

**APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE
COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON
23 NOVEMBER 2022**

This page is intentionally left blank



London Borough of Hackney

Full Council Meeting

Municipal Year 2022/23

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, 23 November 2022

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

Councillors in Attendance:	<p>Mayor Philip Glanville - Mayor of London Borough of Hackney Cllr Anya Sizer - Deputy Speaker of London Borough of Hackney</p> <p>Cllr Kam Adams, Cllr Grace Adebayo, Cllr Frank Baffour, Cllr Alastair Binnie-Lubbock, Cllr Sophie Conway, Cllr Michael Desmond, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas, Cllr Zoe Garbett, Cllr Eluzer Goldberg, Cllr Margaret Gordon, Cllr Ben Hayhurst, Cllr Clare Joseph, Cllr Christopher Kennedy, Cllr Lee Laudat-Scott, Cllr Hershy Lisser, Cllr Richard Lufkin, Cllr Clayeon McKenzie, Cllr Sem Moema (part), Cllr Jon Narcross, Deputy Mayor Guy Nicholson, Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren, Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli, Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Benzion Papier, Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Fliss Premru, Cllr Steve Race, Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Midnight Ross, Cllr Ali Sadek, Cllr Caroline Selman (part), Cllr Gilbert Smyth, Cllr Simche Steinberger, Cllr Sheila Suso-Runge, Cllr Lynne Troughton, Cllr Claudia Turbet-Delof, Cllr Joe Walker, Cllr Jessica Webb, Cllr Carole Williams, Cllr Caroline Woodley, Cllr Penny Wrouth and Cllr Sarah Young</p>
Absent:	<p>Deputy Mayor Bramble and Councillors Adejare, Chapman, Coban, Billington, Lynch, Potter, Young Maxwell, Krautwirt and Samatar</p>
Officer Contact:	Natalie Williams, Senior Governance Officer
Live stream link:	https://youtu.be/OJjqN-uKoo8

Councillor Anya Sizer [Deputy Speaker] in the Chair

The Deputy Speaker welcomed all who were in attendance online and in person. A special welcome was extended to the winners of the Mayor's Civic Awards, their guests and the judges.

1. The Mayor's Civic Awards

1.1 The Mayor's Civic Awards, established in 2016, recognised the efforts of community leaders and sought to inspire others to make a lasting difference within their communities in the borough.

1.2 A vote of thanks was given to all those who nominated, the nominees and the four judges; Dr Ronx, Colette Allen-CEO Hackney Quest, Euphemia Chukwu,-CEO of Fame Star Youth and Tara Mewawalla from the Hackney Gazette.

1.3 The Mayor presented the following awards to individuals:

- **Paul Fosu** - diagnosed with Polio at a young age, he qualified in Fitness Instructing and delivered free classes to patients and residents across the borough. Paul was part of the Together Better NHS Clinical Commissioning Group Project at Elsdale Surgery. The Mayor described him as an amazing example of strength and a community hero.
- **Hawa Sesay** - an award winning activist and campaigner and survivor of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). She founded the Hawa Trust charity, to support communities of vulnerable women and girls affected by violence and abuse. The Mayor described the work of the charity as 'vital' and Hawa as inspirational.
- **Joyclen Buffong** - managed multiple youth hubs in the borough. Joyclen established Rise.365 in 2019 which inspires, supports and empowers young people. During the pandemic, Joyceln set up a community food shop to help stop food poverty - which continued to operate. The Mayor stated that the work undertaken by Rise365 had 'flipped on its head, the perception of young people'.

1.4 The Mayor presented the following awards to organisations:

- **Hackney Migrant Centre (HMC)** - which had supported refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants in need for over ten years. They provided free advice and support services including support with immigration, housing, welfare and access to health. The Mayor praised their collective resistance to austerity and the hostile environment and the 'dedication of its staff and volunteers'.
- **Apex** - provided high quality provision for young people including education, drama and sports as well as mentoring, coaching and family support. Apex particularly supported low-income families, signposting to resources & services and worked to address education gaps and attainment levels especially amongst young black boys and Looked After Children. The Mayor stated that Apex goes 'above and beyond providing for young people and their families in Hackney'.

- **Connecting All Communities (CAC)** - a devoted group of volunteers who supported families in need. The primary aim was to tackle segregation and encourage community cohesion, by offering: mentoring and employment support, housing and welfare advice, citizenship programmes, translation services, cooking classes and intergenerational activities. The Mayor praised the CEO Shukri Adan's incredible 'leadership and commitment to partnership'.

There was a brief intermission, prior to the formal commencement of the Full Council meeting.

The meeting resumed at 7.25pm.

2 Apologies for Absence

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Mayor Bramble and Councillors Adejare, Chapman, Coban, Lynch, Potter, Young, Maxwell, Krautwirt and Samatar
- 2.2 It was noted that Councillors Potter, Samatar and Young had joined the meeting remotely and were reminded that they were not counted as being 'present' for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972 and could not vote on any item under consideration.

3 Deputy Speaker's Announcements

- 3.1 The Deputy Speaker informed the chamber of her recent civic engagements which 'acted as very welcome pockets of hope and light'. These included:
 - Diwali celebration at Hackney Town Hall which brought members of the Hindu and Sikh community to celebrate with food, dance and the switching on of the lights in the Town Hall square.
 - Postponed highlights of Hackney Carnival showcased at Shoreditch Town Hall.
 - Antigua and Barbuda anniversary event at St Matthias church.
 - The Lord Mayor's show
 - Remembrance Sunday hosted by Saint Church, led by Reverend Al Gordon and Rev Paul Cowley.

4 Declarations of Interest

- 4.1 There were no declarations of interest.

5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 5.1 Cllr Steinberger raised concerns relating to the recording of attendance at a previous Council meeting. The Monitoring Officer gave assurances via the

Deputy Speaker that this issue was being investigated and that he would be contacted by the Governance Team Leader.

5.2 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 26 October 2022 be agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

5.3 **NOTE:** *Since this meeting, the Governance Team Leader contacted Cllr Steinberger in relation to the issues raised and this matter has been resolved.*

6 Petition

Details of the petition can be found in the agenda.

