



## **ALL LONDON VOICES**

### **Final Report**

**What the priorities should be for London's Mayor from a consultation exercise targeting Black Asian and Minority Ethnic young Londoners**

*'London's a great city but certain things need to change and opportunities made available to everyone regardless if you are rich or poor or black or white'*

### **Introduction**

In November 2015 the Coalition of Race Equality Organisations (CORE, mainly members based in London), with the kind financial contribution from Trust for London and led by CORE member the Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG), initiated a time limited project with the aim of capturing the views of BAME young Londoners and giving them a voice in the run up to the 2016 London Mayoral elections. This report pulls together the findings from the consultation exercises we undertook and hopefully gives an insight into what young people from London's BAME communities identify as key issues for the new Mayor of London to address.

### **Project aims and outputs**

Our main aim for the project was to identify priorities from a sample of BAME young people from across London through an online survey and focus groups. We achieved this and will report on the findings in a later section.

We produced an e-manifesto from our early findings, highlighting the priorities that had been identified from the young people who had participated in the survey, and shared this with the Mayoral candidates. We'd also hoped to hold a hustings event with the candidates but unfortunately we were unable to secure the main candidates and had to abandon this aspect of the project.

Following the election of Sadiq Khan as Mayor of London, CORE intends to utilise the report from the All London Voices project to engage the new Mayoral administration on its policy proposals and to ensure that BAME young Londoners are beneficiaries from the Mayor's policies.

## Context and facts

For young Londoners, building a successful life in the city is becoming increasingly harder with the most obvious manifestation being London's housing market where rising rents and property values far outpace incomes. There is now a growing sense that a person's life chances are far greater linked than they have been in recent times to their parents' social/economic position.

Social mobility has diminished, poverty appears further entrenched and the pathways out of it harder to realise. This growing inequality in London has always impacted more heavily on some of London's BAME communities. A recent report the Runnymede Trust, a CORE member, [Ethnic Inequalities in London](#), gives a detailed analysis of the exact extent of the problem.

The statistics below, taken from the Runnymede report, highlight some of the challenges faced by BAME communities in the capital. It is our view that the Mayor's approach to addressing these challenges should put a greater emphasis on community engagement and involving civil society in London to construct policy options that will make a more inclusive city:

- All London boroughs exhibit high inequality in housing between ethnic minority populations and White British people.
- Around two in five black African and Bangladeshi people in London live in overcrowded housing
- Ethnic minorities experience disadvantage in employment in every London borough
- All London boroughs have inequalities in housing between ethnic minority groups and the white British population

## Our survey

We ran a short online survey from February to the second week of May 2016. The survey sought the views of young people across London with a focus on the views of BAME young people. We generated interest in the survey through the CORE network mainly from social media and websites.

Our age range was 16 to 30 year olds. The gender breakdown was 48% male and 52% female. A total of 225 young people completed the survey. Just under 70% were BAME young people, with 36% being of black African/Caribbean, 31% white, 15% Asian and 16% mixed. We had respondents from 30 of London's 32 boroughs, with Hackney having the most respondents at 11%

We set the respondents a number of potential priorities for the new Mayor of London and asked them to rank them:

- Police use of stop and search

- Tackling knife crime
- Availability of social housing
- Job opportunities for young people
- Access to youth and recreational facilities
- Experience of racism and discrimination
- Cost of transport
- Cost of higher education

Job opportunities and higher education costs (**See Q5 graph at the end of this document**) scored the highest number of respondents followed by knife crime, transport costs and social housing.

We then asked the respondents the following question

**Do you think young people from minority ethnic communities are getting a fair chance to access opportunities and resources in London?**

55% said no and 45% said yes (**See Q6 graph at the end of this document**)

We then asked a follow up question:

**If not, what are the barriers? (e.g. discrimination, lack of qualifications, support)**

This was an open question and we had 185 responses. Around 70% of responses referred to discrimination or racism as barriers. Lack of qualifications and low aspirations were also frequently mentioned. Below are just a few of the responses we received.

