

**APPROVED MINUTES
OF THE EXTRAORDINARY
COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON
26 OCTOBER 2022**

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London Borough of Hackney
Extraordinary Full Council Meeting
Municipal Year 2022/23
Date of Meeting: Wednesday, 26 October 2022

Minutes of the proceedings of
 the Extraordinary Meeting of
 Council held at
 Hackney Town Hall,
 Mare Street,
 London E8 1EA

Councillors in Attendance:	<p>Cllr Humaira Garasia - Speaker of Hackney Mayor Philip Glanville - Mayor of Hackney</p> <p>Cllr Kam Adams, Cllr Grace Adebayo, Cllr Soraya Adejare, Cllr Frank Baffour, Cllr Alastair Binnie-Lubbock, Deputy Mayor Anntoinette Bramble, Cllr Robert Chapman, Cllr Mete Coban, Cllr Sophie Conway, Cllr Michael Desmond, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas, Cllr Zoë Garbett, Cllr Eluzer Goldberg, Cllr Margaret Gordon, Cllr Clare Joseph, Cllr Christopher Kennedy, Cllr Shaul Krautwirt, Cllr Lee Laudat-Scott, Cllr Hershy Lisser, Cllr Anna Lynch, Cllr Yvonne Maxwell, Cllr Clayeon McKenzie, Cllr Jon Narcross, Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren, Cllr Ozsen, Cllr Benzion Papier, Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr Clare Potter, Cllr Fliss Premru, Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Ifraax Samatar, Cllr Caroline Selman, Cllr Anya Sizer, Cllr Gilbert Smyth, Cllr Simche Steinberger, Cllr Sheila Suso-Runge, Cllr Lynne Troughton, Cllr Claudia Turbet-Delof, Cllr Joe Walker, Cllr Jessica Webb, Cllr Caroline Woodley, Cllr Penny Wrout and Cllr Sarah Young</p>
Apologies for Absence:	<p>Cllr Billington, Cllr Hayhurst, Cllr Moema, Deputy Mayor Nicholson, Cllr Oguzkanli, Cllr Pallis, Cllr Race, Cllr Ross, Cllr Sadek and Cllr Williams.</p>
Apologies for Lateness:	<p>Cllr Selman and Cllr Potter</p>
Officer Contact:	<p>Natalie Williams, Senior Governance Officer governance@hackney.gov.uk</p>
<p>This meeting was live streamed and can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/xPctMck__c</p>	

Councillor Garasia [Speaker] in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Mayor Nicholson and Councillors Bllington, Hayhurst, Moema, Oguzkanli, Pallis, Race, Ross, Sadek and Williams.
- 1.2 Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Selman and Potter.

2. Speaker's Announcements

- 2.1 The Speaker informed Council of recent civic events and visits, which included:

- A visit to Hoxton market and Chatsworth Road Market .
- Leading tours for schools and community groups
- A visit to the Brady Club archive
- Joined Junior Safety Officers programme at a primary school
- Hosted Hackney Older Citizens at the Town Hall
- The Act of Hope and remembrance service at St Paul's Church
- Hackney Youth Parliament Resources launch
- Fame Star Youth Black History Month event at the Edge Youth Club
- Diwali celebrations
- Clapton Community Feast celebrating Black History Month with the older residents of Hackney
- An intergenerational Silver Sunday fun day at St Mary's Secret Garden

- 2.2 The Speaker invited Members to a Christmas panto event which she was hosting on the 21st December. Tickets could be booked via the Speaker's Office.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 Cllr Adejare declared an interest in relation to the deputation at agenda item 5 by virtue of the fact that her sibling was a member of the campaign group Morning Lane People's Space who were presenting a deputation.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 4.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the previous meeting of Council held on 14 September 2022 be agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

5. Deputation

At July's Full Council meeting, Councillor Garbett asked about the plans for 55 Morning Lane following the end of the Option Agreement. In this deputation we will focus on a different aspect of planning for the site: the need for transparency, openness and accountability. After a failed and poorly constructed Option Agreement there has been a breakdown of trust between Hackney Council and local residents about the future of the site. Essential to addressing this is to be open about what has happened up to now.

We demand that our Council make public: the un-redacted Option Agreement, any checks that were done on Hackney Walk before entering into an agreement with them, and all the pre-application exchanges between the Council and Hackney Walk. As well as rebuilding trust, this will enable residents to engage fully with the process and to hold our Council to account.

We also demand that our Council make public and discuss at the Full Council meeting the reports that informed the Option Agreement including any viability studies or other reasoning that contributed to the decision to set a target of 20% affordable housing on the site.

Deputation leader: Heather Mendick

Councillor introduction: Cllr Clare Joseph

- 5.1 Cllr Joseph introduced the deputation. It was highlighted that residents overwhelmingly wanted to see social housing and the retention of a supermarket in any new development plans for the site. She implored the Council to be transparent in decisions going forward and to investigate different funding streams in order to provide the maximum level of social housing.
- 5.2 Adam Forman, Margaret Trotter, Pat Quigley and Heather Mendick addressed the chamber. They stated that there was a lack of transparency and scrutiny of the failed options agreement with Hackney Walk. A survey which they carried out showed that local residents wanted any future development plans to include a supermarket akin to that already on the site as well as affordable council housing. Concerns were raised that following the lapsed options agreement, the Council would sell to private developers. They informed Members that they had created a financial viability study to build low rent homes as well as commercial and retail space for rent on the site. The study (undertaken by students on a Planning Masters programme at University College London) showed it was viable to build a development with 50 percent or more council housing. Requests were made to speak with the Council's quantity surveyor and housing officers to discuss MOPS' proposals and to see the basis for any contrary proposals. Concluding, it was stated the Council needed to acknowledge there had been a breakdown in trust with residents. To rebuild this trust, it was requested that the priorities of local residents be embedded in any future plans for the site.
- 5.3 Following questions from Members, Heather Mendick stated that a Freedom of Information request was made as set out in the deputation text. It was felt that commercial sensitivity was outweighed by the level of public interest and was no longer relevant as the deal had collapsed. She did not believe that the lapsed options agreement was an opportunity for a fresh start unless there was openness about what had gone wrong and transparency and accountability going forward. Homerton ward Councillors were encouraged to engage with the campaign to codesign a suggested way forward.

Mayor Glanville's Response

- 5.4 Mayor Glanville emphasised his administration's commitment to listening to the views of local people and disputed that the options agreement was poorly constructed and lacked transparency. He believed that, while it failed, ultimately

it always sought to manage risk and protect the interests of the Council and the community.

- 5.5 The Mayor reported that there were no plans to sell the site. The intention was to commence a competitive procurement process with an experienced developer that could work with the Council and community. He believed that it was possible to deliver on an exciting collective vision for the site, based on the priorities of the community.
- 5.6 The Mayor explained that the options agreement and pre-application correspondence was confidential and exempt from disclosure under FOI legislation. The Council remained bound by the confidentiality wording in the agreement for a further seven years, which was normal and accepted practice for such agreements. The Council could not release the option agreement without the risk of legal action at the expense of the council tax payer. Assurances were given that extensive due diligence checks were undertaken on Hackney Walk and Dukeminster to comply with the Council's legal and financial obligations.
- 5.7 It was explained that the 20% affordable housing level set out in the option agreement was the minimum level of affordable housing required to be met in any development scheme at the time. This was set by the London Plan under the previous Conservative Mayor of London. The Mayor advised that a new 35% affordable housing target had since been implemented by Sadiq Khan, Labour Mayor of London. Any plans for the site would require to be in line with the Council's planning policy and be subject to planning permission.
- 5.8 It was stated that on average it costs between £350,000 to £400,000 to build a new Council home. 450 homes on the site at 100% Council rent before anything else was built would cost £180m. This would be the baseline for any modelling. It was confirmed that as there was not a current scheme proposed, there were no viability studies.
- 5.9 Concluding, the Mayor committed to prioritise the delivery of genuinely affordable housing. He committed to pursue every option to fund this and work with partners to deliver on a supermarket. He pledged to use the site to benefit Hackney Central and the borough, delivering housing, workspaces, opportunities for businesses, more jobs and high-quality and greener public spaces. The development of the site would be underpinned by the views of the community.

6. Questions from Members of the Public

6.1 From Debbie Anyo (AFRUCA Safeguarding Children) to the Mayoral Adviser for Housing Needs and Homelessness

What is the Council doing to address the growing cases of housing needs in families with no recourse to public funds, the impact on children in these families and temporary accommodation outside the borough.

In the absence of Debbie Anyo the Speaker read the question as set out, following which a response was provided by the Cabinet Member.

Response from the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care

Deputy Mayor Bramble advised that there was a team dedicated to supporting children living with parents/carers with no recourse to public funds, who struggled to meet their children's needs due to this status. The No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) and the Private Fostering Team also offered support to children living in private fostering arrangements. The team endeavoured to resolve immigration issues as quickly as possible. As a result of the commissioning contract with Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network, families were offered timely access to immigration advice and support.

The Council had been supporting each family for just under one year. The families supported by the team were from a diverse range of backgrounds with 6 new families referred to the team for a Child and Family Assessment in the past month.