<https://hackney.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g5477/Public%20reports%20pack%20Wednesday%2023-Nov-2022%2018.30%20Council.pdf?T=10>

6.1 Karen Neill, Katie Killip and Ben Pearson addressed Council on motorcycle and scooter parking charges as set out in the petition submission in the agenda. A summary of the main points raised included:

- The petition against the Council's planned motorcycle and scooter parking charges had been signed by 7750 people
- During the consultation, the Council received almost 4000 responses, 80% of which were against the proposals.
- The report produced by the Council was fundamentally flawed claiming that motorcycles were more polluting than cars. This was used to dismiss the results of the consultation and justify the charges.
- The claim was based on a 20 year old study that looked at non catalytic converter motorcycles from the mid 1990's on bikes which were obsolete.
- Consultation showed that 51% of riders use their bike for commuting
- Riders would face parking charges of £6 per hour which for an everyday commuter adds up to £14,000 per annum.
- Charging bikes the same as cars was unjust and disproportionate. Cabinet failed to recognise the fundamental differences between cars, and electric motorcycles which produced no tailpipe emissions.
- The parking charges would result in: more car use, increased use of kerbside space for parking, failure to improve air quality, increased congestion and pollution.
- The negative impact of the charges to local businesses and the borough.

6.2 Following questions from Members, the petitioners stated that consultation on the charges showed widespread opposition. Only 1 in 5 respondents supported the charges with 97% of motorcyclists and the majority of residents opposed to them. The petitioners believed that whilst the Council claimed that the charges were not aimed at raising revenue, this claim was doubtful given such steep charges. It was felt that charges would most impact working class people living, working and commuting into Hackney, which would have a detrimental effect on businesses in the borough. The petitioners wished to

engage Council officers to assist in finding a resolution. They cited examples of how other London local authorities had dealt with the issue of congestion, the environment and motorcycle parking charges.

- 6.3 Mayor Glanville responded on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport who was not present. He thanked the petitioners for attending and acknowledged that they were originally to attend September's Full Council meeting which was scaled back due to the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. It was noted that in recent months, representations had been made to Cabinet which was indicative of the strength of feeling pertaining to this issue. He explained that consultation was completed on the principle of motorcycle charging, the results of which fed into the Parking Enforcement Plan consultation. He believed that motorcyclists were not exempt and should pay for the use of the public highway and parking.

NOTE: *since the publication of these minutes, it has been noted that the Motorcycle Action Group had made representations to Cabinet and not Save London Motorcycling.*

- 6.4 Mayor Glanville stated that during the 6 month consultation on motorcycle changes, feedback from almost 5,000 people was received and the consultation on the Parking and Enforcement Plan received over 8,000 responses. He believed this demonstrated the extent of the engagement on the Council's plans. These plans were a step to Hackney becoming the most walking and cycling friendly borough in London.

- 6.5 Addressing the points made by the petitioners, the Mayor stated the following:

- The important role that motorcycles, scooters and mopeds play in the Hackney economy was recognised. This was demonstrated in the support of the delivery drivers' campaign in Dalston when it was ensured that the Council provided them with adequate facilities and space.
- All forms of vehicles, including emissions embedded in electric vehicle (EV) motorbikes and cars needed to be recognised in the charging regime.
- The Council's pledge to tackle toxic air and pollution and reduce the amount of miles driven on its roads meant always prioritising the cleanest forms of transport – walking, cycling and public transport. Then treating all other private transport options based on their tailpipe emissions with a surcharge on diesel vehicles.
- Placing motorcycles on the same footing as all other vehicles, with permit prices based on the emissions they produce, would help deliver those pledges.
- At the request of petitioners, the number of charging bands would be expanded from three to seven. Bikes under 125cc would see a permit price of £1.30 a week. 125cc covered most mopeds. This was felt to be a fair and proportionate charge.

- Under the new banding regime, the least polluting vehicles would see permit charges seven to ten times less than drivers of the most polluting vehicles.
- The administration did not support powered commuting of any kind.

6.6 Concluding, the Mayor highlighted that the Parking Enforcement Plan was an Executive decision reserved for Cabinet. He recommended that this issue be further discussed at a future Cabinet meeting. He committed to reviewing the negative impact of the charges highlighted over the first year of implementation. He stated that should some of the externalities expressed materialise, then the possibility of amending the policy would be explored. He suggested that Council refer the matter back to Cabinet, the decision maker.

6.7 Cllr Steinberger requested further clarification on the process and available options.

NOTE: *Since this meeting, the Governance Team Leader has contacted Cllr Steinberger informing him of the process for hearing petitions and next steps.*

6.8 Cllr Binnie-Lubbock proposed that the matter be referred back to Cabinet with a recommendation that Cabinet review the evidence that had been presented. This was seconded by Cllr Steinberger.

6.9 Following recommendations proposed by the Mayor at paragraph 6.6 and Cllr Binnie-Lubbock, at 6.8 a vote was taken.

RESOLVED: That the petition be referred back to Cabinet without recommendation.

7 Questions from Members of the Public

7.1 From Kofo David to the Mayoral Adviser for Housing Needs & Homelessness

With the level of support given to rough sleepers through the pandemic we now know that it is possible to do a lot for rough sleepers. What support is the Council giving to rough sleepers during the winter months amidst the cost of living crisis?

Response from the Mayoral Adviser for Housing Needs & Homelessness

Cllr Etti explained that tackling rough sleeping was more complex than providing accommodation. Support was often needed from a range of different professional and voluntary services including healthcare, addiction support, or mental health services. In addition, some people opt for the perceived safety and familiarity of life on the streets. The Council could only persuade people and had no powers to force people into the offer of accommodation.

During the pandemic, it was reported that the Council and partner organisations had successfully assisted 219 residents into settled accommodation, who were either rough sleeping or at risk of homelessness. The Council had bid for funding from the Department for Levelling Up,

Housing and Communities to deliver support and solutions for rough sleepers. This included provision of emergency and assessment bedspaces to help residents off the street throughout the year. This would allow dedicated officers to assess need and eligibility so that longer term options may be considered.

Ongoing support provided to rough sleepers was delivered by the Outreach Team delivered in partnership with Thamesreach. Support included regular contact with identified rough sleepers in the borough and responses to referrals of new rough sleepers made to Streetlink. This ensured a clear understanding of the street population, their needs and vulnerabilities. Work was undertaken with these residents to secure appropriate housing solutions including reconnection with family. Despite the housing crisis and increasing numbers of new rough sleepers, only 7 residents had been sleeping rough on the streets of Hackney for more than 3 months.

Assurances were given that when temperatures drop to freezing over the winter, the Council would offer temporary accommodation to all rough sleepers. This is in line with the Severe Weather Protocol which operated across London. Hackney Night Shelter (HNS) provided year round nightly accommodation for rough sleepers, some of whom have no recourse to public funds. The Council continued to support HNS to secure new accommodation which would ensure this vital support remained available over the winter period.

Cllr Selman arrived at the meeting at 8.00pm

8 Questions from Members of the Council

8.1 From Cllr Garbett to the Mayoral Adviser for Older People and Carers

Hackney has the largest amount of unclaimed pension credit in London. What has the Council done in the past to address this and what are you doing to address this now?

