categories).
- There is some evidence of a relationship between education and health outcomes. The education of parents can affect the educational outcomes of their children.
- Educational underachievement affects the relative performance of the UK economy. The UK has between 10% and 25% lower output per hour than France, Germany and the US and much of this can be attributed to a poorer level of skills and a shortfall of capital investment.
- There is a strong relationship between educational underachievement and crime. US evidence suggests that social benefits from a one per cent increase in the high school completion rate are equivalent to 14-26% of the private return. Applying these estimates to the UK (with strong caveats) suggests that this might be equivalent to £2-5 billion.

- UK evidence on the effects of the Education Maintenance Allowance and the Reducing Burglary Initiative suggest that programmes like these can lead to savings of about £3,595-£4,902 per 1,000 pupils because of reduced levels of crime.<sup>12</sup>

One of the central contentions of this report is that the costs of exclusion are economically and socially inefficient. The YTF maintained that interventions in helping young people into work, to remain in education or avoid crime represent excellent value for money given the measurable costs of social exclusion. With financial resources becoming increasingly limited in the foreseeable future, the challenge is to combine large-scale employment and training programmes for the majority with specialist support for the most vulnerable young people.

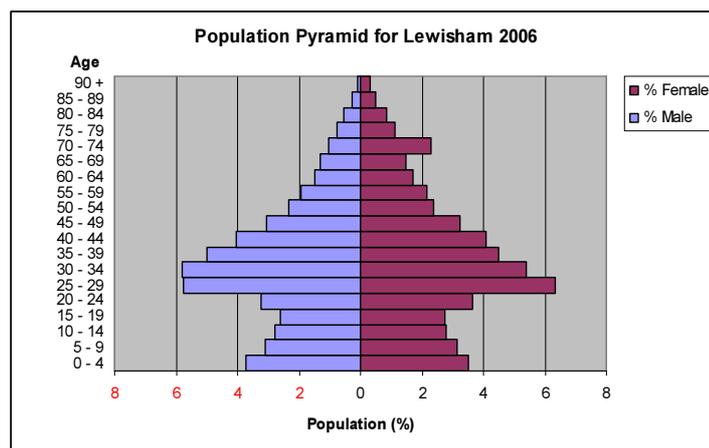
The YTF also considered the wider impacts of recession and economic turmoil on young people. Although the main focus of discussions was on work and education, members were concerned that the effects of poverty, anxiety, stress and depression will begin to harm the mental health and well-being of young people in the longer term. As well as apprenticeships, training, educational opportunities and job creation schemes young people require easy access to support, mentoring and advice to ensure that recession and cuts in public services do not permanently damage this entire generation of young citizens.

### Population of Lewisham

Lewisham is the second largest inner London borough and is home to approximately 255,000 people, with projections suggesting that the borough will grow significantly by 2026.

Lewisham has a slightly younger

age profile than the rest of the UK. Children and young people aged 0–19 make up 24.5% of our residents, compared to 22.4% for inner London and 24.4% nationally. Lewisham has 35,800 pupils in its school system. Whilst 40% of residents are from black and minority



<sup>12</sup> The Prince's Trust. *The Costs of Social Exclusion; Counting the Cost of Youth Disadvantage in the UK*, <http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/PDF/Princes%20Trust%20Research%20Cost%20of%20Exclusion%20apr07.pdf>

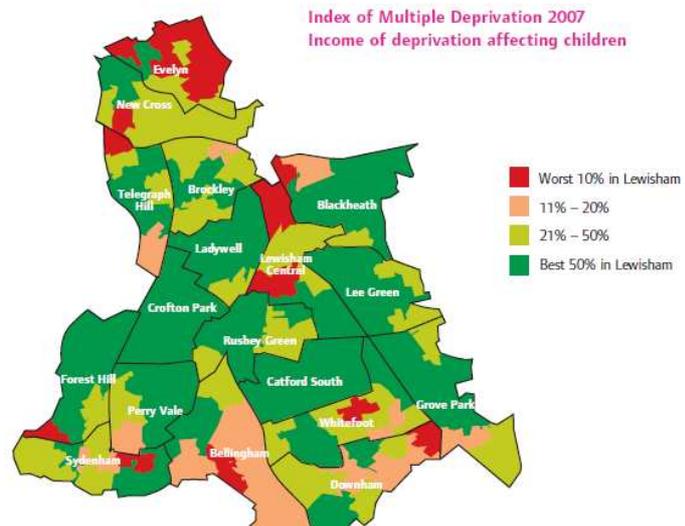
ethnic backgrounds, this rises to 72% within the school population, where over 170 different languages are spoken by pupils.<sup>13</sup>

### Deprivation within Lewisham

Lewisham is facing increased levels of deprivation over the coming years.

The 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation ranked Lewisham 39th out of 354 local areas in England compared to a rank of 57 in 2004.

On the specific indicator of income deprivation affecting children, 38 (out of 166) of Lewisham's super output areas<sup>14</sup> are in the 10% most deprived in the country.



Child poverty is rising across London with 51% of children in inner London living in poverty. More than a quarter of all Lewisham's pupils are eligible for Free School Meals: 26.6% of primary school pupils, 25.7% of secondary school pupils and 44.3% of special school pupils, compared with national figures of 13%, 10% and 28% respectively. Lewisham has 34% of workless families with children under 5 years old, 10% above national figures. Some areas of Lewisham have even higher levels with 45% in Evelyn, 42% in Downham and 41% in Bellingham. Low income families' take-up of child care has increased to 28% from 25% in 2005 – this is above the national average of 17% and similar local authorities at 22.5%.

Other social exclusion issues that have an impact on the future prospects of young people, such as accommodation and overcrowding, are key issues for Lewisham; the housing needs data shows that 10% of households are overcrowded and this increases when considering BME households. For example, 20% of Black African households are overcrowded. As of 19/1/09 there were 3283 households that were overcrowded on the

<sup>13</sup> Lewisham Council. *Children and Young People's Plan, 2009-2012*, <http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/E2C06A8A-DFAD-4D30-838C-5A1D7D375B68/0/CYPplan1.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Super Output Areas are a geography designed for the collection and publication of small area statistics. <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/Info.do?page=aboutneighbourhood/geography/superoutputareas/soa-intro.htm>

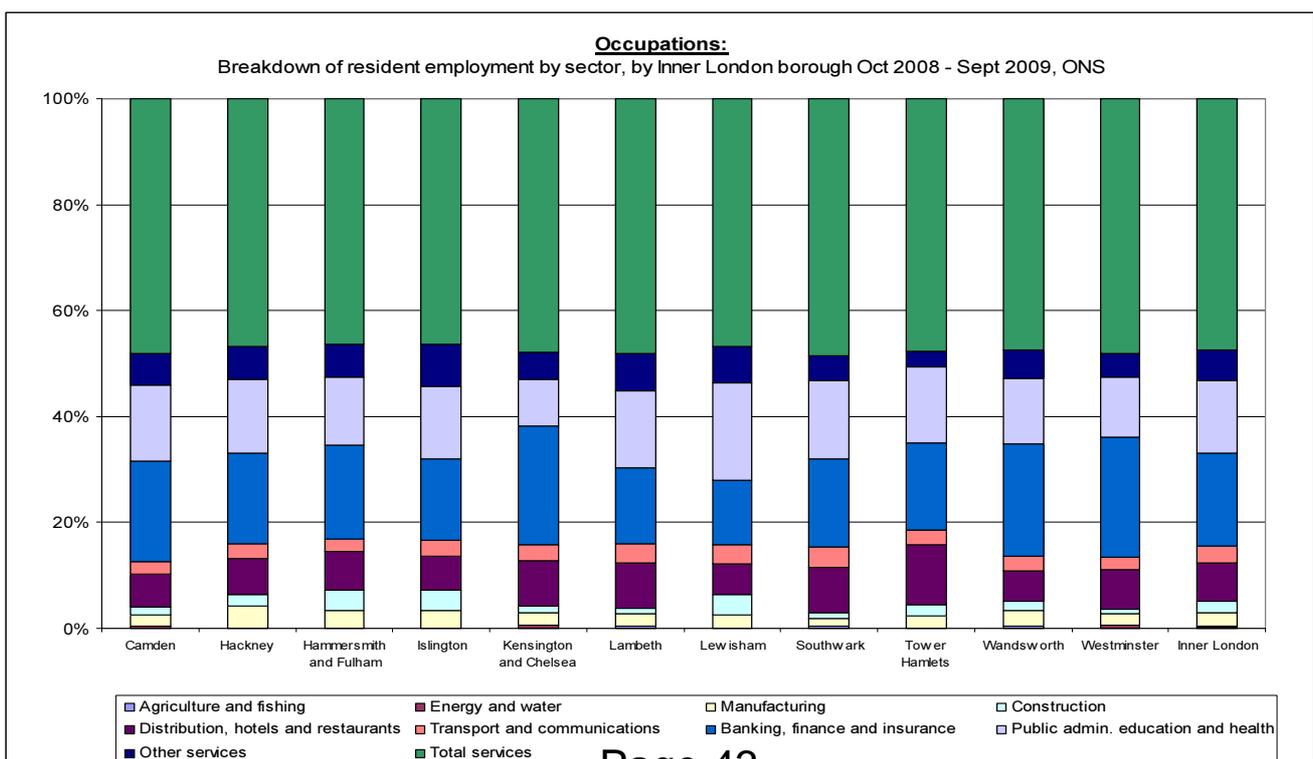
housing register. In 2007/08, 8% of residents accepted as homeless were young people aged 16 and 17 years, which is slightly below the national average. The numbers of young people presenting at the Council for advice and assistance on housing issues remains high, with 16 and 17 year olds comprising over 50% of all enquiries from single households.