*There is still an underlying prejudice towards young black males in particular and I feel throughout school many are stigmatised and carry that belief for the rest of their lives that they are badly behaved and aggressive. Something needs to be done lower down in order to help in the future.*

*Unclear pathways to further education, employment opportunities, cost of LIVING e.g. rent,*

*Lack of exposure & contacts / networks What white counterparts especially from middle / upper classes have is social capital - access to contacts in the industry that enable them to get their foot in the door or to learn about various internships / graduate schemes with big companies Criminal records for petty crimes or crimes committed whilst under 18 can affect some young people gaining employment. This leads to many turning back to crime and becoming repeat offenders*

*I answered no as I think ethnic minorities have more difficulty accessing opportunities and resources in London, as opposed to not being able to access them at all. In this regard I think the main barrier is discrimination.*

*Discrimination in employment- e.g. people with "ethnic-sounding names" are less likely to even get to interview stage of a job application (and that is even putting aside all the barriers they will have faced to even gaining the qualifications or experience needed to apply for the job in the first place).*

*People from BAME backgrounds are often more likely to live in poorer areas and there are variations in the quality of state education based on area .and variations within local services in general due to increasing devolution to local authorities. They are also more likely to be targeted by police. Racism within the police force is institutionalised and widespread.*

Our final question from the survey is highlighted below:

**What priority would you like the new Mayor to focus on? And how could s/he tackle it?**

Again this was an open question and we had 185 responses to this question, Affordable housing was the most cited issue in just over 50% of responses. But employment, tackling discrimination and access to higher education were also frequently mentioned. Below is a small sample of the responses we received:

*Job opportunities for youth. New laws for big companies to hire certain amount a year, more support, more advertising to minority groups, taking away/working against stereotypes and showing that all can do great jobs given the opportunity*

*Housing for young people, social housing as well as supporting young people to buy in London. Young people need to be encouraged to stay in London because people are leaving because it's too expensive. - Cheaper travel in London for young people. Encourage further reductions for young people on public transport.*

*Knife crime but from a community perspective not an enforcement perspective; and availability of social housing because everybody needs a stable home. Reinstate community centres and youth advocacy services*

*1. The sexual abuse and harassment of women - make consent education mandatory in colleges and workplaces 2. More social housing 3. End police violence and racism - better education and guidelines for police officers facilitate integration of migrants - capping housing prices*

## **Focus Groups**

We held two focus groups: one with 5 young people (4 female and 1 male) at a supported housing scheme in Brixton and the other at a youth and community centre in Whitechapel with 9 young people (2 female and 7 male.) The question sets for both sessions were the same. Below we have set out the questions and highlighted responses from the groups.

### **What are the key issues faced by young people in London?**

From the session at the hostel the number one issue, unsurprisingly, was housing. This was followed by the cost of higher education and access to employment opportunities. Poor relationships with the police were also raised as was access to childcare.

The young people in Whitechapel highlighted access to employment and education as their key issue. Fear of violent crime was the third issue and lack of any successful interventions to address it, particularly knife and gang crime. Too much emphasis on policing rather than working with young people to prevent it. A lack of role-models, good career advice at schools and housing was also mentioned.

### **Out of these issues which would be your top three priorities for the Mayor of London?**

Across the two sessions, housing, employment opportunities, cost of education as well as knife crime and the relationship between the police and young people particularly from some BAME groups

### **What would you ask the Mayor to do to address these challenges?**

- Make more affordable housing available
- Increase supply of affordable childcare
- Consult with young people about how to address knife crime
- Get the police to treat young people with respect
- Recruit more BAME police officers

The participants felt that due to a combination of things young people from BAME groups were finding it tougher in London. They thought discrimination particularly in policing, education and employment were a factor. But they also felt coming from a wealthier background improved your opportunities and many of London's BAME groups come from poorer neighbourhoods which disadvantages them.

## **How can we address this and make opportunities more widely available to all young people?**

- Working earlier at a young age with young people and families
- More attention in schools towards career guidance and work experience
- People from BAME groups who have been successful talking to young people giving them a positive example
- Getting companies and employers to address the problem. The Mayor could do something about this.

