

Scrutiny Panel

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

Wednesday, 13th May, 2020

7.00 pm

Under the current national emergency arrangements this meeting will be held remotely

Contact:

Tracey Anderson

☎ 0208 3563312

✉ tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk

Tim Shields

Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney

Members: Cllr Ben Hayhurst, Cllr Mete Coban, Cllr Margaret Gordon, Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr Sophie Conway, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Yvonne Maxwell, Cllr Polly Billington, Cllr Anna Lynch, Cllr Anthony McMahon, Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Ian Rathbone and Cllr Penny Wrout

Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Urgent Items / Order of Business**
- 3 Declaration of Interest**
- 4 Living in Hackney on the Impact of Covid-19 in relation to Housing and Domestic Violence** (Pages 1 - 10)
 - An update on domestic violence (locally) and the support available.
 - An update on the support services available to residents living in council housing and housing association properties in the borough.
- 5 Scrutiny Panel Cabinet Question Time on the Impact of Covid-19** (Pages 11 - 12)
 - Cabinet Question Time session with the Mayor of Hackney and the Chief Executive.

6 Scrutiny Panel Minutes of the Previous Meeting

(Pages 13 - 40)

7 Any Other Business

The press and public are welcome to remotely join this meeting. If you wish to observe the scrutiny commission meeting, please register with the Overview and Scrutiny Officer at tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk the day before the meeting.

This meeting will be live streamed. To access the meeting please click in the link below.

<https://youtu.be/ZCvdisJQQg0>

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-health-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)

Rights of Press and Public to Report on Meetings

Where a meeting of the Council and its committees are open to the public, the press and public are welcome to report on meetings of the Council and its committees, through any audio, visual or written methods and may use digital 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.



<p>Scrutiny Panel</p> <p>13th May 2020</p> <p>Item 4 – Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission on the Impact of Covid-19 in relation to Housing and Domestic Violence</p>	<p>Item No</p> <p>4</p>
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OUTLINE

The current pandemic (Covid-19) has had a significant impact on the UK, its economy and the daily lives of people. Local authorities and statutory partners have had to refocus their support offer to local residents whilst keeping key services operational. The Council and its statutory partners have also had to ensure its resources are best placed to help with the immediate challenges presenting now and in the future.

It has been reported that during Covid-19 domestic violence crimes and reporting have increased. There is also concern about the support available to residents living in Council and Housing Association properties during this pandemic. The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission has requested for an update on the impact of Covid-19 on housing services in Hackney and an update on the impact of Covid-19 on domestic violence (DV) locally.

The discussion will cover the follow areas:

- (1) Support available to residents regarding vulnerability, ASB, rent, leasehold charges and rent arrears due to COVID-19.
- (2) Update on DV reporting in Hackney, the support available and how support is being provided and made available during Covid-19.

The reports attached in the agenda provide information about the impact of Covid-19 on patterns of domestic abuse within the borough and information about the service responses for DV and ASB / Noise.

Attending for this item will be:

Metropolitan Police Service

Detective Chief Superintendent Marcus Barnett (BCU Commander)

Detective Superintendent Adam Ghaboos (Safeguarding Lead)

London Borough of Hackney

Cllr Clayeon McKenzie, Cabinet Member for Housing services

Cllr Caroline Selman, Cabinet Member for Community safety, policy and the voluntary sector

Cllr Sem Moema, Mayoral Advisor Private renting and housing affordability

David Patfield, Director of Housing Services

James Goddard, Interim Director, Regeneration
Sarah Wright, Director of Children and Families
Cathal Ryan, Service Manager for the Domestic Abuse Intervention Service.

ACTION

Members are asked to give consideration to the presentation, report and ask questions.

Domestic Abuse update for Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission
11th May 2020

This paper has been prepared to update the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission on the impact of Covid-19 on patterns of domestic abuse within the borough and to provide information about service responses.

Summary

The Council's Domestic Abuse Intervention Service has adapted its core service delivery to ensure continuity of service while at the same time leading within the Council and across the Hackney partnership on the promotion of a joined up, adaptive and resilient response. The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service (DAIS) remains fully operational and continues to meet what has been a rise in referral rates of around 50% since lockdown commenced. The Council has allocated resources to expand the staff team to meet this demand.

The safety planning guidance which DAIS issued some weeks ago to partner agencies to help professionals respond to victims of domestic abuse is promoted regularly. The Council's web page also contains guidance for professionals and members of the public and a social media campaign is also promoting key messages. Posters have been printed and are being disseminated to key locations including parks, pharmacies and shops.

Fortnightly Covid-19 Domestic Abuse Planning Meetings, chaired and coordinated by DAIS and involving statutory partners and domestic abuse services continue to look at how agencies are ensuring the identification and prompt response to victims of abuse, particularly those who experience multiple vulnerabilities, discrimination or disadvantage. Agencies are aware that the true picture of domestic abuse is likely to be largely hidden at this time so the focus is threefold: reaching victims, providing services, and ensuring resilience so that agencies are able to respond to a surge in demand. Thankfully at this stage the message from statutory partners and domestic abuse agencies is that services remain in place and that there is not yet a shortfall locally in emergency accommodation for those who need it (both via refuge provision in London and provided by Hackney Council).

The Council has offered to take on case work of any third sector Hackney domestic abuse agency struggling to manage due to staffing shortages or a rise in demand. The Council's own Domestic Abuse Intervention Service remains fully staffed and contingency planning is reviewed regularly.

Domestic abuse data

Domestic Abuse Intervention Service (DAIS)

DAIS usually average 25 referrals per week. At 24th April 2020, reported numbers had increased to 38 referrals in the week, as shown below:

Indicator	Weekly average (April 2019 - February 2020)	W/e 06/03	W/e 13/03	W/e 20/03	W/e 27/03	W/e 03/04	W/e 10/04	W/e 17/04	W/e 24/04
Number of referrals to DAIS	25	23	21	13	22	31	32	38	38

DAIS are receiving an increase in self-referrals with people emailing the DAIS inbox asking for support for themselves. A significant number of those that are self-referring are victims/survivors who have used DAIS before and are getting in touch as they have renewed concerns during the lockdown. Referrals are also being received from people raising concerns regarding neighbours. The Duty telephone line is very busy.

Accessing victims to advise them on how to seek help can be difficult due to the perpetrator being at home and in the vicinity of phone calls so DAIS are looking at outreach to victims and potential victims through other agencies and groups who have contact with the public in addition to its own efforts.

DAIS are still assessing new referrals for perpetrator work. However, on European guidance, they have stopped trying to deliver perpetrator programme work on a one-to-one basis virtually and are instead checking in with perpetrators to try to reduce more immediate risk.

Domestic Abuse related contacts and referrals received by the Children and Families Service

Referral Category - domestic abuse or domestic violence	Total received 1st-30th April 2019	Total received 23rd Mar-17th April 2020	<u>Received from Police only</u> - 1st-30th April 2019	<u>Received from Police only</u> -23rd Mar-17th April 2020
Contacts	101	152	80	105
Referrals	53	59	45	44
% Contact to referral	52%	39%	56%	42%

The overall number of contacts made to Children's Social Care in relation to domestic abuse has increased compared to the same approximate period last year. The number of contacts received from the Police has also increased in comparison to the same approximate period in the previous year. However, the number of referrals (contacts that have been accepted for a service) from the Police is similar to the previous year, whilst there has been an increase in referrals overall of approximately 10%.

Domestic Abuse Intervention Service and Covid-19

Hackney's Domestic Abuse Intervention Service shares the generally accepted view that the current lockdown is likely to compound the problem of domestic abuse by creating more opportunity for perpetrators to hurt and control victims and by making it harder for victims to be seen and helped.

During the Covid-19 lockdown DAIS has seen an increased number of referrals of around 60%, from approximately 25 referrals per week to almost 40 per week. In response to demand, DAIS has increased its capacity through increasing the numbers of case workers in the team through both agency recruitment and redeployment as well as being assisted by former members of the service now in other roles within the Council. Management capacity has also been enhanced. DAIS is relatively confident that it is in a strong position to meet any rise in demand and the anticipated 'surge' once lockdown ends.

DAIS continues to offer a service to victims of abuse with the only change being that visits and meetings are done via phone or video rather than in person. One of the key challenges is the ability of staff to speak safely with victims of abuse who are self-isolating with perpetrators.

The risks associated with the lockdown are being mitigated in the following ways:

- Checking in on all allocated cases about risks in light of current health crisis requirements and supporting service users with safety planning.
- Ensuring all partner agencies involved in cases are aware of current risks and difficulties that may present in contacting victims and are taking steps to reduce and monitor these.
- Proactively contacting victims/survivors who were former service users and who staff feel were safe at the point of their case being closed but may be vulnerable to potential escalation of risk.
- Modifying work with perpetrators of abuse; advice on a pan-European level has been that it is unsafe in this health crisis to undertake structured and challenging work with perpetrators similar to what would ordinarily be done in a group setting to change their behaviour. While referrals to DAIS of perpetrators are still being received and, where safe to do so, perpetrators are being assessed. Engagement with them is in the form of regularly checking in and advising on techniques to better manage their emotions thus hopefully reducing some of their behaviour.
- Publicising again Hackney Council's Domestic Abuse Staff Protocol to ensure staff who are working from home and at increased risk are aware of how to get help and to ensure managers are aware of the need to explore staff safety.
- Launching a public facing campaign using the Council website, social and local media, partner agencies, Hackney Gazette and online postings and posters in public spaces such as parks, supermarkets, pharmacies and food banks to give key messages about safety planning and accessing help.
- Developing and disseminating safety planning and risk management guidance for professionals across partner agencies.
- Chairing regular Covid-19 Domestic Abuse Planning Meetings with statutory partners and local domestic abuse agencies to ensure that victims of domestic abuse are able to be identified and helped, to mitigate any risks in the professional system e.g. due to staffing depletion / rising demand and to link agencies to one another and to the Council's efforts to address Covid-19.

