

Overview & Scrutiny

Skills, Economy and Growth Scrutiny Commission

All Members of the Skills, Economy and Growth Scrutiny Commission are requested to attend the meeting of the Commission to be held as follows:

Wednesday 10 March 2021

7.00 pm

Until further notice, all Council meetings will be held remotely

Tim Shields

Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney

Contact:

Timothy Upton

☎ 020 8356 1872

✉ timothy.upton@hackney.gov.uk

Members: Cllr Polly Billington (Chair), Cllr Steve Race (Vice-Chair),
Cllr Richard Lufkin, Cllr Sam Pallis and Cllr Gilbert Smyth

Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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|----------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Agenda Pack | (Pages 5 - 26) |
| 2 | Minutes | (Pages 27 - 38) |

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

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

Further Information about the Commission

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

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



Public Involvement and Recording

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

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.

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Providing oral commentary during a meeting is not permitted.

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Overview & Scrutiny

Skills, Economy & Growth Commission

All Members of the Scrutiny Panel are requested to attend the meeting of the Commission to be held as follows

Wednesday, 10th March 2021


7.00 pm

Until further notice, all Council meetings will be held remotely. To access the meeting please click in the link

<https://youtu.be/uEuO0c1PgY0>

Contact:

Timothy Upton

 0208 356 1872

 timothy.upton@hackney.gov.uk

Tim Shields

Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney

Members:

Cllr Polly Billington (Vice Chair)	Cllr Sam Pallis	Cllr Richard Lufkin
Cllr Steve Race	Cllr Gilbert Smyth	

Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

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|----------|--|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Apologies for Absence | 7.00pm |
| 2 | Urgent Items / Order of Business | 7.03pm |
| 3 | Declarations of Interest | 7.04pm |
| 4 | Adult Learning & Skills Offer Question Time | 7.05pm
(98 mins) |

The Skills Economy & Growth commission will pose questions around Hackney's adult learning & skills offer to Cllr Carole Williams, cabinet member for Employment, Skills & Human resources, and Andrew Munk, Head of Employment and Skills.

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|---|--|---------------------------|
| 5 | Skills Economy and Growth Commission Work Programme | 8.43pm
(5 mins) |
| | To agree or amend the work programme for the remainder of municipal year 2020/2021 | |
| 6 | Minutes of the Previous Meeting | 8.49pm
(5 mins) |
| | To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 25 th January 2021 | |
| 7 | Any Other Business | 8.55pm
(5 mins) |

To access the meeting please click in the link <https://youtu.be/uEuO0c1PgY0>

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Providing oral commentary during a meeting is not permitted.

Skills, Economy & Growth Commission 10th March 2021 Item 4 – Adult Learning & Skills Offer Question Time	Item No 4
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Outline

The Skills Economy and Growth commission have submitted questions around Hackney's adult learning & skills offer to the guests in advance of the meeting. The meeting will comprise of responses to those questions, and further questions that the commission will pose based on those responses.

The discussion will assist the commission in forming their work programme for the coming year.

Invited guests

- **Clr Carole Williams**, cabinet member for Employment, Skills & Human Resources
- **Andrew Munk**, Head of Employment and Skills

Action

The Commission is asked to note the responses to the submitted questions.

Skills Economy and Growth Scrutiny Commission 10 th March 2021 Work Programme 2020/2021	Item No 5
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Outline

Attached please find the latest iteration of the Commission's Work Programme. Please note this is a working document and is regularly updated.

Action

The Commission is requested to note the updated work programme and make any amendments necessary.

Overview & Scrutiny

Skills, Economy and Growth Scrutiny Commission

Rolling Work Programme June 2020 – April 2021

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

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and officer contact	Description, Comment and Action
Mon 8th June 2020	Impact of COVID-19 on Local Business	Chief Executive Directorate Overview and Scrutiny Sonia Khan Simone van Elk	Commission to hear from local businesses to better understand the shifting financial reality for them since COVID
	Impact of COVID-19 on Local Residents	Chief Executive Directorate Overview and Scrutiny Stephen Haynes Sonia Khan	Commission to hear from residents to better understand life since COVID.
Mon 20th July 2020	Skills, Economy and Growth Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2020/2021	Chief Executive Directorate Overview and Scrutiny Sonia Khan Stephen Haynes	Commission to meet, discuss, and agree upon the year's work programme.
Tue 22nd Sept 2020	Developing a Skills Offer Fit for Post-COVID-19 Recovery	Chief Executive Directorate Overview and Scrutiny Sonia Khan Stephen Haynes	<i>Commission to discuss Hackney's future skills offer and examine what role the commission can play in the development of the skills offer.</i>

Mon 19th Oct 2020 (Cancelled)	Repurposing Spaces to Support Entrepreneurialism (Cancelled)	Chief Executive Directorate Overview and Scrutiny Sonia Khan Stephen Haynes	Commission to discuss what kind of industries may be able to repurpose space, and discuss how best to encourage and assist these endeavours (Cancelled)
	Supporting Local Economy (Cancelled)	Chief Executive Directorate Overview and Scrutiny Sonia Khan Stephen Haynes	Commission to meet and discuss how the commission can support the local economy through the pressures of COVID (Cancelled)
Mon 23rd November 2020	Update on Business Statistics Pertaining to COVID	Chief Executive Directorate Sonia Khan Suzanne Johnson Overview and Scrutiny Timothy Upton	Commission to hear numbers around grants, furloughs, GDP, and unemployment numbers to frame the meeting's subsequent discussions.
	Supporting Local Economy and Businesses	Chief Executive Directorate Ian Williams Stephen Haynes Overview and Scrutiny Timothy Upton	Commission to discuss what support has been extended to businesses, the issues businesses and the local economy faces, and discuss further avenues of support.
	Low Traffic Neighbourhoods	Chief Executive Directorate Sonia Khan Stephen Haynes Overview and Scrutiny Timothy Upton Neighbourhoods & Housing Aled Richards	Commission to hear and discuss the initial progress, struggles and benefits of the low traffic neighbourhood scheme.
Mon 25th January 2021	Cabinet Question Time	Mayor's Office	Cabinet question time.

