

Overview & Scrutiny

Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission

All Members of the Governance & Resources Scrutiny Commission are requested to attend the meeting of the Commission to be held as follows:

Monday, 13th October, 2014

7.00 pm

Room 101, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, London E8 1EA

Gifty Edila

Corporate Director of Legal, Human Resources and Regulatory Services

Contact:

Tracey Anderson

☎ 020 8356 3312

✉ tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk

**Members: Cllr Rick Muir (Chair), Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli, Cllr Will Brett,
Cllr Laura Bunt, Cllr Rebecca Rennison and Cllr Nick Sharman**

Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Urgent Items / Order of Business**
- 3 Declarations of Interest**
- 4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (Pages 1 - 14)
- 5 Annual complaints Enquires Report 2013/14** (Pages 15 - 30)
- 6 Governance Review Review Executive Response** (Pages 31 - 38)
- 7 Public Spend Review** (Pages 39 - 58)
- 8 Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission -
2014/15 Work Programme** (Pages 59 - 64)
- 9 Any Other Business**

Access and Information

Getting to the Town Hall

For a map of how to find the Town Hall, please visit the council's website <http://www.hackney.gov.uk/contact-us.htm> or contact the Overview and Scrutiny Officer using the details provided on the front cover of this agenda.

Accessibility

There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall.

Induction loop facilities are available in the Assembly Halls and the Council Chamber. Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

Further Information about the Commission

If you would like any more information about the Scrutiny Commission, including the membership details, meeting dates and previous reviews, please visit the website or use this QR Code (accessible via phone or tablet 'app')

<http://www.hackney.gov.uk/individual-scrutiny-commissions-governance-and-resources.htm>



Public Involvement and Recording

Scrutiny meetings are held in public, rather than being public meetings. This means that whilst residents and press are welcome to attend, they can only ask questions at the discretion of the Chair. For further information relating to public access to information, please see Part 4 of the council's constitution, available at <http://www.hackney.gov.uk/l-gm-constitution.htm> or by contacting Governance Services (020 8356 3503)

Photography, film and sound recording are generally permitted, though prior permission has to be sought from the council's Monitoring Officer by midday on the day of the meeting. Please contact Gifty Edila on 020 8356 3000



Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission 13 th October 2014 Minutes and Matters Arising	Item No 4
--	---------------------

Outline

Attached are the draft minutes from the meeting on 8th September 2014.

Action

The Commission is asked to agree the minutes.

This page is intentionally left blank

London Borough of Hackney
Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission
Municipal Year 2014/15
Date of Meeting Monday, 8th September, 2014

Minutes of the proceedings of
the Governance & Resources
Scrutiny Commission held at
Hackney Town Hall, Mare
Street, London E8 1EA

Chair	Councillor Rick Muir
Councillors in Attendance	Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli, Cllr Will Brett, Cllr Rebecca Rennison and Cllr Nick Sharman
Apologies:	Cllr Laura Bunt
Co-optees	
Officers In Attendance	Kay Brown (Assistant Director for Revenues and Benefits), Jennifer Wynter (Benefits Section Manager), Jackie Moylan (Assistant Director of Finance Childrens Services) and Joanna Sumner (Assistant Chief Executive)
Other People in Attendance	Councillor Geoff Taylor (Cabinet Member for Finance), Councillor Clare Potter, Councillor Carole Williams, John Atkinson (Independent Consultant) and Sue Goss (Office Public Management)
Members of the Public	
Officer Contact:	Tracey Anderson ☎ 020 8356 3312 ✉ tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk

Councillor Rick Muir in the Chair

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
 - 1.1 Apologies from Cllr Laura Bunt.

- 2 Urgent Items / Order of Business**
 - 2.1 None.

3 Declarations of Interest

3.1 None.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 14th July were agreed.

RESOLVED	Minutes	were
	approved.	

5 Methods of Approach to Mapping Total Public Spend

5.1 The Commission noted the reports.

6 Public Spend Review - Expert Briefing

6.1 The Chair welcomed John Atkinson (Independent Consultant) and Sue Goss from Office Public Management (OPM) to the meeting.

6.1.1 John and Sue were involved in the 'Total Place: whole area approach to public services'. This programme involved local public services working together, to deliver better value services to citizens, by focusing on joint working using a place based approach to deliver better outcomes and improved value for money.

6.1.2 John Atkinson managed the Total Place programme from 2008 – 2010 and Sue Goss was an enabler of the Total Place pilot in Sunderland and Tyneside; Sue is now applying these principles to Health and Social Care integration work.

6.1.3 John and Sue were invited to come and talk to the Commission about their work on the 'Total Place' programme to provide the Commission with, some advice and guidance about the methodology and approach to use in relation to the mapping of total public spend for Hackney and the best way to approach a place based review of services. The discussion started with an outline explaining the purpose of the session and aim of the review.

6.1.4 The Commission is aware there needs to be a fundamental change and redesign of services if the Council is to sustain services. From this review, the Commission will identify a framework to apply to service provision, that will: engage with the public, (from the outset) establish the skill sets required for staff and new ways of commissioning. The purpose of this session was to give the Commission an understanding of the requirements for a success Total Place project (deep dive exercise as quoted in the Total Place evaluations).

6.1.5 John and Sue provided an overview and made the following comments:

- Doing a forensic audit of the money flow will not help you to achieve the desired change; The Leicestershire pilot conducted a detailed audit of the

money mapping exercise and ended up with a spaghetti exercise that was difficult to understand

- 20% of effort, rough calculations of the total spend will give most of the information required
- Money mapping helped to identify the percentage of the total funding each organisation was in control of (in relation to spending decisions). In some areas the Council identified they only had control of 30% of the money flow.
- Conducting the deep dive exercise starts with the person and talking to them to identify their desired outcome. Hearing the stories of service users and understanding the nuances of how they use the service or what they find useful was important. This became the lever for change in the Total Place pilots not the mapping of total spend
- The count and the whole system review work together and help to inform the review
- This exercise can help you to identify how and why the system is not working
- Talking and consulting did not get things completed it was working out how to change the service. Through doing this work, one pilot identified that a number of work streams were being funded that proved to be counter intuitive and hindered the delivery of the outcomes. Lewisham Criminal Justice Work was cited as a good example of this.
- The Commission was warned against going into this review thinking (when you commence the project) they knew what the problem was. The Swindon Life project was cited as an example (looking at mental health) where they found a miss-match in relation to the allocation of resources. They found more resources were provided for crisis care, for mental health service users but talking to the service users revealed they wanted assistance before they reached crisis point so they did not have a crisis (at prevention)
- The purpose of doing this type of work was to look at how to changes staff, residents, users and companies
- The big challenge was to get the changes implemented to meet the needs of the service users
- Political support helps to enable the change
- The Commission was advised to read the evaluation report produced by the Treasury and each pilot's individual. John and Sue explained each report give more detail about the individual programmes.

6.2 Discussion, comments and responses

- a) Members asked if the pilots provided analysis on the costs and savings areas. John and Sue advised for this work the Commission needed to decide on their aim following completion of this work. Deciding if they wanted to make extreme comments or target Government to make changes in areas spend they may be willing to change. It was highlighted that one pilot was able to prove one part of the system was counter intuitive to another part achieving its outcomes.
- b) Members enquired about the possibility of DWP being amenable to changes in relation to its budget and service spend. John and Sue did not completely dismiss this as an option and pointed out there may be parts of the current structure accessible to change. They advised this would be a challenging target but that there maybe some ability to effect change in areas of spend

within the organisation; but this would be reliant on an innovative manager. The Coventry pilot (lead by the Council Chief Executive) achievements were highlighted as a catalyst for change and setting the tone for the nature of the change among public sector services.

- c) Members queried if the deep dive exercise could lead to silos and how this could be avoided. John and Sue advised it was important to clarify from the outset the process would lead to service redesign. The advice was to take big areas to review and redesign (2 or 3) taking areas where you could make the most impact (this may be difficult to manage). The Commission was cautioned against pigeon holing the work too tight. Instead, John and Sue advised Members to follow where the information takes them, as this often helped to identify the service area that needed to be changed.
- d) Further enquires were made about redefining the big review areas. The Commission was told to ask questions, like:
- What is the problem you want to solve?
 - What do you want to change that will make the most impact or is achievable?
- e) Start with areas where you can make a difference now - John and Sue commented working on these outcomes helped to reduce demand on social care time and reduce admissions. Agreeing to the 80/20 rule and doing the money mapping with 20% effort. Clarifying what was important politically to all and starting with an outcome to achieve e.g. healthy employment. John and Sue pointed out a politically supported solution was crucial and usually where it went wrong.
- f) In response to a query about targets, Members asked for information about the process to identify targets or the methodology to use when setting targets in this exercise. John and Sue explained targets often related to some part of the process and this could be a problem. John and Sue informed if targets were being set, it was beneficial to have target on an outcome and set in conjunction with the service users and the people who will run the provision, (so they were meaningful to them). Members were advised that when embarking on this journey they would be experimenting therefore targets are not helpful because the outcome is unknown. However they were advised targets could be a helpful tool if they were ambiguous and treated as data to show what is not working so it could be changed. John and Sue informed targets should be viewed as information and not as a measure of performance; otherwise the people responsible for the targets will start to ensure the targets are met. If the target set creates fear and anxiety it will not give you the information you need to learn from or be useful.
- g) In response to a query about the methodology to apply to get the information from the detail, that would help to identify the correct outcomes. John and Sue advised the pilots did a lot of anthropology work, watching people and observing what happens in their lives over a period of time, to identify the outcomes.
- h) Members raised concern about overcoming the challenges associated with co-production and service design (being able to involve everyone and not the regular few). John and Sue advised going through this process would provide

access to other individuals and as the journey progressed the number of individuals involved would increase. John and Sue pointed out true co-production and service redesign would require a cultural shift for an organisation. Experts would be required to give up their expertise and sit in a room with people who have various opinions. Co-design is where the process has been followed through and all the views were taken seriously and used to design the service.

- i) The Members commented that from the discussion their understanding was they needed to know their community well enough to understand what will work. Be clear from the start on the outcome they wanted to achieve and draw out the information. John and Sue added it was important to have staff with the correct skill sets.
- j) John and Sue ended with a final word of advice. The pilots that achieved the most from this work were the places that had no pre-conceptions and followed where the process took them.
- k) The Chair summarised the following points from the presentation and discussion:
 - It's a journey. This process was a journey not an audit
 - The mapping of the money needs to be a high level count
 - Political buy in to the process was crucial
 - Involvement of services users is key and the Commission needs to think about how to engage the public with this process
 - The areas identified for change (starting point) may not be where you end up once the process has been completed.
- l) The Chair thanked John Atkinson and Sue Goss for attending the meeting.
- m) The Chair informed the Commission the next stage in the process would be a presentation from Finance on the funding headlines for the Borough. A high level money mapping for the Borough would provide the Commission a foundation to start from and from there they can consider how they will identify the big areas for review.
- n) The Chair advised a working group would be set up (all Members of the Commission were welcome to join) to help take this forward in between the meetings and would identify the framework and approach to take, terms of reference and the number of people that need to be involved in the group.

Action	The Chair to contact the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources to set up a meeting date to discuss the summary points from the outcome of this session.
---------------	---

7 Welfare Reform Update - 3 years on

7.1 The Chair welcomed Kay Brown (Assistant Director Revenues and Benefits) and Jennifer Wynter (Operations Manager) to the meeting. The Chair advised following the implementation of the welfare reform changes Overview and Scrutiny have been monitoring the impact of the changes locally. The Commission was informed this was the first of 2 updates scheduled for this municipal year and the updates would be presented to Governance & Resources Scrutiny Commission (G&R) in September and Community Safety Social Inclusion Scrutiny Commission (CSSI) in March 2014.

