

London Borough of Hackney
Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission
Municipal Year 2020/21
Monday 7 March 2022

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

Chair:	Councillor Sharon Patrick
Councillors in Attendance:	Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Ian Rathbone and Cllr Penny Wrout
Apologies:	Cllr Clare Joseph
Officers In Attendance:	Ian Holland (Head of Leisure and Green Spaces)
Other People in Attendance:	Councillor Christopher Kennedy (Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care and Leisure), Matthew Adams (Head of Natural Resources and Climate), Kate Foulger (Partnership Manager, Hackney), Paul Lister (General Manager- GLL) and James McHugh (Head of Housing Strategy)
Members of the Public:	
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Councillor Sharon Patrick in the Chair

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence from Cllr Joseph and Cllr Chauhun.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence from Dominic Millen, Head of Climate Action and Sustainability London Borough of Enfield.
- 1.3 Joining virtually was Cllr Adejare.
- 1.4 Chair thanked all the scrutiny members and guests who have contributed to the evidence sessions over the years.
- 1.5 The Chair thanked the support officers from Overview and Scrutiny (Tracey) and ICT (Mario) for their support to the scrutiny commission over the year.

2 Urgent Items / Order of Business

- 2.1 There are no urgent items, and the order of business is as set out in the agenda.

3 Declaration of Interest

- 3.1 None.

4 Climate Change London Councils Net Zero Carbon Workstreams

- 4.1 The Chair commenced this item and outlined the Council's work in relation its net zero carbon.
- 4.2 The Chair explained the commission had explored retrofitting for the council's housing stock, assets and energy strategy.
- 4.3 This item was to hear about the work by London Councils workstreams that are led by local authorities in London. Information was provided about the following workstreams:
- Consumption emissions workstream – Lead Council London Borough of Harrow
 - Retrofit work stream - Lead Councils London Borough of Enfield and London Borough of Waltham Forest.
- 4.4 The Chair welcomed to the meeting James McHugh, Head of Housing Strategy London Borough of Waltham Forest representing the Retrofit Workstream and Matthew Adams, Head of Natural Resources and Climate, London Borough of Harrow representing the Consumption Emission Workstream for London Councils.
- 4.5 The Head of Natural Resources and Climate, London Borough of Harrow commenced the presentation about the consumption emissions workstream. The following main points were made:
- 4.5.1 The Head of Natural Resources and Climate, London Borough of Harrow explained he is the lead officer for climate and sustainability at Harrow Council. The workstream is called 'one world living' because it focuses on materials. Particularly the use of materials and goods. The workstream focuses on London to consider what they London boroughs) can do for sustainability.
- 4.5.2 The officer explained London Councils workstreams cover 7 themes related to climate change activity across London. Each workstream is led by one or more borough.
- 4.5.3 The four themes for this programme focus on food, electricals, textiles, and plastics. The overall aim of the programme is to achieve significant reductions in consumption emission in these areas.

- 4.5.4 At a macro level the data produced by IGES showed that global cities needed to reach 2.5 tonnes of Co2 per capital by 2030 to stay within the 1.5 degrees. Currently the average emissions across London per capital is 8.28 tonnes - Hackney is slightly lower than the London average. Broadly speaking they need to achieve a 2/3rd reduction.
- 4.5.5 The current measure of 8.28 tonnes includes housing and power - food is the third largest area and estimated to be about 1 tonne of the carbon per year.
- 4.5.6 The measures per borough vary and currently stand between 6 tonnes of carbon in Newham to 11.5 tonnes of carbon in the city. In London there is a close relationship between the wealth of the borough, economic situation, and carbon production. In essence the wealthier boroughs produce more carbon and consume more. Therefore, the targets set will need to vary according to the borough.
- 4.5.7 This workstream is in partnership with West London Waste Authority and Re London (previously known as London Waste Recycling Board a pan London waste reduction organisation).
- 4.5.8 There are 4 boroughs taking a lead on different themes. One of which is the sustainability team in Hackney Council. This team is leading the food theme.
- 4.5.9 The workstream has a programme steering group and action plan. Adoption of the plan will be agreed by the steering group.
- 4.5.10 It is anticipated that the food theme will be a joint plan with the Mayor of London because he has similar targets in the London Plan.
- 4.5.11 It was acknowledged that funding will be critical to the all the programmes, and they will be considering how they can work together to raise funds to carry out the interventions required to reduce emissions.
- 4.5.12 Overall consumption emission is a huge topic covering businesses and residents. Local authorities have a role to play as waste authorities. To make a difference it's about scaling up lots of different consumption actions involving choices around what we eat, wear and purchase (billions of decisions). It was pointed out these consumption actions have been the cause of the high carbon lifestyles. Therefore, it will require a multitude of actions to reverse the trend.
- 4.5.13 The work has focused on points of intervention in the programme and in places where they can remove the barriers to help people make different choices.
- 4.5.14 There is a big education piece around this whole agenda. This could mean the provision of information for knowledge about a sustainable diet or how to clear the data off your phone so it can be reused by someone else etc. Understanding what to do with old clothes when they are no longer required. The aim is to make this an engaging programme that helps all people to get involved. They are trying to produce **a**) culture of sustainability. The officer highlighted that the London councils survey identified that 80% of Londoners actively want to do things in this area; and **b**) creating an enabling environment that supports making the choice to live sustainably easier.

- 4.5.15 The borough profile for Hackney's on consumption emissions showed that Hackney's per capital emissions were below the London average. The breakdown of emissions showed that 28% related to housing and power and the largest area (35%) related to transport. After the above 3 areas the next big area for carbon emissions was food and non-alcoholic drinks. This reinforces the point that patterns of behaviour around food will play an important role and a big part of the program. The key message is Hackney is currently below the London average.
- 4.5.16 The focus for London is likely to be around food and other areas where people can minimise their consumption of new items to maximise the lifespan of the items, they already own.
- 4.5.17 A survey carried out across London revealed a range of things that councils are already doing related to electronics and food. The Survey showed the following for the 4 areas:
- Electronics
Collection services (to dispose and reuse), repair initiatives (repairing goods that can still be used once fixed), library of things (a different way of owning or using goods), resale platforms, education, donation of pre-owned laptops.
- Food
Collection services, use of surplus / donated, food growing, school meal procurement (use local authority buying power to set a good example of local supplies and seasonal produce), cookbook to encourage different choices around diet.
- Plastics
Refill stations, having water fountains, reusable nappies, workshops, campaigns and promotions and eliminating single use plastics.
- Textiles
Collection, reuse and repair, rental schemes, school campaigns, campaign promotions and research.
- 4.5.18 In relation to food a 20% reduction of the total food footprint for London would reduce consumption by 70%. This demonstrates how important diet choices are to the carbon footprint.
- 4.5.19 In the plastic workstream the emphasis is being placed on removing single use plastics. Then encouraging the remaining plastics to be constantly recycled. Communicating the message that plastics are a valuable resource to be look after and not viewed as a disposable resource.
- 4.5.20 For textiles it is a similar message to plastics. To keep in use for as long as possible rather than just throwing away clothes that are capable of being reused or repaired. Also looking at different ways of owning clothes such as rental schemes. A survey of parents in schools found that 50% would not buy second hand clothes for their children. They have found that nationally 1.4 million items of school uniform are thrown away every year that are capable of reuse. The aim is to change the culture and view about buying new clothes.