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

In the absence of the Mayoral Adviser for Older People and Carers, the question was responded to by the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture. He informed the meeting that the issue of unclaimed benefits was a national problem, with more than £15bn unclaimed from the Treasury every year. More than seven million households across the UK miss out on benefits they were entitled to each year. In Hackney that amounts to approximately £12.3m of unclaimed Pension Credit every year.

Cllr Kennedy highlighted steps the Council were taking to encourage takeup of Pension Credit which included: Hackney Today articles, messaging via Voluntary Sector partners, mail outs and proactive steps by link workers to contact Hackney pensioners. The team encountered some reluctance by

those eligible due to stigma attached to the benefits system. Assisting people in other areas such as accessing Council Tax Reduction, free TV licences or help with heating costs had opened up engagement on Pension Credit.

Cllr Kennedy informed Members of the Money Hub, an initiative to support those in severe hardship and the use of the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) - a dashboard that identified which households were eligible for which benefits. As of October 2022, nearly 700 households in Hackney were eligible for Pension Credit but had not claimed, losing out an average of £300 per month. The Money Hub included three outreach workers based in community settings, who would seek to identify the 700 households by broad community outreach and targeted support.

Concluding, Cllr Kennedy stated that a Labour Government was needed to provide a fairer welfare system and effectively tackle and alleviate poverty.

Supplementary Question

Are there plans to review the outcome of the work undertaken by the Money Hub with regard to Pension Credits?

Response

Cllr Kennedy advised that the Money Hub had been operational for three weeks. After 6-12 months, a review would take place, following which, a further assessment of the best way to encourage takeup of Pension Credit would be taken forward.

8.2 From Cllr Troughton to the Mayor

One in four Hackney residents rely on buses as their main means of transport including many in King's Park, where there are already very high levels of deprivation, that depend heavily on the 236 and 242. With the Government failing to invest in sustainable and affordable public transport, Transport for London's proposals would leave many King's Park residents even more isolated and poorer. Can the Mayor please update us on his campaign to save our buses, so we can report back to the thousand or more residents who signed the petition calling for a sustainable and affordable way to travel?

Response from the Mayor

The Mayor highlighted that it was only the Labour party in the borough that took action to save Hackney buses and was pleased to report the success of the campaign. The 11 bus routes in Hackney which were proposed by Transport for London (TfL) to be cut or reduced, had been saved, with the exception of some changes to route 26. He reported that he had been with the Mayor of London and other Labour politicians from across London earlier that day, to celebrate the extra investment in London's bus routes.

The Mayor highlighted his dismay at the actions of the last Conservative Mayor of London and former Prime Minister, Boris Johnson who struck a deal that London would not receive any Central Government revenue funding for its public transport system. This was at a time when cities across the world were thinking about public transport as a response to the climate and cost of living crisis.

Concluding, the Mayor paid tribute to officers who had worked on this and emphasised that buses were the most popular mode of transport in the borough. Buses were overwhelmingly used by young people, those on low incomes, women, black and global majority residents and the disabled. Subsequently, his administration was committed to bus prioritisation to ensure the routes were expanded especially to the east of the borough. He paid tribute to Councillors Patrick, Sadek and Troughton who represented the Kings Park Ward. He thanked them for their tireless work on the campaign in saving bus routes 242 and 236 which served those communities who were most disconnected from public transport.

Supplementary Question

How long is this reprieve guaranteed?

Response

The Mayor stated that this was dependent on the long term funding settlement for TfL. More widely, it was also dependent on the re-election of a Labour Mayor of London and a Labour Government that would be willing to invest in the public transport infrastructure.

8.3 From Cllr Binnie-Lubbock to the Mayoral Adviser for Private Rented Sector and Housing Affordability

Many residents who are private renters are reporting real difficulties with the cost of living and in particular private rent increases. Can the Mayor's Advisor for Private Renting and Affordability share with the Council the work she has been doing in recent months to address these concerns?

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

Cllr Moema advised that renters had long been on the frontline of Hackney's housing crisis, due to the government's failure to tackle the root causes of a broken housing system. There had been a near 10% increase in average private sector rents this year in addition to the increased costs of food and energy. The average private weekly rent in Hackney in October 2022 was £650 compared with an average £150 for a housing association property and £108 for the Council property.

Cllr Moema emphasised the Council's commitment to supporting private renters and challenging rogue landlords. It was noted that the Council could

only use the powers given by the Government and so therefore had pushed for changes to private renting in the borough. In recent years the Government had agreed to many of the recommendations put forward by the Council however it was reported that much more needed to be done. Cllr Moema was proud of the work that the Council had undertaken with tenant organisations including Generation Rent, London Renters Union and Hackney Citizens. These organisations acted as a critical friend, holding the Council to account on behalf of private tenants.

Cllr Moema summarised a number of actions that had been taken by the Council as part of the #BetterRenting campaign to address the unfair system. In summary, these included:

- 16 priced-out private renters given the opportunity to remain in the local community by moving into Hackney Living Rent homes at Gooch House in Clapton.
- Hackney Living Rent capped at a third of local incomes, provision of genuinely affordable homes aimed at private renters who were not likely to be prioritised for social housing but could not afford to buy outright.
- Supporting enforcement action against landlords. An example of this was cited where private renters won £24,000 in rent repayment. The Council's private sector housing team provided support by investigating and giving evidence.
- A longstanding Council campaign with partners to end no fault Section 21 evictions
- Commitment to expanding landlord licensing.

Cllr Moema advised that private renters who were eligible would be able to access the wider support package recently announced by the Council. She highlighted the Labour Party's commitment to the manifesto pledge to ensure better renting for private tenants in the borough and deplored the recent shocking case of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale.

Supplementary Question

As Mayor Adviser for Private Rented Sector and Housing Affordability, what have you specifically been doing in response to the cost of living crisis which has been acute in recent months and what does your workload look like?

Response

Cllr Moema stated that the housing portfolio reflected the complexity of the housing market in Hackney. She advised that she had been working alongside the Mayoral Adviser for Housing Needs & Homelessness with those in temporary accommodation. This was considered the main priority group impacted by the cost of living crisis. There was a push to see where Housing Benefit was able to cover the high proportion of private sector rents in the borough. She further advised that she had worked with officers to see how best tenants on low to middle incomes could be advised and supported. A large part of her activities involved campaigning for additional powers for

Councils to take action on behalf of tenants. In closing, she welcomed any ideas that the Green group may wish to put forward to assist in addressing some of the issues faced by private renters which accounted for 40% of the Council's residents.

8.4 From Cllr Patrick to the Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing and Customer Service

Hackney residents are struggling with the rising cost of living, mortgage payments, rent, food, and household bills are all rising. What is the Council doing to support residents in light of the financial crisis and what support is it receiving from Central Government in order to help?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Families, Parks and Leisure

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing and Customer Service, the Cabinet Member for Families, Parks and Leisure responded to the question. Cllr Woodley stated that concerns about health and wellbeing of residents remained a primary concern. She stated that Councillors knowledge of the areas of need within their respective wards and the local community organisations was crucial.