Wed 10th March 2021	Adult Learning & Skills Offer Question Time	Chief Executive Directorate Overview and Scrutiny Sonia Khan Timothy Upton Mayor's Office	The Skills Economy and Growth commission have submitted questions around Hackney's adult learning & skills offer to the guests in advance of the meeting. The meeting will comprise of responses to those questions, and further questions that the commission will pose based on those responses.
April 2021	TBC	Chief Executive Directorate Overview and Scrutiny Timothy Upton	

Skills Economy and Growth Scrutiny Commission 10 th March 2021 Minutes of Previous Meetings and Matters Arising	Item No 6
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Outline

Attached please find the draft minutes of the meetings held on 25th January 2021.

Matters Arising

Action at 4.2

ACTION:	4.2 – Scrutiny officer to make requested amendments to November’s minutes.
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This action is resolved.

Action at 6.7.4

ACTION:	6.7.4 – Cllr Nicholson to respond in further detail around sentiment monitoring at a later date.
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The status of this action is unknown, commission to confirm. Possible further action to put request for information in writing.

Action at 6.13.4

ACTION:	6.13.4 – Cllr Williams to consult recent papers around reshaping the skills programme and come back to the commission with a more detailed response.
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The status of this action is unknown, commission to confirm. Possible further action to put request for information in writing.

Action at 6.16.2

ACTION:	6.16.2 – Cllr Williams to come back in writing with a response to partnership working with employers.
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The status of this action is unknown, commission to confirm. Possible further action to put request for information in writing.

Action at 6.19

6.19 – Scrutiny Officer to type up and circulate action points from this meeting.
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This action is resolved.

Action at 7.17

ACTION:	7.17 - Commission to write letter to Cllr Nicholson seeking a date for metrics around CIL.
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This action is unresolved.

Action

The Commission to approve the minutes or comment on required amendments.

Chair	Cllr Mete Coban
Councillors in Attendance	Cllr Polly Billington (Vice Chair), Cllr Steve Race, Cllr Gilbert Smyth, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Richard Lufkin, Cllr Guy Nicholson, Cllr Carole Williams.
Apologies:	None
Officers in Attendance:	Timothy Upton (Scrutiny Officer)
Other People in Attendance	None
Members of the Public	None
YouTube link	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DQFaitJvoGk
Officer Contact:	Timothy Upton <input type="checkbox"/> 020 8356 1872 <input type="checkbox"/> timothy.upton@hackney.gov.uk

Councillor Mete Coban in the Chair

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
 - 1.1 No apologies for absence.
- 2 Urgent Items / Order of Business**
 - 2.1 There was no urgent business and the order of business was as on the agenda.

3 Declarations of Interest

3.1 There were none.

4 Minutes from Previous Meetings and Matters Arising

4.1 Chair advised that minutes from the previous two meetings need to be agreed (23rd of November & 29th September)

4.2 Cllr Pallis requested the scrutiny officer make 2 amendments to November's minutes, one being at 6.1.1, the text should read "a reduction in the controlled parking hours to Cazenove Ward", and the other being at 6.12.1 the text should read "seek to reduce bus lanes"

4.3 Both sets of minutes were agreed.

ACTION:	4.2 – Scrutiny officer to make requested amendments to November's minutes.
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5 Update on Statistics Relating to COVID

5.1 chair advised that these statistics were not available at the time of the meeting, but as a recurring item, the statistics would resume as of the next meeting.

6 Cabinet Question Time

6.1 The Chair welcome Cllr Williams & Cllr Nicholson to the meeting and requested that all members present introduce themselves for the benefit of anyone watching the meeting.

6.2 The Chair requested that each cabinet member present give a brief update regarding their specific portfolios.

6.3.1 Cllr Nicholson advised that the local economy has followed the wider economy in continuing to struggle since lockdown. It was advised that 1/3 hospitality businesses are in the country are still trading, and a distinction was made that the other 2/3rds are simply not trading as opposed to definitely 'out of businesses'.

6.3.2 Cllr Nicholson advised approximately 4-5 million people are in receipt of furlough down from around 9 million.

6.3.3 It was advised that there are still sectors falling outside of the country's gradual journey toward reopening, and that a large amount of business within the sectors that are opening-up more slowly, such as service sector related industries, can be found within Hackney.

6.3.4 Cllr Nicholson advised that the council has attempted to make sure it is supporting businesses where possible both in monetary terms and in terms of lobbying power.

6.3.5 It was advised that the council must be mindful of what kind of action to help is

possible, whether its continuing in action to reduce business rates, and whether different approaches are needed for different sectors.

- 6.3.6 Cllr Nicholson advised that all the major supermarkets have paid their business rates, essentially refusing grants and subsidies. This was cited as an indicator that some sectors are thriving in contrast to the businesses struggling.
- 6.3.7 The importance of continuing development of digital infrastructure in the borough was made clear, particularly when considering the survival of businesses, jobs, and educational paths for residents.
- 6.4 The chair opened the meeting to questions.
- 6.5.1 The chair posed a question asking for an update on what sort of effect the recent cyberattack has had on the commissions remit, and whether the business rate relief implemented by the council would continue beyond the initially stated 12-month period.
- 6.5.2 Cllr Nicholson advised that the exemption of the payment of business rates is a question that has been posed to central government, but a reply is still awaited. It was recognized that many businesses are calling for an extension to this holiday, that the council is continuing in its lobbying efforts where possible, and that a further announcement was expected in March. Cllr Nicholson advised the commission that it was still something they could focus their efforts on at this stage.

Cllr Nicholson advised that the mayor has been lobbying the chancellor to extend the businesses rates programme, but nevertheless calling for a rolling programme of grants to be delivered over the course of the coming 4-5 months is necessary due to the sheer number of businesses unable to open at all, as well as the various issues with reopening (supply issues, financial outlays to reopen).

- 6.5.3 Cllr Nicholson advised that as the cyberattack is still subject to a criminal investigation, it is important to be mindful that there are still many unknown details about the situation but acknowledged that the setback for various departments has been profound.

It was advised that there is no personal information at risk, and that the potential for fraud is minimal or non-existent.

Cllr Nicholson advised that the business rates team is on schedule to deliver its work, and that funds received from the treasury are under instruction to be allocated to businesses with nothing returning to the treasury, regardless of the cyberattack.

