

Overview & Scrutiny

Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

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

Monday 7 November 2022

7.00 pm

Committee Rooms, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, London E8 1EA

This meeting can be viewed (or replayed) via the following link:

<https://youtu.be/fCpGxB9hzno>

A back up link is provided in the event of any technical difficulties:

https://youtu.be/Py2eMF_-ZLA

Should you wish to attend the meeting please give notice to the contact below and note the guidance included in the frontsheet.

Contact:

Craig Player

☎ 020 8356 4316

✉ craig.player@hackney.gov.uk

Mark Carroll

Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney

Members: Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Penny Wrout, Cllr Soraya Adejare (Chair), Cllr Clare Joseph (Vice-Chair), Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Ali Sadek, Cllr Sarah Young and Cllr Zoe Garbett

Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Urgent Items / Order of Business
- 3 Declaration of Interest
- 4 Changes to the Housing Register and Lettings Policy (Pages 9 - 18)

- 5 Impact of the Cyber Attack on the Housing Register (Pages 19 - 56)
- 6 Minutes of the Meeting (Pages 57 - 112)
- 7 Living in Hackney Work Programme 2022/23 (Pages 113 - 122)
- 8 Any Other Business

Access and Information

Public Involvement and Recording

Public Attendance at the Town Hall for Meetings

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 <https://hackney.gov.uk/council-business> or by contacting Governance Services (020 8356 3503)

Following the lifting of all Covid-19 restrictions by the Government and the Council updating its assessment of access to its buildings, the Town Hall is now open to the public and members of the public may attend meetings of the Council.

We recognise, however, that you may find it more convenient to observe the meeting via the live-stream facility, the link for which appears on the agenda front sheet.

We would ask that if you have either tested positive for Covid-19 or have any symptoms that you do not attend the meeting, but rather use the livestream facility. If this applies and you are attending the meeting to ask a question, make a deputation or present a petition then you may contact the Officer named at the beginning of the agenda and they will be able to make arrangements for the Chair of the meeting to ask the question, make the deputation or present the petition on your behalf.

The Council will continue to ensure that access to our meetings is in line with any Covid-19 restrictions that may be in force from time to time and also in line with public health advice. The latest general advice can be found here - <https://hackney.gov.uk/coronavirus-support>

Rights of Press and Public to Report on Meetings

Where a meeting of the Council and its committees are open to the public, the press and public are welcome to report on meetings of the Council and its committees, through any audio, visual or written methods and may use digital and social media providing they do not disturb the conduct of the meeting and providing that the person reporting or providing the commentary is present at the meeting.

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

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

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

The Chair shall have discretion to regulate the behaviour of all those present recording a meeting in the interests of the efficient conduct of the meeting. Anyone acting in a disruptive manner may be required by the Chair to cease recording or may be excluded from the meeting.

Disruptive behaviour may include moving from any designated recording area; causing excessive noise; intrusive lighting; interrupting the meeting; or filming members of the public who have asked not to be filmed.

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

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

Providing oral commentary during a meeting is not permitted.

Advice to Members on Declaring Interests

Advice to Members on Declaring Interests

Hackney Council's Code of Conduct applies to all Members of the Council, the Mayor and co-opted Members.

This note is intended to provide general guidance for Members on declaring interests. However, you may need to obtain specific advice on whether you have an interest in a particular matter. If you need advice, you can contact:

- Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services
- the Legal Adviser to the Committee; or
- Governance Services.

If at all possible, you should try to identify any potential interest you may have before the meeting so that you and the person you ask for advice can fully consider all the circumstances before reaching a conclusion on what action you should take.

You will have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter if it:

- i. relates to an interest that you have already registered in Parts A and C of the Register of Pecuniary Interests of you or your spouse/civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse/civil partner;
- ii. relates to an interest that should be registered in Parts A and C of the Register of Pecuniary Interests of your spouse/civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse/civil partner, but you have not yet done so; or
- iii. affects your well-being or financial position or that of your spouse/civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse/civil partner.

If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in an item on the agenda you must:

- i. Declare the existence and nature of the interest (in relation to the relevant agenda item) as soon as it becomes apparent to you (subject to the rules regarding sensitive interests).
- ii. You must leave the meeting when the item in which you have an interest is being discussed. You cannot stay in the meeting whilst discussion of the item takes place, and you cannot vote on the matter. In addition, you must not seek to improperly influence the decision.
- iii. If you have, however, obtained dispensation from the Monitoring Officer or Standards Committee you may remain in the meeting and participate in the

meeting. If dispensation has been granted it will stipulate the extent of your involvement, such as whether you can only be present to make representations, provide evidence or whether you are able to fully participate and vote on the matter in which you have a pecuniary interest.

Do you have any other non-pecuniary interest on any matter on the agenda which is being considered at the meeting?

You will have 'other non-pecuniary interest' in a matter if:

- i. It relates to an external body that you have been appointed to as a Member or in another capacity; or
- ii. It relates to an organisation or individual which you have actively engaged in supporting.

If you have other non-pecuniary interest in an item on the agenda you must:

- i. Declare the existence and nature of the interest (in relation to the relevant agenda item) as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- ii. You may remain in the meeting, participate in any discussion or vote provided that contractual, financial, consent, permission or licence matters are not under consideration relating to the item in which you have an interest.
- iii. If you have an interest in a contractual, financial, consent, permission, or licence matter under consideration, you must leave the meeting unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer or Standards Committee. You cannot stay in the meeting whilst discussion of the item takes place, and you cannot vote on the matter. In addition, you must not seek to improperly influence the decision. Where members of the public are allowed to make representations, or to give evidence or answer questions about the matter you may, with the permission of the meeting, speak on a matter then leave the meeting. Once you have finished making your representation, you must leave the meeting whilst the matter is being discussed.
- iv. If you have been granted dispensation, in accordance with the Council's dispensation procedure you may remain in the meeting. If dispensation has been granted it will stipulate the extent of your involvement, such as whether you can only be present to make representations, provide evidence or whether you are able to fully participate and vote on the matter in which you have a non-pecuniary interest.

Further Information

Advice can be obtained from Dawn Carter-McDonald, Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services via email dawn.carter-mcdonald@hackney.gov.uk

Getting to the Town Hall

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

Accessibility

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

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

Further Information about the Commission

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

<http://www.hackney.gov.uk/individual-scrutiny-commissions-living-in-hackney.htm>



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<p>Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission</p> <p>7^h November 2022</p> <p>Item 4 – Changes to the Housing Register and Lettings Policy</p>	<p>Item No</p> <p>4</p>
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Outline

In October 2021, the Council changed its lettings policy and how it allocates social housing.

The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission is keen to hear about how the lettings policy has affected residents since its implementation.

The lettings policy was last looked at by the Commission in December 2020 prior to the introduction of the new policy. The minutes of that meeting can be accessed [here](#).

Discussion

To look at the impact of Hackney Council's new Housing Register and Lettings Policy which came into effect in October 2021.

Particular focus to be given to:

- Advice and guidance in place for residents that no longer qualify for the register, and to those that face a long wait or that are unlikely to get housed
- The impact of the policy on prioritising residents in the greatest need and providing more predictable outcomes

Report(s)

To support this discussion the following reports and presentations were included for background information:

- Item 4a. Response from Housing Needs to key questions received in advance (**attached**)
- *Item 4a(i). Under Occupation Scheme - Insights Summary (attached)*

Invited Attendees

- Councillor Sade Etti - Mayoral Advisor for Housing Needs and Homelessness
- Steve Waddington - Strategic Director of Housing
- Rob Miller - Strategic Director of Customer and Workplace
- Jennifer Wynter - Head of Benefits and Housing Needs
- Ian Jones - Legislation, Strategic Projects Officer

- Zoe Tyndall - Digital & Data Change Support Team Manager
- Marcia Facey - Benefits & Housing Needs Operations Manager
- Sally Caldwell - TPX Impact

Action

Members are asked to consider the reports and presentations and ask questions of those in attendance.

Response to Key Questions

Item 4. Changes to the Housing Register and Letting Policy

Housing Needs

What has been put in place to provide housing advice and guidance to residents that no longer qualify for the register, and to those that face a long wait or that are unlikely to get housed?

During the development, consultation and implementation phases of the new Allocations Policy a package of support was agreed for those residents no longer eligible. This included:

- Personalised, dedicated housing advice and support.
- Help finding suitable privately rented accommodation.
- An enhanced mutual exchange offer to help households already in permanent social housing to find and agree a transfer to alternative accommodation.
- Dedicated downsizing support for households looking for a smaller home.
- Mutual Exchange events

Demand for these services from those who have been removed from the register has been limited which indicates that many of those households previously on the register may have had no realistic expectation of securing social housing or may have found alternative solutions but remained on the register as a back up.

An example of what can be achieved if a tenant is willing to consider alternative housing happened shortly after the Housing register changes- Ms C, a Council Tenant, was living in a two bedroom, overcrowded property, needing two additional bedrooms. The tenant contacted the Benefits and Housing needs Service to see if we could help. We gave advice on affordability, suitability and information on how to find a privately rented property if she wished to prioritise this over her security of tenure. The tenant found a four bedroom privately rented semi detached house in Waltham Forest. We negotiated the rent down from £1875 to £1800 pcm which is above the Local Housing Allowance rate of £1725 pcm. The tenant is working and can afford the excess rent therefore we paid a landlord incentive of £3500 to help secure the property for the tenant and she released her Council property back to the Council for re-let.

There has been some interest in Mutual Exchange with residents supported in

	applying for schemes however for those residents seeking larger accommodation there is limited opportunity in borough.
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	<p>For those residents who are interested in downsizing from family accommodation, we have found that whilst there is no lack of demand, there is a lack of supply of the type of property that these residents will consider in the right location. Often the tenant will only consider a ground floor property with a garden in a very specific location, which either means that suitable properties do not exist or are utilised by those who have disabilities and need wheelchair accessible properties. It is not the case that the Council can simply facilitate swap moves between these tenants as their specific requirements outweigh their desire to move.</p>
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	<p>We will revisit this in light of increasing fuel bills and cost of living crisis, as this may cause some tenants to re-think their property requirements due to increased expenditure. This will link to the behavioural insights review we have carried out to help us better understand the potential barriers to considering moving (the write up and suggestions for follow on work can be found attached below: <i>Under Occupation Scheme - Insights Summary</i>).</p>
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How is resident voice and experience used to shape the service and how effective has this been in improving outcomes?

Whilst it is rather too early to demonstrate meaningful outcomes from the change to the Allocations Policy the service does not underestimate the value of residents' experiences of service delivery.

In delivering the new IT system the online form and application process has been developed using small groups of residents trialling iterations of the form. (See cyber attack below)

With a dedicated complaints team the service is able to monitor trends and to deliver service improvement regarding processes and messaging.

Recent presentations have been made to Advice Partners to share resident experiences and challenges and to encourage focus on achievable outcomes with clients.

Benefits and Housing Needs Service is funding a content designer post to work with the behavioural insights officer, to review all existing web site information to better inform residents on the availability of social housing and alternative options and to deliver a more client oriented content and messaging.

The service is also working to develop further support and information for residents, advocacy groups and colleagues in other Council services to help them understand the full range of options available. This includes case studies of residents who've successfully found better housing by exploring alternative options (including private rented options and out of borough moves) to long waits on the housing register.

What impact has the policy had on prioritising residents in the greatest need and providing more predictable outcomes?

The new allocations policy was intended to deliver a simpler and more equitable process to allocate social housing based on needs and circumstances. It can not, however, reduce waiting times as those are determined by available supply of housing - which continues to be extremely limited as a result of the housing crisis in Hackney.