4.5.21 Under the workstream the visions were outlined to be:

4.5.22 Electronics

Vision: Londoners are slowing and closing the loop of device lifecycles by:

- Caring for our electricals for longer and slowing their replacement, thereby reducing the emissions and other environmental harms associated with manufacturing new devices. The foremost way to achieve this is by understanding the impact of our devices, and ensuring repair, not replacement, is the first port of call. Approximately 50 million phones are sitting in draws around the UK that do not get used.
- Giving unwanted devices a second life wherever possible through refurbishment and donation or sale, helping to bridge the digital divide in the process.
- Sharing devices between people that would otherwise be rarely used.
- Recycling all devices at the end of their useable life, at the highest possible value of their components, to be made into new devices.

4.5.23 Food

Vision: Transforming London's food system to one based on circular economy principles, providing healthy and nutritious food for all Londoners:

- Land use: Increase the sourcing and potential of food grown using agro-ecological practices, and locally where possible within Greater London.
- Diets: Increase the prevalence of healthy and sustainable food items and menus.
- Food Waste: Eliminate avoidable food waste wherever possible and recycle unavoidable food waste back into productive uses within Greater London.

4.5.24 Textiles

Vision: Londoners are making informed decisions on the textiles items they purchase, including:

- The types of materials purchased and the length of the supply chains.
- Only consuming sustainably and knowing how to fully care for the items from washing to repair will support this reduction.
- Once an item is no longer wanted or is at the end of its life, residents know what their options are and no textiles end up in the bin.

4.5.25 Plastics

Vision: Londoners are living differently and:

- Refill is the norm and is accessible at all price points for all consumers. Londoners use 'tiffin boxes' at lunch and when on the go, supported by a London-wide scheme
- The narrative around plastic has changed – it is seen as a limited and precious resource – to be a product that cannot be produced any more. Throwing it away is unthinkable.
- Our rivers and streets are free of plastic litter and all plastics in use are reusable, recycled, or compostable.

4.5.26 The officer outlined the next steps. Research showed that a council's most powerful tool is to lead by example in these areas across London. The recommended work is for low carbon procurement policies. Using their procurement levers to drive behaviour change particularly around school

catering services, uniform, IT policies and single use plastic policies through procurement or in and around buildings.

4.5.27 Secondly there is the circular economy. They are keen to identify pilots that can be tested and scaled up. For example, NWLA did a recycling directory with restart for electricals. They are planning to roll this out in West London. They are hoping to have South London join this network so they can have a London wide repair network directory to repair electrical devices.

4.6 Questions, Answers, and Discussion

- (i) **Members commented that the paper recommendations focus on influencing individual actions and not corporate / council action.**
- (ii) **Members were concerned that there were some big areas that also required companies to act too and would require primary legislation too not just campaigning. In relation to electronics and built-in obsolescence. Members pointed out many items made now are not made to be fixed or opened up.**
- (iii) **In relation to food Members queried how much of the food waste was linked to takeaways and their packaging. Members pointed out there was no recommendation for lobbying about package legislation. Members expressed this would be a good way to reduce plastic use. Members highlighted these are a sample of other areas and asked what was being done to build a strong collective voice to lobby government about these other issues.**

In response the Head of Natural Resources and Climate, from LB Harrow informed lobby is not being ignored and is important. There is a lobby group for each of the work streams. The presentation focused on the work that could be done locally by councils.

Having 32 London boroughs come together to do electronic repairs across London would be good. However, it was recognised that councils as waste authorities are at the end of the waste system trying to influence systemic changes further upstream -primarily in the manufacturing. Lobbying will be a slow burn and currently their focus is on what they can do now to improve the current system and get better outcomes. In tandem they will continue to lobby central government and businesses.

- (iv) **In a follow up point Members commented people get frustrated by the emphasis continually being on the individual. Members asked if they would give emphasis to bigger long-term systemic changes too. This might help people to see that councils are not afraid to take on the big corporations. Members suggested this might encourage people to take action too.**

In response the Head of Natural Resources and Climate from LB Harrow agreed with the points made by Members.

- (v) **Members suggested providing all Londoners with locally grown produce. Members referred to London's diversity with residents from the African, Asian and South American diaspora and asked how produce from these community groups heritages fit into this program of work? Members pointed out much of the produce from their heritage and culture cannot**

not naturally be grown in the UK. In terms of the infrastructure in place how can this be developed to accommodate their needs too?

In response the Head of Natural Resources and Climate, from LB Harrow explained approximately 1% of food consumption is grown locally within the immediate environment of London. However, there is the potential to increase this, but it was acknowledged that the UK will always be an importer of food. It was highlighted there is still more to be done without taking into consideration cultural boundaries. For example the focus being on more seasonal sourcing being acceptable from a cultural point of view. This is likely to be a very long journey with looking at substituting one vegetable for another. The officer pointed out for people eating a tropical diet in London throughout the year the transition would be quite difficult. But if things like carbon taxes are implemented this would impact on the imported food in the long term.

It is anticipated that despite the different backgrounds everyone can buy a little bit more locally and eat a little more seasonally.

- (vi) **Members referred to the campaigning and commented all boroughs need to do more campaigning and education. Members pointed out there could be more campaigning nationally on plastics. Highlighting everything comes in plastic packaging from the food we eat, laundry items etc. Members acknowledged there are schemes where you can take reusable bottle to get refills. But these schemes are limited. Members suggested these could be publicised more locally. Members suggested London's Councils should come together and start campaigning against the multinational supermarkets to stop the use of single plastics.**
- (vii) **Members also asked for people at the bottom of the economic stream to be considered. Pointing out it can be easier to be green for people who are more economically wealthy. Some of the greener produce can be more expensive. Highlighting that poorer people own older cars that give off more emissions.**
- (viii) **Members also pointed out that cost of repair for some appliance was more than buying a new appliance. Therefore, the cost of buying a new applicant verse the cost of a repair (in addition to not knowing how long the repair would last) was a consideration in people's minds. Members commented electronics need to be repairable at an affordable rate too.**
- (ix) **Members also commented that the mobile phone companies make it hard to change the battery when it dies. Therefore, rendering the phone obsolete. Members suggested there needed to be better messaging to young people about mobile phones. Members also suggested campaigning by councils could be supported by their purchasing power too.**

In response the Head of Natural Resources and Climate, from LB Harrow agreed they are all good suggestions. The officer also agreed equity was important. The officer explained there is a big disparity in relation to consumption emissions across London. This depended on the wealth of the borough. Their intention is not to make this more of a burden to people who

face economic challenge but rather for the burden to fall to people who are living high consumption lifestyles and help them to make different choices.