- 6.6.1 Cllr Pallis posed 2 questions, asking firstly about the arts sector. Cllr Pallis asked for further information about how that sector is being supported, and for further details around the Cultural Recovery fund, specifically to include what is being done to support sole traders operating in that sector.
- 6.6.2 Cllr Nicholson advised that the council has been proactively supporting business in this sector in their applications to the Cultural Recovery fund. It was clarified that personal endorsements and letters of support to accompany applications are

common methods of support.

It was also advised that the council's relationship with Arts Council England remains strong, noting that the Hackney Arts of Cultural strategy that Cllr Pallis contributed to is being used as an example of good practice by them, thanking Cllr Pallis for his contributions to that work in the process.

6.6.3 Cllr Pallis asked, in relation to CIL, how the proposals to change how the levy operates with affect the council's policies around the levy and how that will change the metrics at a local level, and whether that changes the dynamic at play.

6.6.4 Cllr Nicholson advised that progress in terms of where Hackney's neighborhood CIL has arrived at in terms of reshaping itself like a 'culture fund' is noteworthy, and that the next draft paper to do with CIL's is imminent (February). It was stated that the mayor is keen to deploy this neighborhood CIL sooner rather than later, noting that the prediction for its implementation is early summer. It was suggested that the CIL will augment the funding practice already in place, and to run tandem alongside and compliment the Cultural Recovery fund.

Cllr Nicholson advised that CILs can continue to be discussed over coming months as the paper is rolled out, should it be of interest to the commission.

Cllr Nicholson advised that in terms of the government's planning reforms white paper, the general idea is that planning game will be effectively centralised through central government, and that planning game would bypass the local level. Little indication was given in the planning reforms as to how this would be arrived at, but that the principles of investing in infrastructure or CILs explicitly appear in the aforementioned planning reform white paper. It was noted that the council did object to this proposal, and that the current legislation protects existing sums of money already collected from being requisitioned by central government at a later date when the planning reform comes in.

6.7.1 Cllr Race asked to what extent the council is able to monitor in real time the health of the local economy since pandemic, and coming out of that, whether there are areas of particular concern, and what plans there are to support these areas as the economy emerges from lockdown.

6.7.2 Cllr Nicholson advised that several recommendations from the commission's previous discussions around local economic review hinge on establishing some kind of resource to monitor the local economy's health more closely. It was stated that national statistics are useful but limited when considering the local landscape.

It was advised work to look at Shoreditch's economy has been commissioned in order to better understand the area's economy. The results of that work will be available in several months' time and will provide an opportunity to reflect on the strengths of the observation tools and to consider whether or how to roll them out more widely across the borough.

Cllr Nicholson advised that the borough must align itself with local business organisations such as Hackney Federation of Small Business and the East End Trades Guild to help the council get a decent view of the local economy until better observational tools are available. It was advised that the number of business receiving updates as part of the Hackney business network is

increasing.

It was noted that evolving this tool and scrutinizing its use would be a useful point of the commission's focus in future work programmes.

- 6.7.3 Cllr Race posed a supplementary question asking whether sentiment is being measured as well as more quantitative methods, clarifying that some companies which are ready to restart their business as we come out of lockdown may not be that distinct from companies looking to cease trading if sentiment is not factored in.
- 6.7.4 Cllr Nicholson requested to be allowed to take the question away and respond at a later date.

ACTION:	6.7.4 – Cllr Nicholson to respond in further detail around sentiment monitoring at a later date.
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- 6.8.1 Cllr Smyth referenced the City of London Corporation's draft of their 5-year COVID-19 recovery plan, asking whether Hackney will have a post-COVID 19 recovery group or taskforce, whether 'the infrastructure of tomorrow' (such as resilient broadband, universal broadband, AI, flexible office space, renewable energy) will be looked at as a subject of investment.
- 6.8.2 Cllr Nicholson suggested the commission reflect on the distinction between 'recovery' and 'reopening', stating that the restoration of the economy has been the council's goal. Cllr Nicholson advised that for businesses facing closure or potential closure, finding the support for them will be crucial and is possible to be more proactive beyond lobbying, but only where it has an appropriate lever over it.

Cllr Nicholson advised that the variance of opinion across business and political minds is so great, that the right approach toward recovery is not clear, but stating that the redesigning and reengineering of Hackney's spaces is a great opportunity.

Referencing the Square Mile, Cllr Nicholson observed that looking at that as a space for small business, and the thinking of the City of London Corporation, suggests that the culture mile will be a source of new ideas in arts & tech and economy around the arts. The close working alignment with the corporation will be crucial but it was also cautioned that the corporation has historically been misunderstood as a home for very large institutions only, and that they are also the largest cluster of small businesses in London. Cllr Nicholson advised that as an incubator of talent and economic development, that their rethinking of their own policies, their planned movement toward a more diverse model, particular with the square mile, is something to be supported by the council.

- 6.9.1 Cllr Lufkin asked whether Cllr Nicholson has a sense of how many hospitality businesses are actually closed for good as opposed to simply closed during lockdown, what percentage of hospitality businesses in the borough that represents, and what will happen to the staff and buildings. As a supplementary

question, Cllr Lufkin also asked about the large number of EU workers leaving London (7%-8% of London workers) has been observed by Cllr Nicholson and his peers.

- 6.9.2 Cllr Nicholson first responded to the former question. It was stated that the information is not available to either the administration or organisation, and that the national statistics, while acknowledged to not necessarily reflect the local situation, are the closest we have in terms of these numbers. Cllr Nicholson advised that using a number around businesses closed without factoring in which sectors are experiencing growth would not be feasible.

Cllr Nicholson advised that some of the figures around the exodus of EU workers may be down to those relocating for other reasons but that the sheer volume of those leaving will certainly have an effect on supply chains and movement of goods and services. It was stated that the impact on the borough remains to be understood, but the hospitality, agriculture, and hotel industries are likely to be significantly impacted.

- 6.10 Chair thanked Cllr Nicholson for his responses and invited Cllr Williams to speak.

- 6.11.1 By way on an update, Cllr Williams observed that there has been an increase in demand for the services run by Employment and Skills, and that Brexit will continue to present barriers.

- 6.11.2 Cllr Williams advised that government funding will continue to provide a challenge to providing services in terms of which programmes will continue to the future.

