

H A R I N G E Y

Fairness Commission

What We've Heard

A summary of the Fairness Commission's first public meeting

1st November 2018, Park View School

HARINGEY

Fairness Commission

At the Haringey Fairness Commission's first public event on 1st November 2018, residents assembled at Park View school to discuss their experiences and perceptions of inequality, and how they think the borough could be made a fairer place. Over 100 residents took part in small table discussions, with around eight residents on each table, discussing one of six topics relating to life in Haringey:

- Children & Education
- Communities & Neighbourhoods
- Debt & Poverty
- Health & Wellbeing
- Housing
- Jobs

The discussion on each table was led either by a Commissioner, a volunteer Haringey resident or a Council officer, whose role was to make sure that the discussion stuck to time and the key questions were addressed, as well as to make a note of the issues that were raised. At the end of each session, the group voted individually on which topics their table discussed that the Commission should focus on as a priority. A plenary session was held at the end for tables to share what they thought were the most important issues they had discussed with everyone at the event.

This document shows the moderators' record of the issues that were raised at each table. For each topic we have provided a short summary, outlining the key issues raised in the discussions. We have also provided a summary of the comments made during the plenary session.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who gave up their time to come along and share their experiences and views on 1st November – the Fairness Commission could not exist without your participation. A particular thank you, too, to our volunteer moderators who did a great job of running discussions on the evening and keeping a record of what was said.

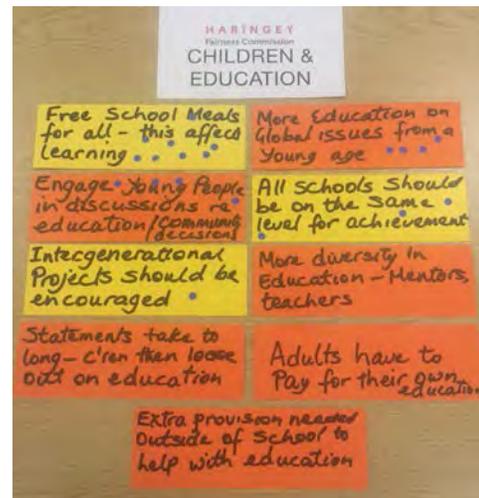
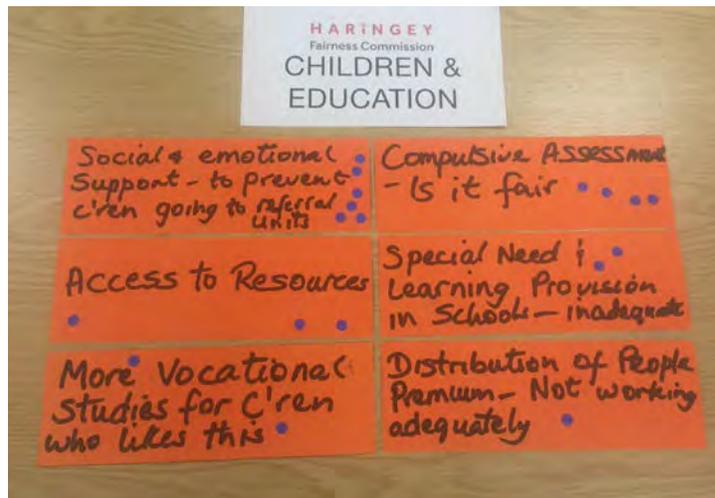
Within the process of running these discussions we recognise the possibility that of the many comments that were shared, some may not have been captured. If you were at the event and feel that your comments are not reflected here, please contact us by telephone or email and we will be happy to incorporate your comments into our upcoming meetings (fairness@haringey.gov.uk / 020 8489 5336).