- (x) **Members referred to slide 5 and asked if the program aimed to achieve its objectives from the bottom up? Members asked how people in the community will be involved so they are part of the decision making rather than just being told what to do.**

In response the Head of Natural Resources and Climate, from LB Harrow explained the reference to bottom up is to recognise that a lot of people do want to do the right thing. The officer pointed out it is often the practical barriers that stop people from taking action. For example, in some boroughs not having food waste collection, not knowing where to take their old clothes rather than putting them in the residual waste. In some instances, the recycling facilities may not be available or residents may not know how to clear the data off their old phone. This can lead to phone being put in a draw when it could be reused.

By bottom they start with the pretext that most people want to make a difference. It was pointed out that the London Councils survey revealed that people are aware of the climate issues and want to live differently and make different personal choices. Their role is not to lecture people but to consider how to make it easier for people to make those right choices by providing the infrastructure or the information.

- (xi) **Members commented ordinary residents are knowledgeable about net zero and recycling. Members were of the view people already know and just need to organise themselves so that they can make the changes. Members suggested that residents only need to be guided and given information.**
- (xii) **Members referred to the point in slide 5 about what local authorities can do to help remove barriers. The Member commented Hackney was doing a lot of good work, although it was acknowledged more could be done. The Member was of the view the recommendations made did not apply to Hackney.**
- (xiii) **Members asked how they will engage this was a big program of work that would require a whole team of people. Members queried if there was funding to cover this or how this would be achieved? Members asked if they were creating a team or if a team was available?**

In response the Head of Natural Resources and Climate, from LB Harrow explained there is no central funding for the work streams. They are currently using their existing resources.

In response to the points about communication they have not set up a central communication team. There was no resource for this in Harrow or any of the other London boroughs. The aim is to produce some resources and guidance to point out the existing initiatives that could be scaled up and disseminate this to all the boroughs. The boroughs can then use this information to consider how to implement locally. The exception to this is likely to be the food theme. There is a move to do a pan London campaign sponsored by ReLondon. ~The

campaign is considering how to get the message out to all Londoners about diet, waste and food growing.

The officer encouraged Members in Hackney to share stories of good work in Hackney. The officer highlighted that sharing successes would inspire people.

- 4.7 Part 2 – presentation from Head of Housing Strategy London Borough of Waltham Forest about the London Councils Retrofit Workstream. The other co-lead borough was Enfield Council. The following main points made were:
 - 4.7.1 This programme is part of London Councils work looking at climate change.
 - 4.7.2 The programme is being resourced through the Council's voluntary activities. The scale of some of the programmes and their objectives is recognised and the resourcing of activities continues to be a challenge.
 - 4.7.3 The start was to define what retrofit means. This is not a phrase residents would commonly refer to. Retrofit means to look at existing homes / properties and homes and consider the measures that can be taken to make them more energy efficient.
 - 4.7.4 The two main benefits in relation to the climate change programme are: a) the more home retrofitted will result in lower carbon emissions. b) this will benefit the occupant of the home.
 - 4.7.5 For retrofit they are promoting a fabric first approach. This is to ensure proper insulation of properties. Therefore, leading to lower household energy bills. In the current climate (the rising cost of gas and electricity) this will be extremely important.
 - 4.7.6 Each home in Britain will have an EPC rating performance certificate. The rating run from A-G.
 - 4.7.7 The objective of the programme is to Retrofit (with fabric improvements, heat decarbonisation and renewable energy) all domestic buildings to an average level of EPC B (or equivalent) by 2030.
 - 4.7.8 This will require some significant interventions for housing stock in London.
 - 4.7.9 The programme commenced with data analysis, followed by an action plan and then an implementation plan. This is part of London Councils cross London work on climate change.
 - 4.7.10 A statement of objectives was passed down to the Director of Housing Group. This has worked through a number of different regional groups and organisations (GLA etc) to fund the initial development of the program.
 - 4.7.11 Data analysis has shown to reach the average rating of EPC B for all home across London will require approximately £49 billion pounds of investment, this is estimated to be £13,000 per property.
 - 4.7.12 This investment would reduce carbon emission in homes by approximately 5.8 million tonnes per year.

- 4.7.13 As this is a sizeable programme, therefore they have carried out 2 sets of modelling. The EPC target and Net Zero target. All councils have signed up to the EPC B target.
- 4.7.14 Several boroughs have made statements about becoming net zero. The step up to net zero would require double the level of funding overall and per property too. Achieving net zero is believed to achieve double the level of carbon reduction. This also highlights the scale of the challenge in relation to the cost.
- 4.7.15 Although retrofitting homes presents a significant challenge there is also opportunities in relation to local skills, employment and jobs growth.
- 4.7.16 It is anticipated there will be 110,000 full time equivalent trade jobs created in the retrofit industry. The breakdown of occupations was explained to be:
- General builders
 - Insulation specialist
 - Plasters and renders
 - Window fitters
 - Carpenters
 - Electricians
 - Heating engineers
 - Renewable heating specialist
 - Retrofit co-ordinators.
- 4.7.17 There will be a few areas of growth and development of specialist roles but generally there will be growth in existing general trades.
- 4.7.18 Recognising there is a lot of investment but also economic opportunity. The suggestion is councils can try to encourage more local companies, colleges etc to estimate the potential market. This also presents an opportunity to aim for more representative jobs and demographics into industries.
- 4.7.19 There are 8 principles that have collectively been agreed in discussion with all the councils across London.
- 1 Boroughs needs to retrofit their own stock and facilitate retrofit to the whole housing stock
 - 2 Boroughs will be vital to creating and shaping a stable and sustainable retrofit market
 - 3 Planning decisions and guidance should support low carbon retrofit
 - 4 We need to move away from gas heating rapidly (and hydrogen is unlikely to be the answer)
 - 5 Achieving net zero will require energy efficiency and carbon data/metrics in addition to EPC ratings
 - 6 Retrofit should seek to avoid significant increase in energy costs
 - 7 Asset management / maintenance decisions should be consistent with the retrofit action plan
 - 8 Boroughs will work collectively to develop skills, procurement models and engage with residents.
- 4.7.20 In relation to the first principle councils need to have an active role in managing their own properties but also a role in encouraging retrofit across a wider housing stock. Encouraging homeowners and landlords to carry our retrofit.