Over the past 5 years, the number of families that required accommodation and/or subsistence support through the NRPF and Private Fostering team at any one time had decreased. It was found that this was primarily related to the support received and subsequent resolution of their immigration status. As of September 2022, the team were supporting 50 families, with 79 children between them, with no recourse to public funds, with accommodation and/or subsistence, or other support needs related to their status. Support offered to those living outside the borough included assistance with registering with local GPs and maintaining links with Hackney services.

6.2 From Helen Lewis to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Recently Hackney Central has been targeted by graffiti such that the Narrow Way is now a disgrace. This is particularly evident on the shop shutters when they are down. Shouldn't the Council take responsibility for cleaning our civic centre and not leave it to individual shop owners?

In the absence of Helen Lewis the Speaker read the question as set out, following which a response was provided by the Cabinet Member.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Cllr Coban explained that the Council was committed to reducing and removing undesirable graffiti, and considered any graffiti on buildings and other structures without the owner's consent to be an interference with the property owner's rights. The Council's Graffiti Removal Service responded to reported graffiti issues from internal colleagues and from members of the public (via email, phone or the Fix My Streets app). The service also worked proactively to identify graffiti and carry out removal work, where possible. Where graffiti was deemed to be offensive, removal could take place within 24 hours where possible.

Cllr Coban explained the potential complexity of graffiti removal, the different methods used and measures to ensure its safe removal with no damage to surrounding property or infrastructure. For complex jobs, there was a charge to businesses and removal was subject to the property owner's permission, by

way of a signed disclaimer. Without this, the Council was unable to remove graffiti. In addition, depending on the shutter type there was a possible risk of flooding in particular basement areas of premises.

In reference to the Narrow Way, the graffiti team had already attended the site, and the shutters on these businesses would not withstand the Council's graffiti removal jet washers without incurring damage. The businesses would need to respray their shutters to remove the graffiti. The Council reserved the right to take formal action against owners to secure removal. Should business owners not comply, the Council could remove the graffiti and recover the costs from the owner.

The Speaker decided to vary the order of public questions and prioritise questions from those who were present in the chamber and remotely.

6.9 From Catherine Cannon to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Given the climate emergency and Hackney Borough Council's stated aim to reduce their emissions, will the council consider committing to serving fully plant-based fare at any future catered meetings and events as other councils have done?

This question was asked by Louisa Hillwood who was in attendance in the chamber.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Cllr Coban advised that on Monday, 24 October 2022, Cabinet approved the draft Hackney Climate Action Plan (CAP) for public consultation. He explained that as part of the draft CAP, the Council would be looking at reducing emissions from food as well as promoting sustainable diets to residents and encouraging climate friendly menus to schools and care services.

Cllr Coban stated that input from residents and various stakeholders would be very welcome as part of the CAP consultation process. He believed that in order to reach Net Zero by 2030 and to tackle the climate crisis, a wider look at lifestyle choices including travel and dress would also need to be explored.

It was reported that Hackney was leading on work relating to food emissions as part of the One World Living, consumption based emission work from London Councils. A workshop with fifteen other boroughs was recently held in Hackney Town Hall to encourage London boroughs to increase plant based meals as part of their procurement processes, as well as reducing food waste from contractors and increasing agro-ecological sourced food.

Supplementary Question

What is the timeline for the CAP and food emissions work?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Cllr Coban explained that a Climate Emergency was declared in 2019 and the Council had been a leading forerunner with regard to this. The Council had

recently won the Local Government Chronicle national award for its response to climate change. He advised of the intention to bring together a strategic framework across the Council which encompassed low carbon development, transport, and food emissions. The CAP would include not only Council areas of responsibility but also actions that local people could take to assist in tackling climate change. A 3 year detailed implementation plan would be put in place to assist. Cllr Coban highlighted the importance of responding during the 10 week consultation period as this would inform how best to deliver commitments and ensure an ambitious pioneering CAP.

6.3 From Larry Keegan to the Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation

How can the Council justify leaving a community flat on Warburton Estate empty, especially with 3 community halls in walking distance available for TRA meetings? Apart from the loss of revenue, it deprives a family of a home.

In the absence of Larry Keegan, the Speaker read the question as set out, following which a response was provided by the Cabinet Member.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation

Cllr McKenzie reported that the Council had 10 flats and one studio (bedsit) designated for community use. He explained that historically, most had been managed by Tenants and Residents Associations (TRAs) and used for their meetings, office administration and ad hoc social events. These arrangements had been in place for many years and agreed at a time when there was significantly less demand for social housing in the borough.

Following a review of community halls 2019, and since the pandemic, the Council undertook work to begin to revert these flats back to housing use and create much needed homes for vulnerable households. Patterns of use have changed, with over half of the flats no longer actively used by TRAs. However, because of the length of time the flats had been designated for community use, planning permission was required to return them to residential use. For those flats no longer in use, the Council was actively working on planning applications to secure change of use and these were on track to be submitted by December 2022. If planning consent is granted, these flats would be allocated through the Council's letting policy in 2023.

Concluding, Cllr McKenzie stated that where flats remained in use by TRAs, work would be undertaken to identify alternative suitable meeting spaces so residents' interests could continue to be championed. This included discussions with Warburton and Darcy TRA who continued to manage and make use of the community flat at Warburton House for their meetings. A full report on the community flats would be presented to Cabinet for decision early in 2023.

6.4 From Fozia Bham to the Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation

Why has it been so problematic for long standing tenants to add their name to the housing register for a bigger place? The cyber attack happened 2 years ago and the Council keeps giving conflicting information.

In the absence of Fozia Bham, the Speaker read the question as set out, following which a response was provided by the Cabinet Member.

Response from the Mayoral Adviser for for Housing Needs and Homelessness

Cllr Etti advised that Hackney as well as most parts of London was in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. This was due to rapidly rising rents combined with cuts in financial support for low income families which had directly resulted in rising homelessness, increased overcrowding and extended social housing waiting lists. Demand by far outstripped available supply.

Cllr Etti informed that the Council operated a Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme, where those accepted on the housing register were able to “bid” for social housing properties. The redesigned Allocations Policy recognised that overcrowding was a significant issue and the need to prioritise severely overcrowded households.

To be considered as severely overcrowded, households required two more bedrooms (or rooms that could be used as bedrooms) than they have in their current accommodation. With high demand and an extremely limited number of properties available for social rent, acceptance on the housing register would not address immediate housing needs. Applicants accepted as severely overcrowded would be placed into Band B with waiting times of; 9 years for 3 bed properties, 13 years for 4 bed and 39 years for 5+ bed need.

Cllr Etti reported that the Council’s Housing Register IT System was irreparably damaged by the criminal cyber attack and work was underway to build a new system. Teams were updating records for single households and homeless families for whom a housing duty had been accepted.

Council tenants experiencing overcrowding should talk to their Housing Officer to explore all options available. Support to access a range of toolkits of advice and guidance about rehousing including: mutual exchange, Homeswapper, Homefinder UK and the The Fresh Start Scheme was available.

The Mayoral Adviser relayed apologies for the delays residents had experienced in the processing of applications to join the housing register as a result of the cyber attack. Assurances were given that officers were working tirelessly to resolve the remaining issues whilst making sure that residents did not miss out.

6.5 From Zaynab Aswat to the Cabinet Member for Families, Parks and Leisure

There has been a remarkable increase in the number of phone thefts and assaults surrounding Springfield Park and surrounding roads up to Clapton.

What plans are in place to increase security and prevent these crimes reoccurring on a daily basis?

In the absence of Zaynab Aswad, the Speaker read the question as set out, following which a response was provided by the Cabinet Member.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services

Cllr Fajana-Thomas informed that she had liaised with Inspector Rob Bradley, Safer Neighbourhood Inspector, who informed her that there had been several crimes of theft reported in the vicinity (approximately 4 in one month). The Integrated Gangs Unit lead officer had given assurances that the area was not one known for recent or historical gang violence.

Cllr Fajana-Thomas reported that the Safer Neighbourhood Team for the area had committed to ensuring that all reported crimes were investigated thoroughly and the victims provided with a full update after the investigation. Police officers had been directed to increase patrols in this area particularly in the winter months. The Council Enforcement Officer was working closely with the Police to prevent further crimes in the area. In addition, Parks Officers for Springfield Park had been briefed to be extra vigilant and to report any suspicious activities to the police.

In conclusion, Cllr Fajana-Thomas encouraged residents to ensure that all phone thefts were reported to the Police via the 101 telephone number. This would ensure that the Community Safety Partnership was made aware of all crimes in the area which would assist them to patrol the area in a focused way.

6.10 From Sophie Cameron to the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

October is menopause awareness month and it is 6 months since Hackney Council passed a motion calling for better support for those experiencing menopause. Can I ask what actions have since been taken to improve menopause support for women in Hackney and to campaign for better outcomes for women nationally?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

Cllr Kennedy highlighted that following the passing of the motion, the requests of the council had been passed up to national level for consideration in the creation of the national Women's Health Strategy.