HARINGEY

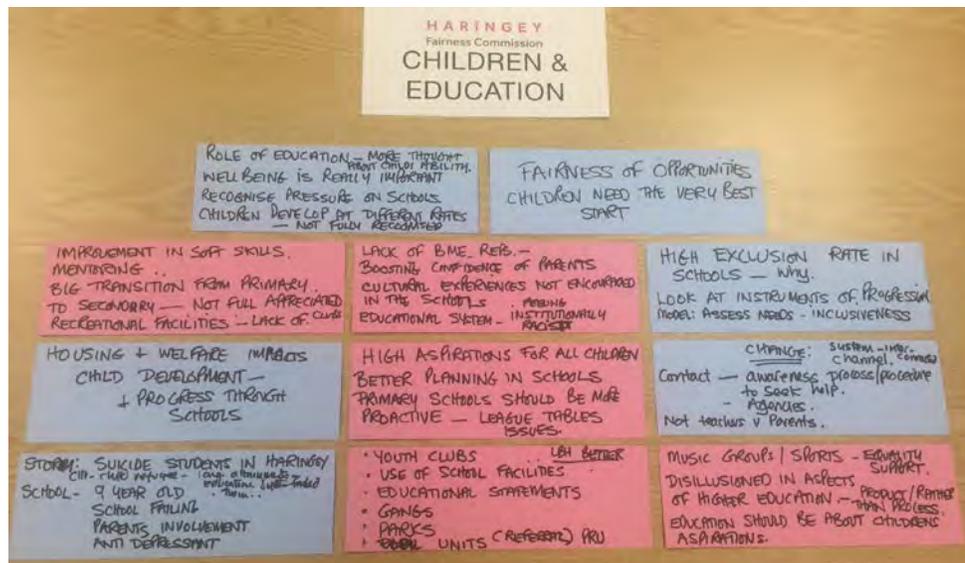
Fairness Commission

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: CHILDREN & EDUCATION



The broad issue of **Alternative Provision** was talked about on all tables, with a particular emphasis on there being a high rate of pupil exclusions and the need for more effective early intervention and support.

- **Table 1:** Residents thought that social and emotional support to prevent children from being excluded and going into referral units was the most important topic they talked about.
- **Table 2:** Residents thought that free school meals should be provided for all (including primary and secondary school pupils). The group also thought children should be given more education on global issues from a young age, and that they should be engaged in discussions around education and community decisions.
- **Table 3:** Topics were not prioritised, but they covered a number of issues including fair opportunities, a lack of BME (Black and minority ethnic) representatives, the importance of improving soft skills (e.g. communication skills or time management), reducing pressure on children, ensuring wellbeing, helping all children to have high aspirations, disillusionment, and the impact of housing and welfare on young people's lives.



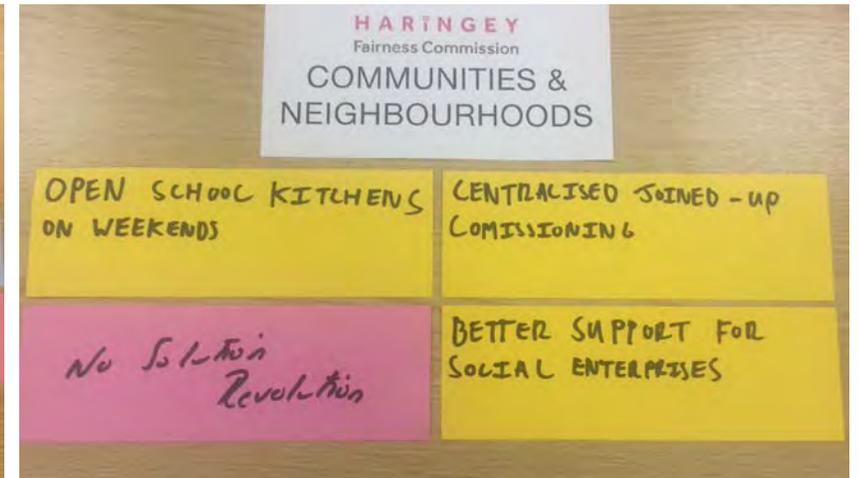
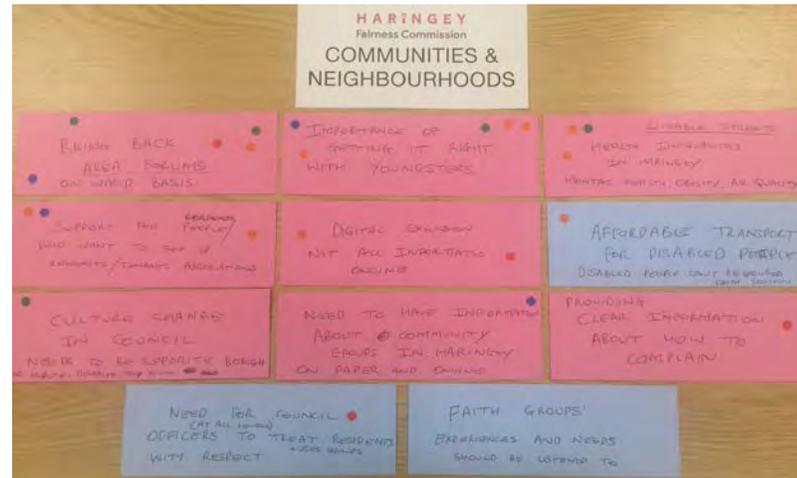
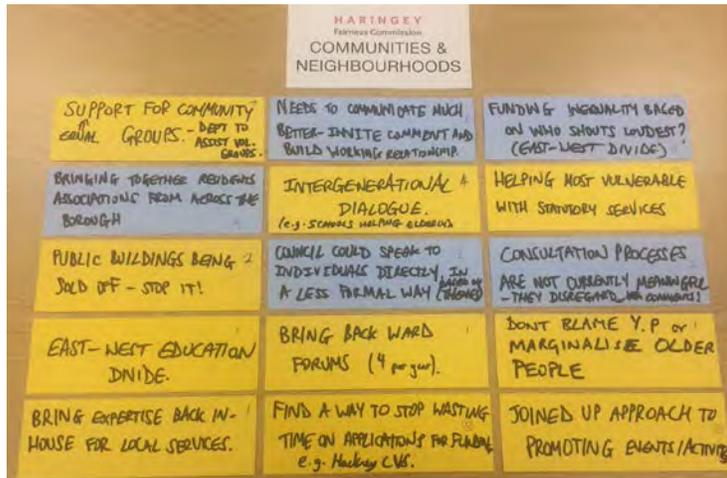
HARINGEY