- 4.7.21 For principle 3 local planning authorities they need to provide the guidance and make decisions that support retrofit. Therefore, councils should consider what is being allowed under permitted development.
- 4.7.22 For principle 7 in relation to asset management and maintenance decisions. Councils should have a consistent retrofit action plan. For example if a council has a big asset management programme they should be looking at opportunities within that programme to intervene with other insulation measures. to intervene with other insulation measures. E.g., having a boiler replacement programme with future objectives built in.
- 4.7.23 For principle 8 about boroughs working collectively to develop skills, procurement models and to engage with residents. The officer pointed out by jointly procuring a service or materials could achieve possible cost savings.
- 4.7.24 The officer explained the data analysis provided the predictions for investment and spend and this was followed by the development of an action plan. The breakdown of the action plan is by themes. To achieve the objective of the EPC B for domestic properties the four main themes are:
- What - Retrofit measures and plans – the particular interventions that need to be made to a property to retrofit and improve its energy efficiency.
 - How - Delivery models, skills and supply chains – the market and how to work with the market to deliver this work.
 - Investment - Costs, funding and finance – a significant level of investment will be required. Councils recognise this will not be grant funded by central government so they need to consider other potential sources of funding and finance to meet the costs.
 - To engage - Engagement, take up and lobbying. There is a role for councils in terms of lobbying central government. It is recognised that Government will not 100% grant fund this but they anticipate there will be improvements to the volume of money and the distribution of the money. E.g., schemes like the green homes grant. There will also be the need to lobby different parts of the Housing Sector. To work with local housing association, hold them to account and understand their work in this area too. There are various different stakeholders, communities and groups that will need to be engaged with this work program.
- 4.7.25 The key point is this programme will be an important section of infrastructure in terms of the scale of investment and its potential benefits. It was highlighted this requirement needs more recognition for its significance and the interventions.
- 4.7.26 The action plan provides a pathway, the requirements and implementation plan outlining the different activities and how they need to be sequenced.
- 4.7.27 The officer explained the implementation plan has different themes mapping to the action plan. The implementation plan also provides more detail about the specifics and the detail.
- a) Data

- b) Market making
 - c) Funding and finance
 - d) Technical solutions
 - e) Cross cutting.
- 4.7.28 An example of how the action plan links to the implementation plan was outlined on slide 10 (*titled Under the hood*).
- 4.7.29 For this programme the implementation plan is in the final stage of sign-off. The next phase will be to prioritise and look at quick wins e.g.. liaising with social landlords and considering the finance.
- 4.7.30 In terms of how boroughs could engage in the programme. The recommendation is to work with registered housing providers and housing associations to consider areas of potential collaboration.
- 4.7.31 Another role is to build market confidence. The aim is that councils retrofitting plans will help to simulate the market. But they recognised there are some challenges regarding the supply chain. The thought is if they can create more certainty about the market more people will step into this sphere and provide services.
- 4.7.32 For councils who have a direct labour organisation. They can consider how their DLOs might respond linking into existing maintenance programmes.
- 4.7.33 Another role for councils could be to act as an ambassador for retrofitting private homes. Engaging with residents and private landlords to try to get them to take up retrofit particularly if you have some form of private sector licensing scheme. If necessary, tying this into enforcement activity too.
- 4.7.34 The officer explained by retrofitting their own stock councils can be used as a model of best practice. In addition, through procurement there is the opportunity to use collective purchasing power to lower the cost of retrofitting and materials.
- 4.7.35 Finally, where Boroughs have further education institutions such as adult education colleges and higher education. They should look at their current offer and identify if there are any gaps to consider how they might ensure the next generation's building and trade workforce are skilled to work in this area.
- 4.8 **Questions, Answers and Discussion**
- (i) **Members aim of moving away from gas consumption to more electric consumption. Members pointed out the hydro system has fully developed, and the proposed sustainable options were not necessarily reducing the cost of electricity for consumers. Members pointed out the options being considered like heat pumps would require significant investment (increasing pipe work and the size of radiators to heat homes to level that people find acceptable). Members argued with the current fuel crisis, price rises, fuel poverty and fear that electric will be more expensive to heat their homes. Members commented they would not like to see people on low income pushed further into fuel poverty. Members wanted to ensure councils retrofitting programmes did not push people into fuel poverty. Then leaving the councils to find solutions to support people to pay their bills.**

In response the Head of Housing Strategy London Borough of Waltham Forest pointed out this goes back to the principle and first point of insulation and fabric first. The officer confirmed they too are very concerned about the switch away from gas and how they can ensure the alternative remains fair and equitable for all particularly for people in fuel poverty.

It was highlighted that an air source heat pump was an incredibly effective solution however, it has to be appropriate for the property. But this solution would come after investment in other aspects of retrofit. The officer informed that Waltham Forest was still developing their knowledge and understanding about heat pumps through the project they are working on. The officer highlighted to date the evidence, suggest the heat pump are effective after insulation of the property to a very high standard. This is in addition to Solar PV on the roof which is generating a lot of power on site. Although it is recognised not all their housing stock will be able to be set up this way.

The officer highlighted they are still building their knowledge and understanding about how this technology works and how to keep the costs low on a household level. For example, they would not want to put in place for low-income households technology that will increase day to day living costs.

The officer explained this is a difficult conversation because people are used to gas and gas boilers, but the gas energy source cannot not continue indefinitely. Pointing out one of the reasons Gas prices are rising is because the insecurity of the global supply of gas and that gas is finite. The officer explained it is anticipated that the cost of electricity will level out to the cost of gas. This programme will require a degree of longer term thinking but in the short term they need to work astutely to ensure they are not giving households higher living costs. This is about ensuring people are not signing up to air source heat pumps without knowing what other measures they should have.

The office explained an air source heat pump could typically provide warmth to a property but what it is not doing is heating radiators up to 60 / 70 degree Celsius. It works on a more comfortable heat. In essence an air source heat pump cannot be put in they do not have the right standards and its after the property has been insulated.

- (ii) **Members referred to page 16 the principles on page 16 and highlighted principle 2. Members asked how they can shape a stable and sustainable retrofit market and how private homes would be managed. Members were of view the challenge area would be privately owned homes. Pointing out it will be easier to engage housing associations, social landlords and to manage council homes. The difficulty would be private landlords that own 1 or 2 properties and homeowners.**
- (iii) **Members referred to page 23 the point that stated, “Act as ambassadors for retrofit in private homes by engaging with residents and private landlords to take-up retrofit” on page 23 and asked if they have any ideas of how this can be achieved without central government dictating and issuing enforcement action?**

In response the Head of Housing Strategy London Borough of Waltham Forest explained in relation to the second question they are waiting for the central government dictate. There was a consultation before the pandemic about the minimum energy enforcement standards for private rented homes. This would mean within a few years a landlord would not be able to rent out a home if it was not within an EPC rating of C. This type of regulation could start the shift and drive the behavioural changes. This would be one way to influence private landlords.

For private landlords and homeowners there is a lot of confusion and interest in this area. People are keen to see what they can do to their properties to make them more energy efficient but there is no clarity about how to access the market. For example, if you search 'retrofit' this would produce a mass of information. By the suggestion to shape the market they consider this to be providing some intelligence out about planning and guidance to help people know what to look for and what to do. Encouraging people to check the accreditation of suppliers.