The Council welcomed the publication of the [Women's Health Strategy for England](#) in summer 2022. The new strategy accepted that insufficient focus was placed on the menopause at a national level. Although the strategy set out encouraging 10 year ambitions, it was felt that the pace at which these would be delivered was inadequate particularly without dedicated funding to ensure improvements. The Council would however work with local partnerships with the NHS and voluntary sector, to act as an advocate for sustained change to better address the menopause.

A women's reproductive health survey was held by City & Hackney NHS Trust in April-May 2022. Over 2,500 people completed the survey which provided invaluable insight into what women were experiencing in terms of (peri-)menopause, symptoms, and the care received. Cllr Kennedy reported the results of the survey demonstrated that whilst some of the women had received good support, more was needed to ensure (peri)menopause support was available and accessible.

To help address the need for better information and support for the menopause, the City & Hackney NHS Trust had developed, an innovative Community Gynaecology Service which included menopause virtual patient engagement events and smaller group consultations. He highlighted the various events and attendance levels, which had received excellent feedback, with more events planned in coming months.

Concluding, Cllr Kennedy pledged that the Council would continue to work to ensure all employees were aware of the council's menopause policy and advocate for greater awareness and support in local workplaces.

Questions that were not taken at the meeting due to time constraints, and where a written response was to be provided are attached at **Appendix A**.

7. Questions from Members of the Council

7.1 From Cllr Binnie-Lubbock to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Residents are worried about the felling of mature trees on Council land, which does not need to go through usual planning processes, even in a conservation area. Has an assessment been made on the possible impact to Hackney's mature tree targets as a result of this, also including the recent heatwave and vandalism?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Families, Parks and Leisure

Cllr Woodley expressed extreme pride in the wealth of trees maintained in Hackney. Work was ongoing to increase Hackney's tree canopy, with 5,000 new street trees and more than 12,500 new trees in its parks and green spaces. Acts of vandalism on trees were described as few and far between. Contractors and volunteers undertook extensive watering programmes both on the streets and in parks and assisted in keeping tree loss to a minimum. All trees that had died due to vandalism or disease would be replaced to ensure continuity in provision.

A list was kept of trees that required replacing under contract, as well as other replacements. For the year 21/22, there were 30 street trees that were replaced under contract. There were plans to continue to build upon the Tree Champion and Tree Carers networks. Future plans included tagging street trees with QR codes linking to a mapping project showing Hackney's trees with their locations, and names.

Cllr Woodley explained that there were occasions where trees had to be

removed due to being hazardous. The Council's tree surveyors assess and commission the work and liaise with tenants impacted to agree a plan and a date for removal. She explained that only trees that were dead, dying or diseased or where there was a public safety issue were removed. Any tree which was removed was automatically replaced. When a tree poses a safety hazard, the tree is either reduced to a monolith - where all main branches are removed or, the tree is felled and the remaining trunk or stem left in place on the ground to provide biodiversity benefits. The loss of trees was considered as part of any planning applications in line with the Council policies which sought to protect trees of amenity value and deliver biodiversity gain.

Concluding, Cllr Woodley spoke of the connection between the Climate Action Plan and the Council's building of affordable homes. Keeping mature trees remained a priority, but it was acknowledged that due to the housing crisis and need to build affordable homes, this may not always be possible. However, the Council would work with the community to design and deliver better communal space, a net increase in the number of trees on site and more biodiversity.

Supplementary Question

The loss of mature trees can be a shock to residents. Can the Council improve its consultation process and make its tree database publicly accessible? This would enable the public to map trees and understand the reasons behind felling decisions?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Families, Parks and Leisure

Cllr Woodley looked forward to the launch of the mapping programme. She explained that the Council kept data on trees that could potentially cause harm. These could be shared with ward councillors who in appropriate circumstances could share with residents who had concerns or who may be impacted.

7.2 From Cllr Suso-Runge to the Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing and Customer Service

According to the Institute for Fiscal Studies, the Government's unfunded tax cuts as part of their recent 'mini-budget' could result in £18bn of cuts to public services in the coming financial year. What assessment has the Council made of the potential impact of these cuts on the people of Hackney?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing and Customer Service

Cllr Chapman stated that following the U-turn on the 45p tax rate, on 3 October, the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) warned that an extra £18bn was needed in each of the next two years in order to restore the 2021 plans, as inflation was then (and now) sitting at around 10%.

Cllr Chapman advised that following a change in Prime Minister and Chancellor, most of the tax measures in the Mini Budget had been revoked and the duration of the Energy Support Scheme reduced to 6 months. This created a great deal

of uncertainty, which widened further when the new Chancellor announced that a Medium Term Financial Plan would be announced on 17 November. It was reported that this would involve a combination of spending cuts and tax increases.

The Council would not have a firm indication of how it would be affected in 2023-24 until the announcement of the Provisional 2023-24 Local Government Finance Settlement in December 2022. It was expected that Conservative government austerity would continue for some years to come.

Concluding, Cllr Chapman advised that he and Deputy Mayor Bramble had written to the Chancellor requesting appropriate levels of support for Hackney Council and its residents and to avert a further wave of austerity. He gave assurances that the Council had introduced a variety of initiatives to help residents through the cost of living crisis. He referenced the Help at Hand: a guide to the support available for Hackney residents during the cost of living crisis which was available in paper format and online. Members were informed that various Council measures and initiatives would be continually reviewed and reshaped according to changing economic conditions. In the event of public spending cuts, the Council would respond pro-actively and positively through existing framework and policies.

7.3 From Cllr Garbett to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Will the CO2 emissions from the Edmonton incinerator be included in the Climate Action Plan (CAP) and the 2030 net-zero target?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Cllr Coban explained that the CAP was the first holistic plan to address the climate and ecological crisis. It was based on evidence, having undertaken emissions pathways studies, both for Council emissions and borough-wide emissions. The total emissions for treating waste, which included recycling, food and garden waste and the residual element from waste facility in Edmonton, were included in the consumption emission category as Scope 3 emissions.

Cllr Coban reported that the waste element of all the consumption emissions was very small; whilst emissions from consumption were the biggest category for the borough, the waste element only accounted for 2% of that overall 74%. The emissions from the energy from waste facility, known as Scope 1 & 2, were included in the national territorial accounts by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy as industrial or commercial emissions for Enfield, due to the activity taking place within Enfield's boundaries.

North London Waste Authority (NLWA) was actively investigating the use of Carbon Capture Use and Storage technology for the new Energy Recovery Facility, and were continually assessing the feasibility and likely timeline for when it was likely to be implemented.

Cllr Coban highlighted that Cabinet had also agreed to rejoin the UK100 Network of Councils. This committed the Council to net zero emissions by 2030 across specific Council functions, namely non-tenanted council buildings and

fleet. The Council's goals aligned with the Paris Agreement, thereby making the Climate Action Plan not only ambitious but also more robust than many other council plans.

Supplementary Question

Carbon Capture Use and Storage technology is unproven, how does this align with the 2030 target when the real solution is the sorting and recycling of waste?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Cllr Coban stated that in 2016 the NLWA carried out extensive research on the sorting and disposal of waste. The only alternative available to the Council was to send waste to landfills or to incinerate; whether it be in London or elsewhere. Carbon Capture Use and Storage technology was requested by campaigners. Subsequently, the NLWA committed to incorporate use of the technology to assist in the reduction of emissions. He advised that this was the cleanest and greenest method available.

7.4 Question from Cllr Margaret Gordon to the Cabinet Member for Families, Parks and Leisure

Hackney's poverty strategy calculates that 48% of our children are living in poverty after the cost of housing is taken into account. What is the Council doing to mitigate the impact of the cost of living crisis on children already experiencing poverty or in danger of falling into poverty?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Families, Parks and Leisure

Cllr Woodley stated that it was unacceptable that nearly half of children in Hackney lived in poverty, once housing costs were taken into account. Poverty for most part was linked to the cost of housing, childcare and insecure low wages. This meant that many parents and carers in Hackney were working and struggling financially. It was highlighted that if national policy was more focused on affordable housing, childcare and better paid jobs, as well as having an adequate benefit system in place, there would not be so many children living in poverty.

Cllr Woodley reported that so far in 2022, 18,000 of the estimated 32,000 children likely to be in poverty in Hackney had received support, with more support available to those identified as vulnerable. Concerns were raised about the long term impacts for those who experience poverty early in life and the outcome of poor emotional and physical health as well as challenges in employment and secure housing in later years.

It was acknowledged that the Council was limited in what it could do, however the scarce resources were focused on those who needed the most help. From April 2022, a greater share of the Community Grants budget (£1m out of a £2.5m budget) had been dedicated to developing advice provision. This included the Hackney Money Hub, the Help at Hand Booklet and the upcoming commission into affordable childcare. A Cost of Living Panel discussion would be taking place with the Mayor and Cabinet on 9 November. A Poverty

Reduction framework was being worked on across finance, health, policy and early years, in conjunction with community partners.