- 6.11.3 The apprenticeship programme has had an increase year on year, including an increase in those over 25 using the scheme. A greater number of women, including older women, are also joining the programme. Of the 24 ICT apprentices recruited, 46% are women. Cllr Williams stated that clearly Hackney cannot deliver an apprenticeship scheme that delivers on the needs of the whole borough, but that the offer must be broadened through partnership working with other organisations. As an example of a broader offer, the kickstart scheme, which offers paid apprenticeships for 16–24-year-olds in receipt of Universal Credit, was cited.

- 6.11.4 Cllr Williams advised her team are in the process of delivering on their STEM manifesto commitment, and that a new officer is working on delivering that. It was noted that the whole process has been quite delayed by COVID.

- 6.11.5 Cllr Williams noted that the last time she spoke with the commission, the integration of adult learning and skills service was mentioned, and that the integration has now taken place. The next step is to develop the adult education programme to ensure adults in Hackney have access to services to assist them with training & education to lead into work or volunteering.

- 6.11.6 Cllr Williams advised there has been a recent success in securing GLA funding relating to COVID-19 recovery, and the funding will be partly used to provide Chromebooks to adult learners.

It was noted that in the week prior, members had received a briefing from Cllr

McKenzie on the work done by him, including affordable broadband to priority groups across Hackney estates. There as also been a focus on addressing digital exclusion and improving digital literacy.

- 6.12 The chair thanked Cllr Williams for the update and opened the meeting to questions.
- 6.13.1 Vice Chair Billington advised she wanted to ask questions around COVID recovery and deal with the skills gap, asking how Cllr Williams sees Hackney being able to shape any local skills improvement plan at London level. Secondly, it was asked in relation to level-3 equivalent education, whether the cabinet would support adult learners to learn the skills they want in the arts and culture sector, or whether this area would be deemed of lesser economic importance.
- 6.13.2 To answer the question about recovery, Cllr Williams advised that, as one of the 12 Central London Forward boroughs, Hackney makes up a part of the critical national economy, highlighting that the borough holds 1 in 10 of the county's jobs, and therefore recovery is key.
- 6.13.3 Cllr Billington clarified that the response she sought was more to do with the white paper published in this area and the possibility of shaping the skills programme.
- 6.13.4 Cllr Williams advised the borough plays a key role in the delivery of what is emerging from the Central London Forward boroughs. It was advised that to provide a more thorough response, Cllr Williams would have to consult the most recent post-16 education papers available and come back on this point.

ACTION:	6.13.4 – Cllr Williams to consult recent papers around reshaping the skills programme and come back to the commission with a more detailed response.
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- 6.13.5 Regarding level 3 qualifications and arts-related qualifications, Cllr Williams advised that looking at all the sectors impacted by Coronavirus and Brexit would be necessary to identify areas of strength in the borough. In relation to STEM, Cllr Williams advised this commitment is not just about the digital creative economy, but also construction, health, but also the creative economy. There is a piece of work to be done around level 3 and the arts, but the Cllr stated that there is a looming question around funding provisions, and learners may struggle regardless of the level-3 offer. It was clarified that a crucial strand of work will be trying to achieve sustainable funding.
- 6.14.1 Cllr Smyth posed a question around digital employment opportunities, asking what the council is doing to push digital skills in preparation for emerging job markets.
- 6.14.2 Cllr Williams advised the STEM manifesto commitment has a significant focus in this area and is presently underway. The approaches to working with schools and FE (further education) institutions are in development, and so is the adult education offer. Cllr Williams offered to provide a more detailed response at a later date.

- 6.14.3 Cllr Smyth posed a further question around digital connectivity and whether its being sufficiently promoted in the council's work.
- 6.14.4 Cllr Williams agreed, stating that pieces of work by Cllrs. McKenzie & Maxwell are leading on pieces of work around digital connectivity and underlined the importance of it. It was stated that the work required lies across a number of portfolios within cabinet.
- 6.15.1 Cllr Lufkin asked how Hackney's apprenticeship program is going and how the participants of that programme are faring amid the complications imposed by COVID, and how the council is supporting them.
- 6.15.2 Cllr Williams advised that the apprenticeship team worked to ensure that interns, adult trainees, and apprentices have the support they need to complete their training programmes. It was stated that both Cllr Williams and Mayor Glanville have met all the apprentices, interns and trainees, and attended their graduations. Cllr Williams advised there has been a wide amount of gratitude expressed by those in the programme, particularly for the fact the programme is paid, and for where devices were provided to make access to learning materials easier.
- 6.15.3 Cllr Williams advised there is growing demand for the apprenticeship programme, and that she hopes to organise a briefing for members to look at statistics around number of completions, the breakdown of apprenticeships across directorates, and other pertinent statistics. Cllr Williams added that the apprenticeship programme is key to achieving the goal of the council as being a significant source of employment for residents.
- 6.16.1 Cllr Race posed a question asking how the relationship with Hackney's employers has fared under COVID, whether they remain enthusiastic, or whether there has been a reduction in the opportunities they can provide.
- 6.16.2 Cllr Williams requested to come back on that point in writing as the work in that area is underway presently.

ACTION:	6.16.2 – Cllr Williams to come back in writing with a response.
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- 6.17.1 Cllr Pallis posed a question around resident participation, asking whether there is updates around future collaborations between cabinet & the resident participation teams, particular in terms of the skills & adult learning offer. An example was given of Hackney Housing residents being referred to other services by the resident participation team, specifically young people on housing estates seeking learning opportunities.
- 6.17.2 Cllr Williams requested to take this point away and continue the discussion offline.

ACTION:	6.17.2 – Cllr Williams to respond at later date, possibly offline.
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- 6.18 The Chair brought the item to a close, thanking the cabinet members for their attendance. Both cabinet members reciprocated that thanks.
- 6.19 Cllr Race requested that it be minuted for the scrutiny officer to type up the actions from the meeting, circulate them, and ensure to include them in the minutes.