- Working with local networks including community, faith and volunteer groups and mutual aid organisations, providing them with material and training on identifying and responding safely to domestic abuse.
- Working with the Council's Humanitarian Aid Group to provide training to its Covid-19 Helpline staff and managers, to general customer service staff and to volunteers.
- Working with Hackney CVS and CCG to participate in 8 "Neighbourhood Conversations', beginning with London Fields to promote key messages.

Specialist Domestic Abuse Court

Hackney is part of the East London Specialist Domestic Abuse Court. The Court is a specially adapted magistrates' court which seeks to increase the number of successful prosecutions and improve victim safety. Hackney co-funds the Specialist Domestic Abuse Court Co-ordinator post along with Tower Hamlets Council. The Court is currently closed and domestic abuse trials have been suspended until further notice. All custody matters (known as priority/urgent) are being heard at Thames Magistrates Court.

The Metropolitan Police Central East Borough Command Unit - covering Hackney and Tower Hamlets - has confirmed that Domestic Violence Prevention Orders (DVPOs) are still being applied for, which is reassuring given their effectiveness as a tool for protecting women from perpetrators. The Police Borough Command Unit will notify Hackney immediately should the situation change for any reason so steps can be taken to address the escalation of risk that would be likely to result.

Refuge Provision and Emergency Accommodation

Hackney has for many years been one of the leading London local authorities in funding local refuge provision and this continues currently. Our refuge provider services, Hestia and Refuge, have been closely involved in the Covid-19 Domestic Abuse Planning Meetings as have the Council's Benefits and Housing Needs Service. Both have been operating 'business as usual'; though demand is increasing they have available staff and accommodation. There are still refuge spaces in London. Refuge providers along with our Cabinet Lead for Community Safety (including Violence Against Women and Girls) are involved in the ongoing work being undertaken by MOPAC to monitor availability of refuge provision. As a Council there has been a flexible, needs-led approach which is drawing on partnership working with local accommodation providers such as hotels, if needed to meet any rise in demand for accommodation due to domestic abuse. The Council's Gold Group is monitoring the issue of accommodation and resources and any reduction in capacity or difficulty in meeting demand will be reported to the Gold Group.

Domestic abuse and women with particular vulnerabilities

Women with no recourse to public funds

Migrant women with no recourse to public funds will be particularly vulnerable during this crisis, especially if they are or become victims of domestic abuse. The Council continues to support women who are parents and in need of accommodation due to domestic abuse under existing Children Act provisions. During the current health

crisis the Council has been acting to provide domestic abuse victims with no recourse to public funds who are not parents with accommodation. The Council - along with other Councils across London - are petitioning MHCLG to review and amend its current stance whereby they will not provide central government funding to Local Authorities to support the protection of women with no recourse at this time. Agencies working with NRPF women are involved in DAIS' campaign and Covid-19 strategy.

Black and Minority Ethnic / Minoritised Women

DAIS are in contact with domestic abuse agencies working with women from specific ethnic and cultural backgrounds and have linked domestic abuse charities in Hackney with Council departments involved in supporting volunteer organisations. The Covid-19 domestic abuse posters are being translated into Hackney's community languages (Turkish, Polish, Spanish, French, Yiddish, Bengali, Portuguese, Gujarati, German).

Women exploited through prostitution

Open Doors, STEPS / Pause, WDP, Benefits and Housing Needs and Public Health are part of the Covid-19 Domestic Abuse Planning Meetings. These meetings have discussed women with multiple vulnerabilities and helped link work undertaken across the partnership to ensure a joined-up response.

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

In Quarter 3 of Financial Year 2019/2020, 136 cases were heard at MARAC, an increase of 7% from the same period the previous year when 127 cases were heard, and the general increase continued through Q1 and Q2 of this Financial Year. In 65 of the 136 cases (48%) there were children in the household which reflected a similar proportion as seen throughout Q1 and Q2 of this Financial Year.

22 (16%) of the total number of cases heard at MARAC in Q1 and Q2 were 'repeat' referrals; this rate of repeat referrals (defined as being when any incident of domestic abuse occurs within 12 months of the case previously being heard at MARAC) is significantly below the expected range (SafeLives advises that a rate between 28% - 40% is expected). Across FY 2019/20 the rate was 18%. It is difficult to tell whether this low rate is because of interventions being successful so that further incidents of domestic abuse do not occur or due to repeat referrals not being correctly identified as such. The importance of agencies correctly identifying and bringing back to MARAC repeat referrals is being flagged with members of the Domestic Abuse Steering Group for dissemination within their workforces.

MARAC continues to operate as usual during the current health crisis through virtual meetings. Numbers have not seen a marked increase or decrease so far.

Safe and Together Implementation

Safe and Together is an approach, developed in the USA and practiced with significant impact in a number of countries. The approach is designed to support Children's Services and other professionals to improve their response to domestic abuse, partnering with victims and holding perpetrators to account as parents. The underpinning belief of the Safe & Together approach is that children are almost always best served by being kept 'safe and together' with the adult domestic abuse survivor. This does not mean allowing children to continue to be exposed to harm

and thresholds for the protection of children do not change. Safe and Together aims to reduce the necessity for removal of children into care by holding perpetrators to account for their behaviour and protecting survivors of domestic abuse.

The domestic abuse specialist agency Respect, along with the London Boroughs of Hackney and Waltham Forest are working together until March 2021 to implement the Safe and Together Model across the two boroughs. This is a major development programme for the Children and Families Service (CFS).

33 Hackney CFS staff have been trained in the Safe and Together model; the majority of these are practicing managers in the Family Intervention and Support Service who work directly with families to assess and reduce risk and also supervise social workers. These staff offer a weekly case consultation forum to CFS staff. Audit activity continues to measure progress in terms of practice change.

Due to Covid-19 the training schedule has been severely disrupted. The Safe and Together Institute has developed a virtual Core Training offer which is going to be trialled by Hackney staff and if felt successful will be utilised further.

Safe and Together resources around safety planning have been disseminated within the Children and Families Service and have informed Hackney's guidance to partner agencies / public.

Housing

The Domestic Abuse Housing Specialist based within DAIS and funded by Hackney Housing continues to work closely with colleagues in Hackney Housing to bring together a service model that is based on the principles of Awareness, Prevention, Early Intervention, and Protection.

A key priority for the specialist is to lead in the achievement of Hackney's Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation for the Benefits and Housing Need service. The accreditation process is allowing Hackney to examine key elements of service delivery and assess our existing practice in order to improve our response to clients experiencing domestic abuse. If successful, Hackney will be one of a few Local Authorities in the country to obtain the accreditation which is the highest standard a housing organisation can receive to demonstrate its commitment to addressing domestic abuse.

Work towards obtaining DAHA accreditation continues virtually at this time.

LIVING IN HACKNEY SCRUTINY COMMISSION 13th MAY 2020, QUESTIONS REGARDING ASB/NOISE

5. In this time of lockdown has there been an increase in complaints about ASB/Noise?

Residential noise service requests have increased from 393 in March 2019 to 451 in March 2020. In April 2109 384 residential noise service requests were received compared to 790 in April 2020.

In relation to commercial noise service requests we received 283 in March 2019 compared to 193 in March 2020 and 274 in April 2019 compared to 208 in April 2020.

6. What are you doing to help residents who cannot leave their homes but are affected by the Noise/ASB?

Residents can complain about noise as normal and we continue to provide the out of hour's noise service which operates from 21.00 and 02.00 on Friday/ Saturday and on Thursday/ Sunday between 18.30 and 02.00 and can be reached via the online reporting system at <https://hackney.gov.uk/noise> or on 020 8356 4455.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions we are unable to visit complainants but if noise is still ongoing Officers will visit the perpetrator while observing social distancing guidelines and issue advice to bring the noise down or further action will have to be taken. They will also be issued with a letter advising that the Council has a legal responsibility to investigate noise complaints under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and to take action if Officers are of the opinion that a disturbance should be classified as a statutory nuisance.

Once an abatement Notice has been served, if an Officer is of the opinion that a breach of the notice has occurred, the Council can take legal action where a fine can be imposed on summary conviction or a Fixed Penalty Notice may be served. The Council may also make an application to the Court and obtain a warrant to enter a property at any time and confiscate equipment that has been or could be used to cause nuisance.

The case is then allocated to the Ward Community Safety and Principal Enforcement Officer and if further complaints are received and the noise is witnessed then an abatement notice will be served on the person responsible for causing the noise.

If a complaint involves a Hackney Housing property the Technical Support Officer (TSO) triaging calls will inform the Officer visiting that it is a Hackney Housing property and after a visit has been made Officers will advise the TSO of the outcome to enable them update Hackney Housing as the Community Safety works in partnership with Hackney Housing in relation to these issues.

