City & Hackney anchor network

Interim learning report

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Contents

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We'd like to thank those from across the City and Hackney health and care system who have contributed time to this work so far.

That includes the network members: Homerton University Hospital Foundation Trust, Hackney Council, the City of London Corporation, City and Hackney CCG, The East London Foundation Trust, and the City and Hackney GP Confederation.

We have also worked closely with other local partners, including Peabody Housing, the City Bridge Trust, the North East London Commissioning Support Unit, and the Museum of London. All of whom have shaped the thinking of this work so far.

Acknowledgements

The journey so far

Over the last several months, we have been working with staff from across the City of London and Hackney's anchor organisations to explore how the ideas of community wealth building might be applied locally.

Anchor organisations are typically – though not exclusively – not for profit organisations that are based in a city or town and are unlikely to move location, usually because their purpose and mission is intrinsically bound up in that area.

They are also often one of the major players in the local economy and can use this economic power to create wealth and improve opportunities for the people in that place. Anchor organisations can use many different strategies to benefit their local populations. Some of the most common ones include employment and HR practice, procurement and supply chain, investments, estates and community engagement. Anchor organisations in recent years have become increasingly interested in how to use their economic power to build wealth within the local community, an approach also called 'community wealth building'.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the extreme pressure on the health and care system we have paused this work. During that pause we have brought together this interim report to summarise the work and learning to date. At the point of publication, in June 2020, we are beginning to re-connect with colleagues across the health and care system and starting conversations about how some of the ideas that are central to community wealth building might help in the recovery and restoration work that is now beginning.

Our work together started in September 2019 when we presented an outline to the Accountable Officers Group for a City and Hackney anchor network. The paper was approved, and this has been followed with many one-to-one conversations with people across the City and Hackney health and care system representing HR, procurement and commercial services, strategy, policy, economy and public health teams. In December we held a strategic design workshop to develop thinking on the existing strengths of the anchors; the opportunities to try new approaches, and 'moon-shots' (ambitious medium- to long-term strategic projects). Four themes emerged at this workshop: employment and skills, with a focus on apprenticeships; new infrastructure projects; childcare and serious youth violence. We have had some significant engagement since this workshop with procurement and HR teams across the anchors, and these two functions have also emerged as strong opportunities to embed thinking and practice on community wealth building.

Through these conversations, we have been asking three main questions:

1. What are the big challenges you're facing that anchor approaches could help with?

2. What support can we offer to test new thinking?

3. What is the additional value that collaboration with other place-based anchors can bring?

The insight from these conversations has been rich. The emerging themes are covered in the second section of this report which explores the learning so far.

Senior sponsorship of the initiative has been vital. David Maher, Managing Director of the CCG, is the senior sponsor of the project, and we have also seen senior level engagement from across the other anchor organisations. This leadership has been important in securing valuable time and commitment from staff in the development work we have been coordinating.

A range of ideas, including childcare and serious youth violence, emerged from early discussions with the anchor organisations, which we may look at in the future. From these discussions, there were two clear themes that were identified for immediate development: procurement and workforce. Each is described in more detail below.

Procurement: procurement leads from all the anchor organisations are now engaged and we have had briefing calls with each one. We have asked each lead to share some data in advance of a themed workshop on the value of their current expenditure within the City and Hackney postcodes, and share any existing social value or sustainable procurement policies. Once the Covid-19 pressures have eased, we wil prioritise convening this group and running a development workshop that builds on this material and looks for opportunities across the anchors to collaborate.

Workforce: workforce leads across the anchor organisations have also been identified, and we will run a similar development workshop exploring what opportunities workforce, as an anchor strategy, might present. We will work with the leads from each anchor to bring together data on where their teams live and in what roles local employment is most and least common.

We think this could lead to better collaboration on shared priorities, such as local recruitment, more collective engagement with local suppliers and partners, and the scoping of more ambitious long-term anchor strategies, for example.

What we've learnt

Through our conversations with anchor organisations, it has become clear that all the anchors have different strengths and different starting points. In some organisations, the ideas of community wealth building have already been discussed and integrated into recent policy documents, while other anchors have developed strengths in particular strategies such as social procurement, or local recruitment.

The staff we have engaged with are enthusiastic about the benefits of connecting with their peers and collaborating across the boroughs. Most of the leads in procurement and HR teams hadn't previously met their counterparts in other anchor organisations. Many of them have described facing common challenges, such as developing social value policies or improving diversity in recruitment. Some of their peers are already working on these challenges, and this could be shared across the network. Although the executive leadership of the City and Hackney health and care system is well connected and have shared strategies for service integration, there is untapped potential to realise the same benefits in some of the core functions, such as HR, procurement and community engagement. We're excited about bringing these functions together through this work and helping to identify common challenges and aspirations they have which might benefit from their collective experience.