Specific support for children and families in summary included:

- Half of the £2.8 million of Government funding via the household support fund, earmarked to support families with children.
- Access to £15 of support for all children on Free School Meals
- Support for families contacting or being referred to the Council via children's centres, youth hubs and community partners.
- Access to Healthy Start and Alexander Rose vouchers for eligible families.
- Access to the national Holiday and Activities Programme (a meal and activities)

Concluding, Cllr Woodley advised that the Council was working to become a Right to Food Borough, joining up with other London Boroughs and cities across England. The Council was committed to continuing its work locally whilst lobbying the government on a range of issues to help mitigate the impact of the cost of living crisis on children and their families.

Supplementary Question

Does the Cabinet Member agree that what the children really need is a general election and the return of a Labour Government?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Families, Parks and Leisure

Cllr Woodley expressed her agreement to the question posed.

7.5 Question from Cllr Binnie-Lubbock to the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care

Are there residents with children who have school lunch arrears; if so, how many and what debt collection methods are used in those situations?

Response from the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care

Deputy Mayor Bramble informed Members that the Council was working with local schools and education settings to offer advice and support on tackling food hunger in schools and during school holidays. She advised that she had written to all headteachers to remind them of the support available and to help signpost families to key information, advice and guidance. This included support for families with no recourse to public funds.

All maintained schools and academies were required to provide free school meals (FSM) to eligible children. In 2022, 38% of all state-funded pupils in Hackney were eligible for FSM (13,352 pupils), the 7th highest among all English local authorities. The percentage of pupils eligible for a FSM and taking up a meal was 30.6%, meaning that around 20% of pupils that were eligible (2,800 pupils) were not claiming free school meals. The Council was working with schools to increase uptake.

The Deputy Mayor reported that information regarding income from school meals and debt collection was initially managed at school level. The Council's Education Department, with the support of partners, was engaging with local schools with a focus on putting in place processes that allowed and enabled schools to share information and escalate 'family at risk' concerns outside of their normal processes. This would assist in targeting additional support for families that may be struggling with the cost of living crisis.

Concluding, further measures for schools to address food poverty were highlighted. These included a dedicated task group to look at local pupil hunger, assessing how schools were supported and what additional support could be provided. Additionally, she welcomed work in this area undertaken by the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission.

Supplementary Question

Can the Council commit to stopping the use of bailiffs and other debt collection methods, where in their remit to do so?

Response from the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care

The Deputy Mayor invited any specific cases to be brought to her attention. She advised that she did not have the current figures for individual schools as this was being collated.

Questions that were not taken at the meeting due to time constraints, and where a written response was to be provided are attached at **Appendix B**.

8. Elected Mayor's Statement

- 8.1 Mayor Glanville relayed his thanks to the Speaker for her handling of the request for an extraordinary Council meeting and for the quick response and mobilisation of the Monitoring Officer and Governance team.
- 8.2 The Mayor also offered a vote of thanks to various Council teams, the fire brigade, businesses, residents and Cllr Woodley for their quick response to the flash floods in Cazenove Road and Stamford Hill areas. He acknowledged the frustrations of residents and businesses in the area and informed the chamber that a meeting was convened the following day to discuss surface water flooding. Additionally, the Council had met with Transport for London (TfL) to discuss the frequency of gully cleansing and their timetable for working with the Council on a long term solution and response to flash flooding on TfL roads. Mayor Glanville highlighted the Council's commitment to climate mitigation and green infrastructure to alleviate and absorb rain water across the borough. He emphasised his commitment to improving the Council's response and ensuring action from TfL and Thames Water.
- 8.3 The Mayor spoke about the different events which took place during the recent Local Democracy Season, notably: Hackney Youth Parliament's attendance at Cabinet, local schools touring the Town Hall and his visit to Mossbourne Riverside Academy to meet their school council. The first in-person Mayor's

question time since the pandemic was held on 17 October. The Mayor highlighted his administration's manifesto commitment to improve democratic accountability of the Executive as well as increased resident involvement. The Mayor also attended the Hackney Youth Parliament 'Who Do They Trust?' event with representatives from Hackney Youth Parliament, Hackney's Young Futures Commission, Voyage Youth, Rise 365 and the local police.

- 8.4 The commitment to rebuild trust and make Hackney an anti-racist borough was highlighted. The Mayor informed the chamber that he and the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services had written to the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police following the findings of the Casey Review, which found the Metropolitan Police's internal disciplinary system to be racist, misogynist and sexist. The Mayor stated that his administration wanted to work with the Police to see institutional change. As such, the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services would continue to engage with communities and hold the Police to account.
- 8.5 The Mayor referenced former Prime Minister Liz Truss' mini-budget which saw record high levels of inflation, tax cuts for the richest and a new wave of austerity, ultimately crashing the economy. He believed that Rishi Sunak, the third prime minister of the year and first Asian prime minister, was an important moment for the country and for diverse representation and leadership. The Mayor however expressed dismay at Mr Sunak's track record as Chancellor, his choice of Home Secretary and Equalities Minister and the Conservative Party's ongoing mismanagement. He raised concerns that Hackney would bear the brunt of more Tory austerity and chaos.
- 8.6 The Mayor spoke about his attendance at the recent Labour Party Conference in Liverpool and commended plans for a fairer, greener Britain set out in the Labour Party leader's speech. The Mayor highlighted his administration's achievements since the last Full Council meeting, which in summary included:
- The approval of the ambitious Climate Action Plan – an evidence-based approach which set out plans to decarbonise Hackney in a socially just way.
 - The refreshed Parking Enforcement Plan.
 - Sustainability Day, held on 23 October, where residents got advice on energy saving and sustainable living.
 - Investment in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities system, expanding places and opening the newly refurbished Pavilion School.
 - The Here to Help offer and booklet - a cost of living support guide.
 - Ongoing work with the Council's partners, NHS, local charities and other public bodies to investigate further support for residents.
- 8.7 The Mayor outlined plans to restructure and invest in the Libraries Services to ensure an efficient and reliable service. This included major renovations to Stoke Newington Library, improved accessibility to Stamford Hill Library and plans to deliver a new Library for Woodberry Down in Phase 4 of the regeneration project. Regarding the new staff structure, it was explained that

all staff would be on a higher pay grade and had been offered support and training for the new roles. It was highlighted that a new Libraries Strategy was recently approved by Cabinet.

- 8.8 Concluding, the Mayor was proud that Hackney was a cooperative and social enterprise Council. Having signed up to the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network, the Council would work with and learn from like-minded councils and organisations across the country. The network would seek to find solutions to some of the problems faced by residents during these difficult times. Mayor Glanville committed to working together for a better Hackney.

Conservative Group Response

- 8.9 Cllr Steinberger spoke of his attendance at Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II funeral which he described as a very moving occasion. He praised the efforts of former Conservative Prime Minister, Liz Truss, which he felt had positively impacted Hackney and welcomed Rishi Sunak as Prime Minister. He believed that the appointment of Britain's first Asian Prime Minister demonstrated the Conservative Party's commitment to diversity.
- 8.11 Cllr Steinberger thanked Cllr Woodley for her attendance at the flood scenes and questioned whether road works had impacted drainage which contributed to the flooding.
- 8.12 Cllr Steinberger raised a number of points which included: the Council's lacklustre response to deputations and the recent efforts of Cllrs Levy and Papier who intervened in an attack on a female outside the Town Hall. He thanked Andy Cunningham, Head of Streetscene, who was retiring after several years of service and Eda Ziya Conti, former Speaker's Officer, who was leaving the Council and wished them well for the future.
- 8.13 Cllr Steinberger questioned why after two years following the cyber-attack all council systems and software were not up and running. He also questioned how a new housing policy could be implemented given the ongoing issues from the cyber attack which he believed had impacted the housing register.
- 8.14 Concluding, Cllr Steinberger stated his dissatisfaction with the lack of consultation with the Conservative group with regard to the calling of this extraordinary meeting.

Green Group Response

- 8.15 Cllr Garbett acknowledged the difficult times that many people experienced and believed that compassionate Green policies were needed to address these. She stated that a Prime Minister was needed who would set a budget that responded to the issues faced by people across the country, however she did not believe that new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak would deliver this. She urged the importance of continued lobbying of the Government and the power of the Council to call for better.
- 8.16 Reflecting on the recent Green Party Conference, Cllr Garbett reported that a motion was passed to back the Enough is Enough campaign; a mass movement resisting the cost of greed crisis and backing striking workers. In

light of this, she stated that the Green group stood in solidarity with Library staff in the borough against proposed job cuts. She emphasised the importance of libraries being adequately staffed. The Green group supported Unison's call for the Council to hold its restructure consultation to allow for the new Library Strategy and changes to embed before considering staffing levels. The Mayor and Cabinet were implored to listen to the concerns raised by staff and unions.