It is recognised people spend a lot of money on their properties but not on making it energy efficient. By providing communication from councils that outlines the potential scale of the opportunities and if councils work with local colleges to help stimulate the market. There is a lot of demand and very limited supply. The aim is to utilise leverage in relation to communication and influence.

- (iv) **Members commented this industry is infamous for scams and Members commented instructing people to look for trusted accreditation marks can make people more fearful. Members were not convinced people would do this until there was legislation in place forcing action. Members were of the view the provision of advice needed to be supported by legislation and preferably with funding too.**
- (v) **Members commented that potentially local authorities have the opportunity to lead on how this is done. The Members pointed out council have trust within the community and asked if the council could lead in some form such as doing retrofit assessment of homes or co-ordinating this to give people some form of reassurance and independent advice.**
- (vi) **Members asked if there was a role for council to recommend contractors because they are local people, having the council check them to verify their expertise. Is this possible?**
- (vii) **Members also suggested lobby government.**
- (viii) **Members acknowledged the skills challenge but were of the view it was a bit like the chicken and egg scenario. Pointing out there are several gas fitters and gas boilers, and these workers will be facing unemployment. Members stated the ideal position would be for these workers to transition and reskill. However, Members recognise that encouraging workers to work in this area before the market developed would be quite a challenge. Member queried if local authorities could be more proactive in this sphere?**

In response the Head of Housing Strategy London Borough of Waltham Forest advised they have tried not to be too prescriptive about what specific role a borough might have or should take with the private sector. Therefore, in relation to their recommendation to facilitate the market this could be as indicated recommending a particular supplier or providing a small fee for service e.g., retrofit assessment. Some boroughs may wish to go further and look at paid for services that they commission themselves. In essence there are a range of interventions that could be made by boroughs in relation to the private sector.

The officer explained in Waltham Forest borough they have been heavily involved in the Green Homes Grant LAD scheme (local authority delivery scheme). This borough has been working with private households on this and arranging for those works to take place.

In relation to the retrofit market there is the view that the owner-occupied market is of one type and people refer to them as the 'able to pay' sector. From their discussions in the borough there is large volume of asset rich but cash poor households. Through the Green Homes LADs scheme they have been able drawn down some of the funding from central government and put this into getting some external wall installations for low income owner occupier households throughout the borough. Although the scheme has not been straight forward and could do with more funding to support it. This was one example of the role a local authority could take.

Potentially there is a range of different options for local councils to try to shape the market and offer different services. Albeit consideration would need to be given to the stock type and level of risk appetite in terms of the service that could be provided.

- (ix) **Members asked if councils were to provide funding and do insulation work to the exterior or inside of properties. Would this help with less carbon emission and help resident homes to be warmer with lower fuel bills?**
- (x) **Member also asked why the rating EPC B was selected as the target for retrofit? Taking into consideration that B is high, but A is higher. Members queried why they did not aim for the highest level.**

In response the Head of Housing Strategy London Borough of Waltham Forest agreed and confirmed the more insulation work completed the lower the heat loss to the property. Therefore, lower heat costs for the household.

In relation to selecting the EPC B rating. This decision was taken across London by the London Housing Directors Group. Without direct knowledge of the discussion the assumption was they probably wanted to set an aspirational target because Central Government set a target of EPC C as best practice. There is a view in London that this may be insufficient. In addition, to move a property from EPC C to A would require significantly larger investment. The typical difference in cost was demonstrated in the presentation with moving a property from EPC B (costing 13k) compared to net zero / EPC A (costing £26k). Moving to an EPC A is looking at the larger measures such as solar panels, air source heat pumps and decarbonising the heating source and these

things are very costly. The hope is in the future some of the measures and materials will reduce in cost/price as the market develops. In the meantime, EPC B was a more achievable target to consider and probably easier to engage the public with. Adding the caveat that they are not dismissing more ambitious targets or the longer-term goal of net zero

- (xi) **Members commented in their view the estimate of £13k to bring a property up to EPC B was underestimated. But acknowledged Hackney Council officers were working on a pilot. Members pointed out the costs being considered in Hackney were double the estimate from the programme.**
- (xii) **Members queried the commitment from housing associations highlighting there was little information about what RSLs would be doing in relation to their retrofit plans for properties. Members commented they do not have democratic accountability like councils (councils have councillors elected by the community).**

In response the Head of Housing Strategy London Borough of Waltham Forest informed as part of the steering group they have representatives from the G15. This is the largest grouping of housing association in London, and they have a representative from the National Housing Federation too.

It was acknowledged that Housing associations do not have the same structure and accountability but have confirmed they are ethnically committed to the agenda. They have been slightly more reserved about publicly setting a specific target. In discussion they have commented about getting a better understanding of their own stock to assess how they can manage the different cost pressures. The biggest area of challenge for both councils and housing associations is managing the building safety costs, the scale and work required.

The programme does have the housing association on board. They will carry on the dialogue and review their data after their analysis. They are aiming to come up with an agreed measure they will be working towards.

The Chair thanks all guests for their participation in this review.

5 Hackney Leisure Services and Facilities

- 5.1 The Chair opened this item by stating besides playing a vital role in supporting better outcomes in health, education, community cohesion and equalities, culture and the creative industries, leisure services provided many with access to leisure facilities particularly during the pandemic and contribute £10.8 billion to the UK economy each year.^[1]
- 5.2 This session will cover a review of the Council's leisure service offers, costs and the concessions available. Anecdotal evidence from a survey in Kings Park Ward in the borough revealed many residents couldn't foresee any circumstances where they would attend one (leisure centre). The scrutiny commission decided to explore the Council's leisure services offers, costs and the concessions available. The scrutiny commission decided to explore the council's leisure facilities and services in the borough open to the public and asked for their service development plans.

- 5.3 The Chair reminded all meeting attendees of the questions sent to the service area and GLL in advance of the meeting for a response.
- 5.4 The Chair welcomed to the meeting Ian Holland, Head of Leisure, Parks and Green Spaces from London Borough of Hackney (LBH); Katie Foulger, Partnership Manager for Hackney; Paul Lister, Head of Service for London from GLL and also in attendance was Cllr Kennedy, Cabinet Member for Health, adult social care, voluntary sector and leisure from LBH.
- 5.5 The Cabinet Member for Health, adult social care, voluntary sector and leisure highlighted in reference to leisure and leisure facilities in the borough the council had opened Britannia Leisure centre on target and within budget during austerity and a pandemic. The Cabinet Member pointed out this was a great achievement and signaled the way forward for future service plans.
- 5.5.1 The new administration will be asking the public to vote for and on proposals for the complete refurbishment of King Hall. This is in addition to previous successes like Clissold Leisure Centre and the London Fields Lido Pool.
- 5.5.2 The officer pointed out there are different activities put on by the Public Health Team and a project called Kings Park Moving Together. The Cabinet Member offered to share a presentation about the project with the commission to provide information about the work and progress of the project. This project has identified that there are residents in the borough that do not view leisure centre facilities for them to use.
- 5.6 The Head of Leisure, Parks and Green Spaces from LBH advised the report was as laid out and outlined the following main points from the report submitted in the agenda.
- 5.6.1 The paper has 2 sections the first section provides an overview of the councils leisure management contract and then covers the areas of customer satisfaction, social impact, fees and charges, usage, accessing leisure facilities, community initiatives, concessions, swimming, targeted programmes and initiatives, promotions, marketing and the website.
- 5.6.2 The officer pointed out since the commencement of the contract with GLL (2009) and with the interim measure in place for the pandemic, the partnership had improved the provision of facilities to residents in the borough. However, it was acknowledged the last 2 years have been challenging in relation to the provision and the partnership with lockdowns and closures of facilities and the restrictions that were put in place.
- 5.6.3 The officer acknowledged there is more to do particularly in reaching the people who do not currently use the facilities and to target those who do not access the facilities.
- 5.7 **Questions, Answers and Discussion**
- (i) **Members asked In relation to point 2.2 are all staff aware that cash should be accepted? It has frequently not been the case at Britannia where cash has been refused.**

