

**4in10
Engage London
and Children England Present:**

A CITY FOR ALL CHILDREN

**4in10 Good Practice & Capacity Building Workshops:
Report #32**

“Research and data presented by the practitioners and analysts was really insightful.”

“The round table discussion was a great way of interactive networking and the speakers provided great food for thought.”

“The presentations were good, but really enjoyed the discussions.”

“Usefully enjoyed Policy in Practice for ideas around how to interpret data and enjoyed meeting others and learning from their practice/ specialisms.”

“Enjoyed all and all interesting. Three speakers added information that I can take back to my organisation and I especially liked discussion.”

“Roundtables were a great opportunity to think concretely about some of the greatest challenges”

- Feedback comments from event participants

A City for All Children was the 32nd of 4in10's series of Good Practice and Capacity Building Workshops, and was a joint event with Engage London and Children England. It was held at Lift, 45 White Lion Street, London N1 9PW on 7th December 2016.

For further information about the event or 4in10, please contact:
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ABOUT THE SEMINAR

The new Mayor of London Sadiq Khan published his vision for London: [A City for All Londoners](#) which was out for consultation until 11th December. In this document he outlined the top challenges and opportunities in the capital, and the changes that City Hall wants to deliver over the next four years.

A City for All Children was hosted by the 4in10 child poverty network in partnership with Engage London and Children England to explore what the strategy must deliver for children, and the key priorities for London's children for the next few years.

The seminar outlined London's high rates of child poverty, as illustrated by the recent End Child Poverty coalition figures, the difficulties for low income working families and the impact of welfare reform on these families, the challenging context for children's services in the capital, and how we can build a family friendly city together.

The second half of the session was group discussion with participants engaging on four of the five key areas of the consultation proposals: Economy, Housing, Accommodating Growth, and A City for All Londoners. We noted gaps or issues of concern for children, young people and families in the Mayor's plans, as well as practical and policy solutions. These discussions and solutions were used in the 4in10 consultation response, and will be used to inform our priorities going forward.

Speakers' presentations can be downloaded from the [event page](#) on the 4in10 website, or can be made available by request.

PRESENTATION: CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN LONDON

Kathy Evans, Children England CEO, gave an overview of the context for children and young people's services in London. She presented data which showed that the formula grants from central government to local authorities, which made up 39% of council budgets in 2010/11, will be completely gone by 2019/2020. Alarming, the formula grant paid for child protection and children's social care, and where the money will come from for these essential services remains unclear. Business rates are expected to provide an increasing proportion of council budgets, but this means that economically poorer areas where families need most support will have the least capacity to raise money for children and young people's services. Data shows that the most deprived local authorities have received the highest percentage cuts in council spending power between 2011/12 and 2016/17.

Kathy noted that the changes to the early years funding formula impact inner and outer London differently. While outer London will see the largest rise in funding for childcare and early years (19% increase), inner London is the only English region which will see a decrease in funding for early years (-3%). The cost of childcare is particularly high in inner London, and funding cuts for early years will make childcare provision more expensive for providers and families.

London's schools have been on an incredible improvement journey and are overall the best performing schools in England, but London still needs an additional 105,000 secondary school places and 60,000 primary school places by 2025. Kathy also voiced concerns about the financial difficulties currently facing Further Education colleges, with the Department for Education recently consulting on an insolvency plan for FE colleges. FE funding is not protected in the ringfenced schools budget.

Voluntary sector run children, young people and families' services have been forced to operate with reduced funding. Research by Charity Finance Group on charity contracting in 2016 found that among over 120 of the largest public sector contracting charities, the average loss on contract value was 11%.

Kathy closed by outlining the underpinning issues for London services and calling for action on these points:

- Property costs and housing costs make all service provision bills higher
- Cost of living crisis in London (including housing, transport and childcare) are fuelling recruitment shortfalls for many areas of public and charity services for children, young people and families
- Too many staff are employed in services supporting children are themselves low-paid, on insecure contracts, and among London's poor families
- Competitive contracting is a failed model for public service provision – how do we share resources, money, power, and collaborate across public, voluntary sector and business community?

PRESENTATION: CHILD POVERTY IN INNER LONDON

Laura Payne, 4in10 Strategic Manager spoke about child poverty in London, and in particular in inner London. She reminded the group that child poverty matters to London because it presents a threat to economic prosperity, as staff struggling with childcare and housing costs are hard to retain, and it also presents a threat to social integration as these families find it harder to live in London.

