FOREWORD BY

CONOR RYAN

CHAIR
OF THE LIFE
CHANCES
COMMISSION
Over the last year, we visited educational institutions across the borough, heard from local business and education leaders, invited and polled the views of local residents and looked at the evidence from the borough and beyond. But above all, we heard the views of local young people and benefited greatly from their wisdom and experiences.

In our report we look at the challenges across three phases of a young person’s life – the early years, school or college, and what happens after that. Our recommendations try to build both on evidence of what we know is working elsewhere and on the good practice that we know is already happening in the borough.

In the early years, so important to later development and educational success, take-up of places for the youngest children is too low and there remain challenges to ensure every setting has well trained staff and the poorest children can access the best quality providers. At school, while results are relatively good, we heard significant concerns from young people about the quality of careers guidance, information for students on their options and access to the sort of work and cultural experiences that will help them when they leave school.

This impacted on their choices after school. Access to the most selective universities is relatively low and there is more that can be done to address family fears and student misapprehensions through summer schools, engaging with existing students and support with the application process. But university is not the only option. Apprenticeships are increasingly available, but they suffer from poor awareness, variable quality and limited progression. There is an opportunity for Waltham Forest to set the pace here with a Gold Standard apprenticeship.

The borough also suffers from a surfeit of poorly paid local jobs. While residents can arguably access the wider London jobs market, they don’t always have the skills or motivation to do so. The growth of the gig economy can benefit some, but it can also perpetuate poor pay and conditions. Addressing these issues will be important in encouraging young people to stay and live in the borough.

I am very grateful to all the members of the Commission for their invaluable insights and contributions to our work. My thanks to all those who hosted and came to our evidence sessions, particularly the young people who brought their personal perspectives to our deliberations. I am grateful too to Clare Coghill and the other councillors who attended these sessions – and commissioned this report. And I am particularly grateful to the Council officers who did all the hard work organising sessions and helping us in the preparation of this report.

Waltham Forest is a borough with great potential. But reaching that potential means addressing challenges over the next decade that could prevent many of its children and young people from succeeding. Identifying those issues and suggesting practical solutions were the tasks the Life Chances Commission was set by the Council Leader, Councillor Clare Coghill.

Waltham Forest faces challenges that are not unique. They are common to many outer London boroughs. But there is a vibrancy in this borough – and a willingness to change – that can ensure it is well placed to secure the life chances of its young people in the years ahead.

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CONTENTS
Waltham Forest is a London borough in the midst of rapid change, with strong economic growth, a growing population and a thriving cultural and creative sector. Next year Waltham Forest will become the first London Borough of Culture following a strong community-led campaign.

These changes have coincided with accelerated gentrification of some parts of the borough. Whilst this has brought positive developments – including new people, businesses and regeneration to areas in need of improvement – it has also led to some difficulties for existing residents, most obviously in the rapidly increasing cost of housing. At its heart, the borough remains one with relatively high levels of poverty, and in 2015 was ranked as the 35th most deprived local authority in the country.\(^1\)\(^2\)

This is not just a Waltham Forest story, but one that is replicated across outer London, with significant implications for our young people. Families are under pressure from rising living costs, and for parents that work – or want to work – the costs of childcare can be prohibitive.\(^3\)

Nationally, ever-increasing pressures on local authorities are affecting the quality and coverage available to support children in their early years and their parents, and the extent of advice and guidance in schools for young people to make the best possible choices about their futures. We are increasingly living in a low-wage society that, when twinned with inflation-busting housing costs, makes it more and more difficult for people to build their lives in London.

Addressing these issues is not just a moral imperative. Waltham Forest benefits culturally and economically from the impact that young people have, bringing creativity, energy and making the borough a good place to live and work. But for this to continue, young people need to be able to live, work and succeed in the borough. Losing their dynamism would cost the borough economically, as well as culturally and socially.

This is all the more important in a changing world. The nature of work and employment is set to radically alter over the years to come. It is crucial that young people can gain the skills needed to thrive now and flourish in a modern economy that is increasingly data-driven and automated in nature.

As a result, enabling young people in the borough to get a good education which leads to a rewarding career is, and should remain, a key priority for the Council.

It is with this in mind that the Life Chances Commission was established, to focus in particular on identifying the actions that the Council should take, and activities the Council should lead, to ensure young people in Waltham Forest have the opportunities and support to thrive during their lives.
To address this challenge, we sought out the views of young people in the borough, particularly drawing on their experiences and thoughts about their futures. This insight was complemented with information gathered from the local education and business sectors, local residents and evidence from the borough and beyond. We then tested our initial recommendations with over 2,000 local young people as part of the Council’s ‘Big Youth Conversation’.

Our work spanned the broad stages of a child and young person’s development: early years, school and post-school. To understand each, we held six evidence sessions to hear from young people about their lived experiences, listened to experts on particular issues and looked at evidence and data to spot local trends to see if it supported the messages we heard. The following chapters set out what we found through these discussions and our recommendations to the Council that aim to address the issues identified.

In summary, we heard consistently from the young people in the borough on two themes: the lack or incompleteness of information they receive to help them determine their future options and the lack of opportunities locally to experience work and build careers. From local practitioners we heard about the importance of high quality early years support and education, and specifically the need to engage with the most disadvantaged families so that they can benefit. These headline findings are set out in Table 1.

### Our Findings

**This insight was complemented with information gathered from the local education and business sectors, local residents and evidence from the borough and beyond.**

<table>
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<th>KEY ISSUE</th>
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| Quality and take up of early years education | We heard that high quality early years education is key to boosting life chances, particularly in disadvantaged groups, but take-up of free places is much lower than it should be.  
We need to ensure that families, particularly those that are disadvantaged, are aware of how to access it and that it’s of high quality to give everyone a good start in life. |
| Information on future options          | We heard consistently that young people don’t feel they receive the right information at the right time about career, university, apprenticeship or job options and opportunities.  
Young people don’t feel that they hear from role models who reflect their life experiences and the diversity of the borough, and who might help them feel like adequate candidates for the opportunities that are available.  
We heard that the bulk of advice comes from parents and teachers, who may be less familiar or comfortable with vocational options such as apprenticeships (due to a perception of them being lower-grade qualifications). |
| Access to opportunities                | Students in Waltham Forest are less likely than those in other boroughs to attend Russell Group universities or to take up apprenticeships. We heard that local young people from diverse backgrounds, and sometimes their parents, are often nervous about how accepted they would feel at top universities assumed to be ‘white and middle-class’.  
We heard that young people weren’t getting the opportunities to experience working life before they left school and that they felt there weren’t many jobs available for them locally. |
Our remit was not just to identify the issues that could prevent our young people from maximising their potential, but to set out actions the Council could take to address them. There are many things beyond the control of local government and we are conscious of the constrained financial context in which councils operate.

That said, investing in our young people is good economics as well as the right thing to do. We set out a series of recommended actions for the Council throughout this report – 30 in total – which we believe, if delivered in concert, could make a material difference to the life chances of young people in Waltham Forest.
The full list of recommended actions is set out in Table 2, but here we summarise the eight priority actions we consider would have the greatest impact:

1. **INCREASE THE TAKE-UP OF THE EARLY YEARS OFFER FOR THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST**

   High quality early years education is hugely important in giving young people the best start in life, and the best chance to progress during school, with educational, social and developmental benefits. It opens up more opportunities for maternal employment and increases families’ financial stability. The concern is that the most disadvantaged children and families in Waltham Forest are not benefiting as much as their peers from the good quality offer that is available. The Council should adopt a forensic focus not only on quality in early years provision – which is crucial – but also access to and take up by the most disadvantaged families in the borough; high quality early years support has little benefit if it is not utilised. A refreshed early education and childcare strategy provides an opportunity to respond positively, recruiting and retaining excellent early years staff and encouraging more take-up of free places for disadvantaged two and three year-olds. The Council should also consider how it can work with parents and businesses to maximise take-up.

2. **PUPIL PREMIUM ENRICHMENT CARD**

   Disadvantaged young people often lack exposure to cultural activities that evidence shows can support better choices at A-Level and beyond. The Council should use its status as Borough of Culture next year to build cultural and creative capacity to support disadvantaged young people. This should include encouraging schools to invest their pupil premium in cultural activities for the most disadvantaged; the Council negotiating with cultural bodies in London – including theatres, special museum and gallery exhibitions and concert venues – for free and discounted entry for pupil premium students and an aspiration that all school children in Waltham Forest will attend at least one event in the Borough of Culture programme.

3. **GOOD QUALITY CAREERS ADVICE**

   Alongside work experience, a lack of quality and consistent advice over their future career options was another regular theme which arose from discussions with young people, who often claimed to have received no advice at all during their school years. The Council should work with local schools and colleges, local and regional businesses and the Careers and Enterprise Company to develop options for providing careers advice and experiences earlier and at multiple stages throughout secondary school, covering the full range of options for young people, including face-to-face advice. This should start with implementing the requirements in the 2018 Careers Strategy, including providing careers advice early – starting at the end of primary school – in Year 6.

4. **OPPORTUNITY BANK**

   The lack of opportunities for work experience, traineeships and ‘Saturday jobs’ was regularly cited by young people as a barrier to their development. Many felt that the lack of experience of an office environment, or of holding a responsible position in a business, meant they lacked confidence when pursuing potential career options. To address this, the Council should work with young people to develop an ‘Opportunity Bank’ that uses digital tools or smart technology to promote meaningful local opportunities to local young people.

5. **COMMUNITY MENTORS**

   Waltham Forest is rich in social capital, yet we heard consistently that young people were not hearing from diverse and inspiring role models who resonated with them. As such, young people told us they often saw opportunities that were within their reach academically as being for others and not for them. The Council should develop options for tapping into the borough’s strong social capital by building a programme for a diverse range of community mentors who can support young people in thinking through their future options. This could include those working in or running local businesses.

6. **GOLD STANDARD APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME**

   Apprenticeship take-up in Waltham Forest is low, especially amongst young people, restricting the vocational options for those who don’t consider the academic route to be appropriate. To support a greater emphasis on high-quality vocational education, the Council should establish a gold standard apprenticeship and traineeship programme – with progression to Level 3 as standard, training as a key element and opportunities to move to higher levels – working with local schools and colleges to attract uptake. This approach should then be recommended to local businesses to replicate. An ‘apprenticeship ambassador’ programme should be implemented to increase knowledge of successful apprenticeships within schools. To tackle some of the misconceptions around apprenticeships, the Council should work with schools and families to ensure young people learn about the full range of learning pathways and career options, not just the university route.
THE UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE

The low rate of attendance of pupils from Waltham Forest schools and colleges at the most selective universities is striking. University is not for everyone and it is important that young people get good advice on their vocational as well as academic options. However, under-representation at Russell Group universities suggests that some students for whom the top universities would be beneficial are not applying or succeeding with their applications. We recommend the Council introduce a ‘University Challenge’ programme to support those young people with capability to attend a Russell Group or other highly selective university, through subject advice, links to outreach programmes including summer schools, facilitation with other local students, parental reassurance and support with admissions.

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

To embed support for young people, the Council should act as an exemplar for how it supports its young people to build their lives in the borough. This includes monitoring and reviewing how all of the Council’s activities (including skills, employment, procurement, planning, housing and regeneration) are enabling young people to succeed over the next decade. This work should consider how to actively engage and plan services with young people, local businesses and education providers and practitioners.

As part of this, the Council should play a more active convening role to build closer relationships between young people, parents, local employers, schools, colleges and Russell Group universities.

For example:
- Through its work with families and parents, the Council can deliver many of the recommendations in this report and is perfectly placed to lead by example, for instance with regard to its policies on maternal employment. Encouraging take-up of childcare and the use of home learning tools, developing community-led approaches to childminding and mentoring, and working to address misconceptions about apprenticeships and university will all require the Council to work closely with families, embedding these ideas within its Think Family programme.

- In its interactions with children’s centres, schools and colleges, the Council should seek to continue to drive up standards in teaching, work on persistent absence, improve careers advice, support the exposure of students to a diverse range of role models, boost interest in apprenticeships and support the most academic students into the top universities.

- Building on its relationships with business, the Council should encourage local companies and organisations to communicate with their employees about the availability of childcare, engage with schools and young people around careers, work experience and traineeships, and boost the provision of apprenticeships and other good quality employment opportunities for young people.

