

Overview & Scrutiny

Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

All Members of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission are requested to attend the meeting of the Commission to be held as follows

Monday, 16th December, 2019

7.00 pm

Room 102, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, London E8 1EA

Contact:

Tom Thorn

☎ 0208 356 8186

✉ thomas.thorn@hackney.gov.uk

Tim Shields

Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney

Members: Cllr Sharon Patrick (Chair), Cllr Sade Etti (Vice-Chair),
Cllr Anthony McMahon, Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Ian Rathbone,
Cllr Penny Wrout and Cllr Anna Lynch

Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Urgent Items / Order of Business
- 3 Declarations of Interest
- 4 Evidence gathering for review around Housing Associations - Focus on repairs and maintenance (Pages 1 - 34)
- 5 Update on review of Housing Services' Community Halls (Pages 35 - 54)
- 6 Housing Services support of resident engagement - update on review (Pages 55 - 70)
- 7 Council and partnership response to escalation in serious violence review - draft report (Pages 71 - 122)
- 8 Minutes of the Previous Meeting (Pages 123 - 144)

- 9 Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission- 2019/20 Work Programme (Pages 145 - 158)
- 10 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-living-in-hackney.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)

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and social media providing they do not disturb the conduct of the meeting and providing that the person reporting or providing the commentary is present at the meeting.

Those wishing to film, photograph or audio record a meeting are asked to notify the Council's Monitoring Officer by noon on the day of the meeting, if possible, or any time prior to the start of the meeting or notify the Chair at the start of the meeting.

The Monitoring Officer, or the Chair of the meeting, may designate a set area from which all recording must take place at a meeting.

The Council will endeavour to provide reasonable space and seating to view, hear and record the meeting. If those intending to record a meeting require any other reasonable facilities, notice should be given to the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting and will only be provided if practicable to do so.

The Chair shall have discretion to regulate the behaviour of all those present recording a meeting in the interests of the efficient conduct of the meeting. Anyone acting in a disruptive manner may be required by the Chair to cease recording or may be excluded from the meeting. Disruptive behaviour may include: moving from any designated recording area; causing excessive noise; intrusive lighting; interrupting the meeting; or filming members of the public who have asked not to be filmed.

All those visually recording a meeting are requested to only focus on recording councillors, officers and the public who are directly involved in the conduct of the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will ask any members of the public present if they have objections to being visually recorded. Those visually recording a meeting are asked to respect the wishes of those who do not wish to be filmed or photographed. Failure by someone recording a meeting to respect the wishes of those who do not wish to be filmed and photographed may result in the Chair instructing them to cease recording or in their exclusion from the meeting.

If a meeting passes a motion to exclude the press and public then in order to consider confidential or exempt information, all recording must cease and all recording equipment must be removed from the meeting room. The press and public are not permitted to use any means which might enable them to see or hear the proceedings whilst they are excluded from a meeting and confidential or exempt information is under consideration.

Providing oral commentary during a meeting is not permitted.



Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 16th December 2019 Item 4 – Evidence gathering for review around Housing Associations - focusing on repairs and maintenance	Item No 4
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Outline

This item

A number of Housing Associations have been invited to attend for this item. This is for a discussion focused on the aspects below:

How are Housing Associations in the borough working to keep homes safe, decent and in a good state of repair:

- How do Housing Association monitor and report performance on repairs and maintenance in Hackney, and what is the accountability to local residents and public bodies?
- How are Housing Associations ensuring they are responsive to Hackney residents' repairs needs?
- How is the right balance achieved between planned and responsive maintenance and repairs to units, buildings and estates achieved?

Guests expected:

- Vicky Bonner (Director of Housing for all regions), Shani Denham (Head of Repairs and Maintenance for North London) and Gary Coultish (Head of Operations for response) - **Clarion Housing Group**
- Sean Kelly, Head of Property - **Industrial Dwellings Society (IDS)**
- Ruth Davison, Chief Executive - **Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association (ISHA)**
- Chyrel Brown (Chief Operating Officer) and Sue Hanlon (Director of Maintenance Delivery Services) - **One Housing Group**
- Brendan Sarsfield (Chief Executive) – **Peabody**

- Deborah Shynn (Operations Manager), John McKeon (Reinvestment Manager) and Michael Thompson (Head of Estate Services) - **Sanctuary Group**

Paper submissions

Papers in support of this item have been provided by Clarion Housing Group (available on pages 5 – 7 of the agenda), IDS (page 9) ISHA 11 – 15) One Housing Group (pages 17 – 25) and Sanctuary (27 – 34)

Context

In its last meeting the Commission received background information around Housing Associations / Registered Housing Providers. This included insight into the number of providers operating in the borough, their stock numbers, the different approaches / models which they may follow, and the extent and nature of their engagement with the Council.

Further to this the Commission decided that its main review of the year should seek to compare and contrast approaches of different providers within a range of themes, and their relationships with the Council. It would be intended that this would be delivered alongside hearing from Housing Association tenants and leaseholders around their experiences.

The discussions in the September meeting highlighted a number of specific aspects as being of interest to Members. These were:

- Repairs services and approaches to maintenance (including the way that providers engage with both residents and local Councillors where there are any concerns around the effectiveness of services)
- Approaches to transfers (including any support offered by providers to their residents – including vulnerable residents - where rehousing is required)
- How providers co-operate with the Council's strategic housing function. This could include exploring contributions to the Council's meeting of housing need and homelessness through nominations and allocations arrangements, new lettings being made accessible to lower income groups, and provision of tenancy sustainment support for more vulnerable households.
- Providers' roles as social purpose organisations, and activities delivered to improve quality of life in Hackney. To include approaches to reinvesting surpluses in the local area and to the delivery of extended services (for example employment training and youth provision).
- Assessing the infrastructure supporting the partnership and relationship between the Council and Housing Associations. To compare Hackney's current Better Homes Partnership arrangement, with those

being followed elsewhere (for example the London Borough of Waltham Forest's Housing Compact)).

- To explore work to tackle anti-social behaviour and to keep neighbourhoods safe and clean.

It is suggested the Commission seeks to explore the set of broad aspects above, across a number of different meetings and site visits.

Action

Members are asked to review the papers enclosed, in advance of the meeting. They are asked to hear opening comments from guests and to ask questions around approaches and performance in repairs and maintenance.

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London Borough of Hackney Stock Profile

We have 1916 properties in the borough of Hackney, comprising of freehold (113), general needs (1304), leasehold (129), market rent (23), shared ownership (118), sheltered (139) and supported (88). Of these, 1319 are flats, 468 house, 43 maisonette, Housing in multiply occupation move on accommodation, one four room and one 12 room accommodation.

1. Clarion

Clarion Housing Group was established through the merger of Circle Housing and Affinity Sutton Housing the transfer of engagement took place in November 2016. Our Hackney stock is a mix of legacy Affinity Sutton and Circle Housing properties. Clarion is a national organisation with a stock portfolio of 125,000 units.

2. Repairs operating model

Following a full review of resident complaints and customer satisfaction results in 2018, it became clear that our external repairs service for North London was not where we wanted it to be. Our in house service provider, Clarion Response (CR) provided the repair service to approximately 70% of our properties and regularly achieved customer satisfaction levels in the high 80% early 90%, this compared to an average achievement by our external providers of 70%- 80% for the combined North London outsourced service. In line with our merger objectives, we brought forward the insourcing of the reactive repair service for the North London region going live with the in-house service in November 2018.

With any service integration project of notable size, bedding down period is required as the contract and new structures are mobilised. We expected a dip in our service provision; however, this dip was noticeable across a number of key performance indicators (KPI). As a result, a full review was carried out and a number of new monitoring systems and a staff restructure was implemented. A Service Improvement and Customer Satisfaction plan was developed to address KPI dips, organisational concerns and issues raised by our residents and local Councillors. High customer satisfaction with the repair service is our objective and to achieve this CR follow the Customer satisfaction 5C's principals detailed below:

Customer Satisfaction 5C's	
Confirm	To the customer that you are on route to complete their repair
Communicate	To the customer who you are and what you intend to do
Complete	The required repair(s) to a high standard
Clarify	To the customer what you have done
Close	The job after adding required SOR's and Diary Notes

Performance measures are monitored on a weekly basis by operational staff across CR and the regional repairs and maintenance team (R&M). Senior staff, (client and service provider) attend a monthly meeting hosted by two Clarion Executive team members, this meeting reviews performance and progression towards our action plan targets. We are seeing month on month service improvement across all areas.

3. Resident involvement and Journey

As part of our continual improvement plan, we work with our resident scrutiny panels to identify service processes that require improvement in the region. We are a large but local social housing provider and use resident feedback from a number of involvement structures to inform our service improvement plans and direction of travel. Our residents have told us via resident complaints, member enquires and through our quarterly customer survey, that they would like repairs resolved at the first visit and a date and appointment time for the works to be carried out. We have identified that many repairs require more than one trade to rectify. To address this we have now recruited to our staff team multi trade operatives, this has helped to ensure a repair can be completed at first visit without the need to refer back for a different trade to attend. This strategy is paying dividend as fewer repairs a referred back, in addition to address appointment times, the CR planning and operation teams have been centralised and resources across the region reallocated to ensure we can meet local demand. This is monitored through our completed at first visit KPI.

Part of our commitment to improve customer services is to enhance our customer journey and improve our service provision at the first point of customer contact. To support this objective we have made some fundamental changes to the way we work across the group. We have introduced a new computer system and changed the housing operational team structures.

Our new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system means Clarion Housing now holds all customer information and data in one place. Front line staff using this system can access all information about tenancy matters, repairs, complaints and general enquiries from one source. This means when a customer gets in touch with us we can resolve more issues (including repairs) at first contact and can easily provide updates on other matters that may be outstanding (if required). The new system and team structures went live on the 5th November 2019.

4. Performance

Below is the key performance information for the North London Repairs Service*

* Repair contract boundaries do not match borough wards.

Target	KPI Measure	YTD 19/20
85%	Resident Satisfaction (Responsive Repairs)	83.69%
95%	First Time Fix (Responsive Repairs)	84.83%
95%	Responsive Repair Completions Times – Emergency Works	99.85%
95%	Responsive Repair Completions Times – Routine Repair Priority Repairs	92.65%
95%	Communal Repair Completions Times – Emergency Works	99.66%
95%	Communal Repair Completion Times – Routine Repair Priority Repairs	93.44%
95%	Appointments made and kept – Property	95.03%

The above table shows a steady improvement with the repair service KPIs with most indicators either almost achieved or exceeding target. We are keen to get our first time fix (responsive repairs) on target that is still under target.

5. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Our Customer Satisfaction target is 85%. The customer satisfaction results for October saw a slight drop in the overall satisfaction score for North London, down to 85.30 % from the Septembers score of 86.60%, however, this is still an increase on the average score for the year with the YTD result now being 83.8%.

The table below shows the regions Customer Satisfaction Performance for the last reporting quarter.

Customer Satisfaction

Month	Performance
August	76.60%
September	86.60%
October	85.30%

6. Repairs Service Standards

Clarion operates with two repairs service standards these are as follows:

- Routine – at resident convenience but within 28 day calendar days
- Emergency – 4 hour attendance to make safe and 24 hour fix

7. Complaints information

We had 32 complaints this year in the borough for repairs and maintenance. We currently have no outstanding member enquires or repair complaints. In relation to disrepair complaints we have 15 live cases in Hackney.

8. Capital works

We are committed to improving our stock and are investing £10 million in the borough; key planned works include component replacement, communal decoration, and window replacement. We know that residents do not want to take too much time of work for repairs to be completed. To support this we have changed our approach to the delivery of planned investment; we now operate an area-focused approach to stock and estates. Our intention is to complete all associated works in a concentrated area, this process allows for improved business planning at a local level and minimises disruption to residents. We continue to work on a small number of units that require planned works now and where required we will carry out bespoke projects to address urgent complex works. We currently carry out a full option appraisal on all our voids and assess the work required to bring the unit up to our 20:40 standard. Our intention where practicable is to carry out the works while the unit is void.

The bulk of our planned works across the whole borough are provisionally scheduled for the financial year 2021/22. In the mean time, we are carrying out a full property assessment to inform the works programme and to ensure we capture all work requirements.

Clarion Housing

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Submission from Industrial Dwellings Society (IDS):

To give a brief overview of IDS capital and revenue repairs and maintenance expenditure:-

1. Approx £2m per annum capital replacement – The programme for capital replacement is driven by our asset management software package “Keystone”, data held within the system is confirmed by stock condition surveys. From this we are able to produce short term (5 year) and long term (30 year), forecasting. Following the Grenfell disaster the majority of the capital budget allocation has been diverted to fire safety works comprising of flat entrance door replacements and compartmentation works, this will be the case for another 2 years.
2. Approx £1m for reactive day-to-day repairs and voids – Our average repair per property is 3 per annum, our stock is geographically divided between 2 repairs contractors, quality control is applied to all works over a specified value threshold which qualifies them for post inspection either physically or via the contractors photographic records held on their web portal. SLA for repairs are divided into 3 response categories:-
 - a. Emergency – 24 hours
 - b. Urgent – 7 days
 - c. Routine 21 days

Each of the repairs contractors also provide an out-of-hours emergency make safe service.

Customer satisfaction is monitored by an independent team of volunteers, satisfaction rates are generally at about 85% using the Housemark benchmarking guidance.

3. Approx £300k revenue major repairs – The majority of spend is allocated to asbestos removal or damp treatment works
4. Approx £100k – cyclical decoration & maintenance

We have a small number of disrepair cases, about 10 per annum, these are often in response to notification of proceedings for non-payment of rent, we have settled one case this year and resolved others by either carrying out agreed works or by demonstrating we have been frustrated in carrying out the repairs due to no-access.

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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

Paper presented by Ruth Davison, Chief Executive of Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association (ISHA)

Background:

ISHA is a community housing association which builds and manages homes in North and East London, particularly in Hackney, Islington and Waltham Forest. It is anchored in those places and seeks to partner with local authorities and others who share their vision.

Building a fairer, safer and more sustainable Hackney

ISHA helps deliver that vision by:

- Building and helping others build
- Striving to be a great landlord
- By being anchored in the community
- Being a great employer
- Being serious about environmental sustainability

ISHA in numbers:

Despite our name, you can see from the following table that the majority of the homes we own and manage are actually in Hackney. ISHA first moved into the borough 60 years ago and has been building ever since. We are strongly committed to Hackney, building predominantly social homes and shared ownership homes to help keep it mixed and vibrant and meet housing need. The majority of the 875 homes we have in Hackney have been built in the last 20 years, some with the assistance of the Borough. We also help other small community housing associations to build – in Hackney, North London Muslim HA – through the North River Alliance consortium which we launched 15 years ago.

The 'general needs' homes on the table on page 2 are social rented homes. ISHA's Board committed not to convert social rents to 'affordable' rents under the Affordable Homes Programme of 2010 onwards. There are no affordability checks for social rents, and we have never had introductory or time-limited tenancies – all are life-time tenancies.

Of the social rented homes, 247 are one-beds, 173 are two-beds, 106 are three-beds and 46 are four-beds.

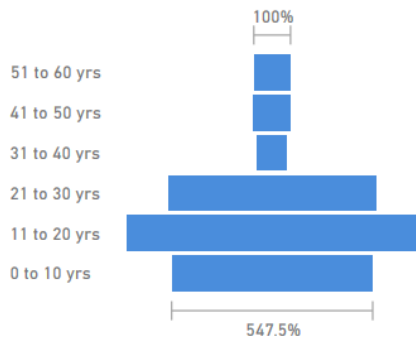
Number of properties

Customer type	(blank)	Camden	Hackney	Haringey	Islington	Tower Hamlets	Waltham Forest	Total
General Needs		33	576	42	616	22	303	1,592
Shared Ownership	14		171		64	1	123	373
Affordable Rent	43		76		29		90	238
Supported			19		36		7	62
Housing for older people			30		12			42
Market Rent			1		17			18
Intermediate Re			1		1			2
Staff			1		1			2
Total	57	33	875	42	776	23	523	2,329

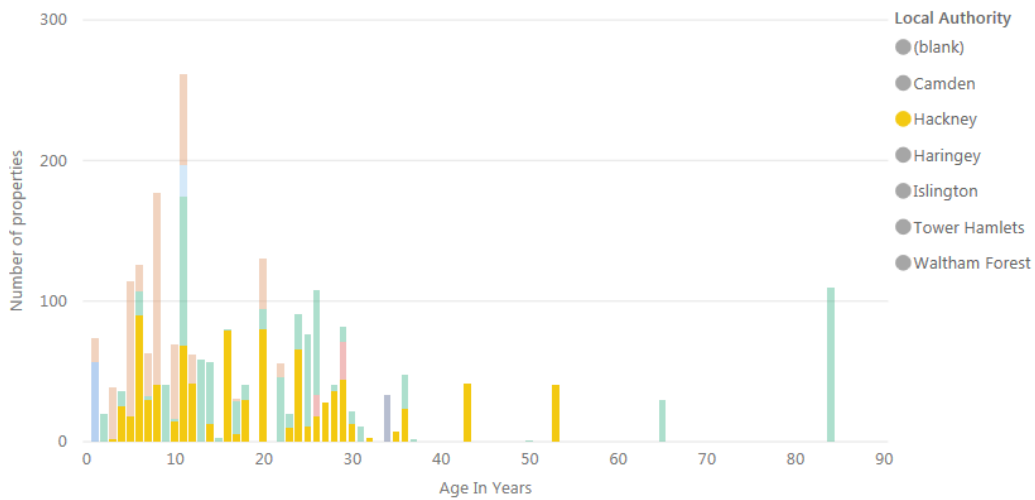
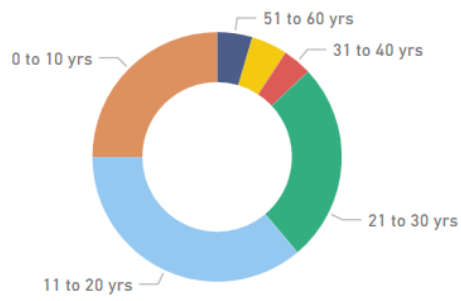
NB: 'staff' doesn't mean we only have one member of staff for Hackney, it means we have one ISHA-owned staff home

ISLINGTON & SHOREDITCH HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD
AGE OF PROPERTIES OWNED
NOVEMBER 2019

Age in years



Age in years





We were the first housing association in the borough to be a London Living Wage employer and insist all of our contractors are too. We don't just want people to be housed well, but to live well.

We take the climate emergency seriously and have achieved 'SHIFT GOLD' status, a housing industry sustainability award that looks at new and existing homes, commercial spaces and business practices.

Striving to be a *great* landlord (...we're not there yet)

Repairs and maintenance:

Our main responsive repairs contractor is MPS Housing formerly Mitie. We entered into this contract in March 2017 on a five, plus five, plus 5-year contract with the option to go to an alternative delivery model during the period.

The objectives of the contract are:

- Partnership – the team is co-located at ISHA's offices, and branded as ISHA Home team, with branded vehicles, uniforms and I.D.
- Value for Money – we're continuously looking to work more efficiently to demonstrate reduced costs and value for money to all our customers
- Customer Satisfaction – It is a core objective to provide a service that meets our residents' expectations and needs
- Social Value – The partnership will create more training, job and community opportunities in our neighbourhoods

Responsive repairs

We have carried out more than 12,000 repairs in 2018-2019 across all our contracts including lifts and door entry (which are not included in the scope of our main contract). In 2018/19 customer satisfaction with responsive repairs was 75% and below what we expect it to be.

We aim to complete all our repairs as a 'first fix' which currently stands at 78%. However, what the man or woman on the street thinks is first fix (me included!) and contractors' class as first fix is different e.g. if a toilet's leaking and you stop it leaking, that's a 'first fix,' even if the whole toilet needs replacing and the contractor has to return the following week to do the job.

We work with our residents to make sure we offer them flexible appointments. Our emergencies are attended to within four hours. We do not have other priorities for repairs other than customer choice, so resident is offered the next available appointment or can choose sometime in the future.



We are taking a strong line on quality and good customer service to tenants and residents and recently terminated a contract after just six months because it failed to deliver on this – even though re-procuring cost us more in cash terms.

Planned maintenance

Like many organisations we held back on some of our planned works due to the impact of rent cuts. However, even before those ended, we stepped up investment again. We aim to replace 5 per cent of kitchens and bathrooms each year. Residents have a choice of cabinet style, colours and flooring. We also aim to replace 75 boilers each year. Our team of experts are always upgrading quality and value for money in terms selecting the correct products. We also carry out an intensive cyclical programme and are currently working on 11 blocks to complete our cyclical programme for this year ensuring that kerb appeal is part of the remit.

We have budgets set aside for estate improvement which are managed by our Neighbourhood Team and includes things such as installation of railings to low walled area to alleviate antisocial behaviour or replanting flower beds during the spring and summer months.

What we're doing to improve the experience of residents and tenants:

- Setting new standards co-created with residents at 'action days' – pioneering in the sector
- Holding people to account against them – staff and contractors
- Joined the Institute of Customer Service & putting all staff through its training
- Investing more in stock & repairs in our new plan
- Re-building processes with the resident, not organisation, at heart

Community outreach & support teams:

You'll notice the Lien Viet logo on this paper. Lien Viet was small housing association founded by refugees from Vietnam who faced first war, then discrimination in the provision of housing when they arrived here. It joined with ISHA some years ago and was properly incorporated last year. We have promised to continue to deliver culturally sensitive services and support in Vietnamese and to celebrate that proud history. We have two Vietnamese members of outreach staff who provide services not only to our tenants and residents but to any who need our help in the boroughs we work – something especially pertinent in Hackney. We also made a large bequest to the Geffrye Museum so the story and contribution of that community can be told to a wider audience.



Development:

We have a detailed plan to build new homes in our 5-year strategic plan and have two schemes scheduled for handover in Hackney this financial year – one for us and one for North London Muslim – totalling 16 homes.

We also have in the pipeline a proposed redevelopment for part of the site at Alexandra Court which will achieve 16 new homes. It will also vastly improve the accommodation of those people in temporary accommodation in the block that Hackney lease from us. Early consultation was promising, and we hope to get planning permission soon.

Ruth Davison

December 4th 2019

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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

16 December 2019



Chyrel Brown,
Chief Operating Officer



Sue Hanlon,
Director of Maintenance
Delivery Service

One Housing: Facts & Figures

- We own and manage over **17,000** homes in London and the South East
- At least 50% of the new homes we build each year are London living rent, affordable rent or shared ownership
- Around **35,000** customers live in a One Housing home
- We provide care and support to over **8,000** customers with a range of needs, including people with lived experience of mental health, older people, people with learning disabilities and those experiencing homelessness
- We complete 97% of routine repairs within our target of 20 days
- We maintain 100% compliance in all assessments covering fire safety, gas safety and water safety
- Approximately 1,600 people work at One Housing

As at 31 March 2019, our total stock in Hackney was **815**, split into:

- 260 general needs
- 120 health, care & support
- 387 leasehold
- 48 commercial or other

Maintenance Delivery Services

The Maintenance Delivery Services team are the internal repairs provider, responsible for the repairs and maintenance of 20,000 One Housing Group properties.

Previously called One Direct, the team of 180 staff transferred to One Housing Group on 1 October 2019, under TUPE legislation.

The Maintenance Delivery Services team are responsible for:

- Gas Repairs
- Planned & Electrical Delivery Services
- Reactive Services
- Systems & Business Support Services

Maintenance Delivery Services Management Team

Susan Hanlon
Director of
Maintenance
Delivery Services



Christopher Gunton
Head of
Environmental
Service & Reactive
Maintenance

**Gabriela Caldera-
Cabral**
Head of Systems &
Business Support

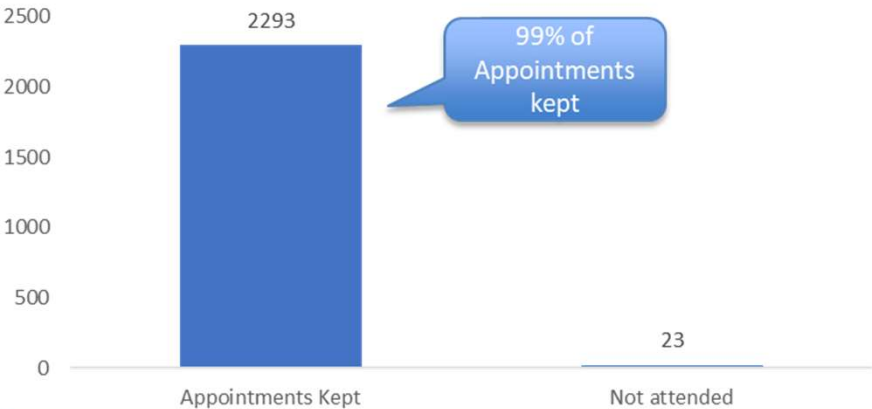
Mark Hutchison
Head of Gas
Services

Lee Abbott
Head of Electrical &
Planned Delivery

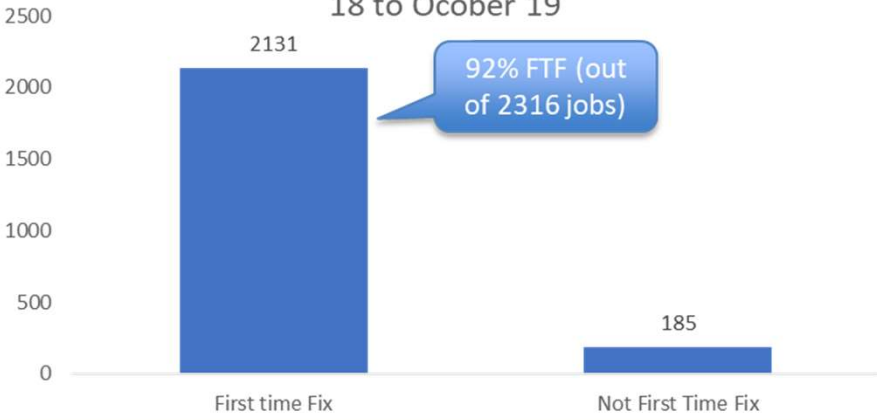
Repairs and Maintenance Analysis for Hackney

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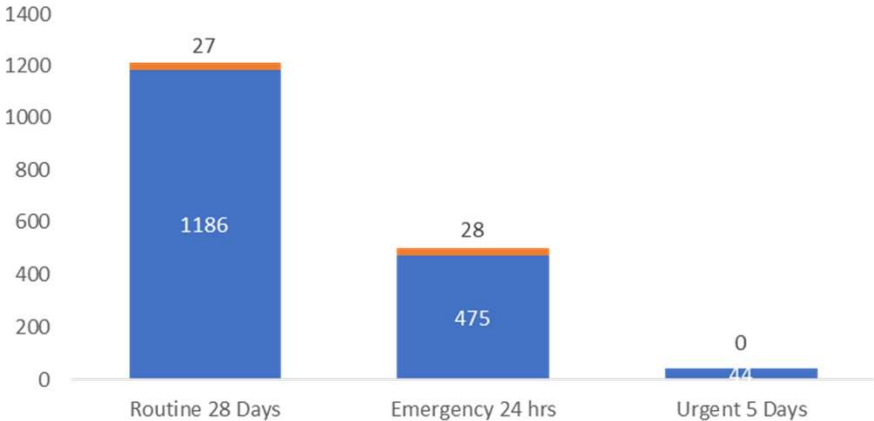
Volume of appointments kept vs not attended between November 18 to October 19



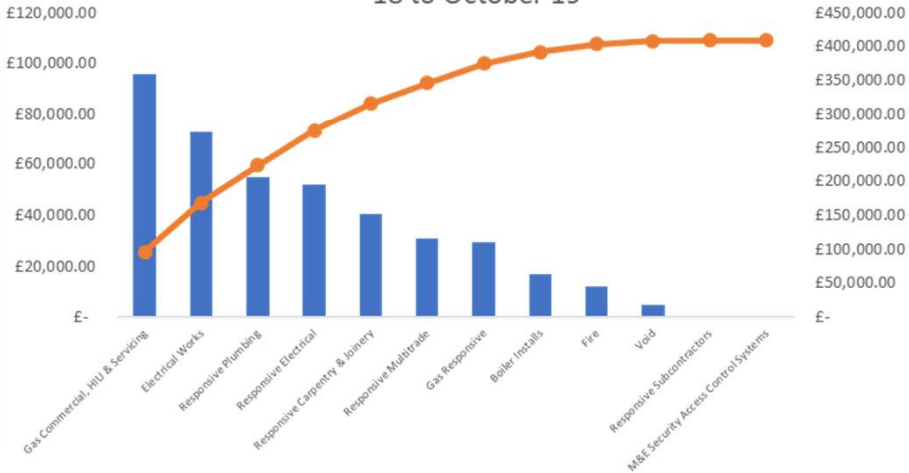
Volume of Jobs completed between November 18 to October 19



Volume of jobs attended within appointment timeframe (am & pm) between November 18 to October 19

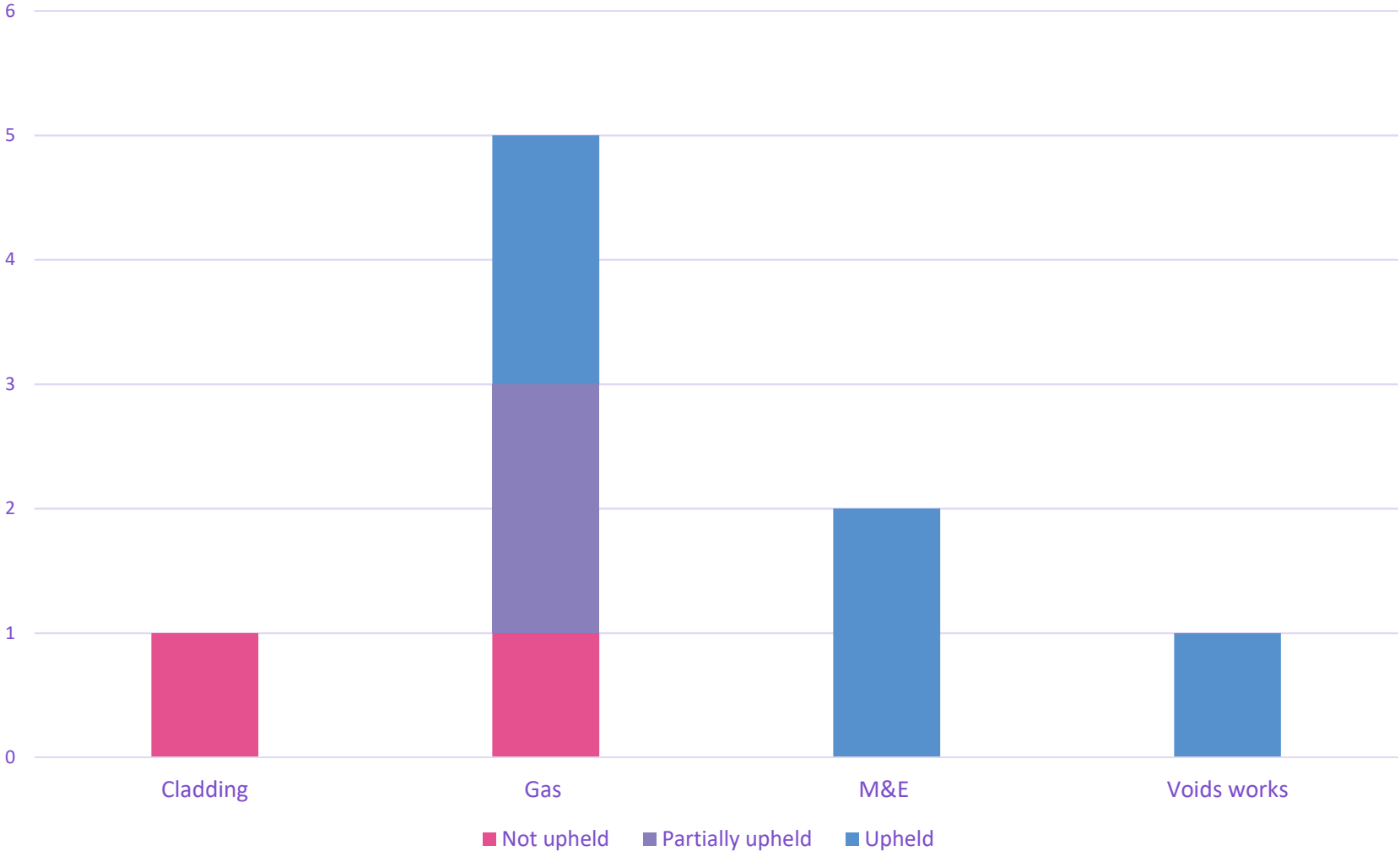


Expenditure by Worktype in Hackney between November 18 to October 19



Complaints Analysis – 1 April 2019 to date

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New ways of working

Leadership team

Investment in new ways of working

Contact centre

Estate service standard

Building relationship

Questions

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REPORT TO: LIVING IN HACKNEY SCRUTINY COMMISSION

**REPORT FROM: KIMBERLEY DE VERGORI
HEAD OF HOUSING**

DATE OF REPORT: 4 DECEMBER 2019

**SUBJECT: SANCTUARY HOUSING ASSOCIATION'S
OPERATIONS IN THE BOROUGH**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper provides an overview of Sanctuary Housing's operations in the London Borough of Hackney.