7.1.1 The Officer referred to the reports in the agenda on pages 211 - 217. The officer provided a recap of the welfare reform changes, the work by the Council to support local residents and the current position. The main points highlighted from the report were:

- The Welfare Reform changes started in 2011. The first area of change was the Local Housing allowance.
- Following implementation of the changes there has been an increase in requests for help, advice, support, telephone enquires, homeless services and footfall into the HSC.
- The Council has used various channels of communication to communicate the changes to local residents and have in place a number of support mechanisms for local residents.

7.1.2 Local Housing Allowance

- This was introduced in 2011 and maximum level for support is set at £400. The current level with inflation has risen to £425, current rent level in Hackney are significantly higher. Housing costs in Hackney rose by 9%
- For Hackney residents the shortfall between housing benefit and rental costs is increasing
- The shortfall can be in the region of £100 - £800 a month. Currently 60% of claimants when assessed have a shortfall between their benefit and rent charge
- There have been changes to benefit entitlement for the single person. Single people who previously were entitled to a 1 bed room flat are experiencing a shortfall. This group of occupants are either returning to live with their parents or have moved into multiple occupancy dwellings and rent a single room
- It was highlighted for people in Job Seekers Allowance the benefit available and their income means renting in Hackney is unaffordable
- The Revenues and Benefits teams give advice to residents about finding alternative accommodation, which entail moving back home or to another borough. For this groups there is very limited support or assistance the Council can provide.

7.1.3 Spare Room Subsidy

- The Council commenced work to advise about the changes and to give assistance in 2011; Officers reported they have:
 - Assisted 122 to move
 - 253 are on the waiting list that have asked for assistance with down sizing

- Provided Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) support to households and spent has been £192, 000 on this type of support to date. The fund to provide this support has been available for 1 year
- Some households were in arrears before the scheme, but approximately 35% are in arrears since the scheme came into operation.

7.1.4 Council Tax Reduction Scheme

- Hackney's Council Tax reduction scheme implemented has had a positive impact on the collection rate for LBH.

7.1.5 Social Fund

- The social fund now administered by local authorities. In Hackney access to this fund is through independent providers. LBH provide funding support to the local food banks through this fund. Since LBH started administering the scheme they have paid out less than DWP. LBH have a strict assessment policy that enables them to provide support to the households in need. In the last 12 -18 months LBH has provided assistance to the households that have been identified as in need. Not a blanket payout on request.

7.1.6 Benefit Cap

- In addition to the LHA residents also face the Benefit Cap. In Hackney residents are experiencing a shortfall of approximately £50-£400 a week
- Many households did not think the Benefit Cap would become a reality, therefore did not engage until it was confirmed. Where possible the Council have assisted people to find work and move into alternative properties
- The Council used all its allocated DHP allowance to support households impacted by LHA and the Benefit Cap
- The number of households impacted by the Benefit Cap is changing continuously because it related to a person's circumstances.

7.1.7 EEA Migrant Benefits

- Changes to the EEA migrant policy (in relation to the benefits they can claim) has resulted on this group not being able to claim benefits for 3 months
- From April an EEA migrant has not been able to access support to cover housing costs nor do they have entitlement to housing allocation i.e. homeless services
- The impact of this policy for Hackney is unknown
- To date two families have presented in this category.

7.1.8 Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

- In relation to Disability Living Allowance (DLA) Hackney has 14,000 in this category awaiting reassessment. This process is currently pending, until the issues about the reassessment process have been resolved. This area of the welfare reform changes still remains a real concern.

7.1.9 Universal Credit

- This benefit will be 6 existing benefits into one. Claimants will receive one payment direct to them.

- LBH have been encouraging residents to start paying their rent by Direct Debit
- Universal Credit is currently being piloted in Hammersmith but with of cohort of less than 300 people. Hackney's current caseload is approximately 44,000
- The new benefit is scheduled to be rolled out across the Britain by 2017. LBH is currently awaiting confirmation of their migration schedule from DWP
- Universal Credit will only be accessible online. Hackney currently has an officer on secondment to the online digital test group at DWP refining Universal Credit and the Council is using this platform (amongst other) to voice its concerns
- Pensioners will not be on Universal Credit and there are currently no plans to include this group onto that benefit. Hackney currently has 10,000 pensioners on housing benefit
- Hackney has real concern about the ability of all residents to access this benefit online once it is implemented. Hackney is currently doing a costing exercise with DWP to develop a framework to support vulnerable residents who maybe digitally excluded
- Hackney is encouraging more and more residents to access services online to get them ready for Universal Credit
- LBH recruiting staff champions to help support residents to use the internet, so they get used to online services.

7.1.10 Potential Policy changes

- The Benefit Cap could be reduced to £18,000. Initial modelling on the potential impact of this policy has identified this would be disastrous for Hackney residents
- Currently the Council has used the DHP fund to support residents experiencing a short fall. This is not a permanent solution and the Council is still awaiting confirmation of the budget, for this fund next year. DWP is not expected to continue to provide resources for this fund long term.

7.2 Discussion, comments and responses

- a) LBH Officers were asked if in their opinion the 181 families identified as under occupancy are in fact under occupied. Officers explained some residents outlined in the report have approached the Council asking for assistance because their accommodation is too big. The terminology 'under occupancy' was used to describe a person living in a property that was too large long before the bedroom subsidy was introduced. Potentially there could be families that can afford to remain in their current accommodation in spite of the Benefit Cap, but the Council is not aware of these cases.
- b) In response to Members enquiring if people were moving into private rented accommodation; the Officers advised they were not. The examples given about support to move were for residents moving into social housing. The latest assessment showed just over half of the households supported moved into RSL accommodation.
- c) Members queried about the short fall and asked about the process for families that were in this situation. Officers advised for families who did not engage, this would lead to eviction, however currently no family in Hackney have been

evicted. It was pointed out Hackney's support processes for households impacted by the welfare reform are viewed by Judges at Shoreditch Court as rigorous and they will issue an eviction. The Council's stance is to try to work with families to pay at least the minimum rent.

- d) Members commented this could be a vicious cycle if a family was evicted. Members asked how the Council made sure the households not engaging are not those in greatest need such as mental ill health. Officers agreed this was a vicious cycle and a policy that was counterintuitive. The Council is working with partners to monitor and identify families that may be in this situation. The Council and partners work closely and engage with residents in a holistic way and aim to carry out joint visits to impose this approach. It was reported some households have moved into employment as a result of the changes.
- e) Members raised concern that an impact of this policy for Hackney would result in social cleansing, lead to a continuous churn in school places and asked if the Council was considering ways it could continue to resource the DHP fund to maintain diversity in the borough. Officers explained the DHP was a grant from DWP. The Council was not in a position to resource this funding pot. The Council is trying to convince DWP to continue the funding; they know the funding is there in the short term but in the long term there are plans to discontinue it. The Cabinet Member for Finance from LBH (Cllr Taylor) agreed with the concerns raised by the Commission and commented the Council would prefer if the workers in the borough only had a 30 minute journey to work, but the current policies were not enabling low paid workers to remain in close proximity to their employment.
- f) Members enquired about the impact if the DHP fund was withdrawn. Officers advised this would not be a Hackney issue just for Hackney but London wide. The Council currently has 1800 in temporary accommodation and paid out £500,000 in support to residents through the crisis scheme.
- g) Members queried if residents were moving into work or potentially trapped in temporary accommodation. Officers informed in most cases the fund is being used to keep households a float because they are not moving into employment. In some cases residents are spending up to 2-3 years in temporary accommodation and some hold unrealistic views about the type of accommodation they can acquire. The advice being provided involves looking at the options which could include moving to alternative accommodation and for some out of the Borough.
- h) Members enquired if the Welfare Reform changes have impacted on the management of resources for the Revenues and Benefits service. Officers advised the service has always experienced a peak in demand between April and June (as council tax bills are issued) and employed temporary to help manage this demand. Following the peak temporary staff are reduced because demand decreases, but recently they has not been a dip in demand. In the HSC the service has assisted 380,000 clients, received 138,000 phone calls and answered 98% of those calls. Revenues and Benefits have been working to increase the number of clients digitally adept to help reduce the volume of face to face contacts. ICT are creating a 'My Account' and homeless applications are moving online to encourage digital access to services.

- i) Members enquired if the system for Universal Credit would be administered locally. Officers informed the national digital system was approximately 18 months away and simplistic to use. The system has been designed based on real people and real needs. The system will be administered centrally by Government and Local Authorities will not have access to this system or have the ability to give clients information about their claim. The only people with access to the claim information will be the claimant and the call centre. Initially local authorities will still process the benefits for pensioners, ESA and those in supported accommodation.
- j) For Universal Credit local authorities will not be able to track the claim in relation to housing benefit and will not have access to local data like the information provided in the report, in the agenda.
- k) Members enquired who had the responsibility to ensure clients had the ability to access Universal Credit on line and that they are digitally aware. Officers informed DWP are of the view it was the responsibility of the individual to get employment ready. Progress has been made in the fact that DWP do now recognise there may be some individuals that are vulnerable and are working on the assumption of a 20/80 split, that being 20% not ever ready. The framework model being developed in conjunction with DWP is being piloted and will act as a triage but DWP do not view this as long term solution.
- l) The impact of Universal Credit will be on other parts of the Council e.g. rent collection. Hackney Homes will need to have in place processes that will assist with the rent collection when the system goes live.
- m) Members enquired about the impact of these changes to staffing levels for Revenues and Benefits and if they have been working with Hackney Homes to prepare for the changes. Officers explained DWP have informed they will not TUPE over any of the current staff in local authorities. This service area currently has 120 members of staff and some are local residents. Administration for Universal Credit will be carried out centrally in remote national service centres by DWP and Job Centre Plus (JCP) staff. JCP is also going through a restructure of their organisation too, which is likely to include reducing staffing levels. There is concern that JCP staff may not understand that administering housing benefit is more than a process and the nuances of peoples lives need to be taken into consideration. This is an understanding that local authorities have built up over time while administering this process. Hackney currently has 44,000 cases and this is expected to reduce to approximately 20,000 and the current volume of staff will not be required to support the reduced volume of clients.
- n) Members were alarmed that DWP were of the view they could provide Universal Credit on reduced levels of staff in JCP. The Officers advised Revenues and Benefits have been working closely with Hackney Homes over the last 2-3 years to get them to monitor the spare room subsidy. A Senior Officer Review Panel has been set up and this group reviews the eviction requests. This has helped to reduce the number of evictions and provide a final check in the process. The message about the welfare reform changes is still being delivered and Revenues and Benefits provide as much information and support to residents as possible to help them with their rent and be proactive.

The Chair thanked the Officers for their update and advised G&R would continue to monitor this with CSSI.

8 Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission - 2014/15 Work Programme

8.1 The Chair advised the work programme would be populated with items for discussion as the outline of the review is confirmed.

9 Any Other Business

9.1 None.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00 - 9.15 pm

This page is intentionally left blank



Governance & Resources Scrutiny Commission 13 th October 2014 Annual Complaints Enquires Report 2013-2014	Item No 5
--	---------------------

OUTLINE

This report is presented in accordance with the Governance & Resources Scrutiny Commission role in monitoring Corporate and Local Government Ombudsman complaints.

This report provides details on the complaints improvement work undertaken over the last year, outlines the key developments in improving the Complaints & Members Enquiries process, further enhancements planned and headline data related to complaints and enquiries for 2013/14.

ACTION

The Commission is requested to note the report and ask questions.