In addition, all Council jobs should be advertised locally with colleges and on relevant social media, and the Council should work with local employers and its own suppliers to encourage local recruitment and sourcing of services.

Finally, as part of this work, the Council should report on progress towards improving the life chances of young people. They should consider the appropriate performance measurements to use, and report publicly at least annually on their progress, including online.
### Table 2 - Summary of recommended actions

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<th>KEY ISSUE</th>
<th>KEY ACTIONS</th>
<th>OTHER RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Quality and coverage of early years education</td>
<td>1. Increase the take-up of the early years offer for those who need it most</td>
<td>The Council should:</td>
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<td>i. Undertake research into why early years take-up is low, particularly in disadvantaged families, building on the findings of the 2016 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.</td>
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<td>ii. Ensure all Council departments are signed up to the importance of providing sufficient childcare places.</td>
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<td>iii. Support schools and settings that are experiencing difficulty recruiting and retaining quality staff.</td>
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<td>iv. In partnership with providers, support the retention of top professionals through a formal celebration event to reward excellent early years provision.</td>
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<td>v. Encourage the use of and access to digital home learning tools such as: easypeasyapp.com</td>
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<td>vi. Consider and test whether high quality childcare in group settings can be complemented by wrap-around home care that is affordable, particularly for disadvantaged families.</td>
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<td>vii. Work with parents and businesses to encourage take-up of free child-care provision and other early years services particularly by disadvantaged families, looking at the opportunity the Integrated Communities pilot provides for focused support.</td>
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<td>viii. Advertise the early years offer and the financial support available through digital platforms, and improve signposting on the website, whilst supporting those without access to digital technology.</td>
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<td>ix. Use the Connecting Communities’ programme to encourage residents within and across communities to ‘reconnect’ and share solutions to local problems.</td>
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<td>Information on future options</td>
<td>2. Pupil Premium Enrichment Card</td>
<td>x. Work with local schools and multi-academy trusts to improve professional development for teachers ensuring that all children receive the best teaching.</td>
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<td>xi. Investigate the reasons behind the high rates of persistent absence, and take steps to address this.</td>
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<td>xii. Encourage schools to use their pupil premium to support disadvantaged children and young people in a more innovative and transformative way – including through a Pupil Premium Enrichment Card.</td>
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<td>xiii. Take steps to ensure young people, in particular those that are disadvantaged, are fully involved in the Borough of Culture programme.</td>
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<td>3. Good quality careers advice</td>
<td>xiv. Improve careers advice by implementing the requirements in the Careers Strategy. Provide careers advice early – starting at Year 6 – and seek opportunities to create Careers Leaders, working with the Careers and Enterprise Company to bring business speakers into schools.</td>
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<td>4. Opportunity Bank</td>
<td>xv. Work with young people on the design of a Waltham Forest ‘Opportunity Bank’ that links them with meaningful local opportunities. Ensure local businesses, schools and colleges are all aware of Bank, encouraging them to use it to promote vocational routes, traineeships, Saturday jobs, work shadowing and better preparation for the workplace.</td>
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<td>5. Community mentors</td>
<td>xvi. Pursue options for mentoring of young people through a network of community and employer mentors. xvii. Promote a diverse programme of guest speakers to go into schools and talk about their life experiences and achievements.</td>
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<td>Access to opportunities</td>
<td>6. Gold standard apprenticeship scheme</td>
<td>xviii. Work to increase the number of Level 3+ apprenticeships open to Waltham Forest young people, and to improve progression. Do this through ensuring the Council has its own gold-standard apprenticeship scheme – minimum one year duration with automatic progression to Level 3 or 4, and a minimum of a day a week college/training – and utilise levy payments to support young people into work. xix. Work with local businesses and colleges to promote apprenticeship provision and take-up across Waltham Forest. xx. Consider introducing an ‘apprenticeship ambassador’ programme where Waltham Forest apprentices and apprentice alumni visit local schools and colleges to talk about their experiences. xxi. Work with parents and teachers to make the value of apprenticeships clearer so that apprenticeships are promoted positively as one of the options for students when they leave education.</td>
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<td>7. ‘The university Challenge’</td>
<td>xxii. Use its agency to increase links between Russell Group and other highly selective universities, and parents, schools and colleges in the Borough to maximise participation in outreach events and summer schools, and reduce misconceptions. xxiii. Develop ways to help young people to become more aware of university options, including through a ‘buddy’ system that links young people from Waltham Forest attending the same university, and a scheme to see university students visit their old schools and talk about their experiences. xxiv. Work to improve the personal statements and supporting references provided by schools to help young people applying to university. Consider options for business-led after-school support.</td>
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<td><strong>8. Leading by example</strong></td>
<td>xxv. Lead by example, embedding an approach across the Council to support young people into work, and career or educational advancement.</td>
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<td>xxvi. Ensure that through all of the Council’s investment activities and programmes – including the Town Hall Campus, Borough of Culture and Sixty-Bricks – opportunities for employment for local young people are considered and prioritised.</td>
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<td>xxvii. Use its relationship with the Top 20 group of businesses to encourage apprenticeships, placements and internships, and seek to boost opportunities to employment for young people.</td>
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<td>xxviii. Consider whether the ‘Steps Into Work’ programme can play a bigger role in linking young people with good employment opportunities locally.</td>
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<td>xxix. Promote the Living Wage locally through relationships with local businesses, and consider introducing incentives to encourage take-up.</td>
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<td>xxx. Advertise all Council jobs locally with colleges and on relevant social media, and work with local employers and its own suppliers to encourage local recruitment and sourcing of services.</td>
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These changes have coincided with accelerated gentrification of some parts of the borough. Whilst this has brought many positives in an influx of new people, innovative businesses and the regeneration of areas in need of improvement, it has also led to difficulties for existing residents, most obviously in rapidly increasing costs of housing, which can make it harder for them to thrive in the borough. Average rental costs now account for almost half of median earnings, up from 37 per cent in 2012, and average house prices are now about 15 times the average annual salary of residents. This is complicated further because, at its heart, the borough remains one with relatively high levels of poverty.

Young people are particularly affected. Only a third of Waltham Forest residents believe the opportunities young people have as they become adults are better than those their parents had. This matches recent national research which found more than twice as many people are pessimistic than optimistic about young adults’ chances of improving on their parents’ lives.

This is not just a Waltham Forest story, but one that is replicated across outer London. And it has an impact on our young people. Families are under pressure from rising living costs, and for parents that work - or want to work - the costs of childcare can be prohibitive. Ever-increasing pressures on local authorities are affecting the quality and coverage available to support children and parents in their early years, and the extent of advice and guidance in schools for young people to make the best possible choices about their futures.

In a low-wage society that, when twinned with inflation-busting housing costs, makes it increasingly difficult for people to build their lives in London.

Addressing these issues is not just a moral imperative. Waltham Forest benefits from its young people – their creativity, energy and ability to make the borough a good place to live and work. But for this to continue, young people need to be able to live, work and succeed here. Losing their dynamism would cost the borough economically, as well as culturally and socially.

This is all the more important in a changing world. The nature of work and employment is set to alter radically over the years to come. It is crucial that young people are given the skills needed to thrive now, and flourish in a modern economy, which will be increasingly data-driven and automated in nature. Waltham Forest is in a good place in this respect, with strong growth in digital and creative industries creating more opportunities for employment, supported by improvements in the digital infrastructure including broadband. Increasing digital knowledge and skills at school and college will mean young people will be able to make the most of this.

The Mayor’s draft Skills Strategy is intended to give fresh impetus to improving skills provision across the capital and build on the recent Government focus on improving technical skills through the new T-Level qualifications, Institutes of Technology, the Apprenticeship Levy and the implementation of an Industrial Strategy.

These frameworks need a concerted local focus to address the systemic inequalities in our society as they impact on the borough. Last year, the Social Mobility Commission reported on the UK’s “lamentable social mobility track record”, finding that “there is a fracture line running deep through our labour and housing markets and our education system. Those on the wrong side of this divide are losing out and falling behind.” Whilst the Commission found that London had a more positive story to tell on social mobility than other parts of the UK, largely as a result of better schooling and early years provision for disadvantaged pupils, it nevertheless found that “the capital has entrenched pockets of deprivation, while high housing costs together with the prevalence of low-paid employment are structural barriers to achieving a higher level of social mobility.”

It is in this context that the Life Chances Commission was established, to understand how to improve the life chances of Waltham Forest residents, and to focus in particular on identifying actions that the Council should undertake, and activities the Council should lead, to ensure that young people in Waltham Forest are enabled to thrive during their lives.

Waltham Forest is a London borough in the midst of rapid change, with strong economic growth, a growing population and a thriving cultural and creative sector. Next year, Waltham Forest will become the first London Borough of Culture, following a community-led campaign.
WHO WE ARE

The Life Chances Commission was established in autumn 2017. It was chaired by Conor Ryan, the Director of Research at the Sutton Trust, alongside seven other commissioners who brought expertise and experiences from business and academia, as well as representatives from local schools and colleges. The Commissioners are shown in Figure 1 with full biographies in Appendix 3.

The Commission worked independently of the Council, though was supported by council officers who acted as a secretariat, supporting the Commission’s meetings and helping with the drafting of this report. This report reflects the collective views of the Commission.
The Life Chances Commission was asked to investigate how the Council and its partner organisations can enable young people in Waltham Forest to get on and thrive. To address this question, we sought out the views of young people in the borough, particularly drawing on their experiences and thoughts about their futures. We supplemented this with visits to local educational institutions, heard from local business and education leaders, invited and polled the views of local residents and looked at the evidence from the borough and beyond.

Over the course of nine meetings we built our knowledge of existing work affecting young people in Waltham Forest. We combined the experience of commissioners in different areas affecting life chances with that of professionals with extensive local knowledge, to identify best practice and areas which needed further exploration, research and development.

In total, the Commission held six evidence sessions and an additional three sessions that established the remit of the research and considered and refined the recommendations. Young people played a significant part in most sessions. The six evidence sessions focused on different themes that can drive or describe the life chances of young people, as set out in Figure 2. The discussions concentrated on the journey of a child to adulthood which has resulted in the following structure of the report: early years, school age and post-school opportunities. We looked at these areas in the context of the specific environment currently facing young people in Waltham Forest.

Following our evidence sessions, our draft recommendations were tested with over 2,000 young people in the borough as part of the Council’s ‘Big Youth Conversation’ – the results from this are set out in Appendix 1. We have used these results to shape our final recommendations, and refer to the results throughout the report.
Waltham Forest residents are concerned about the future opportunities for their young people. As Figure 2 illustrates, a much greater proportion of respondents to the latest Residents’ Insight Survey felt that young people have worse opportunities than their parents had. Interestingly, this pessimism does not come from young people themselves: the youngest cohort surveyed (16-29) were the only cohort to view their opportunities favourably.

Do you feel that the opportunities young people today have as they become adults are better, worse or the same as those their parents had?

Research suggests that life outcomes for young people in the UK are closely related to parental income, socio-economic status and parental education. Financial pressures on many families in London are increasing due to rising rents and childcare costs. High childcare costs mean that financial work incentives in London are weaker than in other parts of the country. Many families are increasingly facing the choice of living in poverty or leaving London. The financial status of families affects the life chances of young people in several ways. Family cohesion can be seriously damaged by the stress that poverty causes: relationships under financial stress are more likely to break down.

Over recent years the freeze in benefit payments and introduction of a benefits cap have contributed to a projected increase in child poverty across the UK: absolute child poverty after housing costs is projected to increase from 27.1 per cent in 2015-16 to 31.3 per cent in 2021-22; relative child poverty after housing costs is projected to increase from 29.7 per cent to 36.6 per cent over the same period. This will reverse progress made in the last 25 years to reduce child poverty.

Family breakdown, poverty and relocation can all detrimentally impact on the mental health of young people. Poverty contributes to mental ill health in children through environmental effects, a higher chance of facing adverse experiences, reduced opportunities to build resilience, and the direct effect of simply knowing that you have less than your peers.