Officers have received very positive feedback from residents and the number of residential noise complaints has increased by 90% compared to the same period last year. The out of hour's service also received an e-mail from a resident who they assisted and who advised "*Greetings all, I hope you're all doing well. I would like to thank the team on Saturday with helping assess the noise and talking to the perpetrators. It really*

felt like a huge stone lifted off my chest, I was finally able to breathe again. I was able to have my first peaceful day yesterday after a long while. I only pray it will continue like this, where hopefully you won't be hearing from me.

I understand with the current situation and putting yourselves out there is a huge risk. I hope you all stay safe and take care .Again thank you and I sincerely appreciate your all help.”

In terms of commercial noise Environmental Protection received a complaint from a resident of Mare Street, regarding excessive noise late at night in the form of moped engines revving, loud talking and laughter by delivery drivers/moped riders operating out of two takeaways on Mare Street.

The complainant contacted the out of hours service at 23.20 one evening and an Officer responded immediately, visited the location wearing appropriate PPE and observing social distancing rules and spoke to the moped drivers and the managers of the businesses concerned who agreed to change how they operate. The complainant e-mailed the Officer advising *“I just can't believe the “silence “, so I went to look out the window and there were two drivers there, not making any noise!. Thanks again.”*

7. Has a different approach been taken to operating the ASB/Noise service?

See reply to Q6



Scrutiny Panel 13th May 2020 Item 5 – Scrutiny Panel Cabinet Question Time on the Impact of Covid-19	Item No 5
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OUTLINE

A key element of the scrutiny function is to hold the Mayor and Cabinet to account in public as part of a Cabinet Question Time Session. The Mayor's Question Time is the responsibility of the Scrutiny Panel.

The current pandemic (Covid-19) has had a significant impact on the UK, its economy and the daily lives of people. Local authorities have had to refocus their support offer to local residents whilst keeping key services operational. Councils have also had to ensure its resources are best placed to help with immediate challenges presenting now and in the future. With this impetus, the Scrutiny Panel is keen to understand and explore how the Council is responding to the pandemic, lessons learnt, strengths, weaknesses and the resilience of Hackney Council.

The Mayor and Chief Executive have been requested to attend the Scrutiny Panel Meeting to discuss:

1. The Council's preparations and response to the crisis particularly for vulnerable residents.
2. How the Council's is working with partners, voluntary sector, local businesses and trade unions.
3. To review the long term impacts of the pandemic on the Council and the community.

To help focus and guide the discussion specific questions related to the areas above were given in advance of topic the Scrutiny Panel session.

Attending for this item:

- **Tim Shields Chief Executive**
- **Mayor Philip Glanville**

The [Mayor, Philip Glanville](#), is the lead within Cabinet on the following areas:

- property
- ICT

- member for families, early years and play)
- strategic housing
- housing regeneration
- devolution and policy (with support from the Cabinet member for community safety, policy, and the voluntary sector)
- private sector housing and housing affordability (supported by a Mayoral Adviser as outlined below)

ACTION

Members are asked to give consideration to the response and ask questions.



Scrutiny Panel 13th May 2020 Item 6 - Minutes and matters arising	Item No 6
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OUTLINE

Attached are the draft minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Panel held on 3rd February 2020.

The matters arising from the February meeting will be updated at the next Scrutiny Panel meeting.

ACTION

Members are asked to agree the minutes and note the matters arising.

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London Borough of Hackney
Scrutiny Panel
Municipal Year 2019/20
Date of Meeting Monday, 3rd February, 2020

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

Chair	Councillor Margaret Gordon
Councillors in Attendance	Cllr Ben Hayhurst, Cllr Mete Coban, Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr Sophie Conway, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Yvonne Maxwell and Cllr Polly Billington
Apologies:	
Co-optees	
Officers In Attendance	Michael Honeysett (Director of Financial Management), Sonia Khan (Head of Policy and Strategic Delivery), Jasmine Martins (LBH Graduate Management Trainee), Alison Potter (Deputy Head of Mayor and Cabinet Office) and Soraya Zahid (Strategic Delivery Officer)
Other People in Attendance	Mayor Philip Glanville (Mayor), Councillor Carole Williams (Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Human Resources) and Councillor Nick Sharman
Members of the Public	1 Member of the public
Officer Contact:	Tracey Anderson  0208 3563312  tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk

Councillor Margaret Gordon in the Chair

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies from Ian Williams, Group Director Finance and Corporate Resources.

2 Urgent Items / Order of Business

- 2.1 The Chair proposed an amendment to the order of business and advised the minutes would be taken at the end of the agenda.

RESOLVED	Item 4 on the agenda was moved to the end of the agenda.
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- 2.2 The Chair informed the meeting a journalist was present and may or may not be recording the meeting. The Chair asked members of the public in observation to please take this into consideration if they wished to participate in the meeting.

3 Declaration of Interest

- 3.1 The Chair declared an interest in relation to item 7a. The Chair works at the Department of Works and Pensions and will not be in the room for this discussion item.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 19th October 2019 were agreed.

RESOLVED	Minutes were agreed
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Matters arising

- 4.2 The Group Director, Finance and Corporate Resources to include an update on the financial implications of the Council's new Waste Strategy in the next finance update.

This action was missed off the list sent to the Group Director. The information request has been rolled over for inclusion in the next finance update.

- 4.3 The Head of Business Intelligence and Member Services to provide a breakdown of the following:
- (a) the percentage and number of complaints which relate to traffic schemes
 - (b) for the most recent period, the number of complaints going to stage 2 which are then upheld
 - (c) further detail on what additional compensation is being paid arising from Ombudsman complaints
 - (d) further detail on why the number of days taken to resolve ASC complaints is high.

The update has been provided on pages 1-3 of the agenda.

- 4.4 Head of Procurement to provide examples of how they have worked in the last year with local SMEs to seek delivery of wider sustainability benefits particularly relating to contracts valued at less than £100k
- 4.5 Head of Procurement to share with the Panel Members the draft version of the guidance given to Heads of Service on examining the viability of in sourcing which they utilise when assessing contracts that are coming up for renewal within the next 2 years.

Information for the above 2 actions was circulated to Members on 22nd October 2019.

- 4.6 Head of Scrutiny and Ward Forums to collate a list of issues to be raised with the Director of Communications, Culture and Engagement at a future meeting.

This item has been scheduled for the next SP meeting.

- 4.7 Head of Scrutiny and Ward Forums to add to the work programme a briefing from Group Directors/Directors on how the learning from Complaints is cascaded down within the service area and used to help make service improvements.

Members to discuss and confirm the service areas they wish to receive as an update. This will be discussed under item 8.

5 Mayor's Cabinet Question Time

- 5.1 The Chair welcomed the Elected Mayor of Hackney, Mayor Phillip Glanville to the meeting.
- 5.2 The Cabinet Question Time with the Elected Mayor of Hackney covered the following areas:
1. Devolution and Policy – local government requests to the newly elected government formed in December 2019.
 2. Brexit – The Council's preparation for exit from the European Union
 3. Climate change – the Council's response to the climate emergency and how it is being co-ordinated and monitored
 4. Organisational Development – Update on the Council's work in response to the harassment and bully claims within the workforce.
- 5.3 In reference to the questions above the main points from Mayor Glanville's opening statement were noted to be.
- 5.3.1 In relation Devolution and Policy this work covers an enhanced public affairs piece of work looking at the Queens speech and thinking about the impact the new legislative programme will have on the borough. The council identified 11 priority bills they will focus on such as EU withdrawal, building safety, fire safety, NHS funding, NHS long term plans, and Wind rush compensation and expenditure bills. This work is being led by the Mayor and Cabinet Office in the council conjunction with officers from across the council working in partnership with London Councils and Local Government Association.
- 5.3.2 The overarching priority is securing a funding settlements for local government. This follows local government experiencing a loss of approximately half of the local government grant income. Mayor Glanville highlighted this amounts to a £520 loss per Hackney resident. This is in addition to the costs pressures across the council s(social care, homelessness and no recourse to public funds) which exacerbate these challenges. The key priority for the Mayor is lobbying on these issues. The Council's aim with its lobbying on the fairer funding review is to ensure they secure the best possible deal for Hackney.