- 8.17 Cllr Garbett stated that a general election was required to address the destruction caused by successive Conservative Governments. It was hoped that this would be the last election under the first past the post voting system. It was also hoped that the Fair Votes motion for consideration later in the meeting would garner cross party agreement, showing support for genuinely representative democratic justice. It was stated that proportional representation was not only needed to stop Conservative Governments, but to ensure there were more Green MPs proportionate to the number of people who vote Green. Cllr Garbett stated that more people were needed to speak positively about immigration, stand in solidarity with striking workers and treat the climate emergency with required urgency.
- 8.18 Cllr Garbett was pleased to see the administration's commitment to the 2030 Net Zero target in the Climate Action Plan (CAP), which was lobbied by the Green group and in their manifesto. However, concerns were raised regarding the lack of targets and specific plans to achieve these goals and refusal to commit to a people's assembly. She believed this demonstrated a lack of accountability and ability to see the public as partners with equal ownership. She believed this attitude extended to the Morning Lane People Space group who had not been recognised as an equal partner regarding plans for the development of 55 Morning Lane. The importance of the site and why it mattered was highlighted. Further parallels were drawn with the site at the Shopping Village at Ridley Road. She believed the Council needed to listen and respond to the voice of residents and stakeholders and raised concerns regarding potential gentrification.
- 8.19 Cllr Garbett spoke of events that she and Cllr Binnie-Lubbock had attended during October in support of Black History and looked forward to working with black led organisations in the borough to effect change. She believed that recognising and celebrating black history, achievements and culture should not be restricted to a particular season. Cllr Garbett emphasised the importance of being anti-racist in words, policies and actions to address the inequalities experienced by black and global majority communities.

The Mayor's Reply

- 8.20 The Mayor stated that the inflation, economic and interest rate crises were all a result of Conservative mismanagement. Citing the actions of the current Home Secretary and her comments at the recent Conservative Party Conference, The Mayor believed the PM's solidarity with black and global majority people in the UK and abroad was short lived.
- 8.22 The Mayor shared concerns relating to the flooding and explained the complexities which were due to road ownership split between the Council and TfL and a nearby Thames Water sewage system, all within close proximity to

the flood site. He stated that the people of Stamford Hill and Stoke Newington required all agencies to provide a long term solution as well as a suitable response in the event of flooding.

- 8.23 Tribute was paid to Andy Cunningham, Andrew Monk and Eda Ziya Conti all of whom were leaving the Council.
- 8.24 The Mayor acknowledged the impact of the criminal cyber-attack on residents. In relation to the housing register, he explained the intention was not to rebuild the old system that did not work but to produce an improved system which would focus on the most vulnerable. He pledged his administration's commitment and that of officers to rebuilding services. He commended the leadership of Ian Williams and Rob Miller in this matter and encouraged Cllr Steinberger and any other interested councillors to contact them to find out more.
- 8.26 Mayor Glanville stated that the proposed libraries restructure presented no threats to safety, services or provision. He informed that library staff had redesigned the service and were being consulted as part of a statutory process.
- 9.27 The Mayor stated that he was proud of the Council's commitment relating to emission reduction and his administration's ambitious climate action to ensure Net Zero targets are attained. He advised that all plans would be fully accountable within the democratic structure of the Council.
- 8.28 Mayor Glanville gave assurances that the Council would continue to work in partnership with residents. With regard to future plans for publicly owned sites. Where possible, these would be co-produced but needed to be realistic. In closing, he stated that the reason the Council had purchased private assets bringing them into public ownership was because his administration were municipal socialists who sought to build an anti-racist borough with Socialism at its heart.

9. Licensing Committee Annual Report

- 9.1 The Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services introduced the report. Commending the work of the Licensing Team, she made special mention of the Hackney Nights campaign which sought to provide a safer night time economy in the borough. The Council was committed to working in partnership with licensed premises, residents, the police and other agencies to ensure Hackney remained a pleasant and safe environment. She highlighted her commitment to ensuring that all decisions were fairly taken, upholding the licensing objectives and consideration given to the views of residents. It was reported that local MP Meg Hillier had undertaken to work with the Council on some of the challenging areas of the Licensing Act 2003 which was felt to require legislative changes.
- 9.3 The Chair of the Licensing Committee thanked the lead member for her support. He paid tribute to licensing officers and members of the sub-committees who worked to ensure that the needs of residents were balanced whilst supporting businesses to be part of a vibrant and mixed economy. He commended the Licensing Service for meeting the challenges

and pressures of leading a world class night time economy which was an intricate part of forming Hackney's reputation as a great place to live, work and visit. Cllr Smyth described the Hackney Night's Portal and Late Night Levy as inspirational and integral to providing a safe space for all. He commended the report to Council.

RESOLVED: To note the Licensing Committee Annual Report.

10. Motions

The proposed tabled amendments to the motions have been published separately.

10a Long Covid

The motion as set out at agenda item 10a within the agenda was MOVED by Cllr Lynch and SECONDED by Cllr Sizer.

Cllr Lynch introduced the motion. She spoke of her experience of having lived with long covid since contracting it in March 2020. She also spoke of the nursing community who undertook their job in the height of the pandemic with no PPE provision, many of whom were still suffering the effects of long covid. The purpose of the motion was to raise awareness of long covid, to advocate for those with long covid and to garner support for the campaign for long covid to be recognised as a disability. She thanked consultants and healthcare professionals at the Homerton Hospital and Lower Clapton Health Centre who had looked after her.

Cllr Sizer spoke in support of the motion, which she believed was contrary to the government's lacklustre engagement with the issue. She quoted the recent All Parliamentary Party Group on covid which found that 'the UK Government covid policy making has continuously failed to take into account long covid'. Concluding, Cllr Sizer referenced that the pandemic revealed and caused deep unfairness in society, the disproportionate effect of covid on those of black and global majority and the mental health implications of long covid.

The proposed amendments as set out in the tabled papers Amendments to Motions were MOVED by Cllr Garbett and SECONDED by Cllr Binnie Lubbock

Cllr Garbett spoke to the proposed amendments explaining that she saw the continued impact of covid on people's lives. The proposed amendments sought to enhance specific points, speak to the experiences of residents and incorporate learning from working in the NHS. They related to: the parity of esteem, the role of carers being a crucial public service and a call on the Council to use its local influence with regard to employment policies. The amendments also requested the Council keep up to date with research on the issue and recognise the financial implications of covid.

The proposed amendments were put to the vote without debate.

The amendments to the MOTION were lost and were declared NOT CARRIED.

The substantive motion was put to the vote without debate

The MOTION was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

Hackney Council notes:

- As of 1 May this year, [figures from the Office for National Statistics](#) (ONS) reveal that two million people living in private households in the UK – or 3.1% of the population – reported they were still experiencing Covid symptoms more than four weeks after their first suspected coronavirus infection.
- About two in five of those with long Covid, or 826,000 people, noted that infection was at least a year ago while one in five, or 376,000 people, said it was at least two years ago. In addition, 71% of those with Long Covid said their symptoms had a negative impact on their day-to-day activities, with 20% saying their ability to undertake such activities had been “limited a lot”.
- As a proportion of the UK population, the prevalence of self-reported long Covid was greatest in people aged 35 to 69 years, females, people living in more deprived areas, those working in social care, teaching and education or health care, and those with another activity-limiting health condition or disability,” the ONS added.
- At present it is not clear what causes Long Covid, but it can be the result of the initial infection sending some people’s immune systems into overdrive, meaning they attack not just the virus but their own organs.
- NICE (National Institute for Health & Care Excellence) describes Long Covid as “signs and symptoms that continue or develop after acute Covid-19”. This definition includes both ongoing symptomatic Covid-19 and post Covid-19 syndrome. Therefore, according to this definition, Long Covid starts from four weeks onwards.
- Long Covid symptoms are plentiful, and more are being seen as related to Covid 19 infection.
- At a local level Hackney Council celebrates the Post Covid Specialist Assessment Clinic and The Covid Rehabilitation (CoRe) service provided by Homerton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, including the work of respiratory consultants Professor Karalasingam Rajakulasingam and Dr Santino Capocci.
- Hackney Council will continue to highlight the needs and support our school children experiencing long Covid symptoms and issue guidance when available from the government to schools and educational settings on the many pupils living with Long Covid, and support for them.

Hackney Council therefore resolves to:

- Working with our health partner organisations to ensure that support for those experiencing Long Covid is a central part of the next City and Hackney Long Term Conditions Strategy.
- Recommend to the Head of the Paid Service that the Council's employment policies and procedures be reviewed to ensure that those with Long Covid symptoms are supported.
- Consider the key recommendations of the Long Covid publication by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Coronavirus.

Proposed by: Cllr Anna Lynch

Seconded by: Cllr Anya Sizer

10b

Fair Votes

It was noted that the proposer and seconder had agreed to a number of suggested amendments. As such, an amended motion incorporating these amendments was tabled.

The amended tabled motion was MOVED by Cllr Garbett and SECONDED by Cllr Binnie-Lubbock

Cllr Garbett introduced the motion, reflecting on the current state of politics. She believed that people had lost confidence in politics and politicians, voter turnout to elections was low and people did not believe their vote made a difference. Some of the reasons cited for this were: incompetence, corruption, misogyny and the choice of prime minister reserved for a select few. It was stated that in Europe, only the UK and Belarus use the archaic first past the post voting system in general elections. The benefits of proportional representation (PR) were outlined. Cllr Garbett expressed disappointment that electoral reform was not a priority for the Labour party despite support from Labour MPs. The support for similar motions amongst neighbouring Labour Councils and beyond was highlighted. Cllr Garbett informed that she did not agree that PR allowed additional risk of extremist views or unstable coalitions and as such was not able to agree to the further proposed amendments to the motion.