Our work with staff in City and Hackney's anchor organisations over the last several months has considered how to introduce anchor strategies from several different starting points, all of which have different benefits and draw on learning from leading best practice. We have explored what anchor strategies might benefit City and Hackney residents through the following lenses:

Led by place: the starting point here is to ask what the unique conditions of the place are – whether that is borough level or a more specific area within the borough. There might be localities which have new infrastructure investment that presents an opportunity for the surrounding community or a place which has a particularly high rate of unemployment, for example. In City and Hackney several places have been mentioned as opportunities for new community wealth building strategies, including the Pembury Children's Community, Wick Award Big Local, Sport England Pilot – Kingsmead, Volunteer Centre Hackney – New Kingshold, Volunteering Matters – Levy Centre and the Social Enterprise Place.

Led by strategy: this approach begins with different core functions (e.g. procurement, HR, finance) and explores the different initiatives that each department can introduce to build community wealth. For example, if starting with HR and workforce, then some of the most common strategies involve gathering baseline data on the current workforce and developing recruitment plans to increase the number of staff employed from the local population.

Led by cohort: this approach explores what all core functions of an anchor organisation could do to have a measurable impact on a particular group of people, for example, young people or low-income residents. In some anchor organisations in North America, for example, all of the core functions – such as finance and procurement – have applied the anchor strategies at their disposal to benefit a single cohort, such as African American men. In our work with City and Hackney anchors so far there hasn't been a clear consensus on which cohort might be the best focus for this work, though some people have suggested young people in the borough, and made links with Hackney Council's 'Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men' project.

Led by opportunity: this approach starts by exploring what opportunities there are to apply community wealth building strategies within a local area. This might be the development of a new hospital or clinic, for example, or an upcoming procurement which has the potential to be used as a testbed for new thinking. In our work so far in City and Hackney, ideas include the new

Pathology lab being built at Barts, for example. This development will require a wide range of new corporate functions which could be used to more intentionally benefit the local community.

Led by challenge: this approach starts by exploring what the common 'pain points' are across the anchor organisations and developing collective approaches to tackling these. In our work in City and Hackney so far, a common challenge that has been identified is the high cost of temporary / agency workers. Affordable housing, childcare and serious violence also emerged as common issues at the strategic design workshop held in November. All these issues are ones where there is existing service provision in place. Applying an anchor lens would mean considering how corporate functions, such as finance or procurement, could impact on these areas. These issues also require strong executive support from across the system in order to get started.

We will continue working with anchor organisations later in the summer to test and develop thinking on these starting points.

We have also come across the challenge that comes when trying to find common ground across the multiple geographic footprints that anchor organisations work within. Some organisations work at a borough-based level, but not many. Others work across several boroughs and some across a sub-regional level. 'Place' can mean different things to all these groups. We know from research in the U.S. that having a clear definition of 'local' is important to help focus anchor strategies and specific interventions. As we move forward on procurement and workforce, we will need to continue to push for a clear geographic focus to the work.

We have been working closely with the team leading on implementing City and Hackney's new **Neighbourhood's Operating Model**. This is a new structure for organising health and care in the borough which will encourage multi-agency working in local neighbourhoods, and provide new structures for collaboration with place-based partners. Importantly – for this anchors approach – they include a remit to address the wider social and economic determinants of health for all of the population, reducing inequalities in outcomes. There is a significant opportunity for the hyper-local work of the neighbourhoods operating model to connect to the anchor collaborative approach by providing a route for insight and influence from the local to the structural.

As might be expected, there is variety in the way that each organisation's systems are set up to capture data. One of the first steps taken by leading anchor organisations working in North America has been to capture baseline data on how much they spend with local organisations and what proportion of their staff represent local residents.   In preparation for the procurement leads workshop, some organisations in the network were able to capture data on their local spend easily, whilst others aren't yet configured to show this. For example, ELFT's systems were able to show that they spend 4.45% of their expenditure with suppliers based in City and Hackney, and are able to break down the figures even further to show the top ten suppliers by spend. Some of the other anchors are able to access this data, but it is a more significant piece of analysis as their systems aren't configured to generate it easily.

Our work analysing the procurement policies of each anchor organisation has revealed that while the strategies and policies of each organisation are broadly supportive of community wealth building, practice could be further developed to meet the potential and ambition of the policies. We will focus on this in the development workshops.

Next steps

When we move forward later this year to convene the workshops, we also plan to collate data from each anchor organisation on the proportion of the workforce in each anchor organisation that lives within the City and Hackney boroughs. This will be analysed in terms of how far they represent the demographics of the boroughs, as another example of baseline data that can be useful for anchors, which want to increase their local impact.

We will stay closely connected to the Neighbourhoods Operating Model and, as they gather local intelligence on what the priority social, economic and environmental determinants of health are across the neighbourhoods, and how the anchor's economic levers can be used to help tackle these.

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1. Help people to learn, work, and connect with their communities.
2. Work with institutions across the UK to understand and increase their impact.
3. Generate learning from across our work to explore the question: what does it take to improve a place?

By working with all the people and organisations that can turn a place into a thriving community, Renaisi has a unique insight and ability to spark change.

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