Child poverty is more prevalent in Waltham Forest than in other areas of Outer London and is higher than the national median – the borough ranks 25th in a list of local authorities with the highest rates of child poverty and 11th highest in London.
The child poverty rate after housing costs in Waltham Forest is 35.9 per cent, with some wards facing a particular problem: the rate is 43.6 per cent in Leyton and 42.2 per cent in Cathall wards. Living in poverty can make many children in the borough susceptible to poor mental health.19

As many as 111,000 children across London will suffer from a clinically significant mental health problem.20 Research shows children living in poverty are at a significant health disadvantage because being poor negatively affects developing physiological systems. Living in poverty can also have detrimental health consequences that are severe and lifelong, and it can lead to family stress and breakdown. In 2015 research by the Dartington Research Unit found that in the borough:21

- 16 per cent of children experience difficulties in relation to their communication and language development (compared with 7 per cent in similar areas)
- 59 per cent experience difficulties in relation to their social and emotional development (compared with 35 per cent in similar areas)
- 28 per cent were considered ‘high need’ compared to 23 per cent in similar areas—but a lower proportion report receiving high need services

These disadvantages are cemented as young people progress into adulthood. Research into young people and their housing options in the borough, undertaken by the Council in 2017, found that those with fewer skills and qualifications, little or no family financial support or option of returning to the family home had more restricted and precarious future prospects.22

Despite these pressures and disadvantages, young people and their families are working hard to achieve education success and attainment. In 2016/17 Waltham Forest recorded a total of 67 per cent of children entitled to Free School Meals reaching a good level of development age five. This is the 7th highest figure in London, above the London average of 64 per cent and the national average of 56 per cent.23

The picture is less rosy for disadvantaged students during secondary school. Of the cohort that completed Key Stage 5 (KS5) in Waltham Forest schools and colleges in 2014/15, 87 per cent of young people secured sustained education or employment destinations, below the national average (89 per cent). For pupils that had been disadvantaged at Key Stage 4 (KS4), the proportion was 86 per cent, the same as the national average for this group of students.24 More broadly, pupils in Waltham Forest perform above the national average but below the London one. At KS4 in 2016/17, the average Attainment 8 score was below the London average, albeit above the national one. Progress 8, which measures the average progress of pupils with similar starting points, was significantly above the national average (the zero line) at +0.14 in 2016/17. This figure was below the London average of +0.22.25

It is against this background that we considered what the Council might do to improve the life chances of young people in the borough.
These are constrained times: our recommended actions are those that we consider will make a real difference to the life chances of young people, but we have avoided anything we consider would be unrealistic for any local authority in 2018, even for those which prioritise improving life chances. Equally, we have focused on areas where we consider the most impact can be had accounting for existing projects and programmes. In some cases, this may mean areas that have a real impact on young people may appear as though they have been missed. In particular:

- We have avoided making recommendations on housing. Housing – its availability and affordability – is a key factor affecting whether young adults can build working lives in the borough, and affects them indirectly as they are growing up through the financial impact of housing costs upon their families. The Council has recently published research on housing and young people and is working on a Housing Strategy for publication later this year. Aside from expressing a view that there is a clear need for more housing that is genuinely affordable, the Commission considered the complexities of this area as beyond its remit.

- We have not looked in detail at the anti-social and criminal issues being faced by some young people, which can act as a barrier to the achievement of potential, and of which there have been high profile examples in Waltham Forest in recent months. We heard little in our evidence sessions about gangs, substance abuse, and the fear of crime that we know affects young people in particular. We are aware the Council is undertaking detailed research into these areas, so have not sought to duplicate this effort. That is not to underplay the seriousness of these issues.

Equally, we have noted some of the key strategies, policies and programmes the Council is pursuing, and have sought to make recommendations that build on these where appropriate. In particular:

- The borough has recently been announced as the first London Borough of Culture which will see a focus on Waltham Forest through a programme of cultural and creative events in 2019.

- The Council has recently been awarded funding as part of the Integrated Communities Strategy to pilot activities to build a more inclusive and cohesive society. This will form
The Council has recently launched a new corporate strategy – Creating Futures – that seeks to transform the way the Council delivers services, in order to achieve the three priorities set by the Leader: keeping Waltham Forest clean and safe; ensuring a decent roof over residents' heads and improving residents' life chances. Part of a broader ‘Connecting Communities’ programme within the Council. Where we have made recommendations around engaging particular groups within the community or the potential to build on social capital within the borough, we have made references to this programme.

- In recent years the Council has adopted a cross-cutting ‘Think Family’ approach to supporting residents, seeking to offer more holistic and effective solutions across children’s services, adults’ social care, public health, housing services, housing solutions and housing strategy and delivery programmes. Where our recommendations would support or build on this approach, we have said as much.

- To support unemployed residents to return to employment, Waltham Forest was awarded funding from the European Social Fund to create a Steps into Work programme. Given the potential link with support for young people into employment, we have referred to this programme in our recommendations. We are aware of further work streams in the Council that are looking to further prioritise local employment opportunities, including a new Think Work approach to support residents into good jobs and develop skills to support the local economy.

Finally, the Council has recently launched a new corporate strategy – Creating Futures – that seeks to transform the way the Council delivers services, in order to achieve the three priorities set by the Leader: keeping Waltham Forest clean and safe; ensuring a decent roof over residents' heads and improving residents' life chances. Creating Futures consists of five driving principles, including a 'People Focused' approach that builds 'New Relationships' and encompasses 'New Ways of Working'. In the Council's own words, the strategy is both ambitious and radical, and so we have sought to recommend actions for the Council that work with the grain of this new approach. Improving young people’s life chances could be a radical programme at the heart of this new Creating Futures approach.

Cycle confident training at Mission Grove – 2018
EARLY YEARS

THOUGH QUALITY IS GENERALLY GOOD, THE COUNCIL MUST NOT REST ON ITS LAURELS. RECRUITING AND RETAINING THE BEST EARLY YEARS PROFESSIONALS SHOULD BE A PRIORITY, INCLUDING THROUGH REWARDING OF EXCELLENT PROVISION.
KEY POINTS

- Whilst the quality of early years provision and childcare in Waltham Forest is good, take-up in the borough is poor, particularly amongst certain communities. Almost half of eligible two year olds aren’t taking up their entitlement to free childcare, less than comparable authorities and the national average. More needs to be done to encourage take-up, especially in the most disadvantaged families.

- There are sufficient childcare places at present, but given the growth in the borough and level of new development, the Council must ensure sufficient provision is built into plans for new developments.

- Though quality is generally good, the Council must not rest on its laurels. Recruiting and retaining the best early years professionals should be a priority, including through rewarding of excellent provision. The Council should also look at whether high quality childcare in group settings can be complemented by wrap-around home care that is affordable, particularly for disadvantaged families.

- The Connecting Communities programme offers an opportunity to support residents within and across communities to ‘reconnect’ and share solutions to local problems.

CONTEXT:

The early years of a child’s life, from birth to five years old, have been shown to be the most important determinant of outcomes for that person. Research has found around two-fifths of the educational performance gap of young people in England arises before children even enter school, which is testament to the importance of early years development. Over recent years the emphasis of national policy has been to support parents of children aged two to five with childcare. However, evidence increasingly shows the importance of quality care and group interaction for children who are under two – both in supporting healthy brain development and developing social and relationship-building skills. The recently published cross party manifesto, which focused on the first 1001 days of a child’s life, highlighted this period’s lifelong impact, for good and bad.

High quality early years provision can help young people to achieve good long term outcomes. This places a premium on combining the take up and quality of provision, including health and development support for babies and young children, and a support offer for parents. High quality childcare for children must go hand in hand with support for carers and parents during a period that, as well as joyous, can be difficult and stressful. High quality early years services, including health, education and childcare, as well as a stable, low-stress home environment, all help to ensure children get the best start in life.

Achieving a consistently high quality level of early years provision is a challenge for areas with diverse populations and with high levels of poverty. Children from poorer backgrounds have worse development outcomes than their more affluent peers during the early years: although not all disadvantaged children do badly, as a group they are less likely to do well than their better off peers. In more than a quarter of local authorities in the UK, fewer than half of disadvantaged children are school ready by the age of five. For many children, this translates into worse educational outcomes throughout their school careers and later lives.

Much depends on the widest possible take-up of high quality childcare and early education provision to reduce the likelihood and size of attainment gaps between disadvantaged children and their peers. To achieve this, the provision needs to be affordable, and parents and carers need to be motivated and informed to take it up.

Alongside high quality care in group settings, evidence suggests that a home learning environment is important to supporting a child’s development. The combination of quality childcare in group settings with wrap-around home care is simple in theory, but difficult to deliver, especially for working parents.

Crucially, lower cost, affordable provision must not lead to lower quality: there is concern that a focus on affordability and boosting maternal employment is coming at the expense of quality care. The recent extension of free 30 hours provision to some working families is aimed at supporting parents into the labour market. However, it may also mean quality care is focused on those already more advantaged. Nationally a third of eligible children – those from the poorest 40 per cent of society – don’t currently take up free provision at age two and a tenth of poorer families don’t take up their entitlement at age three. This tension at the heart of national policy has led to the Sutton Trust warning that the provision of free childcare is ‘coming at the expense of the quality of provision’.
WALTHAM FOREST STORY

During the early years in Waltham Forest, a high proportion of children develop difficulties in their health and development: 28 per cent are considered ‘high need’, 16 per cent experience difficulties in relation to their communication and language development and 59 per cent experience difficulties in relation to their social and emotional development.38 In this context, quality early years care, including healthcare, is crucial including for babies and children up to two years old.

On the surface, Waltham Forest has a good story to tell on early years provision: most providers are rated by Ofsted as ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’. But the good outcomes for those children benefiting from childcare – a relatively high proportion of disadvantaged children in the borough achieve a ‘good level of development’ at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage39 – needs to be seen in a context where almost half the eligible two year olds aren’t taking up their free childcare entitlement.

For an area where child poverty is a prevailing concern, an important focus should be on supporting parents of the very youngest children from birth. Waltham Forest has recast its approach to Sure Start provision since 2016 through a new Children and Family Centre model based around a whole family approach and offering health and parenting support.40

The Council’s four Children and Family Centres provide local families with access to enhanced early education and early help services, including support with parenting, child health and welfare, family life, employability, community links and life skills. To improve child development and wellbeing for children aged nought to five, specialist healthy child services are available, provided by HENRY, a national charity. These have a particular focus on infant feeding from birth, as well as help for healthy eating, oral health and speech and language development, so parents can access expert advice and support in their local Children and Family Centre.

While it is still early days, these centres have the potential to be exemplars of an approach to supporting child development.

Early education and childcare in Waltham Forest are available through a diverse and regularly shifting market of maintained, private, voluntary and independent providers. Levels of provision fluctuate regularly but at August 2017 it was made up of a mix of 56 providers of full day care provision, 28 providers of seasonal provision, 212 childminders, 42 maintained/academy nursery classes and three maintained nursery schools.

As elsewhere, Waltham Forest reflects the national offer of support to parents with the costs of childcare. Free early education of 15 hours a week is available to all three and four year olds, with an extended entitlement of 30 hours to eligible working parents. Free places are also available for two year olds where the parent is in receipt of a working-age benefit. For children under two there is support for parents and carers through a mix of tax free childcare, vouchers and tax credits. Universal Credit allows eligible families to claim back up to 85 per cent of childcare costs within certain defined limits.

In this chapter, we look at the key issues related to early years provision and offer recommendations on where to improve, largely in respect of:

- **Take-up and sufficiency**, where provision needs to be increased and taken up particularly by the most disadvantaged families and communities.
- **Quality**, in rigorously ensuring good standards through hiring and retaining top professionals but also people from diverse backgrounds to improve engagement with the diverse communities in Waltham Forest.
- **Information and support**, ranging from awareness of the financial support available to careful and tailored messaging about the benefits and availability of childcare, which could include efforts to encourage community solutions.

We address each of these in turn below and set out our recommendations to the Council for addressing them.
TAKE-UP & SUFFICIENCY

...DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT CAN BE CRUCIAL, AND LESS THAN A QUARTER OF TWO YEAR OLDS HAVE ONGOING CONTACT WITH THE CENTRES.
We heard through our evidence sessions and have seen through the data that there is a particular issue with take-up of early years places in the borough. Though the existing four Children and Family Centres offer a range of parental support sessions with a focus on the development of very young children based on the Early Years Foundation Stage model, they are only reaching half of two year olds at a time when such development support can be crucial, and less than a quarter of two year olds have ongoing contact with the centres.

Figure 5 illustrates take up of free childcare by eligible two, three and four year olds since 2014. Across all ages, take-up in Waltham Forest is well below the England average, and below the London average for two and four year olds: take-up by eligible two year olds – representing some of the most disadvantaged families – was just 53 per cent, below the London average of 58 per cent and the national figure of 71 per cent.