- 5.3.3 Mayor Glanville pointed out the housing crisis was absent from the Queens speech. Local Government had hoped there might be some propose changes in relation to the type of home ownership but the housing crisis remains a key challenge for the council.
- 5.3.4 In relation to Hackney's request to local government they are lobbying for investment in social and council housing. It was pointed out any reversion to that funding back into home ownership products would be a backward step. The Mayor of Hackney acknowledged the Mayor of London has secured some funding for councils and affordable housing and that the work to date was good.
- 5.3.5 Mayor Glanville highlighted specific local concerns in relation to the Government's consultation on right to buy. The Council is fearful of any redefinition of affordable housing and the impacts. In regards to welfare reform there is concern about the LHA caps challenges and the private rented sector continues to pose challenges too. Although it was acknowledged there has been progress in this area in relation to the new renters' rights bills on affordability and sustainability, Hackney's view is these changes do not go far enough.
- 5.3.6 In relation to the Council's work on climate change. They have lobbied in connection with the Environment Bill. Mayor Glanville highlighted he had attended the Parliamentary Select Committee's review on waste reduction and recycling. Mayor Glanville highlighted the Environment Bill appears to dilute the approach Hackney would like to see around the response to climate emergency. As Britain leaves the EU there will be questions about the regulatory framework.
- 5.3.7 Following confirmation that Britain has now left the EU. The council has 3 key priorities 1) leadership in relation to citizens' rights and the values that under pin hackney. Mayor Glanville pointed out Hackney values its EU residents and will continue to advocate for them, their rights and immigration controls. The Hackney Life publication also provides updates to all residents about the position for citizens and the settled status scheme.
- 5.3.8 In relation to emergency planning, gold groups and coordination groups post Brexit remain in place within the council. The position is not as stark as previously feared. Questions remain around workforce, food supply, procurement and emergency planning but currently stand at a reduced status of emergency. There are still significant challenges as they approach the end of the Brexit transition period. However if in 12 months' time the challenges they have talked about remain unresolved then the effects of this will have an impact on Hackney. The Council continues to monitor the situation.
- 5.3.9 In terms of direct funding from the EU for the Council and local projects, within Hackney this is quite limited. There was social funding going to third sector organisations. Historically funding was drawn for some of the council's social work. The Hackney Works predecessor previously drew heavily on this source of social funding but currently not the case.
- 5.3.10 There is shared concern about London being able to access the new shared prosperity funding pot. Further thought will be given to how that funding is distributed to London.

- 5.3.11 In reference to climate change there are other places that have gone for strategy first and action later. In Hackney they have opted for the reverse. In terms of the council response to the motion and climate emergency. The Mayor advised the council is proposing to provide an annual update about their work on the climate change emergency declaration made in June 2019.
- 5.3.12 A decision was taken not to proceed with this years planned citizens assembly (this was cancelled due to purdah for the general election). The next citizens assembly will be during the sustainability weekend. This gives the council time to review how citizen's assemblies are working across the country and take on board best practice.
- 5.3.13 In relation to the update on organisational development with regards to the harassment and bullying claims. Mayor Glanville pointed out the council took the allegations seriously and for individual cases have reached a conclusion. This process has highlighted some areas of learning that will enable them to address some of the challenges they face in their workforce and organisational development plan. Following feedback taken from a number of sources (trade unions and the staff survey, political leadership and senior officers across the organisation) the Council has made a commitment to inclusive leadership.
- 5.3.14 In reference to the housing contact centre there has been continuous engagement from the Acting Group Director and the Housing Transformation Team. The council is moving towards permanent recruitment and addressing some of the issues raised in the review. The Council is keeping the trade unions up to date on the work and progress.
- 5.3.15 The Council is commitment to its workforce development programme. Its objectives are aimed at more insourcing of services, reducing the use of temporary staff, compulsory training for management around equalities, harassment and bully and making sure they are in constant communication with the workforce about these principles. This was a strong theme in the Chief Executive's roadshow this year. Every member of staff attend these sessions. The Council is also doing some work locally aimed at recruitment which promotes an inclusive approach. This will be rolled out.

5.4 Questions Answers and Discussion

- (i) **Members referred to the update on climate change and the short term measures being put in place to respond and achieving a just transition. Members asked how the council will link it its work with the economy and how the council can support a just transition for workforce and/or jobs that do not translate into a sustainable greener economy.**
- (ii) **Members pointed out this work spans across more than one cabinet member. How will the cabinet members link their cabinet portfolio areas together for this topic and create greener jobs?**
- (iii) **Members referred to the action first and strategy approach and commented the council has a climate emergency narrative and is communicating what they are doing. Member commented the council has set a target of achieving net zero earlier than the Government's target but**

this is a science based target Members pointed out benchmarking and monitoring is important too to demonstrate effectiveness of the work. The government's target is science based Members were interested in understanding how the council will use a science based target without a trajectory of benchmarking and monitoring. Members enquired if the council had any support with regards to effective monitoring and benching of the council's actions in relation to climate change? Members also asked what support has there been from central government for this work and has there any recognition from central government about a borough's role in meeting the net zero target?

- (iv) Members referred to the Audit Committee's work in relation to the target and identifying the key tasks to achieve carbon neutral. Members enquired about the council's plans to achieve its target in 2040 and if this would involve investment and culture change to achieve the long term target.**

In response to the questions above the Mayor Glanville informed the Panel:

The Council's is one of the sector leaders for local place and local government. Hackney's aim is to take the very best of science and innovation to deliver on achieving the target. The Council's work aims to go beyond the set standard, whether that relates to trees, energy switching or its ambitions related to EV.

In reference to greener jobs the Council is working through the ZEN network and their sustainable transport work to embed the principles of just transition. The council was aware of the tighter regulations being proposed for transport and pollution and started a dialogue with Hackney's small businesses (these make up the vast majority to local businesses in the borough). This work helped to create leadership and peer to peer networks to help businesses to transition. Through their work in Shoreditch, Hackney has obtained access to the first roll out of zero emissions fleet for large corporate organisations to deliver to Hackney businesses. This has provided some learning to all businesses from the pilot work.

The council needs to ensure its work with business and around employment takes on board these principles as they move into new areas around climate change. There will be a challenge not to train people for jobs that will not exist in the future.

The Council is exploring solutions for heating that moves us away from large scale combined heat/power system powered by gas for future home developments. Mayor Glanville highlighted there are challenges with looking to use a system that does not have proven technology and how this can work for the council. This requires ensuring they have the correct workforce and skills. Their work will have to involve making sure training is available within a devolved skills system in London. The Council is feeding in their views at both a regional and sub regional level. They will also look at how they create a network of Hackney businesses to respond to this agenda.

The Council does not have a clear picture of the new jobs. But from their experience of rolling out photovoltaic (PV) at Bannister House they propose to

train local residents to be involved in the work. In the past the council has used local social enterprises in relation to education on the use of energy.

This immediate work will evolve into a strategy. The Council is aware it needs a clear baseline for measuring this area of work in terms of demonstrating impact, spend and monitoring the carbon saved. Any strategy being developed will have the core principles around sustainability embedded alongside revisions made to local plans and policies.

The council is developing an energy strategy to look at the impact of the council's energy use across all the functions. This is critical to driving down the council's energy use to make it greener and more efficient. The council will also conduct carbon budgeting by department in order to drive forward culture change to reduce energy and carbon impact.

Better reporting is starting but this will need some financial infrastructure and will be reliant on individual departments recognising this is the direction of travel.

The council is also doing some work with citizens to create opportunities for people to feel involved. The council does not want to just pass a motion but look at how citizens can be actively and practically involved. E.g. through activities like tree planting.

Mayor Glanville explained highlighted progression could be made through small work. An example of this was the Council's work on plastics with the half marathon and ongoing work with their markets team to reduce plastics and waste.

Mayor Glanville confirmed there had been very little support from Government or national leadership on the role of local government in this agenda.

- (v) In relation to Brexit Members referred to the Government announcing their plans to move further away from EU standards. Members enquired how this will effect Hackney and asked how the council would remain a pro EU borough to ensure its EU residents feel welcomed and supported in obtaining permanent residency?**
- (vi) In relation to devolution Members pointed out following the general election the government announced it was planning to reward the North for Brexit support. The suspicion is that this funding will come from areas like London. How can the borough protect its self from potential disadvantage?**
- (vii) Members asked for more detail about the Council's work on citizen's assemblies and how they are capturing more local voices? Members also asked what the council could do to make greening on existing council estates easier?**
- (viii) Members enquired about the impact of Brexit on funding for Hackney Council?**

(ix) Members referred to antisocial behaviour and robbery across the borough and asked how the council can reassure their residents and assist with confidence building among residents?

In response to the questions above the Mayor Glanville informed the Panel:

In his view there is a mixed picture about the rewarding for support. There is a continuation of the Osborne northern power house agenda around infrastructure and that can have an impact on London in terms of the investment into Crossrail 2 and entries into London via HS2. In a rhetorical question he asked will London receive further funding for transport infrastructure for TfL. He explained London does not have day to day subsidy for its public transport system. Access to the public transport system in London - when considering frequency of access to services - compared to other parts of the UK is good. However, there are still hot spots and poorly served areas in London that need to be advocated for like Kings Park Ward in Hackney.

In terms of funding and changes to the funding there are challenges. The Council is expecting to lose out on areas like deprivation. It is anticipated there will be movement towards rurality in the funding formula and this would have an impact on Hackney. The LGA demonstrated some figures in relation to social care recently that showed there would be continued cuts to many of the red war towns and cities. Therefore in relation to funding and potential cuts it was not clear where it will end up. The Council will continue to lobby for London and Hackney Council's settlement within the funding formula.

Regulatory alignment is important but there has also been a values driven alignment around environmental and agricultural standards and things the public care about. Mayor Glanville expressed he would be concerned if there a move towards lowering these standards and a fall away from regulatory alignment. There does seem to be some query about this now but this is a question for the Government. Government will need to demonstrate how serious they are about maintaining standards in relation to regulation about the environment. In terms of practical regulatory alignment locally this would be in the area of procurement and supply chain.

In relation to being an open space this will be determined by the immigration system implemented by the Government and keeping up the support to help residents to get settled status. The council aims to ensure there is no cliff edge for the most vulnerable residents. However, there is still some risk for people who do not have a full set of documents or cannot articulate themselves through the system.