4in10 will soon publish a report called *Inner City Pressure: The Voices of low income working families in inner London* on the complex challenges they face. Working families speak out about the complex challenges they face and the complicated choices they make to protect their children.

Lina, a mum, said “there doesn’t come one day where you don’t think about the bills... You’re always doing calculations, sometimes its food, sometimes the overdraft’

Nadia, another mum said “He needed £7 to go on a trip, I didn’t have it. so I took 7 buses instead of the train to work. It took 3 and a half hours. I had to pick up my son from a friend at 9.30pm”

Laura called for the Mayor of London's strategy to lower costs, increase support, and improve the environment for families in London, focusing on childcare and quality early education, housing (cost, stability, quality), tackling low pay or exploitative employment practice, and improving healthy spaces to learn / play (air quality / food available). This new strategy should reduce the impact of poverty on children, and prevent it from further impairing their childhoods and life chances.

PRESENTATION: THE IMPACT OF WELFARE REFORM ON LOW INCOME FAMILIES IN LONDON

Giovanni Tonutti, Senior Policy and Operations Analyst at Policy in Practice, outlined data on the impact of welfare reforms in London, as well as their recent project on the impact of welfare reform on low income families in Croydon. Planned welfare reform means that by 2020 low income families will be £41.45 a week worse off in real terms than in April 2016, with low income Londoners the hardest hit of all regions. North London boroughs will experience the greatest hit to incomes yet the highest rent increases. The benefit cap, introduced in 2013, limits how much money a working age household in London can receive to £23,000 a year. Large families with children are the group most heavily impacted by this policy.

Policy in Practice aims to turn data into actionable insights. Their recent work in Croydon has seen them analyse local authority housing benefit data with software that allows them to see the impact of specific and cumulative reforms at an aggregate and household level. The analysis is to create an impact assessment of welfare reforms on the borough's residents, which informs the council's priorities for targeted welfare support. Croydon council's strategic priorities were keeping people in their home, reducing indebtedness, and improving household resilience and wellbeing. Policy in Practice and Croydon Council's Benefit Cap Strategy Team (benefit manager, housing manager, emergency and temporary accommodation officer, local DWP official officer) used a proactive smart data approach to identify key groups impacted by welfare reform, including lone parents. The strategy for lone parents was to focus on removing barriers to work by ensuring access to childcare. A geographical analysis helped the local authority to verify whether childcare facilities in each neighbourhood had sufficient capacity to accommodate these children and families, and where increased childcare provision would make the most difference to moving lone parents into work.

Policy in Practice have received a research grant from Trust for London to conduct a London wide analysis, which will track how households affected by the cap will respond, identify the drivers of deprivation among the poorest neighbourhoods in the capital, and identify predictors of need for temporary accommodation.

Giovanni closed by noting that the challenge posed by welfare cuts and the benefits freeze is huge, but it does present an opportunity to rethink how to engage with low-income families and how to plan and deliver support. He called for the smart use of data to provide the basis on which to plan strategies, noting that the insights which the data holds are only proportional to its scope. He called for creativity in trying to overcome the barriers preventing information sharing between organisations.

GROUP DISCUSSION

The seminar moved on to a discussion on the Mayor's consultation on A City for All Londoners, with groups exploring four of the Mayor's five themes; economy, housing, accommodating growth, and a city for all Londoners. For each of the themes participants explored the proposals, noting key issues or gaps, and proposing policy and practical solutions which would make London a city for all children. Key points from the discussions on each theme are noted below.