Source: Children and Young People’s Plan 2009-12

### Occupations of Lewisham Residents

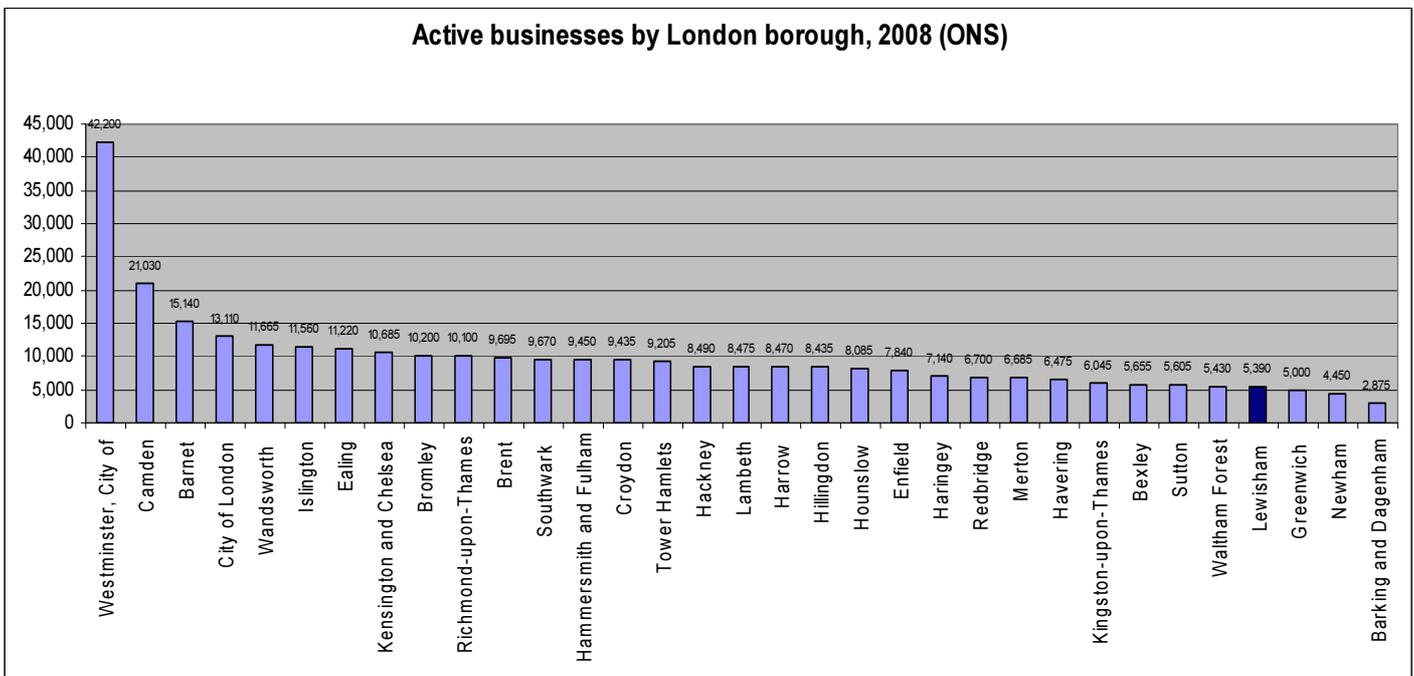
Lewisham has the second highest proportion of residents in inner London in “lower skilled” occupations. Lower skilled sectors include the administrative and secretarial, personal services, sales and customer services, and process and machine operatives. At 33% Lewisham has a greater proportion than the inner London average of 26% and nearly double the rate in Camden of 17%. Lewisham has the lowest proportion of inner London residents in managerial and professional occupations. At 32% Lewisham has the lowest proportion of working residents in the highest skilled occupations. The inner London average is 40% and in six boroughs 40% or more of working residents are in such jobs.

The chart below shows the breakdown of resident employment – by sector of employment – for each of the inner London boroughs. Patterns vary across inner London, but it is clear



that Lewisham has the smallest proportion of residents working in banking, finance and insurance, and the highest proportion working in public administration, education and health. It has broadly average levels for most other sectors, with the exception of construction. More Lewisham residents work in construction than in any other inner London borough.

Mirroring the reliance on public sector employment in the borough, the chart below shows that Lewisham has the second lowest number of active businesses in Inner London. The size of the borough's economy is ranked 30th out of the 33 London boroughs. London's growth in the past 20 years has been concentrated in the finance and business sectors. These growth sectors are underrepresented in Lewisham. Instead growth in Lewisham has been concentrated in the public sector which now represents 34% of all employment.



### Future Prospects for Employment in Lewisham

It is expected that around 490,000 public sector workers could lose their jobs by 2014-15, and up to 600,000 by 2015-16 (earlier leaked projections put the figure between 600-700,000). Others have predicted that the figure could be as high as 750,000 by 2015.<sup>15</sup>

Lewisham has the highest proportion of public sector workers in South East London and is

<sup>15</sup> Chartered Institute for Personal Development statistics obtained from, <http://www.financemarkets.co.uk/2010/06/10/cipd-warns-of-high-unemployment-amid-government-spending-cuts/>

therefore likely to be disproportionately affected by public sector retrenchment. There is likely to be a fall in public sector employment amongst Lewisham residents of over 7,000 in the two years from 2011. This compares to a rise in JSA claimants of around 3,500 during the last two years, following recession in the private sector. £9m was spent in Lewisham on mitigating the effects of the recession - £7m from government and £2m from the Council.

At present it is unclear which types of jobs will be worst hit within the public sector. Although it is largely believed that the private sector recession is now over, public sector retrenchment is likely to have a substantial impact on private sector employment because of the reliance on contracts from the public sector (estimated by the OECD to be 25% of all public sector spending). Early projections suggest that this will lead to 600-700,000 jobs being lost over the next five years in sectors such as; catering, maintenance and repairs, back office support, building and construction, recruitment, training and development, and ICT (equipment, leasing and consulting).

Although job-losses in both the public and private sectors ultimately limit the opportunities open to young people, the latter will have less effect as only 8.6% of the national public sector workforce is below 25, and in Lewisham for example only 3% of council employees are below this age.

### Qualifications of Lewisham Citizens

Qualifications and skills levels in Lewisham are low, by both London and national standards. In December 2007, Lewisham was ranked 322nd out of 354 in Britain. At the lower end, however, qualification levels amongst Lewisham's working age residents compare reasonably well with inner London. Only 9.5% of Lewisham's working age population have no qualifications – below the inner London average of 12.5%. The proportion of residents with qualifications at NVQ1 and above and NVQ2 and above are higher than the inner London averages.

However, qualification levels compare less well at the higher end. The proportion of Lewisham's working age population with qualifications at NVQ3 and above (55%) is marginally below the inner London average of 55.8%. Only 39.6% of Lewisham's working

age population have qualifications at Level 4 or above – the third lowest level in inner London. As skills levels within inner London boroughs are higher than Outer London, however, Lewisham is above the London average even at NVQ4 level.<sup>16</sup>

Qualification Level	Lewisham Numbers	Lewisham %	London %	National %
NVQ4 and above	70,100	39.6	38.6	29.0
NVQ3 and above	97,300	55.0	51.6	47.0
NVQ2 and above	117,400	66.4	63.8	65.2
NVQ1 and above	134,700	76.1	73.7	78.9
Other qualifications	25,600	14.5	14.2	8.7
No qualifications	16,800	9.5	12.0	12.4

### Attainment in Lewisham's Schools

The past few years have been a period of improvement in educational attainment for young people in the borough. At Key Stage 2, for pupils achieving Level 4 and above in English, there has been an improving trend of performance for the last five years, from 73% in 2003 to 79% in 2008. In Maths there has been a 7% increase in the last five years and a 4% increase in Science over the same period. Lewisham equals comparator authorities' performance in English and is above in Maths and Science. Results are only 2% and 1% below the national average for English and Maths, which shows sustained improvement, with further improvement anticipated through focused intervention.