Fairness Commission

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS

The tables discussed a range of issues in relation to strengthening communities and neighbourhoods:

- **Table 1:** Providing **greater (and equal) support for community groups** was voted as the most important topic raised. They also want the **Council to communicate better** and improve its working relationships. They also expressed concern around **funding inequality** between the west and east of the borough.
- **Table 2:** **Bringing back ward forums** was identified by residents as the most important issue (this was also mentioned on Table 1 but was not voted as a priority). The second most important issue for this group was **supporting our young people**. The group also wants **better support for community groups**, including support for people who want to set up residents associations, and information about where to find existing groups (online *and* offline); this issue was also raised on Table 1. This group also raised issues about **how communities communicate with the Council** – they felt there is a lack of respect in how residents are treated, and want to see a culture change. They also want clearer signposting when they want to complain.
- **Table 3:** While the final table on communities and neighbourhoods didn't vote, they wanted to see **school kitchens open on weekends**, more **centralised and joined up commissioning**, and **better support for social enterprises**.



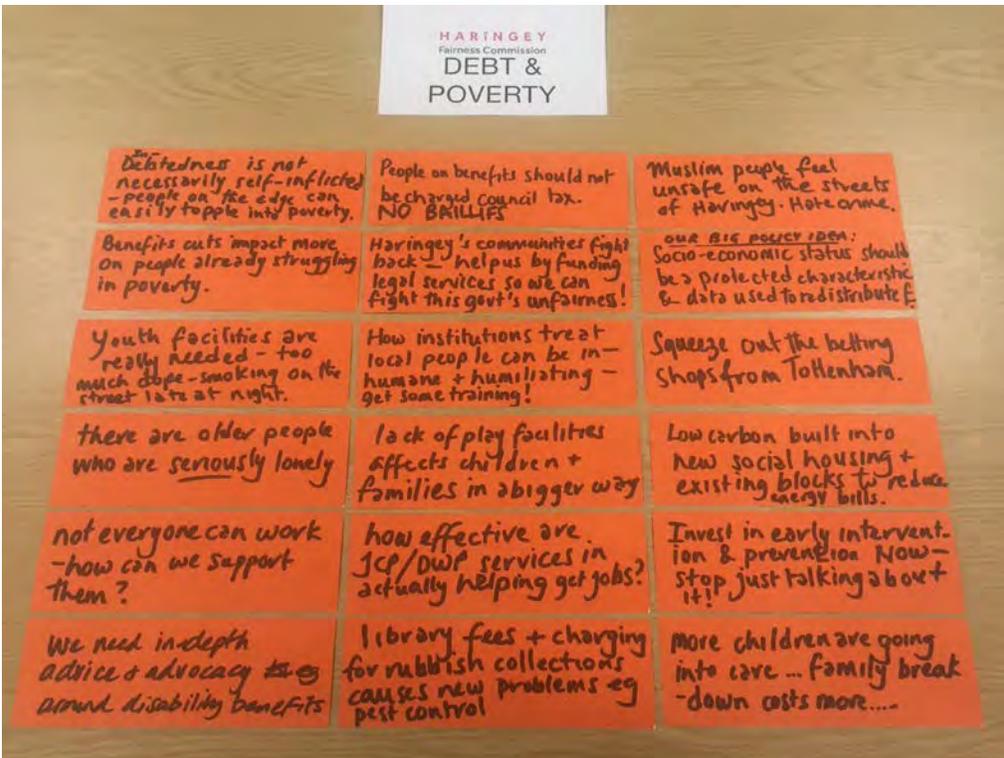
HARINGEY

Fairness Commission

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: DEBT & POVERTY

The table addressing Debt & Poverty discussed a range of topics, though they did not vote on which should be a priority:

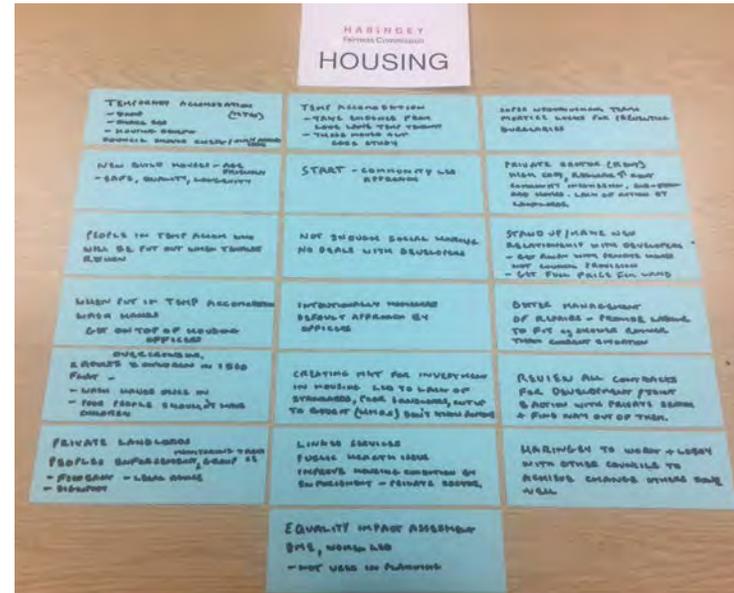
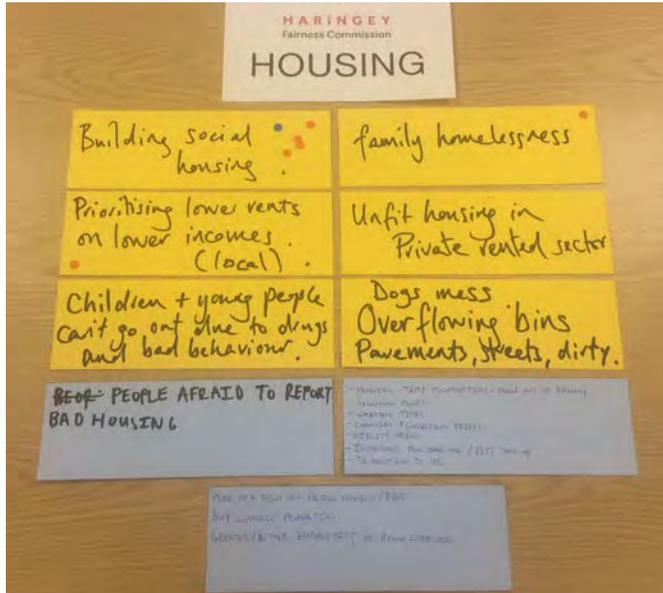