2. Background

Sanctuary Group (the Group) is a housing and care provider operating across England and Scotland. Set up 50 years ago, the Group own and manage more than 100,000 homes. The Group's portfolio of properties includes general needs housing, supported housing, shared ownership and housing for older people. Sanctuary Care, the Group's care subsidiary, was established in 1995 and provides care in almost 100 nursing and care homes. The Group holds G1 and V1 ratings from Homes England, the Regulator of Social Housing, formerly the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) which is the highest rating for both governance and viability, demonstrating stability and confidence in the Group's business plan. The Group also hold Investors in People Silver Award.

- 2.1 Sanctuary has worked in Hackney since 1976 and own and or manages around 3,415 homes in the Borough. The vast majority of these are general needs social rents and are located on five estates: Kingsmead, Morningside, Gascoyne, Shore and Old Kingshold estates. (Overall, approximately one-fifth of the homes on these estates are owned by Right to Buy leaseholders). Much of the remainder are made up by the Victorian street properties of the Cass Estate. (See **Appendix 1** for overview of stock).
- 2.2 The Group acquired the majority of the homes in the early 2000s and undertook extensive refurbishment over a period of five years to bring them up to the Decent Homes standard.
- 2.3 The Group also own 20 commercial units in Hackney, including the Kingsmead office, store rooms and 12 shops. The surplus from any non-social housing property revenues is reinvested to the Group's

core social purpose of maintaining and reinvesting in existing stock and delivering new affordable homes.

3. Reinvestment

- 3.1 Since the refurbishment in the early 2000s the Group have been carrying out cyclical improvement works on a planned basis and repairs on a reactive and where necessary basis. In the case of Kingsmead, significant investment since 2014 has included kitchen and bathroom programmes, replacement boilers, replacement lifts, works on doors, windows and communal drains and redecorations of homes. The Group have invested £12 million in Hackney as a whole, over the last four years.
- 3.2 Despite this investment, it was recognised that some of these buildings and homes in the borough did not meet the Group's standards or the standards that residents should expect and have committed to improving them. The Group is increasing its investment to circa £6 million per year between 2018/2019 - 2023/2024.
- 3.3 The reinvestment plans for 2019/2020 will include the following work across Hackney:
- Improvements to internals of homes on Morningside and Gascoyne.
 - Increasing the number of lift replacement programmes on Kingsmead and Morningside.
 - Ground drainage clearance programme across all Hackney estates.
 - Window and roofline replacement on Victoria Park Road homes are also included in the programme.

4. Voids

- 4.1 There are typically only 75 voids per year across the whole of Hackney. The Group's agreement with LB Hackney means that a minimum of 75 per cent of family size accommodation voids go to them for nominations. As a snapshot of this low void rate, in May 2019, the lettings team had eight voids at one time. The average time taken to turnaround an empty property in the borough is 11 days (year to date).

5. Repairs and customer service

- 5.1 Sanctuary's Customer Service Centre is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Residents can also report repairs using an online form or on social media. In addition, regular repair workshops are held on the different estates.
- 5.2 Local Offers describe the service residents can expect (**Appendix 2**). The Group directly contacted more than half of its residents in

England to develop these offers and they will be reviewed again in 2020.

- 5.3 The target for completing emergency repairs (repairs that need to be 'made safe', such as the loss of essential services like water or electricity) is 24 hours. In Hackney, for the financial year to date 96.9 per cent of emergency repairs (1,213 operations) have been completed on time (within 24 hours). The average time for completion of an emergency repair in Hackney is nine hours.
- 5.4 The target for the completion of routine repairs is 28 days. 85.2 per cent of routine repairs (4,762 operations) have been completed on time. The average time for completion of a routine repair is 16 days in Hackney.
- 5.5 Customer satisfaction statistics (London and South East):

	London and South East
Easy to report the repair	78.7%
Processes and timescales explained	65.0%
Attended when agreed	89.3%
Staff were competent and knowledgeable	91.3%
Staff treated resident as a valued customer	95.0%
First time fix	70.0%

- 5.6 Service standards will be reviewed in the next year (shaped by a conversation with residents about the standards of homes - see section 7) and this will shape the Group's longer term investment plans.
- 5.7 Communal areas
- 5.8 Sanctuary's Estates Maintenance team maintain the vast majority of the communal areas via direct employed staff and a small selection of contractors. Services provided include cleaning, grounds maintenance, window cleaning, arboriculture services and compliance testing.
- 5.9 Standard service specifications are applied to all areas however, these can be adjusted to meet specific scheme requirements.
- 5.10 Service standards are monitored through structured scheme inspections raised through the Group's Customer Service Centre; these are pre-planned over a 12 month period but can also be raised following contact with a resident. In addition, resident led inspections are carried out throughout the year, to provide residents with a means of direct input into service standards.

5.11 The Estates team also carry out additional works that fall outside of the standard specifications; these are raised as work orders via our Customer Service Centre and include works such as fly-tipping and graffiti removal, gutter clearances, cleaning and clearance of empty properties.

6. Complaints

6.1 There are several ways for residents to make a complaint or report an issue: online, by email, by contacting the local office, by phone, by writing (postal) and by social media.

6.2 There are two internal stages to the complaints process:

6.2.1 Stage 1: Frontline resolution: the aim is to resolve these within 10 working days or less.

6.2.2 Stage 2: Investigation: if the complaint isn't resolved to the resident's satisfaction at Front Line Resolution stage, the complaint can be escalated to Investigation. The aim is to undertake the investigation in 20 working days and written response will be sent detailing the outcome.

6.3 When feedback or complaints are received about Sanctuary Housing, the information is used to improve the service provided. For example, comments received about the poor behaviour and attitude of external contractors. As a result, a Code of Conduct was developed, which all contractors are expected to follow. Sanctuary's maintenance staff have also received additional customer service training.

6.4 If a resident is dissatisfied with the response, details can be provided of how they can escalate their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman Service or via a Designated Person.

6.5 Sanctuary is one of a small number of Landlords selected to be an active partner in the Housing Ombudsman's Programme of Engagement. This is a really positive opportunity for the Group to better understand the expectations of the Ombudsman when it comes to complaints handling and any areas that can be further developed.

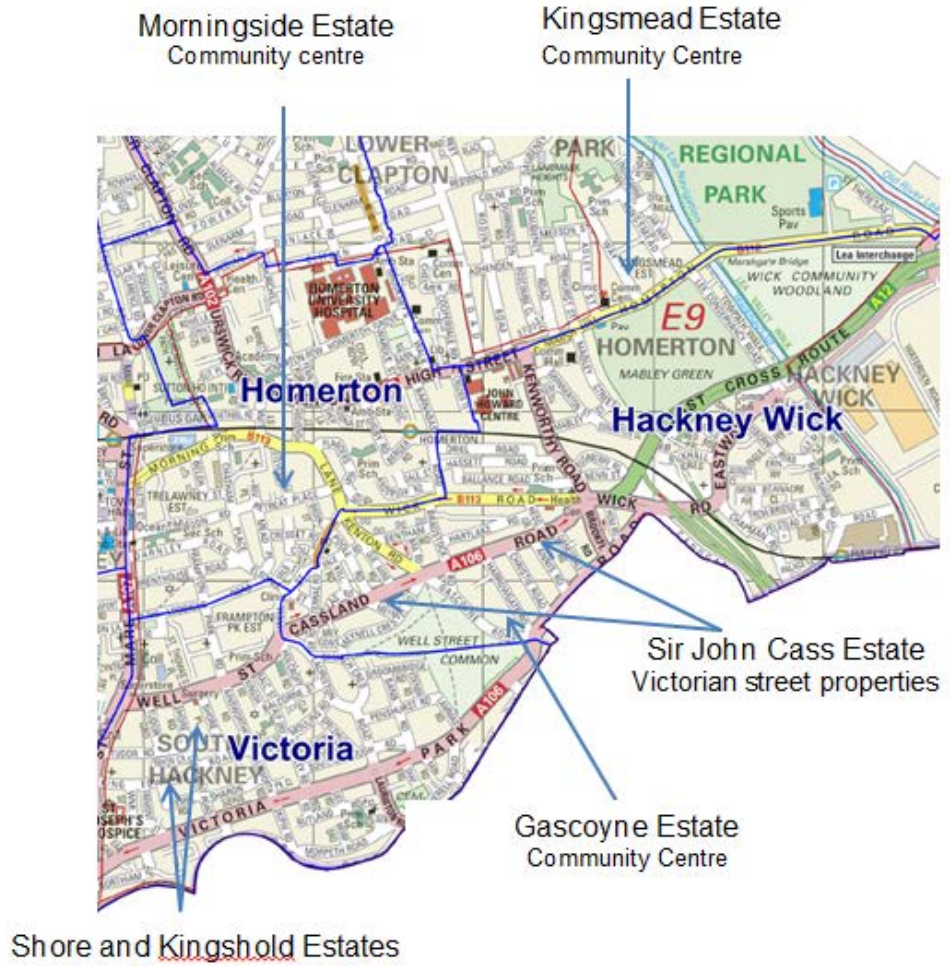
7. Resident scrutiny

7.1 Residents are at the heart of shaping and scrutinising services and Sanctuary's mechanisms to enable residents to do this has been accredited by the external, independent housing consultants Housing Quality Network.

7.2 The scrutiny process takes many forms; principally there is a National Residents' Scrutiny Panel which meets quarterly, with senior housing staff. This is a formal panel meeting where Sanctuary's performance against specific regulatory expectations is monitored, for instance, levels of customer satisfaction or how quickly empty homes are re-let.

- 7.3 The panel also has a practical function to actively review specific areas of service on a task and finish basis or continuously in some areas. This is carried out by groups of residents who are recruited to form 'Communities of Interest'. An example of this is the Procurement Community of Interest, which involves a group of residents who work with the Group Procurement team to establish new service contracts; the group has been involved in looking at selecting a new contractor for lifts in our flats and larger schemes.
- 7.4 There are about 400 resident led estate inspections undertaken across the country each year, where residents inspect an estate with local housing and estate services staff to assess the condition of an estate against the Local Offer to 'make sure your neighbourhood is well maintained'. Kingsmead was inspected in July 2019 and the lead resident reported the estate to be in good condition.
- 7.5 The Group will be launching 'A Conversation with Sanctuary' in 2020, a very ambitious programme of resident engagement to develop a more detailed understanding of the priorities for services and the quality of housing stock from a resident's perspective. This will form the basis of reviewing 'Local Offers' - Sanctuary service standards from 2020 onwards.
- 7.6 In addition to formal resident scrutiny and engagement work, staff regularly meet with and speak to residents' associations and other people in the community about reinvestment plans and other matters that affect the whole community. For example, currently consulting with residents of the Gascoyne Estate on how best to use the disused drying rooms in buildings across the estate and whether these can be converted to additional social rented homes.
- 7.7 The Group are looking at different ways for the three community centres on the Kingsmead, Morningside and Gascoyne estates to be run and are working with a working party of active residents and others in the community to shape a new model.

Map of Sanctuary's homes in Hackney



Local Offers 2017-2020

Home

- If you have an emergency repair, we will respond to you within 24 hours.
- If your repair is not urgent, you will be offered an appointment at a date that suits you.
- If we fail to fix your repair on the first visit to your home, we will give you the date of a further appointment.
- We will make sure your home is safe and compliant with health and safety law.
- We will make sure your home is repaired to the Decent Homes Standard.

Customer service

- We will make it easy for you to contact us if you have a problem or want information or advice.
- If a staff member cannot resolve your query immediately, they will explain the process and the timescale for resolution to you.
- If you have a problem, we will keep you informed regularly of how we are dealing with your query or complaint, and the reasons for any changes.
- If you cannot get through or you leave a message, then someone will call you back within one working day (Monday to Friday).
- Information on the level of service you can expect from us is available on the website.
- We will provide training for staff to ensure they are competent, knowledgeable and treat you as a valued customer.

Neighbourhood

- Make it clear to you what to do if you experience antisocial behaviour.
- Respond within one working day if you report a serious incident.
- Make sure your neighbourhood is well maintained.

Moving home

- If you want to move home, we will help you identify options to meet your needs.

Value for money and governance

- We will provide an annual assessment of performance against plans and objectives.
- We will comply with all relevant legislation and regulation and remain accountable to our residents and partners.
- We will use external credit rating companies to check our performance and make sure we continue to be financially strong.
- Our Group Board is committed to effective leadership and controlling the organisation and supporting residents



Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 16th December 2019 Item 5 – Update on Housing Services’ review of Community Halls	Item No 5
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Outline

During a discussion in July on Housing Services’ support of resident engagement, Members made a number points around the use and management of the Council’s Community Halls.

Members noted that a review of the function was underway, amid recognition that that they are currently an underused asset.

In a letter sent to the Cabinet Member for Housing Services following the meeting, the Commission recognised the challenges around improving the accessibility of our halls - both in relation to financial pressures and around half of our halls being managed by organisations separate from the Council. However, the letter also asked that the review gave consideration to the specific points below.

- How Community Halls will play a role in the delivery of Council and partnership priorities
- How the visibility and accessibility of Community Halls (both those run by the Council and TRAs/TMOs) to community groups and organisations delivering activities will be improved
- How the split between Council-run and TRA and TMO-managed Community Halls will be managed to ensure effective use in all cases, including:
 - Any role for the Council in supporting wider use of all Council-owned Community Halls
 - Any measures to ensure equality of access to all Council Community Halls for all residents
 - How the use of all Halls will be evaluated on an ongoing basis

This item has been scheduled for the Commission to be updated around the outcomes of the Community Halls Review, including the considerations given to the points above.

A set of slides has been provided for the item which appears on pages 37 – 48, along with schematic on page 49 giving an overview of the current booking

process for halls (the level of detail on the schematic may mean this is practically only viewable on electronic versions of the agenda).

Guests expected:

- David Padfield, Interim Director, Housing Services
- Gilbert Stowe, Head of Tenant and Leasehold Services, Housing Services
- Sara Kulay, Project Manager, Housing Transformation, Housing Services

Action

Members are asked to review the papers enclosed, in advance of the meeting. They are asked to hear opening comments from guests and to ask questions around the outcomes from the review of Housing Services' resident engagement function.

Hackney Community Halls Project Update

Sara Kulay, Project Manager, Housing Transformation
Philippa Newis, Senior Delivery Manager, ICT

Living in Hackney Scrutiny Committee - 16th December 2019

- 1. Who are we?**
- 2. What are we doing?**
- 3. Overview of location, stock and use**
- 4. Proposals for improvement**
- 5. What next?**



What are we doing?

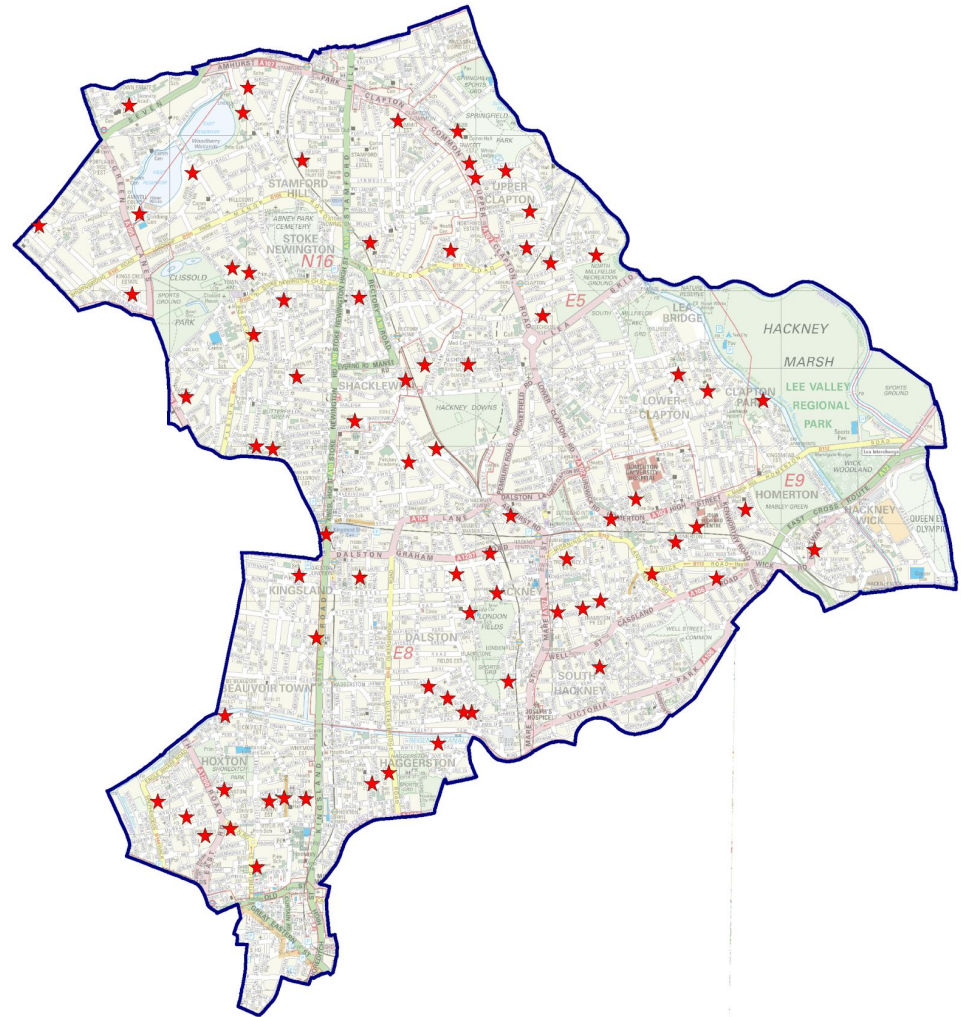
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Housing Services has 87 community hall assets spread across Hackney

There are heavier concentrations in Hoxton, central Hackney and Upper Clapton...

...but most households are within 10 minutes walk of a hall (800m)



Multi functional halls



Larger halls



Smaller, local halls

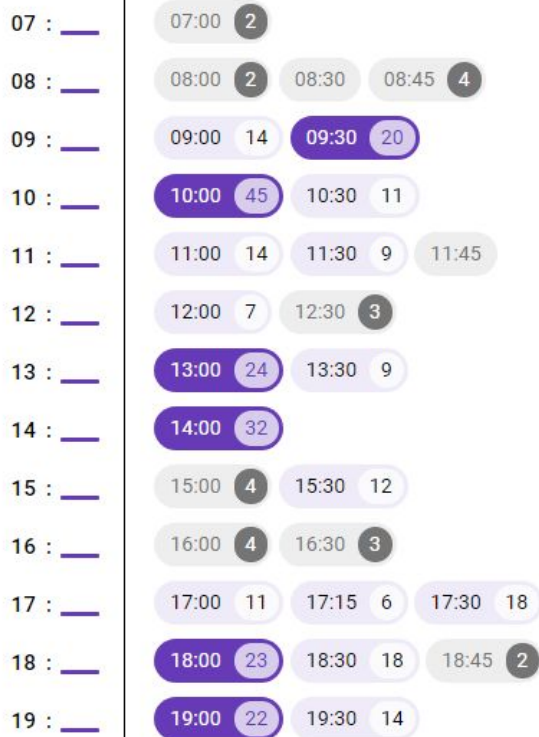


Hackney Managed Halls - bookings by time of day

Time of booking

335 responses

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Start times

Morning:
123 bookings

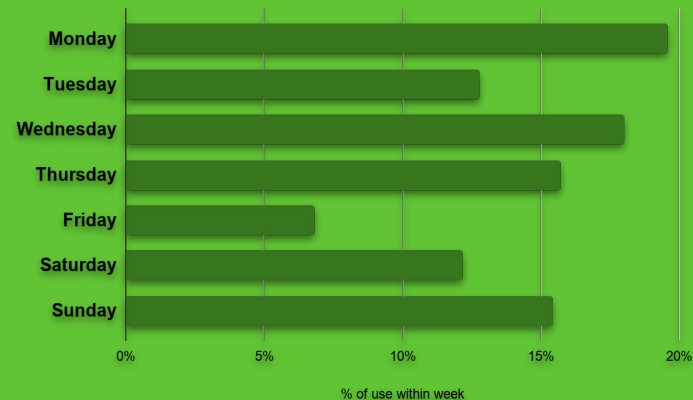
35.8%

Afternoon:
98 bookings

28.5%

Evening:
114 bookings

33.1%



Halls delivery supports corporate priorities...

Page 45

Healthy, active residents

- Fitness Classes
- Healthy Eating
- Just Juice
- Community Lunches

Local Prosperity

- Hackney Works / Employment Fairs
- Construction Training
- IT Training / Silver Surfing Classes

Quality of Life

- Youth Work
- Theatre Groups
- Nursery Provision / Creches
- Social Events

Community Cohesion

- Community meetings /consultation
- Intra-generational activities
- Volunteering
- Celebrating diversity

...but a number of factors reduce use of the halls

- Lack of inclusivity through signage, membership requirements or other 'local' restrictions on use
- Noise complaints and parking issues
- Poor state of repair, with decoration and facilities that do not match modern expectations e.g lack of wifi, audio equipment
- Location / proximity and transport to halls
- Poor booking and hiring experiences.....

Our findings: Visibility

- Hard to find information about community halls both online and offline
- Inaccurate information
- Not the right kind of information
- Over 14,000 unique views online, but 132 online enquiries



Our findings: Getting access

- Pricing is opaque
- Day rate can be a perverse incentive
- Frustration with the time and effort it takes to get answers to enquiries and to make a booking
- Mismatch between the information on disabled access vs reality*
- Difficult to arrange access for viewing and on day of hire



Community halls booking service blueprint - Current state/First time booker

STAGES	Pre-booking						Booking			During room hire			Post Booking				
Customer journey																	
	"I need to arrange a birthday party for my son"	"Where can I host this event?"	"I would like to ask about hiring a community hall"	"Could you tell me more about your community hall spaces?"	"I need to see times to arrange a site visit for me"	"Does this space satisfy my needs?"	"There's a lengthy process for booking halls"	"I'd like to know what all the things that might prevent me from getting my deposit back in full"	"I need to know what it is in the agreement I'm signing"	"I'd like a consistent way to pay for my booking"	"I need to get off for my event"	"I forgot how to lock the hallway"	"I need to clean up and get everything off the hall"	"I got happy to get my deposit back"			
	Learns of the hall by word of mouth. Going to website Booklet. Lives on the estate		Calls the main number to find out more	Speaks with a community hall team member	Arranges a day and time to visit with facilities assistant	Visits site to see if it suits their needs	Fills out booking form and a base through the risk assessment	Calls the community halls team to arrange payment. They might pay all in one go	Signs agreement in person or through an email. Goes over agreement with community halls assistant	Calls the community halls team to arrange payment	Arrives at the appointed time to open the hall	Calls the community halls team out of hours	Co-ordinates with security to close up room	Deposit is returned to their card			
Channel	Website Page In person	Phone	Phone Face to person??	Phone	In person	In person	In person	Over phone In person	Email In person	Over phone In person	In person	Phone	In person	Email			
Touchpoints		Neighbourhood Contact Centre	Community halls assistant	Community halls assistant	Facilities assistant	Facilities assistant	Community halls assistant	Community halls assistant	Community halls assistant	Community halls assistant	Security staff Community halls team	Community halls team member	Security staff Community halls team	Community halls team			
Community Halls Booking team		NCC is the first point of contact for halls	Community halls team takes call	Books a time in the facilities assistant's diary	Shows them the site	Gives them the forms and risk assessment	Fills documentation and updates the calendar	Takes £200 deposit	Prints out agreement	Takes booking fee payment	Arrange security a week before the event	Security goes to open the hall	Security stays for the event	Checkers close the hall	Arranges for deposit to be returned	Review policies in response to incidents	
	"We need to help the booking team manage call volume"	"We spend a lot of time answering FAQs"	"We need to help people make a deposit on the right hall for their event"	"We have several appointments across the borough only"	"We need to make sure people know how to use the halls"	"We need to have records of the booking"	"We can only accept debit cards, cash or cheque"	"We need to ensure the booker is accountable"	"We can only accept debit cards, cash or cheque"	"We need security to be there at the right time"	"It's too busy handing out keys to users"	"This event requires security to be present"	"Security does a risk assessment check of the state and closure up"	"We need to have the hall ready for the next booking"	"Everything checked out fine"	"We need to change the policy to prevent that from happening again"	
	As NCC agent helps the call before it goes to the booking team	Community halls assistant answers questions about facilities, availability and the process of booking a hall	Community halls assistant estimates a day and time in the facilities assistant's diary for a site visit	Facilities assistant meets them at appointed time and gives them a tour	Facilities assistant assists them in filling out the booking form, walks them through the risk assessment and gives them the forms and conditions	Community halls assistant fills paper forms, fills out digital forms, and updates the calendar with date and number amount of people and events	The community halls assistant generates a receipt and then signs an agreement. Goes over it with them in person, then hands each piece of info. Sets them to be a photo of the front page because it has the contact number - security's number	Community halls assistant generates a receipt and then signs an agreement. They update the calendar to be confirmed booking	Community halls assistant makes a contract to book with the customer. They update the calendar to be confirmed booking	Community halls assistant makes a contract to book with the customer. Sometimes they need to coordinate times between CDS and the hall	CDS shows up at the appointed time and opens the hall. If they are not available, community halls team might go instead.	Security has been arranged with the booker if it's a single night event	Security checks a risk assessment check of the state and closure up. If CDS is unavailable a team member will go.	Community halls assistant attempts a cleaner to clean room.	Community halls assistant manually arranges for deposit to be returned to the booker	Community halls assistant reviews policy and will put content in place to prevent that from happening again and will communicate to the team the change.	
Systems used		NCC CRM	Chat sheet	Outlook	Paper forms	Outlook, Excel	Outlook, Excel, Pairs	Outlook, Word	Outlook, Excel, Pairs	Outlook, Excel, Pairs				Outlook, Excel, Pairs			
Policy																	
Pain points	There is very little awareness of the community hall spaces available in the borough	Residents prefer calling our other teams. Residents can't find the booking form or email. Residents don't have enough information available to know whether the phone or community halls is the right option for them. We don't know the proportion of those enquiring the NCC are site to website.	There's no easily accessible phone where residents can find the information they need to make an informed decision. Everything is done over the phone so community halls team spends a lot of time answering questions about availability, prices, and policies. Can be difficult to arrange site visit on short notice.	Residents need to take time out of their schedule to make site visits. They have to make several days. Some people don't have facilities so that when they arrive they don't have what they need.	If too much time has passed they will forget what they've been told. Sometimes it's not clear what is needed to make a booking so they need to call again.	Sometimes the forms they fill in are information that they have already provided. Paper forms are very manual so it's hard to input information in multiple places more than once. Not knowing what their deposit can be withheld for. Some people don't have enough money to set down for a deposit.	Sometimes there is a bit of back and forth to get the deposit can be split because some people don't say on time. People struggle to get through to the community halls team to do. They don't like to credit card. Some local organisations don't have an account. There is no direct debit option so the team has to chase payment each month from long term hires.	Team spends a lot of time answering questions because some people don't say on time. People struggle to get through to the community halls team to do. They don't like to credit card. Some local organisations don't have an account. There is no direct debit option so the team has to chase payment each month from long term hires.	They have to send the hall key to the booker. It's not always clear what changes to book. They have to send the hall key to the booker. It's not always clear what changes to book. They have to send the hall key to the booker. It's not always clear what changes to book.	Sometimes security isn't available during the risk assessment. It's 7pm on Monday but it's a lot of people but not enough people to go through. Halls aren't accessible for events and some people find that a space is inaccessible. There is not enough accessibility information for halls and the info there is misleading. The hall is ready.	Sometimes people forget what they did during the risk assessment. I.e. we get locked out of the hall closing. Sometimes people violate the terms and conditions. Don't turn the bins out, etc. Hires want later hours but don't understand the reasons why it needs to be closed early. Some hires overrun.	Sometimes there not enough time between the last event and the next event for cleaners to clean.	Occasionally deposits are not refunded when they should be. It's not an automatic process for the deposit to be returned. The booking team has to deal with difficult residents. Sometimes they get a lot of complaints from hires which results in having to give discounts or refunds.	It's time consuming to investigate complaints, especially those that are complex. The booking team has to deal with difficult residents. Sometimes they get a lot of complaints from hires which results in having to give discounts or refunds.			
Opportunities		HMM help residents become aware about what is at their disposal	HMM help residents get the information they need themselves	HMM help residents help themselves to make decisions	HMM make it more convenient for residents and the booking team to arrange site viewing?	HMM use email that expectations are managed and bookers know what is expected of them?	HMM make it easier for hires to lose admin?	HMM make it easier to keep track of booking information and also do less admin?	HMM make it easier for hires to review and sign the agreement.	HMM use make it easier for people to pay for hires by card?	HMM use make it easier for people to pay for hires by card?	HMM make sure everyone knows the level of accessibility	HMM help residents understand the reasons behind the site.	HMM make sure that the hall is clean for the next booker?	HMM make sure that money is returned in a timely manner?	HMM make it easier for the team to return a deposit and have less admin?	