- (ii) **Members asked if there are any facilities for pre-booking activities without having to pre-pay online? Commenting even if cash is taken at the door those wanting to use cash frequently find the activities are already fully booked specially at weekends. Thus leaving, cash payers effectively excluded. Members suggested it would be good if some slots could be set aside for walks in. Leaving some slots available or to take telephone bookings with the option to pay later in person using cash.**
- (iii) **Members commented the App often fails, and people see a spinning wheel, meaning they can't book or view anything. Members asked what investment was being made in this app and are there plans to re-open telephone lines (one centralised Hackney phone line). It was highlighted sometimes the person taking the calls was acknowledgeable about Hackney facilities or specific leisure centre to answer questions.**

In response the Head of Leisure, Parks and Green Spaces from LBH asked for specific cases or incidents where cash is not being taken at centres. The officer offered to investigate further. The officer confirmed all leisure centres should be taking cash. Highlighting all the reception areas were set up to take cash.

The situation with leisure centres is as pre covid where people can book online, walk in or at reception. The officer explained they have never had the facility to make a booking over the telephone. This is due to the volume of calls received.

It was highlighted that people can book 3,4 or 5 days in advance using one of the methods outlined above (online, through reception or by a walk in.

- (iv) **Members followed up in relation to the above questions and the impact on families. Explaining that for people with families the ability to go down to the leisure centre in advance to make a booking would be limited. Members commented they remained concerned about customer service because getting an answer via telephone was not easy. Members queried why GLL (Better) could not invest in a person to take bookings and answer the phone? Members pointed out there is a limit to how online focus could represent good customer. Members commented sometimes organisations need to accept they have to invest in getting a person to answer queries over the telephone.**

In response the GLL officers highlighted in theory the suggestion may seem practical but currently they have 3 full time staff answering the phones. The officer pointed out Hackney was the busiest London boroughs they managed.

As an organisation they have reviewed the customer journey and have been prioritizing areas for improvement. One area identified was in their meet and greet / welcome (conciergerie). At the Britannia Leisure centre this has been implemented. This is to greet people attending for the first time or to help people who might be struggling to get into a leisure centre.

They are trying to get away from having people behind a desk or in the office answering phones. Although it was acknowledged not everyone wants to use

the app or book online. GLL was of the view they had made online booking easy. This has been the most positive why people want to access.

For the people struggling to access online they are able to go into the centres and talk to their concierge and they can book them into the session or answer their query.

GLL (Better) explained it would be very impractical to staff a telephone system for bookings. This is not efficient or a sensible way for the service moving forward.

(v) **Members asked about people with language barrier and how they were supported to ensure they can access the facilities too?**

In response the officers from GLL explained they have a diverse workforce and it is anticipated that this cohort are likely to come into leisure centre. GLL do their best to facilitate this need. In terms of deciding about interpretation for an individual they might use google translator or other platforms to help customers.

(vi) **Members pointed out that for the people who do not have apps or a smartphone they can find themselves holding on the phone for a long period of time (15 minutes) then being told to use the website. The issue was the website was not responding.**

(vii) **Members pointed out in the report in the agenda it highlights that all facilities have the same fees and charges however they are aware this is not true. E.g., the Lido has a different price the West Reservoir too (outdoor swimming facilitates). Member highlighted the over 60s cannot swim for free at the Lido and queried why? Members asked why there was such a difference in cost for outdoor facilities.**

In response the Head of Leisure, Parks and Green Spaces from LBH explained the cost of swimming across the borough at the leisure facilities is the same.

The initial programme for funding under 18, disabled people and carers came from DCMS funding. The council took the decision not to include the Lido in the free-swimming programme due to the high volume of use. Thus, directing the free-swimming offer to the pools that had the capacity to accommodate free swimmers.

The officer highlighted that the price to swim across all the pools was the same. However, the West Reservoir is a very different offer and the cost of providing open water swimming is significantly higher than a regular pool. This is largely due to the costs for the number of lifeguards needed and the safety requirements. The costs reflect the additional costs associated with the level of supervision required for open water swimming. For example, the Lido has 2 lifeguards on duty supervising a session. The supervisory levels for the West Reservoir are significantly higher dependent on the number of swimmers.

The Officer confirmed there is no free swimming for under 18s or over 60s at the Lido but disabled people and carers do get free swimming at the Lido.

- (viii) **Members referred to the outreach work and asked about the demographics presented in the report and that the borough has approximately 60% minority groups. Members pointed out there is a high proportion of white users or self-identifying as white. Compared to a low percentage from minority groups. It highlights a disparity in terms of users. Members asked for more information about the type of engagement planned to encourage a more diverse range of users.**
- (ix) **Members also asked in respect of the 10 hours of swimming has GLL carried out any analysis on the users taking up this offer? Pointing out that although there is a local swimming slot at 7:45pm for women only for a single parent this is still inaccessible.**
- (x) **Members asked if they had a breakdown of the demographics and male / female use. Members also asked if consideration would be given to extending the hours and increasing to different times of the day.**
- (xi) **Members asked if the facility was at capacity was priority given to residents? Members informed concerns were being raised by residents struggling to access.**

In response the Head of Leisure, Parks and Green Spaces from LBH informed the council does not have differential pricing for resident and non-resident. Ultimately the operation is on a first come first serve basis.

In response GLL officers added the London Field Lido it is one of the most successful swimming pools in the country in relation to demand.

The pandemic enabled GLL to a review how they operate. Prior to the pandemic if it was a hot day there would be a long queue around the block. The introduction of booking slots has increased the through put of people using the facilities and reduced the queues. This has reduced the number of people using the facilities to sunbath. During the pandemic and at the height of the restrictions they did limit use to residents only. However for people with a paying membership they do have equal rights as residents to access. GLL pointed out they have bookable slots every 10 minutes for the Lido. This has been a better way of maximising capacity.