In 2008, 60% of Lewisham's pupils achieved five A\* – C GCSE grades which was a 20% rise over five years. 46% of Lewisham's pupils achieved over five A\*– C GCSE grades including in English and Maths in 2008. This was a 14% increase over the previous five years taking it towards the national average of 47.6%. Continued progress during the past two years seen this national average be succeeded with 47% and 48% achieved in 2009 and 2010 respectively.<sup>17</sup>

Source: Lewisham Council,

<http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/NewsAndEvents/News/GCSEResults2010.htm>

<sup>16</sup> Office for National Statistics Official Labour Market Statistics, May 2010

<sup>17</sup> Lewisham Council, <http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/NewsAndEvents/News/GCSEResults2010.htm>

Lewisham has made it a priority to improve the educational standards of those groups of pupils who are identified as underperforming, and suffering from social exclusion. 10% of Lewisham's Looked after Children now achieve five A\*– C GCSE grades, including in English and Maths. Whilst this is above the national performance it is far lower than their peers. Lewisham's Black Caribbean boys who take free school meals have improved their performance at GCSE five A\* – C grades from 16% in 2003 to 40% in 2008, and performance is moving closer to that of all Lewisham boys. 13.6% of Lewisham's Looked after Children are absent from school for over 25 days per year, a significant improvement from 25.6% in 2006 but still not reaching to the borough target of 11%. As of March 2008, 7.5% of pupils were persistent absentees from secondary school. In March 2009, analysis of latest persistent absence data showed that Lewisham has the fastest improvement rate in the country for reducing persistent absence.

Source: Children and Young Peoples Plan 2009-12

### Further Education in Lewisham

Lewisham has made significant progress by nearly halving the number of 16–18 year olds who are NEET from 10.3% in 2005 to 5.5% in 2009. However, 65.7% of Lewisham's care leavers are now NEET at age 19. Although this is better than the national average it is slightly below comparator authorities performance of 68.5%. It is clear more work needs to be done. In 2008 Lewisham achieved a 98.5% success rate at A level grades A to E, 1.3% higher than the national figure. Within this the percentage of candidates receiving three or more A grades (4.7%) was the best performance across similar authorities. In the most recent results, Lewisham remains above the national advantage for A\* to E with a 98.4% pass rate.<sup>18</sup>

Source: Lewisham Council.

<http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/NewsAndEvents/News/Alevels2010.htm>

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<sup>18</sup> Lewisham Council. <http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/NewsAndEvents/News/Alevels2010.htm>

The borough also performs better than the inner London average for points per entry at Level 3 and again better than most of its statistical neighbours, thus ensuring its learners are better placed to move on to higher education. 64% of 19 year olds achieve a Level 2 qualification and 41% achieved a Level 3 qualification, which is below statistical neighbour averages of 66.6% and 44.4% respectively. These gaps with statistical neighbours follow a similar trend over time, but with the increasing GCSE results for Level 2 at age 16, this sets a firm platform for further increases for these young people by age 19. 90% of all Lewisham's Year 11 pupils stay on to further education, 10% higher than the national average. In 2007, 90% of Lewisham's young people stayed on for Level 3 courses with approximately 86% of these young people going on to university. 60% of Black Caribbean young people achieving Level 3 qualifications go on to university.

Source: Children and Young Peoples Plan 2009-12

## **5. Discussions and Deliberations**

Peter Walsh, YTF Chair

'We need to present proposals to the Council which are achievable – and we need to make sure the Council and its partners continue being accountable – if the Council and its partners accept our timeframe – and to be held accountable – we need to know what will have happened in a year'.

During the course of the past 12 months, the YTF received a range of information from different public, private and community service providers within Lewisham. To maintain focus and direction it was decided that each of the YTF evidence sessions should have an overarching theme. Whilst the specific recommendations are reflective of the content of the discussions that took place during these individual meetings, additional ideas raised in other meetings, as well associated material concerning local and national policy developments, were also taken into consideration.

A) Youth Led Approach: Securing Wider Engagement of Young People

Setting out the terms of reference, the YTF decided that an essential feature of the of their work should be to seek answers to the following points.

- In what ways can trust and interaction be encouraged between generations to help young people engage more with the community?
- How can young people foster and build a culture of responsibility to each other and the wider community?
- What can be done to empower young people and help them create a positive image of themselves?

In order to find answers to these questions, the YTF wanted to investigate how to improve youth community and intergenerational engagement as well as the formal protocols used to inform young people about local services and opportunities. In February 2010 four members of the Young Citizens Panel (YCP) were invited to the YTF session to discuss the problems young people face in these areas.

### Reaching Out to Young People

What emerged early on in the question and answer session was that one of the key barriers stopping young people from engaging in the community actively and realising the opportunities for self-improvement, was that there is insufficient consideration given to how young people communicate in the 21st century. The Council and other public sector agencies websites do not tend to be places that young people visit in order to gain information. The YTF contended that the personal touch of direct interaction with people was of most importance for passing on information. Additional evidence presented to the YTF suggested communication was a major problem. In April, speakers from one of the borough's community housing organisations expressed concerns over a lack of 'out-reach to young people'. Creating an 'open access' approach, where young people could gain information on demand was suggested as a possible solution to what they regarded as a tendency to 'switch on and switch off' with young people. Task Force members felt that there is a distinct lack of places for young people to socialise, share ideas, and build on positive experiences. The YCP also expressed concerns over how effective the Council

and its partners were in engaging with them. They suggested the following measures be considered by the YTF to tackle this:

- Going directly to young people in accessible places such as schools and youth clubs as well as developing the capacity to send street teams to central places such as Lewisham Town Centre where young people congregate.
- Approaching young people via activities such as sports.
- Approaching housing estates where many young people do not access other services and can often be excluded and left out. Realising the need to overcome the stigma and fear associated with estates.
- Making communications interesting and appealing for young people.

### Visibility and Communication

The lack of visibility relating to projects for young people was a major source of concern for the representatives of the Young Citizens Panel. Views were expressed to the YTF that projects were not always visible to young people. It was maintained that services were only accessed because of word of mouth and young people may often miss opportunities because of this. They suggested that growth and popularity of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter could be an avenue the YTF might explore. One YTF member also implied that there was a lack of communication, connections and linkages between services and this could be overcome through a social networking site. The YCP suggested that face-to-face contact wasn't always suitable for young people and the creation of a Lewisham wide social networking site (or space within a larger website) was a possible solution to overcoming the visibility and communication barrier if:

- It was young person led and attractive to its target audience. It was to be community run and based.
- It was youth led with a motivated steering group.
- It was a one stop shop. Despite it being the duty of the local authority to produce a directory of all youth services, there seems to be a lack (in the borough) of a central point of information.

There was also a discussion about using the Young Mayor's budget for advertising the activities currently on offer for young people in the borough. Concerns were raised over this idea. Whilst it was agreed that better communication which relates to young people (alongside more accessible information) was necessary, it was believed Council officers were the wrong people to steer it. Task Force members indicated to the YCP that Lewisham may be interested in a proposal from them with costing for a social networking site that could be used for information sharing.

### Getting Young Peoples Voices Heard

Incorporated into the debate about appropriate and effective communication with young people was a discussion about encouraging young citizens to make the most of opportunities to become involved in the design and delivery of local services. The young people from the YCP were asked if they felt their voices were being heard:

- The YCP was already attempting to influence service providers, working closely with the health service who have been conducting question and feedback sessions. Moreover, the YCP have partaken in ongoing consultation with organisations, noting that they would not stay involved with the YCP if they didn't get their voice recognised in the delivery process. The panel are very committed and therefore people take them seriously and they see results.
- Their involvement in Lewisham People's Day was a positive example of influence. Every year they undertake the auditions and feel fully engaged and involved in the organisation of it.
- Frankie Sulke (Executive Director of Lewisham's Children and Young People's Directorate) had also asked them to interview for positions in the Youth Sector.
- Every year they were being to become increasingly more involved in activities, leading to a parallel growth in their influence. It was felt this could lead to other opportunities for young people.

The YTF wanted their recommendations to reflect their support for type of youth participation work taking place in Council projects such as the YCP. It was felt the Young Citizens Panel should not be removed or changed. Rather, the YCP should be supported

and celebrated because it is vital that the 900 young people who are part of the YCP are further involved in the improvement, development and delivery of services.