It was highlighted that roaming surgeries had been held across the borough where residents were signposted to the Help at Hand booklet - to show people the different options of help on offer. She implored Members to continue using the information and networks they had to maximise efforts in support of residents in light of the financial crisis

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**.

9 Elected Mayor's Statement

9.1 Mayor Glanville recalled the previous week where Councilors and Council staff took a moment to reflect on Transgender Awareness Week and Transgender Day of Remembrance. Describing Hackney as an open and welcoming borough, he stood in solidarity with transgender and non-binary residents who face discrimination on a daily basis. He denounced the attack at Club Q, a LGBTQI+ venue in Colorado Springs on Saturday, 19 November 2022, where five people were killed and 25 were injured, including trans people. Referencing Qatar, hosts of FIFA World Cup 2022 he raised concerns about their LGBTQI+ rights and stated that small symbols of solidarity had been stamped out throughout the tournament. He believed it was the wrong decision to bring the World Cup to Qatar.

9.2 The Mayor was pleased that the Remembrance Sunday service and events had resumed having been scaled back in previous years due to the pandemic. He was pleased to have also recently attended the Association of Jewish Ex Servicemen Personnel march.

- 9.3 The Mayor reflected on the tragic case of Awaab Ishak who died at two years old from a respiratory condition caused by chronic exposure to mould in his family home in Rochdale. Thoughts were sent to his family. The Mayor stated that no one in 21st-century Britain should be living in the conditions that Awaab's family faced. Citing the manifesto pledge of ensuring tenants have a safe, warm and decent place to call home, the Mayor set out steps the Council would take to redouble its efforts to tackle damp and mould. In summary, these included:
- Prioritise and inspect all reports of damp and mould as quickly as possible. The aim was to inspect the majority of cases within five working days of being reported. Health needs of anyone within the household will also be considered.
 - Where damp and mould was caused by a leak, the aim was to respond to reports of leaks within 24 hours.
 - Undertake a stock survey in 2022/23 to include specific assessments of damp and mould across all Hackney's council stock.
 - Work proactively with residents to identify cases early and prevent cases from happening in the first place.
 - Be more deliberate in the engagement with housing associations operating within the borough on the issue of tackling damp and mould.
 - Work with Tenant Management Organisations to ensure a joined up and standard response to tackling damp and mould.
- 9.4 The Mayor stated that these actions would take place as part of the wider ambition to improve the service given to tenants; including the 34,000 in private rented properties across the borough. Noting the challenges posed by the Conservative Government over the past 12 years, he urged Central Government to stop their attack on council housing.
- 9.5 Concluding, Mayor Glanville was pleased to report that during Living Wage Week, the Council celebrated the milestone that over 200 businesses and organisations in Hackney (including the Council) were signed-up as Living Wage employers. This was an increase from nine businesses and organisations in 2016. He believed tackling poor pay and conditions to be pivotal in tackling the cost of living crisis and committed to working further on this.

Conservative group response

- 9.6 Cllr Steinberger, congratulated the Republicans in the US for winning the majority vote within the House of Representatives. Whilst he sympathised with the Mayor's comments regarding the World Cup in Qatar he vowed to support England nonetheless.
- 9.7 The Chamber was informed of recent public engagements which included; opening a shop in Mare Street, Hackney and attendance at the J Trade Expo-Britain's only Jewish Trade expo.
- 9.8 It was requested that the Mayor look into action emanating from a deputation that was brought before the Council from residents of Brownlow Road two years ago.

- 9.9 Cllr Steinberger stated his commitment to lobbying the Prime Minister to ensure that housing benefits payments were in line with inflation.

Green group response

- 9.10 Cllr Garbett congratulated the recipients of the Mayor's Civic Awards and was encouraged by the positive work undertaken by individuals and organisations throughout the borough. She acknowledged the civic leaders, organisers, activists and volunteers that were lost through the pandemic. Special mention was given to Joanna Roberts MBE, a longstanding volunteer at Benthall School in Hackney Downs who had passed away. Her funeral had taken place earlier that day.
- 9.11 Progress made on the London Living Wage was welcomed however it was stated that there was still much to do. She and Cllr Binnie-Lubbock had joined UNISON, library staff and residents in demonstration to voice continued dissatisfaction to the proposed changes to library staffing. Cllr Garbett urged that there was still time to listen to the concerns and halt the consultation until the Library Strategy was embedded. She spoke more widely about planned strike action across the country including the historical first ever nurses strike as well as ongoing rail and post workers strikes. She stated that these were providers of essential services and their pay should reflect inflation and the value of their work.
- 9.12 Cllr Garbett welcomed the Money Hub initiative and thanked officers who had worked on it to ensure its accessibility.
- 9.13 Reflecting on the avoidable death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale, the focussed work on tackling damp and mould was deemed necessary. The work of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission looking at housing disrepairs was also noted and residents were encouraged to participate in this process.
- 9.14 Cllr Garbett was saddened by the death of a man in the reception area of Stoke Newington Police station. She stated that more information was required regarding the police's actions and resources provided during the day when the man had attended the station.
- 9.15 The Mayor's sentiment of standing in solidarity with the LGBTQIA+ community was echoed. Cllr Garbett condemned the Club Q attack and Qatar's treatment of members of that community and highlighted the significance of the Trans Day of Remembrance. Concerns were raised that Trans rights were not reflected nationally in the Conservative Government. She urged Conservative colleagues in the Chamber to lobby the Prime Minister on LGBTQIA+ rights for residents and staff in the borough.
- 9.16 Cllr Garbett stated that the hostile environment needed to be challenged and the myth that refugees caused pressure on the housing system needed to be debunked. She believed that issues with the housing system were caused by a lack of affordable housing. 24 November marked the one year anniversary of the death of 27 migrants who drowned in the Channel whilst in their endeavours of a better life. Cllr Garbett highlighted the need to take care of displaced people both nationally and locally.

- 9.17 Concluding, Cllr Garbett, expressed thanks on behalf of the Green group to staff and fellow Councillors who had been supportive during their first six months in office. She was delighted that ward forums and surgeries had resumed.