Proposals For Improvement

Space Bank - Direction of Travel

Ten proposals ranging from 'tweaks' to significant investment, including:

- Improving on-line / off line promotion
- Online booking and payments
- Adding basic availability information to the website
- Increasing pricing transparency
- Online video guide for bookers
- Trialling remote access
- Improving support for long-term hirers

What works - prioritising, developing, trialling and testing with the community halls team and service users

Community Halls Project - Direction of Travel

Proposals to improve use / accessibility through:



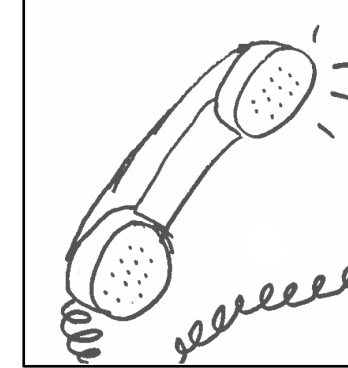
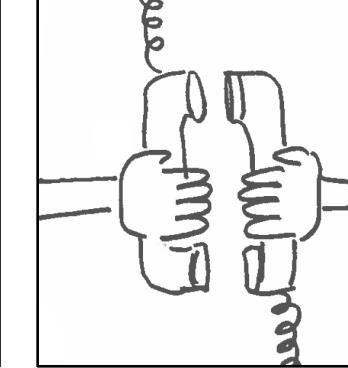
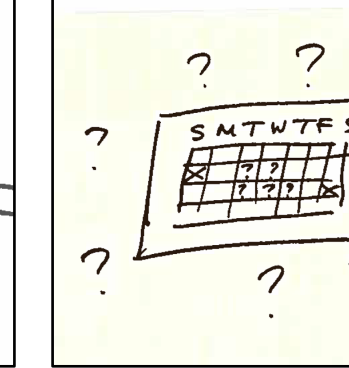
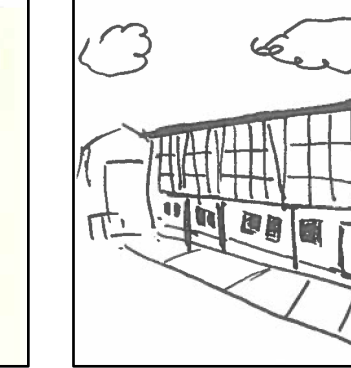
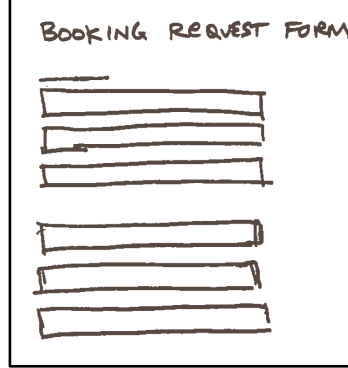
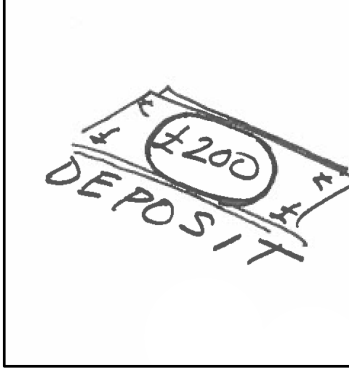
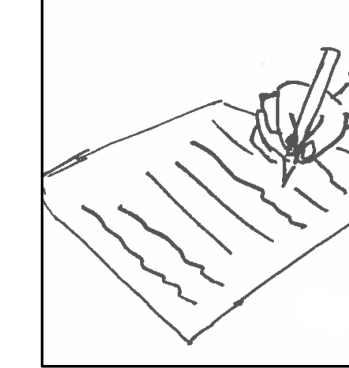




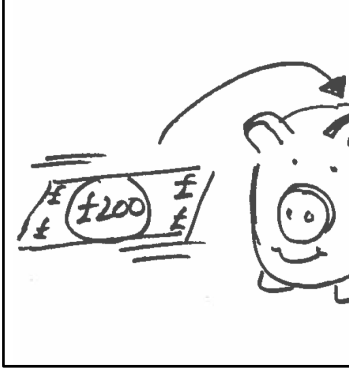


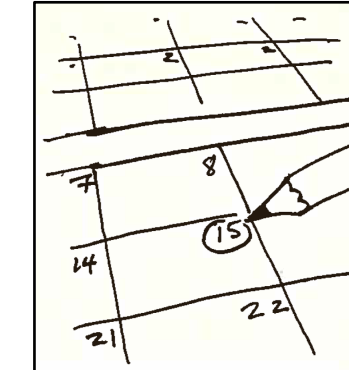

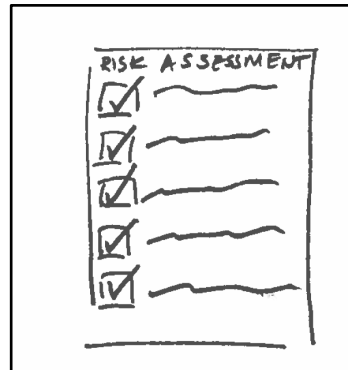
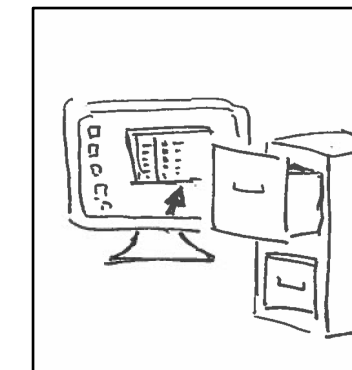
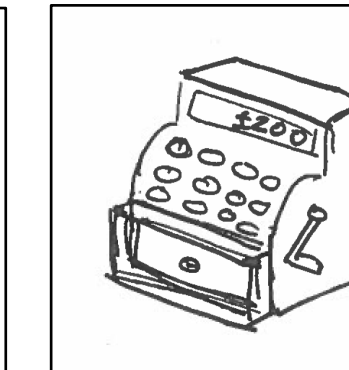
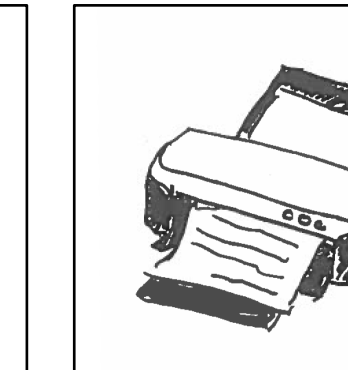
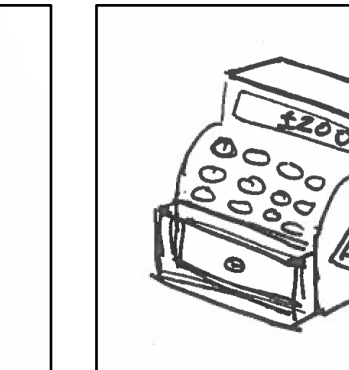
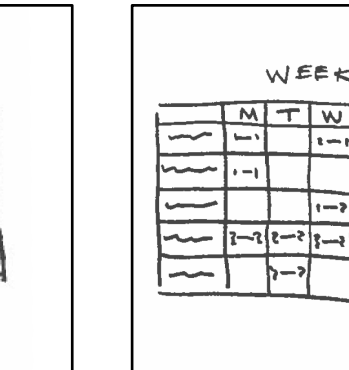
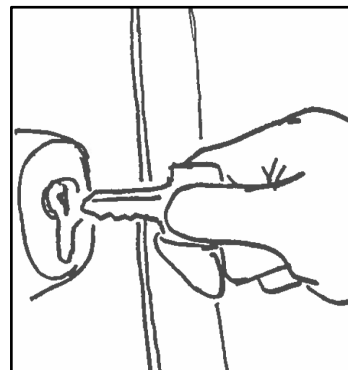


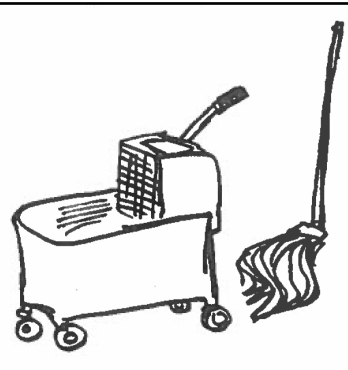

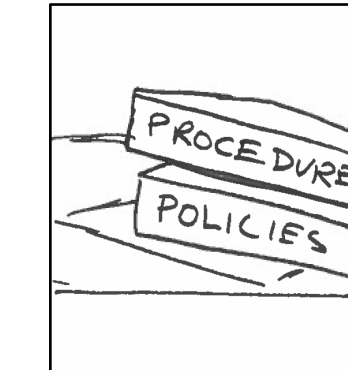
- Improved maintenance, linked to the seven year investment strategy
 - Working with London School of Architects on student design project
- Roll out of free fibre wifi connections to community halls
- Better regulation of local management arrangements - creating a framework of rights / responsibilities
- Improving support for 'local managers' e.g. linking to community networks, funding opportunities, more shared learning events
- Strengthening performance management arrangements

Community halls booking service blueprint - Current state/First time booker

Front stage

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Back stage

STAGES	Pre-booking						Booking				During room hire			Post Booking			
Customer journey	 A booker has an event to plan "I need to arrange a birthday party for my son"	 Looks for an event space "Where can I host this event?" Learns of the hall by: Word of mouth Going to website Booklet Lives on the estate	 Calls the main number to ask about halls "I would like to ask about hiring a community hall"	 Is transferred to the Community Halls Team "Could you tell me more about your community hall spaces?"	 Co-ordinates a site visit "I need to take time to arrange and visit the site"	 Goes to the site on day of appointment "Does this space satisfy my needs?"	 Fills out and submits relevant forms "There's a lengthy process for booking halls"	 Pays £200 deposit "I'd like to know upfront the things that might prevent me from getting my deposit back in full."	 Signs agreement "I need to know what is in the agreement I'm signing"	 2 weeks before the event pays the booking fee in full "I'd like a convenient way to pay for my booking"	 Shows up for event "I need to set up for my event"	 Runs event "I forgot how to turn on the heating"	 Clears up and co-ordinates with security "I need to clean up and get everything out of here"	 Gets deposit back within 14 days "I am happy I've gotten my deposit back"	Deposit is returned to their card		
Channel	Website Print In person	Phone	Phone Email <i>in person??</i>	Phone in person	In person	In person	Over phone In person	Email In person	Over phone In person	In person	Phone	In person	Email				
Touchpoints		Neighbourhood Contact Centre	Community halls assistant	Community halls assistant	Facilities assistant	Facilities assistant	Community halls assistant	Community halls assistant	Community halls assistant	Security staff/ Community halls team	Community halls team member	Security staff/ Community halls team	Community halls team				
Community Halls Booking team		 NCC is the first point of contact for halls "We need to help the booking team manage call volume"	 Community halls team takes call "We spend a lot of time answering FAQs"	 Books a time in the facilities assistant's diary "We need to help people make a decision about the right hall for their needs"	 Shows them the site "We have several appointments across the borough daily"	 Gives them the forms and risk assessment "We need to make sure people know how to use the halls"	 Files documentation and updates the calendar "We need to have records of this booking"	 Takes £200 deposit "We can only accept debit card, cash, or cheque."	 Prints out agreement "We need to ensure the booker is accountable"	 Takes booking fee payment "We can only accept debit card, cash, or cheque."	 Arrange security a week before the event "We need security to be there at the right times"	 Security goes to open the hall "It's too risky handing out keys to hirers"	 Security stays for the event "This event requires security to be present"	 Security checks the state of the room and closes up "I need to make sure that everything is in order"	 Cleaners clean the hall "We need to have the hall ready for the next booking"	 Arranges for deposit to be returned "Everything checked out fine"	 Review policies in response to incidents "We need to change the policy to prevent that from happening again"
Systems used		NCC CRM	Cheat sheet	Outlook		Paper forms	Outlook, Excel	Outlook, Excel, Paris	Outlook, Word	Outlook, Excel, Paris	Outlook, Excel, Paris		Outlook, Excel, Paris				
Policy																	

Pain points	There is very little awareness of the community hall spaces available in the borough Residents don't have enough information available to know whether community halls is the right option for them. We don't know the proportion of phone enquiries the NCC are able to resolve.	Residents prefer calling over other forms of contact like filling out booking forms or email. Residents don't have enough information available to know whether community halls is the right option for them.	There's no easily accessible place where residents can find the information they need to make an informed decision. Everything is done over the phone so community halls teams spend a lot of time answering basic questions about availability, prices, and facilities.	Residents need to take time out of their schedule to make site visits. This can be inconvenient if they have to make multiple visits across several days. Can be difficult to arrange site visit on short notice, so it might take a while to take place.	If too much time has passed they will forget what they've been told. Sometimes it's not clear what is included with the facilities so that when they arrive they don't have what they need.	Sometimes the forms they fill in is information that they have already provided.	Paper forms are very manual so they have to input information in multiple places more than once.	Not knowing what their deposit can be withheld for upfront. Some people don't have enough money to put down for a deposit.	Sometimes there is a lot of back and forth if it's done over email because the forms can be quite lengthy. Any other pain points? Is this the right order? Payment or agreement first? Payment and deposit all in one go or are they separate?	Team spends a lot of time chasing payments because some people don't pay on time. People struggle to get through to the community halls teams to pay. They don't take credit card. Smaller organisations don't have an expense account. There's no direct debit option so the team has to chase payment each month from long term hirers.	They have to send the times a week in advance so changes at short notice will result in a lot of admin between security and hirer.	Sometimes security isn't available during times requested. (5-7pm on weekdays or times that are popular, not enough people to go around) Halls aren't accessible for everyone and some guests find that a place is inaccessible. There is not enough accessibility information for hosts and the info there is misleading. The hall is messy.	Sometimes people forget what they told during the risk assessment, i.e. will get locked out if they leave. Sometimes people violate the terms and conditions. Sometimes hirers won't have time to set up for the event if they can't open early enough.	Sometimes people forget what they told during the risk assessment, i.e. will forget what to do when closing. Sometimes hirers will leave the venue a mess. Don't take the bins out, etc. Hirers want later hours but don't understand the reasons why it needs to close early. Some hirers overrun.	Sometimes there not enough time between the last event and the next event for cleaners to clean. It's not an automatic process for the deposit to be returned.	Occasionally deposits are not refunded when they should be. It's not an automatic process for the deposit to be returned.	It's time consuming to investigate complaints, especially noise complaints. The booking team has to deal with difficult residents. Sometimes they get a lot of complaints from hirers which results in having to give discounts or refunds.
Opportunities	HMW help residents become aware about what is at their disposal	HMW help residents get the information they need themselves?	HMW help residents help themselves to make decisions?	HMW make it more convenient for residents and the booking team to arrange site viewings?	HMW we ensure that expectations are managed and bookers know what is expected of them?	HMW make it easier for hirers to do less admin?	HMW make it easier to keep track of booking information and also do less admin?	HMW make it easier for hirers to review and sign the agreement.	HMW we make it easier for hirers to pay?	HMW reduce the amount of admin for arranging opening and closing.	HMW we make it easier for people we trust to access the halls.	HMW we make it easier for people we trust to access the halls.	HMW help hirers understand the reasons behind the rules.	HMW make sure the hall is clean for the next booker?	HMW make sure that money is returned in a timely manner?	HMW reduce the number of complaints between the residents and hirers?	

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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 16th December 2019 Item 6 – Housing Services support of resident engagement – update on review	Item No 6
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Outline

In its July meeting the Commission explored the work of Housing Services' Resident Participation Team. This included the history of the function, the activities delivered, the resources in place, recent successes, and areas for potential improvement moving forward.

It was timed so that Members could hear about current approaches and give views around possible change, prior to a review of the function taking place over the summer.

Following that item the Commission wrote to the Cabinet Member for Housing Services, setting out its findings and making 11 recommendations which it hoped could help shape the review.

This item has been scheduled for Members to be updated on the review.

A paper has been provided for the item which appears on pages 57 – 70.

Guests expected:

- David Padfield, Interim Director, Housing Services
- Gilbert Stowe, Head of Tenant and Leasehold Services, Housing Services

Action

Members are asked to review the papers enclosed, in advance of the meeting. They are asked to hear opening comments from guests and to ask questions around the outcomes from the review of Housing Services' resident engagement function.

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<p>Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission</p> <p>16 December 2019</p> <p>Housing Services support of resident participation and engagement – update from 15 July 2019 meeting</p>	<p>Item No</p> <p>6</p>
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1. CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report presents an update to the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission on the approach to supporting engagement and participation for tenants and leaseholders within Housing Services. It includes a response to the 11 recommendations raised by the Commission to the Cabinet Member for Housing Services in the letter of 14 August 2019.
- 1.2 An update will be given on the progress of the review of the structure of the Service and development of a new Resident Engagement Strategy for Housing Services.
- 1.3 We are not able to give final outcomes of the review to Members at this stage as the review is still ongoing. However, considerable work has been completed and will help inform residents, staff and stakeholders on the improvements needed to achieve strong and meaningful engagement with tenants and leaseholders.

2. TENANT PARTICIPATION ADVISORY SERVICE 'SMART REVIEW'

- 2.1 In August 2019 the Interim Head of Resident Participation and Communities commissioned an independent, expert body, the Tenant Participation and Advisory Service (TPAS), to carry out a 'Smart Review' exercise, which assesses how Hackney Housing Services is performing against six National Engagement Standards in terms of engagement and participation with those residents living in Council managed homes.
- 2.2 This was undertaken in two parts. A desk exercise, where various documents relating to Resident Engagement activities are supplied and measured against a self-assessment framework. Followed by a TPAS consultant meeting with staff that engage with residents, and involved residents themselves, to do a 'reality check' on findings from the desk work.
- 2.3 This exercise was completed in Sept 2019 and the good practice and recommendations made from the review can be found in *Appendix 1*.
- 2.4 It is proposed that the findings from this will be used, alongside feedback from other sources including the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission to help agree a resident consultation plan that identifies key priorities for involved (as

well as 'less involved') residents and results in a new Resident Engagement Strategy for Housing Services for the next 3 years.

- 2.5 Following the Resident Liaison Group (RLG) meeting on 14 November 2019, a working sub-group of RLG has been agreed, who will work in co-production with Housing Services Officers and the Council Senior Consultation Officer (Housing) to develop the new Strategy.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SCRUTINY COMMISSION:

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Commission letter of 14 August 2019 to the Cabinet Member for Housing Services recommended;

3.2 ***Recommendation 1 - That the Head of Tenant and Leasehold Services leads on the development of a Resident Participation Team Service Plan. That this sets out and monitors progress against a set of objectives and success measures. That the objectives and success measures are informed in part by the discussions in the July meeting (recommendations 2, 4, 6 and 10 cover the specific measures / aspects suggested by the Commission), and the wider consultation with stakeholders.***

- 3.3 As requested, the service is currently developing a new Resident Participation (RP) Service Plan which will set out key priorities and objectives in line with the improvement of engagement services across the whole of Housing Services. This Plan will, as recommended, clearly state what success measures are expected, responsibilities for delivery and realistic timescales to achieve success.

- 3.4 It is recognised that improvement is needed to the systems and processes underpinning the formal engagement functions, as well as improvements to the knowledge and skill set of those directly engaging and communicating with tenants and leaseholders on the front-line.

- 3.5 A formal restructure of the RP service is currently in progress with a planned implementation timetable of Spring 2020. Staff consultation closed on 22 November and feedback from this process is currently under consideration.

- 3.6 The TPAS review is the precursor of the new Service Plan which will be developed in conjunction with residents over the next few months as described previously. Work on the Service Plan aligns with development of the new Resident Engagement Strategy for Housing Services.

3.7 ***Recommendation 2 - Targeting unrepresented estates - priority given to those estates in neighbourhoods with relatively lower numbers of TRAs.***

- 3.8 Whilst Tenants & Residents Associations (TRAs) are the mainstay of local formal resident engagement, there is a need to prioritise support and empowerment of currently under-represented estates to engage with Housing Services over service improvements and delivery. In addition to the 40 under-represented estates targeted last year, the new Service Plan will set a

further target for 2020, the outcomes of which will be monitored and measured against set success criteria.

3.9 ***Recommendation 3 - Numbers of registered TRAs within each Neighbourhood and also the numbers of Hackney Housing estates and units within each.***

3.10 The following table provides the total number of residents who fall within each TRAs area of influence. Estates are defined as in our management information system, with those having over 10 tenanted households selected.

Area	Number of TRAs	TRA Population	Estates
Central	13	2366	45
Clapton	13	2274	27
Homerton	19	5159	50
Shoreditch	11	1606	18
Stamford Hill	8	975	30
Stoke Newington	14	2515	44
Total	78	14895	214

3.11 ***Recommendation 4 - The Service Plan for the Resident Engagement Team includes success measures around:***

- ***The scale of engagement and input by tenants and leaseholders in decision-making around RLIB spending (this might include the numbers and percentages attending walkabout sessions and the numbers engaging in online surveys)***
- ***Outcomes achieved through RLIB spending***

3.12 The Resident Led Improvement Budget (RLIB) was introduced in April 2018 in its current format and it is recognised that there is a need to develop the way in which estate improvements are identified, agreed, monitored and delivered.

3.13 As the Scrutiny Commission rightly suggests, one way of promoting this opportunity is through greater public information on the outcomes delivered from the funding being publicised to the local community. We agree with this and it will be added as a measure of success to the Service Plan.

3.14 Other measures of success within the Service Plan will include reviewing the estate walkabout in terms of publicity, times communication and inclusion. Also, making better use of other communication channels for gaining resident input into the priorities on the estate, including social media and other methods of engagement and communication.

3.15 ***Recommendation 5 - We recommend that details of improvements delivered by the RLIB are made available on myhackney.org and are included in wider RLIB communications with an aim of seeking to engage more tenants and leaseholders in the process.***

3.16 The restructure of the RP team and the re-defining of staff roles and responsibilities will assist in a focus on promoting and celebrating successful co-production and co-design with residents. Housing Services is seeking to

put Council social housing residents at the heart of everything we do. Working in partnership with tenants and leaseholders to improve the estates where they live is fundamental to engaging in a meaningful way and being inclusive in decision-making at all levels of engagement.

- 3.17 We will work closely with the Council's Communications, Culture and Engagement team to ensure that improvements delivered through the RLIB are publicised as widely as possible to encourage greater engagement by tenants and leaseholders in the process.
- 3.18 ***Recommendation 6 – The Service Plan for the Resident Engagement Team includes success measures around:***
- ***Engagement in the CDF (this might include numbers of applications and the number and values of awards)***
 - ***Outcomes achieved through CDF funding***
- 3.19 The Community Development Fund (CDF) was introduced in its current format in April 2018 and it is again recognised that there is a need to encourage greater take up of this grant. It should be noted that the previous July report stated £95,000 take up in 2018/19. However this figure excluded grant money from both the 'Tenant Levy' and 'Mast Money Underspend'. The inclusive spend figure is in fact approx. **£178,000** - although this is still an underspend against the £342,000 available.
- 3.20 We appreciate the need to publicise this opportunity more widely, using all available media and actively encouraging existing TRAs and Supported Resident Groups to utilise this funding to benefit tenants and communities with as wide a range of social and cultural events and activities as possible.
- 3.21 ***Recommendation 7 - We also recommend that details of activities and events delivered through CDF funding are made available on myhackney.org and are included in wider CDF communications within an aim of seeking to engage more tenants and leaseholders in the process.***
- 3.22 Resident Participation will work closely with the Council Communications, Culture and Engagement team to ensure that projects delivered through the CDF are publicised as widely as possible to encourage greater engagement by tenants and leaseholders in the process.
- 3.23 ***Recommendation 8 - We ask that the update in December includes confirmation of Community Development Fund budgets for 2019/20.***
- 3.24 As stated above, the total CDF budget available for 19/20 is £342,000.
- 3.25 ***Recommendation 9 - We ask that consideration is given to the examples of digital engagement cited in the London Assembly Housing Committee's 'Hearing Resident voices in social housing' report. We ask for feedback on any planned use of digital platforms for engaging residents on Hackney Housing estates.***
- 3.26 The Council's digital housing strategy will be looking at tackling barriers to digital inclusion. This sits alongside the current consultation on the far reaching full-fibre proposals, which look at rolling out full-fibre to the borough

by targeting connections to social housing and there is a commitment in the RP review to explore better use of online engagement tools. The My Hackney 'getting involved page' and Hackney Matters Citizen's panel are under review as part of the TPAS work. The 'Hackney Matters' Online Citizens Panel is the Council's online communication and consultation portal – there are currently approx. 180 tenants, leaseholders and home-owners as members of the Panel - the total citizens on the Panel being around 660. In 2018/19 Members were consulted on everything from ASB, Parks, Parking, Housing issues, Public Realm, Streetscene, etc. Working with the Consultation and Engagement team, we are looking to build up the numbers of tenants & leaseholders regularly taking part in this online forum. This is a valuable resource for engagement and one that Housing Services plans to utilise more in coming years for consultations.

- 3.27 Housing Management are also exploring use of Common Place (the online engagement tool used for Dalston and Hackney Central Conversation and Shoreditch Park). The Council hopes to use this as a smart way of doing place-based engagement on estates that links to wider engagement tools. The planned restructure of the Resident Participation Team will put an emphasis on enabling the 'voice of the tenant' to be heard in all aspects of how we as a landlord deliver services to our residents, and demonstrating that social housing residents are able to influence and scrutinise strategy, policy, standards, approaches and performance targets at different levels within Housing Services. Additionally, engagement is outcome focused and is designed to improve services and communities, as well as provide value for money and transparency.
- 3.28 ***Recommendation 10 & 11 - What wider Council policies and strategies can the Resident Participation Team make key contributions to? / The Service Plan - sets out action and success measures around how these will be contributed to.***
- 3.29 The Resident Participation Team already aligns its work with a number of wider Council strategies, including work on employment, financial inclusion and public health. This was particularly evident at the recent Winter Warmer and Our Homes events where a large number of internal and external partners engaged with residents across a wide range of issues.
- 3.30 The Council pursues a "whole citizen" approach to resident engagement whereby the Housing Revenue Account funds staff within the Council's Corporate Engagement Team to, amongst other things, ensure that the voices of Council tenants and leaseholders are properly represented in consultation work. Further improving this is a priority for the future. Fundamental to this will be making better use of our engagement channels and tools (particularly digital engagement tools) to understand the views and needs of tenants regarding where they live and Council services, which allows the Council to monitor and respond rather than just impose top down corporate strategies.
- 3.31 The Service Plan will set out how the work of the Resident Participation and Communities team will increase its contribution to delivery of wider Council policies and strategies including:

- Hackney Corporate plan / Mayor's Manifesto
- Housing Strategy / Green Infrastructure Plan
- Arts and Cultural Strategy
- Older Persons' Strategy
- Fair Futures Commission / Hackney Works - Employment & Skills / Youth Parliament
- Inclusive Economy Strategy
- Recycling Initiatives
- Public Health Initiatives

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Appendix 1

TPAS SMART Improvement report summary – October 2019

Assessment against TPAS 6 National Resident Engagement Standards.

1 Engagement Strategy

Make sure your tenant engagement links directly to business plan objectives

Good Practice and recommendations:

- ❖ **Hackney Good Practice** – the commitment at Director level and from the Cabinet Member for Housing is outstanding and this is reflected by resource commitment and attendance and full participation at a recent Resident Liaison Group (RLG) away day.