This page is intentionally left blank

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides details on the complaints improvement work undertaken over the last year, further enhancements planned and headline data related to complaints and enquiries for 2013/14.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 The Governance & Resources Committee is recommended to: -
1. note and comment on the complaints improvement work undertaken and forthcoming enhancements planned
 2. note and comment on the performance relating to complaints and enquiries during 2013/14

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This report is in accordance with the Governance & Resources Committee's role in monitoring Corporate and Local Government Ombudsman complaints.

4. COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES

- 4.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report. The cost of staff dealing with complaints across the Council is met from within the relevant revenue budgets, as are any compensation payments made. The cost of complaints monitoring is met within the approved revenue budget of the Business Analysis and Complaints Team.
- 4.2 Such costs, however, can be minimised by ensuring that complaints are dealt with successfully at the first stage, thus reducing the numbers that proceed to later stages.

5. COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, HR AND REGULATORY SERVICES

- 5.1 This report details the Council's response to and management of complaints and Members' enquiries. Some complaints go to the Local Ombudsman. In the event that the Ombudsman makes a finding of 'maladministration causing injustice', their report must be presented to Full Council and publicised locally. This report makes it clear no such findings were made in the reporting period.

APPENDICES

- 1 – Complaints and Enquiries Annual Report 2013/14

BACKGROUND PAPERS

In accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act, 1972 - Access to Information a list of Background Papers used in the preparation of reports is required.

Description of document	Location	Date

Report Author	Simon Gray Tel: 020 8356 8218 Email: Simon.Gray@hackney.gov.uk
Comments of the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources	Ian Williams Tel: 020 8356 3003 Email: Ian.Williams@hackney.gov.uk
Comments of the Corporate Director of Legal and Democratic Services	Gifty Edila Tel: 020 8356 3265 Email: Gifty.Edila@hackney.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report outlines the key developments in improving the Complaints & Members Enquiries process as well as information on the volume of complaints and enquiries and performance.

2. Changes to the process & improvement work

- 2.1 It was identified that a 'step change' in the handling of Complaints & Members Enquiries was required. This was to address a number of issues:
- Poor quality of responses
 - Low resolution of residents issues
 - Low satisfaction / confidence of the Council/Hackney Homes to put things right
 - A process that took too long
 - Complaints issues not resulting in changes to service delivery
- 2.2 To address the issues related to handling complaints and low satisfaction levels, as well as to initiate a step change in complaint handling, the Council agreed to a series of changes that have been implemented since Autumn 2013.
- 2.3 The changes saw:
- The re-training of staff in the Council and Hackney Homes who handle complaints and Members Enquiries to focus on resolution of the issues, quality of response and resident contact/engagement
 - A move from a 3 stage to a 2 stage complaints process removing stage 2 in the former
 - The introduction of new software to allow for improved case management/tracking and issue identification
 - Assistant Director sign off of Resolution (stage 1) complaints and Members Enquiries
 - Targets around complaints to be the average number of days to resolve
- 2.4 The aim of these changes is to be more responsive to the public and for senior managers to be more accountable for both ensuring prompt resolution of issues and for dealing with the underlying causes of complaints to reduce the number being made.
- 2.5 Performance targets for complaints and Members Enquiries are now based on the average number of days taken to resolve, rather than targeting a percentage that will be responded to. This provides an incentive to deal with more straightforward complaints quickly, not to ignore cases going

over target days, while allowing longer to deal with and resolve more complex ones. The Indicators also reinforce the approach that is about resolving the issue with the response, not just sending a response.

- 2.6 There is now more flexibility allowed in responses (both in format and content) appropriate to the complaint, e.g. we no longer necessarily send a formal letter in reply to a complaint if we have resolved a straightforward complaint promptly over the phone.
- 2.7 Emphasis has shifted to officers speaking in person to complainants early on to understand issues from the residents' perspective and to seek a timely resolution of issues that have been raised, where possible.
- 2.8 The unsupported IT database for complaints and enquires (Respond) was successfully replaced in October 2013 with a new module of Covalent. The new system implementation has been successful and integrates with a web form for reporting (public and internal), Citizen's Index and the Council's document management system and allows in a number of areas for complaints logged on line to immediately land on the (virtual) desk of the appropriate officers. The new system has enabled changes to the process highlighted above and has allowed much more information to be available to managers to understand the reasons for complaints being made and to tackle peaks in demand.
- 2.9 There have also been changes in the operation of the Ombudsman service with a new Housing Ombudsman function created separate from the Local Government Ombudsman since April 2013 for complaints related to our landlord function. This created an additional 'designated person' role for our lead Housing Member, affording them an opportunity to work to resolve complaints that have exhausted the complaints process but before requiring Housing Ombudsman attention.
- 2.10 The changes have been successful in improving the quality of complaints handling overall. Prior to the changes around 14% of complaints were escalating from the old stage 1 to stage 2 and around 35% of stage 2 complaints were escalating to stage 3. Since the changes, escalation from Resolution (old stage 1) to Review (the second and now final stage) has reduced to under 7% - so under half the previous rate. This has resulted in better outcomes for residents as well as improved information more quickly for officers.
- 2.11 Although the escalation rate is low, it does mean an increased volume of detailed investigations by the Business Analysis & Complaints Team, which it has undertaken within existing resources as a result of improved efficiencies from the new software in other processes.

- 2.12 Following the refresher training of around 500 Council & Hackney Homes staff in the principles of excellence in complaints handling, the focus of improvement work from the Business Analysis & Complaints Team shifted to preparing and training those involved in complaints/Members Enquires to the above changes including the move from a three to a two stage process and the roll out of the new IT system.
- 2.13 The new system training delivered by BA&CT staff to over 200 staff focused on the operating functions of the new IT system and was a critical task for successful implementation of the changes and the reinforcement of key messages and approaches relating to complaints handling.
- 2.14 In preparation for the changes, regular sample quality assessments were undertaken by BA&CT staff which enabled identification of the key issues and improvement areas for high volume service areas. These checks were stopped during implementation of the changes to enable sufficient resources to be available to support the change but have been re-introduced from August 2014 in a revised format (with 20% of complaints assessed) providing much more feedback directly to the highest volume services on how to improve the quality of investigation, resolution, record keeping and response of complaints and also on other related intelligence including volumes, escalation rates and drivers/causes of complaints.
- 2.15 The Council continues to conduct quarterly satisfaction surveys to see what complainants think about the way the Council and Hackney Homes handled their complaints. Feedback from the survey indicates that only a quarter of complainants are on average satisfied with the way their complaint is handled although changes to the approach are being considered in order that a more rounded view of opinion is received. See below for more detail.

3. Customer Satisfaction

- 3.1 The Council conducts quarterly surveys to measure satisfaction levels of complainants by the Council & Hackney Homes. The survey aims to understand the reasons for dissatisfaction, in particular the complainants' experience of making a complaint.
- 3.2 Responses to the survey declined throughout 2013 hitting a low in Q3 of just 13% (54 responses from 415 surveys sent). This low rate made the results statistically unsound and comments left by respondents confirmed that it was only the most disgruntled and dissatisfied residents responding, with most people not bothering to participate in the survey. Whilst the views of these residents need to be heard and acted upon if appropriate the survey was not capturing enough returns to obtain a rounded view of the process.

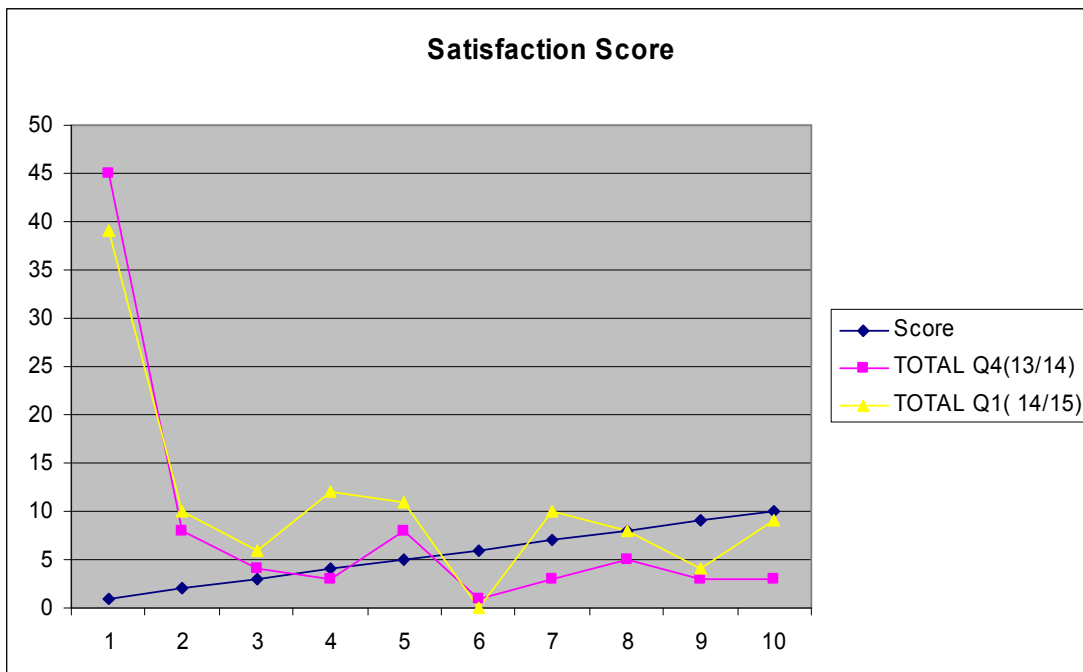
3.3 Benchmarking of the data and survey methods has proved extremely difficult with most authorities and other organisations not undertaking surveys and those that do not prepared to share results.

3.4 In an effort to get robust data, the questions within the survey were changed in Q4 moving away from asking a series of 6 questions with 5 scoring options to two statements to be scored 1-10. Response rates have moved from 13% in Q3 (54 from 415) to 18% Q4 (83 from 453) and 21% Q1 of 2014/15 (109 from 515).

3.5 In Q4 residents were asked to score out of 10 their experience with an average of 3 out of 10 being score based on the 83 responses received. The majority (54%) scored their experience as very bad (1 out of 10) and 13% scoring their experience as good (8-10 out of 10).

- 3.6 Analysis found four key themes of dissatisfaction:
- 52% said their complaint had not been resolved
 - 26% said their complaint took too long to deal with and resolve
 - 12% experienced bad or poor customer care
 - 10% said they had no or limited contact with the Council about their issues

3.7 The survey in Q1 2014/15 as well as showing an increase in responses has seen the overall average score rise to 4 out of 10 with increases in residents being more satisfied.



3.8 Although resolving the complaint was a key message communicated to services within the Complaints handling process, findings show that for the majority of complainants who returned the survey, the main reason for dissatisfaction was the complaint in their opinion had not been resolved – although this will in some cases be because they do

not agree with the Council decision (e.g. on re-housing, benefits claims, parking disputes).

4. Complaints and Enquiries Data Analysis (2013/2014)

4.1 The following tables show the volumes of complaints and enquiries for the last three financial years. Complaints and enquiries volumes fell in 2013/14.

4.2 Whilst any complaint received means the Council or Hackney Homes have in the opinion of our residents failed to provide an acceptable service, the numbers of complaints and those which are escalated should be viewed in the context of the size of the borough, the number of transactions and their complexity. Hackney has a population in excess of 280,000 living in 107,000 households. Relevant to the areas with the highest volume of complaints we have 22,400 homes rented from Hackney Homes and an additional 8,600 leaseholders, more than 43,000 residents claiming benefits and almost 380,000 visits per year to the service centre/cashiers asking for assistance on a wide range of services.