ACTION:	6.19 – Scrutiny Officer to type up and circulate action points from this meeting.
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7 Work Programme 2020/21

- 7.1 The chair noted that the commission should be mindful that local elections are taking place in May and the Purdah period will commence from 23rd of March, but that the commission would have one further meeting on the 10th of March.
- 7.2 Chair requested the scrutiny officer outline the existing plans for the March meeting.
- 7.3 Overview and Scrutiny officer advised that the provisional plans were to examine ‘Building Back Better Post COVID-19’, ‘Economic Strategy’, and ‘Resilience Strategy.’
- 7.4 Cllr Smyth suggested those items could all be under the umbrella of a COVID-19 recovery plan.
- 7.5 Chair advised that learning will probably happen retroactively and may therefore be premature, suggesting a focus on gathering lived experiences from residents during COVID instead, suggesting an evidence gathering session take place.
- 7.6 Cllr Pallis suggested that having the Young Futures Commission attend would be valuable.
- 7.8 Chair agreed but noted the commission would do well to reach out to residents whose voices are heard less often than young people actively engaged in societal discourse. Chair suggested the meeting could be similar to previous nighttime economy summits or other business engagement events.
- 7.9 Cllr Coban suggested using Zoom and it’s breakout function to facilitate such a discussion.
- 7.10 Cllr Race observed that freelancers who are experiencing a lack of support would be a useful source of experience.
- 7.11 Cllr Billington added that hearing from Excluded UK around freelancers would be useful, as well as members of the gig economy, giving the specific example of

Deliveroo, asking how such companies protect their workforce from COVID risk.

- 7.12 Cllr Race agreed suggesting Amazon would be a good candidate for a similar discussion.
- 7.13 Vice Chair expressed interest in bringing in key workers in the private sector, and the tension between the private economy and public health.
- 7.14 Chair requested agreement from the commission.
- 7.15 Vice Chair requested there also be an item on the economic impact of mental health.
- 7.16 Chair agreed and requested to discuss it further offline.
- 7.17 Cllr Pallis requested the commission seek a date for the metrics around CIL by way of a letter to Cllr Nicholson.

ACTION:	7.17 - Commission to write letter to Cllr Nicholson seeking a date for metrics around CIL.
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- 7.18 Chair agreed, asking the scrutiny officer to note that as an action.
- 7.19 Chair drew the item to a close.

RESOLVED:	That the updated work programme be noted.
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8 Any Other Business

- 8.1 There was none.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00-8.45 pm

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London Borough of Hackney
Skills Economy & Growth Scrutiny
Commission Municipal Year: 2020/21
Date of Meeting: Monday 21st June 2021

Minutes of the proceedings of
the Skills Economy and growth
Scrutiny Commission held
from Hackney Town Hall, Mare
Street, London E8 1EA

Chair	Cllr Polly Billington
Councillors in Attendance	Cllr Steve Race, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Gilbert Smyth, Cllr Carole Williams (Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Human Resources)
Officers in Attendance	Andrew Munk (Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning)
Other People in Attendance	None

Members of the Public 87 views
YouTube link **The meeting can be viewed at**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uEuO0c1PgY0>
Officer Contact: **Timothy Upton**
 020 8356 1872
 timothy.upton@hackney.gov.uk

Councillor Polly Billington in the Chair

- 1 **Apologies for Absence**
 - 1.1 Cllr Richard Lufkin sent apologies.

2 Urgent Items / Order of Business

- 2.1 There was an urgent item; following the departure of Cllr Mete Coban, election to chair and vice chair was required.
- 2.2 Cllr Race nominated Cllr Billington for the position of Chair. It was seconded by Cllr Pallis and was therefore accepted.

3 Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4 Adult Learning & Skills Offer Question Time

- 4.1 The chair welcomed Cllr Carole Williams & Andrew Munk (Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning) to the meeting and advised that this item would be broken down into parts: What the council knows and understands to be problems around skills, what the council is doing in response to the emerging issues in the economy & equalities impacts, and what the external drivers for the issues are.
- 4.2 Chair asked Cllr Williams for an overview of the current landscape around skills.
- 4.3 Cllr Williams advised there has been a focus on employment and skills since 2018, noting that significant changes have been made since then. It was advised that prior to this date, a lot of the efforts made in this area were undertaken by the regeneration team, and Cllr Williams' team have rebranded and continued their efforts.
- 4.4 Cllr Williams advised that the Hackney Works team has grown since that time, introducing several schemes such as the apprenticeship scheme, the Hackney 100 scheme, and the team has worked around central government's Kickstart scheme to give it a Hackney-focus. Cllr Williams advised that these programs have not been delivered in isolation but with other teams and public sector entities.
- 4.5 It was advised the skills and employment landscape has inevitably changed since the outset of the pandemic. It was noted since March 2020, the number of claimants has increased, specifically in London by 4.8%. It was noted that unemployment is disproportionately affecting young black men in London with unemployment rates of around 33% compared to 15% of white men.
- 4.6 It was noted that the skills funding landscape is complex to the point where it can be a hindrance to delivering skills and employment outcomes that the council would like to affect. It was noted that work around rebuilding the economy in an inclusive manner is going to be crucial in coming months and years.
- 4.7 Cllr Williams advised that in 2016 a conversation began about how to integrate adult learning at the Hackney Learning Trust and the council's work. Cllr Williams advised that this work was expediated by the pandemic. Adult learning services like computer skills, and maths & English, had to be moved online during the pandemic, but that late last year the services were successfully integrated. This progress will allow a similar approach as the one taken with employment and skills; a pathway (to learning and employment) will be created for low-skilled workers as well as high-skilled workers, older workers as well as younger, and those who might be graduating.