Our recommendations would be:

- To set - **together with residents** /‘co-production’ - a set of SMART objectives that resident engagement will help achieve in the long, medium and short term – these should link to the Council’s corporate strategy, the Community Strategy, data from STAR surveys, the RLG Plan and the Housing Services Plan, and reviewed annually. This will help give Hackney’s Resident Involvement some focus and help reduce the reactive nature of current involvement. This should be around a Resident Involvement Strategy (for Housing), which clearly explains how involvement will work in the Borough with a simple document/web page for every resident to see.
- Set out in this new approach how you will measure the changes as a result of delivering each objective. You need to evidence planned and unplanned changes. Ensure that you measure more than just the numbers involved; Gathering increased evidence and reporting more regularly the impacts to stakeholders, staff and residents will create an ongoing legacy of reassurance.
- Communicate to all residents (not just the involved resident Reps), your plans and involve them in your journey - be open to feedback from residents on how they can help you achieve your vision.
- Ensure that a Building Safety Engagement Strategy and action plan are either drawn up alongside the strategy above, or as part of it in line with current expected regulation following recent national consultation. Ensure residents are part of this process, possibly through a focus group/task and finish approach.
- The strategy should reflect on residents’ views that more meaningful involvement around decision-making and co-production should be developed. This could include a transparent process to involve residents in Housing Services procurement and staff recruitment.

2 Resources for Engagement

Your engagement has got to be resourced to ensure it is effective in delivering planned outcomes

Good Practice and recommendations:

- ❖ **Hackney Good Practice – The Resident Led Improvement Budget (RLIB)** introduced in April 2018 which focuses on genuine physical improvements to communal areas and estates allows genuine resident led decision-making in spending on improvements. Knowledge of the fund is excellent by all stakeholders and at every level and all agreed positive benefits. Examples were well known.

Our recommendations would be:

- Once a strategy, action plan and measurement methodology is agreed with residents, only then can a cost benefit analysis be carried out. I recommend an annual impact assessment is undertaken on each objective (rather than method or Forum), to assess value for money. This should be presented to the RLG and communicated across the Housing Services department.
- Regular budget updates including benchmarking, should form part of the RLG agenda or be devolved to a sub group to increase transparency – this should be shared on MyHackney and in the Tenants Annual Report. These can also be extended to Neighbourhood Panels either as Panel specific budgets, or all involvement, or both.
- The new Resident Involvement Strategy should detail any approach to resident and staff training around engagement and this is an area which needs developing. Property staff need training around customer service, which includes having specific job related conversations with all residents as well as basic involvement skills. Front-line staff could be better utilised to promote involvement options for residents.
- Consider extending staff recognition (certificates) for Good Practice in involvement for non Resident Participation (RP) team staff
- Resident training should start with a training needs analysis of involved residents and the shaping of an annual programme which includes a mixture of internal/external and joint training, (both with other housing organisations and staff/resident mix)
- Publicise annual training more widely as a recruitment mechanism (including recruitment of younger involved residents)
- Consider a small returnable deposit to residents on booking to ensure good attendance
- Consider access for residents to staff training places

- Consider involved residents leading or co-delivery of training such as around the Growing project
- Consider making some training compulsory in return for a grant– groups in charge of large sums of money should undertake training and nobody should be eligible to take the post of Chair without first attending Chair training. They can then be trained to lead or co-produce. Chair training to likely successors (all consolidated in a succession plan)
- Plan networking opportunities for residents and staff – this can include attending free and fee based events, training and conferences (possibly together), as well as inviting nearby social landlords to come and share examples and good practice to all residents meetings.

3 Information and Insight

Utilising the information effectively; Provide access to information at the right level, at the right time, to the right people in the right way

Good Practice and recommendations:

- ❖ **Hackney Good Practice** – *MyHackney* is a good platform for sharing information with residents, but under-used and the Council ‘Hackney Matters’ is a useful consultation tool for all residents – both are a springboard to further develop below.

Our recommendations would be:

- To arrange for a set of guidelines to be drawn up between the Corporate Consultation and the RP Team drawing together different approaches and shared opportunities, (sharing profiling information within GDPR) and learning from consultations and this should be followed up by regular joint meetings to promote greater collaboration
- Share quarterly performance information with Neighbourhood Panels in a meaningful way to drive service improvements
- A future Senior Management away day could focus on the use of data within each service area to improve performance and to improve knowledge outside of each service. This could bring in how residents use data within the RLG and the Resident Scrutiny Group. This could empower RLG/Scrutiny Chairs to discuss their role more.
- The new RI Strategy should set an approach to digital engagement in line with the Council’s Channel Shift Strategy and incorporated into an engagement communication plan worked with relevant officers (Engagement and Communications), to enable social media to be

planned and fed into by Officers. The Council could consider devolving RP social media to the RP team, assuming suitably qualified staff were in place to administer this.

- In addition to the suggestions for outward looking in training as above, resident groups should be encouraged to investigate Best practice – this could be shared by Officers on MyHackney or in a bi-annual briefing, external speakers should be invited to the RLG, any resident events and to Neighbourhood Panels or Tenants & Residents Associations (TRAs).
- Undertake research into why tenants and leaseholders are slow to take up digital engagement and promote usage across all residents and set up a ‘Residents Digital Communications Group’ to shape digital consultations, MyHackney and feed into the newsletter.
- Spend time further developing MyHackney to be an integral part of Resident Scrutiny and Neighbourhood Matters to prevent it being separate to the RP plan
- Consider producing a quarterly briefing to involved residents in hard copy and on MyHackney to feedback the results of involvement and to enable different groups more information.

4 Influence and Scrutiny

Ensure, tenants, leaseholders and communities can influence and scrutinise appropriately

Good Practice and recommendations:

- ❖ **Hackney Good Practice** – The video and article promoting Tenant Management in the Borough is accessible and promotes this option well. <http://hackneylearning.uk/tmo/HackneyTMOs.mp4>
- ❖ The tracking of TRA outcomes from meetings, showing improvements in communication and response is very good. Lastly, the appointment of ‘Champion Senior Managers’ to oversee the Neighbourhood Panels is a useful pro-active commitment.

We would recommend:

- All stakeholders feel that resident scrutiny is not currently working well enough and the Council needs to improve. There needs to be a Senior Management ‘Champion’ for the Resident Scrutiny Panel and the Director of Housing should meet the Panel and reassure them that things will improve moving forward. Clearly, the Panel reporting directly to the RLG is not working and I suggest that this is reviewed to include HSMT in the reporting line. The RLG and HSMT need to monitor the implementation of previous recommendations to ensure

that recommendations that are accepted by Service leads are then implemented and resulting improvements and efficiencies reported back to the Scrutiny Panel, the RLG and more widely, (should be included in the communications plan as above).

- Ensure there is consistent buy in from other services in Housing such as Asset Management, Repairs and Leasehold Services – negotiate service levels within the new strategy and consider agreements to guarantee these
- Provide workshops on the aims of the strategy to service teams outlining their roles and what is expected of them
- Pilot an online platform for leaseholders to increase communication, engagement and reduce high dissatisfaction levels
- Assist formal groups (particularly Panels) to set annual forward plans and focus on key outcomes, (flexible to allow some change) that feed into an overarching action plan for RP that focuses on improvement across all service areas.
- Consider introducing an annual “Lessons learnt” item from complaints to the RLG
- Consider capturing the level of support needed by TRAs in different stages and providing a service standard, in partnership with residents.

5 Community Engagement

Engage with communities and local stakeholders to develop projects and plans to meet jointly identified needs

Good Practice and recommendations:

- ❖ **Hackney Good Practice** – Bottom up – resident led projects are well supported from the examples given to the TRA led activities and Community Development Fund (CDF).
The Growing / Grow your own projects seems to have met outcomes within the Community Strategy such as reducing isolation, engaging with diverse groups etc.

We would recommend:

- Any new RI Strategy needs to link in with community development activities and projects both outside and within the Council Corporate teams and with outside agencies. The strategy should explain what projects would fit the Council’s priorities and what residents can expect as an ‘offer’.

- Evidence of community activities being planned based on need is required – consultation – outcomes.
- It will be difficult to integrate young people within current structures which are traditional and geared towards older residents – draw up a diversity action plan, alongside the new strategy, to ensure a planned approach to diversity, which includes current corporate approaches, other services such as Repairs, Asset Management, Regeneration etc. on gaining views outside of formal structures.
- Train Involved residents in diversity and inclusion - young people and any innovative ways to include their views in formal engagement.
- Ensure the diversity plan includes arrangements for monitoring of larger involvement activities.

6 Valuing engagement

Ensure your tenant engagement outcomes will benefit stakeholder organisations, tenants, leaseholders and communities

Good Practice and recommendations:

- ❖ **Hackney Good Practice – Devising ‘Enhanced TRA’ (ETRA) monitoring has clearly raised response times to residents and will help build trust – it does need more publicising though.**

Our recommendations would be:

- Once the strategy sets out what you want to achieve and sets involvement objectives across the department and corporately, devise a process which monitors and measures the impact of involvement
- The process should also include resident evidence
- This should be put into an annual impact report and shared with residents
- Feedback, promotion and celebration should be part of an annual communication plan which sits alongside the strategy as detailed above. I would suggest an resident awards event to reward, celebrate and publicise Good Practice from resident led community activities. It should also cover spreading the success stories of involvement around the Council – perhaps a poster campaign in offices, bathrooms and in meeting places, as well as use of the intranet.



- Consider greater publicity of the RLIB to all residents including this within the involvement communication plan and include opportunities for residents to input on social media.
- Improve website on involvement - include stories around successful RLIB/Community Development Fund (CDF) achievements including pictures etc.
- Consider greater use of MyHackney.com and increased use of design and colour – feeding back success, details of RLIB bids and CDF Bids - offer other formats on request.
- Co-produce annual reports regularly with residents – include achievements but also honest appraisals of what has not been achieved and why.



Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 16th December 2019 Item 7 – Council and partnership response to escalation in serious violence review - Draft report	Item No 7
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Outline

For its main review for 2018/19 the Commission explored a number of aspects relevant to an escalation in levels of serious violence, which had been in evidence.

The draft report and recommendations from the review is enclosed. Further to its agreement by the Commission, this will be forwarded to the Executive with a response requested.

Action

Members are invited to review and endorse the report, subject to any amendments agreed in the meeting.

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LIVING IN HACKNEY SCRUTINY COMMISSION**Council and partnership response to escalation in serious violence review – Draft Report**Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission – 13th November 2019

Cabinet - TBC

Council - TBC

Classification**Public****Enclosures****1. FOREWORD**

We set out on this review following an escalation in the most serious levels of violence, both in Hackney and elsewhere.

There are a very wide range of aspects which could have been considered, given the multiple areas with roles to play in preventing and tackling serious violence. Domestic violence is an issue which affects disturbingly high numbers of people. Analysis points to significant shares of violent incidents to be associated with the borough's night time economy. Our review could have explored the Council' and our partners' work in these areas. There are many others.

In the time available we gave significant focus to the work of the Council and its partners to prevent and tackle violence related to gang activity.

Gang activity accounts for very small shares of violent crime. However, gang-flagged crime trends to be more violent in nature. Gang-related activity had also largely accounted for an increase in the most tragic incidents which were in evidence in the lead up to the review.

Hackney's Integrated Gangs Unit (IGU) is delivering excellent work. Its co-located model enables a joined up approach to addressing gang-related violence. We have seen how the unit's focus is on preventing or diverting young people away from involvement in criminal activity, and exploitation by gangs, alongside delivery of enforcement action where this is needed to keep the community safe. Our recommendations here are aimed at enabling more areas to contribute towards supporting the IGU cohort towards positive outcomes.

Looking more broadly than the IGU, we welcome the considered approach of the Council, its partners and the community to the spike in violence which led to this review. We look forward to exploring what the next steps have been here.

On policing, we reach a view that reductions in officer numbers and operational change in local policing did not prevent an effective frontline response to the escalation in violence. However, reductions have left responses like this unsustainable in the longer term, and a reduced local police presence has affected feelings of safety which in itself can be a driver of harmful behaviour.

Greater use of stop and search across London formed an explicit part of the response to the escalation in serious violence. The use of stop and search powers – in particular no suspicion searches – are controversial and a source of concern. It is positive that the police's engagement with the borough's stop and search monitoring groups was reinvigorated under BCU Commander Sue Williams. It is vital that this continues.

Trust and confidence generally must be an area of ongoing focus. Here we also welcome the recent levels of community engagement of the Police. This also needs to continue.

Aside from thanking all of those who participated in the review, I want my final comments to be focused on the hugely positive contributions that the vast majority of our young people are making to life in the borough. This is in particular regard to those community groups who can suffer stigmatisation.

I would like to give specific thanks to the Inspirational Leaders within the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men (YBM) Programme, and to the Youth Leadership Manager supporting them. They are demonstrating and broadcasting the successful lives which the majority of boys and young men in the borough are leading, and are working with the Council and partners to help identify and address barriers where they exist. We hope this report does at least some justice to their level of contribution to the borough, as well as that of the communities they represent.

I would also like to play tribute to the two St Giles Trust workers who spoke articulately and powerfully on their own personal journeys from involvement with the criminal justice system, to being mentors and sources of support for young people. They highlighted the potential for people to turn their lives around and to make invaluable contributions to improving the life chances of others.

I commend this report to the Council

Cllr Sharon Patrick



Chair- Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. We set out on this review in September 2018, following an escalation in the most serious forms of violent crime. This was in evidence both in this borough and elsewhere.
- 1.2. We have given significant focus to the work of the Council and its partners to prevent and tackle violence related to gang activity.
- 1.3. At the outset, it is important to be clear that gang related activity accounts for relatively small shares of overall levels of violent crime.
- 1.4. For London, it accounted for 5% of all knife crime with injury offences in 2016¹. The Community Safety Partnership's latest Strategic Assessment for Hackney found high shares of serious violence to happen in time periods and geographical areas which suggested association with the night time economy rather than street gangs. Domestic violence is also known to account for significant proportions of violence, both nationally² and locally³.
- 1.5. However, it is also the case that gang activity is a driver of some of the most serious forms of violence, and that gang-flagged crime trends to be more violent in nature.
- 1.6. On a London wide level in 2017, 57% of gang related stabbings featured a serious or fatal injury, compared to 34% of non-gang-flagged stabbings⁴. Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) is one of the most serious forms of violence. Hackney's Strategic Assessment found that it accounted for only 3% of all crime in the borough in 2017/18. However, amongst all crime which was gang-flagged, GBH took a 40% share.
- 1.7. We were also aware that gang activity had largely accounted for the upsurge in the most serious and tragic incidents in evidence between November 2017 and early April 2018. That period saw what Officers had stated were six gang related murders in the borough.
- 1.8. This considered, we spent time exploring the work of Hackney's Integrated Gangs Unit (IGU), its links with other service areas, and the tools and methods it uses.
- 1.9. Our review followed soon after Amnesty International released its 'Trapped in the Matrix' report. This was focused on the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS)

¹ [London Knife Crime Strategy](#)

² <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2018-0124/CDP-2018-0124.pdf>

³ It is estimated that 35,000 of our female residents have experienced domestic abuse, and that 6,000 children under the age of 18 have experienced domestic violence in the home³. Domestic Violence also features heavily in cases of serious youth violence specifically³.

⁴ Internal MOPAC analysis cited in MOPAC Gangs Violence Matrix Review

Gangs Violence Matrix. This is defined by the MPS as an intelligence tool used to identify and risk assess gang members in every London borough within an aim of reducing gang-related violence and preventing young lives being lost⁵.

- 1.10. The overall Gangs Violence Matrix is a tool which is owned and managed by the central MPS. There is a local Matrix for each borough. On a daily basis, these local matrices are combined to produce the current, London-wide MPS Gangs Violence Matrix. The lead responsibility for the management of local matrices falls with the local police in each borough.
- 1.11. The Amnesty report made a range of criticisms of the Gangs Violence Matrix, in a London-wide context. These included the measures used to inform who went onto the Matrix, how information was shared within some boroughs and – given this - the adverse effect across a range of areas which being on the Matrix could bring, particularly for those groups who are disproportionately represented on it.
- 1.12. During our review, both the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) reported significant issues around the ways that the Matrix was managed in some cases, although both also found evidence to support the use of such a tool. The MPS is working through an improvement plan in response to these findings.
- 1.13. Hackney's IGU uses the local, Hackney-based, Gangs Violence Matrix.
- 1.14. Given the concerns raised about the tool we explored the measures in place in Hackney to best ensure that people are not added unnecessarily, that data is tightly managed, and that those who are on it are best protected from unwarranted poor outcomes as a result of this.
- 1.15. Multiple areas both inside and outside the Council have roles to play in preventing and tackling serious violence. These go far wider than those represented in the IGU.
- 1.16. Examples include early years, transitions into and beyond different stages of the education system, prevention work to avoid school exclusions, health care provision for young people and young adults, support for parents of both younger and older children and young people, and securing and communicating positive opportunities. Many of these are outside of the Commission's remit.
- 1.17. Going into the review, we were aware that that one of the Council's responses to the escalation in violence had been its hosting of an event involving partners and community leaders.

⁵ news.met.police.uk/news/mps-response-to-amnesty-report-into-gang-matrix-305755

- 1.18. This forum explored the impact of serious violence on young people, communities and the organisations which support them. Four broad areas were identified which were most relevant to the prevention and tackling of the issue.
- 1.19. Following the event, the Council embarked on a detailed mapping exercise to gain a fuller understanding of the provision (be that delivered by the Council or other organisations) in the borough within the four identified broad areas. This was intended to help provide a fuller understanding of what was already in place, and to identify any further work needed. [We explored the broad findings of this exercise.](#)
- 1.20. It was timely to also look at aspects around policing.
- 1.21. Focus is needed on addressing the root causes of violence. However effective enforcement by the police - and its effective engagement of the community - forms a crucial role in the response to incidents, at least in the immediate term.
- 1.22. Local policing has undergone significant operational change.
- 1.23. 12 Basic Command Units (BCUs) have replaced the 32 borough model. Hackney formally joined with Tower Hamlets to form a Central East Command Unit in October 2018.
- 1.24. These changes came at the same time as significant funding reductions and reduced police numbers across the MPS. Prior to our review the Council's own Foot the Bill Campaign highlighted the impact of MPS funding reductions, with Hackney having seen a reduction from 770 Officers to 584 in the 7 years to October 2017, the most severe cut in London⁶.
- 1.25. We explored any affect which these operational changes and funding reductions had on the police's capacity to respond effectively to the spike in violence in Hackney.
- 1.26. In the lead up to the review there had been announcements around increased use of stop and search being one of the measures to tackle escalations in violence⁷.
- 1.27. Most stop and search powers require the police to have reasonable grounds to suspect that the person or vehicle they are searching is carrying particular items.
- 1.28. However, certain powers – when applied – allow for non-suspicion searches. This includes the use of Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order

⁶ More recently, the Government recently announced plans for the recruitment of 20,000 police Officers for England and Wales, by 2022. This rows back on previous reductions of 20,564 Officers amongst police forces between March 2010 and March 2019

⁷ <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/sadiq-khan-reveals-police-will-significantly-increase-stop-and-search-to-tackle-knife-crime-a3736501.html> and <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/942469/London-news-met-police-knife-gun-crime-stop-and-search-powers>

Act 1994 (commonly referred to as section 60 searches), which are searches designed to tackle serious violence. The use of these powers are particularly controversial.

- 1.29. There had been an increase in the use of Section 60 orders on a London wide level at the start of our review. Since the end of it, the Government has made it easier for police forces to use them.
- 1.30. One of the major concerns around stop and search is the disproportionate shares which some communities take of those being stopped.
- 1.31. There have also been long standing concerns around the quality of stop and searches, and the damage done where they are not delivered legally, fairly, and with respect.
- 1.32. We explored stop and search data for Hackney. This included volumes, Section 60 enactments, profiles of those stopped, and positive outcome rates (the shares of stops where offences were detected).
- 1.33. We also looked the work of the police and the community to better ensure good quality interactions. This included hearing from the local groups who lead on the scrutiny of stop and search in Hackney.
- 1.34. Ensuring that stop and search is deployed in an intelligence led and professional way has an important role to play in enabling communities to feel trust and confidence in the police.
- 1.35. However, we also wanted to look more broadly at the work of the police and the Community Safety Partnership in this area. Data highlighted that it should be an area of focus. At the time of scoping the review there had been quite significant reductions in the proportions of Hackney residents reporting positive perceptions of the police, across a range of measures. The scale of these reductions had not generally been replicated on a London-wide level.
- 1.36. Community engagement (in relation to policing) is the process through which citizens and communities are enabled to participate in policing, at the level chosen by them. It ranges from providing information and assurance, to empowering citizens to identify solutions to local issues and to influence priorities and decisions. Evidence shows that effective engagement with the community is one of the ways through which public confidence in policing activity can be increased.⁸
- 1.37. We explored the range of activities being delivered around this currently. We looked at the liaison between the police and the formal engagement mechanisms designed to enable challenge and improvement. We also

⁸ Royal College of Policing

explored other work outside of these mechanisms to build confidence, trust and mutual understanding between the police and community.

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2. SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND OUTCOMES

Summary

- 2.1. The IGU is significantly focused on preventing or diverting young people away from involvement in criminal gang-related activity, and exploitation by gangs. We have heard and seen many examples of this work.
- 2.2. As was stated to us a number of times during the review, serious violence is not an issue which can be arrested the way out of. We fully agree on the need for a focus on addressing the root causes of violence.
- 2.3. However, we were also supportive of the police element of the IGU having helped deliver robust enforcement action, where it was needed to keep communities safe.
- 2.4. We have been convinced of how a co-located model better enables a joined up approach to addressing gang-related violence.
- 2.5. Social media monitoring is one of the tools used by the IGU Intelligence Team. We have a clear view that young people should be able to express themselves freely – including on social media - without risk of repercussion. However, we have also seen that monitoring plays an important role in helping to keep young people and the wider community safe.
- 2.6. Further to the spike in violence in Hackney, we are convinced the IGU played a key role in the reductions seen across a range of violent crime indicators. We play tribute to this.
- 2.7. Quantitative police-reported crime indicators play a key role in measuring the impact of the IGU. However, we welcome the unit's move to develop a broader range of outcome measures. We also heard acknowledgement of the need to improve the recording of information; it was not clear that full data was available to assess the impact of interventions.
- 2.8. We have identified what we feel to be excellent and effective practice by the IGU. However, we were left concerned around what we saw as a lack of transparency. This was in regards to the characteristics of those it works with (the IGU cohort).
- 2.9. The terms of reference for our review stated that 90% of the IGU cohort were aged 18 or over. This understanding was based on background research, papers provided to the Commission, and points made in meetings.
- 2.10. As the review progressed we gained an understanding that the IGU had a greater focus on young people aged under 18, than was made clear at the start of it.

- 2.11. We found that under 18s were the predominant focus of the commissioned services (St Giles Trust, Empower London, and Mentivation) operating within the IGU. This was in reflection of the IGU reaching a view that that this is where these services could have greatest impact. Based on the data provided to us, young people aged under 18 made up between 27% and 52% of the total IGU cohort in March this year.
- 2.12. It is positive that the IGU works with young people aged under 18. This work is fundamentally focused on protecting young people from exploitation and harm, and supporting them to towards more positive lifestyles. It is also important to put the IGU's work in context; it works with a tiny fraction of the borough's under 18s (and adults also). We support the unit using their specialist experience to deliver prevention and diversion for some under 18s, alongside the services in the Council's Children and Families Service.
- 2.13. However, if the lack of clarity which we encountered was replicated elsewhere, this could hinder a joined up response to issues. It is important that all those with roles to play in supporting people to move away from harmful behaviour – (including those being supported by the IGU) have clear information to enable this. Evidence does suggest the misconception we had to extend wider than this Commission, into areas directly relevant to helping to improve outcomes for those in the cohort.
- 2.14. We found the links between the IGU and the Children and Families Service to be effective and improving. However, having seen the practical benefits of a co-located model, we see room for further representation of Children and Families service, inside the IGU.
- 2.15. We heard the challenges IGU partners face in securing settled accommodation for individuals being released from custody. This is a major and long term issue, going wider than Hackney. The shortage of housing for ex-offenders is replicated with shortages for all groups, in what is a housing crisis.
- 2.16. The Council is embarking on a review of its lettings policy. During our scrutiny of this, we will explore the housing support provided to ex-offenders. This is in relation to any specific regard applied to ex-offenders in allocations of social housing, and any wider housing related support available to this group and the pathways to accessing this.
- 2.17. Other providers of housing in the borough have roles here also, and we will intend on asking the same questions of Housing Associations.
- 2.18. Mental ill health is a common issue among both children and adults in the IGU cohort. We did not explore provision in detail, but arrangements for ensuring support for those aged under 19 appear sound.
- 2.19. For those aged 19 and over, we ask for assurance around the referral pathways in place setting out when the IGU will seek mental health support, and the routes it will take to doing so.

- 2.20. In the longer term, we feel there should be a mental health specialism inside the IGU⁹. This would better enable needs to be met at early stages and for our NHS partners to take fuller roles in tackling some of the drivers of serious violence.
- 2.21. Turning 19 does not automatically bring an end to one life development stage, and the start of another. This brings a need to review models of service and care which typically change at this time¹⁰. We suggest that the relevant Scrutiny Commission explores the differences in mental health provision for children and adults.
- 2.22. A significant share of the IGU cohort is made up of black boys and young men. Evidence shows that tailored approaches can provide more effective pathways to mental health care for this community group, in cases where it is needed. This is due to cultural and structural barriers which can make traditional routes less accessible. We note the effective pilot led by the East London NHS Foundation Trust which delivered support in community settings. We ask for an exploration around whether and how learning from this pilot can be applied within the IGU.
- 2.23. We heard about the barriers to employment faced by many in the IGU cohort, sometimes due to a lack of readiness to access the types of opportunities available.
- 2.24. We know the Council is playing a very active role in increasing employment opportunities and pathways to them, including for more vulnerable groups who may be further away from the labour market.
- 2.25. We ask that any future pre-apprenticeship programmes by the Council include the IGU cohort within any ring-fencing arrangement.
- 2.26. The lack of accessible work opportunities for often vulnerable, ex-offenders, is a well-known barrier to rehabilitation generally. We ask that the relevant Scrutiny Commission looks how the Council and its partners are working to provide and employment and skills support.
- 2.27. On a London wide level, there tends to be between 3,000 and 4,000 people on the MPS Gangs Violence Matrix at any given time. There were 118 individuals on the Gangs Violence Matrix for Hackney, in March 2019.

⁹ If enacted, one of our recommendations would see greater involvement of the Children and Families Service within the IGU which we would hope would include the Clinical Service offering specialist psychological support to children aged up to 19 and their families.

¹⁰ There are complexities to this. In some cases, young adults are entitled to higher levels of support, beyond age 18. This includes care leavers (the definition of which has been extended to cover young people having spent a 13 weeks or more in custody), and those with learning disabilities. On this point, we heard that IGU played an active advocacy role in encouraging eligible young people to utilise this support.

- 2.28. The reviews by Amnesty, the ICO and MOPAC confirmed significant shortcomings in some boroughs around an open sharing of Matrix information. However, on data management processes in Hackney, it is not an exaggeration to state the Commission found them to be exemplarily. In March 2019, the MPS was not sharing Matrix information with any boroughs, given concerns on information management arrangements. Hackney was the single exception to this. This was due to the strengths of the processes in place, and its model being one of best practice.
- 2.29. We also received high levels of assurance around the measures in place to ensure that people were only added to the Matrix when there was corroborating evidence to support this, and that people were removed as appropriate.
- 2.30. There are clearly issues with the Gangs Violence Matrix, particularly on a MPS-wide basis. There is a need to ensure that the stringent data management processes which are in place in Hackney, are in place elsewhere also. There are community concerns about the tool, including in this borough.
- 2.31. This said, evidence points to it having long term positive impacts, including in levels of offending and victimhood. Despite our concerns we have reached a view that an intelligent model is required to identify those at risk so that interventions can be delivered for them.
- 2.32. The ways that the term 'gang' is sometimes used can marginalise communities. This view appeared to be shared by Council staff in the IGU, and by the police. We ask the Council to consider changing the name of the IGU, in consultation with the community.
- 2.33. Our review found the Council to have responded to a spike in violence in a considered way, within an approach of joint reflection with partners and the community. We welcomed the detailed mapping exercise which has enabled a fuller understanding of relevant provision in the borough, and the identification of areas where work across all partners was needed.
- 2.34. We see the challenge now to be ensuring continued focus on this area, and achieving a joined up response.
- 2.35. For the Commission, an aspect which particularly resonated was the crucial need to appreciate the fear and potential harm which could come from overstating issues. We must not shy away from an issue which needed to be addressed. However, there is also a need to give context.
- 2.36. Recognising and celebrating the hugely positive contributions which the vast majority of our young residents are making to life in Hackney, helps with this. This is particularly important for those community groups suffering from stigmatisation.

- 2.37. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Commission were humbled by the input into the review of some of the Inspirational Leaders within the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men (YBM) Programme.
- 2.38. Taking the words of our own Chief Executive, we saw how they are creating a movement around setting examples, supporting their community, and working with public bodies to help them identify and deliver the improvements needed.
- 2.39. We saw how they are demonstrating and broadcasting the successful lives which the majority of boys and young men in the borough are leading, therefore raising hope and aspirations. This provides an effective response to the negative connotations and racist stereotypes sometimes associated with young black men. We heard examples of work to set up businesses and enable the involvement of the community in these, and their mentoring and supporting of young people.
- 2.40. We also heard about some of the barriers to opportunities and positive outcomes. We welcomed the response of the Council's Chief Executive to these points, which committed to ongoing engagement.
- 2.41. In our view the reduction in police officer numbers (nor the move to the BCU model) did not prevent the police from delivering an effective immediate, frontline response to the spike in violence which had been seen in Hackney prior to our review.
- 2.42. However, evidence points to the reduction in police capacity meaning that responses such as these are unsustainable in the longer term.
- 2.43. Evidence also suggests that the reductions in the police's local presence has impacted on the capacity of the police to provide reassurance to the community and to prevent incidents occurring or escalating.
- 2.44. The stepping up of stop and search on a MPS wide level has been replicated in Hackney. Stop and search and the use of section 60 formed an explicit part of the response to the spike in violence seen in the borough.
- 2.45. Hackney's local monitoring groups are playing a vital and important role in holding the police to account around their deployment of stop and search. However, their success in doing so is fully dependent on effective engagement with them by the police.
- 2.46. It is vital that the BCU's current levels of engagement on stop and search is maintained.
- 2.47. It is for the monitoring groups to scrutinise the use of stop and search powers by the police. However, this Commission will seek to re-establish annual updates on stop and search activity, the engagement between the police and monitoring groups, and the outcomes of this. We hope that this can help better ensure on-going engagement.