### Broadening Horizons

It was suggested by Task Force members that increasing the ability of young people to engage with service providers and the wider community would require an avenue or conduit for change that would allow young citizens to broaden their horizons. It was felt that one of the major barriers to some young people participating fully in society was the narrowness of the options which appear to be available. The YCP was keen to stress that young people had a tendency to adopt a tunnel vision when looking at different locations for employment, volunteering and training opportunities.

- Some young people might not bother to look for work outside of their area. Other young people would rather go to Docklands for work than go to Deptford as they would feel more comfortable doing so.
- Many young people do not think outside of their area and may have a narrow mindset. Young people need to experience different places, cultures and lives.
- There need to be opportunities created for young people to network outside of the borough to help with their confidence and open their minds.
- Young people could potentially learn a lot from experiences outside of their area and outside of the country. The opportunity to visit different countries could help young citizens to realise how much opportunity there is in the UK compared to many other countries.
- Young people should be given more information and knowledge about life outside the UK.

In a presentation by representatives from Widehorizons, a young people's outdoor education trust, the benefits of broadening the experiences of young people were put to Task Force members. Widehorizons dedicates a portion of its budget to expanding the traditional horizons of young people through intergenerational activities. They outlined their work to create awareness amongst different generational groups about the problems facing young people; encouraging different groups to work together in a productive way to

challenge assumptions and encourage positive communication. They seek to help young people experience things outside of their comfort zone in order to encourage self-reflection and to help young people develop self-awareness.

### Youth Exchanges

The possibility of developing a Lewisham based international exchange was discussed. One YTF member talked about a project that he worked on which took gang members from Roehampton to Kenya. It was felt that this helped to change the lives of those involved. It was suggested by members of the group that young people could be given the opportunity to live or spend time in different boroughs and cities throughout the UK as well as in other countries.

The YTF felt the idea of regional, national and international exchanges could be an effective tool in encouraging young people to step out of their comfort zone and gain new experiences. The YCP's emphasis on developing experiences outside their area and outside the country was an indication of youth interest. The YTF felt that sharing local experiences was key to breaking down barriers to opportunity whilst gaining knowledge of national and international comparisons on youth led community innovation would be valuable. This could have the dual benefit of helping young people to learn about and make contact with communities in the borough and to expand their horizons.

Several exchange projects have taken place in Lewisham, however these were mainly open to specific groups of young people who were already working with the Council in some capacity:

- Youth Connect Prague: Lewisham made a successful bid to the EU's Youth Connect Fund in partnership with the Local Authority of Prague 7 in the Czech Republic. The project funded an exchange visit from Lewisham to Prague to allow a comparison of the different styles of youth engagement in the two countries through the exchange of cultures, experience and good practice. Lewisham's Young Mayor and the Young Mayor's Advisors visited Prague during December 2006 to learn from their counterparts in the Prague 7 Youth Parliament. (Further information can be found on Lewisham Council's website).

- British Council in Bulgaria: In 2009, the British Council funded a trip for a group of young people to visit Lewisham during the Young Mayors election. The link was initially made following Lewisham's successful bid to the EU's [Youth Connect](#) fund. The bid focused on different models of engaging young people in local democracy, and with Bulgaria's imminent entry to the European Union, this is of particular interest. (Further information can be found on Lewisham Council's website).
- Leaving Care Team: This Lewisham based team have arranged an exchange programme for the last two years giving looked-after young people the opportunity to visit South Africa. The aim of the project, titled SELSA (South East London to South Africa), was to give disadvantaged young people the opportunity to broaden their horizons by experiencing a different culture and doing voluntary work. The trip was aimed at helping with their transition to adulthood and independence from care.

The YTF discussed the practical problems associated with developing youth exchange programs like these. Some members believed the cost, in relation to the benefits gained by the young people involved, would be minimal. Other members felt that the costs involved in developing an exchange programme would be substantial and unsustainable. Instead, it was suggested that events could be organised which celebrated the differences in Lewisham and encouraged an exploration of the diverse cultures within the city. It was also suggested that established events in the borough, such as Black History Month could be developed and expanded.

*The Youth Task Force recommends:*

- By building on established systems within the community, such as the Young Mayor, the Young Citizens Panel, local assemblies and area forums, the Council should explore how young people can increase their influence and actively participate in the decision-making process within those policy areas which directly affect their future prospects, health and well-being.
- The Council, youth-focused community stakeholders and young people should collaborate in the creation of a Young People's Charter for Lewisham. This charter should outline how young people understand their role as citizens of the borough, what the Council and its partners can do for them and what responsibilities they have towards the community.

- The Council, voluntary, faith and community groups should aim to strengthen the ambassadorial role of young people who contribute to their local community. Firstly, they should work with existing youth organisations and institutions, including the Young Mayor and the Young Citizens Panel, to enhance their presence and influence within the borough. Secondly, as young community activists and social entrepreneurs emerge, the Council's youth services and its partners should strive to reward and champion their achievements in order to create positive new role models. This could be accomplished either through existing awards ceremonies held by the council or new, specifically-designed events.
- Youth service providers within the community, including the voluntary and social enterprise sectors, work more closely with young people to capture their insights into the public sector and draw on these experiences to co-design services and improve delivery.
- The Council and youth service providers should explore options for creating a one-stop internet based communication portal to provide information about youth employment opportunities, volunteering and support services. This resource should be designed in collaboration with the Young Citizens Panel to ensure that it is relevant and attractive. The Young Mayor and other local publicity mechanisms should then be used to maximise awareness and increase uptake. In developing this resource, it is anticipated that council officers would engage with young people about how to build upon existing social networks and utilise new other media.
- The Council and its community partners recognise that whilst voluntary groups, the third-sector and social enterprises are essential to tackling the economic and social problems facing young people, schools are best placed to ensure real progression is made in these areas and should have responsibility for promoting opportunities that exist for employment, training and educational in the local community.
- The council develop an international exchange programme for young people through the Young Citizens Panel. Using the Council's international links gained from previous exchanges, project officers drawn from the panel would be responsible for approaching relevant youth councils, student unions or other citizen groups to secure an appropriate partner with whom to undertake the exchange. They would also need to secure funding both in the initial stages of the project and throughout the programme. Potential funders currently supporting youth exchange

projects include the British Council, European Voluntary Service and the Princes Trust. These organisations fund 70% of the cost of each child participating in the exchange leaving only 30% for the young people to contribute themselves. This remaining cost could be met via fundraising activities, which would be facilitated and supported by the project officers. Funding opportunities from these organisations take place every 3 months so this will need to be a continual process. It would also be necessary to secure funding for the feasibility visit to each country prior to the exchange taking place. This is a standard procedure when applying for funding for exchange programmes.

## B) Volunteering – An Opportunity to Build Self Confidence and Skills

### Volunteering and the Recession

There was considerable discussion in the task force about the importance of exploring the range of pathways into employment. It was recognised that there are opportunities for young people to secure employment and skills through volunteering. Members noted that given the economic downturn, recession and current fiscal retrenchment, volunteering offered practical opportunities for young people to obtain skills, training and experience, without necessarily entering the labour market.

Although the recession is officially over in the private sector, looming public sector cuts mean that a recession in this area of the economy is fast approaching. The figures presented earlier indicate that whilst growth in the economy has returned, albeit at a slow pace, youth unemployment is persistent throughout the UK, especially in more deprived areas such as Lewisham. Moreover, official and unofficial projections also predict that the public sector cuts have the potential to impact heavily on job growth in the private sector in the coming years.

These conditions have sharpened the rivalry for a limited number of vacancies, with nearly fourteen jobseekers for every available position in Lewisham. Even in the wider and more buoyant London economy, in which the majority of our residents work, the figure stands at eight applications for every role. Driven by an influx of college leavers into the labour market, Lewisham also saw an increase in unemployed 18-24 year olds between May and

August 2010. For school and college leavers looking to enter the labour market with little or no experience of the working world, the possibilities of finding employment can be severely limited, particularly in the current circumstances. With increased competition for employment and further education opportunities, individuals who miss out and potentially fall behind their peers not only suffer from educational disadvantage, but decreased levels of workplace familiarity. Volunteering can therefore offer young people the chance to broaden their knowledge outside of the classroom, apply their skills in a practical manner, and develop their CV.

### Local Volunteering and Barriers to Participation

Given the benefits which volunteering can bring to both individuals and communities, the YTF decided to survey existing local and national initiatives.