There should be a clarity of purpose and delivery of the allocations policy such that residents have faith that the process is fair and transparent.

Whilst early in the delivery of the new scheme it is clear that residents with similar circumstances have the same opportunities as other residents no matter what the cause of their housing need.

This is particularly the case for applicants for whom the authority has accepted a statutory homelessness duty. In the past these residents would have been lower priority than those residents who had accommodation but qualified for the urgent band and would regularly see these urgent band applicants with much later band dates housed ahead of them.

The new scheme delivers more predictable outcomes as the majority join the register in Band B and will always have priority over residents with similar circumstances who joined the list at a later date.

Once the work to process the backlog of applications and changes caused by the cyber attack has been completed we will be able to give residents a new indication of their expected waiting time and the number of applicants ahead of them. With this information we will be able to have more open conversations with residents about their housing situation and what might be achieved more quickly to resolve immediate issues.

This is already being built into conversations with residents who approach the service as homeless or at risk of homelessness and through residents' interactions with neighbourhood housing officers. For applicants approaching medical needs we work

	with colleagues in Social Services to explore other solutions that can be delivered in their existing accommodation.
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	For those families with disabled children in particularly difficult circumstances, Children's Social Care, Housing Management and Benefits and Housing Needs Service operate a senior level multi disciplinary team meeting on a monthly basis to ensure that the appropriate attention and support is provided.
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Under Occupation Scheme

Insights and recommendations

Key insight: Limited stock of age-friendly homes and behavioural frictions in the downsizing process are the main barriers to successful downsizing.

Insights Summary

1. Barriers to generate demand
 - a. **Low incentive/compensation**
 - £750 per room given up
 - £500 if you move out on our own
 - If you're in arrears, what you owe to the council is taken out of the compensation
 - If you're a pensioner, the bedroom tax doesn't apply to you
 - b. **Psychological/contextual barriers**
 - Fear of change
 - Wish to stay in one's area and close to neighbours
 - Wish to have a spare bedroom for visitors
 - Family members do not want under occupying tenants to give up larger homes
2. Barriers to those who want to move to 1-bedroom
 - High expectations vs limited stock of age-friendly housing (e.g. ground floor, walk-in shower)
 - Long process: Referral → Visits/checks/verification → Acceptance letter → Bid → Move
 - In the bidding process, you're only moved to BAND C, no longer in the high priority band. Max two offers
3. Opportunities:
 - **Personalised support** is key to successful rehousing of older social tenants
 - Works well if there is greater consideration of **individual tenants' circumstance and preferences** to which this can be reconciled with available resources
 - Looking **beyond Hackney** enabled several moves that received positive feedback (e.g. Seaside & Country Homes)
 - **Practical support** (e.g. arranging for a removal company) and **ongoing communication** about the process improved the rehousing experience
 - Leverage **community events (e.g. Winter Warmer)** to promote downsizing scheme and mutual exchange. Most people hear about housing schemes through word-of-mouth

Key recommendation: A dedicated housing navigator who can provide personalised support and direct offers (where applicable) to those who are motivated to move into a smaller property that better meets their current needs.

Recommended next steps

1. **Understand our current age-friendly stock:** Pull together a list of 1-bedroom housing that is currently available and mark which ones meet our age-friendly criteria (e.g accessible flats that are on the ground or first floor)
2. **Create a list of residents who are eligible** for the under occupation scheme. We can prioritise those who are in 4-5 bedroom housing and/or have expressed interest in downsizing. Helen referenced a list of residents who requested to downsize in the past that needs reviewing
3. **Create a secondment role to proactively reach out to priority residents:** Since we already have a [business case](#) in place, Zoe had a great idea of creating a secondment where a downsizing 'housing navigator' can work alongside Link Workers.
4. **Provide direct offers where possible:** Since downsizing only puts you in Band C, we're likely to lose people in the system. Helen came up with a brilliant suggestion of providing direct offers where possible to speed up the process. She shared an excellent case study where a direct offer helped a resident downsize in 2 months. We can also introduce other relevant schemes such as mutual exchange or properties in the private rental sector.
5. **Iterate our comms as we go:** A key insight from the research is that the financial incentive was not always the main driver for people to downsize. If we do need to generate demand, I suggest broadening our comms so we can get people to speak to the navigator (see mockup below). The navigator can work out what motivates the resident and can put together a personalised housing action plan. We can adapt our comms as we go based on the learnings from the pilot.



<p>Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission</p> <p>7th November 2022</p> <p>Item 5 – Impact of the Cyber Attack on the Housing Register</p>	<p>Item No</p> <p>5</p>
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Outline

The cyber attack on Hackney Council in October 2020 left many systems unavailable for Council staff to deliver services, and staff have continued to work through backlogs of work that built up when systems were unavailable since.

The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission is keen to hear about how the cyber attack has affected residents on the housing register and whether the service has returned to business as usual.

Discussion

To look at Hackney Council's efforts to mitigate the impact of the 2020 cyber attack on Hackney Council's housing register.

Particular focus to be given to:

- The impact of the cyber attack on the housing register, and what has been put in place to mitigate the risks to residents in need

Report(s)

To support this discussion the following reports and presentations were included for background information:

- 5a. Response from Housing Needs to key questions received in advance (**attached**)
- 5a(i). Copy of Member Update on Housing Register (**attached**)
- 5a(ii). Copy of Member Update on New Lettings Policy (**attached**)

Invited Attendees

- Councillor Sade Etti - Mayoral Advisor for Housing Needs and Homelessness
- Steve Waddington - Strategic Director of Housing
- Rob Miller - Strategic Director of Customer and Workplace
- Jennifer Wynter - Head of Benefits and Housing Needs
- Ian Jones - Legislation, Strategy & Projects Officer
- Zoe Tyndall - Digital & Data Change Support Team Manager
- Marcia Facey - Benefits & Housing Needs Operations Manager

- Sally Caldwell - TPX Impact

Action

Members are asked to consider the reports and presentations and ask questions of those in attendance.

Response to Key Questions

Item 5. Impact of the Cyber Attack on the Housing Register

Housing Needs

What impact has the cyber attack had on the housing register, and what has been put in place to mitigate the risks to residents in need?

Impact of the Cyber attack -

Loss of the old Universal Housing system - At the time of the cyber attack all applicants already assessed and eligible for the housing register with a bidding number were still able to bid for advertised properties. The advertising and bidding process is managed through a separate IT system hosted by LB Newham (Novalet) which remained unaffected by our cyber attack.

However the loss of Universal Housing removed the ability to process new applications to the register and changes in circumstances for existing applicants. With waiting times of many years the immediate impact on residents of this has been minimal as those applications / changes would have had a banding date that placed the residents behind other residents who were already on the housing register. There has, however, been a very understandable sense of frustration for residents waiting to have applications / changes processed as residents place great value on being able to bid, even if their prospects of making a successful bid are minimal.

While the work to rebuild our systems has been taking place the service has been collecting resident information for those who wish to apply and those who have had changes so that they could be directed to the appropriate process as soon as they became available (details below).

For existing applicants who have had a change in circumstances and where they have a band date old enough to put them near to successful bidding it has been possible to make manual changes to Novalet that would allow them to bid for appropriately sized property. As a manual process it would not be practical or desirable to intervene in this way for all cases.

The absence of an IT system has resulted in a backlog of applications, assessments and changes to process, these are detailed in the work plan below. The service is ensuring that residents are assigned banding dates based on when they approached the Council

	<p>to make an application / advise of updates - this will ensure that all residents have the correct priority on the housing register and are not disadvantaged.</p>
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Development of a replacement IT system -

The Service is developing an in-house IT system to manage the Housing Register, this will include a front facing online form and back office processing and administration.

Online application form:

- Focused on making the resident-facing form easy to understand and complete to encourage self-service, simplifying language and re-using the Hackney design system.
- Reduced the number of questions and made applicants aware up front of expected waiting times and other housing options. Clear signposting towards support throughout the form.
- Designed for different genders, we added 'prefer to self-describe' to make the design more inclusive and this has been added to the Council's design library.

On the staff side, we have developed an administration tool to view, assign and manage applications. Officers can see applications that are in progress or submitted and view relevant evidence linked to the application. They can notify residents via email of the assessment decision and generate bidding numbers.

Future functionality developments will enable online change of circumstances, annual reviews, view only, recovering the Housing Register waiting time tool, and track bedroom need updates based on age changes, which will help ensure applications are kept up to date.

Work plan - With the introduction of the new Allocations Policy in October 2021 the Benefits and Housing Needs Service agreed a three phase work plan from October 2021. Delays in replacing Universal Housing have restricted work on phase one but this is now fully underway. The Service prioritises those households that would be negatively impacted ie those where the change is one which will shorten their waiting time or they are very close to successfully bidding for a property.

	Phase One
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- **Reserve band applicants not eligible for the new register** - received 110 enquiries from residents asking for a reconsideration, of these 67 applicants had changes that meant they qualified under the new rules.
- **General band applicants not eligible for the new register** - received 363 enquiries from residents asking for a reconsideration, of these 80 applicants had changes that meant they qualified under the new rules. 106 applicants are yet to complete the reapplication process.
- **New Applicants** - received 795 requests to join the Housing Register since October 2020. 190 households have been invited to complete an online application and 117 of these have been accepted. The service is planning to invite all new applicants to complete the registration process by the end of this calendar year.
 - **Accepted Homeless Cases** - 1024 households have been accepted as homeless since October 2020 and are eligible to join the housing register. 351 have been registered, 673 remain to be processed (this is expected to complete by the end of the calendar year). Single people have been prioritised as the waiting time is shorter for one bedroom properties.
- **Reported changes in circumstances** - 684 households have experienced a change in circumstances that they have reported and may change their bidding needs. Those who are urgent and may be at risk of being disadvantaged have been prioritised.

Phase Two - Review of existing applicants

- Applicant circumstances change over time but are frequently unreported. To ensure the continued accuracy of household details and eligibility Phase two will review approximately 1000 applications of more complex cases involving significant medical assessments, overcrowding, social need and under occupation.

Phase Three - Further review and business as usual

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Applications from residents over 55 and eligible for sheltered or older persons accommodation and those with low level medical need specifically will be reviewed.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Business as usual will see regular planned reviews of all applications to maintain the accuracy and integrity of the housing register. <p>The anxiety caused to residents by the impacts of the cyber attack on processing times has resulted in high levels of calls to the Council's contact centre. This is compounded by additional demand caused by the housing crisis and cost of living emergency. To mitigate this and minimise the waiting times for people with the most urgent cases, the Council's housing advice contact number has now been split into four separate queues: Homelessness, Temporary Accommodation, Choice Based Lettings and Housing Advice with the homelessness queue prioritised. Additional staff have also been employed and trained to help us provide the best possible service to residents needing housing support and advice.</p> <p>Previous member updates on this topic can be found attached below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Housing Register Member Briefing● New Lettings Policy Members Briefing - Housing Register Transition
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Hackney Council

Members briefing
Housing Register Software

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2. The challenges
3. The opportunity
4. What we've built
5. The benefits of a new tool
6. What we want to track and why
7. Next steps

A new housing register solution that aligns to Hackney's new allocations scheme is now live

1. An introduction

2. The challenges
3. The opportunity
4. What we've built
5. The benefits of a new tool
6. What we want to track and why
7. Next steps

Background

We have created a simpler, more transparent housing register, better suited to the situation in Hackney today. At a time of increasing demand and reduced supply, the Council must ensure that the limited stock of social housing that becomes available goes to those in greatest need while also investing in advice and support for all those unlikely to access a home through the housing register.