- **Impact of debt and poverty on children and young people:** There is a lack of play facilities, affecting children and families; youth facilities are needed to reduce the number of young people smoking drugs on the street late at night; there are more children going into care, and family break down ultimately costs more.
- **Ways to reduce poverty itself:** Poverty is often not self-inflicted, and people on the edge can easily topple into poverty; some policies have negative knock-on impacts e.g. charging for rubbish collections leads to pest control problems; socio-economic status should be a protected characteristic & data used to redistribute f.
- **Ways to reduce the impact of poverty:** Find ways of reducing energy bills in social housing; drop or stop council tax for people on benefits; stop the use of bailiffs; provide in-depth advice and advocacy e.g. around disability benefits; invest in early intervention and prevention; squeeze out the betting shops in Tottenham in particular; fund legal services for residents.
- **Improve benefits and support for those who can't work:** Benefit cuts will impact more on those already struggling; people need in-depth advice and advocacy e.g. around disability benefits; how effective are e.g. Job Centre Plus and DWP services in helping people find work?
- **Concerns about certain groups:** Loneliness among older people, and hate crime against Muslim people.
- **Provide training so institutions treat local people more humanely.**



HARINGEY

Fairness Commission

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: HOUSING



On all of the tables addressing housing, council and social housing emerged as a concern – principally the need to build more, but also a lack of clarity around waiting lists, and the need for better management. Private rental sector housing was also raised as a concern on every table, including high rents, rogue landlords and living conditions.