The Head of Leisure, Parks and Green Spaces from LBH added the council has made a commitment to development a learner pool at the lido. The funding has been agreed and the council will deliver the learner pool which will expand the capacity and usage, particularly for young people. This project is in the planning phase for the new financial year. This is aimed at addressing the capacity in addition to the type of use by families in the Lido.

- (xii) **Members commented there are regular swimmers and families who cannot afford a day out of the borough. Members highlighted they may want to use the facility as a day out, but the slots are only available for swimming. Members asked if they provide fun sessions at the Lido and how families access it? Members asked how the session were promoted?**

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In response the Head of Leisure, Parks and Green Spaces from LBH informed they do have family swim sessions throughout the summer. There are also free family swim lessons too. They use these to encourage people who are potentially uncomfortable in water into the facilities. They also get access to an instructor to help them to learn to swim.

The officer referred to the fees and charges schedule in the report and highlighted the Lido and all facilities have the lowest prices in relation to accessing leisure facilities. Pointing out Hackney Council has the lowest fees and charges compared to other London boroughs. The council's aim is to have leisure facilities that are as accessible as possible.

The council sets its fees and charges annually through its fees and charges process. The officer pointed out GLL only control a small proportion of the charges, and these are generally around UK wide memberships (the charges applicable across all the GLL estate). It was pointed out that Hackney Councils' facilities are more accessible in terms of affordability compared to other London boroughs.

In response to the question about the women only sessions the officer explained the 10 hours have developed over the last 4 months of the programme through engaging with the Council, GLL and users. The times of the sessions have changed too in response to issues like childcare. GLL also review the usage levels.

In terms of under representation in relation to participation, the council acknowledge they need to do more. They have been working with colleagues in the Public Health Team and the Kings Park Moving Together project to obtain a better understanding.

The council is introducing initiatives. For example working with the Black Swimming Association at Britannia to address the under representation in aquatics activities. Teaching water safety first before getting people comfortable in the water, then progressing towards learning to swim. It is anticipated that more initiatives like this are required.

There are plans to work with the Black Swimmers Association and British triathlon to introduce people into places like West Reservoir to feel safe in that space too.

The GLL officer referred to page 149-152 highlighting the list which outline the community groups GLL is engaged with. It is quite targeted but agreed with the point that they could do more. Following the pandemic, they want to do as much as possible for the community. As a social enterprise their ethos is to focus on the community, and this is their unique selling point compared to other leisure service providers. When looking at the ethnicity data they are considering what more they can do. Whilst they recognise there is some gaps GLL officers pointed out this data does not represent the data that is held in some of their contracts and block bookings. They anticipate improvements in the data compared to the data presented in the report.

Some of the success in relation to outdoor swimming and from the work with partners like the Black Swimmers Association; is aimed at doing more to

engage those communities in outdoor swimming. Typically, the West Reservoir is viewed as a white middle class swimming activity. The council is using its partnership working to help break down stereotypes and myths in terms of outdoor swimming.

In reference to raising awareness there are a number of ways to do this e.g., digital, physical and door drops to specific communities in the more challenging demographics they want to encourage and increase participation. GLL have also introduced a couple of initiatives called 'give it a go' this is a six-week trial at a discounted rate for people to come in that may not have used leisure centres before. There is also a referral campaign. As an organisation (not Hackney specific numbers) 12% of new members came from referrals because of this campaign. GLL pointed out there are benefits if your referral joined as a member.

The GLL officer pointed out Hackney's recovery for leisure services after the pandemic has been extraordinary. There have been other boroughs that have struggled after the pandemic. Investing in facilities like Britannia has been helpful to get people active and participating in exercise again.

The Head of Leisure, Parks and Green Spaces from LBH added there are lots of community groups and partners such as the Public Health team feeding in and utilising the leisure centres to improve participation and representation.

The Cabinet Member for Health, adult social care, voluntary sector and leisure added at an event in his ward after having a conversation with a resident he learned that through their engagement with Badu Sports they had learnt to swim at Britannia leisure centre with the Black Swimming Association. This led to other family members learning to swim. The Cabinet Members pointed out the partnership working with the Black Swimming Association is a positive action to increase participation for underrepresented groups. Designed by the community for the community.

- (xiii) **Members commented the report shows there is a lot of good work being carried out but as a Ward Councillor and local resident too; the challenge is that most people (including the Member) are unaware of the initiatives mentioned in the report (six-week reduced membership). Knowing this Members are assuming most of the population would be unaware of this information if they do not currently attend leisure centres. Members commented there seems to be an assumption that people will attend the gym or will engage with fitness. Members pointed out many people feel out of place.**
- (xiv) **Members suggested the Council should get out to residents and work more with TRAs, TMOs and youth clubs. Members pointed out there is good work and acknowledged they are working with some great partners but what is missing is more work with the wider community because a very small percentage of the population is being covered by these groups. Members suggested to get non active people engaged they would need to reach out to them to highlight what is available. The Members pointed out if they (as Councillors) are not fully aware of all the incentives available, and they are responsible for the policy decisions how will the public be aware?**

- (xv) **Members urged the council to go out to residents. Members commented that they think people may have misconceptions of what is available in a leisure centre and taking a taster session with support available would be helpful for people unfamiliar with using the equipment or service.**
- (xvi) **Members pointed out it was difficult to find out what was available via the app or website during the pandemic. There was no information about opening time, changing facilities or what was available.**
- (xvii) **Members acknowledged that the Kings Park Moving Together did good work, but they wanted to encourage the Council to do more work with residents from the whole community to help all residents feel welcome. Members acknowledged the introduction of the meet and greet at Britannia was good but suggested consideration was given to having support to do the activity too.**
- (xviii) **Members commended the community partnership with the foodbank and Ivy Street family centre. Members hoped this was introducing people to services they might not have previously considered. Member commented following recent set of visits to the Britannia by a resident for rehabilitation sessions (following a heart attack) it was highlighted that the resident was not introduced or given information about the other facilities on offer at the leisure centre. Members suggested this was a good opportunity to give the people attending for the rehabilitation sessions a tour. This might encourage older people to access the facilities too.**
- (xix) **A Member outlined their personal experience of using the website and trying to resolve an issue related to a previous membership. This experience left the impression that GLL's customer service was less than satisfactory at the initial point of joining a year ago. The Member commended the 'meet and greet' policy at Britannia. The Member was impressed with this addition and the trainers in the gym. The Member asked GLL to give more consideration to the website - viewed as cumbersome and designed for a large company. The Members asked for GLL to give consideration to sectioning the website into borough level for residents.**
- (xx) **Members suggested more could be done with the telephone customer service too.**
- (xxi) **Members referred to the Council motion in relation to fire and rehire. This expressed the councils disapproval of precarious work. Members pointed out the Council has committed not to employ people on precarious contracts. Members asked how GLL manage their work contracts and if they provided job security?**

In response the officers from GLL thanked Members for the feedback and agreed they could do more in relation to touring and introducing all the facilities at the centre. The GLL officers confirmed the suggestion would be feedback to the team.

