

## Policy updates: employment, food support, housing, and general welfare,

Here we have summarised the policy announcements made during the week up to 25 August. Where relevant, publications made in prior weeks have been included.

### **Policy, Regulation, Legislation, and reports**

#### General welfare

- ❖ Haringey Council has released its “Haringey’s Good Economy Recovery Plan’. The report, commissioned by Haringey Council, details the economic impact of Covid-19 and sets out a 12-18 month plan to with 4 key area priorities for economic recovery. The full report can be found [here](#).
  - For each priority, the report details a ‘response, recover and renewal’ pathway to deliver the plan. The 4 priorities are:
    - Re-open and support high streets and town centres
    - Support businesses through recovery and into renewal
    - Support residents into work and training
    - Secure social and economic value through investment in neighbourhoods and communities
  - Attached to the report is a separate initiative entitled ‘The High Streets Recovery Action Plan’, which details a step plan for improving high streets in the Borough, including greening town centres, tackling growing vacancy rates in commercial areas and implementing business support strategies. The full report can be found [here](#).
  - Data released in the report indicates the need to tackle the adverse economic effects of Covid-19 in the Borough and points towards the impact on Haringey’s employment and support compared with other Central London Boroughs. These include the highest proportion of furloughed residents (one third), and the highest increase of unemployed claimants (12,000) throughout London boroughs.
- ❖ Education Policy Institute has published a their annual [report](#), which seeks to measure the learning gaps for different pupil groups in different parts of the country. The report explains that the inequalities present in the education system will not ease without systemic change.
  - The findings of the report are:
    - The attainment gap has stopped closing over the last five years and there are indications that it has begun to widen. At secondary and early years, the gap increased in 2018. In 2019 we also find that the gap has increased at primary level for the first time since at least 2007
    - Since 2011, there has been an increase in persistent poverty among disadvantaged pupils. Persistent disadvantage is determined by calculating the length of time pupils are eligible for free school meals over the course of their school lives. Students who have been eligible for free

school meals for 80-100 per cent of their school life experience high persistence disadvantage. The report shows that this group has grown by 5 per cent. It details a clear relationship between the degree of persistent poverty and the size of the attainment gap: the more persistent the disadvantage, the larger the gap.

- Since 2011, the gap between pupils from black and White British backgrounds has increased in the order of 60-70 per cent. Meanwhile, the gap for pupils who arrive late into the English state school system with English as an Additional Language (EAL) has widened by 11 per cent.
  - Progress in reducing gaps for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) pupils has been slow, particularly for pupils with greater needs, and particularly since the SEND reforms in 2014
  - Pupils who are in the care system, have a social worker, or are on a child protection plan are significantly behind their peers by end of secondary school, more so than the disadvantaged groups. Furthermore the number of children on a child protection plan has doubled since 2014, and the children in need and looked after children groups have also expanded slightly. Yet, these groups have seen little progress in closing the attainment gap despite their growth as a proportion of the pupil population.
    - This year's Annual Report provides concerning evidence that progress towards closing the gap between educational inequalities has stopped. What's potentially more concerning is that the data used in the report pre-dates the Covid-19 pandemic. These problems may worsen due to the adverse impact of Covid-19 on children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.
    - The report suggests that targeted government action to close the gap there is urgently needed to avoid the risk of undoing decades of progress in tackling educational inequalities.
- ❖ The Ministry for Justice has published an accelerated package of measures amending access to criminal legal aid. The full report can be found [here](#) which sets out measures to increase the access for criminal legal aid in England and Wales.
- The key highlights are:
    - There is an immediate injection of funding in the legal aid sector. Taken together, the proposals represent an additional £35 million to £51 million for criminal legal aid per annum.
    - The changes effect how litigators and advocates are paid for work, and represent an increase in remuneration for legal aid work. It remains to be seen if these changes will amount to greater representation in court proceedings.