- 2.48. Looking more broadly than stop and search, data for Hackney highlights that trust and confidence in the police needs to be a key area of focus. We found the BCU to share the Commission’s concern in this area.
- 2.49. Evidence shows that effective community engagement is one of the ways through which public confidence in policing activity can be increased. We heard and were impressed by the range of work in this area. We were left with a view that the level of engagement of the community by the police was very positive, at the point of our review.
- 2.50. We pay tribute to the reinvigorated community engagement which the BCU Commander Sue Williams put in place under her leadership. We also thank community groups whose work has been crucial in enabling this. These groups clearly have the capacity to challenge the police on behalf of the community, and to be an effective bridge between them.
- 2.51. The challenge now is to ensure that this reinvigorated engagement is maintained and built upon.

We make 16 recommendations

<p><u>Recommendation 1 – Development of Outcome measures for the Integrated Gangs Unit</u></p> <p>We ask that the next update to the Commission on the on the Community Safety Partnership Plan includes detail on the revised outcome measures for the IGU, the reasoning for them, and progress against these at that point.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 2 – Improved information management of ‘non-live’ cases</u></p> <p>Full information did not appear to be at hand on what we would define as ‘non-live’ cases’ – those individuals which the IGU had previously worked with but no longer did so.</p> <p>Further to our questions, we heard that the issues would be addressed, including via a review of the referral process which would enable the IGU to provide a greater insight into the sources of referrals, and the results delivered following these. We ask that an update on this work is provided.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 3 – Greater transparency on the approach of the IGU, the cohort it works with, and how partners can support the work to achieve better outcomes</u></p> <p>We suggest that a starting point for this would be the creation of a dedicated page for the Integrated Gangs Unit, on the Council’s website. This appears to be a gap currently, compared with some other boroughs with Integrated Gangs Units – for example Westminster and Islington.</p>

We feel this should provide details on its work and approaches, non-identifying information on the broad profile of the cohort, any common challenges faced, and the roles which other services and partners can play in helping to address these.

Recommendation 4 – Greater representation of Children and Families Services in the IGU

Children aged under 18 make up a significant and increasing share of the IGU cohort. We have heard about the practical benefits of a co-located model, with a range of services based in the same office.

We feel that fuller involvement of Children and Families inside the IGU could enable more effective utilisation of the preventative resources in both areas. We saw the positive impacts achieved from part of the (Children and Families') Youth Justice service being colocated in the unit.

We heard about successful join up between the IGU and Children and Families generally; for example in the Contextual Safeguarding Project. However, we feel there is room for a greater co-location of services inside the IGU.

We ask that the potential for this is explored by the Executive Members with responsibility for Community Safety and the Children and Families Service.

Recommendation 5 – For the IGU to report back on mental health services referral pathway for young adults in the IGU cohort

With no dedicated mental health resource currently based within the IGU, we see the need for assurance around the referral pathways in place setting out the scenarios in which the IGU will seek mental health support for young adults in its cohort, and the routes that it will take to doing so. This assurance should be provided in the form of a formal referral pathway being shared with us.

The East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) provides community and inpatient mental health services to children, young people and adults in Hackney. We feel that the referral pathway should be developed in partnership with ELFT, and that regular reviews should be carried out to monitor its effectiveness in brokering mental health support for those within the cohort.

Recommendation 6 – ELFT as partner in IGU

In the longer term, we feel there should be a mental health specialism inside the IGU¹¹.

¹¹ If enacted, one of our recommendations would see greater involvement of the Children and Families Service within the IGU which we would hope would include the Clinical Service offering specialist psychological support to children aged up to 19 and their families.

We have seen the benefits of a co-located, IGU model. We have also heard about the prevalence of mental health issues among those in the cohort, both among those aged up to 19 and those above this.

We ask that the Council seeks to explore with ELFT the feasibility of their becoming a partner agency of the IGU, and for them to provide a dedicated mental health specialist resource.

Recommendation 7 – For the Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission to explore mental health provision for 19-25s compared to young people aged under 18

We feel that an item at the Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission might explore the differences in mental health provision for those aged up to 18, and those aged 19 to 25.

We suggest that to give best focus to the item, that it might explore typical mental health provision and arrangements for 15 to 18s compared to 19 to 25s. This is due to Hackney's Community Safety Partnership's Strategic Assessment findings around the peak (starting) age ranges for involvement in gang flagged crimes and knife flagged crimes.

Recommendation 8 – Applying learning from pilot delivery of mental health provision in community settings, to the IGU

Mental ill health is a common issue among both children and adults being worked with by the IGU. A significant share of the cohort is made up of black boys and young men. Evidence shows that tailored approaches can provide more effective pathways to mental health care for this community group, in cases where it is needed. This is due to cultural and structural barriers which can make traditional routes less accessible.

We note the pilot led by the East London NHS Foundation Trust which delivered support in community settings. This was found to better enable young black men with mental health needs, to engage, compared to traditional primary care routes.

We ask for an assessment – led by the Executive Members with responsibility for Health, Community Safety, and the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme – to be carried out exploring whether and how learning from this pilot can be applied within the IGU.

Recommendation 9 – For any future pre-apprenticeship programmes to include the IGU cohort in any ring-fencing arrangement

We ask that any future pre-apprenticeship programmes by the Council include the IGU cohort within any ring-fencing arrangement, and also that the IGU and the Hackney Works Service explore how the IGU cohort can be best supported to accessing these opportunities.

Recommendation 10 – For the Skills, Economy and Growth Commission to explore employment and skills support for ex-offenders

We note the well-known difficulties ex-offenders face in securing work – both those within the IGU cohort and ex-offenders more broadly. We recommend that the Skills, Economy and Growth Commission explores how the Council and its partners (including the private sector) are working to provide employment and skills support to this group generally, and the feasibility of a dedicated support offer by the Hackney Works Service.

Recommendation 11 – For the IGU to consult the community on a possible name change

On a local level we ask the Council considers changing the name of the Integrated Gangs Unit, in consultation with the community. We feel that a name change could give some assurance to those suffering stigmatisation from the careless way in which the term gang is sometimes used.

Recommendation 12 – To report back on how the findings of mapping exercise are being taken forward

We welcome the significant work by the Council, partners and the wider community which has enabled the production of the provision mapping resource. We see the challenge now as ensuring continued focus on this area by all partners, and achieving a joined up response to those aspects where improvement / greater focus was needed. For our part, we would suggest that they might be translated into a mutually agreed action plan.

We ask that the Council – further to discussions with its partners – reports back to the Commission on how these challenges can be best met.

Recommendation 13 – Ongoing engagement between Chief Executive and Inspirational Leaders

Inspirational leaders of the YBM Programme made a number of points around barriers to opportunities and positive outcomes. We welcomed the response of the Council's Chief Executive to these points.

This included a commitment to continued engagement from the Council with Inspirational Leaders.

One of the specific barriers mentioned was a lack of facilities and spaces to develop businesses within. On this point, the Chief Executive spoke on the Council seeking to provide more workspaces through utilisation of unused spaces. He felt that shares of these might be made available for young people wanting to start-up businesses.

Another barrier mentioned was a lack of advice and guidance for those interested in setting up businesses. In response the Chief Executive said that he would reflect on how the Landing Pad which the Council was seeking to provide for new

businesses to the borough (to better enable access to business planning, financial and other advice) could be made available more widely.

We ask that the Chief Executive meets Inspirational Leaders to explore how these aspects and any others can be taken forward.

Recommendation 14 – For the Council to continue to make the case for a reversal of local Police Officer reductions

We call for the Mayor of London to continue to make the case for a fair settlement for the MPS, and for the Council to lobby towards ensuring that any more realistic London wide funding is translated into a greater local police presence in Hackney.

Recommendation 15 – For the Police and Monitoring Groups to provide annual updates to Living in Hackney Scrutiny on stop and search activity, and the engagement between them

Living in Hackney Scrutiny will seek to re-establish annual updates on stop and search activity, the engagement between the police and monitoring groups, and the outcomes of this. We hope that this can help better ensure on-going engagement.

In reflection of our [findings from the discussion with the police and monitoring groups](#), we will include consideration of the points below, within the next item:

- Extent of body worn camera dip sampling exercises (we heard that these had started only recently)
- Engagement of the community in training
- Section 60 communications and consultation (both monitoring groups reported that the engagement of the police prior to enacting Section 60 notices fell immediately after the move to the BCU model, and the BCU themselves acknowledged they were working on addressing this issue)

Recommendation 16 – For Community Safety Partnership to provide annual updates to Living in Hackney on its Trust and Confidence Action Plan

The Commission will seek annual updates against the Action Plan regarding Trust and Confidence, from the Community Safety Partnership.

In line with our review findings in this area, as part of the first item we will seek updates on:

- The status and activities of the BCU-wide Confidence and Satisfaction Board
- The BCU's engagement with the Young People's Independent Advisory Group

- The BCU's work to maintain active engagement with the community and to improve communication of engagement events
- Any action by the BCU to facilitate greater engagement between the community and central MPS units.

3. FINANCIAL COMMENTS

- 3.1. This report recommends the Council's and Partnership's response to an escalation in serious violence. These recommendations have no immediate financial implication, and the future impact of any plans and strategies proposed in this report will be managed within the available service revenue budgets.

4. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 4.1. There are no legal implications arising from the report at this stage. However, any future action to be taken in respect of Recommendation 9 will need to be considered in line with the Local Authority's duties under the Equalities Act 2010.

5. FINDINGS

How is the Integrated Gangs Unit working to tackle serious violence and what are the benefits and disbenefits of tools used?

What is a gang

The MPS uses the definition of 'gang' developed by the Centre for Social Justice's 2009 report 'Dying to Belong':

A 'gang' is defined as a: 'relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who:

- (1) See themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group, and*
- (2) Engage in a range of criminal activity and violence.*

They may also have any or all of the following features:

- identify with or lay claim over territory*
- have some form of identifying structure feature*
- are in conflict with other, similar gangs'*

- 5.1 The IGU work with those on the Gangs Violence Matrix (for Hackney), who are on the Matrix due to having been identified as being in a gang¹² (as per the definition used by the MPS).
- 5.2 Some of those the IGU work with are not on the Gangs Matrix. However, we heard that the unit's overall focus is on street gangs, and on preventing and reducing serious violence associated with them. We see this fitting broadly with the definition above.

Hackney lead local authority in establishing Integrated Gangs Unit, principles, and Hackney model

- 5.3 The principle of IGUs is to provide a tailored response to an individual young person who has been highlighted as being involved in youth violence or who is being exploited by a group or gang.
- 5.4 Hackney's IGU was established in 2010. It was the first such model in the UK. Some other Councils – including a number of London boroughs - have since followed suit.
- 5.5 The arrangements of IGUs can differ.
- 5.6 Hackney's IGU is made up of part of the Council's Youth Offending Team, Police, Probation and DWP Officers dedicated to the unit, a number of commissioned partners (St Giles Trust, Empower London, and Mentivation) providing targeted and broader work with a focus on young people aged under 18, and a community co-ordinator working to build trust and confidence with the community and the awareness of the service.
- 5.7 These are supported by an Intelligence Team based in the unit.
- 5.8 In addition to these co-located partners, we explored the join up between the IGU and a number of other services.

A focus on prevention and diversion, but enforcement where necessary

- 5.9 The IGU's significant focus is on preventing or diverting young people away from involvement in criminal, gang-related activity, and exploitation by gangs.
- 5.10 We have heard and seen first-hand many examples of this work. They have included work supporting young people to close the speech and language gaps acting as barriers to accessing education or employment, mentoring and brokering contact with wider support services, and supporting the rehabilitation of ex-offenders.
- 5.11 As was stated to us a number of times during the review, serious violence is not an issue which can be arrested the way out of.

¹² Operating Model and Guidance for the Matrix states that the threshold for being included on the Matrix is 'someone who has been identified as being a member of a gang and this is corroborated by reliable intelligence from more than one source (e.g. police, partner agencies such as local authorities)

5.12 However, we were also supportive of the police element of the IGU having helped deliver robust enforcement action, where it was needed to keep communities safe. Operations against a relatively very small number of people following the spike in violence led to a number of custodial sentences. This action had correlated with the start of reductions against a number of indicators of serious violence.

Benefits of a co-located model

5.13 We have been convinced that an integrated model better enables a joined up approach to addressing gang-related violence. It was made clear that having a wide range of agencies inside the unit allows multiple factors to be addressed and dealt with in sensitive, appropriate and holistic ways.

5.14 As stated in a paper to London Councils by Hackney's then Head of Safer Communities in 2017, co-location in a single suite enables real-time communication and information sharing, speed of action and intervention, within a multi-agency approach that looks at all preventative, diversion and enforcement opportunities¹³. A number of Councils have followed Hackney's lead in installing this model.

5.15 We were very grateful to St Giles Trust Youth Workers based in the IGU who spoke on their personal journeys from involvement with criminal behaviour and the youth and adult Criminal Justice system, to becoming mentors and advisors for young people. They both also powerfully articulated the benefits of colocation. For example, one spoke about his ability to build trusting relationships with and 'reach' young people, which enabled joint work by different specialists within the unit to help address a wide range of issues.

5.16 Another example was the work by the DWP Officer within the unit to support people to move away from harmful behaviour. This included through assisting them into jobs and apprenticeships, and in accessing benefits.

5.17 Being grounded within the function allowed a full appreciation of the complex issues being faced by some of those within the cohort. This better enabled cases to be handled appropriately, for example considerations around the locations for appointments.

Value of dedicated intelligence resource, and of social media monitoring as one of its tools

5.18 We explored the role of the IGU Intelligence Team. We have grasped the value and benefits of this resource in helping inform activities of services within the unit and outside of it.

5.19 We received a detailed presentation from the Intelligence Team. Amongst other aspects, this highlighted the intelligence gathered on geographical areas of

¹³ <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/31170>

criminal gang activity, any conflicts and affiliations between groups, and analysis aimed at improving the identification of early signifiers that a young person may be at risk of engaging in harmful activity. We heard how this ongoing intelligence gathering played a crucial part in partnership meetings identifying courses of action.

- 5.20 At the outset of our review, particular attention was being applied to the use of social media monitoring in the response to serious violence. Social media monitoring is one of the tools used by the IGU Intelligence Team.
- 5.21 We gave detailed consideration to this. We have a clear view that people should be able to express themselves freely – including on social media - without risk of repercussion. However, we have also seen that monitoring is an important tool for the IGU to use to help keep young people and the wider community safe.
- 5.22 We saw that social media was playing a more prevalent role in the recruitment of young people into gangs, and that content often provided the first indication that an individual might be at risk of becoming involved with a gang, or putting themselves at risk of gang-related harm. We saw how monitoring had enabled early interventions aiming to steer young people away from involvement or to otherwise keep them safe.
- 5.23 In terms of prevention, we also appreciate the need for young people to be supported to use social media safely. We welcome Young Hackney including this in the menu of options for schools as part of Young Hackney's PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) education offer.
- 5.24 Going back to the IGU, we also saw how social media content can sometimes evidence more direct involvement in violent street gang activity. We saw examples of footage containing criminal, seriously violent behaviour. In these cases, we saw how monitoring does play a role in helping to target enforcement activity. This included in operations following the escalation of violence in Hackney.
- 5.25 In addition to helping to target IGU resources, the insight gathered by the Intelligence Team is used to help inform the work of other areas.
- 5.26 We heard that the geographical areas initially prioritised for intervention by the Contextual Safeguarding project had been identified as areas for concern by the IGU in the first instance. The research gathered by the Intelligence Team was also being used to deliver training to Social Work Practitioners and Schools.

Impact

- 5.27 When we set out on this review, the historical impact of Hackney's Integrated Gangs Unit was already quite clear. Further to its opening in 2010 this, gang-flagged violence fell for a number of years.

- 5.28 However - given the more recent increase in serious violence - which we were advised was explained by gang related activity - we wished to explore the measures and indicators used to gauge the impact of its work.
- 5.29 Papers and points made in meetings highlighted the central role that quantitative police-reported crime indicators had in measuring the impact of the IGU. Papers stated that reductions against a range of measures (Serious Youth Violence, Gun Crime, Gun Discharge, Knife Crime 1 to 19 years old and Violence with Injury) incorporated the key aims of the IGU. With the exception of gun discharges, these had shown recent reductions (on a 12 months rolling basis to July 2018).
- 5.30 In meetings we heard how reductions seen in serious youth violence, in knife crime offences by people aged under 25, and in violence with injury went against the trends seen in many other boroughs.
- 5.31 We heard that the IGU's intelligence based prevention, diversion and enforcement work, alongside joined up work with Children and Families enabling young people at risk to be identified and supported, was playing an important role in this bucking of the trends seen in London.
- 5.32 Looking more broadly than quantitative indicators, we were encouraged that the service was working to getting a broader range of outcome measures in place against which to formally measure its impact.
- 5.33 We should note that papers to the Commission did highlight a number of quantifiable outcome measures delivered by commissioned services within the IGU.
- 5.34 This included (amongst others) St Giles Trust achieving 20 reported gang exits and Empower London's work increasing the understanding of healthy relationships among 81% of those it worked with. We also appreciate the challenges around developing measures. The IGU is focused on preventing harmful episodes from happening, both now and in the longer term. Positively identifying when specific work has led to incidents not occurring, is difficult.
- 5.35 However, given the IGU's recognition that this was an area for improvement, and that the service was seeking to develop a wider set of specific outcome measures which would be incorporated into the new Community Safety Partnership Plan, we ask for an update on this.

Recommendation 1 – Development of Outcome measures for the Integrated Gangs Unit

We ask that the next update to the Commission on the on the Community Safety Partnership Plan includes detail on the revised outcome measures for the IGU, the reasoning for them, and progress against these at that point.

Case Management

- 5.36 We also heard acknowledgement of the need to improve the recording of information on the cases managed by the IGU. For the cohort worked with currently, data was available on the sources of the referral of the individual into the IGU (Children’s Social Care, Criminal Justice System Probation or Schools, for example).
- 5.37 However, it was not clear that full information was available on the impact of interventions delivered for those previously worked with by the IGU.
- 5.38 For these ‘non-live’ cases, it was not clear that information was available on the sources and reasoning for referrals, the lengths of time individuals were worked with, the interventions which were delivered, and the reasoning for contact with them ending.
- 5.39 There is much coverage around using a public health approach to tackling serious violence, including serious youth violence. We understand principles within this approach include identifying and seeking to address wider factors which increase risk of engagement in or risk from violence, and ongoing evaluations of the impact of interventions so that effective ones can be repeated and non-effective ones not.
- 5.40 Maintaining full records of the circumstances of those being referred into the IGU, the interventions delivered and the impact of them, will better enable this. Further to our questions, we heard that the issues would be addressed, including via a review of the referral process. We ask that an update on this work is provided.

Recommendation 2 – Improved information management of ‘non-live’ cases

Full information did not appear to be at hand on what we would define as ‘non-live’ cases’ – those individuals which the IGU had previously worked with but no longer did so.

Further to our questions, we heard that the issues would be addressed, including via a review of the referral process which would enable the IGU to provide a greater insight into the sources of referrals and the results delivered following these. We ask that an update on this work is provided.

Transparency

- 5.41 The importance of ensuring effective join up between the IGU and services within Council specifically supporting children became clearer, as the review progressed.
- 5.42 The terms of reference for our review stated that 90% of the IGU cohort were aged 18 or over. However, over the course of the review we found that our initial understanding was not correct.

- 5.43 It became clearer that whilst the majority of those on Gangs Violence Matrix and being worked with by the IGU were aged 18 and over, those that the IGU worked with who were not on Matrix, were largely accounted for by under 18s.
- 5.44 We found that the IGU (as at March 2019) was working with 118 individuals who were on the Gangs Violence Matrix. We were not provided with a detailed age breakdown allowing us to determine the exact number of those aged under 18 and those aged 18 and above. Based on what was provided, the number of those under 18 was between 1 and 50¹⁴.
- 5.45 In addition, they were working with 76 individuals who were not on the Gangs Violence Matrix. 51 of these individuals were aged under 18. The remaining 25 were aged 18.
- 5.46 Based on the information provided the IGU (in March this year) was working with between 52 and 101 young people aged under 18. This is a small fraction of the borough's young people. However, it still accounts for a significant share of the IGU cohort – between 27% and 52%.
- 5.47 The considerable focus on under 18s was also highlighted by us finding that the commissioned services within the IGU are predominantly focused on this group. This was in line with the unit reaching a view that this is where greatest impact could be had with what were limited resources.
- 5.48 To be clear, we see it as positive that the IGU works with individuals who are not on the Gangs Violence Matrix, including people aged under 18. We support the IGU in using their specialist experience to deliver prevention and diversion for some under 18s, alongside the services in the Children and Families Service. We have identified what we feel to be excellent and effective practice by the IGU.
- 5.49 This said, we have been left concerned at what we feel to have been a lack of transparency and openness with the Commission by the IGU, around its cohort.
- 5.50 Our understanding that the predominant focus of the IGU's resources was on young adults - aged 18 and over - was based on background research, papers provided to the Commission, and points made in meetings. We feel that it was a reasonable view to reach based on the evidence provided.
- 5.51 If what we saw as a lack of transparency was replicated elsewhere, we see a risk that other services and partners would be unclear around the characteristics of the IGU cohort. This could hinder a joined up understanding and response to issues by both the services operating within the IGU, and those outside of it. It is important that all areas and partners with roles in helping and diverting people away from harmful behaviour, have clear information to enable this.

¹⁴ Of Gangs matrix individuals worked with by the IGU, we were advised that 1 was aged between 11 and 15, 49 were aged 16 – 20. 68 were aged between 21 and 30.

- 5.52 Evidence suggests that the misconception we had around the cohort, does go wider than this Commission. This includes in areas of work which are relevant to helping to improve outcomes for those in the cohort. The Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men (YBM) Programme is one of these areas, given that it seeks to plan and deliver a response to young black men faring worse in a range of factors, including gang-flagged crime. The evidence base to help inform its work states that only 9% of the IGU cohort are under 19.
- 5.53 We feel there should be a broad understanding across the partnership of the profile of the IGU cohort, to better allow full contributions to enabling better outcomes. We also see room for greater public information on the IGU.

Recommendation 3 – Greater transparency on the approach of the IGU, the cohort it works with, and how partners can support the work to achieve better outcomes for them

We suggest that a starting point for this would be the creation of a dedicated page for the Integrated Gangs Unit, on the Council's website. This appears to be a gap currently, compared with some other boroughs with Integrated Gangs Units – for example [Westminster](#) and [Islington](#).

We feel this should provide details on its work and approaches, and non-identifying information on the broad profile of the cohort, any common challenges faced, and the roles which other services and partners can play in helping to address these.

Join up with wider areas - Children and Families Service.

- 5.54 We explored the links between the IGU, and the Council's Children and Families Service. We reached a view that this link up is effective, and improving.
- 5.55 Join up is achieved through both the IGU and Children and Families services both being present at a wide range of forums in which cross partnership approaches to cases are defined and agreed. We heard about the work of the Intelligence Team helping to inform Children Social Care's management of cases and training. We heard practical examples of where Children's Social Care and Commissioned services within the IGU worked together to aid young people. IGU staff spoke about improvements having been made in the interchange between the areas.
- 5.56 This said, we see room for further join up through greater representation of Children and Families service, in the IGU.
- 5.57 The embedded section of the Council's Youth Justice Service works to support those in the IGU cohort who are aged 10-17 and on Youth Justice Orders. The central role of this area within the unit is highlighted by the Service Manager for Youth Justice co-chairing the IGU's fortnightly Gangs Panel meetings.

- 5.58 However, other than this service, all elements of the Children and Families Service are based in separate areas of the Council from the IGU. This includes Young Hackney (aside from the Youth Justice function which is part of the wider Early Help and Prevention Service), and Children’s Social Care.
- 5.59 We do note the strong and improved linkages between Children and Families Service and the IGU. However, we have also been convinced of the practical benefits of a co-located model. We feel that the greater involvement of Children and Families inside the IGU could enable more effective use of preventative resources in both areas.

Recommendation 4 – Greater representation of Children and Families Services in the IGU

Children aged under 18 make up a significant and increasing share of the IGU cohort. We have heard about the practical benefits of a co-located model, with a range of services based in the same office.

We feel that fuller involvement of Children and Families inside the IGU could enable more effective utilisation of the preventative resources in both areas. We saw the positive impacts achieved from part of the (Children and Families’) Youth Justice service being colocated in the unit.

We heard about successful join up between the IGU and Children and Families generally; for example in the Contextual Safeguarding Project. However, we feel there is room for a greater co-location of services inside the IGU.

We ask that the potential for this is explored by the Executive Members with responsibility for Community Safety and the Children and Families Service.

Housing Needs Service and other housing providers

- 5.60 We did not hear from the Council’s Housing Needs Service nor wider housing partners in this review. However, IGU staff themselves felt the links between Housing Needs and the IGU might be an area for improvement.
- 5.61 This was in particular relation to the challenges IGU partners faced in securing settled accommodation for individuals being released from custody. We heard that this issue could impact on the scope for successful rehabilitation.
- 5.62 The issue of those leaving custody being at high and increasing risk of homelessness, is a national one. There is wide evidence on the impact of homelessness on prospects for rehabilitation. It is a long term issue; the availability of suitable housing for ex-offenders was one of the major themes emerging from a previous Hackney Scrutiny Review into gun and knife crime in 2011.
- 5.63 We cannot recommend that increased priority for settled accommodation is given to any particular group without considering this in the wider context of all

of those groups in housing need. The shortage of housing for ex-offenders is replicated with shortages for all groups, in what is a housing crisis.

- 5.64 The Council is embarking on a review of its lettings policy. During our scrutiny of this, we will explore the housing support provided to ex-offenders. This is in relation to any specific regard given to ex-offenders within the Council's allocations of social housing. We will also consider any wider housing related support provided by the Council which is specific for ex-offenders or which this group can access, and the pathways through which this can be secured.
- 5.65 Other providers of housing in the borough have roles here also, and we will intend on asking the same questions of Housing Associations.

Mental health services

- 5.66 Mental ill health is more prevalent amongst individuals involved in violence and gangs. We heard from a number of practitioners within the IGU that mental health conditions were common among both children and adults in the cohort.
- 5.67 We did not explore in detail the level and nature of mental health support in the borough.
- 5.68 However, we did hear about the breadth of the services in place for those aged up to 18, and the way that Children's Social Care is able to broker and provide support directly. We were left with a view that arrangements to best ensure that support is given to those aged up to 18 in need of it, appeared very sound.
- 5.69 For mental health services for IGU cohort individuals aged 19 and above – again – we did not explore the extent and nature of provision in detail. However, we did hear that referral arrangements were different for adults.
- 5.70 We heard how the work of Probation Officers – who along with the police are generally the lead IGU partner for those in the IGU cohort aged over 18 - included brokering mental health support, and working to enable undiagnosed mental health conditions to be identified and addressed. This said, we heard there were issues in accessing mental health services¹⁵.
- 5.71 We note the work of Probation Officers in securing support for young adults in the cohort. However – with no dedicated mental health resource currently based within the IGU - we also see need for assurance around referral pathways being in place which set out when IGU will seek mental health support for young adults, and the routes that it will take to doing so.

Recommendation 5 – For the IGU to report back on mental health services referral pathway for young adults in the IGU cohort

¹⁵ We understand that this point (made by the Community Safety Partnership Manager) was made in reference to adults.

With no dedicated mental health resource currently based within the IGU, we see some need for assurance around referral pathways being in place which set out the scenarios in which the IGU will seek mental health support for young adults in its cohort, and the routes that it will take to doing so. This assurance should be provided in the form of a formal referral pathway being shared with us.

The East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) provides community and inpatient mental health services to children, young people and adults in Hackney. We feel that the referral pathway should be developed in partnership with ELFT, and that regular reviews should be carried out to monitor its effectiveness in brokering mental health support for those within the cohort.

- 5.72 In the longer term, we feel there should be a mental health specialism inside the IGU. We ask that the Council seeks to explore with East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) the feasibility of their becoming a partner agency of the IGU, and for them to provide a dedicated mental health resource.
- 5.73 This would better enable needs and provision to be identified and provided at the earliest possible stages. We also feel that a formal partnership arrangement would better allow our NHS partners to take a full role in tackling some of the drivers of serious violence.

Recommendation 6 – ELFT as partner in IGU

In the longer term, we feel there should be a mental health specialism inside the IGU¹⁶.

We have seen the benefits of a co-located, IGU model. We have also heard about the prevalence of mental health issues among those in the cohort, both among those aged up to 19 and those above this.

We ask that the Council seeks to explore with ELFT the feasibility of their becoming a partner agency of the IGU, and for them to provide a dedicated mental health specialist resource.

- 5.74 Our partners also have a crucial role in ensuring that care meets the needs of any young adults – both for the relatively very few within the IGU cohort and more widely. In terms of provision, there is a current distinction in mental health services and support for those aged under 19, and for those aged 19 and above.
- 5.75 We have reached a fuller understanding of the need for the Council and its partners – and national policy - to direct services in a way which recognises that turning 19 does not automatically bring an end to one life development stage,

¹⁶ If enacted, one of our recommendations would see greater involvement of the Children and Families Service within the IGU which we would hope would include the Clinical Service offering specialist psychological support to children aged up to 19 and their families.

and the start of another. This brings a need to review models of service and care which typically change at this time¹⁷, and which can make it difficult for young people aged 19 and above to access the services they need.