The Council and its partners have been keen to encourage volunteering within the local community. Lewisham's Volunteering Strategy (launched in 2006) sought to raise awareness of the benefits of involvement, build capacity and infrastructure, develop good volunteering practice and create a civic environment within which it could flourish, thus ultimately increasing the rate of participation.<sup>19</sup> The Council has also supported nationwide Vtalent programme. It aims to make volunteering opportunities diverse, compelling and a natural lifestyle choice for 16-25 year olds in England and full-time volunteering work across the Children and Young Peoples Directorate has been provided during the past year. Vtalent has also funded another local volunteering group called Youth Aid. This relatively small voluntary organisation provides an advice, information and development service for young people throughout the borough of Lewisham. In particular, it carries out an extensive programme of work through drop-in advice and counselling sessions for young people, group work and collaboration with a number of organisations to develop appropriate responses for young people in the fields of health, education, volunteering, employment, careers advice and educational support.<sup>20</sup>

The Volunteering Strategy was devised and spearheaded by the Council's community partners, such as Voluntary Action Lewisham (VAL), who offered a range of expertise

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<sup>19</sup> Lewisham Volunteering Strategy 2006-12. [www.lewisham.gov.uk/.../FullLewishamVolunteeringStrategy.pdf](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/.../FullLewishamVolunteeringStrategy.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> For information see [http://www.youthaid.org.uk/about\\_us.html](http://www.youthaid.org.uk/about_us.html)

upon which the task force could draw. For over forty years, this charity has supported and represented the work of voluntary and community organisations in the borough. It aims to develop the capacity of the voluntary and community sector in the borough, promoting community empowerment and engagement through effective cross-sector partnership. VAL's database includes over 800 voluntary and community organisations. In addition, over 500 people are involved in local tenants' and residents' associations and 1,000 people are involved in the Lewisham Citizens Panel. Volunteer Centre Lewisham (VCL) is another locally accredited volunteer centre which seeks to develop, promote and enable citizens to get involved in volunteering by offering advice, training and placements.

During a presentation to the YTF one of VCL's community partners, Lewisham Sport and Leisure Service (SLS) described the opportunities and barriers to volunteering in their sector. They informed the group that, in partnership with Sport England and VCL, the Council has successfully secured funding for a part-time sports volunteering development officer. This dedicated officer spends two days a week in Lewisham working closely with local sports clubs in order to develop club and volunteer capacity, including the training of existing coaches and volunteers. Future areas of development will involve securing external funding, which will be used to provide accredited sports training and opportunities for Lewisham residents aged 16 and over. Whilst they indicated that these were positive developments, several barriers preventing young people from fully utilising the opportunities provided remained in place.

These included;

- The image of the leisure & sports industry and volunteering more generally – i.e. long hours, not very 'glamorous' and unrewarding.
- Lack of awareness amongst young people of the range of opportunities in the sector – physiotherapy, coaching, leisure management, lifeguards, gym instructors, personal training, and club development
- Lack of effective communication to make young people aware of the volunteering and training opportunities available in the borough.

The YTF also suggested that volunteering could be used as method to engage young people in community activity. The voluntary sector and youth organisations were leading

the way by encouraging young people to interact with the wider community and they believed that this should be harnessed and promoted.

### 2012 Olympic Games

One of the largest sport related opportunities for volunteering will be the 2012 London Olympic Games. SLS also provided some details on the opportunities provided for volunteering during the up-coming Games. They suggested that the YTF should consider how the Council and its partners can maximise the benefits of the games for Lewisham, citing the London 2012 Plan for Lewisham and the need to secure a lasting legacy for volunteering and training in the sports industry.

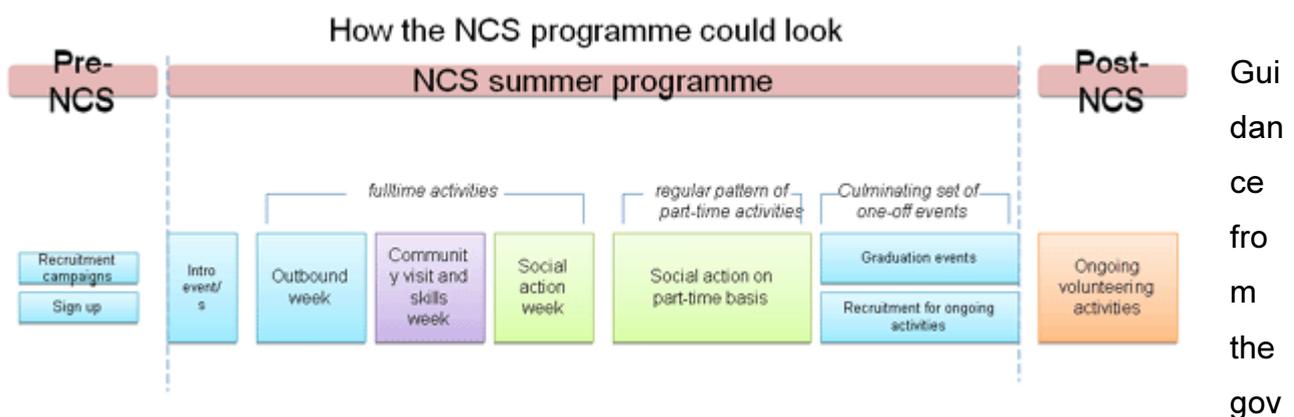
Lewisham Council has produced a two year Olympic and Paralympic action plan (2010-2012). The plan outlines Lewisham's proposals to bring the benefits of the 2012 games to citizens of the borough through the strengthening of international links; encouraging sport and physical activity; sustaining cultural and the arts; supporting business development; building capacity to deliver the games and by developing productive partnerships. During the Olympic year there are plans to run activities and sporting events across Lewisham. Lewisham Sports Fortnight will incorporate national school sport weeks and the London youth games. Lewisham People's Day will be used to showcase the borough's sporting talent and there will be opportunities for citizens of all ages to try new sports. It is envisaged that these events and the associated cultural Olympiad will provide a wealth of opportunities for young people to become involved in sports and healthy activities – and also to volunteer. Task force members suggested that local bodies, not traditionally associated with the voluntary sector such as Lewisham college should work with the Council and the Olympics delivery team to make young people aware of the opportunities and benefits of volunteering at the games and in associated activities throughout London.

### The National Citizens Service

The YTF also wanted the Council to bear in mind national developments in the voluntary sector. On entering office, the Coalition Government expressed a strong commitment to encourage volunteering as part of a civil action drive to tackle the social, economic and political challenges that the UK faces over the coming years. The Prime Minister has

begun expanding on the 'Big Society' theme that encapsulates this new, and advanced role for the voluntary and third (renamed Civil Society) sectors. Community projects have been established in four parts of the UK - Liverpool; Eden Valley, Cumbria; Windsor and Maidenhead; as well as the London borough of Sutton. They allow communities to run post offices, libraries, transport services and shape housing projects with the use of volunteers.<sup>21</sup> Funding for the takeovers could be facilitated through the Government's proposed 'Big Society Bank'. It will be designed to finance neighbourhood groups, charities, social enterprises and other non-governmental bodies.<sup>22</sup> It is estimated that this bank will launch with reserves of around £60 million, funded through dormant bank and building society accounts in England.<sup>23</sup>

Future developments from the 'Big Society' project include the introduction of National Citizen Service (NCS) – a flagship volunteering programme for 16 year olds to be piloted from summer 2011. The Government maintains it will offer young people the opportunity to develop the skills needed to be active and responsible citizens as well as the chance to mix with people from different backgrounds, and to become more involved in their communities. Mixing young people from different backgrounds is one of the core objectives of NCS, and the plan is for organisations to set out innovative approaches to achieving this. It is anticipated that this structured program will last for around 7-8 weeks. The diagram below shows how it will be structured:



the initial three phases of activity should be consecutive and made up

<sup>21</sup> BBC News, Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2010, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-10680062>

<sup>22</sup> The Cabinet Office. *The Coalition: our programme for government*, p. 29-30. [http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/409088/pfg\\_coalition.pdf](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/409088/pfg_coalition.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> The Guardian Online, Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/jul/19/david-meron-big-society-cuts>

of three weeks of full time activities followed by a regular pattern of part-time participation over a further 4 week period. A minimum of ten days and nights should be spent on a residential basis away from participants' homes to give the participants the opportunity to develop life skills and resilience, such as managing a budget and cooking meals'.<sup>24</sup>

Indications from the YTF sessions with the Young Citizens Panel are that young people would react well to a volunteering scheme which would expand horizons across London and beyond. It is thought that encouraging and facilitating volunteering will help minimise the effects of the recession on young people who are encouraged to participate. It has been claimed that the Council's efforts tend to be focused on people who are not in employment or education (NEETs), but there is a case to suggest that it is very hard for those in further and higher education to gain employment upon graduation and therefore be motivated to develop as citizens. Volunteering offers the option for motivated young people to gain experience of the working environments whilst becoming more involved in their the local community.