The Mayor's reply

- 9.18 In reply to the Opposition Groups, Mayor Glanville raised the following points:

- He echoed the tribute to Joanna Roberts MBE and informed that he had not been aware of her death.
- He advised that there was a commitment to continue the conversation with trade unions even after the end of the formal consultation.
- It was reported that following agreement of the Green Book pay award, staff received their back pay on 15 November. Red Book staff (craft and associated employees) increase would be implemented in December 2022.
- The Money Hub was operational and two benefits specialists and a disability benefit specialist were being recruited. 800 people had already submitted applications.
- He concurred with Cllr Garbett's comments on the importance of the protection of Human Rights, whether it be the LGBTQI+ community in Colorado Springs or in Qatar. This sentiment also extended to the estimated 6500 slave labourers who had died in the construction industry in Qatar.
- It was with regret that he had not heard anything about these issues from the Conservative opposition in response. He referenced that the Green group had actively participated in scrutiny and the wider democratic process. The Mayor asserted that the Green Group had done more in the six months since being elected, than the Conservative group had done in 10 years. He expressed dismay that during the 6 months since the election in May 2022, the Conservative group had not tabled one question and utilised the opportunity to hold the administration to account.

Cllr Moema left the meeting at 9.02pm

10 Strategic Plan

- 10.1 Mayor Glanville introduced the report. The Strategic Plan sets out the direction of the administration. Council and borough for the next four years and was a strategic response to the Labour manifesto. He thanked Sonia Khan, Head of Policy and Strategic Delivery, for leading on this work. Thanks were also relayed to Deputy Mayor Bramble and Deputy Mayor Nicholson for leading on this alongside Cabinet. The Strategic Plan encompassed staff values, organisational change, Mayoral priorities and the ambitions and challenges for the borough. It was noted that this was at a difficult and unprecedented time locally and nationally. Highlighting the themes set out within the Plan, it was noted that it would be presented at each Annual Council Meeting.

- 10.2 Deputy Mayor Nicholson advised that due to a lack of funding and support from Central Government partnership working was vital The Council would forge partnerships with those in the voluntary, statutory and private sectors and would provide the political steer to enable delivery of the Plan.
- 10.3 In response to questions from the Green group, the Mayor advised that a Strategy Against Violence to Women and Girls was recently adopted by Cabinet. This alongside the forthcoming campaign to be launched showed the administration's commitment to tackling violence against women and girls. With regard to consultation, the Mayor stated that the Plan built upon the mandate on which he and his fellow Labour Councillors were elected; however there would be scope for the coproduction and codelivery of strategies and services. Concerning community wealth building, he stated that He was a Labour and Co-operative Mayor and co-operative values were embedded within both the manifesto and Strategic Plan. The Mayor informed that there was an Inclusive Business, Social Enterprise and Co-op Mayoral Champion. He believed the recently launched Community Energy Fund, Hackney Business Network and the Diversity and Tech Commission were all examples of the commitment to building community wealth.
- 10.4 The Mayor explained that the intention was to bring the Council's direct emissions target down to 2030. Assurances were given that consumption based emissions and the work of the Pensions Committee were in line with the Paris Agreement. Regarding advertising, there was a sensitive need to balance consumption based emissions and the generating of income. Work on ethical advertising was being led by Cllr Kennedy.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Strategic Plan be adopted.
2. That an annual cycle of progress updates be considered by Full Council in May of each year, linked to the Annual Meeting (AM).

Councillors Papier and Steinberger voted against the recommendations. Cllr Lisser was not present at the time of the vote.

11 Pensions Committee Annual Report

- 11.1 Cllr Adams, Chair of the Pensions Committee introduced the report. He thanked Members of the Committee for their commitment to the responsible management of the 1.9 billion pension fund during a period of considerable challenges for the Local Government Pension Scheme and wider economy. Thanks were also relayed to the former Chair, Cllr Chapman having chaired the committee for eight years and also to Ian Williams, Group Director Finance and Corporate Resources. Cllr Adams was pleased to report that the Pension Fund had reduced its exposure to carbon reserves by 96.9% between July 2016 and November 2021, far exceeding the Fund's original target to reduce exposure by 50% by 2022. He highlighted the central areas of the Committee's work as set out within the report.

- 11.2 Cllr Adams informed the Chamber that the committee had received questions from Cllr Binnie-Lubbock and Cllr Garbett at the Pensions Committee the previous evening that would be responded to in writing.
- 11,3 The Mayor welcomed the report and thanked Cllr Adams, former Chair Cllr Chapman the Committee and officers. He highlighted that the contribution of Council Tax payers to the pension fund could be reduced due to being 103% funded. This assisted in closing the budget gap.

RESOLVED: To note the contents of the report

Councillors Lisser, Papier, Race and Steinberger left the meeting.

12 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report

- 12.1 Cllr Gordon, Chair of the Scrutiny Panel introduced the report highlighting the need for effective back bench scrutiny. She reported that scrutiny in Hackney had shaped the Council's response to many of the challenges faced, given a voice to communities, contributed to the development of various policies and strategies and pushed the Executive to deliver better services to residents. Cllr Gordon highlighted some of the key areas of work undertaken. Thanks were expressed to the Commission Chairs, Vice Chairs, Committee Members and Co-optees. Thanks were also extended to Tracey Anderson, Head of Scrutiny and Ward Forums and her team.
- 12.2 In response to a question from Cllr Garbett, submitted prior to the meeting, Cllr Hayhurst stated that one of the biggest challenges of privatisation over the past two years was that of GP practices. He cited an example of where the local scrutiny function had sought to make national changes. This was done by making local Commissioners accountable and lobbying MPs with a specific proposal to amend legislation to enable local Commissioners to reject a privatisation transfer or impose conditions.
- 12.3 Mayor Glanville highlighted the importance of scrutiny in a Mayoral system and applauded the leadership and commitment demonstrated by the various Commission Chairs. Special mention was given to the reviews undertaken on Child Q, school exclusions and net zero. The Mayor committed to the continued funding, resourcing and support of the scrutiny function.
- 12.4 In response to a question from Cllr Garbett, Cllr Conway advised that the involvement of community organisations and residents was central to scrutiny. Every effort was made to ensure that the views of the few who were detrimentally impacted were considered. The importance of residents setting the agenda and contributing to reviews was emphasised. Assurances were given that the tracking and monitoring of the implementation of recommendations remained a primary focus.
- 12.5 Cllr Gordon thanked Cllr Garbett and Binnie-Lubbock for their proactive and enthusiastic engagement in scrutiny and expressed disappointment at the Conservative group's failure to contribute and represent residents in this process.

RESOLVED: To note the contents of the report

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7.1 Section 4.2 of the Council's Constitution, Cllr Adams MOVED a motion without notice to extend the meeting beyond 10pm to 10.15pm

This was SECONDED by Cllr Rathbone

RESOLVED: That the meeting be extended to 10.15pm

Cllr Gordon left the meeting at 9.45pm.

13 Motions

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

Full details of the debate can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/OJqN-uKoo8>

13a Cash Welcome Here

The motion as set out at agenda item 13a within the agenda was MOVED by Cllr Joseph and SECONDED by Cllr Wrout.