- 5.76 The Council has taken action here, within the very significant budget constraints it is working within. This has had strong impacts. The extension of the Substance Misuse Service in 2015 from serving only those up to 18 to supporting young people aged up to 25 has already resulted in increases in the numbers of people in treatment for alcohol and drug misuse, and in successful completion of treatment.
- 5.77 However, there is room for action by our partners in other areas. Mental health care provision is a central one.
- 5.78 We have not spoken to NHS partners during this review. However, we feel that an item at the Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission might explore the differences in mental health provision for those aged up to 18, and those aged 19 to 25.
- 5.79 We suggest that to give focus this might explore provision as it relates to those aged 15 to 25. The latest Hackney Community Safety Partnership's Strategic Assessment showed the peak age ranges for both victims and suspects of gang flagged crimes to start at 16 years of age, and for the peak age range for suspects of knife flagged crime to start at 15. Exploring typical mental health provision and arrangements for 15 to 18s compared to 19 to 25s might therefore add best value.

Recommendation 7 – For the Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission to explore mental health provision for 19-25s compared to young people aged under 18

We feel that an item at the Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission might explore the differences in mental health provision for those aged up to 18, and those aged 19 to 25.

We suggest that to give best focus to the item, that it might explore typical mental health provision and arrangements for 15 to 18s compared to 19 to 25s. This is due to Hackney's Community Safety Partnership's Strategic Assessment findings around the peak (starting) age ranges for involvement in gang flagged crimes and knife flagged crimes.

¹⁷ There are complexities to this. In some cases, young adults are entitled to higher levels of support, beyond age 18. This includes care leavers (the definition of which has been extended to cover young people having spent a 13 weeks or more in custody), and those with learning disabilities. On this point, we heard that IGU played an active advocacy role in encouraging eligible young people to utilise this support.

- 5.80 Alongside the need to extend and improve access to mental health services, we gained insight into the need for service provision and design to respond to particular inequalities in levels of mental ill health (and other areas), by delivering services in a way which can help close them.
- 5.81 Only 1% of young black Londoners are involved in serious youth violence¹⁸.
- 5.82 However, it is also the case that black boys and young men group are overrepresented amongst both victims and suspects, and within the IGU cohort.
- 5.83 We have seen how identifying and addressing barriers preventing black children and adults from accessing mental health services at earlier points and how improving experiences of service provision, can play a part in the response to serious violence, in addition to delivering wider change.
- 5.84 Formed in 2015, the YBM programme recognises and seeks to respond to the fact that young black men tend to fare worse than their peers across a wide range of areas, including education, involvement in the criminal justice system, and health. It is focused both on the current cohort of young black men aged 18 - 25 and also embedding change which see greater life chances of future generations.
- 5.85 The Mental Health strand of programme highlights how - through tailored approaches - there is the prospect of better enabling mental ill health to be addressed at an early stage. This was through a pilot led by the East London NHS Foundation Trust and involving a group of Inspirational Leaders; young black men trained to deliver peer work and take leadership roles in the YBM Programme.
- 5.86 This found that when engaged differently – through group work within community settings rather than through traditional primary care (GP) routes and in ways that allowed them to feel greater agency during the process - young black men in need of support were more likely to put themselves forward for it. Inspirational Leaders themselves spoke about the impact of this pilot in breaking down barriers.
- 5.87 We ask for an assessment exploring whether and how learning from this pilot can be applied within the IGU.

Recommendation 8 – Applying learning from pilot delivery of mental health provision in community settings, to the IGU

Mental ill health is a common issue among both children and adults being worked with by the IGU. A significant share of the cohort is made up of black boys and young men. Evidence shows that tailored approaches can provide more effective

¹⁸ GLA Strategic Crime Analysis Team, City Intelligence Unit, July 2019

pathways to mental health care for this community group, in cases where it is needed. This is due to cultural and structural barriers which can make traditional routes less accessible.

We note the pilot led by the East London NHS Foundation Trust which delivered support in community settings. This was found to better enable young black men with mental health needs, to engage, compared to traditional primary care routes.

We ask for an assessment – led by the Executive Members with responsibility for Health, Community Safety, and the Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme – to be carried out exploring whether and how learning from this pilot can be applied within the IGU.

Hackney Works / Employment and Skills

- 5.88 Engagement and re-engagement in education, training and employment can act as protective factors and support people out of serious offending. For example, during the review we heard how educational exclusion was a common experience amongst those within the IGU cohort.
- 5.89 The Children and Families Service – alongside its universal provision – targets support at young people to enable re-engagement. However, there was broad agreement on the need for all partners to improve the level and breadth of opportunities for young people (including young adults) to best ensure there are accessible options for all.
- 5.90 We heard about a number of the challenges which some of the IGU cohort face in seeking to turn their lives around.
- 5.91 On young adults specifically, we heard how Probation Officers in the IGU worked to broker contact between individuals and employment opportunities. However, Probation staff spoke about the lack of readiness of many in this cohort to access the types of opportunities which were sometimes on offer. This barrier meant the cohort was less likely to believe that legitimate and legal lifestyles were possible for them.
- 5.92 The lack of accessible work opportunities for often vulnerable, ex-offenders, is a well-known barrier to rehabilitation. This review will not solve this issue.
- 5.93 We are also aware that the Council is playing a very active role in increasing employment opportunities and pathways to them, including for more vulnerable groups. This includes its Apprenticeship Programme which won national awards in both 2018 and 2019 and the work experience opportunities delivered through its Hackney 100 Programme. Both are targeted at 16 to 24 year olds. This is alongside a wide range of support to help provide residents with a pathway to employment, and engagement with businesses and growth sectors to open more opportunities.
- 5.94 Items at another Scrutiny Commission have highlighted the Council's recognition of the need to provide accessible opportunities for more vulnerable

residents, and its work to do so. This includes the delivery of a pilot pre-apprenticeship programme aimed at bridging the gap between those furthest away from the labour market and the Council's main Apprenticeship Programme. The Commission heard that the pilot had been ring fenced to care leavers and to those interacting with particular services including Children's Social Care¹⁹.

- 5.95 We ask that any future pre-apprenticeship programmes by the Council include the IGU cohort within any ring-fencing arrangement, and also that the IGU and the Hackney Works Service explore how the cohort can be best supported to access these opportunities.

Recommendation 9 – For any future pre-apprenticeship programmes to include the IGU cohort in any ring-fencing arrangement

We ask that any future pre-apprenticeship programmes by the Council include the IGU cohort within any ring-fencing arrangement, and also that the IGU and the Hackney Works Service explore how the IGU cohort can be best supported to accessing these opportunities.

- 5.96 We note the well-known difficulties ex-offenders face in securing work – both those within the IGU cohort and ex-offenders more broadly. We suggest that the relevant Scrutiny Commission explores how the Council and its partners are working to provide employment and skills support to this group generally, and the feasibility of a dedicated support offer by the Hackney Works Service.

Recommendation 10 – For the Skills, Economy and Growth Commission to explore employment and skills support for ex-offenders

We note the well-known difficulties ex-offenders face in securing work – both those within the IGU cohort and ex-offenders more broadly. We recommend that the Skills, Economy and Growth Commission explores how the Council and its partners are working to provide and employment and skills support to this group generally, and the feasibility of a dedicated support offer by the Hackney Works Service.

Gangs Violence Matrix - context

- 5.1. The overall Gangs Violence Matrix is a tool which is owned and managed by the central MPS.
- 5.2. There is a local Gangs Matrix for each borough. On a daily basis, these local matrices / databases are combined to produce the current, London-wide MPS Gangs Matrix.

¹⁹ <http://mginternet.hackney.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=31800>

- 5.97 The responsibility for the management of local Matrices falls with the local police. Decisions on who is added and who is removed are made at borough level. Each individual added to the Matrix is given a 'harm score', and coded red, amber or green according to this score. This traffic lighting system is designed to help to inform the response and management of cases, by both the police and partners.²⁰
- 5.98 On a London wide level, there tends to be between 3,000 and 4,000 people on the MPS Gangs Violence Matrix at any given time. There were 118 individuals on the Gangs Violence Matrix for Hackney, at March 2019.
- 5.99 We explored the use of the Matrix through a discussion with Amnesty International, the Detective Superintendent with lead police responsibility for the IGU, and lead Council Officers for the IGU.
- 5.100 Given the MPS-wide response to issues raised with the Gangs Violence Matrix, the Police Commander with lead responsibility for driving improvement in the Matrix on a London level was also in attendance. This enabled us to explore the wider response of the MPS, and to gain insight into the practices in place in Hackney, compared to elsewhere.
- 5.101 We do not have the role of scrutinising the MPS, on a London wide level. However, we heard about a range of work underway, driven from the centre. Our view was that the improvement plans appeared sound. The Amnesty representative we spoke to - whilst reiterating the organisation's serious concerns with the Matrix - explained that their position currently was that the database should be reformed rather than dismantled. This was subject to the MPS working through the improvements required by the ICO (which were made further to the Amnesty investigation) and set out in the recommendations from the MOPAC review.
- 5.102 Our main focus was on the use of the Gangs Violence Matrix on a Hackney level.

Matrix in Hackney – information management

- 5.103 The open sharing of Matrix information in some cases – in its looking at the use of the tool across London – was one of the central concerns raised by Amnesty. This was triangulated by the ICO findings. However, the ICO also found the operation and management of local Matrixes in some boroughs to be good.
- 5.104 Our review has confirmed that this is the case in Hackney. On data management processes, it is not an exaggeration to state that the Commission found the measures in place here to be exemplarily.

²⁰ While local matrices are managed by the local police, central police units (Trident and MPS Central Intelligence) can make recommendations to boroughs around people being added and removed.

5.105 This was powerfully confirmed by the Central MPS Commander leading on the improvement of the Matrix London-wide. He confirmed that further to the ICO findings, Matrix data was not (at January 2019) being shared by the police within boroughs, nor with Prisons and Probation. Hackney was the exception to this, given the quality of the arrangements in place here, and its model being one of best practice.

Matrix in Hackney – additions

5.106 Operational guidance for the Matrix states that someone can only be added based on reliable intelligence from at least two sources. Amnesty raised concerns that in practice, the two corroborated pieces of intelligence ‘safeguard’ did not appear to be effectively in place in boroughs. The MOPAC review also reported a lack of assurance around the adherence to the corroborating evidence aspect in some cases.

5.107 As with the data management, we drew a high level of assurance around the additions process in Hackney. We saw how the partnership approach to this which is in place best results in the two corroborated pieces of intelligence ‘safeguard’ being followed effectively, and in the effective scrutiny of whether – combined - this intelligence warrants an addition.

Matrix in Hackney – reviews and removals

5.108 Guidance sets out that the Gangs Matrix should be reviewed quarterly and that individuals should remain on the Matrix for no longer than is necessary. The MOPAC review found that in practice there were variations across the boroughs and that guidance around reviews and removals was applied flexibly.

5.109 Within a Hackney context – and as with additions – we heard that decisions around removals are a partnership decision, and also that lists were reviewed on an ongoing basis within a commitment to regularly remove people as appropriate.

Matrix in Hackney – green and zero harm individuals

5.110 At any one time, high shares of the ‘gang nominals’ on the Matrix will be in the lowest risk group (green). Some of those within the green grouping will be ‘zero harm’ individuals. Zero harm scores are applied to those who have no record of charges or police intelligence linking them to violence in the past two years²¹.

5.111 The Amnesty report raised significant concerns around the scale of the presence of individuals on a violence Matrix who had shown no propensity for violence.

5.112 We explored the approach to green nominals, including zero-harm individuals, in a Hackney context. We heard that a key reason for the inclusion of green nominals was for prevention and diversion purposes. We heard examples of this work in practice.

²¹ Page 7, *Trapped in the Matrix* report

5.113 We did not obtain the numbers of zero harm individuals on the Matrix on a Hackney level. We did hear there were very few. We also heard that the IGU partnership meetings regularly reviewed these individuals and removed them where appropriate.

Matrix in Hackney – overall view

5.114 The Commission is not claiming that there are not issues with the Gangs Violence Matrix, particularly on a MPS-wide basis. The reviews by Amnesty, the ICO and MOPAC each found significant concerns around the ways that it was managed and used on a London-wide basis.

5.115 There is a clear need to ensure that the stringent data management processes which are in place in Hackney, are in place elsewhere also.

5.116 We are also aware of community concerns on the Matrix. The extent to which communities can feel marginalised and unfairly targeted by the tool was expressed by the representative from Amnesty we spoke to. Part of Amnesty's evidence on this aspect came from speaking to community leaders in this borough. While Amnesty International were not currently calling for the database to be scrapped (subject to fundamental changes being made to it), they were clear that many still wanted it abolished.

5.117 This said – it is important to note that detailed analysis for the MOPAC review found that the Matrix has had positive impacts. This has included falls in levels of offending and victimhood amongst those being added to the Matrix, and these falls continuing after removal; suggesting long term positive impact.

5.118 As a Commission, we share concerns around some individuals in Hackney who have not partaken in violent crime appearing on a 'Gangs Violence Matrix', and the over representation of some community groups. There is clear need for improvement by the Met, on a London wide level.

5.119 However, we have reached a view that an intelligent model is required to identify those at risk so that interventions can be delivered for them. Data does evidence that – despite very significant shortcomings which need to be worked through – the Gangs Violence Matrix does do this. We have found that despite its faults at a London wide level, that it is managed very effectively in Hackney. We ask that the Council keeps abreast of the action plan being worked through by the Central Met, and adapts its processes where appropriate.

Gang term

5.120 Amnesty International disagree with the reference to the word 'Gangs' within the Gangs Violence Matrix. This is given the often limited understanding of what the term means, and the different use of it by different parties.

5.121 Their research – and wider input by community leaders into this review – has highlighted how the ill-informed ways that the term is sometimes used can marginalise communities. This view appeared to be shared by Council staff in the IGU, and by the police.

- 5.122 IGU staff spoke around the challenges and competing needs of safeguarding those at risk from harmful activity, whilst also not labelling them. One said that the gang term was irrelevant and sometimes unhelpful.
- 5.123 The Police Officer with lead responsibility for violence locally confirmed her own view as being that the term was not conducive to engaging the community. She envisaged a greater movement towards the use of the word violence alone. The Central Officer leading on the improvement of the Matrix was clear on the need to explore terminologies as part of the work, both within the Gangs Violence Matrix and wider strategies to tackle what had been called gang crime.
- 5.124 Members of the Commission agreed with these points. We welcomed hearing the communications being planned by the MPS as one of the responses to the MOPAC Review, which would include clearer information on the purpose and focus of the tool. We made the suggestion that the dropping of the word Gang from the Gangs Violence Matrix would – in our view – really change the way that the community would perceive it.
- 5.125 On a local level we ask the Council considers changing the name of the Integrated Gangs Unit, in consultation with the community. We feel that it would give some assurance to those groups suffering stigmatisation from the careless way in which the term gang is sometimes used.

Recommendation 11 – For the IGU to consult the community on a possible name change

On a local level we ask the Council considers changing the name of the Integrated Gangs Unit, in consultation with the community. We feel that a name change could give some assurance to those suffering stigmatisation from the careless way in which the term gang is sometimes used.

How has the Council responded to the escalation in violence, how is the response developing, and what is it showing?

- 5.126 Our review found the Council to have responded to a spike in violence in a considered way within an approach of joint reflection with partners and the community. This was in relation to the event in April 2018 bringing the Council and its partners together, and the detailed mapping exercise informed by this which followed. This enabled a fuller understanding of the provision in the borough within the broad areas commonly agreed as being most relevant.
- 5.127 Having reviewed this provision, we saw it equating to very wide ranging preventative work. This was complemented by the support for those very few who were closer to harmful activity. We also welcomed the identification of areas where work across all partners was needed.
- 5.128 We welcome the significant work by the Council, partners and the wider community which has enabled the production of this resource. We see the

challenge now as ensuring continued focus on this area, and achieving a joined up response.

Recommendation 12 – To report back on how the findings of mapping exercise are being taken forward

We ask that the Council – further to discussions with its partners – reports back to the Commission on how these challenges can be best met.

- 5.129 While we will not explore all areas covered within the mapping exercise, a number of aspects particularly resonated.
- 5.130 We supported the measures being taken by the Council and partners to address the fear and worry that incidents could cause.
- 5.131 It is clear that all partners – within an effective response to the escalation of serious violence which had been in evidence - need to fully appreciate the fear and potential harm which could come from overstating issues. We know that fear can be a driver of unsafe behaviour in some cases.
- 5.132 This is the responsibility of this Commission also. We must not shy away from an issue which needed to be addressed. However, there is also a need to give context.
- 5.133 Recognising and celebrating the hugely positive contributions which the vast majority of our young residents are making to life in Hackney, helps with this. This is particularly important for those community groups suffering from stigmatisation.
- 5.134 A tiny fraction of young black Londoners are involved in serious youth violence. However, youth leaders in Hackney told us that young black men are commonly associated with harmful behaviour.
- 5.135 It is not an exaggeration to say that the Commission were humbled by the input into the review of some of the Inspirational Leaders within the YBM Programme. Taking the words of our own Chief Executive, we saw how they are creating a movement around setting examples, supporting their community, and working with public bodies to help them identify and deliver the improvements needed.
- 5.136 We heard and saw how they demonstrate and broadcast the successful lives which the majority of boys and young men in the borough are leading, therefore raising hope and aspirations. This provides an effective response to the negative connotations and racist stereotypes sometimes associated with young black men. We met leaders who had set up businesses in the arts, and were enabling the involvement of others.
- 5.137 The discussion also covered barriers to opportunities and positive outcomes. We welcomed the response of the Council's Chief Executive to these points, which committed to ongoing engagement. We will seek updates around this.

Recommendation 13 – Ongoing engagement between Chief Executive and Inspirational Leaders

Inspirational leaders of the YBM Programme made a number of points around barriers to opportunities and positive outcomes. We welcomed the response of the Council's Chief Executive to these points.

This included a commitment to continued engagement from the Council with Inspirational Leaders.

One of the specific barriers mentioned was a lack of facilities and spaces to develop businesses within. On this, the Chief Executive spoke on the Council seeking to provide more workspaces through utilisation of unused spaces. He felt that shares of these might be made available for young people wanting to start-up businesses.

Another barrier mentioned was around a lack of advice and guidance for those interested in setting up businesses. In response the Chief Executive said that he would reflect on how the Landing Pad which the Council was seeking to provide for new businesses to the borough (better enable access to business planning, financial and other advice) could be made available more widely.

We ask that the Chief Executive meets Inspirational Leaders to explore how these aspects and any others can be taken forward.

What are the opportunities and risks of changes to local policing in relation to tackling serious violence?

- 5.138 The reduction in Police Officer numbers (nor the move to the BCU model) – in our view - did not prevent the police from delivering an effective immediate, frontline response to the spike in violence which had been seen in Hackney prior to our review.
- 5.139 This was achieved through continued local investment in and prioritisation of tackling violent crime, and strong support from - and partnership work with – centralised MPS resources.
- 5.140 On a local level, Hackney continued to have a dedicated Gangs Task Force in place, in addition to the police presence within the IGU²². This had not been affected via the move to a BCU model²³. Both of these units had contributed to significant successes, including a reduction in knife crime. There was a

²² We note the move to a BCU model has brought changes to operations in some other areas which are contributors to violent offending; including the Night Time Economy (NTE). This is now policed by a single unit across Hackney and Tower Hamlets. Future items might explore this impact on the safety of the NTE.

²³ We understand that this was with the exception of a single Police Officer taking the lead for the Hackney units and their equivalents in Tower Hamlets, and not by 2 Detective Inspectors as previously.

commitment towards keeping both units as fully staffed as possible. There had been no reduction in the police resource based within Hackney's IGU.

- 5.141 We also heard about the contributions of centralised MPS units to operations in Hackney. These included the Violent Crime Taskforce, Trident, and the Territorial Support Group.
- 5.142 The Violent Crime Taskforce was set up in April 2018, to provide support in geographical areas where there was a concern. Its work has been commended by the London Assembly's Police and Crime Committee, with the monthly frequencies of knife crimes and homicides across the capital reducing (at December 2018) further to its introduction. We heard Hackney had benefitted significantly from this resource.
- 5.143 Joint work with the central Operation Trident Unit had led to a targeted response to a spike of violence in one area of the borough, with a covert operation resulting in drug seizures, the closures of drug supply lines and a number of convictions.
- 5.144 The Territorial Support Group had roles of responding to disorder and reducing priority crime, and had been deployed in Hackney.
- 5.145 We were impressed at what we heard around the co-operation and team work between the local BCU and central units. This best enabled resources to be secured, for action to be delivered in a joined up way, and also for the central assets to deliver the types of policing needed in a way which best understood any local contexts and sensitivities.
- 5.146 It is positive that the BCU always sought to have an arrangement in place where a Senior Leader provided briefings to any central teams being deployed locally. This was in order to give bespoke briefings on the borough, expectations around approaches and behaviour, and the duties they were being asked to perform.
- 5.147 Despite seeing the overall response by the police to have been an effective one, we have concerns that the reduction in police capacity means that responses such as these are unsustainable in the longer term. We also have concerns about the police's capacity to provide effective reassurance.
- 5.148 There has been wide commentary around the escalation in violence seeing Met's Police Officers having their rest days cancelled. There is a concern about the impact that the intense focus on violent crime may have for other lower profile crime areas; for example the Violent Crime Taskforce has been resourced partly through the transfer of police Officers from other units.
- 5.149 We are also concerned at the reduced police presence locally. We heard that the BCU was working hard to generally achieve the London Mayoral Neighbourhood Policing target around each of the Borough's ward's having two dedicated full time Police Constable and one Police Community Support Officer resources in place.

- 5.150 However, in a context of lower Officer numbers, there was acknowledgment of the need at times to deploy these resources elsewhere in response to specific incidents. Safer Neighbourhood Board Members confirmed that a reduced police visibility was a common concern raised across the forums they were involved with.
- 5.151 We do see the reductions having impacted on the capacity of the police to provide reassurance to the community and to prevent incidents occurring or escalating.
- 5.152 Staff at a youth club spoke about the police previously being visible and actively involved with the club. Now, their lack of visibility had helped foster a perception of reduced safety among young people and parents, and impacted on levels of attendance.
- 5.153 One youth leader pointed to the preventative impact which the presence of police officers could have; he had been told by young people that by a single police officer being present, a situation in which two rival gangs were on the same street would not – in 9 out of 10 cases - escalate or result in any incident. This compared to the same situation where a police officer was not present, where escalation to violence would more likely.
- 5.154 We see a recovery in police numbers both in London generally and Hackney specifically, as vital. This is in regards to both ensuring that the MPS' ability to respond to incidents is effectively is sustained and – on a local level – that capacity allows for the community to feel assured by a stable, visible presence.

Recommendation 14 – For the Council to continue to make the case for a reversal of local Police Officer reductions

We call for the Mayor of London to continue to make the case for a fair settlement for the MPS, and for the Council to lobby towards ensuring that any more realistic London wide funding is translated into a greater local police presence in Hackney.

What role is the use of Stop and Search and Section 60 Orders playing in the response to the escalation in violence, and how are good quality interactions with the public during the deployment of Stop and Search being best achieved?

- 5.155 In a Hackney context, the Central East Commander spoke about the importance of Stop and Search – when used properly and effectively - to combatting violence and the threat and fear of it.
- 5.156 We saw how the stepping up of stop and search on a MPS wide level has been replicated in Hackney, and how stop and search and the use of section 60 formed an explicit part of the response to the spike in violence seen in the borough.

- 5.157 We heard that the 5794 stop and searches conducted in Hackney in 2018 was an increase on the previous year. There had been 139 section 60 orders in the borough during that time, 12 of which had been borough wide. We heard that 2018 was the first year that they had been used in Hackney, after a gap. 345 searches were conducted using these powers; meaning they accounted for 6% of all searches.
- 5.158 Positive outcome rates data for stop and search can - to some extent - be used to indicate the extent to which stop and searches are effectively targeted. Data for Hackney showed the positive outcome for stops and searches carried out in Hackney - by all units - to be 30.5%, the highest across the Met.
- 5.159 One of the major concerns around stop and search is the disproportionality in terms of those who are being searched. Concerns of those on the ground were given a voice during the review. One Inspirational Leader said that the community had noted rhetoric around increasing stop and search, and were worried that there could be a return to days where young black males felt particularly high levels discrimination through being stopped numerous times. Another said that young people had come to see stop and search as a normal part of being from a black background.
- 5.160 As is the case across the Met, profiled stop and search data for Hackney showed searches to be disproportionately concentrated among black boys and young men, compared to the share that this group accounts for of the population.
- 5.161 Outcome rates amongst different community groups are used by some commentators to indicate whether stop and search activity is proportionate²⁴.
- 5.162 In Hackney, the positive outcome rate for people coded as being of white ethnicity was 31.6%. The positive outcome rate for those coded as black matched almost exactly - at 31.5%. This went against the picture on a MPS wide level for the same period, where the positive outcome rate for white people was almost 4% higher for white people compared to black people. We should note that Hackney did see a lower positive outcome rate among people coded as Asian; at 24%.
- 5.163 The concern that greater use of Section 60s and searches without suspicion will worsen racial disparities in stop and search activity, played out in the data provided, both on a Hackney and MPS level.
- 5.164 Among those searched under Section 60 powers across Hackney and the MPS, black people were more over represented than they were within general stop and search. The positive outcome rates fell considerably for these searches.

²⁴ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/stop-search-police-london-met-section-60-race-a8943931.html>, for example.

- 5.165 In terms of the quality of searches in Hackney, we heard the commitment of the police to ensuring that stop and search powers were deployed transparently, with high standards of professionalism and integrity, and with concern for those stopped.
- 5.166 The greater use of body worn cameras appeared central to this, and Hackney was performing well in ensuring the recording of encounters compared to the MPS generally. We were assured that Officers were challenged when cameras were available but encounters were not recorded. The quality of footage was improving as the technology was bedded in.
- 5.167 Formally involving young people in training can help improve Officer's understanding about why quality of stop and search is important, and we were pleased to hear of the Police's engagement with Hackney Crib's Trading Places initiative. This sees practical exercises where young people swap places with representatives of a range of organisations which interact with them.
- 5.168 Helping people understand their rights in regard to stop and search can empower them to challenge poor practice. It is positive that the BCU is delivering 'know your rights' sessions in schools.
- 5.169 We explored the work of the local groups who lead on the scrutiny of stop and search in Hackney. In addition to the Community Stop and Search Monitoring Group, Hackney also has a Young Person's Stop and Search Monitoring Group.
- 5.170 On this point, it is important to recognise the innovative work of Hackney's Safer Neighbourhood Board (which has the overarching role of implementing monitoring arrangements locally) in the establishment of monitoring arrangements which put significant emphasis on enabling scrutiny of stop and search activity by young people directly.
- 5.171 We gained practical insights into the vital and valuable role which local monitoring groups can play in holding the police to account around their deployment of stop and search, on behalf of communities. We heard important examples of successful recent work by the groups. We have seen how the mechanisms exist for this functions to be delivered very effectively in Hackney.
- 5.172 However, it was also made clear that their success in doing so is fully dependent on effective engagement with these mechanisms, by the police. The recent successes were reflective of a refreshed level of engagement by the police. Until recently, this had been an area in need of improvement. We place on record our thanks to Sue Williams for reinvigorating the police's engagement with the monitoring groups during her time as Central East Commander.
- 5.173 We heard clear accounts that the extent of the police's engagement with the monitoring groups had varied according to who had been the lead police officer for the borough.
- 5.174 We agreed with the monitoring groups on the need for the BCU's current levels of engagement with the monitoring groups – and with the community more

widely – to be maintained. This includes through any periods of leadership change. Indeed, this point was illustrated further at a later point where the Central East Commander we heard from during the review was seconded elsewhere.

5.175 It is for the monitoring groups to scrutinise the use of stop and search powers by the police. However, this Commission will seek to re-establish annual updates on stop and search activity, the engagement between the police and monitoring groups, and the outcomes of this. We hope that this can help better ensure on-going engagement.

Recommendation 15 – For the Police and Monitoring Groups to provide annual updates to Living in Hackney Scrutiny on stop and search activity, and the engagement between them

Living in Hackney Scrutiny will seek to re-establish annual updates on stop and search activity, the engagement between the police and monitoring groups, and the outcomes of this. We hope that this can help better ensure on-going engagement.

In reflection of our [findings from the discussion with the police and monitoring groups](#), we will include consideration of the points below, within the next item:

- Extent of body worn camera dip sampling exercises (we heard that these had started only recently)
- Engagement of the community in training
- Section 60 communications and consultation (both monitoring groups reported that the engagement of the police prior to enacting Section 60 notices fell immediately after the move to the BCU model, and the BCU themselves acknowledged they were working on addressing this issue)

How is the Community Safety Partnership working to ensure effective relationships with the community?

5.176 Looking more broadly than stop and search, data for Hackney highlights trust and confidence in the police needing to be a key area of focus locally.

5.177 We found that the BCU shared the Commission’s concern in this area. We drew assurance that – following the move to the BCU model and under the leadership of the then BCU Commander – a range of initiatives had been put in place in response.

5.178 We were impressed with the establishment of a BCU-wide Confidence and Satisfaction Board. We hope will secure an ongoing focus on trust and confidence despite leadership change.