Vision

People wanting to join the housing register can understand the full range of options available to them and their likelihood of securing social housing. It is simple to join for people who qualify, minimises failure demand, is easy to administer, sufficiently open and gives all stakeholders confidence in the fairness of the process. The underlying applications are secure, reliable and adaptable to the changing needs of users.

Outcomes we're driving through the new system:

- Empathic – prioritising people with the greatest need
- Simple – easier to apply and guides people to the right outcome
- Robust – generates less confusion and misunderstanding
- Fairer – provides predictable outcomes
- Clearer – changing the conversation about what's possible

Some of the main challenges we were facing

1. An introduction

2. The challenges

3. The opportunity

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6. What we want to track

and why

7. Next steps

There is a severe shortage of social housing in Hackney, meaning we can not provide a social housing property to the vast majority of people who would like one

In early 2021 there were 13,000 people on the housing register in Hackney. **Last year fewer than 400 families moved into social housing** and most people without special circumstances would be waiting **for over 20 years** for social housing.

Homeless households were facing estimated waiting times **four or more times longer** than households with similar circumstances in the urgent band.

Of households in the register in 2020 **over one third had significant housing needs**, double the proportion in 2015. More and more of these households are presenting with multiple and complex needs.

Unable to focus on the most complex and vulnerable cases

Due to the quantities of people on the housing register and because of the large amount of administrative work, our staff were unable to focus on **the most complex and vulnerable cases which often need more support to secure a stable housing option.**

Compromised systems

In October 2020, the council endured the cyber-attack which resulted in many of our internally hosted systems being unavailable **including the old housing register (Universal Housing).**

The opportunity

The Council recognised the need to update the Social Housing Lettings Policy, moving from 5 bands to 3 bands **to provide a clearer system for eligible residents** and support those most vulnerable residents to find settled accommodation.

And we wanted to build a tool that would;

- allow residents **to self-serve where possible**
- incorporate logic and automation where we could **in order to gain efficiencies and minimise the administrative workload**

1. An introduction

2. The challenges

3. The opportunity

4. What we've built

5. The benefits of a new

tool

6. What we want to track

and why

7. Next steps

The tool : resident facing form

1. An introduction
2. The challenges
3. The opportunity

4. What we've built

5. The benefits of a new tool
6. What we want to track and why
7. Next steps

We focused on making the resident-facing form easy to understand and complete to encourage self-service, **simplifying language and re-using the Hackney design system.**

We reduced the number of questions and **made applicants aware up front of expected waiting times and other housing options.** There is also clear signposting towards support throughout the form.

A small but notable change that was introduced was **designing for different genders,** we added 'prefer to self-describe' to make the design more inclusive and this has been added to Council's design library.

The screenshot shows the 'Address history' section of the Hackney Housing Register application. At the top, it says 'Hackney Housing Register application' with a 'Save & exit' link. Below that, it shows the user's name 'Joe Bloggs' and a breadcrumb trail 'People > Joe Bloggs > Address history'. The main heading is 'Joe Bloggs Address history'. Underneath, there is a section for 'Current address' with a link 'Help with home address'. A text box explains: 'If you have no fixed abode or if you are sofa surfing, use the address where you sleep for the majority of the week. If you are living on the street, contact a housing officer'. Below this is a 'Postcode' input field and a 'Find address' button. At the bottom, there is a 'Time at address' section with the example '01 03' and input fields for 'Years' and 'Months'.

Application complete

Your reference:
HDJ2123F

A confirmation email has
been sent to
joe.bloggs@gmail.com

What happens next

Application submitted

Thursday 29 April 2021

Application review

We aim to review applications
within two weeks.

Medical checks

If you have provided information
about medical conditions for
people in your application, these
will be assessed by a specialist.

The tool : admin interface

The decision to prioritise the resident experience means the staff experience is still being developed whilst live.

On the staff side, we developed an administration tool to view, assign and manage applications.

Officers can **see applications that are in progress or submitted and view relevant evidence** linked to the application. They can notify residents via email of the assessment decision and generate bidding numbers.

We're currently building functionality to **track bedroom need updates based on age changes**, which will help ensure applications are kept up to date.

The screenshot displays the 'View application' page for Mr Joe Bloggs (+2 others) in the Hackney Housing Register system. The page is divided into several sections:

- Header:** Hackney HOUSING REGISTER, Firstname Surname, Sign out
- Navigation:** < Back to worktray
- Application Title:** View application Mr Joe Bloggs (+2 others) with a 'View documents' button.
- Tabs:** Household overview (selected), Notes and history, Actions
- Snapshot:** There are 3 people in this application. They are currently living with friends or family in a two bedroom flat (third floor) with 4 other people in E8 1DY. 2 people in this application have a stated medical need.
- Case details:** Application reference: 21006-34525, Status: Awaiting assessment (Change), Application date: 28 May 2021, Assigned to: Select an option.
- Main applicant:** Mr Joe Bloggs, Applicant, Male, 13/12/90 (age 30), Medical need, 07701234567, joe.bloggs@gmail.com, To do, Open.
- Other household members:** Ms Josie Bloggs, Partner, Female, 18/02/93 (age 28), To do, Open; Mx Junior Bloggs, Child, Non binary, 10/05/09 (age 12), Medical need, To do, Open.

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5. The benefits of a new tool
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Demo

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Hackney Housing Register application Maya [Sign out](#)

What to expect

Based on the information you have provided about who you want to move with, you may be able to apply for a **2 bedroom** property.

The average waiting time for a 2 bedroom property is **11 years**.

Next, you will need to complete more information to determine if you qualify to join the housing register.

[Save and continue](#)

[Cancel this application](#)

Help

If you need help completing this form, please contact us quoting your **application reference E4ED1F3218** and we will assist you.

Hackney Housing Register application Jane [Sign out](#)

[Application](#) > Jane

Complete information for:
Jane Doe

Identity

[Personal details](#) Completed

[Immigration status](#) To do

Health

Medical needs Can't start yet

Living situation

Residential status Can't start yet

Address history Can't start yet

Current accommodation Can't start yet

Your situation Can't start yet

Demo

We will demo two separate user journeys, but there are of course many variations and different paths residents can take when filling out the form due to the logic that's been built into the questions.

We will demo;

- 1) What happens when a user is **successful** in their application (i.e. they qualify and receive information on **next steps**). Our persona for this demo will be from the Private Rental Sector
- 2) What happens when a user is **unsuccessful** in their application (i.e. what messaging and **alternative support is offered**). We will use the example of a council tenant to demonstrate this alternative.

Reflections on the tool

We first launched the tool with a small cohort of residents on the **25th October 2021** and have since been **capturing feedback** from residents and from the Housing Register Officers.

We have received overall positive feedback from both audiences, and have **captured any improvement and enhancement opportunities for the tool**. We have also been able **to iterate on a handful** of the issues raised.

It is however worth noting that **we launched this tool as a working *minimum viable product*** and it is not perfect. The Housing Register Officers have been working really hard to learn how to use the tool, have helped test it and log any unexpected issues or possible improvements and have been patient bridging any gaps that occur as a result of launching a new digital tool.

"The design feels familiar, like applying for a covid test or doing my taxes. I'm used to the questions and format so can zip through it. Great!" - Resident

"The snapshot really helpful in quickly building a picture of the household and their need, saves me time having to go back and forth..." - Housing Register Officer

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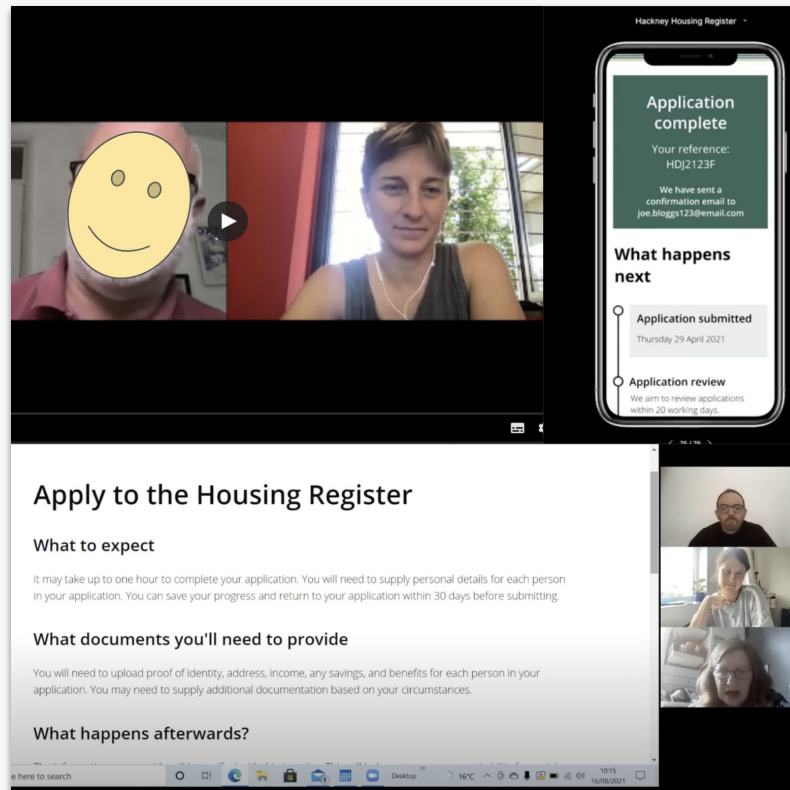
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We engaged residents and staff to design and test the new form

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We involved service users through the design process, conducting **19 resident sessions** and **14 Hackney staff sessions** with housing register and customer service officers, managers and medical officers.

We iteratively tested the housing register **with a diverse group** of residents (different demographics, digital literacy, housing and accessibility needs) to check flow, design, language, usability of the form, and optimise design for different accessibility needs.



The image shows a Zoom meeting interface. On the left, a video call is in progress with a yellow smiley face overlay on one participant. On the right, a presentation slide titled "Apply to the Housing Register" is displayed. The slide content includes:

- What to expect**
It may take up to one hour to complete your application. You will need to supply personal details for each person in your application. You can save your progress and return to your application within 30 days before submitting.
- What documents you'll need to provide**
You will need to upload proof of identity, address, income, any savings, and benefits for each person in your application. You may need to supply additional documentation based on your circumstances.
- What happens afterwards?**

On the right side of the Zoom window, there is a mobile app preview titled "Hackney Housing Register" showing a confirmation screen: "Application complete", "Your reference: HDJ2123F", and "We have sent a confirmation email to joe.bloggs123@email.com". Below this, it says "What happens next" with a timeline: "Application submitted" (Thursday 29 April 2021) and "Application review" (We aim to review applications within 20 working days).

What we want to track and why

Indicators of success

- **Number and characteristics of residents being added to the register** in comparison with before so that we can ensure those in the greatest need are supported into social housing
- **Increase in the proportion of residents finding housing** through other avenues e.g. PRS / number of other grants provided so that we can prevent homelessness and help with a realistic housing aim
- **Increase support for complex cases with medical conditions** so that they receive a tailored experience
- **Increased number of residents self-serving** so that staff can spend time delivering support to those who need it most (those who can, do)

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Next steps

How Might We . . .

1. Support residents who feel more confident at accessing the service online to do more (eg. change of circumstances)
2. Reduce failure demand by making the journey more transparent (eg. recovering the waiting time tool)
3. Make the process more efficient (eg. integrating with Single View)

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Hackney Council

Members briefing
Lettings Policy -
Housing Register Transition

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A new housing register solution that aligns to Hackney's new allocations scheme is now live

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Background

We have created a simpler, more transparent housing register, better suited to the situation in Hackney today. At a time of increasing demand and reduced supply, the Council must ensure that the limited stock of social housing that becomes available goes to those in greatest need while also investing in advice and support for all those unlikely to access a home through the housing register.