*The Youth Task Force recommends:*

- All possible avenues and techniques for emphasising the importance of volunteering are explored in order to foster positive attitudes towards the individual and community benefits. This should highlight its contribution to enhancing an individuals CV; its ability to build social and professional relations; the social networks it creates beyond a young person's familiar surroundings; and its potential role in improving the personal responsibility of young people and community cohesion.
- With London hosting the Olympic Games in 2012, the Council, schools, voluntary, faith and community groups should make it a priority that Lewisham's young people should be encouraged to become involved in the games and associated activities across the city, wherever possible.
- Public agencies investigate the possibility of creating more work experience schemes and internship placements which match skills to job progression in order to create sustainable outcomes for young people.

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<sup>24</sup> See The Cabinet Office, [http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/newsroom/news\\_releases/2010/100802-grants.aspx](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/newsroom/news_releases/2010/100802-grants.aspx)

## C) Apprenticeships – Creating Opportunities for Young People

### Why Apprenticeships?

In all of the YTF meetings and associated activities, apprenticeships were raised continuously as a way of creating sustainable opportunities for young people. With the chief objective of the YTF being an investigation of how to improve employment opportunities for young people in Lewisham, apprenticeships were seen as equipping young people with the skills to survive recessions and their subsequent repercussions in the labour market. At a time of fiscal restraint, apprenticeships were seen as a good long-term investment. Over 80% of businesses believe that apprentices help raise the productivity of their organisation; due to this increase in productivity, the investment is normally recouped with two or three years of the apprentice completing their training and employers report lower staff turnover, a more innovative workforce, and are able to develop managers for the future. Due to their participation in apprenticeships, young people can expect a wage return of 8-18% compared to 14% for A-level students; 90% of apprentices find employment immediately after their training ends; and over 40% achieve an upgrade or promotion on the completion or shortly after their training concludes.<sup>25</sup>

### Council and Partner Organisations' Apprenticeships

The Council, has maintained a long-standing commitment to increasing the number of apprenticeships available to school leavers and those who are classified as NEETs. The Children and Young People's Plan 2009-12 made explicit pledges to enhance both the breadth of opportunities and number of apprenticeships in order to raise aspirations and close socio-economic gaps in the borough.<sup>26</sup> During the economic downturn in 2009, the Mayor created an additional 31 apprenticeships in areas such as youth work, community arts management, emergency planning, communications, human resources and finance. In June of this year the Mayor also announced fifteen new Council apprenticeships as part of the Mayor of Lewisham's action plan to support the local community. The Council has entered into partnership with other organisations in the borough to deliver training and jobs

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<sup>25</sup> Confederation of British Industry. *You're Hired! More Apprenticeships for Business*.  
<http://www.cbi.org.uk/pdf/20100713-cbi-youre-hired.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> *It's Everybody's Business. Lewisham Children and Young People's Plan 2009-12*, p. 13 and 56

for apprentices. During the last round of recruitment, the Council placed several apprentices in third sector organisations for two year placements. This novel and innovative scheme will be reviewed over time to ensure that it creates sustainable routes into employment.

The SLS informed the YTF of both existing and future apprenticeships offered in their sector. An apprenticeship in 'Active Leisure and Learning' contains paths that cover many aspects of the sector, including sport, fitness, playwork and outdoor activities. It also offers the opportunity to develop both practical and technical skills that allow developments at work and progression into further education. The apprenticeships run at different levels, but all lead to National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ), key skills and a range of technical certificates.

One of the areas the SLS were looking for ways to develop are the Young Apprenticeships (YA) in sports management, leadership and coaching. YA's provide an opportunity for 14-16 year olds to combine academic studies with a blend of vocational qualifications and work placements. During Years 10 and 11 (key stage four), YA's embark on a Level 2 vocational qualification in sport leisure (worth between 2-4 GCSEs at A-C\*) alongside core curriculum subjects such as English, Maths and Science. Young Apprentices learn the practical skills and knowledge required by employees whilst studying for qualifications which specifically relate to the sector.

For SLS, the key to obtaining long-term success in apprenticeships was maintaining a constant support framework for those participating in their programmes. They also believed that their involvement in the Mayor's apprenticeship programme had been a productive experience and offered a good example of a spring board for future employment.

Two other local services providers that had been part of the Mayor's apprenticeship programme in 2009 – Phoenix Community Housing and Glendale – gave the task force further details about the apprenticeships they provided. The former are involved in the national apprenticeship training scheme and are working with UK-wide organisations to provide extensive training in order to develop staff and to progress them through the organisation. They are also working with the community organisation Groundwork. Glendale are similarly exploring different ways of working with young people.

Phoenix currently employ around 105 people, but only 5 apprentices. The task force asked these organisations why they hadn't taken on more apprentices and whether the terms of the contract stipulated that this was necessary. Glendale responded that there was no requirement for them to take on apprentices in their contract, but there had previously been a requirement to take one apprentice. They would be willing to take more apprentices on in the future, if this was written into their contract.

### Council Procurement and Apprenticeships

The Procurement department at Lewisham Council was asked to give a presentation about the Council's procurement practices in order to answer questions regarding the potential addition of apprenticeship requirements to Council contracts.

The Procurement Team agreed it would be possible to implement such a requirement within future contracts if it was made Council policy. They stated that 'criteria involving social considerations may be used to determine the most economically advantageous tender where they provide an economic advantage for the contracting authority which is linked to the product or service which is the subject-matter of the contract.' In short, 'the Council could ask for apprenticeships in a security contract but not for the supply of paper'.

The previous Government has been keen to leverage the £220 billion spent on public sector procurement each year to implement its wider policies. At Lewisham Council, contracts are already being used to implement policy. For example, the Mayor agreed to give 'due consideration' to the implementation of the London Living Wage (LLW) in 2009 during the re-tender process for Council contracts. The first contract to be successfully re-tendered with the integration of the LLW was the Green Spaces Management and Maintenance Contract, which is worth £35 million over ten years. The cost of implementing the LLW for this contract during the first year is estimated to have been around £350,000.

The YTF was interested in a similar method being used by the Council to promote the use of apprenticeships by contractors. As public funds will be limited in the future, they suggested that the Council should use its position as the largest user of out-sourcing contracts to ask all contractors working with Lewisham to employ a number of young

people as apprenticeships depending on the size of the contract. In response, the Procurement Team informed the YTF that in order to implement such a policy the Council would have to alter the wording of its re-tendered contracts and determine what level of involvement it would have with apprentices who were based in contracted organisations. At present, the scheme is administered through the Council's Human Resources department. The YTF asked for early submissions from the Council's Procurement Team on the use of Council contracts to support employment opportunities for the borough's young people. The Council could use this capacity to support the embedding of apprentices into the services run by Council contractors.

The YTF asked for additional information about the impact of legal, financial and equalities issues on any proposals they might potentially put forward. Legally, the office of government commerce has outlined the framework for including apprenticeship roles in public contracts (see Appendix 3). This framework has been available for some time and central government has been notionally committed to hiring apprentices in public contracts for several years. Nonetheless, the uptake of apprenticeships by contractors has not been at the level expected by Government. The problems with employing apprentices at the Olympic construction site as well as on the development of Crossrail have highlighted some of the drawbacks with the current approach. These issues have been debated more widely in the available literature and it is suggested that the Council review the implementation of its apprenticeships policy in the financial year 2010/11.

Central government has historically funded part of the apprenticeship programme, either during the training element or through some other part of the process, but it is desirable that as much funding as possible should be drawn from this source in order to pay for the scheme. In 2009, the previous Government set a target for the provision of places for 20,000 apprentices over three years, with funding allocated for the support and development of the programme through the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (DBIS). The current Government has expressed a strong desire to expand national apprenticeship opportunities. Whilst job creation schemes, such as the Future Jobs Fund have been cut, they have outlined £500m to support 'job training' and apprenticeships.<sup>27</sup> The cost of matching funding for apprentices in the third sector for a year should be

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<sup>27</sup> Early commentary on the coalition budget: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/may/24/george-osborne-6-25bn-spending-cuts>

thoroughly explored by the Council. The rough estimates of costs are around £20,000 for each apprenticeship per year. It is envisaged that costs of apprenticeships in the private sector be borne by Council contractors and the relevant central funding bodies.

In terms of the equalities impact, the apprentices scheme has been dominated by young people (typically those who are 16-25) and Government funding has been focused on those in the lower age range. Lewisham does not specify an age range for apprentices<sup>28</sup> and it would be expected that this situation be maintained. The provision of employment opportunities for young people has been one of the Mayor's priorities and this policy may well positively benefit those who are 16-25. Nonetheless, it should not focus on young people to the detriment of older people who wish to follow the apprenticeship option.

The YTF stressed that there was a need to gather further evidence on how this the national policy framework would develop over the coming years. Once this process has been undertaken, the YTF believed that because the apprenticeships are so vital to the young people of Lewisham, a national framework for quality apprenticeships could be led by the Council and its community partners.