Economy

- **Key issues and gaps** in the Mayor's proposals were noted by participants around the London Living Wage (LLW rate assumes families live in social housing, but an increasing number of families are now living in the private rented sector where rents are much higher); the impact of the 'shadow economy' on children (such as poor take-up of free childcare places and poor school-readiness); a lack of focus on the high correlation of disability with poverty; issues with section 106 funds; the unaffordability of childcare for providers and families; and there being too much educational pressure on children and young people, particularly around making career decisions early.
- **Policy solutions** discussed included giving the Mayor's Economic Fairness team a remit to look at family-friendly working as well as the impact of disability on poverty; developing a fair rent strategy for all rental housing is needed; reinstating the London Schools Challenge collaborative model; GLA modelling for local authorities to explore whether incentives (such as business rate discounts) to employers who pay the London Living Wage could improve child poverty; a universal childcare scheme free at the point of access for the whole of London; enabling children to follow their interests and passions rather than portfolio education; promoting the "Open to All" campaign which calls for employment processes to not screen out people without degrees; setting up a taskforce on achieving diverse ways of learning and options for careers and skills (e.g. project travel, practical); targeting investment in the economy to the areas of greatest poverty and deprivation; and councils exploring a Pan-London approach to business rates.
- **Practical solutions** from participants included focusing the organisations working with schools on struggling schools; more effective communication, cooperation, collaboration across and within sectors; the voluntary sector and schools collaborating to nurture and respond to children and young peoples' needs and interests (e.g. summer universities); improving provision of creative, honest careers advice tailored to individuals; ensuring that young people aren't 'locked in' to career choices made at year 9, with work experience happening before choices; nurseries and schools opening up their spaces for communities to use; and pooling existing local authority funding for childcare, with companies and charitable foundations paying into the pot, to create a universal free childcare scheme in London.

Housing

- **Key issues and gaps** in the Mayor's proposals around housing for families were discussed as follows; no clarity on the definition of 'affordability'; a lack of specific housing policies announced for low income and just about managing households, with 'affordable' products largely targeted at middle income earners, the 'hidden homeless' (those staying with friends and family) are not addressed in the homelessness policy; no recognition of the importance of secure tenancies for children; London Living Rent is calculated on gross income rather than net income, so is not really a third of average incomes; too much empty housing in the city which has been bought as an investment asset rather than a home; a lack of clarity on how the huge rise in temporary accommodation places required will be achieved; and intergenerational tension with young families overcrowded and more isolated older people under-occupying larger homes, a situation which doesn't suit both groups.

- **Policy solutions** discussed by participants include; the GLA could launch an investigation into section 106 and make more resources available to local authorities to help them ensure that communities benefit properly from section 106; the Mayor should use the opportunity of the white paper on housing announced in the Autumn Statement to call for more power around housing to be devolved to London; the GLA should lobby central government for legislation / taxation on unoccupied properties; the Mayor should work with partners to develop an attractive offer to encourage under-occupiers to downsize, which includes consideration of design and community concerns; the Mayor should mandate a proportion of all new developments should be at London Living Rent; the Mayor should clarify what his “support” for local authority PRS landlord licensing schemes entails in practice and provide resources for councils to explore such schemes; the GLA and local authorities should develop a lobbying strategy to end the benefit freeze in London; and the Mayor should work with public bodies selling off land in London (e.g. MOJ, NHS) to ensure that social and affordable housing is prioritised within these developments.
- **Practical solutions** discussed by participants include local authorities and social housing finding ways to build more social housing; the Mayor should ensure that a proportion of each bit of TfL land reserved for housing development includes social housing; the Mayor should use his planning powers to increase land class designation for community or mixed use, which will encourage and help community land trusts to buy and develop land; and the Mayor, local authorities and charitable funders should pool resources to invest in a London-wide scheme to expand box unit temporary accommodation such as at ‘The Place’ in Ladywell, Lewisham.

Accommodating Growth

- **Key issues and gaps** in the Mayor’s proposals around accommodating growth discussed by participants were the lack of a definition of ‘affordability’; clarity on security of tenure for affordable housing, particularly for build-to-rent; London’s recruitment crisis in teaching due to housing costs, which threatens the creation of new school places; the difficulties of childcare for shift workers; a recognition that service staff who can’t be relocated to workstations and hubs still need to have affordable accommodation within travelling distance of their employment; and an understanding that the growth in the use of Uber means more cars and more air pollution. The uncertainty surrounding Brexit and what this will mean for the London economy and population was also noted as a key concern.
- **Policy solutions** to accommodate inclusive growth in London were that (net) incomes, not the market, should be the measure of affordability; the Mayor and GLA should lobby central government regarding the forthcoming white paper on housing to ask for more discretion for London on housing, to include security of tenure, and to unpick the Housing and Planning Act 2016; The Mayor must have a seat at the Brexit negotiating table; the Mayor should campaign for a fair London funding formula for schools and early years; the Mayor and local authorities should expand the number of local childminder pool schemes; local authorities should encourage business to move out of central into more local areas to support local economies (e.g. Nestle in Croydon); and focusing future transport investment in less connected places.