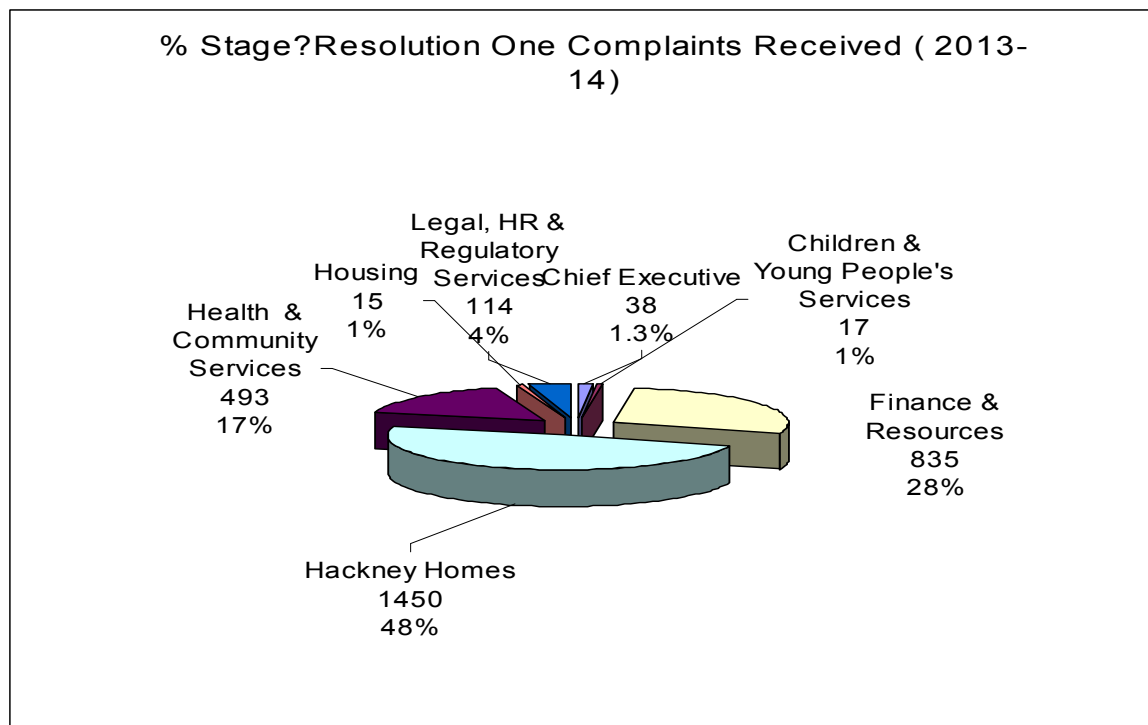
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Stage One / Resolution	2,930	3,078	2,951
Stage Two	314	436	226
Stage Three / Review	146	151	202
Members Enquiries	1,743	1,460	1,828
Mayor's Office Enquiries	1,816	2,479	2,076

Average Complaints Response Times	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Stage One/Resolution Complaints received	13 working days	14 working days	14 working days
Stage Three/ Review Complaints received	17 working days	18 working days	18 working days

4.3 There has been a 34% increase in the number of Review/Stage Three complaints when compared to 2012/13, but this rise must be viewed in the context of having removed the former stage 2 investigation from the process in October 2013.

Types of Complaints

- 4.4 Hackney Homes related complaints make up the largest proportion of complaints at all stages of the Corporate Complaints process (see charts below).



- 4.5 The highest proportion of Hackney Homes Stage One/Resolution complaints are related to Building Maintenance issues, which includes complaints linked to delayed and poor quality repairs, missed appointments and follow-up actions not being implemented.
- 4.6 The majority of Finance and Resources complaints are associated to Revenues and Benefits. These complaints relate to processing times for handling applications, employee behaviour, documentation going missing and recovery action taken.
- 4.7 Public Realm issues make up 80% of Health and Community Services complaints. These complaints include issues related to Parking (such as parking permits), waste/recycling (such as refuse not being collected properly) and employee behaviour.

Ombudsman Complaints

- 4.8 In 2013/14 the Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) took on responsibility for Local Authority Housing Complaints from the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). A new step of the opportunity for all housing complainants (including Registered Providers (RSL's)) to

ask a Designated Person (Cllr Glanville for Hackney) to decide whether they can help in reaching resolution of the issue without the need for the Ombudsman to be involved.

- 4.9 To date only the LGO has published an annual statement for 2013/14 and it is unclear as to whether the HOS will produce one.
- 4.10 The LGO report for 2013/14 has provided some volume headlines which do not tally with Council records because they include a variety of enquiries, some of which are not progressed, which we do not count. A meeting with the LGO is in order to understand their approach to reporting more fully.
- 4.11 In the absence of this clarity from the LGO we can only at the moment conclude that there were 23 formal investigations in 2013/14 compared to 53 in 2012/13. Some of this drop may be due to reporting issues from the LGO covering non-housing related council services which include the introduction of new classifications. In addition, changes made with the introduction of the Housing Ombudsman Service has seen fewer investigations undertaken compared to previous years which could be caused by a lack of understanding by complainants brought about by the introduction of the designated person process and also because of delays and backlog at their end.
- 4.12 Comparison with other London Boroughs

The LGO have released data for all Councils on the volume of decisions they have made (places Hackney 10th highest), formal investigations undertaken (places Hackney 13th highest) and % of formal investigations upheld (places Hackney highest). Although there is dispute over the volume of formal investigations the LGO has undertaken this does show a healthy position for Hackney when compared to many London boroughs.

London Borough	LGO Decisions made	LGO formal investigations	% formal investigations upheld
Hackney	184	37	83.8%
Croydon	268	60	61.7%
Ealing	227	60	65%
Enfield	153	39	59%
Haringey	230	55	58.2%
Harrow	164	38	55.3%
Islington	146	38	47.4%
Lambeth	338	85	60%
Newham	299	49	57.1%
Redbridge	182	55	54.5%
Southwark	242	62	71%
Waltham Forest	172	47	57.4%
Westminster	221	75	24%

Given the openness and transparency with which we as a council offer advice to complainants who have exhausted our complaints process on how to escalate their case to the Ombudsman these figures are considered reasonable as are the relatively low volume of formal investigations which are actually taken on. The % of formal investigations upheld is high and although we await clarity from the LGO on the specific cases they are counting these are not considered a cause for concern. It is actually considered that the LGO count upheld as being in favour of the complainant in finding some fault with the council and whilst this is correct, it does not reflect that the Review stage of the complaints process is used to identify and accept fault and responsibility where it exists and when things go wrong. Given this and the fact that we promote the Ombudsman service, it is clear from the analysis of the 23 formal investigations undertaken as set out above that of the 14 that went through our complaints process first, 11 (79%) the LGO judgement was found to concur with our Review stage decision judgement, albeit with two allocated slightly additional compensation.

- 4.13 Overall, the Council has received no ‘judgement of maladministration’ and the Local Government Ombudsman has concluded that the Council has not caused any significant faults.

a) Members’ Enquiries

- 4.14 Members’ Enquiries consist of a mixture of complaints, requests for service for residents and requests for information. Currently, there is no distinct separation in the way these different category types are dealt with and all have a response turnaround time of 10 working days.

Members Enquiries	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Members Enquiries Received (inc follow-up enquiries)	2,198	1,848	1,828
Average time taken to respond	8.8 working days	8.5 working days	10 working days

b) Mayor's and Cabinet Members Enquiries

4.15 Each Mayor's Enquiry represents a comprehensive, personal response sent from the Mayor to what are often wide ranging and complex enquiries.

Mayor's & Cabinet Members Enquiries (inc Referrals)	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Enquiries Received (inc referrals)	1,814	2,479	2,076*
Average time taken to respond	10.2 working days	9.7 working days	11.2 working days*

* Note: Unlike the rest of the data in this report which is derived from the corporate complaints database, these figures are taken from a local source in the Mayors Office as, due to multiple cases, separate records are kept.

4.16 Responses are subject to extensive quality assurance processes by the Mayor's Office and the Mayor before the response is sent, and many drafts have to be returned to departments in cases where the resident's query has not been fully answered. Until a full response is obtained, the case will not be concluded, and therefore this process puts significant pressure on the 10 day target timescale.

4.17 As shown in the table above, the volume of Mayor and Cabinet enquiries can fluctuate from year to year, and the total received in 2013/14 was 16% down on the previous year. Despite this, the average time taken to respond to cases was 1.5 days longer.

4.18 The quarterly response times for 2013/14 show that the average response time was 10.9 days in Q1, 9.7 days in Q2, 12.1 days in Q3 and 12.7 days in Q4. The new corporate complaints system (Covalent) was installed at the beginning of Q3, and technical problems relating integrating the Council's Corporate Document Management (CDM) system with Covalent and office hardware has been a major contributor to the slower response times in Q3 and Q4. It should be noted, however, that the 2012/13 response times were particularly low given the volumes received, and the response times for last year are consistent with 2011/12 when the volume of cases are taken into account (2013/14 volumes were 14% higher than 2011/12, and the average response times were 10% slower).

c) Adult Social Care Statutory Complaints

4.19 The table below shows the figures related to complaints covered by the statutory Adult Social Care process

Adult Social Care Local Resolution	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Numbers Received	72	97	139	93
Average time taken to respond	28 working days	12 working days	18 working days	17 working days

4.20 The majority of the 2013/14 complaints fell under the following categories: -

- Quality of service provided by Home Carers
- Blue Badge /Freedom Pass assessments including service users contesting results
- Dissatisfaction with Community Care Assessment and Care Provision
- Outcomes of Occupational Therapy assessments regarding home adaptations

4.21 Following previous analysis of Home Carers related complaints, a dedicated Complaints Line was established. This Freephone number was launched in November 2012 and operates between Monday and Friday, 9am to 5pm and aids early intervention on issues on home care provision. The Freephone number has been a success and has reduced the number of complainants needing to escalate their complaints to a more formal process. Complainants have advised that this service has given them the opportunity to speak personally to a Council officer to resolve their concerns in a more timely way.

d) Children’s Social Care Complaints

4.22 Complaints related to Children’s Social Care are handled separately under a statutory process. The numbers of Stage 1 Children’s Social Care complaints have reduced compared to 50 received in 2012/13. For data protection reason, a full breakdown of the volumes by categories cannot be provided in this report.

Children’s Social Care	Stage 1 – Local Resolution	Stage 2 – Investigation	Stage 3 – Review Panel
Total	43	7	6

- 4.23 51% of complaints related to 'Difficulties in Communication'. An examples being parents dissatisfied with the accuracy of assessments, the content of discussions at Child Protection conferences and timeliness or quality of contact from the social work unit. 16% related to financial issues relating to a lack of clarity in the financial policy for care leavers and guardians dissatisfied with the review of financial support packages.
- 4.24 Numbers of Stage 2 complaints have remained static compared to 2012/13 whilst the increase in Stage 3 complaints (from 4 to 6) is statistically negligible with no identifiable trend being established.

This page is intentionally left blank



Governance & Resources Scrutiny Commission 13 th October 2014 Governance Review Executive Response	Item No 6
---	---------------------

OUTLINE

The attached document sets out the London Borough of Hackney Executive response to the Commission's review of Governance and recommendations made, following the external Governance Review that was debated and agreed by Council.

ACTION

The Commission is asked to note the response.