Cllr Joseph introduced the motion. The purpose of the motion was to ensure inclusivity and prevent exclusion from participating in the economy. Cllr Joseph stated there had been no consensus with regard to adopting a cashless way of life. She believed that the decision to refuse cash was contributing to a two tier society. The findings of the National Access to Cash Review were welcomed and the need to protect the ability to spend cash in Hackney was highlighted. The implications of a cashless society were stated to be complex and far reaching, disadvantaging children learning about money, the elderly, low paid and those without bank accounts.

Cllr Wrout spoke in support of the motion and paid tribute to her fellow ward colleague Cllr Joseph for her grass root campaign. All shops, pubs, cafes and restaurants were encouraged to make this change and the Council's backing was seen as crucial to this. The Government was called to protect cash by legislating for mandatory cash acceptance in shops and businesses.

Councillors Williams, Turbet-Delof, Rathbone and Premru spoke in support of the motion.

The motion was put to the vote.

The MOTION was unanimously CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

Hackney Council notes:

Since the pandemic, shops and services increasingly only accept cards as a method of payment. According to Which, around 1 in 5 consumers have been stopped from making cash payments.

So far this financial year, 1 in 3 payments made at the Council's Self Service Payment Centre were cash payments. A record £3.32 billion in cash deposits and withdrawals were handled at Post Office's branches in July 2022, and they report that personal cash withdrawals are up 20% since last year.

Going cash-free excludes many people.

1. People on lower incomes often rely on cash and avoid cards as they may be waiting for payday, trying not to bounce a direct debit or worrying about going into an overdraft — average overdraft rates have recently increased from 12.34% to 27%. Cash is more easily ring fenced.
2. Older people often struggle to use cards and fear associated scams.
3. Children learn the value of money by using coins and notes.
4. Staff in many cash-free businesses interviewed by Victoria Councillors confirmed that cash machines often fail, and then cash is temporarily accepted.
5. Staff often receive a smaller share of tips on cards.
6. Between 1.3 and 2 million UK adults do not have a bank account. This figure includes refugees and homeless people without the documents to get a bank account. A cash-free society could be devastating for them.
7. People leaving abusive partners often need to hide money away, leaving no trace.

As more shops go cash-free, the options dwindle for those who need to use cash. No one has voted for this and it has not appeared in any manifesto.

The government has promised to protect access to cash in the Financial Services and Markets Bill, but not to mandate cash acceptance.

Hackney Council therefore commits to:

- **establishing Hackney as a #cashwelcomehere borough, supporting the campaign started in Victoria Ward, and promoting an inclusive economy by encouraging local businesses and ensuring that council-run facilities accept cash and other payment methods.**
- **lobbying the Government to include a mandate for businesses to accept cash in the Financial Services and Markets Bill.**

Proposer: Cllr Clare Joseph

Seconder: Cllr Penny Wrout

13b The Climate and Ecology Bill

Following the publication of the motion within the agenda, proposed amendments to the motion were received. These were tabled at the meeting.

The proposer and seconder had agreed to one of the suggested amendments. As such, a revised motion incorporating the amendment was also tabled.

The amended motion as set out at in the tabled papers was MOVED by Cllr Smyth and SECONDED by Cllr Lufkin

Cllr Binnie-Lubbock introduced the motion. He believed that tackling climate change and its impacts was the defining crisis of this time. He stated that nowhere was immune from the devastating consequences of climate change. With reference to the immediate locality, he stated that poor infrastructure had led to flooding and sewage being pumped into river ecosystems. Rising temperatures, natural disasters, extreme weather events, rising sea levels, coral reefs dying and forests burning, were all cited as consequences of climate change. Cllr Binnie-Lubbock urged that now was the time for bold, collective action and committed to holding the Council to account to develop greener policies. He reported that the Climate and Ecology Bill was the only proposed legislation that ensured a comprehensive and joint up response to this emergency. In reference to the tabled amendments, Cllr Binnie-Lubbock wanted to ensure that the council thanked Dianne Abbott MP for her support of the Bill and strongly encouraged Meg Hillier MP to support it in contrast to her support for airport expansion. Cllr Binnie-Lubbock stated that a Citizens Assembly for Hackney was in line with the Bill being discussed as well as the Labour group's recent manifesto and so should not be amended out of the motion. He urged the council to advocate for a nature premium to ensure children in the borough with the least access to nature were given greater access, crucial to help with their mental health. Cllr Binnie-Lubbock extended thanks to campaign group Zero Hour for their work on the bill and Caroline Lucas MP for introducing it. Cllr Binnie-Lubbock ended by commending the good work and climate leadership of the Council.

Cllr Joseph left the meeting at 10pm

The proposed amendments as set out in the tabled papers were MOVED by Cllr Smyth and SECONDED by Cllr Lufkin.

Cllr Smyth spoke to the proposed amendments.

The proposed amendments were put to the vote without debate.

The Green group voted against the proposed amendments.

The amendments to the MOTION were CARRIED.

Cllr Garbett spoke to the amended substantive motion. She implored Members to agree the motion so that there could be a cross party response to the climate emergency.

The amended substantive motion was put to the vote.

The MOTION was unanimously CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

Hackney Council notes:

- That in June 2019, Hackney Council declared a climate emergency and committed to become a net zero carbon borough by 2040 and is developing a climate action plan to achieve this.

Hackney Council also notes:

- The work of Hackney Council to reduce carbon emissions, reverse biodiversity decline and tackle toxic air pollution, such as switching its energy supply to 100% renewable sources, establishing Hackney Light and Power, a Community Energy Fund, supporting walking cycling and public transport, increasing the recycling rate in the borough by 11%, and planting 5,000 new street trees.
- That in 2022, Hackney has again been a Healthy Streets Scorecard leader with 70% of suitable streets covered by a Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN), the top score, and School Street schemes at 45% of all schools covered, the highest total number
- That there is a Bill before Parliament - the Climate and Ecology Bill - according to which the Government must develop an emergency strategy to limit global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees celsius above pre-industrial levels
- That less than 5% of Hackney's carbon emissions are from the Council's corporate operations and buildings
- That the Council cannot tackle the climate emergency alone and the Conservative Government needs to step up with a plan to reach net-zero carbon emissions much sooner than the current target of 2050
- The lack of ambition shown by the Conservative Government since 2010 in tackling the climate emergency
- That many other London councils have joined the UK100 network of highly ambitious local government leaders and it is the Hackney Council's intention to bring forward its net zero target to 2030 so it can join the UK100 network.