Vision

People wanting to join the housing register can understand the full range of options available to them and their likelihood of securing social housing. It is simple to join for people who qualify, minimises failure demand, is easy to administer, sufficiently open and gives all stakeholders confidence in the fairness of the process. The underlying applications are secure, reliable and adaptable to the changing needs of users.

Outcomes we're driving through the new system:

- Empathic – prioritising people with the greatest need
- Simple – easier to apply and guides people to the right outcome
- Robust – generates less confusion and misunderstanding
- Fairer – provides predictable outcomes
- Clearer – changing the conversation about what's possible

Some of the main challenges we were facing

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There is a severe shortage of social housing in Hackney, meaning we can not provide a social housing property to the vast majority of people who would like one

In early 2021 there were 13,000 people on the housing register in Hackney. **During 2019/20 only 409 properties became available for allocation** and most people without special circumstances would be waiting **for over 20 years** for social housing.

Homeless households were facing estimated waiting times **four or more times longer** than households with similar circumstances in the urgent band.

Of households in the register in 2020 **over one third had significant housing needs**, double the proportion in 2015. More and more of these households are presenting with multiple and complex needs.

Unable to focus on the most complex and vulnerable cases

Due to the quantities of people on the housing register and because of the large amount of administrative work, our staff were unable to focus on **the most complex and vulnerable cases which often need more support to secure a stable housing option.**

Compromised systems

In October 2020, the council endured the cyber-attack which resulted in many of our internally hosted systems being unavailable **including the old housing register (Universal Housing).**

The opportunity

The Council recognised the need to update the Social Housing Lettings Policy, moving from 5 bands to 3 bands **to provide a clearer system for eligible residents** and support those most vulnerable residents to find settled accommodation.

We are developing a tool that will;

- allow residents **to self-serve where possible**
- incorporate logic and automation where we could **in order to gain efficiencies and minimise the administrative workload**

In next weeks briefing we will give you a run down of the new software

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Transition Process

- Those residents previously in the urgent, priority and homeless bands will retain eligibility under the new scheme as will households previously in the General Band where there is an assessed medical need or overcrowding in a one bedroom property.
- Over 55s will remain eligible to bid for older persons accommodation, and households with children approaching a relevant age will remain on the register in a transitional band.

New Band	Description	Number of households (approx) *	
Band B	Applicants with a significant housing need - accepted homeless, overcrowded by 2 rooms or more, significant medical need/condition, significant social priority	5176 (includes 501 accepted homeless cases pending issue of bidding number)	Applicants eligible under urgent, priority or homeless band in previous scheme.
Band C	Medical need, condition not exacerbated by housing, one room overcrowded. social need	2337	
Transition	Applicants with children approaching significant birthday which brings about overcrowding by 2 or more rooms		Refers only to existing applicants on the register at 30/09/21
Over 55s - Band C	Applicant eligible for older persons accommodation		Applicants only eligible to bid for age related properties.

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The transition process - Reserve and General Band Households

- Letters have been dispatched to all residents in the **reserve band** who no longer qualify under the new scheme. A copy of the letter can be found [here](#). 2901 households fall into this category and have now had their bidding account suspended.
- Letters have been dispatched to 2313 **general band** households who no longer qualify under the new scheme and a copy of the letter is [here](#). Those households who still qualify because of their medical condition (392) or overcrowding in small properties (1341) have been identified separately.
- The letters included a link to an [online form](#) for residents to report a change in circumstance if they believed they are eligible and qualify under the new scheme and offered the opportunity to provide details of relevant changes and to seek individual advice about securing appropriate settled accommodation.
- The service is working on all forms received and applicants who qualify through this route will be awarded an appropriate band and effective date based on the change in circumstance, they will not have been disadvantaged by the cyber attack or policy change.
- The service has been scheduling appointments and conducting interviews with those residents who have asked for further support and advice.
- 620 households have been identified as moved away and not notified the Council of their change ie 5% to date and increasing as the transition process continues

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The transition process - Phase 1 New applications

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- Applications to join the housing register = 442
- Reported changes in circumstances = 306
- Households requested to complete a health form = 75
- Homeless accepted cases to be allocated a bidding number = 602
- Homeless residents reporting a change in circumstances = 110
- Reviews = 5

The transition process - Phase 2 Band B Re - registering process

Phase 2 will address the need to check the circumstances of those households that transfer to the new register and will focus on:

- Review and registering of under occupiers = 260
- Review and registering of households with significant medical needs = 120
- Review and registering of overcrowded households = 399
- Review and registering of households with a significant social need (e.g Domestic Abuse, Gang Related) = 67
- Review and registering of Lease Expiry/Council Interest (Quota)/Decants (Temporary or Permanent) = 199

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The Transition Process - Phase 3 Band C Re - registering process

Phase Three will review the cases in Band C of the new scheme:

- Households with residents over 55 eligible for older persons housing/dwellings - Housing Register (859)
- Review as reassessment of households with a lower level medical need (e.g. extra bedroom) - Medical Team (750)

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Tailored Housing Advice

- Medical Team & Housing Register Team
- Specific advice based on Tenure type and individual circumstances
- 12 ways into housing for Council Tenants
- Registered Providers giving advice direct to affected residents and promoting mutual exchange
- Housing Advice appointments booked for private tenants
- Early advice for new applicants to explore quicker solutions for housing needs
- Promotion of alternate schemes Homeswapper, Homefinders, Seaside and Country Homes. 10 moves via SSCH
- Mutual Exchange event for Council and Housing Association tenants
- Mutual Exchange is a way for social housing tenants to swap tenancies so that they can move, normally into the right sized house. 172 MEX swaps completed during 2019/20 & 2020/21
- **4 way** swap completed by Housing and three other Landlords. Hackney to Birmingham to Pontypridd to Great Yarmouth to Hackney.....588 miles.

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Tailored Housing Advice

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Would you like to swap homes with another social housing tenant?



Don't miss our Home Swap virtual event on **Saturday 5 March from 10.30am-12.00pm**

Swapping homes is known as 'Mutual Exchange'. Hundreds of Hackney residents have already done this. It's a nationwide scheme; you can apply to exchange properties with other council tenants in Hackney or another council, housing association or other provider.

It's suitable for those living in social housing and who either wish to:

- Move to a bigger property
- Downsize
- Move to another area outside or inside Hackney.

To take part, you will need to be a social housing tenant with a secure or assured tenancy. You must also have no rent arrears or live notices of seeking possession relating to your tenancy. The Mutual Exchange process will also require you to have access to the internet.



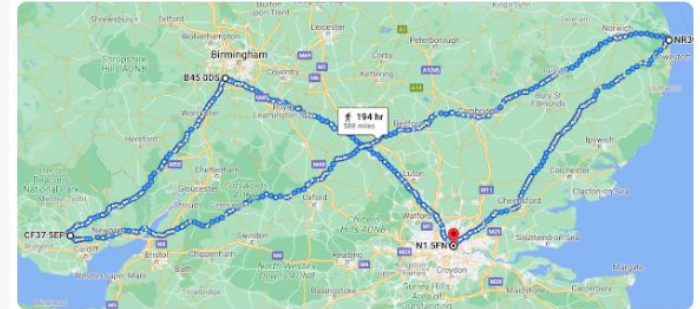
Mutual Exchange but turned up to 11

Mutual Exchange is a way for social housing Residents to swap tenancies so that they can move, normally into the right sized house.

Well, with new technology and the pressure on social housing these swaps can become very complicated! Check out the **4 way** swap completed by Damian Donnelly and three other Landlords below. Hackney to Birmingham to Pontypridd to Great Yarmouth to Hackney.....588 miles.

Well done to **+Damian Donnelly** and the landlords but most importantly to the Residents for making it happen!

#residents #MutualExchange #iwouldwalk500miles



Next Steps

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- September 2022 - Report to members:
 - Evaluation of policy intent
 - EQIA - outcomes of Lettings Policy change
 - Update on detailed reporting from Housing Register
 - Progress of case reviews

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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 7th November 2022 Item 6 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting	Item No 6
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Outline

Attached are the draft minutes of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission meetings held on:

- 17th January 2022
- 7th March 2022
- 13th July 2022

Action

Members are asked to review and agree the draft minutes as accurate records of the meetings, and note any responses to actions arising.

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London Borough of Hackney
Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission
Municipal Year 2020/21
Monday 17 January 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 Wrouth
In Virtual Attendance:	Cllr Clare Joseph, Cllr Ajay Chauhan, Cllr Anthony McMohan and Councillor Soraya Adejare
Officers In Virtual Attendance:	James Goddard (Interim Director, Regeneration), Michal Jankowski (Head of Resident Safety), Kevin Thompson (Head of Private Sector Housing) and Steve Waddington (Director of Housing)
Other People in Virtual Attendance:	Councillor Clayeon McKenzie (Cabinet Member for Housing Services) and Councillor Sem Moema (Mayoral Adviser Private Renting and Housing Affordability)
Officer Contact:	Craig Player ☎ 020 8356 4316 ✉ craig.player@hackney.gov.uk

Councillor Sharon Patrick in the Chair

1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 The Chair updated those in attendance on the meeting etiquette and that the meeting was being recorded and livestreamed.

1.2 Councillor Joseph, Councillor Adejare, Councillor McMahan and Councillor Chauhan were in virtual attendance.

2 Urgent Items / Order of Business

2.1 There were no urgent items, and the order of business was as set out in the agenda.

3 Declaration of Interest

3.1 None.

4 Fire Safety Update

4.1 This item would cover the fire safety of buildings in Hackney, specifically the arrangements in place covering the fire safety products fitted and the checks on the products used to ensure they were of the highest standard grade available.

4.2 Representing London Borough of Hackney

- Councillor Clayeon McKenzie, Cabinet Member for Housing
- Steve Waddington, Strategic Director of Housing Services
- Michal Jankowski, Head of Resident Safety

4.3 Representing the Resident Liaison Group

- Steve Webster, Co-Chair
- Helderda Costa, Co-Chair

4.4 The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Housing to give a short verbal presentation to supplement the written reports received and included in the agenda pack. The main points from the presentation are outlined below.

4.5 The Council placed resident safety as its number one priority for its residential properties. As a residential landlord it was one of the first London boroughs to establish a dedicated Resident Safety Team.

4.6 The Resident Safety Team undertook all fire safety works and coordinated the Council's response to regulatory fire safety changes.

4.7 The Council had undertaken a number of major fire safety works to ensure its housing stock was safe.

4.8 This included the removal and replacement of external wall insulation with inert mineral fibre insulation at Lincoln Courts, Nye Bevan and Seaton Point and planned internal cladding works at Fellows Court.

4.9 The Chair then invited the Head of Resident Safety to give a short verbal presentation to supplement the written reports received and included in the agenda pack. The main points from the presentation are outlined below.

4.10 Specialists within the Resident Safety Team were split between three areas: fire safety, asbestos management and risk and compliance.

4.11 The fire safety service predominantly focused on fire risk assessments in residential blocks of flats as defined by legislation.

4.12 The primary piece of legislation that applied to the work of the fire safety service was the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 which introduced the concept of responsible person fire risk assessments - moving responsibility from the fire service to landlords.

4.13 There was guidance around fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats as used by fire risk assessors but this was widely criticised following the Grenfell Tragedy and had now been withdrawn. An updated version was yet to be published.

4.14 Since the Grenfell Tragedy various pieces of guidance and legislation have been introduced, including design and build regulations for the developers and designers of residential buildings, a revised approved code of practice for fire risk assessors and a number of recommendations made for landlords to gradually implement before legislative requirements were introduced.