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive response to Governance & Resources Commission recommendations in relation to the Governance Review

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Executive response</u>
<p>1. <u>Role Descriptions</u></p> <p>That the Council develop and adopt "role descriptions" for Chair and Vice Chair positions within the new governance structure.</p> <p>There is a need for clarity about the work that is expected to be undertaken and means by which leading Members may be held to account for delivery of their role. This recommendation could also help Councillors in some positions by clarifying their duties and role. Greater clarity increases the potential for accountability and for them to report on achievements.</p>	<p>Agreed. Cabinet would support the introduction of role descriptions for Chair and Vice Chair positions within the new governance structure, and agree that this would provide greater clarity around role expectations.</p> <p>The Corporate Director for Legal, HR and Regulatory Services will take this recommendation forward, and develop role descriptions in consultation with relevant members/committees.</p>
<p>2. <u>Joining-up local neighbourhood meetings</u></p> <p>The potential to align Ward Forum meetings with CAPs should be revisited in light of potential changes to CAP arrangements proposed by that Mayor's Office for Police and Crime.</p> <p>This has already been adopted by some Ward Forums and CAPs on an ad hoc basis. In some areas there is a view that since the 'neighbourhood policing model' is changing, local teams are less sure about the future remit and direction of CAPs. Also, it is not the best use of time for public services nor residents to have multiple local meetings for different services.</p> <p>This recommendation has the potential to rationalise the number of local meetings that are held at Ward Level, bring public services together in an area, increase the identity of a ward and community leadership role of Councillors.</p>	<p>Officers are currently revisiting the alignment of ward forum meetings with CAPs, which are police led panels. We understand that the Metropolitan Police are looking to ensure greater consistency in the approach taken across boroughs through Safer Neighbourhood Forums and ward panels.</p> <p>Officers will be meeting with local police on October 9th to discuss opportunities for joint working. There is certainly agreement in principle that it would be helpful to join up the mechanisms for engaging with local people more effectively.</p>
<p>3. <u>Clarifying the suite of tools available for Ward Councillors</u></p> <p>That all of the procedures available for Councillors to use be presented collectively in an innovative way.</p>	<p>Agreed. Cabinet is in support of raising awareness amongst Members of the procedures available to them for raising issues that are material to local residents.</p> <p>Corporate Director of Legal, HR and</p>

<p>There are number of procedures available within the constitution that are not currently used widely by Councillors, in part because some are not all widely known. This recommendation should clarify and promote less frequently used options such as 'call for action', different types of petition and deputation, 'call- in', and Member mail-outs.</p> <p>Most Councillors are aware of the levers available to them for getting things done and are able to use them effectively. However, discussion of some of these procedures during the review did provoke interest, particularly if the roles of some formal bodies such as full Council are to change, there might be greater need for awareness of alternative procedures.</p>	<p>Regulatory Services to produce guidance on this.</p>
<p>4. <u>Policy debates at Full Council</u></p> <p>Introduce procedures, guidance and training for Full Council meetings to initiate debate and agree further activities to develop new policies or review existing policies.</p> <p>The Commission heard evidence to suggest that Council meetings could be used as the start, rather than the end, of a policy process. Topics debated at Council might initiate work to be carried-out by a lead Cabinet Member before a decision is taken at a later stage, or lead to a suggestion for a Scrutiny Review for example. This approach could take the form of a Parliamentary model with Green and White papers (perhaps produced by Ward Forums or Scrutiny Commissions).</p> <p>Combined with fewer meetings of Full Council overall, this would have the potential to radically alter the nature of those meetings and the ability of all Councillors to participate in the debate. It is not clear at this stage what the impact would be on the policy development process compared to current approaches. Deputations, petitions and pubic question that do not relate to the topic of debate may get crowded-out and will need accommodating elsewhere, for example at Cabinet or Scrutiny.</p>	<p>Cabinet support the use of Council meetings for policy debates, which was also agreed by Full Council when it agreed the governance review. A debate entitled a 'Place for Everyone' has provisionally been scheduled for Council in January 2015 to discuss the changing face of Hackney and future priorities.</p> <p>Whilst the principle of greater forward planning of policy debates is supported, it is felt that an annual Full Council planning meeting may not be the best way to achieve this, although Scrutiny may wish to consider possible debates at the Scrutiny Chairs annual work programming meeting.</p>

<p>It will be important to get input from Cabinet in order to plan effectively for topics that it would be appropriate to discuss at an early stage. This could be achieved by arranging a Full Council Planning Meeting ahead of the Municipal Year where Scrutiny Chairs, Cabinet, Scrutiny Officer, Chief whip, etc. come together to map out the year ahead as much as possible. Council meetings could then be promoted actively well in advance via channels such as Hackney Today, Twitter, the Council website, etc.</p>	
<p><u>5. Use of current Council Procedures</u></p> <p>The procedures for receiving deputations and petitions work effectively at Full Council and existing provisions within the constitution should be promoted to residents and Councillors so that they can be used equally effectively at Cabinet, Scrutiny and other relevant committees.</p> <p>The Council's procedures for receiving and responding to deputations and petitions was described by one resident as a 'model of democratic procedure'. Others had more mixed experiences of using them but the overall impression was that they worked well and should be used more of settings other than Full Council. The Commission was informed that the current constitution allows for this but that such procedures were not widely used. For example, it was possible currently for deputations and petitions to be received by Cabinet or Scrutiny. This approach might increase the opportunity for deputations or petitions of varying natures to be directed at the most appropriate body, and possibly increase the number overall. What difference this would make to local governance, engagement or the quality of decisions is untested but would support the Nolan principle of openness, for example.</p>	<p>The Council's petition scheme is available on the Council's website on a dedicated web page, and sets out how and when petitions are reported to different Council bodies. In reality, whilst the channels for doing so are there, many residents do not necessarily wish to present their petitions to a formal meeting of the Council, but just want reassurance that their concerns are being listened to and addressed. Whilst the volume of petitions to meetings of Cabinet or Scrutiny is low, for instance, the Mayor will regularly receive petitions from residents which are dealt with through the casework process; these will range from a few households petitioning about parking or ASB in their street, to much larger lobbying campaigns around specific policy or service issues.</p> <p>However, we will review how engagement between residents and the Council could be promoted to increase awareness of what is possible.</p>
<p><u>6. Open Public Question Times</u></p> <p>Consideration should be given to introducing open public question times, similar to those held by the Greater London Authority where members of the public can ask questions of their lead politicians spontaneously on the night. Some guidance should be provided for this which encourages participants to</p>	<p>There are already a number of ways in which residents can engage with the Council and its elected representatives including the Mayor and Cabinet. These include through casework, surgeries, ward forums, public questions at Full Council and Cabinet, Cabinet question times at scrutiny, and Meet Your Mayor sessions. Many members are also active on social media. Of these, Meet</p>

<p>give some early indication of the topic they might ask a question about. Guidance would also be required regarding the scope of topics for questioning and use of appropriate language, where this is not already covered in the current Constitution. This approach could replace Cabinet Question Time at OSB and reduce the need for a Mayor's statement to which only opposition leaders can respond currently.</p>	<p>Your Mayor and ward forums are both public forums at which residents can ask spontaneous questions of members (i.e. of the Mayor or in the first instance, and ward councillors in the latter instance). However, in recognition of the request from scrutiny for further opportunities to spontaneously question the Mayor and Cabinet at public meetings, it is agreed that the requirement for prior written notice of questions at Cabinet meetings will be waived. It should be recognised, however, that if members are not supplied with any notice of questions, their ability to respond with any detail will be limited. It is therefore suggested that residents should still be encouraged to provide some notice of the questions, although the option to ask a question with no notice will be there.</p>
<p><u>7. Overview and Scrutiny Debates at Full Council</u></p> <p>The reports of Overview and Scrutiny Commissions should only be referred to full Council if the Commission agree that the subject, findings and recommendations merit wider debate. Where a scrutiny review has been carried out at the request of Full Council it should always be reported back for receipt and debate.</p> <p>The Commission found that not all matters that had been the subject of a scrutiny review were a relevant topic for debate at Full Council meetings. Furthermore, some of the concluding reports were detailed and quite technical in their nature. This meant that not all Councillors were in a position to participate in such debate.</p> <p>This would reduce the number of scrutiny debates at Full Council meetings but should also improve the quality of debate for those scrutiny reviews that do feature on the agenda. A recent example of this was debate surrounding the summary report of a scrutiny review regarding Childhood Obesity.</p>	<p>There is no formal requirement for reports from scrutiny reviews to be reported or debated at Full Council, and which reports are discussed there has always been at the discretion of Scrutiny Chairs. Whilst in previous years the practice has been for all scrutiny reports to be discussed at Full Council, more recently Scrutiny Chairs have opted to only present certain reports at Full Council, where it is believed the reports are more appropriate for a debate in that forum. This approach is supported.</p>
<p><u>8. Behaviour of Councillors at meetings</u></p>	<p>Agreed. Upon election, all members are</p>

<p>While the Commission recognises that vigorous debate is a sign of a healthy democracy, there should also be a commitment to civility in meetings. Those speaking in Council meetings should avoid the use of ridicule and demeaning language when engaging in debate. Members of the public and local press were clear that 'yah-boo' style politics were not attractive nor of interest, and that at its worse it could prohibit constructive discussion and debate across the whole Chamber.</p>	<p>required to sign up to a Code of Conduct which is based upon the seven principles of public life, and which promotes high standards of conduct from all members, including treating others with respect.</p> <p>Whilst it is recognised that discussion within the Council chamber can occasionally get heated, it is the role of the Speaker as chair to call a Member to order if their conduct is not deemed to be in accordance with the principles of public life.</p>
<p><u>9. Practical points about Council meetings</u></p> <p>i. The Council should introduce paperless meetings and consider providing Councillors with appropriate equipment for reading and annotating papers in an electronic format.</p> <p>ii. The Council should introduce a jargon buster in the explanatory notes at the front of every council paper or agenda as appropriate.</p> <p>iii. The Council should experiment with how digital technology can be used to present and report the activity of meetings in ways that a minute cannot.</p>	<p>i. The use of tablet devices is currently being trialled with some members, to determine whether they support more efficient working, deliver cost savings, and enable paperless meetings.</p> <p>ii. Whilst this can be implemented, reports should be presented in a user friendly format in plain English.</p> <p>Officers will be reminded of the need to make clear in reports unusual words or meanings. Where jargon is unavoidable it must be explained.</p> <p>iii. The Council has a popular twitter feed (11,300 followers) and regularly tweets from Full Council meetings and other meetings that are thought to be of particular public interest.</p> <p>As part of the refurbishment of the Town Hall, facilities will also be installed in the Council chamber which support online streaming of Council meetings.</p>

This page is intentionally left blank



Governance & Resources Scrutiny Commission 13 th October 2014 Public Spend Review	Item No 7
--	---------------------

OUTLINE

Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission is embarking on a whole place review of public services in the Borough covering statutory public sector providers, voluntary sector and private sector.

A presentation will be provided by London Borough of Hackney Corporate Director Finance and Resources on public services spend in the Borough and Hackney's Medium Term Planning Forecast (MTPF).

The State of the Borough Report attached on pages 41-56 provides a summary of the boroughs evidence base that outlines the trends, issues and opportunities for the borough (which has been informed by community insight and resident surveys) to support strategic priorities and decision making. This report is to accompany the information being presented about total public services spend in the borough.

Additional information on the population can be found in [Hackney Population Profile](#). This provides key data on Hackney's population and equality groups as well as its economy, health, housing, environment, crime and future development.

ACTION

The Commission is asked to note the report and presentation.