- 4.8 It was advised that £113,000 pounds has been secured from the Greater London Authority to enhance work with adult learners. That enables the team to work with those who were previously digitally excluded by providing 200 laptops, Chromebooks, and electronic devices to enhance their learning.
- 4.9 In terms of the funding landscape, there are complex challenges and is lacking some of the integration that might be desired. There are varied funding sources, and even prior to the pandemic, the further education sector was stretched having borne the brunt of funding cuts. A robust further education and skills offer is needed to develop skills that learners need for career opportunities in an increasingly competitive modern labor market. Cllr Williams advised the offer would have to be modern, fit for purpose, and able to adapt to the future.
- 4.10 Cllr Williams advised the skills white paper promised reforms to simplify funding for removing unnecessary rules and ringfencing, but there are few proposals to deliver the skills sector that is required. The department for education makes a case in the white paper for longer term funding settlements with providers judging on outcomes, but in reality, the sector won't see this until the next round of spending review. The paper itself contains no additional funding to what was announced last November.
- 4.11 It was advised that Hackney responded to funding requirements with a combination of section 106, funding from GLA (Greater London Authority), and the overall budget that Hackney has is £2.25m.
- 4.12 Cllr Williams advised that Hackney has demonstrated it can provide a comprehensive and quality approach to the employment offer, but the borough has to be able to do that for Adult Education and Skills also. There will need to be conversation about how to work in partnership with further education and higher education organisations to improve the council's reach. The pandemic presents this opportunity. Meetings with higher education institutions have begun, as have initial conversations with officers about how to formalise and embed these partnerships to improve future options for Skills and Employment, noting that a robust framework would need to be in place for this to be successful in the next administration.
- 4.13 The chair thanked Cllr Williams and opened the item to questions.
- 4.14 Cllr Race asked about need and modelling, and around how the council understands what level of services is necessary now and in the future. The question was whether there is data available around whether current demand matches need.
- 4.15 Andrew Munk advised the Adult Education and Skills & Employment Services were integrated in September and soon after that the council worked to develop an evidence base to underpin decision making around adult learning. It was advised that the need in terms of qualification levels in the borough was looked at.
- 4.16 The borough still has 19% of working age residents who have Level 1 qualifications or lower, or just under 40,000 residents. Adult learning funding from Greater London Authority stipulates it can only be used for level 2 and below, which means huge need remains for residents to have basic functional skills like maths and English.
- 4.17 Evidence around the need for education at this level include waiting lists for

courses including ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), functional skills, and vocational skills.

- 4.18 Andrew advised that demand for reskilling and vocational skills is increasing, and not just due to pandemic and furloughing. Sectors like hospitality and retail were cited as examples of sectors with employees seeking reskilling. Demand is increasing also in more resilient sectors.
- 4.19 Cllr Race asked for further detail about how the council models for future demand, agreeing that as pandemic restrictions & emergency funding are eased, more businesses will likely collapse, leading to a more competitive jobs market and a need for reskilling.
- 4.20 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that before responding, context is required. It was advised that adult learning funding was recently devolved to GLA. The funding rules were focused on numbers of learners rather than outcomes, which the GLA is now focused on, which aligns with Hackney's objectives. It allows Hackney to focus on demand rather than just numbers of learners. Upskilling, functional skills, and adult learning as a way of addressing social isolation were cited as three main areas of focus that affect the borough's planning around demand.
- 4.21 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised the borough is developing a systems approach to funding where different organisations and partners in the borough work together in terms of adult learning approach. An example was given of making sure courses aren't duplicated unnecessarily, but instead compliment one another.
- 4.22 Cllr Race asked whether the council's future systems approach have targets and how they will be measured.
- 4.23 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised an outcome framework is in production which work in conjunction with the 3 areas of focus outlined earlier in the meeting. In each area, desired outcomes will be set, and each area will have different metrics. An example was given around upskilling and a metric around numbers moving into Hackney works. Andrew advised that generally the council is trying to steer away from metrics only concerned with numbers of learners, adding that such methods can lead to perverse incentives, giving the example of the difference in cost between level 2 and unaccredited courses.
- 4.24 The chair posed a follow up question asking whether real-time data has been used to model demand thus far, and what kind of sectoral approach the council might make in the circumstances of an uptick in unemployment following pandemic.
- 4.25 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that one of the benefits of adult learning sitting alongside Hackney works is that certain real-time analysis is available. An example was given of residents signing up for Hackney Works doing so via a digital service – the digital service allowed the council to directly ask participants which sectors they are interested in. It was advised that the information has fed into planning for the next year's curriculum. It also allows the council to have conversations with employers around agreements by which someone can go on a course and have a subsequent pathway into work with them.
- 4.26 The chair made an observation that using real-time data to determine what kind of work residents would like to do is distinct from modelling out sectoral demands for skills, adding that it would be useful to understand the numbers of unemployed, as

well as the skills gap and reskilling need.

- 4.27 Cllr Williams agreed, observing that the real-time data being used is primarily concerned with participants in Hackney works, and fails to depict a full spectrum of what is happening in the borough and across London, giving the example of those excluded from the labor market, particularly because of the impact the pandemic will have had on the labor market. It was advised that last year there was a disproportionate impact on minoritised communities and that will continue to be the case as the impact of pandemic becomes clearer. Cllr Williams added that women have been severely affected by unemployment, as have young black men, and a robust model with this information is required to make sure there are adequate preparations within the service. Without a robust model and a sectoral understanding, the council could continue to target and provide opportunities in disproportionately hit sectors.
- 4.28 The chair observed that this point should be the basis of a recommendation from the commission.
- 4.29 Cllr Smyth advised that he is shocked by the stated number of 40,000 residents with lower functional skills, adding that it should be a high priority area. Cllr Smyth advised that Hammersmith and Fulham have 500 part-time courses available, and they work with community groups – Cllr Smyth posed the question as to whether the council is working with community groups also, and how many courses are presently available.
- 4.30 The chair requested that this question be answered in the next section of the item.
- 4.31 The chair asked about where unemployment numbers are heading as furlough is withdrawn.
- 4.32 Cllr Williams advised that the GLA has highlighted hospitality as well as arts & entertainment will be hardest hit, and both sectors will see employment opportunities reduced by a further 10% this year.
- 4.33 Cllr Race asked whether the invited guests agree with GLA's assessment on the future of those sectors, noting that those sectors may bounce back quite quickly due to their nature.
- 4.34 Cllr Williams advised that the question is about precarity and what that means long term for the sector. The GLA has projected a return to pre-pandemic levels by 2023 for those sectors, but the quality of employment is still unclear, needs further work, particularly when it comes to reducing inequality in that area.
- 4.35 Cllr Race asked whether the ongoing Brexit situation has been factors into these projections, citing the exodus of Eastern European workers as an example.
- 4.36 Cllr Williams advised that the GLA has advised Brexit has been factored into their projections but noted that her expertise are not on the statistical analysis side, so it is a difficult question to fully answer at this point.
- 4.37 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning added that colleagues in DWP are predicting a major rise in unemployment as well once furlough draws to a close, that will be across the board, and that will include people who are low-skilled and haven't been unemployed before. It was noted that people in this position will be worst affected by an increasingly competitive jobs market.