We understand there are several reasons why take-up is low in Waltham Forest. The borough’s 2016 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment involved discussions with young parents, parents of children with a disability, Polish parents and parents of Pakistani ethnicity, and identified a range of issues which act as barriers. These included a lack of awareness about financial support and availability, lack of flexibility to fit in with working patterns and perceptions that childcare was of poor quality. In some communities there is also a culture of informal childcare through extended networks of family and friends. There are other challenges for parents relating to their particular circumstances or background.

The Commission heard that not only must information about childcare and financial support be widely available, it must also be accessible to parents and carers from different backgrounds. This means creative solutions need to be found to attract families and communities who don’t traditionally use the early years services. At the same time, there is a need to explore other ways of supporting parents and carers with challenging family circumstances, with busy work lives and limited space to deliver the best outcomes for their children in the early years.

As we discuss in the next section, the quality of early years provision within
Based on these findings, we recommend the Council should:

1. Undertake research into why early years take-up is low, particularly in disadvantaged families, building on the findings of the 2016 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.

2. Ensure all Council departments are signed up to the importance of providing sufficient childcare places.

the borough is generally high, yet the benefit of the good quality provision on offer is undermined if take-up is poor. It wasn’t clear to the Commission the extent to which targeted work is being undertaken within those communities where low take-up is a particular issue. The Council’s Integrated Communities pilot may provide a means of engaging with these groups as part of its wider Connecting Communities programme. Either way, the Council must do more work to understand and address poor take-up in the borough and advertise the services that are on offer.

Take-up and sufficiency of places go hand in hand. In terms of sufficiency, analysis for the Council suggests there are sufficient early education places at present, but over the next five years more childcare places will have to be found to cater for an increasing population and (hopefully) greater take-up of free early education. There are also concerns over the lack of suitable premises limiting an expansion of places.

In addition to places being sufficient, childcare should be convenient for parents to find when they need it. The 2016 Childcare Sufficiency Assessment reported that 57 per cent of parents surveyed in Waltham Forest found it difficult, or very difficult to find childcare in a convenient location. Given the level of growth and regeneration in the borough, availability of quality early years education and care needs embedding through the Council’s planning, business support and housing functions: all have a role to play in prioritising joint work to find solutions to these anticipated shortages.

Benefits of take-up are not just educational and developmental for the child. We know childcare offers the opportunity to access employment and therefore greater financial stability for mothers – in particular where local rates of maternal employment are a critical factor underlying London’s high child poverty rates. In Waltham Forest, of the 55,500 women of childbearing age, one in five are either unemployed or economically inactive – with women from ethnic minorities twice as likely to be in this category as white females. About 21 per cent of women who are currently inactive (5,800) say they would like to have a job. The Council is well placed to make a difference, becoming an exemplar as an employer supporting maternal employment and in discretionary decisions about where to target its resources – some approaches are set out in the Child Poverty Action Group’s 2013 study.

In summary, more needs to be done to boost take-up of good quality early years education, which will both support the most disadvantaged in school readiness, and help mothers that want to re-enter the work place to boost their (and their family’s) economic situation. This should be a key focus of the Council’s updated early years and childcare strategy.
QUALITY

It is not enough for childcare and early years provision to be affordable and widespread; it must also be of the highest quality. Excellent childcare provides a boost for children’s attainment in a way that mediocre provision does not.\textsuperscript{51,52} High quality pre-schooling is especially beneficial for the most disadvantaged students and for those of low qualified parents in promoting better English outcomes at age 11.\textsuperscript{53}
The Commission recognises outcomes are good when families in Waltham Forest access early years provision. The key trends on achievement are:

- A relatively high proportion (67 per cent in 2016/17) of children eligible for free school meals achieved a ‘good level of development’ at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage: the borough was ranked as 7th in the country for this measure.\(^{54}\)

- There remains an achievement gap between the bottom 20 per cent of children and the rest — in 2017 it stood at 31.5 per cent, similar to the national average of 31.7 per cent and London average of 31.3 per cent.\(^{55}\)

- The proportion of three and four year olds taking up their place at a good or outstanding provider reached 98 per cent, higher than all other local and national measures that are at between 77 per cent and 97 per cent.\(^{56}\)

Further, considerable improvement has been made in the quality of childcare provision in the borough over the last four years. By March 2017:\(^{58}\)

- 91 per cent of all Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) sector childcare was rated ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted (a significant improvement from August 2012, when only 64 per cent had achieved this).

- 88 per cent of Childminders are ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’.

- 94 per cent of Childcare on Non-Domestic Premises is ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’.

- In 2017, 100 per cent of funded two year old places were in ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ settings.

Despite these successes, it is clear there is more to do to continue to improve the quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged children, in particular in reducing the achievement gap between the bottom 20 per cent of children and the rest. The importance of quality in shaping outcomes for young people makes it crucial for Waltham Forest to attract and retain high quality staff into their services.
Based on these findings, we recommend the Council should:

3. Support schools and settings that are experiencing difficulty recruiting and retaining quality staff.

4. In partnership with providers, support the retention of top professionals through a formal celebration event to reward excellent early years provision.

5. Encourage the use of and access to digital home learning tools such as easypeasyapp.com

6. Consider and test whether high quality childcare in group settings can be complemented by wrap-around home care that is affordable, particularly for disadvantaged families.

We heard recruitment and retention of high quality early years staff is central to good quality provision. Waltham Forest has a high proportion of graduate-led early years provision across the PVI sector. If quality of provision is to be improved further, schools and settings need support to help them attract and keep their best staff in a challenging recruitment environment. The Council should work with these bodies to help them achieve this.

To support retention, some councils have adopted formal recognition of early years excellence – Bournemouth’s Annual Childcare Awards is a good example – creating a systemic valuing of what can be seen as a low profile/low priority profession. We recommend that the Council look at doing so too, to reward and retain top staff.

There are pressures on the system with an influx of new providers entering the market as a result of the extension of the free offer to 30 hours for three and four year olds of eligible working parents. Some of these have been of very poor quality, leading to Ofsted interventions in Waltham Forest. The challenge is to continue to improve quality in a complex mixed market where provision is fluid. This brings added complexity when added to the need to do more to support access to childcare for disadvantaged children for whom the stakes are much higher.

The Commission also heard how new digital home learning tools may be able to support parents in lower income families with educational provision for their children – for example through applications such as ‘EasyPeasy’ which are designed to help parents to support their children at home to achieve basic skills before they arrive at school. Take-up of such tools could be encouraged and access made more widely available for those that lack the digital technology.

Finally, we heard of how high-quality learning in group environments can be most effectively complemented by a good home learning environment: as well as interacting with larger groups of children, learning daily routines and taking instructions from adults, young children need some down time; walking to the shops or the park, going to the library, experiencing the warmth and intimacy of home settings. Many parents who have the resources to choose opt for five days of group care, supplemented by nanny or childminder care in the home – a model that is simple to understand but complex to achieve for those that lack the resources. We recommend the Council consider and test whether high quality childcare in group settings can be complemented by wrap-around home care that is affordable, particularly for disadvantaged families.
INFORMATION & SUPPORT

The range of early years provision can be complex for residents, particularly those for whom English is not a first language or who are newly arrived in the borough. Because provision is differentiated by age and eligibility, it places a premium on ensuring information for parents and carers is timely and clear.
The range of early years provision can be complex for residents, particularly those for whom English is not a first language or who are newly arrived in the borough. Because provision is differentiated by age and eligibility, it places a premium on ensuring information for parents and carers is timely and clear. In Waltham Forest we heard this is not always felt to be the case; that more can be done to improve the quality of information offered to both primary carers and also others that are influential in decisions about a young person’s life.

Based on these finding, we recommend the following:

7. Work with parents and businesses to encourage take-up of free childcare provision and other early years services, particularly by disadvantaged families, looking at the opportunity the Integrated Communities pilot provides for focused support.

8. Advertise the early years offer and the financial support available through digital platforms, and improve signposting on the website, whilst supporting those without access to digital technology.

9. Use the Connecting Communities programme to encourage residents within and across communities to ‘reconnect’ and share solutions to local problems.

Traditional information provision approaches need to be rethought. Whilst the Council should consider periodic focused communications campaigns to raise awareness, it is in its role as a convener and place leader that it should seek to have the greatest impact, encouraging partners to provide the right information, at the right time to those who need it. The borough’s Children and Family Centres are already showing the way: by co-locating early years provision with Job Centre Plus, they are able to highlight their services to parents who may not have been aware previously.

Communities also have a role to play: the strength of communities and the support they can provide is a contributor to life chances across early years and beyond. Social cohesion, social capital and collective efficacy can encourage solutions and support to be sourced and secured within communities.

Neighbourhoods that engender high levels of social capital can support mental health, promote health-benefitting behaviours and reduce risk-taking behaviours, leading to better overall perceptions of health and greater likelihood of physical activity. Building neighbourhood social capital is therefore a means of tackling health inequalities. Feeling part of a community and having strong community relationships has been shown to improve residents’ sense of well-being more than social status or life circumstances.

Waltham Forest has a good level of community strength. Research has found 85 per cent of parents report being connected to someone – friends, family and people in their community – if they needed them for social, emotional or financial support. This high level of social capital is matched by a high degree of ‘collective efficacy’ – social cohesion and informal social control – which is at 70 per cent (compared to 47 per cent in similar areas). This suggests the borough is in a good place to encourage community involvement in tackling issues in society.

The Council is undertaking work in this area already, working with the Government on an Integrating Communities pilot to better connect communities in order to promote opportunity, improve community relations and better involve local groups in policy development. This forms a part of the Council’s new ‘Creating Futures’ corporate strategy, where building new relationships is a key theme.

Schemes such as ‘Maternity Mates’, which supports pregnant women who do not have a suitable support network with a trained volunteer from the local community, can improve social cohesion and help residents gain the support they need in the community. This too can be an access route to more formal early years support. The Council should explore how it can make the most of such arrangements to bolster access to and take-up of health and early years support for those most in need.

As part of the Connecting Communities programme, the Council should work with the local community to identify and design further mechanisms that tackle residents’ issues and promote social cohesion, building social capital across the borough. This could help address some of the recommendations within this report about changing attitudes, values and behaviours – for example views on higher education and apprenticeships.
SCHOOL AGE
- Waltham Forest has a high proportion of disadvantaged students, though this is falling. They generally perform well, but more could be done to reach the standards of the top London boroughs. We recommend actions to boost outcomes for these students, including looking at opportunities through the London Borough of Culture.

- Careers advice is considered to be poor, infrequent and inconsistent by young people. We recommend implementation of the Careers Strategy, and better linkages with employment and educational opportunities locally.

- Some young people say they are held back by a lack of diverse role-models. We recommend a community mentoring programme to support young people and improve integration, and that the council promote a programme of diverse speakers into schools to talk to young people about their careers at an earlier age.

**CONTEXT:**

A good start in life, whilst helpful to those who receive it, is not a guarantee of good life outcomes. High quality early years care and support needs to be followed by good primary and secondary education.67

Nationally, there is a well-documented and long-standing gap in the educational attainment between pupils from the most disadvantaged and the most advantaged backgrounds, which persists throughout school years. At the age of five, there is a ‘school-readiness’ gap of up to 19 months between the richest and poorest children. By the age of 16, this translates to children on free school meals (FSM) acquiring grades 20 to 30 per cent lower than their counterparts who are not receiving free meals.68

This is because the same financial and environmental factors that affect young people during their early years are at play during school years: where families are able to provide a financially secure, stable, supportive and lower-stress environment, young people are better able to learn academically and develop their softer skills.69 Children of highly educated parents are more likely to have access to positive learning resources, role models, occupational knowledge and informal networks.

Conversely, where there are significant stresses and disruption at home, it is harder for families to provide young people the same level of support. Young people from more disadvantaged backgrounds, who are often provided with less preparation or support to make ‘good decisions’ about post-16 options, are more likely to do poorly in their transition into the labour market.70 Evidence from the US suggests that bright students from low income families now achieve worse educational outcomes than weaker students from high income families.71

Schools have a crucial role to play in helping improve the life chances for young people and reducing this attainment gap through high quality teaching. In the US, having a high-performing teacher (in the 90th percentile) versus a low-performing teacher (in the 10th percentile) equates to a difference of almost $2m in the lifetime earnings of those pupils.72

A similar study in the UK found the impact of teaching quality was especially great for poorer pupils: where there is less support outside of the classroom, the difference between a high and low-performing teacher is equivalent to a whole year’s learning.73

It is in this context we looked at how experiences during school age might affect the life chances of young people in Waltham Forest.
WALTHAM FOREST STORY

Waltham Forest residents believe that a good education and having access to good schools and teachers are the most important factors for getting ahead in life, and in helping those from less advantaged backgrounds to fulfil their potential.