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In response to the personal experience outlined. The GLL officer advised as an organisation they did not get everything right during the pandemic. They directed all the telephone calls to the centralised head office team. Despite there being over 50 staff to answer calls it then became clear that they were not able to answer the borough specific leisure centre queries. After reviewing, slightly later than required, they introduced a localised call centre. At Kings Hall leisure centre they have 3 dedicated staff to answer the phone lines. The centralised team has been answering 200 calls per day, this new local team is answering 98% of the call volume. Following this the level of complaints had reduced and customer feedback has revealed things are improving. The data is shaping the website and the areas of improvement. It was agreed that the website covered a large range of information from existing to new users. And recognised it could be challenging to navigate unless you understood where to find links. GLL reported they are in the process of upgrading their IT system and the webpage was a fundamental part of this process. The GLL officer pointed out the calls will help to shape the website changes. The duty of answering calls was taken away from the receptionist physically serving customers in reception. They acknowledged that there is more to do in relation to customer experience. But that the changes to date are as moving the organisation in the right direction.

In response to the question about job security Hackney is a borough with the most diverse facilities. There are approximately 150 permanent jobs available, but GLL struggle to recruit permanent. GLL confirmed they do pay the London Living Wage. Historically the leisure industry has always had a mix of permanent staff who have employment as a career in addition to a more transient population that maybe working in the industry while they are a student. The teachers for classes are classified as flexible / casual workers. There are approximately 400 classes a week. These staff are a large part of the workforce in Hackney. Officer explained flexible workers earn similar pay to the permanent staff but attract different benefits compared to the full-time staff employed (e.g., different benefits related to sickness, maternity or paternity).

The GLL officers added approximately 5 years ago they introduced minimum guaranteed hours for a person that wants to work part time on a part time contract. The worker has flexibility with the number of hours they work per week. These workers are staff who do not wish to work a set number of hours per week. Their hours vary from week to week. They currently have 15 of those contracts in place and they anticipate the number of these contracts will increase as they exit the pandemic.

GLL recognise the balance and mix is not as they would like but they are hopeful that they will get more permanent and fixed employment staff. They will always have and need flexible workers in their workforce.

The GLL officer added that they had a recruitment day at Kings Hall centre. They also go to colleges, universities, schools and other various institutions. They held interviews all day for Hackney residents. Over 100 residents were interviewed.

(xxii) **Member asked for clarification in relation to part time staff contracts and if they are entitled to holiday and sick pay?**

In response the GLL officers confirmed they have the same benefits, but it is prorated to the hours contracted to work. If they are contracted to work 20 hours but work 30 hours the benefits are accumulated.

(xxiii) Members also referred to the benefits and rates for flexible / casual staff?

In response the officers from GLL confirmed the rates for these staff are slightly increased from the rates of their permanent staff to cover the costs of annual leave. Explaining they receive the same value and benefits but for permanent staff. When they go on annual leave their pay is maintained during that period but for flexible staff are paid in advance so when they go on annual leave they use the reserves.

(xxiv) Members asked what is the percentage of staff employed that are Hackney residents?

In response the officers from GLL advised they do not have the current figure at the meeting but at the last review this was 46%.

(xxv) Members asked if GLL have any apprentice programmes or young people who want to become a personal trainer?

In response the officers from GLL informed they do work with various different groups like the Hackney Ways into Work Team and Hackney 100 (offering work experience placements). They also have apprenticeship schemes running across all the leisure centres. They have an internal scheme to train to managers (open to internal and external staff) and based on their progression through the leisure industry to senior roles.

On the recruitment day they were offering positions in gymnastics, lifeguards, football coaches and swimming teacher on funded courses. The applications were open to all. They were flexible contracts on fully funded courses with no costs to the resident. Their preference was to look for permanent staff ranging from 10-hour contract to a 40-hour contract. GLL also pointed out they offer a lot of opportunities to train and develop free of charge.

(xxvi) Members asked if they take volunteers?

In response the officers from GLL confirmed they do take volunteers and have previously supported a range of volunteers in areas like the Gym, front of house and other various roles. GLL is supportive of volunteering and are always willing to consider any groups or people looking to get into the leisure industry. GLL also considers training and development.

In addition, the other GLL officer informed that due to the pandemic a number of things stopped were apprenticeship schemes due to the pandemic because leisure centres were closed. The officer pointed out apprenticeships are starting to resume.

In Hackney they have recruited a people manager. This role is very unusual for a borough. The officer in this role will lead the recruitment programme in Hackney. The manager in this role will also lead on the other initiatives mentioned like work experience, volunteering etc. The officer pointed out the

leisure industry is not exempt from the recruitment challenges like other industries. The demand is high, but they do not get the candidates. This is their biggest challenge, but they continue with recruitment for their facilities.

In response to the question about getting more people into the leisure centres and promoting the facilities on offer the Head of Leisure, Parks and Green Spaces from LBH informed it was not solely the responsibility of GLL. The Council's services like, Parks and Leisure, Public Health and Young Hackney all have a role to advocate and direct people to facilities and programmes.

The officer pointed out there is the 50 plus programme which is delivered in the leisure centres, there are health programmes like the stroke rehabilitation programme; there are other activities like the football youth league that is delivered at Hackney Marshes.

It was highlighted that GLL have also employed a new community sports manager. The manager's role will be outreach, making connections within the community, promoting the facilities and opportunities to bring new people into the leisure centres.

- (xxvii) **Members referred to the Queensbridge areas with older people accommodations and commented the leisure centre would be good location for the over 60s to come together to socialise. Members asked if the big space could be redesigned to accommodate the older population?**

In response the Head of Leisure, Parks and Green Spaces from LBH informed the Queensbridge centre has been refurbished and there is currently no planned programme to redesign the centre. In reference to Queensbridge the officer pointed out that the Public Health team in Hackney Council, commission an organisation called Sharpe End to deliver services to older people at the leisure centre in Queensbridge. This organisation delivers an extensive programme of activities and some social based activities. This programme is heavily subsidised with significant discounts to that cohort of residents. The officer suggested the Councillor refers residents to the Sharpe End to engage with their programme of activities. This is targeted at older residents.

The Chair thanked officers for their attendance.

^[1] <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/leisure-under-lockdown-how-culture-and-leisure-services-responded-covid-19-full-report>

6 Minutes of the Meeting

- 6.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were not available but will be published at the next meeting.

7 Living in Hackney Work Programme 2021/22

- 7.1 There were no further meetings for this municipal year.
- 7.2 The Chair informed the new municipal year will start in June 2022.

8 Any Other Business

- 1.1 The Chair thanked all the guest for their attendance that evening and throughout the municipal year.
- 1.2 The Chair thanked the scrutiny officer (Tracey) and IT support officer Mario for their support throughout the year to ensure the meetings were successful.
- 1.3 The Chair thanked all the LiH scrutiny commission members for their contribution throughout the year.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00 - 9.45 pm