- 4.38 The chair observed that something robust around this needs to be in place in the borough adding that so far (in the meeting) retail hasn't been mentioned, but will be a severely affected sector.
- 4.39 Chair asked what proportion of the money for the Hackney employment and skills offer comes from central government and how much of that money is ringfenced to cover the adult skills offer specifically.
- 4.40 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that the budget is passed from the Skills Funding Agency to GLA who then pass it onto Hackney. It was £2.2m this year, will be £2.3m next year. Within that, there are two funding sources. £1.6m of that can be used very flexibly, and the other £0.6m must be used for accredited courses. It was noted that the £1.6m can be used for accredited courses also. It was advised it has traditionally been used for community learning, but it is generally worth noting that the GLA are being cautious in moving to an outcomes-based system, but that does not prevent Hackney from moving to such a system.
- 4.41 Cllr Smyth asked what executive and fiscal decisions can be made to support unemployed adults in the borough, and, what can the council do to encourage employers to improve the training of their staff noting that this area has been lacking.
- 4.42 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that in terms of section 106, the policy is shaped by Hackney and the Planning Authority. Over the past two years, Employment and Skills has worked closely with planning to shape the focus. There has been a focus in recent years on local labor, apprenticeships, partnership working with Hackney Works, and a focus on equalities groups. Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that this means that the funding that goes to section 106 has those conditions around its use attached to it. It was advised that adult education funding conditions sit with the GLA, but the council works to influence their framework, and the set of objectives within their framework are very reflective of the borough's inclusive economy aspirations.
- 4.43 Cllr Smyth asked what areas are a priority in terms of the 40,000 without qualifications, or level 1.
- 4.44 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that London's economy requires a basic level of skills, level 2 as a minimum. Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that maths and English are important but noted that for those with a poor experience of the education system, or those who learned in another country, community learning and non-accredited courses can act as a useful bridge into more formal education, especially in areas of deprivation where there is less confidence in seeking out education.
- 4.45 Cllr Smyth asked how the 'bridge' idea is working at the moment.
- 4.46 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised this bridge has been a strong focus of community learning & adult learning, but noted a drawback in how long it can take to enter the labor market from that point. It was advised that the council should be better at tracking the situation during those interludes in education and making sure there are no gaps.
- 4.47 The chair observed that inequalities embedded and entrenched by levels of unemployment meant that simply keeping people's incomes sufficient to make ends meet will form a significant part of the challenge for the council.

- 4.48 Cllr Pallis asked what the council is doing to capture and engage those coming out of school with level 1 or below qualifications and transition into further adult education.
- 4.49 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that since the summer, the mayor and Cllr Williams have been keen for the council to think about 18–24-year-olds. There has been work with New City College to create something of a youth hub with a strong focus on adult education alongside the Kickstart work and employment support. It was noted that traditionally adult education hasn't had a particular focus on younger adults. Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised this work has been important in its focus on shorter courses directly linked to employers – the council will be looking to do more of this, but noted that the challenge does lie with people who have had a negative experience with education so far in their lives
- 4.50 Cllr Williams echoed that making the right choices around these programs will be a significant challenge, noting that making these decisions in partnership with colleges and the voluntary sector will be key.
- 4.51 Cllr Pallis asked about how the council is ensuring that funding provisions are administered in a way that does not disproportionately benefit certain groups.
- 4.52 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised the model for adult learning is partly delivered in house but significantly delivered by smaller community-based providers to ensure there are rich insights into different parts of the community. Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning gave examples of Mind, and Core Arts which have a focus on residents with mental health needs. The Haredi community was also given as an example. This has often been based in children's centers, but its application will be looked at in the next year for improvements; community halls & estates were given as possible locations for further work to take place.
- 4.53 Cllr Pallis asked, in terms of the Haredi community, when that engagement piece started, what it looks like, and what the future of that work is.
- 4.54 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised the scheme has been ongoing for years, and engagement with providers has been essential. Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised starting this process is important so that community groups have ample opportunity to bid for partnership arrangements and to foster a dialogue between the council and these partnership groups. It was advised this process will look to continue this year, even despite Covid, and acknowledged the value of working with these groups.
- 4.55 The chair asked whether Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning's team is working with the community groups to understand what the impacts of unemployment on the community may be in order for them to reshape the offer for emerging need.
- 4.56 Cllr Williams advised that this is not happening presently but that more conversations with offers to develop these ideas would be needed.
- 4.57 Cllr Pallis asked whether there are any groups that the council have aspirations to work with (on adult learning), and whether there is ongoing work to map them out.
- 4.58 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised there is more work to do to

understand who is accessing services based on different equalities groups.

- 4.59 Cllr Williams advised there have been great strides in this area, in terms of equalities work, citing the apprenticeship program and the recent Black Lives Matter work undertaken at town hall, and noted that looking holistically at more groups when designing this work will be needed.
- 4.60 Cllr Smyth asked whether Hackney Works engaged employers to train and reskill their workers.
- 4.61 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised there has been substantial work with employers over the past few years. The aim is to have employment and skills plans set out with major employers in the area, whether that is a contractual arrangement via section 106, or a partnership arrangement, like at Here East work campus. Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that there is work with smaller employers to transfer apprenticeship levy where possible to assist employers to train apprentices, take them on, and train existing staff in a way that is aligned with the council's values on the subject. It was noted that a main objective of this partnership work is to direct these opportunities at more disadvantaged residents.
- 4.62 Cllr Smyth asked if tax credits could be used to provide a pocket fund for employees to invest in their future and ensure their security.
- 4.63 Cllr Williams advised that this was an idea that she would need to think about in more detail before answering.
- 4.64 Cllr Williams noted that part of the Inclusive Leadership work the council is doing with employers is at least in part about identifying talent among their existing employees, especially those from minoritised communities, this approach ensures that the council's partners are helping to close the minorities pay-gap.
- 4.65 Cllr Pallis observed the importance of considering how companies which are experiencing increased profits during pandemic could benefit residents toward adult learning, asking further whether the council has any levers over this which are not currently being pulled.
- 4.66 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised under the framework of inclusive economy, there has been a robust employment and skills plan put in place that delineates what is being looked for in the labor supply chain. It was advised that a pathway being in place for quality jobs is essential, and training sitting alongside real opportunities is a part of ongoing procurement work.
- 4.67 Chair asked what kind of impact social distancing has had on the practicalities of the skills offer that the council makes, and how it has affected frontline delivery staff of these adult learning courses.
- 4.68 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised as many courses as could be moved online were, and from September the requirement was that all in-house and external adult learning courses to be delivered digitally. It was advised it has been challenging on front line education delivery staff, and that there has been training in place to use digital platforms like Zoom and Meets. It was noted that certain curriculum areas are more challenging such as ESOL – delivering digital skills training is difficult if the learner has a poor standard of English. It was advised that close work with ICT to deliver digital skills, and a blended approach of digital and 'analogue' course delivery is being explored for next year.