## Employment

- ❖ [Reports on data](#) found by the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) Trade survey indicates the fastest fall in retail employment since the financial crash. The release suggests that since the start of the year, real term job cuts have risen with expected forecasts for the rest of the year due to deteriorate in the retail labour sector.
- With consumer confidence low, CBI Head Economist notes that, "trading conditions for the retail sector remain tough, even against the backdrop of business slowly returning. Firms will be wary of deteriorating household incomes and the risk of further local lockdowns potentially hitting them in the pocket for a second time"

- This findings have significant implications for Haringey. Retail sector employment in Haringey represents 20% of the total labour market in the borough, almost double that of the London wide labour market ([NOMIS Haringey profile](#)). The worry is as firms begin to let employees go post the furlough window, Haringey will see further unemployment in this sector.
  - This report comes at a particularly volatile moment in the employment and labour market, with the furlough scheme due to conclude at the end of next month. Recent [reports from the Office for National Statistics](#) also report an increase in occupational switches, only adding to the sense of instability in the UK labour market.
- ❖ Office for National Statistics has released its quarterly NEET summary, Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training. Based on estimates of young people (aged 16 to 24 years) who are not in education, employment or training, by age and sex, the report marks improvements for young people in education and training. The full report can be found [here](#).
- The key takeaways are:
    - There are, surprisingly, fewer young people not in education, training and employment as compared to this time last year. There were an estimated 765,000 young people (aged 16 to 24 years) in the UK who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in April to June 2020. This is a decrease of 28,000 compared with April to June 2019 and was down by 6,000 compared with January to March 2020.
    - As confidence is low in educational inclusion during the lockdown, coupled with a growth in employment gaps, the figures are perhaps misleading. With evidence in the [growth in education inequality gaps](#), there is much to be done in the protection for young people new to education and the labour market.

## Housing

- ❖ Housing Secretary, Robert Jenrick, after mounting cross-party and housing sector pressure, has announced the extension to the evictions ban for a further 4 weeks. In a last minute update to the existing extension, the evictions ban was stayed last Friday, just two days before it was due to be lifted on Sunday. The announcement can be found [here](#).
- The announcement comes with an added policy of six month notice period until at least 31st March 2021 designed to protect residents from eviction throughout the winter months and fears of further local lockdowns.
  - Whilst the announcement has been widely welcomed, there remains pressure from sector leaders to do more for the protection of renters experiencing so called 'Covid-arrears'. [Shelter suggest](#) Parliament must use this window to implement proper safeguards for renters, and 'to protect renters now through legislation and emergency funding, and they need to reform our broken renting system for good'. Find the Shelter response, [here](#).
- ❖ The MHCLG has released statistics this week on the levels of statutory homelessness throughout the UK for the first quarter of this year (including the first weeks of lockdown). The report can be found [here](#), and figures by local authority can be accessed from [here](#)
- The main takeaways are:
    - There has been a rise in statutory homeless this year (pre-covid). The report found that a rise of homes assessed by local authority as homeless was up 8% from the same period last year. This is

worrying given the recent turmoil around evictions and temporary accommodation and represents a high need for interventions and prevention duty across the UK.

- For Haringey, the numbers of statutory homelessness are comparatively high across all indicators, as reported by local authority. Amongst cases of threatened homelessness, Haringey falls with the 2nd highest number throughout local authorities in England with 5.3 cases per 1000 households. The worry for Haringey remains that these cases will slip through the intervention and assistance net.

#### Ad hoc items

- ❖ The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) has released a report analysing how local council funding has been hit during the first financial quarter of 20-21. The forecasts detail the, with approximately 41% of the spending pressures are estimated to have taken place between April and June. The full report can be found [here](#).
- ❖ Secondary pupils will now have to wear face coverings in school corridors in local lockdown areas of England, after the government reversed its guidance. No. 10 has U-turned under pressure [from Head Teacher's union ASCL](#) and government officials to follow Scotland's lead in making the use of face masks for teachers and pupils in corridors and communal areas 'obligatory'. This come in the wake of new World Health Organisation (WHO) guidance that [students aged 12 and over should wear a mask](#), advice which stands at odds with Public Health England's guidance.