Schools in Waltham Forest are generally better than the average across England and result in better attainment for pupils, as illustrated in Figure 8, though attainment is below the London average. As shown in Figure 9, the rated quality of teaching in schools is significantly better than average across London.

Figure 7
Responses to the Residents’ Insight Survey questions (left) ‘Which of the following factors do you think is the most important for getting ahead in life?’, and (right) ‘Which one of the following do you think is the most important in helping those from less advantaged backgrounds to fulfil their potential?’

Figure 8
Average Attainment 8 scores
Figure 9
Proportion of Good and Outstanding schools across London Boroughs. 97 per cent of schools in Waltham Forest are rated Good or Outstanding as of April 2018.

From our discussions and analysis, we found the following key issues in Waltham Forest:

- Waltham Forest has a high proportion of disadvantaged students, though this is declining. Schools are rated highly, but more could be done to match the attainment outcomes for disadvantaged students achieved in the top performing London boroughs.

- Careers advice was considered to be poor, infrequent and inconsistent by the young people we spoke to.

- We heard from young people that they felt they were held back in their aspirations by a lack of diverse speakers and role models whose experiences resonated with theirs, and would like greater exposure to mentors, speakers and meaningful work experience.
OUTCOMES FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

WALTHAM FOREST HAS A HIGH PROPORTION OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS: AFTER HOUSING COSTS, 36 PER CENT OF CHILDREN ARE IN CHILD POVERTY IN THE BOROUGH. THIS IS THE 11TH HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY RATE IN LONDON AND THE 25TH HIGHEST CHILD POVERTY RATE IN ENGLAND.
Waltham Forest has a high proportion of disadvantaged students: after housing costs, 36 per cent of children are in child poverty in the borough. This is the 11th highest child poverty rate in London and the 25th highest child poverty rate in England. This high proportion of disadvantaged students is reflected in the large proportion eligible for the pupil premium. In 2017 this stood at 28 per cent of primary students and 40 per cent of secondary students, although both figures were lower than in 2013, suggesting the proportion of disadvantaged students is reducing. The proportions are broadly in line with London averages, but well above the national average, as illustrated in Figure 10.

Despite this, the borough is ranked as the 20th best local authority in the country for encouraging social mobility in school years (though only 18th in London), reflecting the percentage of children eligible for free schools meals attending primary and secondary schools rated ‘Outstanding’ or ‘Good’, achieving the expected level in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2 (KS2), and their average attainment. 96 per cent of pupils are attending schools that are ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’. However, by both the Progress 8 metric, which measures changes in performance for different groups during school, and Attainment 8 score, which measures attainment, disadvantaged pupils in Waltham Forest do less well. They make less progress during school than the average disadvantaged pupil in London and achieve lower levels of attainment. They make less progress than their non-disadvantaged peers as well. Pupils on free schools meals have an average Progress 8 score of -0.02, indicating marginally worse outcomes than expected, versus a relatively good Progress 8 score for other pupils of 0.29. For a wider ‘disadvantaged’ group, the figures are -0.04 and 0.29 respectively. Positively, no schools in Waltham Forest fall below the Government’s ‘floor’ level of -0.5 on the Progress 8 metric across all students.

Figure 10
Proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium in primary and secondary schools
Despite successes there remains room for improvement. In particular, there are several London boroughs where disadvantaged pupils are achieving more at KS2 and Attainment 8. In our discussions with young people, we heard regularly about how teachers were failing to connect with young people, and pushing the university route too strongly (see Chapter 4). The Council should work with schools and local multi-academy trusts to improve training and development for teachers, so that all pupils receive the highest quality teaching.

We note the high rates of persistent absence of pupils at school in Waltham Forest – the second highest rate in London across all schools, and the highest rate in secondary schools. Whilst we have not looked at the issues behind this in detail, it is crucial for young people to be attending school if they are to fulfil their potential. It is worth noting, however, that there isn’t necessarily a link between disadvantaged students and higher absence levels. We recommend the Council investigate the reasons behind the high rates of persistent absence, and take steps to address these.

Young person in evidence session

**Figure 11**
Average Progress 8 scores – 2016/17

**Figure 12**
Rates of persistent absence across London boroughs. A persistent absentee is defined as a pupil that misses at least 10 percent of their sessions due to authorised or unauthorised absence.
In addition, schools should consider how best to spend their pupil premium to support disadvantaged pupils, learning from best practice (including from the Education Endowment Foundation toolkit\textsuperscript{80}) and considering innovative ways to foster ambition and achievement.

**Based on these findings, we make the following recommendations:**

10. Work with local schools and multi-academy trusts to improve professional development for teachers to ensure all children receive the best quality teaching.

11. Investigate the reasons behind the high rates of persistent absence, and take steps to address them.

12. Encourage schools to use their pupil premium to support disadvantaged children and young people in a more innovative and transformative way – including through a Pupil Premium Enrichment Card.

13. Take steps to ensure young people, in particular those that are disadvantaged, are fully involved in the Borough of Culture programme.

Waltham Forest has recently been selected as the first London Borough of Culture and 2019 will see a comprehensive programme of creative and cultural events. The Council should use the Borough of Culture, and its excellent work in building cultural and creative capacity, to support disadvantaged young people, particular those that are harder to reach, and encourage schools to use their resources to get involved.

Engaging those aged 11-13 in cultural enrichment activities, such as school outings, has been shown to produce statistically significant improvements in GCSE results.\textsuperscript{81} One idea would be to encourage schools to invest their pupil premium in cultural activities for the most disadvantaged. A Pupil Premium Enrichment Card could include the Council negotiating with cultural entities in London – including theatres, museums, galleries and other educational attractions – for free and discounted entry for pupil premium students, and an aspiration that all school children in Waltham Forest attend at least one event on the Borough of Culture programme.
CAREERS
ADVICE

SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO MAXIMISE THEIR POTENTIAL REQUIRES CONSISTENT, HIGH QUALITY CAREERS ADVICE. SCHOOLS ARE UNDER PRESSURE TO SECURE STRONG EXAM RESULTS AND WE HEARD OF SOME TENSIONS IN RELEASING STUDENTS FROM CLASSROOMS TO LEARN ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREERS.
Many studies demonstrate the importance of high-quality careers advice on boosting the life chances of young people. Conversely, when young people are not given this advice, they can underestimate the educational outcomes required for their desired profession, and are statistically more likely to end up not in education, employment, or training (NEET). Young people from poorer backgrounds are more likely to have career aspirations that are misaligned with their educational ambitions and careers advice is particularly useful to boost outcomes for the most disadvantaged.

Careers advice should be introduced early and consistently: there is evidence that suggests career learning should begin in primary school and continue through adulthood. Two-thirds of studies into the impact of careers advice have provided evidence of positive economic outcomes; no study has found evidence that careers education can be linked to poorer outcomes.

As part of a careers advice programme, job shadowing and work experiences have been shown to produce positive economic outcomes for participating young people. In the UK, teenage part-time employment is rapidly in decline: the proportion of British 16 to 17 year-olds combining full-time education with part-time employment has fallen from 42 per cent in 1997 to 18 per cent in 2014. With such decline, the requirement grows on schools, colleges, and employers, through the realm of careers education, to help young people gain insights, exposure and experiences they would traditionally have accessed through direct, paid experience of the labour market. One study suggests two-thirds of young people wanted more input from employers while they were in school to inform their decisions over their career and further learning priorities.

The Government’s Career Strategy, launched in December 2017, offers a framework for better careers implementation. From January 2018, schools should use the Gatsby Good Careers Guidance Benchmarks to guide their careers activity provision, if they don’t already. The Government aims for all schools and colleges to meet all eight of the benchmarks by 2020. From September 2018, schools and colleges will need to have a named Careers Leader in place, responsible for running their careers programme. By 2020 every young person should have at least one experience of work every year during school years 7-13.

In addition, the London Enterprise Adviser Network helps to prepare young people aged 5-18 for the world of work, by connecting businesses with London schools. Enterprise Advisers are business volunteers working in senior roles that work with careers leads in schools to develop strategies to boost careers education. They also help schools to access local careers resources, and help businesses link up with schools.

We heard throughout our discussions with young people that the careers advice they had received to date had been scant and of poor quality. It left...
them confused about their options and particularly undervalued the vocational and apprenticeship routes on offer. In one session we held, none of the young people present had received careers advice. In addition, some college principals we spoke to bemoaned the lack of careers advice that their intake had received during school years.

We recommend the Council works with their schools to implement the Careers Strategy and engage the London Enterprise Adviser Network to get senior leaders into Waltham Forest schools. This should include face-to-face advice for all young people, and not focus solely on provision of information.

The lack of opportunity to undertake work experience was raised by several young people who felt that experience of work, and a working culture and environment, would be useful in school to help prepare for and decide upon post-school options. This was particularly raised by young people from families where parents and family members may not have worked in more formal office or business environments. In addition, evidence suggests exposure to good work experience can support entrance into the top universities – something to which those from more affluent communities and families have greater access.90

We heard from head teachers and principals how the pressure on schools and colleges to secure good exam results can mean teachers struggle to release students for non-curriculum activities, including careers advice and work experience. As set out previously, the academic benefits and positive long-term impact on careers outcome means schools and colleges must prioritise consistent and high-quality careers advice from a young age.

Finally, alongside the need for work experience, young people told us they needed access to better information on local jobs, traineeships and careers in order to make informed choices. They were positive about the Council working with them, and with schools, colleges, and employers, to design tools that could link them to meaningful opportunities. To address this, the Council should work with young people to develop an ‘Opportunity Bank’ using digital tools to post meaningful opportunities to local young people.

Based on these findings, we make the following recommendations:

14. Improve careers advice by implementing the requirements in the Careers Strategy. Provide careers advice early – starting at Year 6 – and seek opportunities to create Careers Leaders, working with the Careers and Enterprise Company to bring business speakers into schools.

15. Work with young people on the design of a Waltham Forest ‘Opportunity Bank’ that links them with meaningful local opportunities. Ensure local businesses, schools and colleges are all aware of the Bank, encouraging them to use it to promote vocational routes, traineeships, Saturday jobs, work shadowing and better preparation for the workplace.
Arts and crafts at Walthamstow Garden Party – July 2018
MENTORS & ROLE MODELS

LINKED TO BETTER INFORMATION ON CAREERS, WE HEARD CONSISTENTLY ABOUT THE NEED FOR A DIVERSE GROUP OF MENTORS AND ROLE MODELS WHO COULD SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE BY PROVIDING INSPIRATION AND COMFORT ABOUT DIFFERENT OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THEM.
WALTHAM FOREST LIFE CHANCES COMMISSION 2018

Linked to better information on careers, we heard consistently about the need for a diverse group of mentors and role models who could support young people by providing inspiration and comfort about different options available to them. This was raised by young people where they were interested in certain career or educational routes but didn’t feel they had sufficient knowledge; particularly where young people from different ethnic or social backgrounds were unsure of how comfortable they would feel in a career or educational setting. The changing nature of the borough, with an increasingly diverse number of people with lived experiences, could help support young people to better understand their opportunities.

Based on these findings, we make the following recommendations to the Council:

16. Pursue options for mentoring of young people through a network of community and employer mentors.

17. Promote a diverse programme of guest speakers to go into schools and talk about their life experiences and achievements.

Mentoring approaches are popular, though the evidence suggests they have limited impact on the educational outcomes of young people when compared to other support strategies. Where they are used, mentoring schemes that are community-based are more effective than those based within schools. We heard from young people on both the desire for mentoring opportunities from a diverse range of residents, and of the benefits in terms of confidence and decision-making that having a mentor had provided to some young people.

A community-based mentoring scheme could have wider benefits than just on educational attainment. Mentors can inspire and support decisions on career choices, can provide a community-based social infrastructure that can be missing for many disadvantaged young people, and can support efforts to improve social integration and collective efficacy. Such a scheme could link well with the Council’s Integrating Communities pilot and Connecting Communities programme, especially since the benefits of mentoring can flow both ways. It could also support the Council’s work on youth resilience.