In terms of Brexit and funding there are small pockets of funding that are part of consortiums of VCS organisation. There is no significant level of funding that is of immediate concern or that effects the delivery of projects from loss of funding. Many of the projects that do get funding the government has pledge to keep the funding going. Access to the shared prosperity fund will be key and this depends on how it is constructed and what proportion will be made available for London as well as sub regional distribution.

In terms of settled status Hackney has 14,000 EU nationals. The Council gets quarterly updates. The next set is due this month.

With regards to resident engagement there are a number of methodologies for citizens' assemblies such as reporting back mechanisms, involvement in co-producing solutions and leadership. If the Council was to conduct this work now it is likely to be some form of reporting back type process. Ideally the Council would like to have a process that looks at the year's work and also provides some challenge to go further and co-produce solutions.

In terms of relationships Mayor Glanville explained the Council will not always agree with all campaigns and activist. However in his view the council does have good relationships with all campaign groups and openness and transparency in the councils work. The Council is willing to consider new ideas and challenges. It is important to take these ideas into a citizen model. The Mayor expressed an interest in the jury type model which is based on a representative demography of residents to look at an issue. Mayor Glanville highlighted to get true 'Just Transition' you will need to involve people who are supportive as well as sceptical.

There is scope in scaling up VCS and volunteering to bolster the work of the council in their green infrastructure work. This will not take away paid roles within the council but aims to train up people so there is capacity to address the challenge e.g. mentoring and peer to peer support.

In terms of recycling on estates the council obtained some significant learning from their pilots on estates. They learned that closing shoots helped. It was pointed out shoots are difficult to maintain and allow people to forget about their deposit. The design of estates will be a key factor and needs to take into consideration people who cannot transport their waste around, either through disability, health or age. The council is exploring the next phase of recycling on estates and highlighted the cost for this is significant but it does deliver results. An example of this was the rubbish reconfiguration on St Johns Estate in Hoxton West. This work needs to continue and investment but key will be winning hearts and minds of people to achieve it. This work led to higher rates of recycling, better estate environment and lower ongoing revenue costs. It was pointed out the council is still committed to comprehensive waste service for their estates and properties above shops. As the council moves to fortnightly collection it will be key to reassure residents they are aware of density and the challenges with living in density where you do not have places to store waste like street properties.

In relation to community safety the Council has had some intensive discussions with the Police. There has been ongoing work around school safety in response to the awful muggings that have been taking place. Particularly around Stoke Newington School and Clissold Park. The Council has taken a community leadership role in ensuring parents have information on how to keep young people safe. The Mayor emphasised that young people are more likely to be victims than perpetrators. The community safety response is aimed at ensuring children are safe. In relation to this the Council is looking at the safe haven model for the community businesses and public infrastructure. This will enable a young person who feels unsafe to enter these businesses. This is being explored with the Police. The Police have put in place safe routes resources to ensure they are policing school drop off and pick up and the routes young people are taking to school.

Hackney will see an increase in police numbers over the next year. The Borough Commander is working out where he will deploy the additional police resource paid for by the Mayor of London. To the Mayor's knowledge the local priorities for policing are: schools, neighbourhood policing, reducing violence and the night time economy.

In relation to hate crime the Borough Commander is also keen to develop a resource to tackle the rise in hate crime reported recently. The Council is supporting this work through its Community Safety Team, the work that Young Hackney does, contextual safeguarding on trusted relationships and CCTV investment. They continue to work in partnership.

- (x) Members referred to the devolution of health and the possible merger next year to a single CCG across 7 boroughs. Members pointed out this could lead to a loss of accountability and funding. One possibility discussed to counteract this is to have an agreement that keeps Hackney funding in Hackney. Members enquired how likely would it be for Hackney to retain an accountable CCG and Hackney's health money in the borough?**
- (xi) Members referred to the work of the Audit Committee on the SEND budget and agency staff. The Council's targets for both areas of work were referred to and highlighted that for both areas challenges remain. Members referred to the SEND budget and the gap the Council is facing despite an extra funding commitment from Government. Members enquired how this will be taken forward. In relation to agency staff Members referred to the ambitious targets for each department. Members enquired about the targets for the reduction of agency staff?**
- (xii) Members referred to high streets and challenges with rate increases and the impact this is having on local SMEs and the demise of Hackney Walk due the challenges retail is facing. Member enquired about the Council's support to SMEs and how the Council is protecting Hackney's high streets from demise?**

In response to the questions above Mayor Glanville informed the Panel:

The Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission was scheduled to receive an update in relation to the plans for the CCG. The Mayor of Hackney expressed concern about the NHS halting the public engagement about the long term plan and future structures of the STP regions (due to purdah) and proceeding with the sign-off deadline for the plan as originally scheduled and not restarting the consultation. Mayor Glanville highlighted the Hackney CCG worked well and was one of the best in the country. There are parts of London where the CCG has not worked well and the demise of those CCGs may not be missed, therefore those areas may welcome a different approach. Hackney is pleased that it's lobbying and the strength of Hackney's health system has helped to keep it as a standalone system within the STP currently. If the 3 systems are finally merged the level of governance, freedom, financial resources available at our system level will be critical.

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The Council continues its work to embed the 4 integrated commissioning work streams. Embedding the neighbourhood model, looking at more preventive work and ensuring that they do more with the community and the third sector. The average person does not appear to see any of the operational changes and neither does it appear to be effecting the services they receive. The key aim is for Hackney is to get a commitment that works locally.

On SEND and agency staffing, he did not have that information available at the meeting however the Mayor pointed out there is a manifesto commitment to reduce the use of agency staff. The Council anticipates having data available shortly that will give them information about the hard targets by service areas and directorate to look at the reductions of agency spend in a structured way. The Mayor pointed out there will be areas experiencing pressure but the commitment is absolute and part of the Council's Workforce Strategy.

On high streets there is a growing trend that is common to retail across the country. In his view Hackney's high streets are more resilient than other areas. The resilience's that underpins the local high streets revolves around people walking, cycling or taking public transport to their local high street. They see that services are often independent, culturally specific and highly valued. That is different from high streets that are suffering from the increase of out of town retail and the squeeze of online shopping. Mayor Glanville also pointed out Hackney's markets are doing well too. However, universal pressures on business rates still impacts the boroughs local town centres. The introduction of exceptions, particularly for small businesses, has been welcomed. Although it was pointed out local businesses are still dealing with the consequences from the previous business rates review and a new business rates evaluation is due shortly. The Mayor of London and Hackney borough have expressed to Government that a full review of business rates is needed. There is still uncertainty for the Council about the level of funding that will come from business rates for the Council's budget.

If there is a move towards 100% business rates for council's budgets and a move away from grant top ups. The questions will not just be about how viable the high streets are but also about the viability of the council's budget. It was pointed out generally London does badly when it comes to receipt of funding from government funding pots. Noting that either, London is not able to apply or they have done badly in the level of funding allocated. This is an area London boroughs and the Mayor of London will need to continue lobbying on.

In terms of the units on Morning Lane (Hackney Walk) this has its third set of owners. The Council is engaging with the new owners and communicating their desires and the principles Hackney Council wishes to see. One of the challenges is the original agreement in place with the Arch Company (previously network rail) such as no food and beverage companies. The Council's town centre team is in dialogue with them to look at the possibility of getting a different range of businesses in those spaces. Mayor Glanville advised he has had positive conversations with the business owner and they have a commitment to investment as well as a broad portfolio. The council has communicated their desires in terms of the planning policies and the council's aspirations to ensure their town centres are not one dimensional. In terms of planning policy all the Council's high streets are protected through Article 4 which the Council implemented.

6 Single Equalities Scheme Update

- 6.1 The Chair welcomed to the meeting Cllr Carole Williams Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Human Resources and Sonia Khan Head of Policy and Strategic Delivery.
- 6.2 This is an update on the Single Equality Scheme for Hackney 2018 -2022 covering the priorities and progress of the scheme. The officer commended by providing some background information about the scheme and its development. The main points from the presentation were:
- 6.2.1 In terms of the Council's response and its approach to promoting equalities. The officer advised they want to ensure equalities is embedded and delivered in all services and engages residents in a business as usual way.
- 6.2.2 The Council's Single Equality Scheme does not articulate everything they would like partners or services need to do in relation to promoting equalities. For example this scheme would not outline the work schools need to do to ensure children have the best education. The scheme outlines how they wish to proactively tackle specific inequalities. From the Council's assessment a main stream approach for all services would not be enough to shift the borough's complex inequalities. This is because it may be that there are external factors and structural inequalities a group faces that leaves them more disadvantaged than others. Through this scheme the Council aims to proactively eliminate discrimination and disadvantage that may be faced by certain groups.
- 6.2.3 The scheme sets out the key objectives and associated actions they wish to take. It also shows how the Council meets the Equalities Act and its public sector equalities duties.
- 6.2.4 The scheme was developed drawing on the insight gathered from the Community Strategy and produced an equalities evidence base - this is publically available. This information was reviewed alongside other sources of information (resident insight, staff surveys, assessment on progress and scrutiny reviews).
- 6.2.5 The objectives in this scheme look at both work to tackle poverty and tackling discrimination and disadvantage linked to protected characteristics. This recognises socioeconomic disadvantage as a key driver. However, there are other drivers too and the scheme acknowledges the relationship between them. The third objective is about building a cohesive and inclusive borough.
- 6.2.6 The officer referenced the objectives in the scheme. There are 2 enabling objectives.
- a) Embedding prevention into service delivery - the Council has done a lot of work to trail preventative approaches. The Council has a body of work it can use to share across the council to look at how they tackle root causes.
 - b) Promoting a culture of inclusive leadership and developing a more diverse workforce – this aims to have a more diverse workforce that thinks diversely in terms of inclusive leadership. A diverse workforce better

represents the demographics of the borough and helps to address some of the inequalities.