This page is intentionally left blank

State of the Borough report 2013

Section 1

Encourage economic participation and reduce long term unemployment

Part 1: Summary of trends, issues and opportunities

Headline trends

1. Economic change in Hackney has increased the number of businesses in the borough, brought in new sectors and boosted the employment, qualifications and higher occupations rates (see section 4). However the employment rate and proportion of residents on key out of work benefits has remained fairly constant in recent years.
2. In 2011, 6% of the working age population were claiming Job Seekers Allowance compared to 4% in London and 3.5% in Britain. This rate has increased by 1.6% since 2008 when the recession began, compared with 1.4% in Britain and 1.5% in London. In absolute numbers, JSA claimants have increased by 41% from 7,340 to 10,370 between 2004 -2011 even though the unemployment rate has remained steady. This is because the overall population has grown and Hackney now has more residents who are employed. A reduction in Hackney's JSA rates, from 6% to 4% in line with the regional average, would entail a movement of around 3,450 claimants into work.
3. Between 2004 -2011, an average of 9% of the working age population is on IB/ESA. The numbers on this benefit have hardly changed since 2004; data going back to 2000 indicates that an average of 13,000 people have been on IB/ESA consistently over the past 12 years. The rate is 2% higher than Britain and 3% higher than London. A reduction in Hackney's IB/ESA claimant rate to bring it in line with the regional average would entail an estimated 3,000 IB/ESA claimants moving into work.
4. To achieve both of these ambitions, a step change in pre-employment support would be required by all partners. These figures are presented to show the scale of the challenge. There are many external factors which will affect benefit claimancy rates including what is happening at a national and international level, population growth and change, dynamics in the wider region and sub region and public policy. As an illustration, economic modelling carried out by Oxford Economics on behalf of the six host boroughs currently projects Hackney's unemployment to reduce to 5.1% by 2030.

Summary of opportunities and challenges

1. Harnessing opportunities

The economic change we have seen in Hackney presents major opportunities in promoting sustainable employment for the most disadvantaged residents in the borough. There are significant and ongoing opportunities sub-regionally for continued business and employment growth. Hackney will need to actively

pursue these opportunities for continued business and employment growth and use networks and influence to help progress this agenda.

A key challenge is harnessing this growth to ensure it benefits all residents, and translates into local employment and skills opportunities. This may be progressed by helping businesses to recruit local employees and develop apprenticeships, work placements and pathways into local employment in Hackney.

2. Welfare to work

There are other aspects that need to be addressed to harness this opportunity, in the context of welfare reform. Already robust responses have been put in place by the Council and a range of partners to mitigate the impacts of reform on claimants. However, to move people from benefits to work there needs to be a greater emphasis in pre-employment support programmes focusing on those more at risk as a result of welfare reforms. This could include people going through Incapacity Benefit reassessment and residents affected by the Benefit Cap, including disabled people or those more likely to have complex issues for example relating to their health.

Linked to this, there may be a need for a more structured approach across a range of services (including health care, social care, housing providers, schools, apprenticeships and business support) to support people who have been unemployed long-term and people who have low skills, to help them move closer to the labour market. For many residents who have experienced long-term disadvantage, the journey back to work may be lengthy and require intensive support from both specialist and universal services. This is particularly the case for vulnerable residents, who may experience multiple barriers to the labour market, for example relating to homelessness, substance misuse, or offending.

3. Opportunities for young people

To harness the opportunities from economic growth, there is also a need to ensure the next generation are able to take advantage of the employment chances in their area. More intensive work with local schools and colleges to prepare young people to work in London's knowledge based economy may be required. This might include skills training, but also practical careers support and advice on recruitment processes.

Hackney has a level of population churn which is not unusual for an urban area. However, ongoing change in population can present challenges in securing lasting economic benefits for all residents. In ensuring this and the next generation are able to benefit from economic growth in the borough, housing is a key factor. This is particularly the case in relation to affordable housing supply for existing residents and future generations. The Council has made the decision to maintain secure lifetime tenancies for lettings to Council homes, and has encouraged Registered Housing Providers to adopt similar policies. Further consideration could be given to any creative ways to address housing affordability (intermediate markets, lettings policies) to enable the next generation of Hackney residents to stay in Hackney.

This link contains the full report for [section 1](#).

Section 2 Child Poverty and Family Well-being

Part 1: Summary of trends, issues and opportunities ***Headline trends***

1. About 37% of all children in Hackney are affected by child poverty, according to the standard national child poverty measure¹. This is a relatively high rate of child poverty and is currently the third highest rate in London, although Hackney's child poverty rate has been decreasing year on year since 2007. Data on Free School Meals entitlement also provides a reasonable indication of levels of child poverty in the borough: 35% of pupils in Hackney's primary schools and 36% of pupils in Hackney's secondary schools are eligible for free school meals, these levels are about double the national average.

2. Spatially, child poverty is more concentrated in the south and east of the borough. Wick ward has the highest rate overall, although Hoxton and Haggerston wards also have high concentrations of families in poverty but this is set alongside concentrations of households with higher incomes, which suggests there could potentially be greater risks of polarisation in these areas.

3. When we look more closely at the characteristics of these 36.8% of families in poverty in Hackney we can see that out of work poverty is a key issue. In 28.6% of these households where there is child poverty, the parents are out of work; where as 4.2% of these households are affected by in work poverty. For the remaining 4% of households where there is child poverty the data is unclear on whether the parents are in work or out of work.

4. One of the key means of alleviating child poverty is to improve the prospects of parents on low incomes to get and to sustain decent work. Having access to affordable, good quality childcare is an important factor that has a bearing on parents' decisions when they are in the process of returning to or entering work; it is also a significant factor affecting families already in work on low and modest incomes. There are a number of other important factors that can help families living in poverty to achieve their potential, including education, good health and personal safety.

5. In terms of education, the gap in educational achievement between local children who live in poverty and their peers in Hackney has narrowed and is 9.6% compared to the national average of 21%. However, in early years, children from the most deprived 10% areas score between 4 to 10 points less than those in the other 90% and they also perform less well at both Key Stage 2 and at GCSE. The outcomes gap widens by GCSE level with attainment amongst Hackney pupils who are eligible for free school meals dropping 14% lower than their non-Free School Meal counterparts.

¹ The national measure of child poverty is defined as the proportion of children living in families in receipt of out of work benefits or tax credits where their reported income is less than 60 per cent of the median income.

6. However, schools in Hackney are performing very well and educational outcomes for all pupils have continued to improve over time. As of July 2013, 87% of primary schools and 92% of secondary schools were rated as “good” or “outstanding” by Ofsted and both nurseries graded as “outstanding”. GCSE results have also continued to improve with 61.3% of students obtaining 5 or more A*-C grades in 2013 (60.5% for 2012).

7. Most children raised in poverty do not become involved in crime, but national evidence shows that there are higher victim of crime and fear of crime rates in disadvantaged areas. Being involved in criminal activity whilst young has been shown to have a negative impact on later life chances. Furthermore, the children of young offenders are more likely to live in poverty themselves, reinforcing the ‘cycle of poverty’. Youth Crime rates are falling overall in Hackney, as are first time entrants to the Youth Justice System. However, re-offending rates have risen in the past 2 years and young black men remain disproportionately over represented in the youth justice system.

Summary of opportunities and challenges

1. Supporting parents to find and sustain work, including parents affected by welfare and housing reforms

Work is planned to examine employment support for parents with children, as part of the local child poverty assessment. This will include examining what the barriers to employment are, the groups particularly affected by these barriers and how far existing provision goes in addressing them. The Council also plans to take forward further work on Financial Inclusion towards the end of 2013, and will work with partners on a range of initiatives designed to enhance our support to residents, including families in poverty.

Childcare is already identified as one of the factors that will impact on this. Parents have reported dissatisfaction with waiting times for nursery places with almost 25% of 0-2 year olds waiting over a year for a nursery place in 2010. At a time where we want to encourage parents back into work to help alleviate poverty, there would be benefit in reviewing and considering whether there are any means of enabling more flexible childcare provision in addition to the existing our core offer. In particular we could consider options for families affected by Welfare Reform, especially parents returning to work on shift work and on zero hours contracts. This could be looked at as part of the review of Child Care Sufficiency.

There is more detailed discussion of the issues and opportunities for supporting residents back into employment in section one of this report. There is also further discussion in section five, on the impacts that national welfare and housing benefit reforms will have on household incomes, including the impacts on claimants who have younger children.

2. Improving practical support for families and young people more at risk of poor outcomes, as a result of living in poverty

Evidence shows that there have been improvements in local services which support families: local schools are improving and along with children's and youth services they are securing better outcomes for many children and young people in Hackney, at a faster and higher rate than the national picture. However, it is still the case that children and young people living in poverty here tend to fair less well than all children and young people in Hackney do, in key areas such as health, education and community safety. Local partners will need to continue to look together at how we can further close these gaps and to consider how we can work with families, the wider community and other service partners to improve outcomes for families and increase resilience in the community. There is also potential to learn from recent successful efforts to involve and engage young people in design, delivery and commissioning in the youth service.

As part of this approach, in the last couple of years we have developed better awareness and support mechanisms for families, so that a wider range of local services can better consider and respond to the specific needs of families. For example the 'Thriving Families' partnership task group has developed a training offer for staff to encourage all services to 'think family'. This should better encourage staff in key front line services to consider the needs of both the children and the parents whenever we design a support package for a family member.

One area in particular where new approaches are being considered is on the issues young black men face and how best to support them as part of the local youth offer. This is of particular concern for a range of reasons including because young black people are over represented in the Youth Justice System and accounted for 57% of first time entrants in Hackney in 2012/13. The partnership is setting up a new task group to take forward the work scoped on addressing issues identified with Young Black Men.

3. Managing and preventing future demand on services for families

We have also established ways of working together as partners to help manage demands on services. As a result we are doing more preventative work with families for e.g. by targeting support for parents and young children in the early years and by working in partnership to support young people who need it most in their teens. This has the potential to better manage pressures and costs on services in future. One example of this is the recently established Health and Wellbeing Board partnership arrangements for children, young people and families, which should enable further integration of health services with the children's services offer. However, reduced national funding and budgetary cuts will continue to place greater pressures on services. Partners will need to innovate to manage demand for children's services and youth services in a climate of reducing resources.

This link contains the full report for [Section 2](#).

Section 3

Improve quality of life and promote safety and cohesion

Part 1: Summary of trends, issues and opportunities

Headline Trends

1. Residents' satisfaction with their local area as a place to live has risen sharply over the last five years from 71% in 2008 (Place Survey) to 89% in 2013 (IPSOS MORI survey). While there is no significant difference in levels of satisfaction between people from different ethnic groups there is some variation in views held. Residents who are more likely to be satisfied with the local area are those who moved into the area in the last five years and people in full time work.
2. Research with residents on our E-panel also shows that a majority of people are optimistic about many aspects of quality of life in the local area. Local people feel that many local services and amenities have changed for the better including cleaner streets, better schools, better housing, less crime and violence, an improved retail offer and improved transport and local services. Aspects that people feel has got worse over time are expensive housing, an increase in violent crime and gangs and unemployment and job prospects.
3. Compared to several other similar places in London, Hackney has a lower rate of crime in total, and much lower rates of personal robbery. However Hackney is performing less well in theft offences and the rate of violent crime is still high. In the last year confidence has grown in how local public services are tackling crime and anti-social behaviour issues.
4. When the Council last polled residents on our E-panel in 2011 to ask them whether they felt safe on our streets, a majority of residents surveyed said they feel safe during the day (93%), and a greater proportion of people said they felt safe after dark (66%) than in previous surveys. In Hackney fear of crime is greatest among people under 35, primarily at night and young people (aged 16-24) are the age group who are least likely to feel 'very safe' after dark.
5. Over the last eight years, Hackney residents surveyed have consistently been more likely to say that the local area is a place where people from different background tend to get on well together, than residents polled for national surveys.
Recent data from 2013 shows that 90% of residents agree that the local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together; this was 83% in 2005. While the overall picture is very positive, there are some indications that there may be underlying differences in attitudes between newcomers and residents who have been here longer and between residents in different socio-economic groups.