Mentors were particularly raised in the context of building entrepreneurship skills for young people interested in developing their own businesses after school, which suggested a lack of support for this through the school curriculum. Given the borough’s focus on the creative sector, where business growth rates are high and start-ups are more common, provision of business and entrepreneurship skills will be crucial in enabling young people to benefit from the local context.

Business involvement in a community mentoring approach would be a valuable addition, with employer mentoring schemes having been shown to improve behaviour and engagement if undertaken effectively. The Council could look at how Homework Clubs have enabled businesses to support young people after school, and how approaches such as Lifeskills have helped young people get skills they need through businesses.

In addition to mentoring, young people felt that having a greater range of role models come into their schools and talk about opportunities would be helpful. We heard from several young people who bemoaned the nature of in-school speakers – all fitting a demographic that they felt didn’t reflect their experiences – and who struggled to connect with the advice as a result. Promoting a diverse programme of guest speakers to visit schools could address this. The Council should look at the London Enterprise Adviser Network and consider working with Speakers for Schools, seeking to attract leading professionals and other role models that reflect a broader range of work, backgrounds and experiences that young people may be interested in.
There are all these new people moving to the area with skills we could learn from. Could we create a community mentoring programme?

Young person in evidence session

I often feel that the people that come and talk to us don’t relate to me – it would be great to hear from people who more closely share my background and experiences.

Young person in evidence session

Speakers don’t all have to be doctors or lawyers – or even rappers and creative types. Hearing from more regular people would be good too: what’s it like to be an estate agent, or to work in a bank?

Young person in evidence session
**KEY POINTS**

- Better vocational routes, and apprenticeships in particular, are important to residents in Waltham Forest. Yet there are relatively few apprenticeships undertaken in the borough. We recommend working with local businesses, colleges, schools and parents to promote apprenticeship provision and take-up across Waltham Forest, and ensure the Council has its own gold standard apprenticeship scheme with progression to Level 3 a minimum expectation.

- Students in Waltham Forest are less likely to attend the top Russell Group universities than students in other London boroughs. We recommend actions to improve the opportunities for those that want to take the academic route, including by increasing links with Russell Group and other more selective universities, engaging parents to address any cultural fears, and working with schools to improve personal statements.

- Waltham Forest has the highest proportion of low-paid jobs of any London borough. To address this, the Council should encourage local businesses to become Living Wage Employers and encourage them to engage with local schools and colleges to promote good local opportunities to young people. Finally, it should lead by example, adopting an approach in all of its activities to ensure that young people are prioritised through its decision making.

**CONTEXT:**

We want young people to be able to shape the future they want as they leave education – be that through apprenticeships, university, vocational training or employment. Good schools and early years education, quality careers advice and a strong mentoring approach will help, but are not enough in themselves. They must lead to the opportunities young people want.

There are huge post-school issues facing our young people nationally, from an educational culture that prioritises the academic over the vocational, to an education system that means students from independent schools are twice as likely as those from comprehensive schools to be accepted into the most highly selective universities. Low pay is endemic across the country, but when twinned with the ever increasing housing costs in the capital, it makes gaining decent skills and a good education even more crucial to building a life in Waltham Forest.

In this context, we looked at the research evidence and spoke to young people in the borough, to understand what the key barriers were for young people to thrive post-school, and what the Council should do to address them.
WALTHAM FOREST STORY

From our discussions and analysis, we found the following key issues in Waltham Forest:

- Apprenticeships are important to residents, yet there are relatively few apprenticeships undertaken in the borough.
- Pupils in Waltham Forest are less likely to attend the top Russell Group universities than pupils in other London boroughs.
- Waltham Forest has the highest proportion of low paid jobs of any London borough.
APPRENTICESHIPS

YOUNG PEOPLE WHO DO NOT GO TO UNIVERSITY ARE TOO OFTEN FAILING TO SECURE GOOD QUALITY FURTHER EDUCATION OR TRAINING, OFTEN BECAUSE THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE TOO LIMITED.
Young people who do not go to university are too often failing to secure good quality further education or training, often because the opportunities are too limited. There has been a concerted push to increase the take-up of apprenticeships over recent years, including through the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy which, although it has had a shaky start, may prove pivotal over time.

However, despite these efforts, take-up of apprenticeships has remained low: between 2010/11 and 2014/15 apprenticeship starts by under 25s increased by just 4 per cent,99 and in the second quarter May-July 2017 the number of new apprenticeships fell 70 per cent.100 While some of this may reflect a welcome move towards improved quality, it also reflects the use of the levy to accredit or upskill existing staff rather than train new young staff.

Research suggests young people in London are even less likely to start an apprenticeship: only 10 per cent of young men and women in a cohort start one within three years of GCSEs, compared to 17 per cent across the country.101 Further education (FE) colleges in London tend to engage less in apprenticeship provision: in 2014 only 7 per cent of apprenticeships in FE colleges were in London. Given the need for new homes in London, and concerns over labour shortages in the sector regionally, it is notable that there are fewer apprenticeships in construction in London than elsewhere in the UK. In 2016/17, 2.9 per cent of apprenticeship starts in London were in construction, versus 4.3 per cent nationally.102

We know good quality apprenticeships lead to improved employment and pay prospects, and enable apprentices to progress further in their careers and education. Their quality arises from a shared understanding about and sustained commitment to ensuring the needs of both the employer and the apprentice are met. Analysis shows there is some positive pay-out for apprentices at Level 2 and particularly at Level 3 compared with those who left education with GCSEs or took a different Level 2 or 3 vocational qualification. However, there’s also a gender issue in the nature of apprenticeships undertaken, with men much more likely to undertake a higher-paying engineering apprenticeship, reflected in a much bigger pay-off for men than women. At Level 2, male apprentices earn about 23 per cent more than those who left education with GCSEs, whereas female apprentices earn 15 per cent more. At Level 3, male apprentices earn about 37 per cent more than those who left education with GCSEs whereas their female counterparts earn 9 per cent more. On average, those that go through apprenticeships are paid 22 per cent more by age 28.103

The Sutton Trust has found that, although England has some very good quality apprenticeships, too many are failing to provide sufficient training and access to skilled work to enable participants to progress. There is no provision in current policy to build on the expertise of good quality providers and use it to raise the capacity in sectors and sub-sectors where quality is weaker.104

Residents in Waltham Forest consider the provision of apprenticeships in the borough to be the second most important thing to help those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, only ranking behind teaching.
Apprenticeship starts for residents have been relatively flat in Waltham Forest over the past six years (Figure 14), though the number of apprenticeships undertaken in the borough has increased markedly, tripling to over 1,000 placements in 2016/17.

Despite the desire to see apprenticeships as an alternative route for young people, over half of Waltham Forest residents that take up an apprenticeship, and over half of apprenticeship starts in the borough, are by those over 25. This suggests much more needs to be done to support good quality apprenticeships for younger people. Indeed, of those leaving a Waltham Forest school or college at KS5 in 2015/16, only 4 per cent took up an apprenticeship; almost half of the average in England of 7 per cent.105
% of apprenticeship starts by age (WF residents)
Source: Department of Education

Apprenticeships provision by age (LBWF providers)
Source: Department for Education

Apprenticeship starts by age and level (2016/17)
Source: Department for Education
The young people we spoke to considered there to be a lack of understanding amongst young people about what apprenticeships entail, the breadth of apprenticeship opportunities available and how they are advertised. This was linked to a concern that schools are prioritising the academic options for young people – perhaps related to the fact that all teachers are likely to have attended university rather than taken an apprenticeship or vocational option. There was also a view that apprenticeships were about STEM subjects, rather than supporting more creative careers.

Similarly, we heard that parents, who have a strong influence over their children, are less familiar with apprenticeship options than they are with the more widely understood academic route. This links to a concern of young people that, even if they see an apprenticeship or vocational option as useful to them, society may not value it as much, therefore limiting their future options.

We also heard from existing and former apprentices who generally spoke positively about their experiences, particularly the opportunity it had given them to build a working life and gain the experience they wanted, rather than further study. Many had progressed within their organisations as a result, in some cases incredibly successfully. The lack of tuition fees and opportunity to earn straight away were flagged as benefits.

We heard some concerns about what the Government’s current provision and push for apprenticeships – which is welcome – might mean. In particular, there was concern the Apprenticeship Levy would be focused largely on retraining existing staff rather than supporting young people into work. At a national level, the Council should lend its weight to push against systemic issues that work against vocational routes: for example, families lose child benefit for a child who takes up an apprenticeship but not if the child takes A-levels, creating a serious barrier to apprenticeship take-up for the most disadvantaged young people.\(^{106}\)

It is clear to us that the Council can do much more to promote apprenticeships within the Council itself. We recommend that it establishes its own ‘gold standard’ approach: apprenticeships that are high-quality, with minimum duration of one year, automatic progression to Level 4, supported by a minimum of a day a week in college or training. This must then be complemented by an effort to encourage take-up of the ‘gold standard’ across the borough, using the Council’s relationships with local employers and colleges to build a high quality apprenticeship culture.

One further idea to consider is the introduction of an Apprenticeship Ambassador scheme such as the one introduced in Manchester, where apprentices are trained to go into schools and colleges to promote their positive experiences.\(^{107}\) This could help tackle misconceptions in schools and with parents, and promote a vocational route alongside the academic options.

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**Based on these findings, we make the following recommendations to the Council:**

18. Work to increase the number of Level 3+ apprenticeships open to Waltham Forest young people and to improve progression. Do this through ensuring the Council has its own Gold Standard apprenticeship scheme – minimum one year duration with automatic progression to Level 4, and a minimum of a day a week college/training – and utilise levy payments to support young people into work.

19. Work with local businesses and colleges to promote apprenticeship provision and take-up across Waltham Forest.

20. Consider introducing an ‘Apprenticeship Ambassador’ programme where Waltham Forest apprentices and apprentice alumni visit local schools and colleges.

21. Work with parents and teachers to make the value of apprenticeships clearer so that apprenticeships are promoted positively.

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There’s pressure on all young people to go to university. I didn’t see the need to go to university but received lots of pressure from home.

Young person in evidence session

I would be interested, but the opportunities are not advertised as much as going to an art college or university are. Schools need to give more information.

Young person in evidence session
The Commission heard from Philip Stone, who had undertaken an apprenticeship in the borough at Eurostar. He started it in July 2008 on his 16th birthday. Philip was keen to work on the railways, coming from a long line of family members with connections to the industry.

His starting salary was £14,250, though today’s Eurostar apprentices start on around £19,000, with annual increases and bonus payments if they successfully complete the course. Philip described himself as really fortunate to have avoided the big debts his friends that went to university incurred, meaning he was able to buy a house when he was 22 years old.

The first Eurostar apprentices started in 1992. Since then 98 per cent of apprentices who complete the course still work in the railway industry, with 77 per cent still working for Eurostar in 11 different roles. On average Eurostar invests around £150,000 in each apprentice over the four-year course.

Eurostar currently offers a Level 3 apprenticeship in Traction and Rolling Stock and accepts around four new apprentices a year at the Leyton depot.

Philip found the apprenticeship to be a good way to start a career with a mix of classroom teaching and practical application.

At the end of his apprenticeship in 2012 he was employed as a maintenance engineer, then promoted the following year to be a team technician. He then became a technical trainer and last year was appointed training strategy and development manager whilst undertaking a Masters degree.

He told the Commission he had never regretted the decision to do an apprenticeship and will encourage his own children to look at that option too.
UNIVERSITY IS NOT FOR EVERYONE, BUT THOSE CAPABLE OF ATTENDING OUR TOP ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED AND SUPPORTED TO SURMOUNT ANY BARRIERS IN THEIR WAY.

“...I really like the course on offer, but I worry about how I would feel in the community; would I fit culturally? I don’t want to feel like an outsider.

Young person in evidence session

“...My father would be hesitant about me leaving home, even if it was to go to Oxford. It affects my funding options too – getting out a loan with interest is against my religion.

Young person in evidence session
University is not for everyone, but those capable of attending our top academic institutions should be encouraged and supported to surmount any barriers in their way. It is a function of our society that those at the top of their professions have normally attended top universities, building the skills and networks that have supported them in achieving that success.108

However, nationally, UCAS data shows that young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to go on to university and much less likely to go to a selective university.