- 6.2.7 The scheme has overarching measures of success that are being monitored for key inequalities and gaps. To ensure that inequalities in education, employment and health do not worsen and if possible are narrowed.
- 6.2.8 In reference to the resident's survey. The Council would expect to see that satisfaction rate improves for equality groups where there is a difference and that the borough's cohesion indicators remain at their high levels.
- 6.2.9 Through the equalities work they are developing a Poverty Reduction Strategy to make sure they have a more cohesive approach to tackling poverty and are delivering tangible new actions that benefit those in poverty and seek to keep people out of poverty.
- 6.2.10 The officer explained the equalities evidence base is complex and highlighted the key inequalities as school attainment, life expectancy and Hackney's unemployment rate.
- 6.2.11 The officer informed the Commission the progress update being provided was in advance of the formal update in May 2020. The update has focused on the actions in the scheme which require proactive crosscutting work, rather than the ongoing work which is referenced e.g. Housing Strategy or early years.
- 6.2.12 The priorities for the first year involved developing a Poverty Reduction Strategy. The Council is currently developing a framework that seeks to embed an approach to poverty reduction in council plans and policies; to support residents who are living in poverty and seeks to prevent poverty. Within this area of work they have also developed a food poverty action plan and the Inclusive Economy Strategy.
- 6.2.13 The second objective in the priority year was tackling disadvantage and discrimination for groups based on structural inequalities or prejudice and discrimination. The key focus has been on the following areas:
1. Improving outcomes for young black men - Three work streams: education, mental health, reducing harm - moving to a youth led accountability structure from April 2020
 2. Young Futures Commission - Commission will share findings and recommendations early in 2020/21
 3. Older People's Strategy - Ageing Well Strategy being developed through co-production with stakeholders and older people - to go to Cabinet early in 2020/21
 4. Trans and non-binary inclusion in services and facilities - Focus groups to capture lived experience of services in February to inform recommendations
 5. Inclusion and access to leisure centres, parks and libraries - Focus groups going on in leisure centres, Parks strategy being developed
 6. Hackney an accessible place for everyone - Visits to areas, involving staff, residents and Members will begin in February 2020- to look at access and mobility and identify changes that can be made to specific sites and to Policy.

7. Integrated Communities Programme - Identified and mainstreamed improvements to services supporting migrants.

- 6.2.14 The third objective in the priority year was about cohesion covering the adoption of a cultural strategy and inclusive language guide; to help staff understand how to think inclusively about different people and communities. The aim of the guidance for staff is to help improve engagement with the Charedi community. This information does not provide an exhaustive list but touches on the areas that have been developmental.
- 6.2.15 In terms of the enabling objectives they are beginning to share learning from all locality based approaches that seek to take preventative approaches. Embedding a user led approach to service design.
- 6.2.16 The second enabling objective was the work to promote an inclusive leadership culture. This was launched last year and they trained champions. The champions have trained senior managers. The Council expects to have all senior managers trained by March 2020. After the training they will look at how to embed the principles into the organisational culture and training.
- 6.2.17 In addition is the Council's work about BAME staff progression. The Director have talked to over 300 staff and issues a separate survey for anonymous contributions. They have now worked with staff to shape an action plan which was shared.
- 6.2.18 The priorities for 2020-21
- Turkish Kurdish inequality - looking more closely at the needs of the community and identifying how outcomes can be improved
 - Encouraging men to seek help earlier (link to wider work to encourage earlier engagement)
 - LGBTQ Equality plan -scoping and actions. Last reviewed in 2014/15 so doing a refresh of this work.
 - Undertaking further development work into social isolation
 - Making it easier for residents to contribute to community life
 - Developing actions to improve digital inclusion
 - Developing a better understanding of the nuanced views of the Council - understanding lived experiences of austerity, understanding differentiated views on satisfaction and trust, confidence and fair treatment.

6.3 **Questions, Comments and Discussion**

- (i) **Members referred to the points made by the Hackney Independent Safeguarding Chair in the Hackney Citizen. The remarks were made particularly in relation to young people. He stated “that the problems they are dealing with in here are different from other boroughs because they are multi layered with people moving in with lots of money displacing other people who have been here for a long time, which creates a level of resentment”. Members commented the scheme highlights very complex issues and asked how much can the local authority do, to mitigate the effects of the inequalities described?**
- (ii) **Member queried what success would look like in relation to the objectives? Members referred to the engagement work with the Charedi**

community how many people from the Charedi community and enquired how many residents from this community were employed by the Council. Members also asked to what extent increased efforts have been made in that area.

- (iii) **Members asked for further clarity about the guidance asking if it was a full training programme, its aims and the measures it be judged against?**
- (iv) **Members referred to the Inclusive Economy Strategy and asked how ambitious is the strategy? Members enquired if the strategy covered the work of partners? Members pointed out the local hospital has 300 staff employed by a sub-contractor that does not pay the London living wage. Members asked if the strategy covered this through using the Council's power on the Integrated Commissioning Board.**
- (v) **Member referred to the report on page 50 in the agenda and referred to this statement "We need to see things from the perspective of the person who is in poverty, and the multiple and compounding ways that this impacts on their life". Members asked given the volume of impacts on a number of groups how the council proposed to hear their voices in a meaningful way that gets past the usual groups already engaged?**

In response the Head of Policy and Strategic Delivery advised the single equalities scheme has been honest on the stark realities. However, if we were to articulate - like we do in the Inclusive Economy Strategy – the links between change and growth this brings prosperity for some and inequalities for others (Using the links that have been researched). The principle is that although they recognise this is a big challenge they are starting with that policy position that the safeguarding Chair raised. Therefore just simply creating opportunities through promoting prosperity alone does not lead to economic and community wellbeing. The Scheme is a public articulation of that challenge and it is for officers to find a way to practically embed them.

In relation to strategy first and action later. The scheme outlines a lot of plans but also builds on the previous scheme. This has been a continuous learning process whilst recognising there has been a political reset. It is an articulation of a point in time based on the evidence at that time of what they need. The officer pointed out if challenges are reviewed on a service by service basis and do not take a holistic approach to cross cutting issues you will miss things that might help you to prevent issues.

In terms of what success looks like, they are scoping out a success criteria. But overall they will look at the inequalities and assess whether the gap is narrowing for different areas including cohesion and wellbeing. The officer pointed out this is not just about maintaining cohesion levels but monitoring for change as a result of the work; to assess their impact.

In relation to staff for their work on workforce diversity. There was an assessment of the gap. Looking at whether staff think the organisation is committed to equality in policy and in practice. This is covered by questions to staff about perception and if senior managers were committed to inclusivity. It's a combination of looking at resident perception in a granular way alongside the equalities evidence base and reviewing the changes.

In terms of the Charedi community and workforce diversity plans. The Council acknowledged they do not have a large number of Charedi residents employed. The officer advised they have worked on an employment programme in the past with partners like Interlink. The council is aware of the structural inequalities and barriers. There is now an approach looking at working with the community to consider employability overall as opposed to developing a council led programme. They recognise there are different barriers for different groups within the community. This will be their starting point with the community.

In reference to the Council's work on engagement it is about council services having a consistent approach in terms of understanding the different ways to engage, the different channels and how to engage. The aim is to create a body of understanding and wisdom for staff to draw on.

In reference to the question about the inclusive economy strategy they are started that dialogue. They held a session inviting local employers who are considered anchor institutions - within a community wealth building approach - the most significant employers, those we are procuring services from and those that have property. This is not full influence and all the levers but it is a start, the objective being to get employers to work with the council. This is discussed at the Integrated Commissioning Board.

In terms of lived experience and poverty it is important to get information about the lived experience. For the food poverty work they carried out interviews with people in the community and developed case studies. Further work is being scoped. The Council wants to understand how people have come through their experiences of poverty. They will draw on the insight from other programmes (like the Young Black Men programme) whilst being respectful of people's time.

(vi) The Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Human Resources asked Members for more clarity on why they had focused on the Charedi community within the borough?

In response Members explained as a local councillor they had limited knowledge about the community and this session prompted them to ask the question about this community group. They wanted to understand if the structural barriers of employment are so great or if there is a way to bridge that.

The Cabinet Member explained there is interest about other similar research models from the UK and overseas to see whether they can be adopted. The Cabinet Member advised she will continue these conversations with officers.

(vii) Members referred to the Council's Ofsted inspections and enquired if the inspection reports were used as an opportunity to reflect on the changes in the workforce where the organisation undergoes period of change. Members questioned if there was a need to monitor if particular groups are overrepresented in the numbers leaving the workforce e.g. women on maternity leave, single parents or ethnic minorities. Also if there needs to be further work to look at who is coming in to replace those leaving?