Summary of opportunities and challenges

1. Resident's passion and commitment to Hackney is a big asset

The most recent findings from local residents' surveys reinforce what we already knew about the strength of community feeling about Hackney; there is a strong sense of community, pride and tolerance in Hackney and many local people are passionate about the area and the diversity of the community here. A good proportion of residents are also actively involved in local civic and community life and there is a vibrant community and voluntary sector locally. Residents' strength of feeling about the local area and their contribution to the local community is a great asset for the borough.

2. Expectations of excellent services in a climate of diminishing resources

Over the last 5 to 10 years Hackney has seen major improvements to many local services such as schools and public transport. Local streets and public spaces are also visibly cleaner, the crime rate has fallen and local people generally feel safer than they used to. Residents have noticed these improvements and there is now more confidence and optimism in the local community about the borough.

However cuts to public spending are expected to continue up to 2018. In this climate of diminishing resources it will very difficult to maintain excellent local services and high resident satisfaction levels with the local area and local services. The Council, its partners and people in the wider community are also concerned about the potential cumulative impacts of spending cuts on the local area and on the community. Team Hackney Leadership Board and the wider partnership will need to continue to anticipate where the worst impacts may be felt and to consider practical steps we can take together to help mitigate negative impacts.

3. Reduce future demand on services and design more preventative services

The Council and other partners will need to continue to anticipate pressures on public and community services and find ways to reduce demands on public services. We will need to continue to work together to design and deliver smarter, preventative local services which encourage resilience in our community. Local services will also need to find effective ways to engage and involve the community in making these kinds of changes to local services.

4. Retain a focus on tackling violent crime, youth crime and anti-social behaviour

Despite local reductions in crime, residents remain concerned about crime and antisocial behaviour. We will need to continue work to reduce crime and make sure people feel safe in Hackney; in particular to continue to address violent crime and to ensure that young people in Hackney are safe and feel safer on our streets. At the same time, the borough is anticipating continued reductions in resources for policing and safer neighbourhood teams from regional and national government.

5. Pay attention to signals about quality of life and about low level tensions between residents

There are already some low level indications from the community that there may be underlying differences in attitudes about quality of life here between newcomers and residents' who have been here longer and also some concerns about how well local people get on together; in particular between residents in different socio-economic groups. It is important that we continue to keep an eye on any potential tensions and pick up and try and deal with problems before they escalate.

The Council and local services will need to continue to ensure that local people who are more vulnerable or who require more support from public and community services also feel that they benefit from improvements in services and local amenities. It is still a priority that the Council and its partners continue to design, deliver and programme local services to serve residents who might otherwise feel marginalised and excluded from recent investment and changes in the local area.

There is also appetite for Team Hackney partners to look at ways we can improve community engagement with our residents and with local grass-roots community networks and organisations. The partnership should also consider how it could better reach out to and encourage contributions from newer residents and at how it could help forge better connections between people who have more recently moved here and more established community networks.

This link contains the full report for [Section 3](#).

Section 4

Enable sustainable growth

Part 1: Summary of trends, issues and opportunities

Headline Trends

1. Hackney has seen almost a 20% increase in population in the ten years up to 2011, with much of this growth in the 25-34 age groups. Continued growth of the population is predicted: in the period up to 2041 growth of around m70,000 persons is expected, with most of this growth accounted for by the working age population.

2. Alongside this growth in population, the number of households in Hackney has grown significantly in recent years, from 86,040 in 2001 to 101,690 in 2011, with much of this accounted for by the expansion of the private rented sector by around two thirds between 2003 and 2008. There have also been changes in household structure, including a 5% increase between 2001 and 2011 in 'other' multi person households i.e. an increase in sharers, renting rooms in properties. Growth in the overall numbers of households is predicted to continue with over 20,000 new households expected in the next thirty years.

3. Hackney has consistently exceeded its housing delivery targets with over 1160 new homes built in the borough in the last five years. Between 2006 and 2012, over 4300 new affordable homes have been delivered in the borough. Despite this growth in new homes and in households, the affordability of housing in Hackney is a key ongoing concern: although average incomes in Hackney increased by around 34% over the period from 1997 to 2011, over the same timeframe Land Registry data shows that house prices have increased by 500%.

4. Accompanying this growth in people and households, there has been employment growth in Hackney, particularly in professional careers such as media, technology and consulting; this trend is linked to recent changes in the commercial and business realm in the borough. Over the past five years the character of business has also changed. The number of new business starts grew by 9% between 2004 -2010 in Hackney, while the number of new startups in London as a whole decreased by 2% over the 6 year period. Hackney has a high proportion of business, finance, property, ICT and creative firms. The growth rate for businesses in Hackney was 13% between 2004 and 2011, slightly lower than the 17% in London as a whole. This economic growth is set to continue since Hackney's growth centres sit within two major sub regions that are the main corridors of expansion and growth for London. Based on a natural growth rate, approximately 110,000 jobs are forecast over the next decade in East London.

5. Evidence suggests Hackney is continuing to make strong progress in encouraging sustainable travel. The 2011 census shows that car ownership in Hackney has fallen by 9% over the last ten years and that Hackney now has

levels of car ownership that are considerably lower than the London average (36% vs 54%). Over recent years there has also been considerable growth in cycling levels in Hackney. The borough now has a strong cycling culture and the proportion of people cycling to work has increased from around 7% in 2001 to over 15% in 2011, the highest of all London Boroughs. However, challenges remain to maintain and advance this progress, and associated challenges with regard to energy consumption, recycling and air quality.

Summary of opportunities and challenges

1. Housing Growth

In recent years Hackney has seen significant growth and housing delivery. Despite this, affordability of housing remains a key concern for many residents, including the newer cohort of higher skilled residents. In the new funding environment and the current market, securing provision of new affordable and family homes will remain a challenge and requires innovation and careful consideration of the levers available to us.

In addition, the growth in the private rented sector, and the rise in rents seen in recent years means the Council and other partners should consider how best to engage with and influence private sector housing providers.

We should also consider how to best manage any anticipated demands that could follow as a result of the expected growth in the population and to consider what this means for housing and amenities; including anticipated growth in the older population which is projected to increase after 2021.

Although our Infrastructure Delivery Plan finds that investment plans for infrastructure are mostly sufficient at the moment, there could be some significant issues from 2015/16. Continued collaboration will be needed for infrastructure planning and demand management to anticipate likely demands on key infrastructure provision

2. Population Growth and Change

Residents continue to say that the diversity of people and the energy of people living in Hackney are the borough's greatest strengths; residents' passion about the local area and commitment to the community are key strengths that could help bridge between groups in the community.

It is clear that some residents have concerns, either because they feel that growth and change in the population and economy is putting a strain on amenities or because there is a sense that some people are being left behind. There are mixed feelings about the impact of growth on long term residents. Concerns about local housing affordability and pressures on some residents as a result of national welfare reforms add to this threat of polarisation. It will be necessary to continue to track residents' perceptions about the way the borough is changing and pay attention to any issues and potential tensions.

Additionally, partners will need to continue to collaborate to ensure there are wide social benefits from growth and investment for all residents and to guard

against polarisation in the community. For example, to ensure that new amenities benefit and appeal to the broadest range of residents².

3. Economic Growth

Growth and changes in the borough have resulted in a significant number of younger residents living here now, who tend to be employed and to have high skills levels³. Alongside this, the borough has experienced business growth in recent years and entrepreneurial activity is strong. However, this growth in local business activity does not necessarily translate into higher employment rates for all our residents.

We recognise that there is a need to enable some residents to improve their confidence and skills and to encourage people to take up new employment opportunities, and to enable residents to take up work experience, apprenticeships and employment opportunities in and around the borough, including for people who are currently in a more disadvantaged position in the labour market. This might include helping businesses recruit local employees and develop apprenticeships, work placements and pathways into local employment. Or, more could be done to work with schools and colleges to prepare young people to work in London's knowledge based economy.

In addition to these opportunities, there are a significant development sites in the sub-region and transport improvements should help unlock residents' access to these employment opportunities.

4. Sustainable Growth

There are strong advocates for sustainable ways of living in the community and a good track record in local services such as transport in encouraging sustainable lifestyles. There is a need to learn from this and make the most of the rich insight the borough has, to help us to manage the impacts of growth and to address demand pressures in future.

Growth could place some pressure on the environment and environmental services for example, there may be a rise in carbon emissions from home energy use, or more waste generated. To minimise this, Hackney will need to continue to use our influence to help shape plans for longer term investment in strategic transport and energy infrastructure in London, for the benefit of the borough.

This link contains the full report for [Section 4](#).

² Section 3 has addition detail on this topic

³ See Section 1 for a full consideration of the trends on employment and unemployment

Section 5

Help and protect those residents who most need support, and work with them to improve their lives and capacity for independence

Part 1: Summary of trends, issues and opportunities

Headline trends

Economic and Social Inclusion

1. A majority of local residents who claim welfare and housing benefits will be affected in some way by the complex range of welfare reforms brought in by central government. All claimants will see some changes in their benefits with the new universal credit in future years and many have already, or will be, significantly affected by other reforms. The scale and nature of the impacts of the various reforms on different households vary considerably.

2. Those more likely to be significantly affected include: larger families with children; those claiming housing benefits living in the private rented sector, Incapacity Benefit claimants as they are put through a reassessment of their entitlement; and claimants of lone parent benefit who since 2008 have seen their eligibility for this benefit change with the lowering of the age threshold for the youngest child from 16 to 5.

- Recent data shows that there are still broadly the same numbers of residents claiming incapacity benefit or Employment Support Allowance than there were 9 years ago. It is also still the case that the most common reasons for claiming these benefits are mental behavioural and emotional issues, which in 2012 accounted for 47% of all local claims.
- Lone Parent claimants have decreased from 8,000 residents in 2004 to 4,850 residents in 2011 due to changes in eligibility. However, the first major decrease is evident in 2009 following the introduction of significant conditionality changes to this benefit, and between 2008 and 2011 Lone Parent claimants have reduced by 2, 240 people. Some corresponding increases have been seen in claimant rates for benefits such as Jobseekers Allowance.
- Local Housing Allowance (Housing Benefit) reform has affected around 5,000 households in Hackney who rent accommodation in the private sector. These claimants have either seen a reduction in their weekly income which they have had to meet through cutting spending elsewhere, or have had to move to cheaper accommodation.
- The introduction of the Benefit Cap in Hackney in summer 2013 has affected around 700 claimants in the borough, some of who will see almost completed withdrawal of their housing benefit.

3. In terms of overall financial impact of the national welfare and housing reforms, Hackney experiences the 7th highest loss per year of all London boroughs, with a reduction of almost £120m in benefit payments. Newham, Brent, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, and Westminster are the only boroughs with higher losses. Hackney also experiences the third highest loss per working

age adult after Barking and Dagenham and Brent, with an average of £677 per year.

4. Other local intelligence from partners such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau and feedback from other agencies has provided an important indication of how local people have responded to and felt as a result of rising rent or benefits shortfalls. Partners, including frontline health services have flagged concerns about the residents who are presenting in their services who are struggling to cope with stress associated with the changes, and concerns about the strains on family budgets where people are cutting back on essentials such as food and utility bills as they try to meet shortfalls from already low household budgets. Resident feedback has also highlighted that some residents experience an ongoing fear of homelessness and a sense of fragility in their housing circumstances.

5. Levels of digital exclusion in Hackney are the highest in London, with 26% of the population estimated to have never used the internet. This is particularly significant given the 'Digital by Design' approach of the introduction of Universal Credit.