Our key finding is the relatively low proportion of students from Waltham Forest schools and colleges attending the most selective universities, most of which are in the ‘Russell Group’109. The proportion of Waltham Forest students attending Russell Group universities fell to 7 per cent last year, well below the overall national average of 12 per cent and the London average of 14 per cent in 2016/17. In London, only Richmond and Lewisham sent a lower proportion of their students to these institutions.

As Figure 19 illustrates, although the proportion attending Russell Group institutions was low, Waltham Forest performed only moderately below the London average at securing ‘sustained destinations’ through employment or education, with 87 per cent of KS5 students achieving this status in 2016/17. In addition, a higher proportion of Waltham Forest school-leavers attend further education institutions than the London average; Waltham Forest ties for the top London borough in students on free school meals securing additional education, employment or training after completing KS4.111

The reasons for this disparity on Russell Group attendance are myriad. In part, this is part of the national story on private schools, selective schools and state schools. According to the Sutton Trust, pupils from private or independent schools are more than twice as likely as those from comprehensive schools to be accepted into the most highly selective universities.113 Waltham Forest has six independent schools in the borough.114

In addition, we heard that adjacent boroughs have a greater level of school sixth form provision when compared to schools in Waltham Forest, where half of schools don’t have sixth forms. Many Waltham Forest students, particularly those that are high achieving, may attend sixth forms outside the borough from where they do succeed in reaching top universities. The Council should seek to understand these patterns more fully to inform their response.

However, we would be surprised if this explained the full difference between the level of attendance from Waltham Forest versus other London boroughs. Even if it did, we heard through our evidence sessions from many young people and teachers that there were barriers to them applying to or being accepted into these top institutions which the Council should seek to address.

The first message we heard clearly is that pushing for more attendance at Russell Group or other top universities must not be a goal in itself for every student. Throughout our work, the misplaced prioritisation of the academic route over vocational options was raised consistently. Young people...
Based on these findings, we make the following recommendations to the Council:

22. Use its agency to increase links between Russell Group and other highly selective universities, and parents, schools and colleges in the borough to maximise participation in outreach events and summer schools, and reduce misconceptions.

23. Develop ways to support young people become more aware of university options, including through a ‘buddy’ system that links young people from Waltham Forest attending the same university, and a scheme to see university students visit their old schools and talk about their experiences.

24. Work to improve the personal statements and supporting references provided by schools to help young people applying to university. Consider options for business-led after-school support.

...should be encouraged to take the path that is right for them. However, there is much evidence that those from less advantaged backgrounds are less likely to apply for the more selective universities, and less likely to be successful, even though they have the grades to do so.115

We identified reasons why capable and eager students from Waltham Forest are struggling to reach the top universities, and these must be addressed. Attending top universities can boost life chances, with an average earnings premium of around 10 per cent over graduates of other universities over a lifetime, and an average net graduate premium of £88,000 compared to those just taking A-Levels.116 Other estimates suggest an average annual salary difference of £5,500 between those attending Russell Group and non-Russell Group universities.127

A consistent theme raised by the young people we spoke to related to cultural fears and concerns about how comfortable they would feel attending university. We heard from young people worried about how they might fit into a university perceived as very white and middle class. Others were concerned about living in mixed-dorms. For some, their religion made the student loan process impossible. In all cases, these concerns made it less likely for these students to apply to or then accept an offer at a top university. This matches research at a national level that found social class and cultural background can have big impacts on where young people choose to study.118

There is clearly a role for universities here in stepping up their outreach efforts, ensuring the full breadth of our student populace feels safe and accepted in their institutions, and working more closely with schools and parents in Waltham Forest to break down any misconceptions. Few of the students we spoke to had heard of the Russell Group, and only slightly more were familiar with the London university members. We recommend the Council seek to work with the Russell Group or key Russell Group institutions to see if more can be done to address these perceptions.

When we asked students what would make them feel more comfortable about applying, they made several suggestions. As raised in chapter 3, they suggested exposure to a diverse range of role models that had undertaken the experience previously would help. It was noticeable that the young people who had a sibling or close family member that had been to university were much more comfortable with the prospect than young people who would be the first in their family to attend. They advised that, in some cases, it was their parents that needed to be convinced university was an appropriate choice for them.

Students wanted to hear more about university life from the universities themselves. They felt they didn’t know what different universities were undertaking in terms of outreach and wider participation events such as summer schools, and would have liked more opportunity to understand the different options available to them. They suggested more could be done to link up young people in Waltham Forest that are thinking of attending universities, creating a ‘buddy’ system to help share excitement and concerns.

As well as hearing from young people, we heard from representatives from Russell Group universities to understand their perspective on why attendance from Waltham Forest was so low, and how to improve it. They focused on two areas: attending summer school and outreach events that take place, and support for university applications, particularly the personal statements. It was noted that personal statements are key to entries, but often hastily drafted with seemingly little oversight – a finding echoed by the Sutton Trust.119 Ensuring these reflect the full talents of the applicant could go a long way to ensuring young people in Waltham Forest are able to fulfil their potential.
LOW PAY

THERE ARE REAL ISSUES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHEN ENTERING THE JOBS MARKET. WHILST UNEMPLOYMENT IS LOW – IN 2016, THERE WERE 280,000 UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE IN LONDON, THE LOWEST NUMBER SINCE THE START OF THE RECESSION IN 2008/09, AND THE PROPORTION OF HOUSEHOLDS WHERE NO ADULTS ARE WORKING HAS NEARLY HALVED SINCE 2001 – LOW PAY IS A PARTICULAR PROBLEM. 120
Weakness of pay growth has persisted since the financial crisis. Instead of low pay work acting as the first rung on the ladder, for too many it is the only rung. Of all those low paid in 2006, by 2016 just one in six of those had ‘escaped’ low pay.

One of the reasons there has been a prevalence of low paid work is the growth of low paying industries. Additionally, there has been an increase in the number of self-employed managers and self-employed skilled people. Often, the self-employed do not have the same protections at work or the ability to access benefits such as a company pension scheme. This can force many into low wages.

London doesn’t escape the low pay problem. In the last decade, weekly pay in London has fallen. A larger proportion of people are earning less than £200 and £400 per week in 2016 than in 2006. In 2016, 13 per cent of workers earned less than £200 a week and another 20 per cent earned less than £400. The biggest group among the low paid were female, part-time employees – 31 per cent of the total. 55 per cent of all low paid jobs in London were carried out by women. The number of those who manage to move away from low paid work fell in London between 2006 and 2016.

Indeed, although the proportion of jobs paid less than the living wage is lower in London than the rest of the UK, there are a number of occupations with higher proportions of jobs below the living wage in London, notably caring, leisure and other service occupations.

The self-employed, including those in the ‘gig economy’ find it difficult to increase their hours and thus raise their incomes. Analysis by the Social Market Foundation and Trust for London found 60 per cent of those who are in low monthly work are already working more than 30 hours a week, and 40 per cent work more than 40 hours a week. This problem is especially acute in London, where 18 per cent of workers are classed as self-employed. 67 per cent of self-employed Londoners earned less than the equivalent of a full-time employee on the London Living Wage.

Waltham Forest has a particular issue with low pay, with the highest proportion of low paid jobs of any London borough in 2016 at 37 per cent (Figure 22). A smaller proportion of residents are in low-paid work than this figure suggests – reflecting the fact that many residents commute into the city centre for work at higher salaries – though the borough’s residents are in one of the five lowest paid London boroughs.

Young people need more opportunities to access employment locally

Figure 20
Employees in low pay work by location of jobs
Based on these findings, we make the following recommendations:

25. Lead by example, embedding an approach across the Council to support young people into work or educational advancement.

26. Ensure that across all of the Council’s investment activities and programmes — including the Town Hall Campus, Borough of Culture, and Sixty-Bricks — opportunities for employment for local young people are considered and prioritised.

27. Use its relationship with the Top 20 group of businesses to encourage apprenticeships, placements and internships, and seek to boost opportunities for young people.

28. Consider whether the ‘Steps Into Work’ programme can play a bigger role in linking young people with good employment opportunities.

29. Promote the Living Wage locally through relationships with local businesses.

30. Advertise all Council jobs locally with colleges and on relevant social media, and work with local employers and its own suppliers to encourage local recruitment and sourcing of services.

One of the reasons behind this is that an extremely high proportion of workers in Waltham Forest are self-employed. As shown in Figure 21, there has been a big increase in self-employed jobs in Waltham Forest since 2007, reaching 22 per cent in 2017, much higher than the London (18 per cent) and UK (14 per cent) averages.

There is a role for the Council in supporting young people to access good jobs locally, and based on our discussions with young people, they would welcome this. To lead by example, the Council should consider how all of its activities and programmes impact on its young people to ensure that disadvantaged young people are prioritised, and that decisions on policy affecting skills, employment, procurement, housing, planning and regeneration are taken with young people in mind — not just as consumers of the services, but as contributors to their design, including through traineeships, apprenticeships and employment. Policies that determine the Council’s approach to procurement and planning (including through Section 106) should seek to harness the benefits of spend and investment for young people in the borough.

In addition, all Council jobs should be advertised locally with colleges and on relevant social media, and the Council should work with local employers and its own suppliers to encourage local recruitment and sourcing of services.

The Council has good links to local businesses through the ‘Top 20’ group, and invests in capital and goods locally through its procurement, regeneration, housing and infrastructure. It should leverage these relationships to encourage businesses to work more closely with schools and colleges, encouraging apprenticeships, placements and internships, and seeking to boost opportunities to employment.

The Council also owns a housing company, and has links with a number of private sector investors in developing sites across the borough. It will shortly launch a programme of work for the Borough of Culture 2019. We recommend the Council seek to ensure young local people have the opportunity of employment through all of these activities.

The Council’s Steps into Work programme is designed to support the unemployed back into work, and provides a brokerage service with local employers. Expanding this offer to all young people and evolving the offer into a broader local jobs portal should be considered, with the offer then actively promoted across local schools and colleges.

Finally, as a Living Wage Employer, the Council is already leading by example in ensuring its members of staff are adequately reimbursed. It should consider ways to encourage local businesses to follow in its footsteps locally, perhaps through incentives such as business rate discounts.
CONCLUSION

Waltham Forest is in the midst of rapid change, and it is crucial that opportunities for young people are prioritised to ensure this change supports those that represent the future of the borough. Investing in our young people is good economics as well as the right thing to do.

We have set out a series of recommendations for the Council throughout this report – 30 in total – which we believe, if delivered in concert, could make a material difference to the life chances of young people in Waltham Forest. Those recommendations – across the different stages of a young person’s life – highlight some key areas where the Council should focus its activity:

- Through its **work with families and parents**, the Council can deliver many of the recommendations in this report. Encouraging take-up of childcare and the use of home learning tools, developing community-led approaches to childcare and mentoring, and working to address misconceptions about apprenticeships and university will all require the Council to work closely with families, embedding these ideas within the Think Family programme.

- In its interactions with **children’s centres, schools and colleges**, the Council should seek to continue to drive up standards in teaching, work on persistent absence, improve careers advice, support the exposure of students to a diverse range of role models, boost take-up of quality apprenticeships and support the most academic students into the top universities.

- Building on its **relationship with business**, the Council should encourage local companies and organisations to communicate with their employees about the availability of childcare, engage with schools and young people around careers, work experience and traineeships, and boost the provision of apprenticeships and other good quality employment opportunities for young people.

Central to this, the **Council has a duty to young people in the borough to lead by example**. In an age of austerity this is not easy, but it is vital all the same. We have made clear recommendations about discrete areas of activity the Council should lead such as creating a ‘gold standard’ apprenticeship scheme, and actions that require the Council to facilitate and convene, such as in linking our top universities, with schools, colleges and employers in the borough. However, most important is to instil a culture within the Council that prioritises the needs of young people in all of its activity. Decisions on issues such as skills, growth, employment, procurement, housing, planning and regeneration all affect young people, and should be taken with their impacts in mind.

Finally, as part of this work, the Council should report on progress towards improving the life chances of young people. They should consider the appropriate performance measurements to use, and report publicly at least annually on their progress, including online.