The proposed amendments as set out in the tabled papers Amendments to Motions were MOVED by Deputy Mayor Bramble and SECONDED by Cllr Ogundemuren.

Deputy Mayor Bramble spoke to the proposed amendments. She stated that people had become disillusioned with politics and politicians. The importance of political education was emphasised. She believed the motion did not reflect the imperfections of democracy and that the real barrier was voter identification which would silence the voice of many, irrespective of the voting system. In conclusion, the Deputy Mayor stated that until such time of an electoral review it was important not to actively endorse one voting system over another, but to ensure that the Council advocated for the democratic rights of voters.

Cllr Ogundemuren also spoke to the proposed amendments. He believed that the introduction of voter identification would disenfranchise those marginalised and from black and global majority backgrounds. He highlighted the importance of diverse representation but not at the cost of those who faced the worst outcomes in society.

Cllr Binne-Luccock advised that ongoing discussions were being held with Hackney Youth Parliament regarding voting systems. It was clarified that one particular form of PR was not being promoted over another however to remove it would change the overall essence of the motion.

The proposed amendments were put to the vote.

The amendments to the MOTION were declared CARRIED.

The substantive motion was debated.

Cllr Binnie-Lubbock and Deputy Mayor Bramble contributed to the debate.

The substantive motion was put to the vote

The MOTION was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

Hackney Council notes:

- Research has found that electoral systems impact participation in politics for example there is a positive correlation between proportional representation (PR) and women elected to legislatures.
- The introduction of PR for local elections in Scotland has led to an increase in turnout, which was 44.8% at the last elections, held in 2022. In contrast turnout in Hackney in 2022 was 34.29% (this varies by ward with the lowest turnout in Hoxton at 24%).
- The Labour Party in government successfully implemented Proportional Representation to a number of elections, introducing PR into the London Assembly, in devolved government for Scotland and Wales and the Supplementary vote for the Mayoral elections.
- The Labour Party's conference in 2022 passed a motion calling on the Party to make a commitment to introduce a Proportional Representation electoral system for general elections.
- 370 Constituency Labour Parties (CLPs) – about 60% of the total number – have now formally passed policy in favour of PR.
- The Green Party has long supported a fairer voting system and PR for national and local elections to ensure seats in parliament better reflect the share of votes cast, as well as supporting extending the right to vote to those aged 16 and up.
- With the Welsh Senedd reviewing legislation on Single Transferable Vote for local councils, England looks likely to be the only part of the UK without any form of PR at the local level.
- According to polling, the majority of voters in the United Kingdom support the use of PR for elections in the United Kingdom.

- The last Labour Government put together the Jenkins Commission, which recommended the adoption of the AV+ voting system. This system is similar to how we vote for the London Assembly, giving voters local representatives and regional list members.
- PR would end minority rule. In 2019, 43.6% of the vote produced a government with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power. PR also prevents 'wrong winner' elections such as occurred in 1951 and February 1974.
- The current Conservative government, elected by less than 30% of the electorate under the First Past the Post voting system, led by a Prime Minister selected by just 81,326 Conservative Party members, is enacting an extreme policy platform that was not in its manifesto and does not therefore have any democratic mandate.
- In June 2022, Unison, Prospect and the University and College Union (UCU) voted to embrace more proportional general elections. The list of trade unions that back electoral reform is long and growing, it currently includes Unison, Unite the Union, Fire Brigades Union and Musicians' Union.

Hackney Council recognises:

- That there are many reasons people are disillusioned with politics and that disproportionate electoral systems could have contributed to dangerous levels of distrust and disillusionment with our democratic process along with other factors such as politicians and institutions failing to focus on issues that matter most to people's daily lives.
- That it is essential that faith is restored in our democratic system and that the public see Parliament as fairly reflecting their views and their votes.
- That our First Past the Post voting system could be a significant barrier to restoring this faith.
- That the current Conservative Government introduced the biggest barrier to Hackney's communities engaging in democracy by introducing voter ID requirements and removing the limited use of the supplementary vote in England and Wales in the Elections Act 2022.
- That this Council lobbied against the Elections Act¹, its introduction of voter ID and the removal of the supplementary vote for directly elected Mayors.
- Voter ID is also a significant barrier to Hackney residents engaging in democracy, particularly among poorer and more diverse communities that may not have valid ID such as a passport and drivers licence. 24% of the electorate hold neither a passport or photographic driving licence² and Hackney Council estimates that 47% of households in Hackney have no driving licence holder.³ Democracy must be inclusive and accessible to work.
- That a system of Proportional Representation in which seats match votes and all votes count equally could help to rebuild public trust by ensuring that all political views are represented in Parliament and at local councils in proportion to their level of public support.

1

<https://news.hackney.gov.uk/voter-id-plans-will-disenfranchise-young-black-and-asian-council-tells-mps/>

² <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/voter-id-key-facts-and-figures/>

³ <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/boroughs-and-communities/streetspace-funding>

- That no voting system is perfect and many forms of Proportional Representation lack the vital local link between elected representatives and their constituents, risk creating fragile coalitions, and risks creating opportunities for extremist views in our democratic institutions.

Hackney Council therefore resolves to:

- To write to the Secretary of State for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities and the Home Secretary, to call for a national review of voting systems in England and condemning the introduction of voter ID and removal of the supplementary vote for Mayoral elections.
- To consult the Hackney Youth Parliament on their choice of voting systems for Youth Council elections.

Proposed by: Deputy Mayor Bramble

Seconded by: Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren

Close of meeting.

Duration of Meeting - 7:00- 9:51pm

Attachments

Appendix A - Questions from the public not answered due to time constraints

Appendix B - Questions from Members not answered due to time constraints

Appendix A - Questions from the public not answered due to time constraints

6.6 From Oscar Heron to the Mayor

What assistance is available for low-income residents involved in the arts who have been affected by section 21? What measures are the Council taking to prevent homelessness, eviction and help with private letting because of affordability assessments?

Response from the Mayoral Adviser for Private Rented Sector and Housing Affordability

Dear Mr Heron

Thank you for your question intended for October's Full Council meeting regarding support for those affected by section 21. As there was unfortunately insufficient time for the question to be answered at the meeting, I am sending you this written response; I apologise for the delay in doing so.

I recognise that Private renters have long been at the forefront of Hackney's housing crisis – subjected to a badly regulated sector which allows poor conditions, mistreatment from landlords, unstable tenancies and extortionate rents.

In Hackney, we're committed to supporting private renters and challenging rogue landlords, and we've lobbied for a number of changes we want to see to make renting in Hackney better – such as a database of rogue landlords, stopping letting fees for tenants and ending Section 21 'no-fault' evictions – and introducing our own measures like [licences for landlords](#) and living rent homes for renters.

As you'll be aware, under section 21 of the Housing Act 1988 a landlord can issue an eviction notice and gain automatic right of possession without having to give any grounds once the fixed term has expired. Unfortunately this significantly restricts the options available to the Council to intervene to prevent the eviction taking place. Currently the Council's Benefits and Housing Needs service receives on average 40+ approaches per month from households as a consequence of their private sector tenancies ending; this is around 20% of all approaches to the service.

Central Government has previously made a commitment to "get rid of no-fault evictions" as part of the Renters' Reform Bill; recent changes in government made it less clear if and when the Bill will proceed, although Michael Gove, the new Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, recommitted the government to the Bill earlier this month. We will continue to lobby on this issue and continue to make the case for tenants to be given the choice of stable tenancies for years, not months; for rent rises to be capped; and for a range of other measures that will improve the private rented sector for tenants and landlords. Vulnerable private renters are at the greatest risk of health-related housing issues and more needs to be done to reduce these health inequalities in the borough.

Where a tenant has been issued a Section 21 notice and they believe the landlord is not acting legally then we may be able to help. The tenant can approach the Benefits and Housing Needs service who have specialist trained officers who can advise the tenant.

If the landlord has acted legally, then the Benefits & Housing Needs Service may be able to assist the tenant in other ways:

- Where practical, officers will liaise between the landlord and the tenant to establish whether there is any possibility that they are willing to withdraw the notice and potentially accept a new tenancy agreement with the tenant. Under extremely limited circumstances the Council may be able to offer a short term financial incentive to the landlord to expedite this.
- Support the tenant to access alternative accommodation; this will include guidance on accessing the toolkits and support mechanisms available to them, advice on affordability and how they may maximise their opportunity to source suitable accommodation.