4.15 The Council categorised fire risk into three main categories - low, medium and high - as was the industry standard approach.

4.16 However, it also split its medium category into three further categories - 24, 36 and 12 - to give a more individualised approach to its buildings, recognising the Council's wide-ranging portfolio.

4.17 In 2021 the Council had completed 252 fire risk assessments. Of these, 90% were rated as medium risk, 1.8% as high risk and 5.5% as low risk.

4.18 A total of 357 high risk actions were picked up through those fire safety assessments, of which 72.8% had been completed. These may include replacement of fire doors, works to improve compartmentalisation and fire detection systems.

4.19 16% of the high risk actions identified in 2021 were in progress. These were works that had been issued to contractors or the direct labour organisation (DLO) and were awaiting completion on site.

4.20 The remainder of works (11.2%) had been added to the active or future programme and would therefore be included in major works both underway and planned in the future.

4.21 3.5k medium risk actions had been identified in 2021, which included the replacement and installation of signage, removal of combustible materials in communal areas and the installation of premises information boxes.

4.22 In addition to the removal and replacement of external wall insulation with inert mineral fibre insulation at Lincoln Courts, Nye Bevan and Seaton Point previously mentioned, internal cladding works were planned at Fellows Court and a consultation with residents was currently underway to enable the commencement of works.

4.23 Other fire safety works undertaken by the Council included fire door replacements, fire alarm upgrades, Dry Riser installations, sprinklers, fire stopping, resident insight, premises information boxes and wayfinding signage.

4.24 However, there had been challenges in undertaking these fire safety works such as Covid-19, supply chain delays, manufacturing delays, access to contractors and residents refusals.

4.25 The Council had a number of quality assurance methods to ensure high standards of construction materials. For new build developments this included written design standards, engagement with professional service providers and compliance with the Royal Institute of British Architects Gateway Process.

4.26 For major works and refurbishment of existing stock the principles of the Asset Management Strategy were followed which prioritised fire safety works, along with

additional design responsibilities put on contractors to ensure only materials that comply with the latest set of regulations were used.

4.27 Through the use of stringent procurement processes due diligence was given to the development of detailed contract specifications and particular attention was given to fire safety elements of the specifications.

4.28 One of the biggest challenges for the Council over the last 18 months was the implementation of EWS1 surveys which were introduced in 2019 as a means of confirming to mortgage providers whether remediation work was needed on a property and to help during their appraisal process for loan requests.

4.29 The Council had made a commitment to provide leaseholders with EWS1 surveys on request and had introduced a flat fee of £750 in order to recoup some of the costs.

4.30 Due to the lack of suitably qualified fire engineers and unprecedented demand there was a minimum wait of 16 weeks for a leaseholder to obtain a EWS1 survey and in some cases it took much longer.

4.31 As a matter of course the Council reviewed the risk assessment of any property that did not comply with current building requirements and if any remedial actions were required they were added to the major works programme.

4.32 In terms of future challenges, there were two major pieces of legislation set to be introduced. These were the Fire Safety Act 2021 and the Building Safety Act 2022/23, both of which directly affected fire safety in Hackney.

4.33 The Fire Safety Act required the Council to risk assess external fire spread in a similar fashion to the EWS1 survey.

4.44 The Building Safety Act would require landlords to employ Building Safety Managers and introduce the concept of a 'golden thread' of information which would change the way the Council manages information in regard to building safety.

4.45 All building safety records would need to be digital, made available to residents and submitted to the newly established regulator to obtain a licence to operate the building.

4.46 The Council had already employed a Building Safety Manager and was implementing an online database where it would store all building compliance documents and fire risk assessments.

Questions, Answers and Discussion

4.47 *A member of the Resident Liaison Group asked whether the recent announcement from central government which stated that developers should foot the bill for the removal of cladding on buildings over 11 metres applied to Council-owned properties.*

4.48 The Strategic Director of Housing Services explained that the Council would likely be classed as a developer as it had built and improved properties across Hackney.

4.49 Whilst central government had suggested that developers should foot the bill for the removal of cladding on buildings over 11 metres, it had not yet put forward any legislation to force developers to do so.

4.50 A member of the Resident Liaison Group asked whether leaseholders had to wait until any remedial actions identified through an EWS1 survey were completed before being able to sell the property.

4.51 The Strategic Director of Housing Services explained that if any remedial actions identified through a EWS1 survey were high risk, works would be undertaken immediately.

4.52 If they were identified as medium to low risk remedial actions, they would be undertaken in the next round of capital works on the property.

4.53 The Council was one of the few, if not only, London boroughs which had committed to undertaking EWS1 surveys for leaseholders on request with other London boroughs of the view that there was no requirement on local authorities to do so.

4.54 A Commission Member asked whether there was a financial cost to the Council's policy to undertake EWS1 surveys for leaseholders on request.

4.55 The Head of Resident Safety explained that EWS1 surveys factored in not only the cost of the specialist fire engineering contractor that undertook the surveys but also the cost of separate contractors to facilitate access to buildings.

4.56 The cost to the Council was significantly higher than the flat fee of £750 charged to leaseholders.

4.57 A Commission Member asked why those remedial works identified by B2 rated EWS1 surveys had not been previously identified by the Council through its fire risk assessments.

4.58 The Head of Resident Safety explained that EWS1 surveys were implemented in 2019 and as such came into effect after much of the Council's housing stock had been built and refurbished.

4.59 The Council was unable to build and refurbish against the current regulations at the time because they had not yet come into effect, and therefore there were sometimes remedial actions identified through EWS1 surveys that had not been before.

4.60 Going forward the Fire Safety Act 2021 required the Council to risk assess external fire spread which should lead to a decrease in remedial actions identified through EWS1 surveys.

4.61 A Commission Member asked for clarification on the extent to which cost and staffing pressures affected the Council's ability to undertake fire safety risk assessments.

4.62 The Strategic Director of Housing Services assured those in attendance that the Council saw resident and fire safety as a priority and as such the relevant teams had been afforded the resources to carry out their role effectively.

4.63 Whilst there would be additional cost pressures as a result of the further phases of Grenfell related requirements, the Fire Safety Act 2021 and the Building Safety Act 2022/23 it was felt that the Council was in a good position to meet those requirements.

4.64 A Commission Member asked how the Council worked with the private sector to ensure private developments were fire safety compliant.

4.65 The Strategic Director of Housing Services explained that the Resident Safety Team itself did not work with the private sector. This team was funded through social housing rents and leasehold service charges and focused on council-owned properties.

4.66 The Interim Director of Regeneration added that the Council had inspected around 250 private and housing association blocks in Hackney for fire safety compliance, three of which needed intervention works.

4.67 The Council had enforcement powers on certain aspects of fire safety in private and housing association properties. For example a block in South Hackney was currently in the process of being served notice.

4.68 The Mayoral Advisor, Private Rented Sector and Affordability recognised that many leaseholders within the borough were adversely affected by fire safety issues. Particular concerns included the situations of shared ownership leaseholders, long-term leaseholders who were not in a position to remortgage and those leaseholders on lower incomes.

4.69 Ultimately, the concern was around who covered the cost of fire safety works once identified, whether that be landlords, freeholders or leaseholders. Whilst there had been good examples of the cost being shared, there were also numerous examples of leaseholders being hit with unaffordable bills.

4.70 A Commission Member asked for further information on instances of residents refusing fire safety works and the extent to which this happened.

4.71 The Strategic Director for Housing Services highlighted a particular incident in which a number of residents were refusing to let the Council into a property to undertake remedial works.

4.72 It remained important to engage with residents effectively to ensure they understood the need for the works and that they were undertaken without minimal disruption to residents.

4.73 However, fire safety works were critical to the health and safety of residents and in some cases the Council was prepared to take legal action to ensure they were undertaken.

4.74 A Commission Member sought further information on the high risk actions both in progress and in active or future programmes, projected timelines for completion and how it compared at the same stage last year.

4.75 The Strategic Director of Housing Services explained that some of the works “in progress” may well be completed, but the Council was waiting for confirmation of completion from contractors or the DLO, certification of completion and/or awaiting post-works inspections.

4.76 Those works in active or future programmes included dry riser installations, replacement of materials and major works which would not be classed as urgent and were too complex for responsive repairs.

4.77 There may be additional pressures which cause the delay in the commencement of works including Covid-19, supply chain delays, manufacturing delays and access to contractors.

4.78 All fire safety actions were assessed from a risk management perspective to ensure mitigations were in place. Directorate level Fire Safety Board meetings were held on a monthly basis to review all low, medium and high risk fire safety actions.

4.79 *A Commission Member asked what the Council had done to ensure blocks were equipped with appropriate fire safety signage.*

4.80 The Head of Resident Safety explained that the Council had fitted the majority of its buildings with fire action notices indicating what action needed to be taken in the case of an emergency. This signage was installed in the lobby areas of each building.

5 Private Sector Housing - Licensing Scheme Update

5.1 This item would cover the private sector housing scheme and an exploration of an extension to the scheme across Hackney.

5.2 London Borough of Hackney

- Councillor Sem Moema, Mayoral Advisor, Private Rented Sector and Affordability
- James Goddard, Interim Director of Regeneration
- Kevin Thompson, Head of Private Sector Housing

5.3 The Chair invited the Interim Director of Regeneration to give a short verbal presentation. The main points from the presentation are outlined below.

5.4 The three licensing schemes in Hackney were the borough-wide Mandatory Licensing Scheme for larger HMOs with 5 or more occupiers sharing, the borough-wide Additional Licensing Scheme for all other HMOs with 3, 4 or more occupiers sharing and the Selective Licensing Pilot Scheme for everything else not covered by the previous two schemes but limited to Brownswood, Cazenove and Stoke Newington wards.

5.5. There were around 30,000 of private rented stock in Hackney which represented the fastest growing private rented stock over the last 20 years in the UK, increasing from around 3,000 around 25 years ago.

5.6 Data modelling suggested that there were around 8667 licensable properties across all three schemes in Hackney, and there were likely to be more due to "hidden" additional HMOs.

5.7 The Mandatory Licensing Scheme was introduced in 2006 and was ongoing. The Additional Licensing Scheme and Additional Licensing Pilot Scheme had been introduced in October 2018 and would operate until September 2023.

5.8 The Private Sector Housing Team sat within the Chief Executive's Directorate. There were 36 posts in the team including management, approximately two thirds of which were devoted to licensing.

5.9 As of December 2021, 5818 licensing applications had been received across all schemes, of which 2949 had been issued.

5.10 The applications received were 67% of the total predicted licensable properties, ahead of the predicted profile.

5.11 Fee income was around £4.5 million as of November 2021, in line with the predicted profile.

5.12 Licences issued were 34% of the total predicted licensable properties, below the predicted profile.

5.13 There were a number of challenges for property licensing in Hackney. For example, the number of licences issued were significantly lower than the number of applications.

5.14 There was also a large backlog of licensing inspections (5389) due to Covid-19 restrictions during 2020-21.

5.15 Licences for higher risk properties (e.g. HMOs) were dependent upon inspections, therefore a number of licences had not been issued as they were awaiting inspection.

5.16 The Council had put corrective measures in place to mitigate against these challenges. This included licensing applications now being carried out and an enhanced inspection programme under consideration to work through the backlog.

Questions, Answers and Discussion

5.17 *A Commission Member asked whether officers felt that the Additional Licensing Scheme and Additional Licensing Pilot Scheme had been successful thus far.*

5.18 The Interim Director of Regeneration explained that licensing applications were dealt with thoroughly and on a case-by-case basis. For example, when an application is received officers will inspect the property itself, the landlord's history and the public realm amongst other factors.