Hackney Council further notes:

- The Climate and Ecology Bill requires that the UK to play its fair and proper role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions consistent with limiting global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees C above pre-industrial temperatures; and
 - ensures that all the UK's consumption emissions are accounted for;
 - protects and restores biodiverse habitats along overseas supply chains;
 - restores and regenerates the UK's depleted soils, wildlife habitats and species populations to healthy and robust states, maximising their

- capacity to absorb CO2 and their resistance to climate heating and flooding;
- sets up an independent Citizens' Assembly, representative of the UK's population, to engage with Parliament and Government on these issues

Therefore, Hackney Council resolves to:

- **Support the Climate and Ecology Bill;**
- **Write to Diane Abbott MP and Meg Hillier MP letting them know that this motion has been passed and**
- **Write to Zero Hour, the organisers of the cross-party campaign for the Bill, expressing the Council's support.**

Proposer: Cllr. Gilbert Smyth

Seconder: Cllr. Richard Lufkin

End of Meeting: 10:14pm

Attachments

Appendix A - Member Questions (agenda item 8) not taken at the meeting due to time constraints, that received a written response,

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix A - Agenda Item 8 Questions from Members of the Council Not Responded to at The Meeting Due to Time Constraints.

8.5 From Cllr Walker to the Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation

The Council's draft Resident Engagement Strategy (2022-25) has pledged to create a residents-first culture at the heart of our housing service. Following consultation, how will the strategy ensure resident voice and participation across different tenures to drive improvements and ensure that poverty, social isolation and poor health are tackled head-on?

Response

Dear Cllr Walker

Thank you for the question at Full Council regarding the Council's Resident Engagement Strategy. As we unfortunately ran out of time for me to answer your question in person at the meeting, I am sending you this written response.

The need for a Resident Engagement Strategy is clear. Hackney Council has one of the largest stocks of social housing in the country, with 30,761 households living in our homes. This includes council tenants, freeholders, leaseholders, private renters in council leasehold properties and shared owners, all of whom need to be able to communicate and engage with Housing Services to resolve service issues easily, and to have opportunities to genuinely influence our service delivery and decision-making.

A key aim of the strategy is to provide a clearer framework to drive improvements in how Housing Services engage and communicate with its residents, and to ensure that our approach reflects changes in our operating context - such as growing levels of need among our housing tenants, the increased use of digital engagement, our increased tenure complexity, and the proposed changes to the housing regulatory framework set out in the Government's Charter for Social Housing Residents (Social Housing White Paper).

In developing the strategy we have worked in partnership with residents to 'co-produce' the Strategy, to ensure that it reflected feedback from a diverse range of resident voices, and to build upon good practice from within and outside the housing sector and consequently heard the views of thousands of residents who live in our homes, including feedback from seldom heard groups that we often struggle to reach.

The strategy sets out how we will engage with our residents on what services we deliver and any significant changes to existing services. The core of our approach is to work with residents to, where appropriate, co-produce significant changes to services we provide, a process of doing it **with** residents rather than residents feeling things are done to them.

A key part of that will be reaching out and engaging with all Housing Services residents regardless of tenure, based upon the service-specific issue. For example, we would not engage with tenants regarding services solely to leaseholders and visa versa.

With regards to tackling head-on the issues facing some of our most vulnerable residents, we have a number of key approaches that we deploy to support residents. Our Financial Inclusion team are:

- Working with residents to maximise income and dealing with benefits issues and referrals to debt advice.
- We also support residents to resolve benefits issues and liaise with our colleagues at Housing Benefit to address these.
- We have developed and continue to undertake a number of Discretionary Housing Payment campaigns to support tenants to sustain their tenancies.
- We are working with the homelessness team to help residents access the extra support from the government's household support fund.

This work delivers direct benefits for residents, and through maximising income since the beginning of the pandemic we have seen almost £2m in additional benefits for our residents.

Finally, to ensure residents can access our services, we are introducing local Housing Surgeries in the community, taking the service closer to residents. A pilot is underway and these surgeries will be rolled out across all housing areas in the new year.

I hope that this response is helpful, but if you have any further questions regarding the strategy please do come back to me.

Kind regards

Cllr Clayeon McKenzie

8.6 From Cllr Desmond to the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy & Regeneration

Hackney Downs Councillors have been campaigning to protect Kidzmania children's soft play centre, which is threatened by development by Peabody Housing Association. How can the Council help protect this popular centre and persuade Peabody to adapt their plans to ensure it survives and prospers?

Response

Dear Cllr Desmond

Thank you for the question you tabled at Full Council asking how the Council can assist in resolving the current impasse between Kidzmania and Peabody Housing Association. It was unfortunate that time was not on our side and I was

unable to respond in the meeting but please find the following written response.

First, may I take this opportunity to acknowledge your and Cllr Sem Moema's consistent support for Kidzmania, a well-established, well-liked and exciting Hackney based children's play venue.

As you are both aware, for some time now Kidzmania have been negotiating commercial terms for the use of a new premises with the owner, Peabody Housing Association. The new building is a mixed-use development with twenty-one affordable homes and a ground floor commercial space. The original planning permission that was granted by the Council ensured that the ground floor commercial space could include in Planning Use Class terms, the provision of a children's play centre.

Since planning permission was originally granted various building safety regulations have been introduced affecting all new buildings. These new regulations were mainly focussed on fire and building safety matters. As a result of the new building safety legislation the Peabody development required some amendments to the original permission granted. These changes were approved by the Council but it did not change the material planning permission regarding its possible future use as a children's play centre.

It must be noted that from a legal perspective, the long running negotiations between Peabody and Kidzmania is a commercial negotiation between third parties that are completely separate from, and independent of, the Council and the planning process. In addition Planning law prohibits the Council from granting planning permission to any third parties other than the applicant. It cannot identify and make it a condition of planning, a named third party end user of a development. It is only able to specify the types of use of a building and as I have already said - the Council has delivered on this by ensuring that a children's play centre would be a permitted use of this space.

As it stands the Council has no legal grounds for intervention either through the Planning process or through any other statutory function to impose a contractual conclusion to the current impasse. Neither can the Council involve itself in a commercial negotiation between two third parties in which it has no corporate interest in. For information the Council does not commission any children's services from Kidzmania.

However, Hackney has a strong track record in working with local partners, organisations and businesses from many sectors to reach a resolution on a range of matters. Council officers have contacted Peabody on this matter, the outcome of which is that a further negotiation will now take place between Peabody and Kidzmania. The Council understands that the date is yet to be confirmed but it has learnt that this meeting is likely to happen in December.

At this stage I would therefore suggest that we let the planned negotiation get underway but we will ensure that the Council maintains close contact with both parties and wields as much influence as can be considered both suitable and legal.

Please be reassured that all support your and Cllr Moema's ambitions and let us hope that both parties can reach an agreement through this latest negotiation. As you have often said this is a much loved facility that provides a popular play destination for Hackney families and I am sure that an agreement between Kidzmania and Peabody would be a welcome Christmas present for many in these pretty tough times.