*The Youth Task Force recommends:*

- During the re-tender of Council contracts, due consideration be given to the provision of employment for apprentices as well as other opportunities including work experience, work shadowing, etc.
- Eligible contractors be asked to outline their capacity for the delivery of positions for apprentices and that this should be used as part of the tender evaluation process.
- The Council's current provision for providing apprentices should be used to support the deployment of apprentices into partner organisations.
- The Council consider 'matched funding' for the delivery of the apprentice programme in the third sector, whereby the Council funds one year of an apprenticeship on the provision that the other year is funded by the host organisation through their own funds or through the draw down of central government funding.

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<sup>28</sup> Lewisham Apprenticeship scheme  
<http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/JobsAndCareers/CouncilVacancies/Apprenticeships.htm>

- The management and development of apprentices should be included in the Council's overall management of its contracts.
- The Leisure Services contract be used as the first Council contract to specify the uptake of apprentices in its tender documents. The contract is in the process of being written and it is due to come into force in October 2011.

#### D) Social Enterprise and the Third Sector – Developing New Prospects

Social enterprises have become increasingly important as providers of local services over the last twenty to twenty five years. In Lewisham, there are 41 registered organisations with a social aim. The Mayor has stated his commitment to encouraging the development of social entrepreneurs and the role that social enterprises have in making Lewisham a stronger, more dynamic and prosperous place to live.<sup>29</sup> The Lewisham Social Enterprise Strategy (LSES) 2009-12, which was delivered in partnership with the Lewisham Social Enterprise Steering Group (composed of VAL, Social Enterprise London, South East Enterprise and representatives of local social enterprises) set out six strategic aims for the social enterprise sector in Lewisham;

- Raising the profile and demonstrating the value of the third sector.
- Developing entrepreneurial capacity of the third sector.
- Enabling access to a range of finance.
- Opening up procurement practices to enable access to new markets.
- Developing a recognised voice for social enterprise.
- Improving access to suitable premises.

In June this year, the YTF meeting was dedicated to investigating local social enterprises. Presentations were given by The Midi Music Company, Head for Business and Enterprise UK, plus submitted evidence by Make Believe Arts. The session had three main themes – breaking down barriers, developing business links and creating networks.

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<sup>29</sup> Lewisham Council. Organisations with a Social Aim Directory 2008.  
<http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/7153D5B8-C6AC-415C-BF5F-55B0CC83DD92/0/DirectoryOfOrganisationsWithASocialAim2008.pdf>

## Breaking Down Barriers

As the YTF found out during their investigations into encouraging a youth led approach to volunteering, there appeared to be significant barriers facing young people who want to develop business ideas and contribute to the social enterprise sector. The Midi Music Company (MMC) works to break down the barriers facing young people who want to become involved in the music industry by training people to develop their musical talents and work alongside other young people on collaborative projects. In addition, the MMC uses teachers, mentors and role models to support its work and to develop the talents of its young creative clients.

The organisation has always promoted the uptake of tailored careers advice to young people as it believes that this helps those both receiving advice and their respective employers. One of the difficulties the organisation faces in its work with young people is the poor promotion of networks and other alternatives available to those who need it. Although there are many such networks and groups working with young people, they need to be better integrated. Indeed, there appears to be a lack of programmes which bring these groups together in order to share their connections across the industries.

## Developing Business Links

The YTF was interested in finding out how young people could become involved in the setting up and running of businesses. Finding out why there were not more young people in Lewisham who are prepared to set up their own businesses was a matter the YTF wanted to explore further. Head for Business (HFB) was aware of this issue. They are concerned with engaging young people in enterprise in order to help young entrepreneurs work through the problems associated with starting traditional businesses. HFB supports people who want to start their own business – with a particular focus on the creative and cultural industries. Clients are referred to the organisation through networks as well as being recommended by word of mouth.

The YTF felt that young people needed to be well informed about the implications of their ideas. Some YTF discussions focused on the need for young people to learn responsibility. The implications of finance, such as debt and credit issues, should be taught

to young people who wished to develop sustainable business ideas. Moreover, the integral role of business plans was also mentioned as a key feature of the learning process which could help encourage local youths into social enterprise. It is vital for young people to get constructive advice about how businesses work in order to make informed decisions.

### Creating Networks

The final area covered during the YTF's social enterprise and business session was that of young people possessing business links and the social capital to see their ideas come to fruition. Members of the YTF were interested to learn about the ideas generated by Enterprise UK in this area. It was pointed out during this organisation's presentation to the Task Force that it is likely the third sector's reliance on public funding will be a subsequent difficulty for social enterprises post-recession and through the period of fiscal retrenchment in the public finances. It was suggested that there need to be more small and medium sized industries to enable people to support themselves rather than relying on public sector funding. Moving forward, it was noted that funding for the set up of small businesses will need to be drawn from a more diverse range of sources. The idea was presented to the YTF that one of the main challenges of social enterprise is to set up a business with as little money as possible and to be inventive with the resources to hand. The point was made that there is no need for young people to get into debt to set up their own business, but they do need the right support and advice.

The biggest barrier for young people in this sector is the lack of information about how to realise their business ideas. It may be that one of the biggest opportunities is young people's familiarity with social networking sites and social media. Supporting young people to network with each other in order to develop their own approaches to shared problems may be much more successful than adults marketing to young people. MBA believes that engagement needs to be youth lead, with the knowledge that the support from young leaders need will be available when it is needed.

*The Youth Task Force recommends:*

- The social enterprise and third sector should work together to create a 'social enterprise mentoring academy'. This new service would provide advise and

guidance to young people that encourages them to develop aspirations to start-up their own community schemes and business enterprises in the future. One essential function of the mentoring academy would be to forge links between businesses, professionals and those in the creative industries, and to pass these onto young people struggling to make their first business and industry contacts.

- The Council and its community partners should explore methods of broadening the commissioning of public services to extend their capacity to make use of the creative and cultural sectors such as UK music, sports and leisure industries. The social enterprise sector should also be encouraging young people to explore potential growth areas in the coming years, such as elderly and personal care.
- As the focal point of the local community, the Council should facilitate the creation of a forum for the third-sector and social enterprises to share success stories and evidence of what works in the local community. This will allow these sectors to improve the services they provide to young people by forming a framework of best-practice, and help avoid duplication of services. Moreover, it should also explore how the role of the social enterprise sector can be extended and expanded.
- Given the massive investment from the Building Schools for the Future programme, schools should be encouraged by the Council to open their new facilities to the wider community to create opportunities for social enterprises and the third-sector to make use of them. Given the economic climate surrounding education funding, schools should also investigate the possibility of creating commercial relationships with these sectors to make it economically viable for them to offer the use of their amenities.

#### E) Wellbeing – Constructing Resilience

As indicated in the background research, the social costs of youth unemployment stretch well beyond material well-being. In order to further investigate how unemployment and scarce opportunities amongst young people can effect their health, well-being and security, the YTF held a dedicated session on the subject. Two presentations were given on health and well-being and community safety.

## Health and Well-being

The first set of evidence was provided by the South London Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLAM). They talked the YTF through the mental health services provided by the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in Lewisham- which include:

- A wide range of mental health and substance misuse services.
- The largest child and adolescent mental health service in the country. At any point in time over 6,000 children and young people are in contact with their services, of which over 900 are in contact with their national and specialist service.
- The provision of a wide range of learning opportunities, including 14,000 training experiences a year.

## Risk Factors

To understand the potential impact of youth unemployment on the well-being and health of Lewisham's young people, the YTF discussed the specific risk factors associated with poor mental health which may be present in parts of the borough. CAMHS indicated that the impact on young people in the community when risk factors overwhelm protective factors, and its resultant implications, is a complex issue for policy makers. Service providers need to consistently monitor young people who are on the edge of the community. The emotional effects on young people who underachieve can potentially last the whole of an individuals' life. It was noted that prevention is a vital tool in this field of work.

One particular risk that can result from being on the edge of the community as a result of underachievement or unemployment is exposure to overconsumption of alcohol (sometimes referred to as 'binge drinking'), illegal drugs, violence, eating disorders and mental health problems. The YTF discussed with CAMHS the number of young people being referred to them because of drugs. Although no specific figures were given, it was felt that there was not a particular rise in cases. However, there has been an increasing upward trend in young people using strong varieties of cannabis. This latter social problem has been linked to young people developing mental health problems in later life, and should therefore be regarded as a life cycle risk.

The issue of substance misuse was discussed at length. It was maintained by some members that serious social problems can become self permeating; with older group of young people tending 'act' out of their problems by abusing alcohol, and becoming involved in violence. Moreover, as socially excluded young people become older, bi-polar disorders, depression and anxiety also tend to manifest themselves. The YTF was informed that one in six – 1700 referrals a year – take place in Lewisham for metal health related problems. Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), depression and 'conduct disorders' were the most prevalent disorders being referred to CAMHS. It was pointed out by a YTF member that young people are often reluctant to admit that they have mental health problems. Situations such as exams are stressful and this causes depression. As expectations on our young people increase, there should be better advertising and access to mental health services.