5.19 The Head of Private Sector Housing added that initial data modelling had predicted that around 20% of the HMO stock would have serious hazards and poor conditions.

5.20 However, since the introduction of the Additional Licensing Scheme the Council was finding that this was closer to 50%. This suggested that there was a clear need for such a scheme within the borough.

5.21 Officers were at the early stages of implementing the Additional Licensing Pilot Scheme but initial data modelling had predicted that around 15-20% of those properties not covered by the previous two schemes in Brownswood, Cazenove and Stoke Newington wards would have poor conditions.

5.22 The introduction of licensing schemes had allowed the Council to be more proactive in the private rented sector. Prior to these schemes the Council would only engage with landlords that were subject to a complaint.

5.23 Landlords remained engaged with the Council once a licence had been issued, and licences had strict criteria for good and better renting that landlords had to adhere to or risk facing penalties.

5.24 A Commission Member asked what the process was for identifying issues in properties and overseeing improvements once communicated to landlords.

5.25 The Head of Private Sector Housing explained that the Council carried out comprehensive inspections against a range of criteria.

5.26 Should improvements be deemed necessary, officers would draw up a schedule of works that were deemed necessary to bring the property up to the required standard.

5.27 The Council would decide what course of action it would take against a property. The most common course of action was issuing an improvement notice which specified the commencement and completion of works, and failure to comply was a criminal offence.

5.28 In some cases of extremely poor conditions the Council would look to prosecute the landlord, and if it was deemed impractical to bring a property up to a required standard it may prohibit the property from being used for human habitation.

5.29 A Commission Member asked how private tenants living in poor conditions could contact the Council to seek advice and support.

5.30 The Head of Private Sector Housing explained that information on how private tenants could report issues to the Council was available on the website. Complaints could be made via email or via the dedicated telephone number.

5.31 Whilst residents were able to make complaints anonymously, they were encouraged to engage with the Council to ensure that robust action could be taken against their landlord.

5.32 A Commission Member asked whether there was any scope to extend the duration of the Additional Licensing Scheme and Additional Licensing Pilot Scheme to reflect the impact of Covid-19.

5.33 The Head of Private Sector Housing explained that the duration of the schemes were determined by the Housing Act 2004 which specifically stated that licensing

schemes may not extend beyond a five year period (excluding the Mandatory Licensing Scheme).

5.34 The schemes would end on 30th September 2023, at which point the Council could look to extend either or both of the schemes. However, that process was bureaucratic and resource intensive.

5.35 Whilst the Council could not carry out routine inspections during Covid-19, it was able to deal with more serious issues remotely by contacting landlords via telephone and email.

5.36 A Commission Member asked how many private properties had been prohibited from being used for human habitation as they were not up to the required standard.

5.37 The Head of Private Sector Housing confirmed that the Council had issued a number of prohibition orders since the implementation of the licensing schemes.

5.38 Prohibition orders were seen as a last resort, and were commonly issued for fire safety related reasons.

5.39 A Commission Member asked for further information on the level of resource needed to support the private sector licensing schemes in the borough.

5.40 The Head of Private Sector Housing explained that various resourcing scenarios had been modelled within the service, particularly in regard to reducing the backlog of inspections.

5.41 The Interim Director of Regeneration added that comparisons had been made with similar boroughs such as Islington and Camden and it was clear that the team was smaller than other comparable teams across London.

5.42 The Mayoral Advisor, Private Rented Sector and Affordability then explained that the team had taken on additional responsibilities since the initial modelling took place, for example in regard to fire safety requirements and Covid-19.

5.43 If the Council sought to expand the schemes it would likely need additional funding to do so.

5.44 A Commission Member asked whether the Selective Licensing Pilot Scheme had seen any impact outside of the three wards it applied to (Brownswood, Cazenove and Stoke Newington).

5.45 The Head of Private Sector Housing explained that the effect of the Selective Licensing Pilot Scheme on areas outside of the three designated wards was identified as a risk prior to its implementation.

5.46 The Council had been unable to collect meaningful data on this, largely due to the effects of Covid-19 and the cyber attack. However, it would need to be done as it would form a critical part of the evidence base when it came to reviewing the effectiveness of the schemes.

5.47 *A Commission Member asked whether the Council was working with neighbouring boroughs to share experiences and resources in relation to the private sector licensing schemes.*

5.48 The Head of Private Sector Housing explained that all London boroughs met every eight weeks through the Greater London Authority (GLA) Partnership to share information and good practice.

5.49 The GLA also had a rogue landlord database to which landlords subject to civil penalties or prosecutions were added. The database had both a resident access section and local authority access section.

5.50 The Council maintained good working relationships with other London boroughs and information sharing was commonplace and encouraged. More formal working arrangements were in place with local boroughs such as Tower Hamlets and Islington.

5.51 *A Commission Member asked whether the Council would put pressure on central government to extend the licensing schemes in Hackney and other London boroughs.*

5.52 The Mayoral Advisor, Private Rented Sector and Affordability explained that the Council had taken a public approach to lobbying central government, in which residents were encouraged to participate.

5.53 It also sought to engage with landlords to educate them on what it meant to be a good landlord and the renting standards that were expected in the borough.

5.54 It was important to highlight the human impact that poor renting conditions had on residents in Hackney and London more widely, and the Council would continue to build an evidence base to this end to support its lobbying efforts.

5.55 *A Commission Member asked for clarification on the shortfall in the amount of licences issued compared to the amount of licensing applications received, and asked what could be done to reduce the gap.*

5.56 The Head of Private Sector Housing explained that the shortfall was down to the backlog that had been built up due to Covid-19 and the cyber attack.

5.57 The Council was looking at ways to reduce this backlog quicker such as issuing licences to those properties that were not deemed high risk and inspecting them at a later date.

5.58 *A Commission Member asked what the Council was doing to engage residents and landlords and increase awareness of the private sector licensing schemes in Hackney.*

5.59 The Head of Private Sector Housing explained that the Council had sought to engage residents and landlords in a variety of ways, including targeted leafleting in the three wards under the Selective Licensing Pilot Scheme.

5.60 A wider communications campaign was soon to be undertaken in order to engage residents and landlords in those areas outside of the Selective Licensing Pilot Scheme.

5.61 *A Commission Member asked what recourse options were available for private sector tenants who had found themselves in poor conditions.*

5.62 The Head of Private Sector Housing explained that there were a number of civil actions that tenants could take against landlords with the support of the Council, including rent repayment orders if a tenant was living in a property that should be licensed.

5.63 There were also a number of other civil actions that they could take privately, and there were agencies in place to support these processes.

6 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

6.1 The draft minutes of the previous meeting held on 8th November 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

7 Living in Hackney Work Programme 2021/22

7.1 The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission for the 2021/22 municipal year work programme was noted.



8 Any Other Business

8.1 None.

Duration of the meeting: 7pm – 9.15pm

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:	
Officer Contact:	Tracey Anderson  020 8356 3312  tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk

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 councils most powerful tool is to lead by example in these area 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?**

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.

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](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

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London Borough of Hackney
Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission
Municipal Year 2020/21
Wednesday 13 July 2022

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

Chair: Cllr Soraya Adejare

Councillors in Attendance: Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Penny Wrout, Cllr Soraya Adejare, Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Zoe Garbett and Cll Ali Sadek

Apologies: Cllr Sarah Young

Councillors in Virtual Attendance: Cllr Clare Joseph and Cllr M Can Ozsen

Other People in Virtual Attendance: Stefanie Turton (Regional Housing Director, London and South East, Sanctuary Housing Association), Tom Forty (Director of Customer Experience, Sanctuary Housing Association), Richard Hill (Group Chief Executive Officer, One Housing), Chyrel Brown (Chief Operating Officer, One Housing), Leslie Laniyan (Managing Director, Shian Housing Association), Minara Sultana, (Operations Director, Shian Housing Association), Aaron Whitaker (Chair of the Management Board, Shian Housing Association), Terry Harper (Committee Member, Social Housing Action Campaign) and Mick O’Sullivan (Committee Member, Social Housing Action Campaign)

Officer Contact: **Craig Player**
☎ 020 8356 4316
✉ craig.player@hackney.gov.uk

Cllr Soraya Adejare in the Chair

1 Election of Chair & Vice-Chair

- 1.1. Councillor Adejare was duly elected as Chair for the 2022/23 municipal year.
- 1.2. Councillor Joseph was duly elected as the Vice-Chair for the 2022/23 municipal year.

2 Apologies for Absence

2.1. The Chair updated those in attendance on the meeting etiquette and that the meeting was being recorded and livestreamed.

2.2 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Young.

2.3 Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Rathbone.

2.4 Councillors Ozsen and Joseph were in virtual attendance.

3 Urgent Items / Order of Business

3.1 There were no urgent items, and the order of business was as set out in the agenda.

4 Declaration of Interest

4.1 Councillors Adejare and Joseph declared that they were Clarion Housing Association tenants.

4.2 Councillor Ogundemuren declared that he was a Clarion Housing Association employee.

5 Implementation of the Charter for Social Housing Residents - Resident Experiences

5.1 The Chair opened the item by explaining that the session would cover how local housing providers in the borough had responded to and were implementing the seven commitments outlined in the Charter for Social Housing Residents - Social Housing White Paper November 2020, which outlined plans for new regulation, a strengthened Housing Ombudsman to speed up complaints, and a set of tenant satisfaction measures that social landlords had to report against.

5.2 The Chair explained that further sessions would be held to cover Hackney Council in relation to the charter, but with the constraints on time and to ensure a full discussion it had been agreed to bring local housing associations together for a standalone session.

5.3 The Chair reminded those in attendance that the Commission would not expect a response to individual cases but to patterns and trends, issues raised about processes and key points made in the meeting.

5.4 The Chair then explained that Commission Members would reflect after the meeting on the evidence heard and may make recommendations for improvement to the organisations for consideration.

5.5 This item would cover tenants' experiences of local social housing since the charter was put forward and the work of local advocacy groups in supporting social housing tenants.

5.6 Representing Social Housing Action Campaign

- Mick O'Sullivan - Committee Member
- Terry Harper - Committee Member

5.7 The Chair invited Councillor Joseph to give a summary of the written testimonies received. The main points are summarised below.

5.8 One of the major issues that social housing tenants faced was disrepair. Some had waited years for issues such as cracks, damp and mould to be dealt with. One resident had seen multiple target completion dates missed, leaving her to live with her children in a damp and overcrowded home.

5.9 Another resident had explained that the housing association had failed to respond to five emails and a lack of engagement meant that he was unsure if contractors would turn up, or what they were scheduled to do on dates given by the housing association. Some said that contractors ring up and cancel on the day, and for one resident this mean losing out on money having taken the day off work.

5.10 A pensioner had waited over 18 months for repairs as a result of flood damage, despite making multiple calls to service lines. She felt that estate offices serve her needs much better, and questioned what accountability structures were now in place.

5.11 Many residents questioned the value for money that their housing associations provided. One resident said that her key worker accommodation had risen rapidly, and another in sheltered accommodation described increased service charges and expensive charges for adjustments for disabilities. A resident said that their pension once comfortably covered rent but now she was forced to claim housing benefits to meet the cost.

5.12 Some residents pointed out significant housing regeneration and building schemes in their local areas, but felt that little of this would provide for social housing.

5.13 Those in attendance were then played three resident testimony videos. The main points are summarised below.

Resident Testimony 1

5.14 The resident had been waiting around two years for repairs. She showed cracking, damp and mould on the walls and ceilings in her home that she shared with her children, which had led to leaking in some places. She had tried to clean and/or paint over areas of damp, mould or cracking but the issues would always return.