- (viii) Members enquired about the involvement of businesses with the Single Equality Scheme objectives?**
- (ix) Members made the following enquires:**

 - a) The work of the council in the past?**
 - b) The measures being put in place**
 - c) The levels of awareness in terms of the different communications they need to put out to enable young black males to be as equally employable as young white males.**
- (x) Members referred to the incident in Streatham and enquired what communication the council is going to issue to reduce hate crime that is linked to these types of incidents and affects community cohesion.**
- (xi) Members referred to the incident in Streatham and enquired what communication the council is going to issue to reduce hate crime that is linked to these types of incidents and affects community cohesion.**
- (xii) Members enquired how the council is ensuring the environment is friendly for older people in the borough. Making it intergenerational friendly for both the older and younger generations.**
- (xiii) Members commented the scheme was an impressive range of actions to tackling a difficult challenge like inequalities. Members understood the long term outcomes was to narrow the indices raised. Members enquired how the yearly targets matched against the resources and how they will monitor progress against the longer term objectives. Members pointed out the report does not provide details about resources and they wanted reassurance there were resources and an intermediate plan to match this for each objective.**

In response to the questions the Head of Policy and Strategic Delivery advised the following:

In relation to how the council understands its workforce profile. This work came from the working groups carried out with black and ethnic minority staff. This was also highlighted as good practice. An organisation is encouraged to understand the workforce profile in detail and the dynamics. The Council has tried to do both. The Council has identified improvements which officers are working on. The Council aims to build on the profile information to provide a more nuanced and granular analysis. This will include the people coming into the organisation e.g. who is interviewed verses who is recruited; the pipeline of progression and the impact of organisational change. The Council recognises if it looks at the work force profile data they have now it does not give them an understanding of movements.

The Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Human Resources added in reference to the voluntary redundancy (VR) scheme and the overall impact this has had on the workforce. They are currently analysing the VR data. The Cabinet Members advised this will be shared with Members once it is complete.

There is work on a local recruitment campaign. This has been launched to ensure they have a representative workforce, one the council wishes to see

better reflects the local community. In addition the Cabinet Member pointed out the apprenticeship scheme achieved its aim of increasing the number of local residents working for the council. Highlighting the council monitors and reviews the diversity of the apprenticeship programme within the council. The Cabinet Member informed the apprenticeship profile represents the group's Members would like to see working for the council (single parents, part time workers, workers with a disability and neurodiverse conditions as well as mental health conditions) from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds.

(xiv) Members enquired about receiving a written update on the VR and apprenticeship schemes when available.

The Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Human Resources advised a briefing session was being prepared for the next day and information will be sent to Members following further analysis of the impact on the profile.

In response to the question about the involvement of businesses. The Council has adopted a charter and this outlines the Council's requests of businesses. In relation to this charter the Regeneration Team is looking at how the council can work with businesses on employment and sustainable procurement.

In response to the questions about the council's work with young black males. The Council is evaluating their work to address that inequality in terms of the demographic representations. Through the Improving Outcomes for YBM programme a group of corporates have put a funding contribution to the programme. There is work across London with employers to look at the inequality for graduates. This work is challenging an employer's idea of employability. In addition Department of Works and Pension (DWP) through their flexible fund DWP are funding work that is related to the group being discussed. The Council's work through the programme has identified what works. In partnership they are looking at how to mainstream this work.

In regards to the Council's tolerance strategy and policy there is an officer group looking at this area of work. The scheme seeks to address this before it becomes an issue and its aim is to help the community be as tolerant as possible.

In terms of older people they have worked with older people to help to develop the Aging Well Strategy and an update on the strategy's development went to Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission (HiH) before Christmas. Access and mobility is a key strand of work and staff will go out on visits to look at access and space.

In terms of the targets the officer acknowledged they were ambitious but pointed out the progress to date and what had been achieved in one year. The officer highlighted in terms of the Poverty Strategy work success would be achieving a cohesive approach to poverty by the end of the year. Currently the council has a number of different initiatives but not a cohesive approach. However after year one they will be in a better position to demonstrate impact. This is a longer term goal.

(xv) Members referred to the Turkish and Kurdish and the actions presented. Members pointed out the challenges are not new and have been around

for a number of years. Members referred to the point in the presentation that advised the council would be drawing on the approaches from the YBM programme. Members asked what this means practically for the Turkish and Kurdish community? Members also referred to the point about developing a better understanding of the specific inequalities. Members pointed out there are difference between the 2 community groups as well as difference within the groups themselves and; commented there does not always seem to be an understanding of these community groups and an assumption they can be put together.

(xvi) Members enquired what outcomes would the council expect to see to show achievement?

In response the Head of Policy and Strategic Delivery advised for their work on Turkish and Kurdish communities this has not been addressed in year one. Some initial research work has been conducted to understand the data and inequalities in relation to education, self-employment, health outcomes and issues for older people. The Council also needs to complete its work with the VCS representatives and the community. The next step would be to develop the granular data from insight work about what is driving inequalities to identify the cross cutting lessons. This means not just looking at an individual service response but taking a more holistic view.

In relation to the question about outcomes, for each area there are specific outcomes. This involves looking at the gap and narrowing the gap. However, this should not result in an overall drop. For example in the area of educational attainment, the gap for the community group and overall should not narrow because attainment overall has fallen.

The Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Human Resources agreed with the point made by Members about the differences within a BMAE group. Acknowledging that when the terminology BAME is used it is creating one cohesive collective group that is glossing over huge differences between different ethnic minority groups. Pointing out this is making the ethnic minority groups invisible when those groups want to be visible.

The Head of Policy and Strategic Delivery added for the Improving Outcomes for YMB programme where they can be specific about the inequalities for different groups and were possible; they have encouraged the approach of being specific and intersectional.

7 Quarterly Finance Update

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed to the meeting Cllr Rennison Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Finance, Housing Needs and Supply and Michael Honeysett, Director of Financial Management to the meeting.
- 1.2 The Chair referred to items 7a in the agenda and explained the Director of Financial Management in attendance was unable to provide any further update on the information provided in the agenda for Universal Credit (UC).

- 1.3 The Chair proposed they moved to item 7b and postponed item 7a until the next meeting.
- 1.4 Members agreed. The Chair will not leave the room for item 7a as this discussion was postponed.
- 1.5 The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Finance, Housing Needs and Supply informed a drop in about UC will be running in the spring. This will provide an update on the position post the general election.

ACTION	Group Director Finance and Corporate Resources to provide an update on Impact of UC at the next SP meeting.
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- 1.6 Member proceeded to item 7b finance update.
- 1.7 The Director of Financial Management referred to the report as set out in the agenda on pages 89-105. The officer advised the Overall Financial Position (OFP) report is as laid out and assumed read. The key points from the finance report highlighted to the Panel were:
 - 1.7.1 The Council is forecasting an approximate £6 million overspend. The major contributors to the overspend are adults and children's services in the areas previously discussed e.g. adult social care and for children SEND provisions etc.
 - 1.7.2 The officer pointed out they are managing the overspend in a couple of ways. At the end of the year they use one off resources to apply to the overspend in addition to the planned reserves. To manage the budget deficit they set up planned reserves know to have budget pressures.
 - 1.7.3 In relation to the financial settlement set out in the report this has been confirmed for 1 year and this funding is the same as the current year.
 - 1.7.4 The Council had forecast a £30 million deficit of which savings of £13 million have been found for the 2020/21 budget. The deficit has been pushed back by 1 year with the roll over financial settlement. The officer explained the council has acquired extra funding but that changes to funding formula have been delayed by 1 year. The Council is expecting the fairer funding review to come into effect for 2021/22 budget.
 - 1.7.5 The main factors they are expecting to affect Hackney in the fairer funding review are: deprivation, area costs adjustments and population. For Hackney the council is expecting to lose funding in the areas of deprivation and cost adjustments.
 - 1.7.6 In relation to the deprived areas they do not have the same deprived areas they had back in 2014/15. For area costs they are talking about including rurality and travel time. This will go against areas like Hackney.

- 1.7.7 The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Finance, Housing Needs and Supply advised this is expected to move more money out of big urban areas into the shires. The Council is expecting to lose a substantial amount of funding.
- 1.7.8 The Director of Financial Management advised in relation to the fairer funding review the Council is estimating they will lose £17 million. However one area of exempt funding is the better now social care funding.
- 1.7.9 The officer pointed out there is uncertainty in relation to the fairer funding settlement and key to this will be the transitional arrangements put in place between the new funding arrangements and the old regime. From past experience changes to the financial system have been implemented over a 2 years transitional period. The Council has assume this in their forecast but this has not been confirmed.
- 1.7.10 The Capital update report in the agenda covers the Council's investment and resources for future years linked to the manifesto commitments. The report is provided as a monthly update to Cabinet on the programme of works.
- 1.7.11 The report covers works such as Hackney museum refurbishment, London Fields learning pool, Stoke Newington library refurbishment etc.
- 1.7.12 The Cabinet Member pointed out the OFP report highlights the purchase of 2 properties previously sold under the right to buy. Pointing out 2 properties have come back into council ownership.