The Council has taken an important decision to prioritise improving the life chances of residents and it should start by considering how it can operate in ways to boost opportunities for young people.
APPENDIX 1:
THE BIG YOUTH CONVERSATION

The Big Youth Conversation involved:

- A survey of over 1,800 young people online and through assemblies in schools.
- Life Chances Lessons in Holy Family and Kelmscott schools reaching over 600 young people.
- The Council’s Young Advisors talking to young people at the Walthamstow Garden Party about their aspirations and the challenges they face.
- A Big Youth Conversation Summit with over 60 young people, featuring qualitative discussions around aspirations, community, engagement in decision making and experiences.
- Discussions with Looked-After Children about their aspirations and the challenges they face at the 2018 Funday.

### FINDINGS:

#### (1) Views on the Life Chances Commission recommendations

Young people were asked for their thoughts on the eight key recommendations from the Life Chances Commission once they were in draft form. They were asked to choose their top three that would support them to achieve their aspirations.

![Figure 22](image)

Proportion of young people that selected each of the eight key recommendations in their top three to help them achieve their aspirations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>More opportunities for work experience, traineeships and part-time jobs</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Better careers advice in schools</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>More support for applications to top universities</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Greater focus within the Council on helping young people to succeed</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Mentoring from the diverse role-models in the community</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>More and better quality apprenticeships in the Borough</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Better access to cultural activities like theatre, museums, galleries and concerts</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>More take-up of free childcare for disadvantaged parents</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### (2) How young people want to feedback on their life chances

Young people were asked how they would like to feedback to the Council on how the lives of young people can be improved. Most responded positively to providing feedback through in-class sessions at school, promisingly almost all young people were keen to contribute their thoughts in the future.

![Figure 23](image)

Percentage of young people choosing each of the seven responses to the question “Going forward, how would you like to give your thoughts, feedback and opinions on how the lives of young people can be improved?”
(3) What’s missing from the recommendations

Young people were asked what they thought was missing from the recommendations through the survey, Life Chances lessons and at the Youth Summit.

In the Big Youth Conversation Survey young people raised points around general support (235 young people), more/better schools, teachers and mentors, more motivational speeches and role models, and better tutoring.

What else would help you meet your aspirations?

At the Youth Summit young people talked about wanting to be heard, and the need for free studio time to work on their music and creative projects.

During Life Chances lessons in schools young people highlighted better communication between police and young people, reduced university fees for the first year, more Council funded events, and helping young people with life skills such as money management.
APPENDIX 2: LIST OF THOSE CONTRIBUTING EVIDENCE

Young people – to protect their privacy, we have only used their first names.

- Katy, Young Advisor
- Asher, Young Advisor
- Eunice, Young Advisor
- Cara, Youth Independent Advisory Group
- Benny, local young businessman
- Molly, Apprentice, London Borough of Waltham Forest
- Ubah, Walthamstow School for Girls
- Aleeza, Walthamstow School for Girls
- Firdaous, Walthamstow School for Girls
- Erin, Walthamstow School for Girls
- Zahrah Walthamstow School for Girls
- Tenzin, Walthamstow School for Girls
- Raluca, Sir George Monoux College
- Tamia, Sir George Monoux College
- In addition, six young people from the Voices In Partnership programme participated.

Early Years, School, College, University and Business representatives

- Tim Hobbs, Director of Dartington Design Service Lab
- Pauline Thomas, CEO Lloyd Park Children’s Centre
- Wendy Fields, Integrated Service Manager, Lloyd Park Children’s Centre
- Meryl Davies, Head Teacher, Walthamstow School for Girls
- Penny Wycherley, Principal and Chief Executive, Waltham Forest College
- Nadeem Khalifa, Director of Commercial and Business Development, Waltham Forest College
- David Vasse, Principal, Sir George Monoux College
- Guglielmo Ventura, London School of Economics
- Billy Reed, Wider Participation Manager, Kings College London
- Philip Stone, Training Development and Strategy Manager, Eurostar

In addition, to the above list, the Commission were supported in their work by numerous Council officials, across multiple service areas. The Commission would like to thank ALL of those that supported our work.
APPENDIX 3: COMMISSIONERS’ BIOGRAPHIES
CONOR RYAN (CHAIR)

Director of Research and Communications (2012-18), Sutton Trust

Conor Ryan led the Trust’s communications, policy and research work from 2012-2018. Conor was Senior Education Adviser to Prime Minister Tony Blair from 2005-2007 and was David Blunkett’s Special Adviser from 1993-2001. Conor is a trustee of the National Foundation for Educational Research and a director of a multi-academy trust. In 2015-16, he was a member of the Scottish Commission on Widening Access. Conor started as a Communications Officer for the British Youth Council in 1984. He then worked for the Inner London Education Authority as a Schools Press Officer. In 1993 he joined the office of David Blunkett as Senior Press and Research Officer and was his Senior Special Adviser when David Blunkett served as Secretary of State for Education and Employment. In 2005 Conor became Senior Education Policy Adviser to Tony Blair. He assumed his role with the Sutton Trust in 2012. He has also been an adviser to many senior education leaders and written and edited several education policy books as well as writing for many newspapers.

ELI BROWN

Walthamstow School for Girls

Eli Brown is a Year 11 student from Walthamstow School for Girls. They are passionate about equality and social justice issues and think it is vital that all young people have access to the same opportunities and resources.

NAOMI EISENSTADT

Early Years Specialist

Naomi Eisenstadt is currently Deputy Chair of the Poverty and Inequality Commission for Scotland. She has recently published ‘Life Chances of Young People in Scotland’ for the Scottish Government and in January 2016 published ‘Shifting the Curve’, identifying 15 recommendations that could significantly reduce poverty in Scotland.

After a long career in the NGO sector, in 1999 Naomi became the first Director of the Sure Start Unit. The Unit was responsible for delivering the UK Government’s commitment to free nursery education places for all three and four year olds, the national childcare strategy, and Sure Start, a major programme aiming to reduce the gap in outcomes between children living in disadvantaged areas and the wider child population. After Sure Start, Naomi spent three years as the Director of the Social Exclusion Task Force working across Government to identify and promote policies to address the needs of traditionally excluded groups. Since retiring from the Civil Service, Naomi has chaired the Camden Equalities Commission, the Milton Keynes Child Poverty Commission, published a book and several articles relevant to child development and child poverty. She is a trustee of four charities: Save the Children, the Standard Life Foundation, the Dartington Social Service Lab, and the Trust for London.

Naomi is an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Oxford Department of Education and Department of Social Policy and Intervention. She was awarded an honorary doctorate from the Open University in 2002 and in 2005 became a Companion of the Bath.
DR AMINUL HOQUE MBE
Goldsmiths College, University of London

Dr Aminul Hoque MBE is a lecturer in the Educational Studies Department at Goldsmiths College, University of London. Dr Hoque gained his doctorate from Goldsmiths College in 2011, and his research forms the basis of his book 'British Islamic Identity: Third Generation Bangladeshis from East London'. His book is an in-depth study of young Bangladeshis from East London examining areas of cultural, linguistic, national, religious and gender identities. Dr. Hoque’s writing and research focuses on issues of multicultural Britain, identity, social justice, youth policy, religion, race relations and Islamic feminism. Dr Hoque has more than 27 years of voluntary and professional experience in the youth, community and voluntary sector and is a recognised expert in young people and cultural identity. He is the proud father of three daughters and a resident of Waltham Forest. Dr Hoque was awarded an MBE for services to youth justice in East London in 2008, and was also appointed to the Board of Trustees of Royal Greenwich Museums by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the Prime Minister’s Office in 2016.

PROFESSOR STEPHEN MACHIN
Economist, London School of Economics

Stephen Machin is Professor of Economics and Director of the Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics. Previously he has been visiting Professor at Harvard University (1993/4) and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2001/2). He is a Fellow of the British Academy, has been President of the European Association of Labour Economists, is a Fellow of the Society of Labor Economists and was a member of the UK Low Pay Commission from 2007-13. His current research interests include inequality, education and crime, and the interactions between them.

ALEXIS MICHAELIDES
Big Creative

Alexis launched Big Creative Training (formerly Dv8) in Waltham Forest in 1999 delivering creative courses to young people from across the Borough. In 2013 Alexis and his team founded Big Creative Academy a 16-18 free school and together with Big Creative Training established Big Creative Education (BCE). In this time Alexis has also been involved in the music industry as a label and artist manager.

Over the last 20 years BCE has grown to offer full time courses and apprenticeships across the creative the digital sector to over 600 students and apprentices. BCE will launch ‘Creative Works’ a co-work space for creatives and apprentices in the heart of the Blackhorse Lane creative quarter in October 2018.
IAN PARKES

Chief Executive of East London Business Alliance (ELBA)

Ian Parkes was appointed as ELBA’s Chief Executive in April 2016. Ian’s career spans the public, private and not for profit sectors. Formerly Chief Executive of AZTEC, he founded SOA Development in 2001. SOA Development was an independent practice specialising in project management, strategy development, partnership development, and organisation governance. Clients were drawn from the public, not for profit and the private sectors. He was involved with Coast to Capital LEP and Greater Brighton City Region’s devolution bid.

From 2004 to 2012 SOA Development specialized in Olympic Legacy planning, raising awareness of the business opportunities that could arise from the London Games and making sure businesses across the south east region were well prepared for Games time disruptions.

Strongly committed to helping children and young people meet their full potential, Ian is a serial school and college governor. He recently stepped down after 12 years as Chairman of Governors at an inner London primary school, and is currently a senior governor at one of London’s largest secondary schools, Vice Chair of the educational trust which runs the school and Chair of the Governors for their recently opened primary school.

LESLEY RETALLACK

Head of Corporate and Social Responsibility, Eurostar (retired 15 June 2018).

Lesley joined European Passenger Services, the UK arm of the tri-railway partnership of the national railways of the UK, France and Belgium, in 1991 as PR Manager. She worked on communications campaigns and educational initiatives driving public awareness of the work the railways were undertaking to introduce a passenger rail service to take advantage of the construction of the Channel Tunnel. She was involved in all the key milestones for the business including the launch of commercial services in 1994. The key highlight of her career, when she was Head of Press, was the seamless move from Waterloo International to St Pancras International and the opening of HS1 in 2007.

In 2010, when Eurostar became a limited business for the first time, Lesley stayed within the communications team but took up the remit of Head of Corporate and Social Responsibility (CSR), which had previously been largely the responsibility of each of Eurostar’s key stakeholders. To that end she has built on some of the existing initiatives but also developed new initiatives and partnerships particularly in the field of education, community and environment. Lesley had a key CSR role in London 2012, the London Paralympics and the Special Olympics in 2014.

In 2016, Eurostar linked the environment and energy side of its business with the CSR side to launch its integrated Community and Environment programme. Lesley’s particular forte is educational initiatives to ensure that young people have access to business at different ages in order to better understand the types of jobs and opportunities available. Besides apprenticeships and graduate schemes there are also special work experience modules, master classes, classroom visits, careers talks and a Homework Club. She is an Executive Member of Urban Partners, a voluntary business partnership for Euston, King’s Cross and Euston whose members include Google, the Guardian, King’s Place, HS1, Argent and Grant Thornton. After recently retiring from Eurostar she has accepted an appointment as a Trustee of the Young People’s Trust for the Environment.
REFERENCES

3. Throughout the report, any mention of ‘parents’ refers to any parent or carer with parental responsibility for children and young people
10. We have specifically focused on young people due to the evidence that the experiences a person has when they are young are fundamental to shaping their life outcomes and avoiding the need for support later in life. That does not imply that activities to support life chances later in life are not effective – they are – and the Council should ensure that these activities continue...
64. Parsfield et al., eds. RSA Action and Research Centre, Community Capital The Value of Connected Communities: https://www.thersa.org/discover/publications-and-articles
70. Kirchner Sala L. et al. (2015), Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Youth transitions to and within the labour market: A literature review: https://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/07/1451
78. ‘Disadvantaged’ means eligible for free school meals or looked after at any point between year 6 and year 11
81. The Sutton Trust (2015), Subject to Background – What promotes better achievement for bright but disadvantaged students?: https://www.suttontrust.com/research-paper/subject-to-background-disadvantaged-pupils-enrichment-homework/
92. The Careers and Enterprise Company: Effective Employment Mentoring: https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/research/publications/effective-employer-mentoring
95. Speakers4Schools: https://www.speakers4schools.org/


98. Housing has not been a focus of this study since this is not a key influence on life chances per se, though evidently young people need to have affordable accommodation available to them if they are to build their working lives in the borough


106. Apprenticeship Ambassador Programme: http://gmlpn.co.uk/our-projects/apprenticeship-ambassadors/