- **Practical solutions** put forward by participants to accommodate inclusive growth in London included the use of soft power to influence developers and encourage housing associations to remain housing associations; building capacity in communities for people to build their own community housing associations; the development of London teachers' centres; the introduction of a transport discount for key workers such as teachers; relieving pressure on teachers with data management and support staff; co-locating different organisations to locally based work hubs, saving space and costs and encouraging collaboration; and the introduction of a part-time travelcard.

A City for All Londoners

- **Key issues and gaps** in the Mayor's proposals for creating a city for all Londoners, and in particular children and young people, include a lack of access for key groups to take part in the National Citizens' Service; a recognition of the voluntary sector and community sector and how much it brings to London in terms of resources; the lack of opportunities for young people involved in knife crime (on the DBS in particular); the exploitation of children and young people in terms of drug trafficking fuelled by the affluent; poor quality housing as a driver of health inequalities; safeguarding concerns (peer-on-peer abuse, domestic abuse, consent, etc); a recognition that young people are too often seen as a problem in society; and clear acknowledgment that social integration requires more inclusive growth.
- **Policy solutions** discussed by participants include the Mayor recognising the contribution the voluntary and community sector makes to London and outlining where it fits within the London Plan; the Mayor promoting the voluntary sector's involvement in commissioning; a more joined up approach, at local, national and global levels; tackling the exploitation of children and young people in drug trafficking; more effective collaboration between housing services and the NHS; for the Mayor to support on safeguarding issues by exploring approaches to engage young people on attitudes to sexual violence; profiling the assets of young people to encourage investment in young Londoners; and taking best practice from other cities in improving social integration and inclusive growth.
- **Practical solutions** discussed by participants include ensuring that initiatives like NCS do more outreach to widen access, including through working more with regional and local providers; the Mayor should promote a greater focus on grants rather than contracts for the voluntary sector; improving transferable skills training to support young people with employability issues due to former involvement in crime; for local authorities and voluntary sector to adjust requirements for applications to ensure that pathways exist for young people out of gangs via employment; developing an intergenerational approach to mobilizing the skills and knowledge of local communities emphasising the informal education needed for tackling gang issues; developing a multi-faceted approach with better wrap around care for tackling gang issues; looking for models of good practice, share knowledge, collaborate VCS sectors, and look at faith communities to document and utilize their good practice in tackling gang issues; for the GLA to support local data mapping to improve knowledge and services around public health and housing issues; the Mayor, VCS and local authorities could work together to play an educational role to tackle sexual violence; encouraging central London businesses to create employment opportunities across London not just in central boroughs; and supporting existing providers to collaborate more.

AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

- Participants' discussions on how the Mayor's consultation works for children, young people and families in London, and suggestions for policy and practical solutions were included in 4in10's response to the A City for All Londoners consultation submitted in December.
- 4in10 will hold an event on working more effectively with City Hall in early 2017 and will invite event attendees to participate in this forthcoming session.

EVENT PARTICIPANTS

Participants representing organisations from the voluntary and statutory sector attended the seminar. Organisations attending included LB Barking and Dagenham, Inspire! Education Business Partnership, Zest of Mind, Teach First, St Matthew's Project, Charlton Athletic Community Trust, Revo Seccus, Teens and Toddlers, Volunteering Matters, Generation Rent, Renters' Rights, Partnership for Young London, LB Southwark, Henry Smith Charity, Save the Children, Policy in Practice, Barnardo's, Epic CIC, and Child Poverty Action Group.

ABOUT 4IN10

4in10 is a network of organisations working to end child poverty in London, based at Children England and funded by Trust for London and the City Bridge Trust. This seminar was one of 4in10's series of Good Practice and Capacity Building Workshops, which cover different issues that impact on child poverty in London. They create an opportunity for individuals, voluntary sector organisations, campaigners, academics, and local authority bodies to share information, good practice and get up to date useful knowledge about all issues that impact on the lived experience of children and families in the capital. Through these, we hope to build specific knowledge and skills to support work on tackling child poverty and launch or support campaign work where relevant.

ABOUT ENGAGE LONDON

Engage London is a collaboration between Partnership for Young London, Children England, and the Race Equality Foundation, funded by London Councils, to support the children, young people and families voluntary and community sector across the London region.

ABOUT CHILDREN ENGLAND

Children England is a charity created, governed and inspired by other children's charities. Our mission is to change the world for England's children by harnessing the energy, ingenuity and expertise of the voluntary organisations that work on their behalf. We believe that a society that has children at heart is a better society for everyone.