## **Conclusions**

Our consultations contacted around 240 young people. We believe this is a big enough sample to give a steer as to the challenges faced generally by young people in London but particularly for BAME young Londoners.

The challenge for Sadiq Khan and his new administration is to ensure that his generic policies deliver fairer outcomes to London's BAME communities and where appropriate targeted initiatives are developed that focus on specific communities who are clearly being disadvantaged in areas such as housing, policing and economic development. As a network of 35 civil society organisations CORE believes there are two specific principles that the Mayor must take on board if he is to improve access to opportunities for BAME young Londoners:

Firstly, he must open the debate about ethnic inequalities within the institutions he has responsibility for. The members of the CORE network are often battling to get our institutions acknowledging and engaging proactively with the challenges highlighted in this report and the Runnymede Trust's report into ethnic inequalities in London.

Secondly, he needs to put community engagement and consultation at the front end of his policy making approach, informing the development of his interventions with the views of the people who know best: Londoners. Within that we feel young people and BAME Londoners need to be a key constituency.

Central to these two priorities is a healthy challenging engagement with London's civil society. At CORE we feel we can play an important role in working with the Mayor to improve outcomes for all Londoners and inform his policy agenda moving forward to ensure it delivers to London.

## **Mayoral commitments**

CORE would like the Mayor to make the following commitments:

- Set in place, at the heart of his administration, a commitment to reduce economic inequality across the city and within that to reduce ethnic inequalities by ensuring that this is incorporated in all Mayoral plans, strategies and policies.
- Create a job market in London where no one is prevented from getting a job or advancing their career because of their ethnicity or faith.
- Ensure that the redevelopment and regeneration of London's districts enables people from all social, economic and ethnic groups to live in a city where housing is affordable for all groups and where no groups are forced out of the city.
- To tackle ethnic disproportionality and poorer outcomes in London's criminal justice system for young people from London's black and Muslim communities and to address the pathways into the system such as mental health, school exclusions, youth offending and cared for young people services.
- A commitment to consultation and real dialogues with London's young people, BAME communities, faith groups, refugee and migrant bodies and civil society organisations to inform the development of policy and ensure community interests are effectively represented throughout City Hall's policy development process.

## **Mayoral actions**

We would like the new Mayor to consider the following actions:

- Bring together employers, Government, BAME young Londoners and civil society groups to tackle the persistent gap between improved educational attainment and labour market outcomes for BAME young Londoners. To introduce BAME specific targets in apprenticeship recruitment and to work with London employers to increase BAME entry into internship schemes and open them up to greater accountability and scrutiny.
- Deliver a transport policy that can halt the escalating rise in public transport costs in the city that disproportionality affects the poor, young and those from BAME groups.
- Develop a bottom up youth driven knife crime strategy for the capital that places addressing the causes of youth violence at its heart in collaboration with all relevant agencies and that specifically targets over-represented communities.
- Develop and deliver a housing policy that should place increased supply and affordability at its core across all sectors of the capital's housing market: social

housing, privately rented and owner occupation. There should also be greater investment in supported models of housing for some of London's most vulnerable young people such as care leavers, those with mental health problems and those leaving prison..

- Regeneration programmes should reserve a set percentage of their employment opportunities for local young people with a BAME target.
- Establish structures that can facilitate effective engagement with London's young people, BAME, refugee and migrant, diverse faith communities and civil society groups working with these communities..



CORE (formerly the Coalition of BME VCS organisations) brings together many of the UK's leading black and minority ethnic voluntary and community organisations for the promotion of race equality.

The coalition includes:

- **Black Training and Enterprise Group (BTEG)**
- **Black South West Network (BSWN)**
- **BME National**
- **Croydon BME Forum**
- **Friends, Families and Travellers**
- **JUST West Yorkshire**
- **OLMEC**
- **Operation Black Vote (OBV)**
- **Race on the Agenda (ROTA)**
- **Race Equality Foundation**
- **Runnymede Trust**
- **Voice4Change England**