There have been 1,500 new homes started or completed by the Council since 2018, with more than half being genuinely affordable Council social rent, Shared Ownership or Hackney Living Rent homes. The Council has ambitious plans to deliver a further 1,000 new social homes in the borough, and we have also committed to building additional homes for Hackney Living Rent and for shared ownership to help local people onto the housing ladder. We will do that by building new homes, refurbishing empty homes, and buying back council homes that were bought under Right-to-Buy. Hackney Living Rent homes are aimed at private renters who are struggling to save for a deposit and want to build up savings to buy a home, or are simply looking for a more affordable option; rents are calculated based on a third of average local incomes, meaning they will be lower than the market rent a private landlord would charge. The Council recently completed the conversion of 16 outdated bedsits in Gooch House, Clapton, into modern homes for Living Rent.

Unfortunately the number of residents seeking social and affordable housing continues to grow rapidly across London, and demand far outstrips the supply available. The Benefits & Housing Needs Service work strenuously with all households facing homelessness to explore all the options open to them, including:

- Working with the Single Homeless Prevention Service, which provides bespoke advice to single adults at risk of homelessness and supports them in maintaining their existing accommodation or securing and sustaining alternative accommodation.
- The Capital Letters scheme, a London wide procurement service supported by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities that assists in sourcing affordable private sector accommodation for those who approach the council as homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Homefinder UK which provides access for residents to social tenancies elsewhere in the UK.
- Specialist advisors working with hospital discharge teams, Probation Services etc.

The Council will continue to do all that it can to support private renters and all those in housing need in the borough.

I hope that this response is helpful, but if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to come back to me.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Sem Moema

6.7 Question from Alan Roberts to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Why has the Cabinet Member failed to respond to questions relating to LTNs and take on board public opinion not in favour of them?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Dear Mr Roberts

Thank you for your question intended for October's Full Council meeting regarding public engagement relating to Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs). As you were unable to attend the meeting I understand that you requested a written response.

The Decisions to implement the Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in Hackney were taken following an in depth review of public consultation and traffic and air quality analysis.

The details of the consultations, polling and data analysis are publicly available in the Council Decision reports, and further information regarding the Council's implementation of LTNs can also be found on the Council's website here: <https://hackney.gov.uk/low-traffic-neighbourhoods>. The LTNs were introduced to meet a number of policy objectives set out in Hackney's Transport Strategies and more recently direct advice from the Department for Transport (DfT). Meeting the outcomes of these policy objectives was also part of the balanced review on whether to implement the LTNs permanently.

The Council received and reviewed *all* comments and objections during a 6 month period *for each* LTN scheme and carried out independent polling during the experimental traffic order process.

As with all Council schemes the consultation, engagement and analysis of traffic movements allows the Council to make appropriate changes to the scheme. For each of the schemes a number of recommendations were made based on feedback and these are or have already been implemented. Some examples of this include the Blue Badge exemption policy that allows Blue Badge holders the right to pass through the three bus gates across the borough and moving closure points. Further details of these amendments can be found in the individual Decision reports.

Although there was evident opposition to some of the elements of the schemes there was also widespread support. Equally, we found that there was much more support when looking at local residents' consultation responses.

It is important to highlight that the decision to implement the Low Traffic Neighbourhoods is in direct response to tackling serious problems we are facing. Traffic management schemes like LTNs can help reduce CO2 emissions, improve air

quality and create healthier streets for all residents regardless of how they travel. We recognise that the changes that have been introduced do create some inconvenience for some people. However, as I trust we have demonstrated, the Council takes a balanced view and has made decisions that will benefit the largest number of people.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Mete Coban

6.8 Question from Nick de Bunsen to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Please explain the Council's persistent failure to address the longstanding road traffic issues on Lordship Park/Manor Road which have only been made worse by the introduction of the Stoke Newington LTN, and outline your action plan to tackle them.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Dear Mr de Bunsen

Thank you for your question intended for October's Full Council meeting regarding the Stoke Newington LTN and traffic issues on Lordship Park and Manor Road. As we unfortunately ran out of time for me to respond to the question at the meeting, I am sending you this written response.

The Stoke Newington Church Street Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) was implemented in September 2021 under an experimental basis for 18 months. The scheme is currently under review and a decision will be made before the end of the emergency transport order period whether to make the scheme permanent, change the scheme or remove it.

Initial results were published in February and are available online at <https://rebuildingagreenerhackney.commonplace.is/proposals/stoke-newington>. There is a lot of detail in the report, but a few key points are:

- motor traffic on Church Street was down by 50% (appropriate as the bus gate operates 7am-7pm),
- pedestrians were up slightly and outnumbered cars for the first time
- traffic was up on Lordship Park, by approximately 1,700 vehicles, but that is less than the number taken off Church St (4,500)
- the most recent analysis suggests that traffic flows on Lordship Park are returning to or lower than pre pandemic levels.

More recently annual traffic analysis shows that the average daily 7am-7pm motor flow on Church Street declined by just over 4,300 vehicles while traffic on Lordship Park rose by 25 vehicles in the same period, since the LTN was introduced. Combined traffic on the two roads fell by 31.5%.

Further detailed analysis will be made available to the public as part of the Council's engagement programme for the Stoke Newington LTN scheme.

The Council is also looking at what mitigations would be necessary for Lordship Park as part of the review of the scheme.

I hope that this response is helpful, but if you have any further questions please do

Wednesday, 26 October 2022

come back to me.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Mete Coban

Appendix B - Questions from Members not answered due to time constraints

7.6 From Cllr Wrout to the Mayor

Can the Mayor provide an update on the Council's recovery of its systems since the criminal cyberattack on the borough in October 2020?

Response from the Mayor

Dear Penny

Thank you for your question intended for Full Council, regarding our recovery from the criminal cyberattack on the borough. As we unfortunately ran out of time for me to respond to the question at the meeting, I am sending you this written response now, I also realise that some time has elapsed and that since then Rob Miller (copied in) and I have also organised the all members drop in on the cyberattack.

The Council's teams have continued to work hard to clear the backlogs of work caused by the criminal cyberattack of October 2020. To give you some examples of the progress with our recovery:

- Our Housing Benefits service made sure that benefits which were already in payment prior to the attack were not interrupted, and has made significant progress processing new claims and changes of circumstances. All new claims have now been processed and the majority of changes of circumstance have also been completed. We are expecting to complete the work and return to normal turnaround times for benefits processing by early next year.
- Our Council Tax and Business Rates teams are now operating within normal processing times for new claims and transactions. We have taken steps to support residents having difficulties paying their bills and I've provided more information about that below.
- We are working to update new applications and changes of circumstances for the Council's housing register and we expect this to complete by the end of the calendar year. We will ensure that everyone on our housing register is correctly prioritised in line with our Lettings Policy based on the date when they contacted us so that no one is disadvantaged due to the impact of the cyberattack on our systems.
- Residents are now able to access the full range of planning and land charges services, and the service teams have cleared backlogs caused by the cyberattack. We are, however, continuing to provide a partial land searches service while we continue the work to recover some further data that is required to provide full land searches. As a result indemnity cover may be required by some lenders and the Council has worked with mortgage providers to ensure that all major lenders will accept indemnity cover.
- We have restored the system used by our children's and adults' social care teams. While this work was taking place we provided in-house developed software that these critical services were able to use to manage their vital casework.

- Our housing repairs service now has new systems in place for managing repairs (which have delivered significant improvements over the systems used before the cyberattack). Further work is in progress to deliver the full range of systems needed for housing services, with interim systems in place while that work continues.

I understand and share the frustration of people who have had to wait for us to process their request or respond to an issue and, as I've said previously, I also recognise that for some residents we need to rebuild their confidence in our services and systems. This has also been reflected in casework received by councillors, our MPs and myself. As we reflected only a few months ago on the second anniversary of the cyberattack I know that many people will question why it is taking us so long to get back to normal.

The impact of this criminal attack on the Council has been significant and it is hard to overstate the scale of the challenge that it presented for our services. Officers across the Council's services have worked incredibly hard throughout the period since the attack to do everything possible to restore our systems and also deliver the services that our residents need while that complex work has been taking place.

Our recovery work has been complex and extremely challenging, against the backdrop of the pandemic, and sadly we are seeing a rapidly growing number of similar attacks on organisations around the world, including other local authorities. Our recovery puts Hackney in the best possible position to defend against these future threats and rebuild truly citizen centred services - as we are seeing with our award winning customer service work and the Money Hub service that we recently launched.

I know that you have sent some follow up questions about the impacts on residents who are receiving Council Tax bills that have been seriously delayed because of the cyberattack. I have now received a briefing from officers on these important points, and would like to address these here (I have italicised your queries for ease of reference), and I hope that this gives you the reassurance that you need.:

What are we offering people by way of payment options when they suddenly receive these big bills sometimes stretching across two financial years? I know some families have put funds aside for assumed eventual council tax charges, but not everyone is so foresighted and even for those who are, it is daunting when facing unanticipated cost of living challenges. An additional bill in the region of £1K is in some cases causing panic. I appreciate that the Council needs to claw back the council tax revenue it lost during the cyber attack period, but I assume we would look at help to spread the burden over the longer term if people are struggling? What is our policy in these circumstances?

While we were working to recover our Council Tax system we wrote to residents who had cases pending in the system to make sure that they knew we had received their notification and to provide them with an estimate of the Council Tax bill that we would be sending to them.