Regards

Cllr Guy Nicholson

8.7 From Cllr Ogundemuren to the Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities

Given the cost of living crisis, public sector workers need a pay rise. Can the Cabinet Member give an update on the 2022 / 2023 pay claim made by the unions and when does she expect staff to see an increase?

Response

Dear Cllr Ogundemuren

Thank you for the question at Full Council regarding the public sector pay claim. As we unfortunately ran out of time for me to answer your question in person at the meeting, I am sending you this written response.

We know that the cost of living crisis is hitting our staff, particularly the lowest-paid, in the same way as it affects our residents (including those who are both).

For employees in local government and schools, pay is determined by a negotiating body, the National Joint Council (NJC) for local government services. This is more commonly known as the National Employer. Individual local authorities are not responsible for determining pay locally.

The process for deciding on the pay claim is one that requires a great deal of negotiation. What is clear is that public sector workers, including our staff, won't get the pay rise they deserve until the government puts their hands in their pockets and starts to value the staff who keep this country running.

The National Employer is responsible for determining pay for local government workers and this year made a pay offer to the three trade unions of £1,925. Following the trade unions consulting with their membership, two of them accepted this offer and one did not. When the National Employer met with the trade unions on 1 November 2022, two of the unions agreed and signed off the pay award as it is done on a majority basis.

As we are an 'Inner London Borough', Hackney Council officers receive an historical 'Inner London weighting' element to their pay which normally gets adjusted by the percentage of the pay award agreed. As this year, the pay award was for a fixed amount of £1,925, a further £430 was added to this amount by the Regional Employer (London Councils). Therefore, the full amount of pay award for full time employees was £2,355, which amounts to around a 10% pay rise for the lowest paid. This is pro rata for part time employees, based on the number of hours they work.

Following agreement of the Green Book pay award, staff received their back pay on 15 November. As the award took effect from 1 April, this meant that staff received a lump sum of over £1,000 back pay this month, in addition to their monthly wages.

Red Book staff (craft and associated employees) have had to wait slightly longer, but I am happy to say their deal has been approved, and the increase will be implemented in the December 2022 pay run so that the money is with these staff by Christmas. The delay is unfortunate, and whilst we can all accept that there is a need to push the government to take responsibility and fund higher public sector pay, we've all got a duty to ensure that those on the lowest and intermediate pay scales are given their increases in a timely manner. The Red Book pay award is £1,925 and the historical 'Inner London Weighting' element to take their pay increases this by £112 making a the full amount of the pay award for Red Book employees £2,037.

We are also taking other measures to support staff through the cost of living crisis. We have an internal comms campaign targeted at staff on the lowest and intermediate incomes, and are promoting our wellbeing offer including the Employee Assistance Programme which can also offer financial advice. We are continuing to highlight existing benefits for permanent staff including Salary Finance loans for high-interest debt, the Tenancy Deposit Scheme and Wagestream, which offers early access to salary payments in the event of urgent need. We also have a range of staff discounts for supermarkets, as well as local discounts throughout Hackney.

I hope that this response is helpful, but if you have any further questions please do come back to me.

Kind regards

Cllr Carole Williams

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

Can the Cabinet Member give assurances that the Council will work with partners and stakeholders to make sure that the future of St Leonard's hospital remains a fully comprehensive health service aimed at providing much-needed health services in Hackney?

Response

Dear Cllr Oguskanli

Thank you for the question at Full Council regarding the future of St Leonards. As we unfortunately ran out of time for me to answer your question in person at the meeting, I am sending you this written response.

St Leonards is currently owned and managed by NHS Property Services (NHSPS). NHSPS do not have any plans to change the usage of the site so there are no immediate risks to the site as a provider of NHS services. That said, the current arrangement also means that there is a lost opportunity to maximise the benefit of what is a large and well-situated site within Hackney, within the context of population growth and increasing demand for health services.

The existing provision at the site is a GP surgery and outpatient departments including sexual health services, podiatry, rehabilitation services, talking therapies and wheelchair services - whilst there is much going on, I would not describe it as "a fully comprehensive health service" Famously saved from complete closure by a public campaign in the 1980s, the building ceased to function as a General Hospital in 1984 and the services currently provided there are those of what we would now call a health centre rather than a hospital.

Both the Council and Homerton Healthcare have scoped various options for improving the site and would ideally want to bring the site under local management and control.

In 2019 the Council, Homerton, what was the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHSPS facilitated a viability exercise to explore whether improving the healthcare facilities on site might be achievable by including housing on site to create income that could be reinvested. Unfortunately the exercise concluded that such a project would not be financially viable.

Louise Ashley, CEO Homerton Healthcare and City and Hackney system lead was asked about St Leonard's at the Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission on November 16th 2022. She confirmed that Homerton Healthcare, under NHS rules, has the ability to take the site over from NHS Property Services.

Homerton have formally started the process to test feasibility for taking on St Leonards, an approach which the Council are supporting. The Homerton submitted an Expression of Interest regarding a potential asset transfer to the Department for Health & Social Care (DHSC), which was approved in October 2021. The approval gave the Homerton access to the site documentation and financials held by NHSPS, which enabled them to commence work on a full 'Business Case' which will detail the financial viability of the site, the costs to manage the backlog of maintenance and the ongoing schedule of works.

If Homerton Healthcare were to take over the site, they would then take on all of the associated maintenance and other costs of the building. The site has suffered from years of decline, so these costs are likely to be considerable. Several buildings are in a state of disrepair, with some areas locked off and marked as dilapidated. There is a considerable maintenance backlog and work is required to bring the site back up to the standards of a modern healthcare facility. Due to the age and nature of the site, it is expensive to maintain, and the Homerton has to operate within strict capital spending limits set by the government.

Early findings suggest that the costs of running the site will outstrip any income received from running services or rent from other tenants and make it unaffordable for the Homerton as a single owner to operate the premises. Homerton would, understandably, not be able to take on St Leonards if it was unaffordable. They are, however, exploring all options to try and make it feasible, and are currently progressing land value assessments to examine all the possibilities that the site may have to generate inherent value, to support the business case.

Council officers meet regularly with the Homerton to explore partnership options on the site. Our intention in that work is to be sure that we do not inadvertently miss an opportunity that might work with the input of both parties to make more of the site should it arise. Right now it is hard to see how that might come about, but regular dialogue meanwhile only helps to build stronger mutual understanding and so strengthens the working partnership.

It is worth repeating that, outside of the potential asset transfer to the Homerton, there are no plans for NHSPS to change the current usage of the site, and it will continue to provide NHS community services as it currently does. Likewise, local partners will continue to work with NHSPS to try and improve the current condition of the site as far as possible.

I hope that this response is helpful, but if you have any further questions please do come back to me.

Kind regards, Chris

Cllr Chris Kennedy

This page is intentionally left blank