### Services

A YTF member asked about the age and range of services offered by CAMHS. Their service sees people up to the age of 18. After this age, young people are referred to adult mental health services at GPs' offices. The profile of cases changes on a regular basis. Younger children tend to have behavioural problems and the manifestation of the internalisation of problems. Also, especially among young girls, there is a problem with the internalisation of their worries which manifests in eating and communication problems. They indicated that there was a problem with working for a large trust – 'there's a big sign on the side of CAMHS buildings and for some people the Maudsley has negative connotations'.

YTF members wanted to know what established public sector agencies, such as schools, can do to combat the risks produced by social exclusion. A YTF member wanted to find out about CAMHS interactions with schools. At present, there are a small number of mental health staff working in schools. However, some young people want to be referred outside of the school setting due to issues such as social stigma. The YTF inquired whether educating young people about mental health was taking place in the classroom. The YTF heard that there was, at one time, a programme of engagement which trained teachers to support young people. It was maintained that this service would make a difference if it could be revived and delivered sustainably. However, there was a

recognition that teachers are being given a difficult task. High academic standards are expected but schools are also being required to look after young people's health and wellbeing. Schools could be seen as a central place for monitoring, engagement and the delivery of basic help for young people with high stress levels.

### Safety

One question relating to the subject of health and well-being that was consistently referred to was the issue of threats to physical safety as barrier to young people fulfilling their potential. Similar to the risk posed by health related issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, involvement in crime can be direct product of youth unemployment and associated problems of social exclusion. Task Force member Barry Mizen, who has a personal insight into the issue of crime due to the tragic loss of his son to knife crime, gave a presentation to the YTF on his work in the local community. There were two prominent themes in Barry's presentation and in the subsequent question and answer session:

### Neighbourhoods and Community

The work of the Jimmy Mizen Foundation (JMF) is centred around improving neighbourhood and local community safety of young people. Supporting the idea that the safest communities are 'self regulating' the JMF has spent the last couple of years campaigning on crime issues and community engagement in the borough. One part of this is the Jimmy Mizen awareness project which involves visiting schools and prisons. The foundation is also working with other community groups such as the South London Citizens to engage people in local areas.

One of its innovative programs is the work with Safe Havens which involves local shops becoming Safe Havens where young people can go to if they feel as though they are in danger. This was built on the belief that shop keepers are willing and able to build relationships with young people and communities in their local areas if the opportunity is created. The Jimmy Mizen Foundation has turned a shop into a coffee shop, community hub and centre for the foundation on Hither Green Lane.

The YTF was informed that the unique aspect to the Safe Havens project was that, unlike Safer Neighbourhood Teams, their work focused on getting young people to support themselves and to help them build capacity in their own areas. They felt it was about creating an alternative for young people and to give them an opportunity to be involved in positive activities. They suggested that unlike other community ideas such as safe houses, which they regarded as complex and open to abuse, the Safe Havens were 'a simple idea that works well'.

## Police

Whilst community and neighbourhood interaction was seen as an innovative way of contributing towards ensuring young people's safety and well-being, ultimately meaningful youth engagement with the police is seen as critical. In the session with the YCP the YTF asked the young people whether Lewisham felt like a safe enough place for them to succeed, and if the police were felt to be a solution or part of the problem. They gave the following responses:

- They feel safe in some areas, but not in other parts.
- In their experience young males are stopped and searched on regular occasions.
- There is a lack of police presence at night, so they do not feel safe.
- Night time transport issues were highlighted, particularly the feeling of vulnerability felt when having to wait in town centres with no police presence.
- They felt there was a lack of positive relationships and trust between young people and the police.

The relationship with the police and young people was a point which was revisited during the health and well-being session. The breakdown in trust between young people and the police was a concern for the YTF. They felt that building trust in communities to support people was vital. One YTF member felt this tension between young people and the police could be traced to the intimidating behaviour by some police officers. Another felt difficulties stemmed from the difference in cultural understanding between the police and young people. This could be a reflection of the YCP point regarding the prevalence of stop and search. The lack of cohesion was also related by another member to there being no

incentive for the police to engage with the local community. There may be a role for PCSOs, but this will take some time to develop. They indicated that this is what made Safe Havens an attractive method of youth engagement; the shopkeepers involved were rooted in the community and did not move – enabling people in communities to build relationships.

The YTF also felt that there was a growing concern about the escalation in youth violence and the perceptions of youth crime, potentially related to this decline in trust. Indeed, the JMF felt that the level and escalation of violence was a problem as young people were not able to deal with the exacerbation of violence and some were not deterred by harsh punishments. According to the JMF, it was necessary for young people to see the wider consequences of their actions on the local community. It was suggested by another YTF member that young police officers should be put in positions where they can engage with young people in their communities, learning the skills they need to connect with young people in the borough.

*The Youth Task Force recommends:*

- The Council create a specific support system for young people facing stress, depression, isolation and pressure at school. It is vitally important that our young people are equipped to deal with stress, anxiety and depression. Access to information about mental health should be readily available at schools and (where feasible) teachers should receive specialist training from the borough's mental health experts on how to help young people deal with well being and mental health issues.
- The Council and its community partners work more closely with schools to ensure young people are given information and advice on issues which concern them. For instance, an information programme could be designed and led by young people as they are best positioned to relate to other young people about issues affecting their generation. This work could be developed alongside third sector partners and the local NHS.
- Creating more opportunities for inter-borough and regional initiatives that encourage young people to travel and feel safe without fear of crime or attack. This should

include the Council continuing to support and development the London Citizen's Safe Haven's project.

## **Appendix and Sources**

1.

Pete Walsh (Chair) – Consultant LBL on BSF and former Head of Forest Hill School

Les Back – Professor of Sociology, Goldsmiths College

Mike Bidulph – New Projects Development Manager, XLP

Wozzy Brewster OBE – Director, The Midi Music Company and Mayor's Advisor

Rev. Barry Carter - Brockley United Reformed Church and St Andrews Youth Club in Brockley and St Michael's youth Club

George Davies - Chair of Lewisham Borough Football Club

Manny Hawks – Co-ordinator, Young Citizens Panel

Dennis Hunter – Consultant and former head of Lewisham's Youth Service

Nathan John – Chief Executive Youth Enlightenment Limited and Mayor's Advisor

Simon Marchant – Director of Projects and Operations, XLP

Barry Mizen – Founder, The Jimmy Mizen Foundation

Margret Mizen – Founder, The Jimmy Mizen Foundation

Kalbir Shukra - Goldsmiths College Youth and Community Work MA, Goldsmiths

Denis Wade - Director/Pastor Micah Ministries

Phil Turner – Development Officer, Second Wave

Liam Webber - Co-ordinator, Young Citizens Panel

2.

OGC apprentices contract wording

[http://www.ogc.gov.uk/documents/ppn\\_14\\_09\\_guidance\\_on\\_embedding\\_skills\\_and\\_apprenticeships\\_in\\_public\\_procurement.pdf](http://www.ogc.gov.uk/documents/ppn_14_09_guidance_on_embedding_skills_and_apprenticeships_in_public_procurement.pdf)

The Contractor is required to take all reasonable steps to employ apprentices, and report to the Authority the numbers of apprentices employed and wider Skills training provided, during the delivery of this contract.

The Contractor shall take all reasonable steps to ensure [Insert % up to 5% or 1 in 20] of the employees, or that a similar specified proportion of hours worked in delivering the contract, (which may include support staff and sub contractors) are to be delivered by an employee on a formal apprenticeship programme.

The Contractor is required to make available to its employees working on the contract, information about the Government's Apprenticeship programme and wider skills opportunities.

The Contractor shall provide any appropriate further skills training opportunities for employees delivering the contract.

The Contractor shall provide a written report detailing the following measures in the regular contract management reporting [monthly, quarterly] [delete as appropriate] and be prepared to discuss apprenticeships at contract management meeting:

- a) The number of people during the reporting period employed on the contract, including support staff and subcontractors;
- b) The number of apprentices and number of new starts on apprenticeships directly initiated through the procurement process;
- c) The percentage of all employees taking part in an apprenticeship programme;
- d) If applicable, an explanation from the contractor as to why they are not managing to meet the specified percentage target;
- e) Actions being taken to improve the take up of apprenticeships;
- f) Other training/skills development being undertaken by employees in relation to this contract, including:

Work experience placements for 14 to 16 year olds

Work experience /work trial placements for other ages.

Student sandwich/gap year placements

Graduate placements

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Basic skills training

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