- 5.179 Evidence shows that effective community engagement is one of the ways through which public confidence in policing activity can be increased²⁵. We heard about a range of work in this area.
- 5.180 We welcome the BCU's engagement with the formal engagement mechanisms, and its contributions to building the capacity of these.
- 5.181 On this point - during the review the BCU confirmed that funding had been secured for a Youth Independent Advisory Group in Hackney. We understand that this will be formed of the Inspirational Leaders who we heard from at various points of the review.
- 5.182 This is hugely positive. We heard during the review of the huge strength of this group in being able to challenge the police on behalf of young people and to broker dialogue and understanding between the two.
- 5.183 We also heard of and were impressed with other work to build confidence, trust and mutual understanding, outside of the formal mechanisms, and to better ensuring good quality encounters.
- 5.184 We welcome this work, as did the community groups involved in the discussion. We feel that it can only help further ensure that encounters are well managed.
- 5.185 The above leads us to a view that the level of engagement of the Police by the community was very positive, at the point of our review.
- 5.186 This is not to say the arrangements in place could not be further improved. We heard that the great potential which a number of high quality engagement activities had had to help address trust and confidence issues had not been fully realised due a lack of effective communications on them. We heard concern that the police could inadvertently reduce trust and confidence through the release of footage intended to provide reassurance.
- 5.187 We also found a clear need for greater assurance to the community around the approaches and practices of central units deployed to the borough. This was despite measures in place to achieve a localised approach, and the involvement that central units currently took in engagement activity in the borough.
- 5.188 We welcomed the BCU Commander's candour on the need to address and improve in these areas. We pay tribute to the reinvigorated community engagement which she put in place under her leadership. We also thank community groups whose work has enabled this. These groups clearly have the capacity to challenge the police on behalf of the community, and to be an effective bridge between them.

²⁵ Royal College of Policing

5.189 The challenge now is to ensure that this reinvigorated engagement is maintained and built upon.

5.190 We see the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission having a role in monitoring this.

Recommendation 16 – For Community Safety Partnership to provide annual updates to Living in Hackney on its Trust and Confidence Action Plan

The Commission will seek annual updates against the Action Plan regarding Trust and Confidence, from the Community Safety Partnership.

As part of the first update, we will gauge progress on a number of areas in line with our review findings in this area.

We will seek updates on the status and activities of the BCU-wide Confidence and Satisfaction Board, on the BCU's engagement with the Young People's Independent Advisory Group, its work to maintain active engagement with the community and to improve communication of engagement events, and any actions to seek to facilitate engagement between the community and central units.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1. We have seen excellent work by the IGU to keep young people and the community safe. It has a clear and significant impact. We laud its co-located model. We have explored and gained assurance around its approaches and the tools it uses.
- 6.2. Our recommendations around this area – in terms of improving transparency and better ensuring the involvement of wider partners in work – are intended to help build on this further.
- 6.3. We welcome the considered approach of the Council, its partners and the community to the spike in violence which led to this review. We look forward to exploring what the next steps have been here.
- 6.4. Violent incidents and their causes need to be addressed and not shied away from. However we have seen the importance of placing issues in context. Recognising and celebrating the hugely positive contributions which the vast majority of our young residents are making to life in Hackney is crucial.
- 6.5. We see the police as having delivered an effective immediate, frontline response to the spike in violence. This was despite reductions in officers. However, we are clear that reductions in police capacity means that responses such as these are unsustainable in the longer term.
- 6.6. Evidence we heard also suggests that the reductions in the police's local presence has impacted on the capacity of the police to provide reassurance to the community and to prevent incidents occurring or escalating.

- 6.7. The greater use of stop and search has been one of the responses to the escalation in levels of violence in London. This includes the re-emergence of no suspicion searches. This makes it all the more important for the police to maintain the levels of engagement with the Stop and Search Monitoring Groups which were put in place under the most recent BCU Commander.
- 6.8. Trust and confidence generally must be an area of ongoing focus. Here we also welcome the recent levels of community engagement of the Police. This needs to continue.

7. CONTRIBUTORS, MEETINGS AND SITE VISITS

Meetings of the Commission

13/09/2018²⁶

Contributors

- Cllr Caroline Selman, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Policy, and the Voluntary Sector
- Maurice Mason, Community Safety Manager
- Alice Deacon, Assistant Head of Service - Early Help and Prevention

13/11/2018²⁷

Contributors

Inspirational Leaders, YBM Programme

- Oj Odebode
- Ayo Ogunjimi
- Oluwatosin Adegoke
- David Ogana
- Lamide Olusegun
- Deji Adeosun, Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS (and support for (Young People's) Stop and Search Monitoring Group
- Tim Shields, Chief Executive
- Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Policy and the Voluntary Sector
- Karen Law, Partnership Strategic Analysis & Performance Manager
- Aled Richards, Director, Public Realm
- Community Safety Manger
- Sonia Khan, Head of Policy and Partnerships, and Programme Manager of Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme
- Cathal Ryan, Cathal Ryan, Service Manager, Children and Families Service and Lead for Reducing Harm Working Group (Young Black Men Programme)
- Jason Davis, Policy Advisor
- Dina Sahmanovic, Senior Operations Manager Victim Support

²⁶ <http://mginternet.hackney.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=32383>

²⁷ <http://mginternet.hackney.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=119&MIId=4431&Ver=4>

- Zoe Williams, Senior Operations Manager for Children and Young People, Victim Support

10/12/2018²⁸

Contributors

- Sue Williams, Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service
- Community Safety Partnership Manager
- Jan Stout, Integrated Gangs Unit Manager
- Emma Harradine, Probation Officer, Integrated Gangs Unit
- Brendan Finegan, Service Manager - Youth Justice Service
- Oladele Woye, Community Engagement Officer, DWP, Integrated Gangs Unit
- Samir Khattab, Case Worker, SOS Project, St Giles Trust, Integrated Gangs Unit
- Damion Roberts, Case Worker, SOS Project, St Giles Trust, Integrated Gangs Unit
- Steve Gowan, Researcher, Integrated Gangs Unit
- Nichole McIntosh, Director for Operations, Safer London

31/01/2019²⁹

Contributors

- Central East Commander, Metropolitan Police Service
- Louise Brewood, Chair, Safer Neighbourhood Board
- Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Policy and the Voluntary Sector
- Nicola Baboneau, Support Officer to Hackney Safer Neighbourhood Board, and Designated Chair of Hackney's Stop and Search Monitoring Arrangements
- Deji Adeosun, Youth Leadership Manager, Hackney CVS (and support for (Young People's) Stop and Search Monitoring Group
- Tim Head, University of Essex student and volunteer for Hackney CVS
- Ayo Ogunjimi, Member, Young People's Stop and Search Monitoring Group
- David Agana, Member, Young People's Stop and Search Monitoring Group

Site Visits

The Commission made the following site visits for this review. The records of these are available below.

- [Site visit to the Integrated Gangs Unit, 22nd January 2019](#)
- [Site visit to Site Visit to Young Hackney Concorde, 22nd January 2019](#)
- [Meeting with MPS and Amnesty International re Gangs Violence Matrix, 24th January 2019](#)
- [Meeting with Integrated Gangs Unit and Children and Families Service 14th March 2019](#)

²⁸ <http://mginternet.hackney.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CI=119&MI=4432&Ver=4>

²⁹ <http://mginternet.hackney.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CI=119&MI=4433&Ver=4>

8. MEMBERS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Councillor Sharon Patrick (Chair)

Councillor Sade Etti (Vice Chair)

Councillor Michelle Gregory

Councillor Anthony McMahon

Councillor M Can Ozsen

Councillor Ian Rathbone

Councillor Penny Wrout

Overview and Scrutiny Officer: Tom Thorn ☎ 020 8356 8186

Legal Comments: Manjia Grant ☎ 020 8356 4817

Financial Comments: Deirdre Worrell ☎ 020 8356 6196

Lead Director: Ajman Ali ☎ 020 8356 3670

Lead Cabinet Member: Caroline Selman, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Policy and the Voluntary Sector



Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 16th December 2019 Item 8 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting	Item No 8
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Outline

The draft minutes of the meeting of the 30th September 2019 are enclosed.

Matter arising from September meeting:

One action arose from the meeting in September. This and the response are detailed below.

ACTION 1 (Director of Housing Services):

To provide information to the Commission on the value of compensation payments relating to Housing Services complaints.

RESPONSE:

Information has been circulated to Commission Members.



Action

The Commission are asked to review and agree the minutes, and to note the matters arising.

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London Borough of Hackney
Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission
Municipal Year 2016/17
Monday, 30th September, 2019

Minutes of the proceedings of
the Living in Hackney Scrutiny
Commission held at
Hackney Town Hall, Mare
Street, London E8 1EA

Chair:	Councillor Sharon Patrick
Councillors in Attendance:	Cllr Sade Etti (Vice-Chair), Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Penny Wrouth and Cllr Anna Lynch
Apologies:	Cllr Anthony McMahon
Officers In Attendance:	Ajman Ali (Director of Housing Services), James Goddard (Director, Regeneration), Donna Bryce (Head of Resident Safety, Housing Services) and Steve Platt (Head of Building Maintenance and Estate Environment)
Other People in Attendance:	Councillor James Peters
Members of the Public:	1
Officer Contact:	Tom Thorn  0208 356 8186  thomas.thorn@hackney.gov.uk

Councillor Sharon Patrick in the Chair

1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies had been received from Cllr McMahon.

2 Urgent Items / Order of Business

2.1 There were no urgent items and the order of business was as laid out.

3 Declarations of Interest

3.1 Interests were declared as below.

- In relation to items 4 and 6 the Chair declared she was a Council leaseholder
- In relation to items 4 and 6 the Vice Chair and Cllr Ozsen declared they were Council tenants
- In relation to agenda item 5 Cllr Lynch declared she was a Southern Housing tenant

- In relation to agenda item 5 Cllr Rathbone declared his wife was a Peabody tenant
- In relation to agenda item 5 Cllr Wrout declared she was a Member of the Board of Hackney Parochial Alms-houses.

4 Management of asbestos in Council-managed homes

4.1 The Chair welcomed the following guests for this item:

- Ajman Ali, Director, Housing Services
- Donna Bryce, Head of Resident Safety, Housing Services

4.2 The Chair also welcomed Cllr James Peters who had an interest in the subject of asbestos management from his case work.

4.3 Invited to make any opening comments, the Head of Resident Safety presented the paper which was available in the agenda packs. She made the following points:

- The paper provided the history, processes and procedures in place for the management of asbestos within Housing Services.
- She would not detail the full report. However, key points included work to reach out to Council leaseholders, in addition to tenants to ensure they got the advice around asbestos as and when they needed it.
- Historically, one of the major partnering contracts had been used for works related to asbestos management. The Council wanted to exert greater control. Two in-house surveyors had been recruited who would be predominantly focused on void properties and on re-inspections of asbestos left in situ (where asbestos was left where it was and managed and monitored, rather than being removed). A specialist asbestos contractor was in place to complement this resource so that support was available on a 24 hour basis.
- The service was working towards being able to carry out all air testing itself following works itself rather than for this to be done by contractors.
- It was also seeking to get a consistent and effective approach in place around information available to residents regarding asbestos in homes. Contractors carrying out asbestos survey work and removals often used jargon in reports. The service was getting in place standardised templates for recording information around asbestos. These were designed to be clear and user friendly, and accessible for residents who were not specialised in the area.
- The Planned Asset Management service sometimes delivered asbestos works through major works programmes, via other contractors. The Resident Safety Team was liaising closely with them. This was in order to ensure that records of this work would follow the same user-friendly, accessible format.
- The service was improving information for residents. New Council residents were given information leaflets about asbestos, and copies of asbestos reports if asbestos was present in their property. There was a dedicated phone line and email address in place.

- Prior to a resident moving into a property, a decision would be made on whether to remove the asbestos or to leave it in situ. Often, it would be removed, particularly when a survey deemed it a risk that it could be disturbed. However, in some cases it was safer to leave it untouched. In these cases, annual inspections were carried out to ensure that it remained in a safe condition.
 - A new and very knowledgeable Asbestos Manager had been recruited. All Officers in the asbestos team had been trained to P405 (a Management of Asbestos Standard). This meant that Officers were able to deal with enquiries to better ensure residents received advice promptly. This training would be rolled out to the full Resident Safety Team.
 - The service was seeking to launch an online portal enabling residents to access asbestos and fire safety reports for their homes. Alongside this the service was exploring whether the current IT system could be made fit for purpose and future proofed, or if it needed replacing.
- 4.4 The Chair thanked the Head of Resident Safety. She noted points around new residents being given information on where asbestos was in their homes. She asked how the Council addressed the risk of existing tenants, leaseholders or freeholders inadvertently disturbing asbestos as they were not aware that it was there. She felt that information should be re-provided on a regular basis.
- 4.5 The Head of Resident Safety agreed that giving information on asbestos – on an ongoing basis - was crucial. The service engaged existing residents in a number of ways. She had attended and spoke at the Tenant and Management Organisation Forum the previous week. The service was delivering roadshows to help highlight asbestos and the risks from disturbing it. The first roadshow would take place in November. They were working with Communications around doing more. The key message for residents was to contact the Council at any time they were considering carrying out works in their homes so that they could be informed of where any asbestos was.
- 4.6 The Chair noted the upcoming open day for leaseholders and freeholders. She noted that these groups were responsible for repairs and works inside their homes, where asbestos might be present. She asked if the Asbestos Team would be present at the event.
- 4.7 The Head of Resident Safety confirmed that the Fire Safety and Asbestos Safety teams would have a stall at the event.
- 4.8 In response to a question the Head of Resident Safety confirmed there was not a cost for the advice and surveying function for leaseholders.
- 4.9 Cllr Peters recalled meeting with the Head of Resident Safety some months ago. This was further to him having concerns about what had appeared to be the unsafe removal of asbestos by contractors, during their delivery of major works in homes. He had been reassured from these meetings. He had heard that in future sample inspections would be carried out of a number of units in any block subject to major works, and if asbestos was identified in any it would be presumed that asbestos was present in all units.

- 4.10 He wished to explore how this was working with other departments; for example whether an operative visiting a property to fix a leak would be versed around where asbestos was likely to be present.
- 4.11 The Head of Resident Safety said she was fully confident that this approach would be followed prior to any planned works going ahead. The service had also done significant work with the Reactive Repairs service so that they were much more aware of asbestos considerations, and where advice should be sought prior to starting a repair.
- 4.12 This said, there was still room for improvement. For example, currently, operatives needed to contact the Resident Safety Team to get information on the presence of asbestos. The service was working on a solution where this information would be available on their hand held devices, and where an active warning was given around asbestos being present as soon as a job was raised.
- 4.13 They wanted to go further. There was a four stage clearance process following asbestos works, to ensure the safety of the site. The Service was working towards a position where this exercise was only carried out by the Council itself. This would provide greater quality assurance.
- 4.14 A Member recalled issues explored by the Commission previously around the performance of housing contractors. This had included issues around sub-contractors. He welcomed the move to deliver the quality assurance function around asbestos works, directly.
- 4.15 The Head of Resident Safety confirmed that contractors carrying out works where asbestos was present needed –by law - to get a licensed asbestos specialist to carry out testing after the works to ensure the site was safe.
- 4.16 She accepted there had been issues with contractors and sub-contractors in other areas of housing. Reflecting this, the service carried out audits to ensure this testing was done accurately. Moving forward, the service wished to perform the testing function directly, using the expertise of the Asbestos Manager and Surveyors. This would take time to get in place; it would require access to a laboratory in which to do the air testing.
- 4.17 A Member welcomed that residents were able to find out if asbestos was present in their homes, and for a visit to be carried out if this was necessary. She asked how long a resident would need to wait for a visit.
- 4.18 The Head of Resident Safety advised that visits would be carried out within 24 hours in most cases. The clear message to residents was that if they suspected there may be asbestos in their homes to contact the Council so they could visit to assess this.
- 4.19 The Member asked – in broad terms - what share of the Council’s housing stock contained asbestos. If this was high, she suggested that highlighting this in publicity campaigns could better encourage people to check with the Council prior to doing any works in their Council homes.

- 4.20 The Head of Resident Safety thanked the Member for the suggestion, which she said was very helpful. She confirmed that – given the age of much of the Council’s stock – that around 50% of homes contained asbestos. This was being managed in an effective and improving way, including through annual inspections to ensure that asbestos was either in a safe and sound condition and otherwise removed.
- 4.21 However, she agreed that messaging on how common asbestos was could be powerful in persuading more people to come forward to seek advice. This would build on the service already having seen increases in calls received. She said this was a helpful point which she would give further thought to.
- 4.22 A Member asked if information on asbestos in properties was made available to residents purchasing or renting ex Hackney Council homes.
- 4.23 The Head of Resident Safety confirmed that solicitors acting on behalf of people buying ex Council homes would request both asbestos and fire safety certificates from the Resident Safety Team. Moving forward, the service was hoping to make this information available online.
- 4.24 A Member noted the action being taken to improve information on asbestos, which he welcomed. He asked if this could include publicity in newspapers targeted at groups from whom English was not a first language.
- 4.25 The Head of Resident Safety said this was a helpful suggestion that service could take forward.
- 4.26 A Member asked what residents should do if they saw others discarding what they suspected was asbestos, carelessly and not through a licensed specialist.
- 4.27 The Head of Resident Safety advised that residents should contact the Council or the Health and Safety Executive in these cases.
- 4.28 The Chair thanked the Head of Resident Safety. She felt the discussion had been very useful. She looked forward to future updates, where the Commission would explore the progress made on bringing greater direct delivery of quality assurance of asbestos works, on greater publicity around asbestos, and on making information on asbestos surveys more readily available.
- 4.29 As a final point, Cllr Peters agreed that the item had been helpful. He asked the Chair whether the Commission was intending on exploring the Council’s role around asbestos in relation to the private rented sector. He understood that this came largely within the remit of the Health and Safety Executive. However, he understood that the Council’s Private Sector Housing Services did come into contact with issues in its work. He felt there was some lack of clarity around the roles of the Council and the Health and Safety Executive in regards to asbestos in some cases.
- 4.30 James Goddard, Director Regeneration - who was in attendance for another item – advised that he had lead responsibility for the Private Sector Housing Service. He confirmed that his area did encounter issues and take enforcement action in some cases. He felt that a scrutiny item would be useful which explored a range of issues, including flytipping of asbestos.

4.31 The Chair thanked Cllr Peters. She would give thought as to when a wider item on asbestos could be incorporated into the work programme.

5 Item to inform likely review - Context on Registered Providers operating in Hackney

5.1 The Chair welcomed James Goddard, Director, Regeneration for this item.

5.2 She reminded Members that in its last meeting the Commission had discussed exploring a range of areas around housing management - in relation to both the Council and Housing Associations – for its main review of the year.

5.3 During the summer she had held further discussions with Officers. These meetings had left her with a view that the review should focus only on housing associations, and the varying practice by different providers. This was due to the variance across housing associations meaning that a review of this area alone would already be a substantial one.

5.4 Alongside this, the Commission would continue to hold one off items in relation to the Council's Housing Services throughout the year, including on fire safety, resident engagement and community halls management.

5.5 This item was intended to give the Commission a broad insight into the housing associations operating in Hackney, and the interaction between these and the Council. Noting the slides available in the agenda packs, the Chair asked that the Director, Regeneration made any opening comments.

5.6 The Director, Regeneration made the following points:

- There were many types of organisations which could be broadly described as Housing Associations; Registered Providers, Registered Social Landlords, Housing Co-ops, Community Groups, Community Trusts, Charities and Registered Providers. There were differences between them in some cases, highlighting the varying types of organisation his area dealt with.
- Broadly, Registered Providers were described by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government as "*Independent, not for profit housing providers, approved and regulated, provide homes for households in housing need*". This was not a legal definition, but could act as some guide.
- Some housing associations were registered. These were accountable to the Regulator of Social Housing, as were local Housing Authorities (including the Council). Others were charities, with reporting lines to the Charity Commission.

5.7 In response to a question, the Director, Regeneration advised that the Regulator of Social Housing was a formal government body, regulating all forms of social housing. This said, it applied different forms of regulation to the different types of organisations providing social housing. For example, some of the data indicators reported to the regulator by Councils, would not be reported by housing associations.

5.8 Also, some approaches followed by Housing Associations – including around the extent of gearing (borrowing) to support investment – were less relevant to

Councils. In short, this made comparisons between Councils and Housing Associations difficult.

- 5.9 Housing Associations followed different models. Some saw themselves as specialist; for example by focusing their housing resources on older people and or people from particular community groups. This was now less common, due to a range of mergers and also an increasing consensus that a mainstreaming approach was better. There were some specialist providers in Hackney – including Anchor and Hanover - which focused on older people.
- 5.10 The size and reach of housing associations varied substantially. North London Muslim Housing Association (NLMHA) operated in three boroughs, with a total of less than 1,000 units. This compared to Clarion which managed more than 125,000 units, across 170 local authority areas.
- 5.11 The size of operations had a strong influence on the approaches Housing Associations took to housing management, including their contracting arrangements and the nature of their repairs services. It also effected the extent to which the Council was able to influence and engage with them, and secure their commitment to contributing towards local priorities.
- 5.12 Structure also differed. Housing Associations were social purpose organisations. This meant they were providers of general needs housing and the factors wrapping around this; for example forwarding the employment and skills agenda.
- 5.13 Some delivered new development; mainly the larger providers. These providers sometimes supported smaller ones to develop in the local area.
- 5.14 L&Q were the largest housing association in London with 95,000 units.
- 5.15 They had developed 2862 new homes over the most recent reporting period. Only 250 of these were at social rent levels.
- 5.16 The remainder were sold or rented at market levels, or rented at Affordable Rent levels. Affordable Rents could be charged at 50%, 65% or 80% of market rent. The majority of those rented by L&Q on the Government's Affordable Rent definition were priced at 80% of market rent, making them inaccessible to the majority of households in housing need.
- 5.17 He was giving L&Q as an example given its size. However, the trend of development moving away from social rents towards tenure types which were unaffordable to many, was applicable to many other housing associations.
- 5.18 A Member noted the points around Affordable Rents. She did see a place for homes at levels of rent which were between social rent and open market rent. This was providing a service to some of Hackney's residents. However, she was concerned at an issue she was aware of from her casework around housing associations 'flipping' units which were previously rented on a social rent basis, to an affordable rent. She felt that this is something which a scrutiny review might explore.
- 5.19 The Director, Regeneration, agreed with this point.

- 5.20 Continuing with the presentation he said an important development in recent years had been a merging of a number of already large housing associations. This had led to the emergence of some very large housing associations. Key examples included Affinity Sutton and Circle merging to create Clarion, and Family Mosaic joining with Peabody. There were likely to be more in the future.
- 5.21 There had also been an emergence of for-profit housing associations.
- 5.22 On tenancies, since 2010 housing associations had been encouraged to provide assured and fixed term tenancies rather than life time tenancies. These tended to last for five years. There had been movement back by some towards providing life time tenancies in more cases, but there was a legacy of less secure tenancies for some residents.
- 5.23 Earlier that day at the Conservative Party Conference the Secretary of State for Housing had announced that housing association tenants would have the right to shared ownership buy, with a discount attached. This risked the borough losing more of its social housing stock. The planned funding arrangements for the scheme were unknown.
- 5.24 There was also the ongoing prospect of full right to buy being extended to housing association tenants. Previous iterations of this policy if enacted would have left Councils being required to sell off shares of their social housing stock to fund the discounts applied to the right to buys.
- 5.25 A Member said that from casework and from speaking to her residents she was aware of the frustrations of some of those who lived in housing association properties. There was sometimes a view that they were not accountable. A number had said that they would have welcomed the Council owning and managing this stock rather than housing associations.
- 5.26 The Chair said she was aware of issues where residents living in housing association properties who were overcrowded, were advised by their landlord to seek rehousing by the Council through its waiting list, rather than the housing association offering them paths to suitable housing through its own stock.
- 5.27 The Director, Regeneration, confirmed that this was a problem. He felt that the Commission could add value by exploring approaches to transfers by different providers.
- 5.28 A wide range of issues could be covered within this. This included some housing associations sometimes not providing adequate support to households where there was a domestic violence issue. Instead of engaging with the situation and providing support to vulnerable household members (including rehousing), it sometimes appeared that housing associations only sought to pass all issues straight to the Council to deal with alone.
- 5.29 Part of the definition of housing associations was that they were not for profit. Recently, there had been an emergence of bodies which did work for profit. Sage had been taken to court to stop it naming itself as a housing association. This organisation was funded by Blackstone, the single largest equity fund in

- the world. Sage had tried to enter Hackney on some of the borough's small Section 106 sites. The Council had worked hard not to allow this.
- 5.30 There were other profit-making housing providers, including pension funds.
- 5.31 Clarifying a point made by a Member the Director, Regeneration confirmed that while Housing Associations were not able to make profit, they were able to achieve surpluses. They were encouraged to do so by the Regulator for Social Housing as this evidenced financial sustainability. The regulator stipulated the generation of surpluses as a success measure.
- 5.32 A Member understood that – whilst housing associations were not allowed to have shareholders – that some got around this by issuing bonds against which shares of surpluses would be paid. She understood Peabody to be one of these.
- 5.33 The Director, Regeneration agreed with this. In terms of Peabody, its structure had enabled the payment of bonds since 1905.
- 5.34 For 2019/20, L&Q were forecasting a £202 million surplus. In theory, all surpluses were ploughed back into the organisation be this through staffing, the skills agenda, or others. Questions for providers around how surpluses were used could form a helpful element of a scrutiny review.
- 5.35 The Housing and Planning Act 2016 set out policies including the extension of right to buy to housing associations funded by the forced sale of the most expensive third of councils' housing stock. Policies in the act were sometimes referred to as zombie policies, as they were still there. They had not been repealed. This meant that there was the legislative scope to move forward with it.
- 5.36 Presenting a slide looking at the number of Hackney units held by the largest 14 housing associations (by Hackney stock size), the Director, Regeneration advised that there was an error. The 285 figure on the slide for the number of units held by Sanctuary was incorrect and should have been given as 3,288.
- 5.37 He also noted that in advance of the meeting the Chair had asked for a list covering all housing associations operating in Hackney. He said that the service did have a list. The total number of operators was around 50. However, this did depend to some extent on the definition being used.
- 5.38 The 50 operators ranged widely in size; from the large providers like Clarion and Peabody, to very small charities and organisations with one or two almshouses in the borough. He would provide this list to Members. However, there was a health warning as it was currently being updated, with completion due at the end of December.
- 5.39 In response to a question, he confirmed there were approximately 24,000 housing association units in the borough.

- 5.40 In terms of the liaison between the Council and housing associations, the Council had an Approved List. Only housing associations which were on this list were able to develop or to be partners to other developers in the borough.
- 5.41 Those on the Approved List had agreed / were assessed as meeting criteria covering 17 aspects. Examples of these included having a secure financial base, not evicting tenants unnecessarily, and not making a profit. This list was similar to the criteria set out by the regulator. The Council could not reasonably insist on more stringent standards than these as it would be open to losing any legal challenge against it.
- 5.42 His service monitored housing associations against nominations agreements in place. Nomination agreements set out the share of the voids of each housing association which the Council was able to nominate households for, from its own waiting list.
- 5.43 In addition, it monitored the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act. The Council was beginning to see an increase in referrals from housing associations based on this act. As social purpose organisations housing associations had duties around supporting residents, and it was concerning that in some cases there appeared to be a lack of taking responsibility. The Council had met with a number of providers about their approaches to individual cases.
- 5.44 The partnership arrangements between the Council and housing associations were set within Better Housing Partnerships. There were two – one covering Development, and the other Housing Management.
- 5.45 Other boroughs followed different arrangements.
- 5.46 For example, Tower Hamlets had a Housing Association Federation. Within this, housing associations made a financial contribution and signed up to a range of articles in order to be a member of the federation.
- 5.47 Another example was Waltham Forest's recent establishment of a Housing Association Compact. This contained a number of standards and expectations which those signing up were expected to meet, and which they would be governed against.
- 5.48 In comparison to these models, Hackney's approach in terms of its relationships with housing associations had been relatively informal up to now. He suggested the Commission might wish to explore the Council approach compared to others.
- 5.49 This said, it was important to note that Councils had reduced capacity to shape the approaches of housing Associations compared to more historical periods. In the past grants to Housing Associations were paid via local authorities. Now this was no longer the case. This had impacted on the level of influencing and steering which was possible locally.
- 5.50 One way which the Council was providing funding to Housing Associations was through the Mayor of Hackney Housing Challenge, funded by right to buy receipts. These were offered to housing associations for them to develop in the borough. Morpeth Garages was one example, with Peabody developing with

- Council funding. Where the Council was issuing a grant there was tighter control.
- 5.51 The Housing Strategy Team led on day to day liaison with housing associations. This ranged from the management of detailed individual casework (where residents had raised concerns with the Council about a housing association) through the liaising with housing association Chief Executives within the Better Homes Partnership.
- 5.52 The Director, Regeneration presented the dashboard slide showing data against a number of measures from the largest housing associations, as reported by the housing associations themselves.
- 5.53 In response to a question, the Director, Regeneration confirmed that the repairs figure was the number of repairs which Housing Associations had reported doing. Comparing the numbers of repairs, complaints and other aspects against the number of units they managed could help give some proportionate insight into activities of different providers.
- 5.54 There were limitations to the data which needed to be acknowledged. Different methodologies would be in place for the measures, depending on the housing association, and caution needed to be applied. For example, the satisfaction rates reported by Southern Housing were based on overall rates across all the housing they managed, rather than separate monitoring within boroughs. The ways that satisfaction rates were calculated would vary – for example the numbers of residents surveyed.
- 5.55 He was aware that Hackney had very robust methodologies in place around satisfaction data collection. This had produced an outturn of 75.2% for the most recent reporting period. He noted that some of the figures in the table might be seen as surprising when compared against this. For example one provider reported a 95.4% satisfaction rate, and having received only 2 complaints regarding the 177 units that it managed.
- 5.56 A Member agreed with this point. She noted that Sanctuary Housing Association had reported a satisfaction rate of 81%. She said she would wish to apply scrutiny to the basis for this finding.
- 5.57 The Director, Regeneration said the information in the table constituted the starting point of work to gain a better range of data from Housing Associations, to better allow fair and valid comparisons. He offered to keep the Commission updated on this work throughout any review.
- 5.58 It was the first time that the Council had requested this information. It was now collecting the second round of data. This was including discussions with providers where the Council was seeking to persuade them to provide Hackney-specific data for all metrics. Not all housing associations had accepted this request. It was important to note that they were providing the information in the table on a voluntary basis. This data was not available elsewhere, and providers were not compelled to report it.
- 5.59 The Chair thanked the Director, Regeneration. She asked that in any future updates on these measures information was also given on the sources of this

- information, the timeframe to which it related, and any other broad information which could enable to the Commission to better gain the context.
- 5.60 Presenting the next slide, the Director, Regeneration advised that this broke down the complaints received by Housing Associations, as reported by those Housing Associations.
- 5.61 The Chair asked whether there were a set of key performance indicators which Housing Associations were required to collect and report to the regulator. She suggested that there might be clear definitions around these which might give greater assurance around data quality and being able to compare figures across Housing Associations. She asked if these measures might provide a baseline level of information to the Commission.
- 5.62 The Director, Regeneration confirmed there were measures which Housing Associations were required to report on. These had been changed under the previous Prime Minister and it was likely they would change again. There were 15 indicators currently. Some of these were not relevant to Councils; for example financing arrangements. There were some others which were more relevant, including reactive repairs.
- 5.63 As a final point on the presentation the Director, Regeneration said that a review comparing the practices and approaches of Housing Associations would be challenging. This was given the wide differences in the scales of their operations. He suggested that the most practical approach might be hearing from a number of smaller providers and – separately – a number of larger ones.
- 5.64 Evidence did point to smaller, more locally based organisations generally providing a better service to residents. This was compared to larger organisations which were sometimes more business-focused and removed from the local context. He suggested that this might be tested further during a review which heard from both around their approaches, before comparing them.
- 5.65 A Member noted the point made around the Waltham Forest Compact. She asked what other types of arrangements were in place between local authorities and Housing Associations.
- 5.66 The Director, Regeneration advised that in general local authorities either had a compact or a partnership model in place. There were different types of both of these. For example, Tower Hamlets' Federation of Housing Associations could be described as a partnership arrangement.
- 5.67 In response to the Member suggesting that a review might explore what the most effective approach might be for Hackney, the Director, Regeneration agreed that this would add value. This might include exploring the impact of Waltham Forest's move to a Compact arrangement.
- 5.68 A Member felt there had been significant communications by the Council around its role and action in tackling poor standards and management in the private rented sector. However, she suggested that housing association residents were often unaware that the Council had a role in providing support to them, in the same way that it did to private rented sector tenants generally.