Resident Testimony 2

5.15 The resident showed cracking and leaking on the walls and ceilings in her home. The water tank on the roof had overflowed leading to her needing to collect leaking water with a bucket and towels. She had kept a log of her interactions with the housing association since the incident which outlined the time it had taken to get the issue rectified. The local councillor had written to the housing association but did not receive a response. She had to repair her living room walls and ceiling herself at a cost of £400, but other issues remained.

Resident Testimony 3

5.16 The resident showed paint flakes falling from the kitchen ceiling following a leak. Work was halted in April 2021 to allow the leak to dry up but it led to paint falling onto kitchen surfaces.

Resident Testimony 4

5.17 The resident showed a large leak coming through his wall which had led to paint coming away. The resident had to use a bucket to collect leaking water.

5.18 The Chair then invited Mick O'Sullivan and Terry Harper, Committee Members of the Social Housing Action Campaign (SHAC) to give a short verbal presentation. The main points from the presentation are outlined below.

5.19 SHAC was a network of tenants, residents, workers and activists in housing associations and cooperatives. It campaigns to improve the experiences of those who live in housing association properties and to reduce the commercialisation of the sector.

5.20 Increasingly for larger housing associations profits were prioritised over the living conditions of tenants. The surpluses generated by their operating activity lies at somewhere between £4.7 to 4.9 billion per year which had increased since the pandemic as they were unable to carry out cyclical maintenance.

5.21 In 2016 the government implemented a rent directive requiring housing associations to reduce social rents by 1% annually for four years. However, in 2020 the government set the social rent cap at CPI +1% which meant rent increases of 10% or more (CPI was at 9.1% in June 2022 and trending upwards).

5.22 The cost of living crisis meant that people were already struggling to manage rents, with RPI inflation at 11.7% in May 2022 and rising. Moreover, there was no cap for service charges which were paid by some tenants as an additional payment. These charges increased a differing percentages across the country in 2021/22, with some housing associations increasing them as much as 100% in a single year.

5.23 A third of housing association households had their rents and service charges covered by Universal Credit. This meant that the rises would create a further direct transfer of taxpayers' money into housing association surpluses. In 2020/21 housing associations were paid a total of £7.7 billion in respect of the Housing Benefit element of Universal Credit, compared to £4.6 billion to councils and £5 billion to private sector housing.

Questions, Answers and Discussion

5.24 *A Commission Member asked what support the Social Housing Action Campaign felt that Hackney Council could provide to housing association tenants to improve their experience of social housing and how they could hold housing associations to account.*

5.25 In response, a SHAC Committee Member highlighted that Hackney Council could use its planning processes to ensure that housing associations operating within the borough fulfilled their planning obligations. Hackney Council could also collaborate

with nearby boroughs to draw up a criteria for housing associations that want to work within the borough that secures affordable and decent housing for residents.

5.26 A SHAC Committee Member explained that Islington Council gives a space to housing activists to meet on a monthly basis and that Hackney Council could consider doing so too.

5.27 *A Commission Member asked whether they felt that housing associations needed to improve their customer service offer to ensure that tenants were able to report problems easily, and that repairs were dealt with in a timely manner.*

5.28 A SHAC Committee Member responded by explaining that in cases of damp, housing associations needed to firstly look at the structural issues that may have caused the issue and, if that does not lead to any answers they should look at overcrowding, ventilation or inappropriate use of facilities.

5.29 Reporting an issue seemed to be a barrier to most housing association tenants with properties in disrepair and, once an issue is reported, it was often difficult to get the housing association to take timely action. He felt that more resources needed to be put into the customer service offer to simplify this process.

5.30 *A Commission Member asked the Social Housing Action Campaign to elaborate on its work to campaign for the decommercialisation of the housing sector and how Hackney Council could support this work.*

5.31 In response, a SHAC Committee Member explained that the Social Housing Action Campaign Group had advocated for a number of measures to make housing associations more accountable to their tenants. This included making housing associations smaller and regionally based and ensuring that there was tenant and local authority representation on housing association boards.

6 Implementation of the Charter for Social Housing Residents - Housing Associations (7.40pm)

6.1 The Chair opened the item by explaining that this section of the discussion would focus on how local housing associations had responded to and were implementing the seven commitments outlined in the Charter for Social Housing Residents - Social Housing White Paper November 2020.

6.2 Representing Sanctuary Housing Association

- Stephanie Turton, Regional Housing Director - London and South East
- Tom Forty, Director of Customer Experience

6.3 Representing One Housing

- Richard Hill, Group Chief Executive Officer
- Chyrel Brown, Chief Operating Officer

6.4 Representing Shian Housing Association

- Aaron Whitaker, Chair, Shian Management Board
- Minara Sultana, Operations Director

- Leslie Laniyan, Managing Director

6.5 Apologies had been received the attendees listed below.

6.6 Representing Peabody

- Veronica Kirwan, Managing Director - South London & Hackney

6.7 Representing Agudas Israel Housing Association

- Chaya Spitz, Chief Executive

6.8 The Chair invited Stephanie Turton and Tom Forty, representing Sanctuary Housing Association, to give a short verbal presentation. The main points from the presentation are outlined below.

6.9 Sanctuary Housing Association had led a resident-led self-assessment against the Social Housing White Paper completed by the Sanctuary Housing Association National Resident Scrutiny Panel (NRSP).

6.10 Residents had identified 108 recommendations, from which a 32 point action plan had been developed. The implementation of the actions plan would be monitored and scrutinised by the NRSP, and the approach had been supported by the Regulator for Social Housing.

6.11 There had been continued investment and operational focus by Sanctuary Housing Association on ensuring tenants were safe in their home. There was a Building Safety Programme which focused on remediation and the end-to-end approach to building safety, which was audited to ensure it was appropriate and robust.

6.12 A Primary Authority Partnership with Hampshire Fire and Rescue had been agreed to ensure ongoing expert advice and guidance along with the recruitment of Building Safety Managers and fire safety expertise.

6.13 Sanctuary Housing Association had signed up to a seven year Asset Investment Strategy that would increase investment in capital properties. This would be monitored and scrutinised by the NRSP.

6.14 It was also investing in technology through the One Property Programme to ensure it could support trade operatives and repair staff to carry out their roles effectively and be more customer focused.

6.15 Sanctuary Housing Association had been working towards being more transparent and accountable to its tenants. This had involved agreeing the financial information and value for money information that tenants wanted to see, and redeveloping its approach to annual reports to residents.

6.16 A 'Residents Academy' had been developed to deliver CiH accredited courses to tenants involved in the NRSP to empower them to be involved in decision making and encourage informed scrutiny.

6.17 A customer experience dashboard had also been developed to give an insight into a customer's journey so that each stage of the journey could be improved as needed. The metrics for the dashboard had been set in consultation with tenants.

6.18 Sanctuary Housing Association were also reviewing resident involvement in its governance arrangements to increase the strength of the resident voice. Sanctuary Housing Association had adopted the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code and an annual review of its approach to the Code was completed by the Complaints Community of Interest.

6.19 A specific review of the complaints process had also been undertaken with over 150 tenants taking part in the process and holding Sanctuary Housing Association to account for the delivery of the resultant action plan.

6.20 This had led to improvements in access and the ease of making a complaint and the implementation of an improved system to monitor and track complaints.

6.21 Sanctuary Housing Association had developed a new resident engagement strategy for the next three years. It was hoped that this would increase the ease and ways in which tenants could provide feedback, increase resident involvement in governance and improving local communications.

6.22 It had also developed the 'Housing 360' initiative which would target residents who had reported disrepair or were at risk of disrepair, recognising the impact that disrepair had on tenants' lives. It was hoped that this approach would foster relationships with tenants and help identify issues at an early stage.

6.23 The Chair then invited Chyrel Brown and Richard Hill, representing One Housing, to give a short verbal presentation. The main points from the presentation are outlined below.

6.24 One Housing had been on a continuous improvement journey over the last five years which included responses to the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the Social Housing Green Paper, the Social Housing White Paper, the National Housing Federation's 'Together with tenants' initiative and the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.

6.25 There was a strong corporate focus on fire and building safety and resident engagement. This involved an electrical safety programme, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms being checked and replaced in necessary and regular health safety inspections in communal areas.

6.26 Regular resident meetings were undertaken with people living in social housing to explain what works were being undertaken, why they were being undertaken and to understand how tenants may feel more secure and comfortable in their homes.

6.27 One Housing had been working with tenants to identify the information that they wanted. This information was published in newsletters and on its website, and breakdowns of spending were now provided in annual reports.

6.28 Its Complaints Policy had been reviewed to include the revised Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code and a strategic and operational relationship with the Ombudsman was maintained to ensure delivery against this.

6.29 Measures such as a webchat had been introduced as an additional channel to raise complaints, and the My One Housing portal could be used to track complaints. Since the introduction of these measures 90% Stage 1 complaints had been answered in target.

6.30 A Customer Experience Strategy was in place with a strong focus on improving customer experience efficiently and effectively while meeting diverse needs and hearing the customer voice. Progress against this was regularly reported to the One Housing Board and Committees.

6.31 A new Resident Engagement Strategy had also been developed to improve the resident engagement offer and enable resident-led scrutiny of services. The strategy was developed in consultation with 2000 residents, and customer voice surveys would capture live feedback on progress against it.

6.32 The Chair then invited Aaron Whitaker, Minara Sultana and Leslie Laniyan, representing Shian Housing Association, to give a short verbal presentation. The main points from the presentation are outlined below.

6.33 Shian Housing Association had an ongoing roll-on programme in carrying out health and safety inspections such as Annual Gas Safety Checks, Fire Safety Risk Assessments and Periodical Electrical Safety Checks.

6.34 It reviewed its Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) data with Shian Housing Association Scrutiny Panel members and regularly published the KPIs data in newsletters, its annual report and on its website.

6.35 Complaints were handled in line with its Complaints Procedures and the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. Complaints KPIs were discussed in Management Board meetings as well as with Scrutiny Panel members, and complaints reports and feedback were reported to residents in newsletters and the annual report.

6.36 Shian Housing Association carried out independent customer satisfaction surveys as well as in-house satisfaction surveys for both the repairs service and customer contact.

6.37 Feedback from satisfaction surveys were reviewed by the Senior Management Team and improvements were made where needed. Customer satisfaction survey feedback was also reported to the Management Board, Scrutiny Panel members and to all residents through newsletters and the annual report.

6.38 Where major works such as bathroom and kitchen replacements were carried out, resident feedback is actively sought to continuously improve the service.

6.39 It invests over £1 million in its housing stock per year, and recently completed a kitchen and bathroom replacement programme.

6.40 A roll-on programme for the upgrade of electrical consumer units, windows and door replacements was also underway, and there was an ongoing programme over five years for electrical safety inspection for properties.

Shian Housing Association offered homes across a range of different tenures to ensure social housing could support people to take their first step into ownership, such as shared ownership and the intermediate rented housing scheme.

Questions, Answers and Discussion

6.41 *A Commission Member asked to what extent housing associations were open and transparent about their performance, especially in relation to repairs and were how far they were willing to go in improving their performance.*

6.42 Aaron Whitaker, representing Shian Housing Association, spoke of the importance of high standards of repair and maintenance being achieved by housing associations. Much of this was down to prompt and high quality repairs, and also enabling tenants to report repairs easily.

6.43 Stephanie Turton, representing Sanctuary Housing Association, explained that social housing services were looking to be more localised to ensure high standards of repairs and an understanding of local need.

6.44 One large Sanctuary Housing Association estate in Hackney had a pop-up repair surgery where tenants were able to report repairs and local operatives would assess the issue and seek to solve the problem immediately.