- **Table 1:** This group broadly agreed that the recommendation to build social housing was the most important thing the Commission could do. Family homelessness and making lower rents available to local people on lower incomes were also discussed and considered to be important.
- **Table 2:** Although this table did not vote, issues relating to temporary accommodation came out strongly, in terms of living conditions e.g. damp, interaction with officers, and the need to take evidence from Love Lane residents specifically. The table also talked of concerns around relationships with developers, private landlords, the quality of housing and overcrowding.
- **Table 3:** Besides the issues of council housing and rogue landlords, this table raised concerns around hidden fees, a lack of transparency from officers and their apparent failure to listen to residents, and the demolition of Love Lane.

Table 3, Topics Raised:

Lack of transparency and information
 Rogue landlords aren't held to account
 Hidden agents' fees – private landlords and council housing agents
 Gatekeeping - officers hiding the truth
 Residents & public consultations aren't listened to
 The process for going up / down the council housing ladder is unclear
 Love Lane – impact of demolition on residents
 Homelessness
 The relationship between developers and officers
 Uncertainty in housing leads to health issues
 Follow the Equalities Act

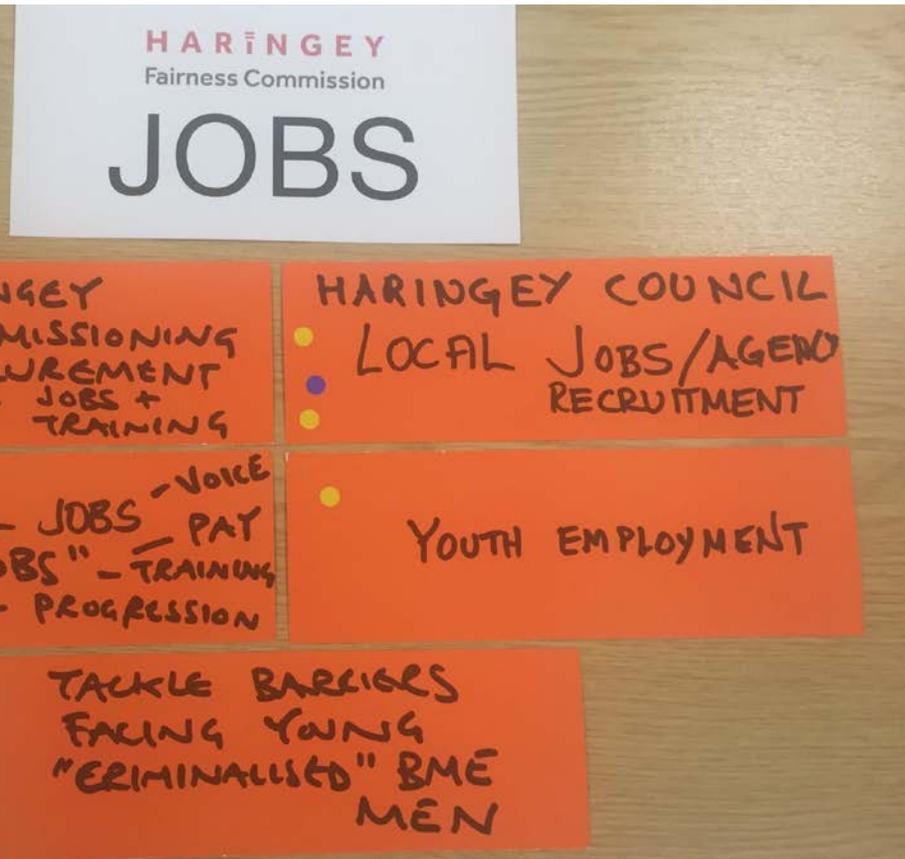
Table 3, Suggested Solutions:

A free public legal service
 Push for licensing of private landlords
 Create a list of agents' fees and publish them online so people can compare and call out
 Hold officers accountable for mistakes they make
 Reevaluate how consultations work so that they aren't a box ticking exercise but they actually help people
 Hire equality advisors