- 5.69 She felt that a review might explore how the Council communicated the rights of Housing Association residents and how it could provide support where this was needed. She noted that the service had gathered complaints data from Housing Associations. She asked if data was available on complaints made to the Council's Private Sector Housing Service by housing association tenants, and what the responses of the Council had been to these.
- 5.70 She said she would welcome a review which aimed to better ensure that housing association residents had positive experiences from their providers. The Council housed some of the residents on its housing waiting list, within Housing Association stock. It therefore had a duty of care to help ensure that these residents were treated fairly and well, and that a long term relationship with them was maintained.
- 5.71 She was aware that many tenants of one of the major housing associations operating in the area would welcome a stock transfer back to the Council, given their experiences. She was aware that residents could be left feeling that their housing associations were unaccountable and unreachable; with little local presence. This was sometimes demonstrated when residents were given national telephone numbers to make contact with providers.
- 5.72 The Director, Regeneration thanked the Member for her points. It needed to be acknowledged that the main focus of the Private Rented Sector Housing Service had been on the main-stream private rented sector, given issues around poor conditions and management. This had included work to make private rented sector tenants aware of their rights and the support which was available to them; including through the Better Renting Campaign. All 34,000 private rented sector tenants had been written to as part of this work.
- 5.73 However, moving forward, there would be a focus on housing associations. This would include a more stringent approach in tackling poor management. As an example, following a complaint by a tenant the previous week, the service was preparing to carry out an urgent inspection of a housing association property. It would be issuing an enforcement notice if there were grounds to do so, rather than seeking a resolution through more informal measures. It would apply the maximum charge that it was allowed to for this notice. It would seek to publicise any action which was taken.
- 5.74 This would be the approach moving forward. This would help ensure that both housing associations and their residents were more aware of the Council taking an active role in improving conditions and management where this was needed.
- 5.75 If he was offering advice to the Commission, he would suggest organising items according to size of provider. He could give advice on different practices and approaches amongst Housing Associations of similar sizes. This could allow scrutiny items which made valid comparisons of approaches. He felt that areas to explore might be how providers dealt with transfers and repairs. Looking at transfers could include explorations of the support given to residents suffering difficulty, including domestic violence. Exploring repairs would help gauge the extent to which housing management was localised. In addition, he felt the Commission might explore the roles for social good which providers played in Hackney.

- 5.76 A Member noted an earlier point around the service starting to seek data from housing associations and to improve the quality of this to allow for better monitoring. However she also noted that this was provided on a voluntary basis and worried that this might stop at the point that the Council started to use it to produce intelligence with which to challenge providers. She asked if the Council might seek agreement on a pan-London level around a set of indicators which each provider should report. She suggested that London Councils could be one possible avenue.
- 5.77 The Director, Regeneration thanked the Member. However, he said that efforts had made all efforts around this over a very long period, including through the London wide Housing Directors Group. One recent response to this lack of transparency in some cases, had been the greater use of Housing Association Compacts.
- 5.78 A Member worried that Hackney might be particularly vulnerable to housing associations selling off social housing in the borough in order to develop elsewhere, given the significant rises in property values locally. She asked if there were measures in place to mitigate this risk, including obtaining assurance from providers that they would not do this.
- 5.79 The Chair recalled a previous review where a Chief Executive of a large housing association had categorically stated that he would be willing to sell units in Hackney if it was seen to benefit his organisation overall.
- 5.80 The Director, Regeneration said there was a Sales Protocol in place, which had been agreed with housing associations.
- 5.81 This set out firstly that providers would not sell in Hackney. Secondly, if the Council reluctantly accepted that a sale was required (for example where a property was in a state of disrepair which made it financially unviable to put right), then the Council or the Hackney Housing Company was given first refusal and otherwise given opportunity to facilitate a sale to another registered provider. If these options were exhausted and a sale on the open market did occur, the agreement stated that the funds from the sale would be reinvested back into Hackney.
- 5.82 The service worked hard to ensure this protocol was followed. Recently, it had come to its attention that one housing association – Peabody – was preparing to sell two properties in a location close to a new Peabody development funded through a grant from the Council. This was unacceptable, and following meetings between Peabody’s Chief Executive and the Mayor of Hackney, the units had been taken out of auction.
- 5.83 This said, there was an issue in some cases where - despite the agreement in place - housing associations sold properties without informing the Council. The agreement was voluntary, and was not one the Council could enforce. He suggested that Scrutiny could add value by seeking to ask housing associations around their approaches to sales, and their level of commitment to supporting the Council to deal with what was a housing crisis. Selling units which had provided affordable housing very much went against this.

6 Item to inform likely review - Context setting around Housing Services - stock, budgets, and performance

6.1 The following guests were in attendance for this item:

- Ajman Ali, Director Housing Services
- Jahedur Rahman, Head of Housing Transformation
- Steve Platt, Head of Building Maintenance

6.2 The Chair noted that the main review for the year would focus on housing associations. However, she still felt that the Commission would find it useful to receive the context around the performance of Housing Services.

6.3 She had therefore asked the Head of the Housing Transformation Service to present to the Commission on the work of his service. His area led on satisfaction monitoring, research and improvement, reviewing and reporting the performance framework, benchmarking, statutory returns to Government, and business and strategic plans.

6.4 The Head of Housing Transformation delivered a presentation, the slides of which are available via this link:

<http://mginternet.hackney.gov.uk/documents/s67426/Housing%20Transformation%20Service%20presentation%20to%20Living%20in%20Hackney%20Scrutiny%20Commission.pdf>

6.5 Following the presentation, the Chair said she welcomed the increases in levels of satisfaction between 2016 when the management of the Council's housing stock came back into the Council, and 2019.

6.6 She also noted the strength of the data on which this was based, in terms of the numbers of residents surveyed.

6.7 She asked if on an overall level the data suggested that the Council had made enough progress since housing management had been transferred back into the organisation.

6.8 The Head of Building Maintenance offered to answer this question as a wide range of the satisfaction measures mentioned in the presentation were relevant to his area (which included repairs). He said progress had been made but there was a lot more still to do. The repairs service restructure went live in April. Area Surveyors were now in place, each with lead responsibility for geographical areas. This had been put in place in reflection of resident feedback. He looked forward to later surveys helping to indicate the impact of this on levels of satisfaction.

6.9 Adding to this, the Head of Housing Transformation said that lower rates of satisfaction among leaseholders compared to tenants in Hackney and also the smaller increases in rates over time, reflected a national issue.

6.10 However, this was not to say there was not room for improvement locally, which the service was looking to address. Leaseholder experience would be an area of focus.

- 6.11 There was lower satisfaction among leaseholders around value for money and also communal repairs. There was a call for greater transparency around the works being required, the quality of it, and the costs.
- 6.12 Tenants now had access to their rent accounts online. However leaseholders were not able to access their service charge accounts this way. The service was working to get this in place.
- 6.13 The Division was also hoping to set up a specific body which would be accountable to leaseholders, therefore enabling a greater say by leaseholders in the management of communal areas.
- 6.14 There was an acknowledgement that letters to leaseholders were sometimes inaccessible and unclear. The service was working to improve this.
- 6.15 The Chair felt that the service needed to differentiate its approaches to different types of leaseholders. Leaseholders who had bought their properties under right to buy and who were still living in the property, sometimes had different needs and circumstances than those residents who had bought ex Council homes on the open market. She felt that full consideration needed to be given to the needs of each group. This was in particular relation to leaseholders receiving bills for significant amounts of money for major works to housing blocks.
- 6.16 A Member agreed with these points. This said, also felt there was room in some cases for more realistic expectations amongst leaseholders around the need to invest in works on their homes and communal areas, as did all homeowners.
- 6.17 Some leaseholders had benefitted from very significant discounts when buying their homes, and were sitting on very high property values. Those purchasing properties were given full information around responsibilities they would have as leaseholders.
- 6.18 The Head of Housing Transformation agreed with these points. There was a need for tailored approaches. An analysis by the service suggested that significant numbers of leaseholders were using their homes as investment vehicles by renting them out rather than living them.
- 6.19 Housing Services did feel that it needed to give consideration to different approaches to this group, compared to leaseholders who lived in their homes. This was in particular regard to levels of flexibilities around payment options for major works; for example whether to provide resident leaseholders with an option to pay over a 10 year periods but to provide a lower time period for those renting out their leasehold units.
- 6.20 He also acknowledged the points around leaseholders having bought under the right to buy having received significant discounts. This said, some of these households were asset rich, but cash poor. He suggested that the service needed to take separate approaches to payment arrangements for leaseholders who were in genuine financial hardship, and others.

- 6.21 A Member said these points highlighted the need for full information being made available on likely ongoing costs of building maintenance, to those preparing to purchase their home under the right to buy.
- 6.22 He suggested that information should be provided on costs which leaseholders could sometimes incur over a long term period, and case studies to highlight this. He also felt there was a need for better quality information at the point of works starting. There had been real upset in his ward over costs of major works. In these cases, the Head of Building Maintenance had dispelled a lot of these by spending time in the ward and speaking to those affected.
- 6.23 The Director of Housing Services thanked the Member. He agreed that ensuring information on major works was provided in an accessible format, was crucial. The service was currently working on making letters and wider information around major works, more user friendly and accessible.
- 6.24 A Member thanked the Head of Housing Transformation for the benchmarking data provided in the presentation, comparing satisfaction rates in Hackney with a number of other local authorities with similar stock sizes.
- 6.25 She welcomed the findings that Hackney was in the top quartiles for tenant satisfaction with repairs and maintenance, with their neighbourhood, and with their views being listened to and acted upon, and that it was close to the top quartile for overall tenant satisfaction.
- 6.26 She asked if there were any measures which were less positive. She asked if any had seen decreases in satisfaction.
- 6.27 The Head of Housing Transformation said that not all satisfaction measures showed increases.
- 6.28 In some cases, this could be at least partly explained by changes in methodologies.
- 6.29 As an example, some satisfaction measures had been based on residents being asked to give feedback directly to an officer, at the end of an interaction with them. In these cases people could sometimes feel more compelled to report positive experiences. Therefore, the service had changed the methodology of these indicators to be based on a text message being sent to the person, at the end of the interaction. This offered a more valid approach, and it had led to a reduction in satisfaction levels reported. The challenge now would be to achieve increases in satisfaction, as evidence by this more robust measure.
- 6.30 However, on an overall level, the direction of travel on both satisfaction and service performance indicators generally, had been one of improvement. There were a very wide range of indicators which were reported to the Audit Committee.
- 6.31 As a final question a Member asked if data was available on the number of complaints received by Housing Services, and also the amounts paid in compensation.

- 6.32 The Director of Housing Services advised that the upcoming Scrutiny Panel meeting was receiving an annual report, which evidenced the number of complaints by all areas of the Council. He asked the Scrutiny Officer shared this with the Commission. He would provide information back to the Commission on the amounts paid in compensation for complaints related to Housing Services.

ACTION 1 (Director of Housing Services):

To provide information to the Commission on the value of compensation payments relating to Housing Services complaints.

7 Item 7 - Item to note - Resident Engagement by Housing Services - hand over of findings to Cabinet Member for Housing, and response

- 7.1 The Chair advised that the Commission's letter to the Cabinet Member for Housing Services and his response, had been included in the agenda in order to make them public.
- 7.2 The Commission's letter had set out recommendations for Housing Services to consider within its reviews of community halls and the Resident Participation Team. The Commission would receive later items looking at the outcomes of these reviews.
- 7.3 Cllr Rathbone noted that the wording for recommendation 11 (which appeared twice in the Commission's letter) contained repetitions of words 'that the'.
- 7.4 Cllr Lynch advised that a Budget Scrutiny Group looking at fees and charges, would be continuing under her chair ship. She felt it likely that this would continue to give consideration to community halls aspects including hire charges and levels of usage. She felt that ensuring the effective usage of community halls could play a role in helping the Council to meet its very significant financial challenges.

8 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 8.1 The minutes of the Commission meeting of 15th July were agreed as an accurate record.

9 Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission- 2019/20 Work Programme

- 9.1 The 2019/20 Work Programme was noted.

10 Any Other Business

- 10.1 Cllr Rathbone recalled the Commission's meetings with Thames Water in November 2018 and April 2019. This followed the flooding and damage caused by a burst Thames Water main in his ward of Leabridge.
- 10.2 He reminded Members that the Old Schoolhouse - which a charity was working to bring back into community use - had been effected by the flood. The flood had also prevented the charity from being able to deliver the activities on the site from which it had planned to raise funds for the fuller renovation. At the

point of the meetings, the charity was liaising with Thames Water around compensation arrangements.

- 10.3 He said that the charity had now called an end to its dialogue with Thames Water on the issue, due to what it had said was Thames Water's poor and dishonest behaviour. The company were taking no responsibility for the charity's loss of fund raising opportunities.
- 10.4 He said that another resident who was vulnerable and whose home was severely damaged, had lost all of her goods and furniture. Upon her return she had no furniture or curtains, and had been helped by neighbours donating blankets. He had been trying to help the resident but both her housing association (Clarion) and Thames Water were saying that the other was accountable for her having no furniture. He was continuing to seek to advocate on her behalf.
- 10.5 The Chair thanked Cllr Rathbone. She offered to take up the case with Thames Water, on behalf of the Commission.
- 10.6 Cllr Rathbone thanked the Chair and said he would liaise with her as appropriate.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00 - 9.40 pm

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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 16th December 2019 Item 9 – 2019/20 Work Programme	Item No 9
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OUTLINE

The latest version of work programme for the current year is enclosed.

ACTION

The Commission is asked to note the work programme.

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Overview & Scrutiny

Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission: Work Plan July 2019 – April 2020

Each agenda will include an updated version of this Scrutiny Commission work programme

Meeting	Item	Directorate / lead	Comment / purpose of item
15th July 2019 Room 102, Hackney Town Hall Agenda dispatch: 5 th July 2019	Housing Services support of resident engagement	Gilbert Stowe, Head of Tenancy and Leasehold Services, Housing Services	<p>This item will explore current work to support involvement of Council tenants and leaseholders in the management of their housing and in the improvement in quality of life on estates, and any aspects for improvement.</p> <p>It will include exploring any support provided to Tenants and Residents Associations and Tenant Management Organisations, the value, take up and use of the Community Development Fund (a funding stream supporting community development and engagement activities on estates), and the work of Housing Services to communicate this and other funding opportunities to groups on estates.</p> <p>Having it at this point will enable the Commission to hear about the current approach to resident engagement, and to give views on where they see potential improvement. This is prior to a review of these functions which Housing Services is planning for later in the summer.</p> <p>A separate update on the outcomes of this review has been scheduled for the meeting of the 13th November</p>
	Prevent Programme Update	Tracey Thomas, Hackney Prevent Co-ordinator, Community	The Prevent Programme is an initiative to support and divert vulnerable people away from the radicalisation process and is one of four elements of the government's counter-terrorism strategy. Prevent involves encouraging the different local partners to work together to drive action and to learn from each other in promoting integration and challenging

Meeting	Item	Directorate / lead	Comment / purpose of item
		Safety	<p>extremism.</p> <p>Local Prevent Coordinators for lead on working with communities, police and other local agencies, to deliver preventative measures against violent extremism.</p> <p>This item has been scheduled for Members to receive an update on the programme.</p>
	Discussion about work programme for 2019/20	Tom Thorn, Overview and Scrutiny Team	For the Commission to agree review topic and one off items for this year.
<p>30th September 2019</p> <p>Room 102, Hackney Town Hall</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: 20th September 2019</p>	Item to inform likely review – Context on Registered Providers operating in Hackney	James Goddard, Director, Regeneration	<p>In its July meeting the Commission discussed using its main review for the year to explore a range of areas around housing management. Within this, Members suggested seeking to identify good practice, amongst both Councils and Registered Housing Providers / Housing Associations, possibly shaped around 4 consumer standards set by the Registered Provider of Social Housing which both are required to meet.</p> <p>With the review likely to include consideration of the work of Registered Housing Providers, this item has been scheduled to provide some background context to Members. This is in relation to the numbers and profiles of the Registered Providers / Housing Associations operating in the borough, their stock numbers, the different approaches / models which they may follow, and the ways in which they interact with the Council.</p> <p>James Goddard is the Council's Director for Regeneration, with responsibility for the Council's liaison with Registered Providers. He will</p>

Meeting	Item	Directorate / lead	Comment / purpose of item
			<p>be in attendance at the meeting to present and answer questions.</p> <p>The item is intended to help inform a later discussion on how the Commission might approach its review, and the areas it might cover.</p>
	<p>Item to inform likely review – Context setting around Housing Services - stock, budgets, and performance</p>	<p>Ajman Ali, Director of Housing Services</p>	<p>With the Commission considering a review broadly seeking good practice amongst Housing Providers, this item is intended to provide background into Council's Housing Services Division.</p> <p>The Housing Transformation Service is based in the Housing Division. This service leads on satisfaction monitoring, research and improvement, reviewing and reporting the performance framework, benchmarking, statutory returns to Government, and business and strategic plans.</p> <p>It is intended that this item will be based around these aspects in order to provide Members – particularly those new to the Commission – with a grounding in the service.</p>
	<p>Management of asbestos in Council-managed homes</p>	<p>Ajman Ali, Director of Housing Services</p>	<p>Materials containing asbestos were commonly used for a wide range of construction purposes until 1999, when all use of it was banned. Many buildings still contain asbestos. This includes the majority of Council homes.</p> <p>Where asbestos materials are in good condition and are unlikely to be disturbed they generally do not present a risk. However, when they are in poor condition, or when they are disturbed or damaged, they can cause serious harm.</p> <p>This item has been scheduled for Members to explore the Council's approach to managing asbestos in its housing stock. This includes the</p>

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			measures in place to ensure safe and effective removal where this is required due to maintenance and improvement works in our residents homes and in communal areas.
<p>16th December 2019</p> <p>Room 102, Hackney Town Hall</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: 5th November 2019</p>	Evidence gathering for review around Housing Associations - Focus on repairs and maintenance	Tom Thorn	<p>In September the Commission received background information around Housing Associations / Registered Housing Providers. This included insight into the number of providers operating in the borough, their stock numbers, the different approaches / models which they may follow, and the extent and nature of their engagement with the Council.</p> <p>Further to this the Commission decided that its main review of the year should seek to compare and contrast approaches of different providers within a range of themes, and their relationships with the Council. It would be intended that this would be delivered alongside hearing from Housing Association tenants and leaseholders around their experiences.</p> <p>This item will help inform the review. A number of providers have been invited to join a discussion on one broad element – repairs and maintenance</p>
	Housing Services support of resident engagement – update on review	Gilbert Stowe, Head of Tenancy and Leasehold Services, Housing Services	<p>In the July meeting the Commission explored the work of Housing Services' Resident Participation Team. This included the history of the function, the activities delivered, the resources in place, recent successes, and areas for potential improvement moving forward.</p> <p>It was timed so that Members could hear about current approaches and give views around possible change, prior to a review of the function taking place over the summer.</p>

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			<p>Following that item the Commission wrote to the Cabinet Member for Housing Services. This set out the findings of the Commission, along with 11 recommendations.</p> <p>This item has been scheduled for Members to be updated on the final outcomes from the review, and the consideration given the recommendations made by the Commission.</p>
	Outcomes of Housing Services' review of Community Halls		<p>During the July discussion on Housing Services' support of resident engagement, Members made a number points around the use and management of the Council's Community Halls.</p> <p>Members noted that a review of the function was underway, amid recognition that that they are currently an underused asset.</p> <p>In a letter sent to the Cabinet Member for Housing Services following the meeting, the Commission recognised the challenges around improving the accessibility of our halls - both in relation to financial pressures and around half of our halls being managed by organisations separate from the Council. However, the letter also asked that the review gave consideration to the specific points below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How Community Halls will play a role in the delivery of Council and partnership priorities • How the visibility and accessibility of Community Halls (both those run by the Council and TRAs/TMOs) to community groups and organisations delivering activities will be improved • How the split between Council-run and TRA and TMO-managed

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			<p>Community Halls will be managed to ensure effective use in all cases, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Any role for the Council in supporting wider use of all Council-owned Community Halls ○ Any measures to ensure equality of access to all Council Community Halls for all residents ○ How the use of all Halls will be evaluated on an ongoing basis <p>This item has been scheduled for the Commission to be updated around the outcomes of the Community Halls Review, including the considerations given to the points above.</p>
	Council and partnership response to escalation in serious violence review - draft report	Tom Thorn	For Member review and agreement.
14th January 2020 Parkwood Primary School, N4 2HQ	Thames Water Main Burst in the N4 area - summary of response by the Council	Aled Richards, Director, Public Realm	<p>Homes in the N4 area of the borough were flooded on 8th October 2019, following a mains burst on the Thames Water network. The burst also affected water supply for a wider area.</p> <p>This item will provide a short summary of the response of the Council and its partners to the incident.</p>
Agenda dispatch: 6 th January 2020	Thames Water Main Burst in the N4 area – evidence from Thames Water	Thames Water staff	<p>Thames Water are responsible for managing and maintaining the water main network across London and the Thames Valley.</p> <p>The Commission previously heard from Thames in January 2017 and November 2018, following major main bursts flooding in the Stoke</p>

Meeting	Item	Directorate / lead	Comment / purpose of item
			<p>Newington and Leabridge Wards respectively.</p> <p>Following the most recent major burst and damage caused in the N4 area, Thames Water have been asked to attend and answer questions on the causes of this, its response, and its general management of the network in Hackney.</p>
	<p>Thames Water Main Burst in the N4 area – input from Ofwat (economic regulator of the water sector in England and Wales)</p>	<p>John Russell, Senior Director, Strategy and Planning</p>	<p>Ofwat is the economic regulator of the water sector in England and Wales.</p> <p>In June 2018 Thames Water agreed to pay £65 million to customers as part of a package of payments and penalties worth £120 million. This followed an Ofwat’s investigation finding that Thames Water’s Board did not have sufficient oversight and control of its leakage performance.</p> <p>The £65 million payment to customers was on top of £55 million in automatic penalties incurred by the company for missing commitments it had made to cut leaks.</p> <p>The settlement also saw Thames Water commit to getting its leakage performance back in line with what it had promised it would deliver in 2019-20. It would also publish its performance each month in tackling leaks, appoint an independent monitor to certify the information in its monthly leakage reports, make additional leakage reductions of 15% by 2025 and do more to engage with customers on leakage issues – including at its Board.</p> <p>Thames Water also pledged to provide Ofwat with more detailed evidence to assure that it is meeting its statutory obligations in relation to leakage and improving its management control over the delivery of</p>

Meeting	Item	Directorate / lead	Comment / purpose of item
			<p>core operational functions.</p> <p>Members have requested that Ofwat provide an overview of the role and work of the regulator in regards to Thames Water, and of the extent of any improvement following the penalties applied in 2018.</p>
<p>20th January 2020</p> <p>Room 102, Hackney Town Hall</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: 10th January 2020</p>	<p>Learning from the 2019 Hackney Carnival, and benefits for residents</p>	<p>Polly Cziok, Director, Communications, Culture and Engagement</p>	<p>Due to the large numbers expected to attend, the Hackney Carnival for 2019 followed a different route and arrangement in 2019. A review was planned for after carnival on the location and best format for the event.</p> <p>This item is for the Commission to explore learning from the 2019 event, the costs, the benefits of the Carnival and events like it for Hackney residents, and any advantages and disadvantages of delivering the event directly. Members also want to explore the work of the Council and partners to secure a wide range of involvement including by schools and alternative education providers, and residents living on estates.</p>
<p>19th February 2020</p> <p>Room 102, Hackney Town Hall</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: 11th February 2020</p>	<p>An overarching item on the Hackney Community Safety Plan</p>	<p>Tim Shields, Hackney Council Chief Executive and Co-Chair, Hackney Community Safety Partnership</p>	<p>The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission fulfils the statutory role of the authority's crime and disorder committee. This involves reviewing and scrutinising decisions made and action taken by the local Community Safety Partnership</p> <p>Hackney's Community Safety Partnership is made up of the Council, the Police, Probation, Health, Fire and Rescue, and other partners. A Statutory Officers Group operates within the partnership, and is responsible for meeting the partnership's statutory duties.</p> <p>One of these duties is the production of a Strategic Assessment; a detailed overview of crime, disorder and community safety in the area.</p>

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			<p>Another is the production and publication of a Community Safety Partnership Plan – informed by the Strategic Assessment - summarising the actions and activities which members of the Partnership will take to reduce crime, disorder and other community safety related problems. Plans must be produced every three years.</p> <p>The Community Safety Partnership produced a new Strategic Assessment in 2018. This helped to inform the development of a new Community Safety Partnership Plan, for the period 2019/20 to 2021/22.</p> <p>The Plan prioritises the following themes. Each of these will be progressed by a set of objectives, in turn supported by a range of planned activities with lead partners for each.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious Violence and Gang Crime • Alcohol Related Crime & Disorder (Licensing and Safer Socialising) • On Street Drug Markets and Substance Misuse • Domestic abuse / Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) <p>This item has been scheduled at a point where the Plan is close to one year in. This is in order for the Commission to receive updates on the progress made in the different areas above, against those planned.</p>
<p>23rd March 2020 Room 102, Hackney Town Hall</p>	<p>Trust and confidence, and police's community engagement</p>	<p>Marcus Barnett Commander, Central East Basic Command Unit (BCU), Metropolitan</p>	<p>As part of its substantive review last year, the Commission held an item on the work of the police and partners in response to levels of trust and confidence in the police – on some measures - to be relatively low in Hackney.</p> <p>The item – in January 2019 – heard about a range of activities (including a dedicated board being set up on Trust and Confidence,</p>

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Agenda dispatch: 13 th March 2020		Police Service	<p>question and answer sessions in venues around the borough, funding for and engagement with a Youth Independent Advisory Group (IAG) to help develop the relationship and understandings between the police and the community, participation in the Trading Places initiative, and the piloting of a programme where psychologist-supported training was being provided around body language, and in preventing escalations of situations.</p> <p>A number of Community Groups – including the Youth IAG were involved with the discussion, the record of which is available here. The March item would be for the police to provide an update on this general engagement work, and for community partners to feed in also.</p>
	Stop and Search Stop & Search and Use of Force Monitoring (including tasers) item	Detective Chief Superintendent Marcus Barnett Commander, Central East Basic Command Unit (BCU), Met Police and Co- Chair, Hackney Community Safety Partnership	This item will provide an update on Stop and Search and Section 60 activity further to the last update received in January 2019. That item included exploring trend activity data, and work by the Police, Stop and Search Monitoring Groups and others, to better achieve good quality interactions on the deployment of stop and search. The record of the January 2019 item is available here . It is intended that this item follows a similar format.
	Partnership response to street based drug dealing and	Detective Chief Superintendent Marcus Barnett	<p>The Community Safety Partnership Plan sets 'On Street Drug Markets and Substance Misuse' as one of its priority areas.</p> <p>This is a wide ranging area covering preventative and diversionary work</p>

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	associated ASB	Commander, Central East Basic Command Unit (BCU), Met Police and Co-Chair, Hackney Community Safety Partnership	<p>and input from a number of areas of the Council and partner services including Public Health, Health Services, Children and Families, and Probation.</p> <p>In order to achieve focus in what will be a single discussion, this item will focus on the immediate response of the Police, Council and other partners to street based drug dealing and drug taking, and anti-social behaviour related to this. The police themselves suggested that this be an area of focus for the Commission.</p> <p>The Police have been asked to lead this item. In addition, Members hope to hear from Council services including Community Safety Enforcement, Business Regulation and Housing Services, and from Registered Providers.</p> <p>The Commission also hopes to hear from residents on their views and experiences of street based drug activity, and the response of partners to this one year onto the life of the Plan.</p>
<p>30th April 2020 Council Chamber, Hackney Town Hall</p> <p>Agenda dispatch: 22nd April 2020</p>	Progress on implementation of recommendations of Fire Risk Assessments	Ajman Ali, Director of Housing Services	This is further to the previous update of April 2019.

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