1.8 Questions, Comments and Discussion

- (i) **Members referred to the continued cost pressures and the need to continuously use reserves. Members enquired about the sustainability of the current deficit and if the Council is using its full reserves? Members enquired about the planning, preparation and estimates for worst case scenarios in relation to cost pressure areas like SEND, adult social care and other particularly high areas of spend.**
- (ii) **Members referred to the £4-5 million drawn down from the HLT reserves and enquired if they were from planned or unplanned reserves. If unplanned how sustainable is this?**
- (iii) **Members referred to the care support commissioning and highlighted that the adult social care learning disabilities service was a regular overspend area but care support commissioning is a new area being highlighted in the report. Members enquired what is the increase related to and if this was related to a loss of care support beds, local resources in terms of bed availability etc.**
- (iv) **Members asked if the gap assumption made by the Council for the fairer funding had this deficit built into the Council's budget gap or if this will be and addition to the gap already identified.**

In response the Director of Financial Management informed the Commission the reserves are a mix of planned and unplanned. Some reserves were set up

for areas known to have specific budget pressures and the resources are put in to smooth transition. It was pointed out part of the gap in the budget forecast is for growth provision. This is for a phased approach to growing the budget. The officer agreed that sustainability was important and a key factor to take into consideration when setting the budget each year. The officer confirmed the drawdown of unplanned reserves was not high and advised most reserves used were from planned reserves and used in a transitioned way.

The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Finance, Housing Needs and Supply added there are layers of contingencies within the financial framework. The Cabinet Member explained there are contingencies within the project, directorate and formal reserves. They also add any forecasted increased in income like council tax. This impacts on the amount available for flexible spend at the end of the year to balance the budget. The Cabinet Member explained it was getting more challenging to achieve a balanced budget but they are currently managing.

(v) Members enquired about the Council's net reserve position now compared to last year and asked if it was decreasing.

In response the Director of Financial Management advised the net reserves did decrease slightly but it was marginal. Most of its use was on capital spend.

The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Finance, Housing Needs and Supply clarified this was not the Council's formal corporate reserves they were still untouched. The Director of Financial Management explained the council still held the formal amount recommended for local authorities to hold in reserves. This was £15 million. However the council is finding it harder to manage with increasing costs.

The Cabinet Member highlighted it was getting harder to manage the costs and with each OFP the overspend was increasing. The Council is starting to see the impact of austerity through increased demand. Explaining the Council is trying to manage costs and cope with increasing demand at the same time. The Cabinet Member cited the housing needs service an example of a service area with an increasing number of overcrowded families. The Cabinet Member pointed out they needed to consider the long term impacts from this service on other services areas. This could lead to the children needing to access children services or the family requiring access to other types of support due to pressures like debit, universal credit etc.

The Cabinet Member pointed out they can consider prevention but there will be areas of increasing spend that the Council is unable to stop such as children services. In some cases the Council may not have the power to stop the increase in spend, therefore they need to find the budget and resources to meet the demand.

The Cabinet Members acknowledged there may be different ways to do things and more efficiently but this will not fully address the scale of demand.

In response to the question about HLT reserves this was planned reserves for that year, but it was the last year of planned reserves. The forecast overspend in HLT is £9 million for this year. HLT have found some savings from other

services areas to fund some of the budget increase but work is continuing to look at how they can support this budget going forward.

The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Finance, Housing Needs and Supply pointed out the SEND position is not unique to Hackney, other local authorities are facing the same challenges. This budget is from Government the flexibility with spend has been reduced. This is a ring fenced budget that sits separate to the local authority's main grant funding. Currently the Government is providing just enough funding to keep the system afloat and local authorities are waiting for a steer from Government. In the meantime the Council will have conversations about contingency because SEND is not a service they will allow to fail or not operate. The SEND budget is not their budget it's a government budget and they have no clarity if it can run at a deficit. It is also unclear where responsibility lies if the funding runs out, if it is with central government or the local authority.

In discussions Members commented the service covers some of the boroughs most vulnerable children and all indicators point to a trend of increasing demand for this population.

- (vi) Members asked about representations from the Local Government Association (LGA) and other bodies to seek clarity on this issue with SEND services. Members commented the anxieties for families across the country will be profound and the Government has an obligation to reassure everyone that the funding will be there to meet needs. All local authorities with this responsibility need a clear steer from central government.**
- (vii) The Chair of Audit Committee highlighted that the Audit Committee did a review of SEND Services in Hackney. This review highlighted the Council was managing to control services to the best of their ability. The second conclusion was that SEND has a deeply unstable future because demand is increasing whilst resources are stable but diminishing. There is a time bomb in the system and councils needs to think about how to manage the funding over the next 3 years.**
- (viii) The Chair of Audit Committee commented the last Capital update report shows the cost scheduling and cost estimates are continuously moving and capital costs are shifting from quarter to quarter and year to year. There is a systemic problem with estimating, scheduling and costing. The Chair of Audit Committee pointed out raising and managing capital is becoming a more important activity. The Chair was of the view the Council needed to think about how they can manage capital in a more effective way.**

In response the Director of Financial Management informed the LGA alongside other bodies like the Society of London Treasuries was constantly lobbying. The officer pointed out there has been a large amount of lobbying which may have attributed to the extra one off funding received. The challenge for councils is the level of SEND provision. It was highlighted some council have opted to change their level of provision but the legal ramification from this type of decision have not concluded.

In reference to the capital update and budgeting he confirmed some budgets are moved from one year to the next for some capital programmes. The officer acknowledged the Council needed to get better at estimating capital spend because it does affect the budget position and borrowing activity. The officer confirmed to date the council has not borrowed in advance of need. This is closely monitored by the Director of Financial Management and he has ensured the council has not been in the position of borrowing ahead of need.

ACTION	Group Director Finance and Corporate Resources to provide an update on the key challenges in relations to SEND provision including an update on the national position.
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8 Work Programme 2019/20

- 8.1 The Chair introduced this item and asked for an update from the Head of Scrutiny and Ward Forums about the budget scrutiny task groups' process for this area of work.
- 8.2 The Head of Scrutiny and Ward Forums explained the budget scrutiny task groups commenced in October 2018. The budget task groups were established as sub groups under the Scrutiny Panel and these have concluded and provided recommendations to the relevant Cabinet Member for the topic area reviewed.
- 8.2.1 The officer pointed out the majority of the task groups had to develop the area for review at the first session. In some cases this extended the number of meetings originally planned. The recommendations made were to feed into the budget decision for 2020/21-2021/22. Some saving proposals, if implemented, have moved to the relevant scrutiny commission for monitoring and update if required.
- 8.2.2 The process for some task groups morphed into a scrutiny review, conducting a number of site visits and bringing in external witnesses. The process was larger than originally planned and impacted on the work programme of the 4 main scrutiny commissions.
- 8.2.3 The budget task groups were Member led and each group had an independently selected chair. Each task group was supported by the Chair from one of the main scrutiny commissions. This process was viewed as very useful for Councillors (not part of the executive decision making structure) to understand the financial context to budget decisions.
- 8.2.4 The Head of Scrutiny and Ward Forums recommend Councillors continue with some form of working group to review budget savings proposals. However conducting this process in tandem to a full scrutiny commission's work programme had significant impact on the scrutiny work programmes for municipal year 2018/19.
- 8.2.5 In discussions about the process Members made the following key points.

a) Setting up a process that operates outside of the scrutiny function. It could be a working group led by the Cabinet Member with a membership of interested Councillors who work with the Cabinet Member to challenge and review proposals put forward.

b) There needed to be more structure coming from officers in relation to the proposed area for review. Particular if the topic area was broad and they needed to decide on the focus. In the current process this was left to the working group to decide and it was challenging.

c) This process should continue to be led by non-executive Councillors. Members commented having the process led by the decision maker may not provide strong independent challenge to the proposals put forward.

8.3 The Chair of Scrutiny Panel moved to the work programme and provided the following updates:

8.3.1 As a result of the pending GLA elections purdah is due to commence on 23rd March 2020. Therefore the next SP meeting was moved from 27th April 2020 to 13th May 2020. Members were asked to note the date and the Scrutiny Officer will send out notifications.

8.3.2 The items for the next SP meeting are:

1. Quarterly Finance Update
2. Chief Executive Question Time
3. Scrutiny and Communications
4. Learning from complaints.

8.3.1 In discussion about the work programme Members agreed to have a more in-depth look at how a directorate uses the complaints data to make service improvements. Members agreed they would look at one directorate at a time and the first should be the directorate responsible for housing services. Members agreed this should not duplicate the work of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission (LiH) but focus on how the service area uses the complaints data and how they learn from complaints with the provision of examples.

8.3.2 In relation to item 3 for the next SP meeting Members suggested they make a list of the previous requests and actions from their previous discussion with the Director Communications, Culture and Engagement to enable SP to monitor the progress.

8.3.3 The Head of Scrutiny and Ward Forums informed Members the Chair of SP and the scrutiny officer had reviewed the last discussion Members had with the Director and requested for information about communications support for scrutiny in other boroughs to use as a bench mark for comparison to the support provided in Hackney. The Director will also discuss with the Chairs having more autonomy with the communications to promote the work of scrutiny.

8.3.4 As a result of the next SP meeting date moving to the 13th May 2020 so officers are unavailable to attend. The following work programme items will be moved to the next municipal year's work programme.

- a. Advice services review
- b. Poverty strategy.

8.4 The Chair proposed developing a survey to obtain all Councillors views about how scrutiny works and the impact of scrutiny's work in Hackney. The Chair informed Members a draft of the proposed questions would be circulated following the meeting.

9 Any Other Business

9.1 None.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00 - 10.00 pm