- 4.69 Cllr Race asked what the level of drop-off was when learning moved online midway through courses.
- 4.70 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised he would have to look at the details but acknowledged there was a drop-off. It was added that this was not necessarily due to the move online but could be due to the generally shocking nature of the unexpected pandemic. Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that tutors had worked well, and alongside them, an 'information, advice and guidance' team was rolled out who contributed to support and pastoral care for learners. Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning cited getting mobile phones to this team to communicate with learners via WhatsApp was a noteworthy success in these efforts.
- 4.71 Cllr Smyth asked what proportion of people in training are retraining and asked how important it is for the council to appreciate that distinction.
- 4.72 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that most courses delivered to date are for a level of qualification they do not already possess. Whether people are retraining in terms of sectors is not presently known, but given the structural changes to the economy, it is likely to increase in the coming years.
- 4.73 Chair observed that the money allocated for 200 electronic devices is unfortunately insignificant against the ~40k residents with level 1 qualifications or lower and asked what kind of resources would be needed to satisfy this gap.
- 4.74 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that it's important to understand the nature of the problems around digital divide noting that 'motivation' (i.e. wanting to get online), is often overlooked for the more obvious issues around access to digital devices. Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised therefore money is not all that is required. Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised the council has resources for partnership working giving the example of the IT directorate working with telecoms companies to establish social value agreements to provide things like improved broadband to estates. This is where, again, partnership working is so key to ensure resources are being used well.
- 4.75 The chair asked, in terms of the limited finances available and the government framework, what works well.
- 4.76 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that the GLA package compared to other funding packages, the package is quite flexible in terms of delivering good quality outcomes. It is not particularly prescriptive. It was noted it works less well for level 2 and below. Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning noted other funding for higher levels would be useful.
- 4.77 Cllr Williams gave an example of the Kickstart scheme advising the council has to use its own creativity and additional funding to deliver quality programmes that will benefit the sort of young people the borough has who need access to this learning. Cllr Williams advised the parameters of the scheme only require a minimum wage for apprentices, but a decision was made to pay the national living wage. Encouraging employers across the borough to sign up through Hackney to the scheme and pay something towards that national minimum wage was necessarily to make it work for Hackney.

- 4.78 The chair referenced the Future Jobs Fund that was brought in after the 2008

financial crisis and asked how the Kickstart scheme differs from that.

- 4.79 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised that the scheme is quite similar, but the minimum wage offer is a notable difference. It was also observed that since the Kickstart scheme is offered through DWP and a strong operational partnership is in place to ensure that Hackney placements go to Hackney residents, whereas the general rule for such schemes is an 8-mile radius which of course would not guarantee this. This was made possible by Hackney's intervention and would not have been possible with the Future Jobs Fund.
- 4.80 The chair advised there will need to be further input at a future time from the guests, particularly about understanding of cost-of-living increases and how they will affect reemployment and skills related offers from the government. It was asked what efforts there have been from central government to understand the risks to the midlife work force who may be losing their jobs with a risk of not working again.
- 4.81 Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised various groups have called into question whether the Kickstart scheme should be extended to over 25-year-olds, but to date there has been no answer from central government. There are no similar programmes for mid-life residents.
- 4.82 Chair asked the administration to look at the differential impact between generations when considering this employment and skills work to ensure everything is done in line with Hackney's ambition to be an age-friendly borough, and not to squander the resource and talents of mid-life workers.
- 4.83 Cllr Williams advised this would be a good topic to take to the Central London Forward partnership.
- 4.84 Cllr Pallis brought up the government policy of getting rid of the Union Learning Fund which they called a pivotal fund that supports 200k workers a year. Cllr Pallis asked if that will impact on Hackney's adult learning provision and whether there is any coproduction that occurs between the council and unions.
- 4.85 Cllr Williams advised the slashing of the fund is an oversight on the part of central government, particularly when considering the chair's points about midlife workers. Cllr Williams advised that further partnership work with the trade unions will be needed about the future of the fund, and what can be done more broadly for them.
- 4.86 Cllr Smyth asked about the lack of funding for level 3 and above asking if the commission could make a recommendation around better funding to fill the gap, noting that most jobs in London require level 4 education as a minimum.
- 4.87 Chair requested the scrutiny officer note that recommendation.
- 4.88 The chair drew the item to a close, thanking the present guests for their input.
- 4.89 Cllr Williams added that this will be the first start of the academic year where the adult learning has been integrated with the employment and skills team and would welcome the opportunity to return and speak on that further.

ACTION:	Scrutiny officer to note the possibility of having the recommendation taken forward to highlight the gap between level 4 requirements for jobs and a lack of funding for education of that level.
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5 Skills Economy & Growth Work Programme

- 5.1 The chair noted that the municipal year is over as far as the commission is concerned, and next year's work programme will be discussed informally offline, and formally at the next meeting in June.
- 5.2 Cllr Race reminded that there is an AGM in March and to be mindful of new members having input to the next municipal year's work programme and suggested holding an informal meeting for that purpose.

ACTION:	Scrutiny officer to arrange informal session for new members of the commission to contribute ideas to the work programme
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RESOLVED:	That the Commission's work programmes for 20/21 and 21/22 and the rolling work programme for SEG be noted.
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6 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 6.1 The minutes were agreed and noted.
- 6.2 It was noted by Cllr Race that the commission was awaiting a written response on several items.
- 6.3 Chair advised this will be picked up in future.
- 6.4 Cllr Smyth asked the scrutiny officer to pursue the formal CIL levy letter that had previously gone to Cllr Nicholson.

RESOLVED:	That the minutes of the meeting held on 10th March be agreed as a correct record and that the matters arising be noted.
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7 Any Other Business

- 7.1 There was n other business.

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