6. Recent analysis by the GLA indicates that Hackney's residents have a higher demand for debt advice than those in Islington, Tower Hamlets or Newham. Closer analysis shows that demand for debt advice is greater in the north and east of the borough and that the majority of those seeking debt advice are living in social rented accommodation.

7. Other groups who are likely to require more complex wrap-around support and intervention from public services include around 1,000 'Troubled Families' in Hackney; in the 2012/13 just over 400 of these families were offered support to help address complex often inter-related issues including persistent involvement in criminal or anti-social behaviour, truancy and long term unemployment.

8. Local services are also assessing and providing treatment for drug users and ex-offenders who commit crimes, and there is a continued drive to reduce levels of re-offending, whilst providing support and treatment through the Integrated Offender Management scheme locally. Reductions have been seen in Hackney's re-offending rate since 2007/8, and the borough has a lower rates of re-offending than many London comparators, and than would be predicted given the characteristics of offenders within the borough.

Health, wellbeing and independence

9. Good progress has been made in improving the life expectancy of our residents, and for women in Hackney this is now above the national average and for men the gap has fallen to less than a year. This is likely to be as a result of concerted intervention, and demographic changes. However, Infant mortality has risen in Hackney for the last three years (2008-11) and is now significantly higher than the national average.

10. Childhood obesity levels in Hackney remain above national average. Over the last five years the rate of overweight and obese children has been stable among Reception Year children but consistently rising among Year 6 pupils.

11. Smoking prevalence is declining but remains high; a National Survey in 2009-10 found that 27% of all Hackney residents are smokers. This is higher than the average for London and neighbouring boroughs. Local quitting targets were exceeded in 2010/11 and in 2011/12.

12. The recorded prevalence of severe mental health conditions and depression in general practice in Hackney remain among the highest in London. The prevalence of depression in Hackney GPs surgeries was 10%, the third highest prevalence in London.

13. An assessment of the long-term trends in ill health predicted that the prevalence of dementia and depression would increase significantly amongst older people. This includes a 35% increase in older people living with dementia in Hackney and the City between 2010 and 2030⁴.

14. For several years the local authority has been transforming local social care services to help manage increased demand on services and to enable individuals to have greater choice and control over their care support. In 2011/12 over 2900 people (mainly older people) have benefited from local reablement services. During 2012-13 the number of older people permanently admitted to residential care has almost halved from 116 during 2011-12 to 62 in 2012-13.

15. We have also seen a rise in the last year in the numbers of people using social care support who say they felt they had control over their daily life; in 2011/12 66% of all respondents felt this was the case compared to 32% in 2010-11.

16. Dialogue with community networks has flagged a wide range of other factors that older people, people with long term conditions and people from black and minority backgrounds feel affects their health; the kinds of issues that commonly came up included stress, isolation, housing problems and money and poverty.

Summary of opportunities and challenges

Economic and Social Inclusion

1. Co-ordinated support for residents affected by welfare reform

There has been strong collaboration between the Council and local partners and this has enabled us to build and share intelligence on the local impacts of national reforms to welfare and housing benefits. There has also been a robust response locally to help mitigate the negative impacts of the reforms on those residents most affected and to coordinate local support.

⁴ Projecting Older People Population Information System, Department of Health 2010

2. Promoting financial inclusion

However, we will need to continue to work as a partnership to support residents who do find they are subject to benefit sanctions and reductions in welfare payments as a result of reforms, to help them manage and deal with their new circumstances. This includes continued coordination of information, advice and guidance provision and practical support to help people with household budgeting, managing money and dealing with debt (i.e. financial inclusion and financial literacy). As we move nearer to the national roll out of the new Universal Credit benefit system, it will also be important to provide practical support to help people who do not currently use the internet, so they can access the new system, which will be online. Partners also need to continue to find effective means to support people more affected by pressures associated with these kinds of changes in circumstances, and with poverty and debt, to better deal with stress and to build greater resilience. Taking this kind of preventative approach could help alleviate pressures on other services such as health.

3. Improving employability and employment support

One of the ways we provide support to help people more affected by benefit reforms to deal with their new circumstances is to provide employment support and to help people to improve their employability. The partnership is in the process of setting up an Employment task group. This will aim to better co-ordinate and focus partners' activity on employment support, and to look at how we develop more effective support and pathways into work for those residents who are further from the labour market.

4. Support for people with more complex needs

Partners have collaborated and developed better service support in recent years, to 'wrap around' the specific needs of individuals and families who have more complex issues and difficult circumstances to deal with in their lives and who have higher support needs as a result (examples include the Troubled families work and the Integrated Gangs Intervention etc). It is worth considering whether there is additional benefit to be gained locally, from accelerating early intervention programmes such as the 'Troubled families' work, if these approaches prove to be effective over the medium term. We will need to continue to assess whether these approaches prove to be effective in preventing poor outcomes for children, young people and families over the longer term and also whether they reduce demands and pressures on local services in time too.

Health, wellbeing and independence

1. Managing and reducing demand for health and social care services

The local Health and Wellbeing Board has agreed its priorities and work programmes are already in place to address key inequalities in health in the early years, to reduce childhood obesity, to look at how to achieve better mental health for everyone, to continue to support people to stop smoking and to encourage young people not to start in the first place and also to provide better support for people with dementia and older people in need of care support. The Health and Wellbeing Board will also continue to look at how we can continue to better integrate services and to develop smarter ways to

address demand for health and social care support through greater preventative work

2. The Council has an ongoing programme of work to transform social care support services in the borough and within that there is an emphasis on enabling residents with complex long term health conditions and impairments to take more choice and control over their personal care and support packages.

3. However, continued improvement and innovation is needed to meet high ongoing demands for health and care support. On key issues such as managing the future impacts of an ageing population, the Team Hackney Leadership Board will need to support colleagues on the Health and Wellbeing Board and work together with them to consider how local services in the borough can better manage these kinds of longer term pressures. Local services and the community will need to collaborate and encourage a more preventative approach: one which improves residents' general wellbeing, promotes their independence and reduces their reliance on or need for health and social services.

4. Creative options of affordable housing for older and younger people
Access to affordable, decent housing is an important component, which can have a significant impact on people's wellbeing and independence. Older people and young adults may find their options are constrained in the current environment as a result of the resilience of the local housing market and changes in eligibility for housing benefit for households. There are also broader questions about the kinds of housing provision that might better meet the needs of young people in newly formed households, or households of older people around and above retirement age, and about whether more creative options for affordable housing might also help achieve other ambitions for services to reduce dependence on social care, or on health and welfare.

5. Enabling inclusion and reducing social isolation
More broadly, there is also merit in the Team Hackney partnership exploring how local services and the community can collaborate and find ways to prevent social isolation and to enable social inclusion. This should benefit residents whose day to day lives are limited by poor health, older residents who currently have more limited social contact and social networks, residents with communications barriers and residents who have lower levels of trust in public services etc. As a partnership, we will need to continue to find ways to encourage individuals to take control of their lives and to achieve greater independence and a positive sense of wellbeing. There are projects already underway looking at aspects of this, and it is likely to remain an important issue for the partnership, given the kinds of pressures on local services to manage demand pressures and to promote greater resilience in the community.

This link contains the full report for [Section 5](#).

This page is intentionally left blank



Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission 13 th October 2014 Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2014/15	Item No 8
--	-------------------------

Outline

Attached is the work programme for the Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission for 2014/15. Please note this is a working document and is regularly revised and updated.

Action

The Commission is asked to consider and note the report and suggest any amendments to its work programme.

This page is intentionally left blank

Overview & Scrutiny

Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission (as at 25 July 2014)

Rolling Work Programme July 2014 – March 2015¹

All meetings take place at 7.00 pm in Hackney Town Hall unless stated otherwise on the agenda. This rolling work programme report is updated and published on the agenda for each meeting of the Commission.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and officer contact	Comment and Action
Mon 14 July 2014 Papers deadline: Thu 3 July	Election of Chair and Vice Chair	Chief Executive's	First meeting of newly elected Commission.
	Introduction to G&R	O&S Officer	To note.
	ICT Review	Finance and Resources (Christine Peacock)	To agree final report. Changes requested at April meeting.
	London Living Wage investigation	Chief Executive's	To note Commission's letter to Cabinet Member for Finance on outcome of this investigation
	Finance update	Finance and Resources (Ian Williams)	Briefing on the budget scrutiny process and update on General Fund savings 2011/12-2013/14.
	Work Programme Discussion		To agree a review topic and topics for one-off items for the year.

¹ Please note there will be no Commission meetings in April 2015 because of the General Election purdah period.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and officer contact	Comment and Action
Mon 8 Sept 2014 Papers deadline: Thu 28 August	'Public Spend' review – expert briefing	OPM - Sue Goss and Independent Consultant - John Atkinson	Briefing on 'Total Place' to begin scoping of review on 'Public Spend'
	'Public Spend' review – Methodology of Approach to Mapping Total Spend	O&S Team (Tracey Anderson)	Information on the methods of approach used to map total spend
	Impact of welfare reforms on local residents	Finance & Resources (Kay Brown and Jennifer Wynter)	Continuing regular updates on how the Council is responding to local impact of welfare reforms. Joint with CSSI members following up on their own review. ² Both Commissions collaborating.
Mon 13 Oct 2014 Papers deadline: Thu 2 Oct	'Public Spend' review – evidence gathering session	Finance and Resources	Information presented on total public spend in the Borough
	Complaints Service – annual report	Chief Execs Office (Bruce Devile)	Annual report of the Council's complaints service
	Council Governance – scrutiny inquiry	Mayor's Office (Ben Bradley)	Response to additional recommendation from April (proposal for an annual Full Council work programme planning meeting)
Mon 10 Nov 2014	'Public spend' review – evidence gathering session 3	tbc	Evidence gathering session 3

² G&R received update in Dec 2013. CSSI received update April 2014 and is due to receive another in March 2015.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and officer contact	Comment and Action
Papers deadline: Thu 30 Oct	'Public Spend' review – Terms of Reference '	O&S Team (Tracey Anderson)	To agree terms of reference
Mon 8 Dec 2014	'Public spend' review – evidence gathering session 4		Evidence gathering session 4
Papers deadline: Thu 27 Nov	Cabinet Question Time with Cllr Taylor (Cabinet Member for Finance) TBC	Cllr Taylor and Ian Williams	Cabinet Question Time is now carried out by individual Commissions. Cllr Taylor has lead responsibility for revenues and benefits, audit, procurement, pensions, and customer services.
Mon 19 Jan 2015	Finance update	Finance & Resources (Ian Williams)	Budget and Finance update
Papers deadline: Thu 8 Jan	'Public spend' review – recommendations discussion	O&S Team (Tracey Anderson)	Recommendations discussion
Mon 9 Feb 2015	Finance update	Finance & Resources (Ian Williams)	Budget and Finance update
Papers deadline: Thu 29 Jan	'Public spend' review – agree report	O&S Team (Tracey Anderson)	To agree report
	'Whole person services' review	O&S Team (Tracey Anderson)	Draft Terms of Reference.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and officer contact	Comment and Action
Mon 16 Mar 2015 Papers deadline: Thu 5 March No mtg in April due to general election purdah	'Whole person services' review – evidence gathering session 1	tbc	Evidence gathering session 1
	Work programme for 2015/16 discussion		Discussion on topics for work programme for 2015/16.

The following are also to be scheduled:

- Public Participation* – full review to commence June 2015
- The Future Public Servant* – full review to commence Jan 2016
- Technology and Innovation* – full review of Task & Finish
- Capital Strategy* – full review
- Fees and Charges* – revisit implementation of recs of previous review
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme* – one off item
- Big Data* – major review
- Full Council* – implementation of recs from previous review – one off