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<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS COMMUNITY and PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON FEBRUARY 18, 2015</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>LYNNE LIVINGSTONE MANAGING DIRECTOR NEIGHBOURHOOD, CHILDREN AND FIRE SERVICES</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>LONDON'S CHILD AND YOUTH NETWORK 2014 PROGRESS REPORT AND CHILD AND YOUTH NETWORK IMPACT ASSESSMENT UPDATE</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director of Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services, the Child and Youth Network 2014 Progress Report and the Child and Youth Network Impact Assessment update **BE RECEIVED** for information.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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- “The Best for Our Children, Youth and Families II – The Next Three Years of London’s Child and Youth Agenda to 2015” - Nov 12, 2012

<b>BACKGROUND</b>
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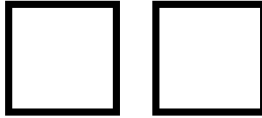
**Overview and History of London’s Child and Youth Network**

London’s Child and Youth Network exists to drive relentlessly and collectively toward one goal: making life better for children, youth and families. The Child and Youth Network was established in 2007 when a collection of like-minded organizations came together to talk about how to improve outcomes in the community. The need to find new ways of working was compelling:

- 1 in every 5 children born in London was living in poverty
- More than 1 in 4 were not ready to learn in grade 1
- More than 1 in 5 did not graduate from high school
- 1 in 4 was overweight or obese
- Families were saying the service system wasn’t working for them

Driven by an ambition to improve these statistics, organizations created London’s Child and Youth Network, a collaborative network guided by the shared vision of: *“Happy, healthy children and youth today; caring, creative, responsible adults tomorrow.”* Today, the Child and Youth Network has grown to include over 170 organizations and over 500 individuals working together using a “collective impact” approach to improve outcomes for Londoners.

Child and Youth Network members developed a shared plan of action, guided by the voices and needs of London families, in the four priority areas of: Ending Poverty; Making Literacy a Way of Life; Leading the Nation in Increasing Healthy Eating and Healthy Physical Activity; and Creating a Family Centred Service System. During the development of each 3-year *Child and Youth Agenda*, Child and Youth Network members provided a letter of commitment to carry out the plan; as a result of this overwhelming community support, both the 2008 and 2012 *Child and Youth Agendas* were formally accepted by Council.



Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services staff support the work of the Child and Youth Network by providing the “backbone” function on behalf of the network. The backbone function is a coordinating, supportive role that focuses on aligning the efforts of members toward the shared goals; it has been described as the “gas and the glue” of collective efforts.

### **Child and Youth Network 2014 Progress Report**

The Child and Youth Network has produced an annual report documenting accomplishments and the progress each priority area has made towards its goals. The **Child and Youth Network’s 2014 Progress Report** (Appendix A) continues to demonstrate the remarkable impact we have when organizations work together toward common outcomes. Two of the examples highlighted in the 2014 Progress Report include:

- In 2014, Child and Youth Network members deepened the reach of our work, such as the Grade 5 *Act-i-pass*, an initiative providing free physical activity opportunities to Grade 5 children that saw a six-fold increase in registration this year; and,
- *Food Families*, a community-based food skills initiative that saved families an average of \$100 per month, every month, on their grocery bills.

Funders are increasingly looking to invest in collaborative efforts, recognizing the value of working collectively to address complex social challenges. The Child and Youth Network’s longstanding collaborative structure and culture provide an attractive investment opportunity for funders who want to maximize community impact. Notable investments in the Child and Youth Network in 2014 include: the Healthy Kids Community Challenge, a grant of up to \$1.5 million over four years from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care; a one-year grant of \$150,000 from London Community Foundation for the Single Ceiling Project, an initiative that will use Family Centre Argyle as a platform for research and integrated mental health services; and \$425,000 for the Human Environments Analysis Laboratory at Western University to assess the impact of the Act-i-pass initiative.

These outcomes are possible because of changes to the way partners are working together. This change is best demonstrated with a quote from Crouch Neighbourhood Resource Centre: “Networking and collaborating with other like-minded organizations strengthens our commitment and ability to address these priorities areas collectively across the city.”

### **Child and Youth Network Impact Assessment**

The Child and Youth Network vision and structure were designed to guide the work of the network to 2015. As the network approaches this major milestone, it is important to reflect on the entirety of the Child and Youth Network’s work. Changing contexts, new research, and new insights gained along the way allow us to think critically and thoughtfully about the future of collaborative planning and increasing our impact beyond 2015.

The Child and Youth Network Impact Assessment will examine the impact the Child and Youth Network has had since its inception in 2007, investigating:

1. Population-level impacts – understanding changes in key community indicators (E.g. low income rates, obesity rates)
2. Initiative-level impacts – the collective benefit of Child and Youth Network initiatives and how they have helped London families
3. System-level impacts – understanding how the Child and Youth Network approach is changing the way organizations work together and how these changes benefit families

Broadly, the impact assessment will look at how London’s story has changed since 2007. How has life changed for families? How have organizations within the service system changed their approach to working with each other and with families? Is our approach working? What have we learned and how do we get better?

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To obtain an objective view, the impact assessment will be conducted by an independent external organization. Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services staff is working closely with community partners to develop the assessment plan and guide its implementation. It is anticipated that the final report will be delivered in the fall of 2015 and will set the foundation for a community conversation on how we move forward together to continue improving outcomes for London's children, youth, and families.

<b>FINANCIAL IMPACT</b>
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There is no financial impact associated with this report.

Council provides \$1.1 million annually to support the Council-directed Child and Youth Network strategy. The Child and Youth Network leverages this investment through in-kind, financial and program contributions from Child and Youth Network members, estimated to be in excess of \$1 million annually. In addition, in 2014 the established structure, processes and collaborative network supported by the Child and Youth Network attracted additional investments in our community of more than \$2 million, including:

- Healthy Kids Community Challenge Grant (\$1.5 million over 4 years from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care);
- London Community Foundation (\$150,000 for the Single Ceiling project);
- Federal Grants (\$425,000 to the Human Environments Analysis Laboratory at Western University); and
- Province of Ontario (\$150,000 for the Community Integration Leaders research).

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	<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>
	<b>LYNNE LIVINGSTONE MANAGING DIRECTOR NEIGHBOURHOOD, CHILDREN &amp; FIRE SERVICES</b>

C. Anna Lisa Barbon, Director, Financial Services