HARINGEY

Fairness Commission

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: JOBS



The table addressing Jobs raised the following:

- The priority for the Commission should be to **recommend** that Haringey Council's procedures actively contribute to creating better jobs and providing training.
- They also want to see the Council **create an agency** for local recruitment and jobs.
- The table also thought the Commission should **focus on making local jobs 'great jobs'** – by improving pay, training and progression opportunities.
- **Youth employment** was also raised as an issue on this table, and in particular they highlighted the need to **tackle barriers** facing young 'criminalised' BME men.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: PLENARY SESSION

To close the event we held a plenary session, where someone from each table was asked to stand up and tell us about the things they discussed that were considered most powerful, or most important for the Commission to address. A summary of the issues raised around each topic is below.



Children & Education

- High rates of school exclusions need to be addressed
- More attention should be given to children's wellbeing
- Recognise the pressure on schools
- Lack of facilities and clubs affects education
- Teachers and parents must work in unison
- Children as young as 9 are on medication for depression, due to bullying – needs to be clearer where to go to get help
- Make sure there are options for children who don't suit mainstream schools
- Make vocational training available to help all children and engage those at risk of exclusion.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: PLENARY SESSION



Communities & Neighbourhoods

- More support is needed for community and voluntary organisations;
- There are many examples of people doing great voluntary work to replace services that have been cut, but groups need more recognition, advice, support and cash;
- Consultation must be meaningful;
- Build better relationships with communities e.g. Wards Corner; Council communication needs to improve;
- The Council needs a culture change – residents want to see more respect in how they are treated;
- Bring back area forums;
- Support people to set up residents and tenants associations;
- Listen to young people more;
- Don't do everything online – it excludes people;
- Getting transport right for disabled people can prevent their exclusion from society;
- There is not enough expertise in the Council about how to support immigrants;
- Do outreach with refugees and asylum seekers to prevent cases of suicide;
- Reduce air pollution and make Haringey streets truly liveable;
- Help build a borough that is less divided between east and west.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: PLENARY SESSION



Debt & Poverty

- Add a socio-economic indicator to the list of protected characteristics in Equalities Impact Assessments (EqIAs);
- Ensure EqIAs are not a box ticking exercise, and ensure actions identified to mitigate risks do happen;
- Make equality of outcomes an enforceable duty;
- Treat people with respect and dignity;
- Reform the council tax system;
- We need a better approach for people with no recourse to public funds.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: PLENARY SESSION



Health & Wellbeing

- Dignity, health and wellbeing must be accessible to all;
- Access to health centres varies significantly in different parts of the borough, as does life expectancy;
- Poor level of care experienced at St Ann's;
- Importance of clean air for health;
- People need meaningful, purposeful activities to reduce isolation.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: PLENARY SESSION



Housing

- Check the Council's relationship with developers – need for better negotiation;
- Take evidence from Love Lane;
- Lack of transparency for both temporary and secure tenants, which leads to mental ill health;
- Make legal assistance available for residents;
- Council must abide by the Equality Act and should have trained equality officers;
- Want to see the Council change its approach to Regeneration.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD: PLENARY SESSION



Jobs

- Connect people to local jobs, and make local jobs better;
- Council should work with the private sector to make bad jobs good jobs;
- There is a lack of quality employment in the borough;
- The Council itself should be hiring more local people.

WHAT WE'RE CHANGING: THE EVENT ITSELF



As well as the above, attendees at the event and in our follow-up survey have given feedback on the event itself, and how it can be improved upon for our future events in January and February 2019.

Based on this feedback, we will be making the following changes to our upcoming events:

1. The Health and Wellbeing table will become Health and Social Care
2. A table will be added for Environment
3. A table will be included that has no allocated topic, for residents to talk about any issues that they feel don't fit anywhere else
4. Attendees will be informed of the table topics in advance of the event
5. Table moderators will make it clearer to participants that what is written down will be submitted to the Commission, and that the table can request changes to wording if required
6. We will allow more time for registration, so that the sessions can run to time and more time is available to discuss problems as well as their solutions



Come and have your say! Our next public events will be held:

West of Borough: 25th January, 5pm-7pm (registration from 4.30pm), at St Mary's Primary School, Hornsey

East of Borough: 2nd February, 10am-12pm (registration from 9.30am), Tottenham (exact location TBC)

For more information and to register, visit our [website](#).