The Council Tax Team will always seek to make sustainable arrangements with residents who require additional time to pay their Council Tax. Arrangements are assessed on a case by case basis to ensure that they are affordable for the resident in terms of clearing any arrears that have built up and paying the current year Council

Tax so that the level of any unpaid Council Tax is not increasing. Arrangements for residents will vary on their ability to make payment and arrangements are being made for periods of up to 24 months (or longer if appropriate).

Residents who have difficulties making their Council Tax payments or have been offered an arrangement that they are unable to pay are asked to contact the Council Tax Team on 020 8356 3154 or complete an online form at <https://hackney.gov.uk/paying-your-council-tax#arrangement>.

As far as I'm aware there was no suggestion of any support with payment plans when the bills were issued, which seems something of a lost opportunity. Some publicity about what the Council might offer in these circumstances and what residents should do to access the assistance would be great - are there any plans for this?

Following the recovery of the Council Tax systems from the cyberattack, all Council Tax bills issued to residents have been accompanied by an insert that provides contact details for the Council Tax team and asks residents to get in touch if they are struggling to pay their bill.

The insert also provides contact details for the Rent team if they are also in rent arrears along with contact details for Housing Benefits, Universal Credit and Discretionary Crisis funding. The Council Tax team are receiving contact from residents in response to this advice and currently have c12,000 payment arrangements in place.

An additional insert is being issued with Council Tax reminder notices asking residents to contact the Council Tax team for help with their Council Tax payments as well as providing contact details for the new Money Hub service which will work with residents to explore ways that they can increase their income if they are not claiming all of the benefits they are entitled to.

I've had contact with someone on Universal Credit, who has worked through the Council Tax Reduction Calculator on the Hackney website, and finds they are not entitled to any reduction. It doesn't say why that is, which makes it tricky for them to decide if there are other routes to support they may be able to access. Could it be possible for something to pop up (as with the government's pension credit calculator) with a brief explanation of why they would get nothing?

The CTR Calculator is a pre-application advice service and provides an estimate of the potential benefit that the resident is eligible for. The current CTR calculator is externally provided service and unfortunately doesn't have the functionality to provide a breakdown along these lines.

Residents seeking additional support are asked to make contact with the [Hackney Money Hub](#) which provides assistance to residents to maximise their benefits and a link to the Turn2Us calculator which provides a more comprehensive benefit checker. Money Hub advisors will also be able to signpost applicants to other means of support and assist with applications for Hackney's Discretionary Support Scheme, Council Tax Support and Discretionary Housing Payments.

The assessment takes no consideration of childcare costs, which can be a significant additional burden, especially for single parents - can this be remedied so that childcare costs are also considered?

This is incorrect - childcare costs are disregarded in the assessment provided the costs and the circumstances of the applicant satisfy the eligibility requirements (see para 57 & 58 of [the CTRS Scheme](#)).

The application for Council Tax Reduction I'm told only backdates by 3 months. Does that mean those who want to claim for the full period of the cyber attack are unable to get the reduction backdated to over the full period?

Hackney's CTR scheme allows for backdating of applications where there is a good cause for delay. The maximum period of backdating is 3 months for applicants of pensionable age and 6 months for working age applicants. (Note: the CTR scheme for pensionable age applicants is mandated by central Government).

We have taken steps to ensure that people who have needed to make applications for Council Tax Reduction are not disadvantaged due to the cyberattack and an online application form was made available shortly after the attack occurred.

Residents completing the online form have had their date of claim recorded as the date they completed the online form and when CTR claims are subsequently awarded their entitlement is based on that claim date. Where claims were submitted during the period while we were recovering our systems the claims have been assessed for the entirety of that time.

Please accept my apologies for the time it has taken to provide you with this response, but I hope it provides the information that you and your residents require. Do come back to me if you have any further questions, casework or enquiries.

Best wishes,

Philip Glanville

7.7 From Cllr Samatar to the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

How is the Council supporting staff in the Libraries Service through the ongoing restructure of the service, and what improvements can residents expect from the service under the new structure?

Response Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

Dear Cllr Samatar

Thank you for your question intended for last night's Full Council meeting regarding the review of the library service. As we unfortunately ran out of time for me to respond to the question at the meeting, I am sending you this written response.

It is vital, when undergoing a workforce restructure, that our staff are fully supported

through the process. In April 2021, the Council started a comprehensive review of the library service over 12 months, looking at all areas of the service and engaging with 8,500 residents on the future of our libraries. An extensive staff engagement programme accompanied this throughout the year as they co-designed the new vision.

The new strategy was approved by Cabinet on Monday 24th October and is a clearly stated vision for what the library service is going to achieve in the future: a more joined-up service with the Council's arts, culture, film and heritage teams: increased resident access to more cultural events; activities that encourage healthier and happier lives.

First and foremost, we're committed to keeping all our libraries open with no changes to the opening hours. Our libraries will become digital and lifelong learning hubs to increase resident access to high speed wifi and digital resources. Residents can expect stock improvements, homework clubs and engagement with local writers to promote the new diversity of books and reading materials.

From next month, people will also be able to access free cost of living and energy advice in our libraries and they will provide a warm, friendly space for those in need throughout the winter months. In the longer term they will respond to the demands of our young people with extended study space and opening times. Our vibrant Community Library Service will increase the outreach of the library service into the community to those most in need.

The new staff structure will provide apprenticeships and will see staff learning new skills to provide our residents with advice and guidance, digital skills and training to offer more activities that have been shaped by all our communities.

We have a large and very diverse workforce, and the restructure will give them the chance to apply for higher paid roles, recognising the long standing low pay issues in the service. The recruitment process for those new roles is being co-designed with staff, supported by an external company which specialises in equalities and diversity. A commitment has already been given to provide interview questions in advance, to reduce any stress or anxiety during the process.

Staff are being given access to interview skills training, tailored to the needs of the workforce, and 1-1 coaching should they require it. They are also being consulted through individual meetings and group workshops. Meetings between senior management and union representatives take place every two weeks in the Town Hall. Extra facility time has also been agreed for staff who are on union duties.

A brilliant vision, therefore, for the future of our libraries and a full programme of support to ensure our staff are equipped to deliver it.

I hope that this response is helpful, but if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to come back to me.

Yours sincerely

CLlr Chris Kennedy

7.8 From Cllr Turbet-Delof to the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

There are an estimated 1.6 million people on mental health NHS services waiting lists, the announced government cuts not only affect those already living on the brink of poverty, hardship and destitution, it also affects their emotional well-being, undoubtedly increasing the already existing waiting list. What steps is the Council taking to ensure the mental health of residents across the borough is safeguarded and a priority of this administration?

Response the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

Dear Cllr Turbet-Delof

Thank you for your question intended for last night's Full Council meeting regarding mental health services. As we unfortunately ran out of time for me to respond to the question at the meeting, I am sending you this written response. Can I also take this opportunity to thank you for your excellent work as Mental health Champion.

As you are aware, mental health is a key priority for the Council and supporting resident mental health is fundamental to all of our new Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities. We work alongside NHS services to safeguard and improve mental health. Across the council many frontline workers and officers from all departments play an important role in this.

- The council commissions its own mental health service, the Wellbeing Network, which we are currently in the process of recommissioning. It provides an alternative, community-based means of accessing mental health interventions, providing holistic support to residents with high needs. Partnership working with NHS and other services, including through the Neighbourhoods program, ensures a joined up approach that considers wider factors such as finance, employment and isolation. Support is also made available to those on waiting lists via an online offer.
- Recently we were able to provide grants for community organisations to pilot a range of different mental health interventions, which are informing the development and improvement of the Wellbeing Network. I was privileged to visit a project working with the recently bereaved that was delivered at St Mary's Secret Garden, Madam Speaker, your chosen charity.
- Officers prioritise partnership working by improving pathways into mental health services and the clarity of the offer for residents, improving service user experiences and using data to inform strategy, decision making and service improvements.
- We are also rolling out a programme called Making Mental Health Everyone's Responsibility - ensuring that mental health is considered in the delivery of all our services.
- We also coordinate the suicide prevention work for City and Hackney, which includes
 - Increasing awareness and addressing potential risk factors in schools
 - Improving the response where suicides sadly do occur

- Improving the support for people bereaved by suicide
- The Council commissions Turning Point to support residents with substance misuse issues. These are a major mental health risk factor so the service includes a strong mental health focus.
- Financial worries can endanger mental health, therefore through our Stop The Knock and Income Maximisation projects, the council works to understand residents' financial difficulties and help them to access support and advice.
- Black History Season runs from October to December, celebrating untold stories which we hope will help to unmask, repair and prevent the hidden wounds of racial trauma on Black and the Global Majority children and families in Hackney. It's perhaps wrong to single out an individual project, but there is still just time to catch the wonderful globes of The World Reimagined.
- Hackney funds on average over 200 specialist Supported Living placements for people with mental illness each year. These placements allow individuals to be discharged from hospital

I hope that this response is helpful in summarising some of the many steps the Council is taking with partners to ensure the mental health of residents across the borough is safeguarded.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Chris Kennedy

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