

Wednesday 1 July 2026, Tower Hamlets Town Hall

Notes of the meeting

The National Youth Sector Advisory Board (NYSAB) met in Tower Hamlets to discuss progress on the Government's **Youth Matters: National Youth Strategy**, emerging developments in youth policy, workforce reform, youth participation, and support for young people.

1. Welcome and introductions

Opening the meeting, the Chair welcomed members, partners and young people, highlighting the importance of the current policy landscape, nine months on from the publication of the National Youth Strategy. While recognising positive momentum, he noted concern about the pace of progress so far.

The National Youth Agency (NYA) shared reflections from the recent National Youth Strategy Regional Roadshow events, delivered in partnership with DCMS, UK Youth and Regional Youth Work Units, which engaged more than 1,000 people across the country. The NYA also highlighted its new Youth Council UK programme, designed to strengthen youth voice in decision-making.

2. DCMS Youth Matters – Progress Update,

Officials from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) provided an update on delivery of the National Youth Strategy. The department has reorganised its work around three core ambitions:

- Places to Go
- People Who Care
- Be Seen and Heard

Recent activity and engagement from the DCMS includes:

- Delivery of 23 engagement events to embed the strategy across the sector.
- Development of a new Youth Matters Measurement Framework, with publication expected in July.
- Publication of guidance to support youth participation in policymaking.
- Ongoing work with government departments on initiatives including the National Youth Guarantee, the Milburn Review on Young People and Work, and the development of a new Mental Health Strategy.
- Partnership with the Department for Education on the emerging Enrichment Framework, designed to strengthen opportunities for children and young

people through activities such as sport, arts, civic engagement, outdoor learning and life-skills development.

3. Delivering Local Youth Transformation (LYT) and Young Futures Hubs (YFHs)

Colleagues from Youth Access and the Young People's Foundation Trust shared early findings from the **Local Youth Transformation (LYT)** programme, which involves supporting councils to rebuild high-quality local youth offers.

The programme currently works with 12 pathfinder and eight early-adopter local authorities and focuses on:

- Stronger local leadership and governance.
- Better partnership working.
- Embedding youth work quality standards.
- Ensuring young people influence decision-making.

Emerging evidence suggests authorities with clear leadership, strong partnerships and a whole-system approach are achieving the strongest results.

Tower Hamlets –Young Futures Hub early adopter case study

Tower Hamlets Council showcased its progress as an early adopter of the **Young Futures Hub** model.

Working closely with young people and local partners, the borough has expanded and strengthened its youth offer, including developing girls-only provision in response to direct feedback from young women.

Key achievements include:

- More than 100,000 attendances across 20 youth centres in the past year.
- Around 5,000 regular users.
- 133 community conflicts mediated by the rapid response team.
- Establishing a Young Futures Hub at Haileybury Youth Centre working in partnership to provide support to young people with mental health and wellbeing, employment and staying safe.

4. Youth Workforce Transformation Update

The NYA provided an update on the Youth Workforce Development Strategy, which aims to grow, upskill and professionalise the youth workforce.

The strategy focuses on:

- Recruiting more youth workers.
- Improving training and skills.
- Increasing professional recognition and status.

Recruitment onto professional youth work qualifications has increased by 20% over the past year, although significant growth is still needed to meet long-term workforce targets.

The NYA also outlined the development of a new training framework, including a core set of competencies and essential training for everyone working with young people.

Workshop discussions - People Who Care and Be Seen and Heard

DCMS ran workshops on the People Who Care and Be Seen and Heard pillars of the National Youth Strategy.

Workshop participants highlighted the importance of transparency, trusted relationships, critical thinking, arts and culture, and creating meaningful opportunities for young people to shape decisions affecting their lives.

We also heard from the King's Trust who outlined a new programme, developed with DCMS and a range of partners, to promote the role of trusted adults across young people's lives, from youth workers to coaches and mentors.

The Department for Work and Pensions provided an update on the **Milburn Review into Young People and Work**.

5. Closing remarks

Closing the meeting, the Chair thanked attendees, particularly the young people who contributed their views throughout the day. He emphasised the importance of maintaining momentum behind the National Youth Strategy during a period of significant political change and ensuring youth policy remains embedded across government.

The next NYSAB meeting will take place on **8 September 2026**.