6.45 Richard Hill, representing One Housing, recognised that repairs were a large indicator of customer satisfaction. One Housing had invested not only in ensuring operatives were able to carry out their roles effectively, but also in ensuring that the necessary systems were in place to allow tenants to report and track their repairs easily.

6.46 *A Commission Member asked whether the housing associations in attendance had plans for further house building in Hackney over the next five years, and how much of the tenure mix would be put aside for social housing.*

6.47 Richard Hill, representing One Housing, explained that One Housing planned to build around 2.5k homes in London and the South East over the next five years.

6.48 Two thirds of this was planned to be affordable housing and discussions would take place with local authorities about social housing needs on individual developments.

6.49 *A Commission Member asked how easy it was for tenants to receive specific information about their service charges, recognising that service charges differed from home to home, and sometimes even between homes within the same building.*

6.50 Richard Hill, representing One Housing, explained that a booklet was shared with tenants each year outlining what the service charges had been and how the service charge had been decided.

6.51 When proposing to change service charges, One Housing would undertake a consultation with tenants and give tenants a choice in whether or not they receive a service where possible.

6.52 The costs of service charges to housing associations had risen in recent years and there were a range of inflationary pressures to account for this, for example paying employees the London Living Wage.

6.53 Chyrel Brown, representing One Housing, explained that One Housing engaged tenants annually in developing its booklet outlining service charges, for example by holding resident surgeries to go through service charges and receive resident feedback on what services they required.

6.54 Where mistakes in regard to service charges were made, it worked quickly to identify them and refund tenants where needed. It undertook internal audits to ensure that mistakes were identified and rectified quickly.

6.55 Tom Forty, representing Sanctuary Housing Association, explained that Sanctuary Housing Association aimed to be transparent about rent increases and have honest conversations with tenants to ensure it was making the right decisions in the interest of tenants.

6.56 A Commission Member asked what the housing associations in attendance were doing to ensure tenants were aware of their rights and felt empowered to have their voice heard by their landlord.

6.57 Tom Forty, representing Sanctuary Housing Association, explained that Sanctuary Housing Association had a number of active residents' associations on its estates in Hackney, and had a resident engagement team that actively supported those residents' associations to bring tenants together to ensure that it was providing a high standard of service.

6.58 Stephanie Turton, representing Sanctuary Housing Association, highlighted the transfer of community halls to residents on estates in Hackney as an example of working with tenants to make the most of their community through projects and social groups.

6.59 A Commission Member asked whether the housing associations in attendance had considered the creation of a Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) which would allow housing associations to manage their repairs and maintenance internally.

6.60 Aaron Whitaker, representing Shian Housing Association, explained that all of its contractors were based in Hackney and the majority were Black and Global Majority contractors. This allowed them to be more responsive to the needs of their tenants.

6.61 Tom Forty, representing Sanctuary Housing Association, explained that Sanctuary Housing Association had a DLO in London which delivered around 70% of its repairs which consisted of local employees with knowledge of their local communities.

6.62 Whilst the aspiration was for the DLO to deliver more of its repairs, it had to be conscious that it may need to use external contractors for some specialisms and to ensure value for money in some cases.

6.63 A Commission Member asked whether the relationship between the housing associations in attendance and its repairs workers was positive, and whether the relationship had any impact on the quality of repairs undertaken.

6.64 Stephanie Turton, representing Sanctuary Housing Association, explained that the relationship between the housing association and its repairs staff was positive despite ongoing pressures due to staffing across London, and high vacancy rates in particular.

6.65 It worked hard to maintain a positive relationship with the repairs team and support it through what had been a difficult time.

6.66 A Commission Member asked what Sanctuary Housing was doing to localise its services, and ensure local resident voice was being listened to and learned from.

6.67 In response, Tom Forty, representing Sanctuary Housing Association, recognised that more work needed to be done to improve resident engagement at a local level.

6.68 It had teams in Hackney that engaged with residents regularly, and the relationships between the housing association and residents was particularly strong on estates.

6.69 There had been an increase in feedback from resident associations on performance on estates, but there was difficulty in engaging with those residents who did not wish to be part of a resident association.

6.70 *A Commission Member asked how Sanctuary Housing Association focused on customer satisfaction whilst its business model seemed to be at odds with such an approach (being a large and commercial organisation).*

6.71 Tom Forty, representing Sanctuary Housing Association, explained that the organisation was trying to move away from a data driven approach to customer satisfaction, but to an approach in which the individual experiences of residents were listened to and acted upon.

6.72 Resident mentoring had been developed where local residents had mentoring relationships with members of the senior leadership team so that the leadership team had an insight into what was going on in local areas.

6.73 This involved members of the senior leadership team accompanying residents on inspections of social housing across the country.

6.74 Richard Hill, representing One Housing, explained that One Housing had not been seeing the same level of surpluses as it had in previous years because most of its surpluses were being directed towards building safety.

6.75 It also directed much of its surpluses to its care and support work which included supporting people who are homeless, living in temporary accommodation or who are at risk of being homeless.

6.76 Its surpluses also went towards building new, affordable housing stock to meet housing needs within London. It did not aim to make profit but to continue to grow and provide more homes.

6.77 *A Commission Member asked Sanctuary Housing whether issues in regards to repairs, complaints and safety was simply down to a lack of investment.*

6.78 Stephanie Turton, representing Sanctuary Housing Association, explained that there were specific problems in London that were affecting the level of service housing associations were able to provide to residents.

6.79 There was a labour shortage in London that had led to high vacancy rates, meaning that less operatives were available to carry out repairs and maintenance.

7 Living in Hackney Work Programme 2022/23 (9.05pm)

7.1 This item would cover the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission work programme for the 2022/23 municipal year.

7.2 Any suggestions from Commission Members this evening, as well as suggestions made in the public survey, by officers and by Cabinet Members would be collated into a shortlist and presented at the next meeting for agreement.

7.3 After the Commission had agreed the items for the work programme, the Chair and Vice Chair would update the Scrutiny Panel with the proposed work programme for the Commission.

7.4 The Chair then invited Commission Members to make any comments or suggestions for the 2022/23 work programme.

7.5 Commission Members supported the suggestion to explore and advise on existing models and develop new ways to build affordable and accessible homes in Hackney.

7.6 Commission Members supported the suggestion to look at how drug crime was policed in Hackney including stop and search and what happens to people when they were found with illegal substances.

7.7 A Commission Member supported the suggestion to look at the impact of the changes to the Housing Register and Lettings Policy on residents.

7.8 A Commission Member supported the suggestion to look at the arrangements in place in Hackney to provide temporary accommodation to residents in priority need.

7.9 Commission Members then suggested additional work programme items as outlined below.

7.10 To look at urban farming in Hackney as a means of promoting sustainable communities, including urban beekeeping.

7.11 To look at flood planning in Hackney, particularly the risks faced, the impact of flooding and measures taken to manage risks and reduce potential damage and destruction.

7.12 To look at the Council's work to meet its net zero carbon target in relation to retrofitting buildings in the borough.

7.13 To look at the Council's work to revitalise high streets and town centres. However, as this would sit within the economic regeneration department it would therefore fall outside of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission.

8 Minutes of the Meeting

8.1 The minutes of the previous meetings held on 17th January and 7th March 2022 would follow in the next meeting agenda.

8.2 The draft minutes of the previous meetings held on 24th February 2022 and 13th December 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

9 Any Other Business

9.1 None.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00 - 9.43 pm

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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 7th November 2022 Item 7 – Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2022/23	Item No 7
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Outline

Attached is the draft work programme for the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission for the 2022/23 municipal year.

Please note that this is a working document.

Action

Members are asked to review and agree the work programme for the 2022/23 municipal year.

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Overview & Scrutiny

Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission: Work Programme for June 2022 – April 2023

Each agenda will include an updated version of this work programme

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
<p>13th June 2022</p> <p>Special Joint Meeting with Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission</p> <p>Papers deadline: Wed 1st June 2022</p>	<p>Strategic Response of Statutory Partners to Child Q and the Accountability and Monitoring Arrangements</p>	<p>City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership</p> <p>Metropolitan Police Service - Met HQ & Central East Borough Command Unit</p> <p>Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)</p> <p>London Borough of Hackney</p>	<p>The scrutiny commissions have convened this meeting to review the strategic response of statutory partners to the recommendations from the Safeguarding Practice Review by the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP).</p> <p>This meeting is to review the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The timeline of events and actions from the date the incident related to Child Q was reported to all agencies up to the publication of the report. ● The response and actions taken by the statutory agencies to the report and recommendation of the Child Q Safeguarding Practice Review report. ● The accountability structures and monitoring arrangements in place reviewing the progress and implementation of the recommendations made in the report. ● Public involvement and accountability in the monitoring process and structures.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
<p>13th July 2022</p> <p>Papers deadline: Mon 4th July 2022</p>	<p>Implementation of the Charter for Social Housing Residents – Resident Experiences</p>	<p>Selected advocacy groups and resident testimonies</p>	<p>The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission is looking at how local social housing providers in the borough have responded to and are implementing the 7 commitments outlined in the Charter for Social Housing Residents - Social Housing White Paper November 2020.</p> <p>The scrutiny commission wants to get an understanding of tenants' experiences of social housing since the White Paper. The Commission invited residents to submit information about their experiences and invited two advocacy groups to share information about the key issues tenants face and to outline their work to support tenants.</p> <p>Commitments of the Charter for Social Housing Residents:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be safe in your home. 2. To know how your landlord is performing, including on repairs, complaints and safety, and how it spends its money. 3. To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly, with access to a strong Ombudsman. 4. To be treated with respect, backed by a strong consumer regulator and improved consumer standards for tenants. 5. To have your voice heard by your landlord. 6. To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in, with your landlord keeping your home in good repair. 7. The government will ensure social housing can support people to take their first step to ownership.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
	<p>Implementation of the Charter for Social Housing Residents - Housing Associations</p>	<p>Selected Housing Associations</p>	<p>The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission is looking at how local social housing providers in the borough have responded to and are implementing the 7 commitments outlined in the Charter for Social Housing Residents - Social Housing White Paper November 2020.</p> <p>The scrutiny commission asked local housing associations to provide information on how they have responded to and are implementing each of the seven commitments below. The commission has expressed a particular interest in repairs, complaints, disputes, and transparency in decision-making relating to service charges.</p> <p>Commitments of the Charter for Social Housing Residents:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be safe in your home. 2. To know how your landlord is performing, including on repairs, complaints and safety, and how it spends its money. 3. To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly, with access to a strong Ombudsman. 4. To be treated with respect, backed by a strong consumer regulator and improved consumer standards for tenants. 5. To have your voice heard by your landlord. 6. To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in, with your landlord keeping your home in good repair. 7. The government will ensure social housing can support people to take their first step to ownership.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
	LiH Work Programme Planning 2022-2023	Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer	Discussion to consider and make suggestions for the LiH work programme for the new municipal year.
12th September 2022 Papers deadline: Thurs 1 st Sept 2022	N/A		As a result of the Death of the Monarch and subsequent period of designated national mourning, this meeting was cancelled and planned agenda items were deferred to the subsequent meeting.
7th November 2022 Papers deadline: Wed 26 th October 2022	Changes to the Housing Register and Lettings Policy	Housing Needs Jennifer Wynter, Head of Benefits and Housing Needs	To look at the impact of Hackney Council's new housing register and Lettings Policy which came into effect in October 2021. Particular focus to be given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advice and guidance in place for residents that no longer qualify for the register, and to those that face a long wait or that are unlikely to get housed ● The impact of the policy on prioritising residents in the greatest need and providing more predictable outcomes

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
	Impact of the Cyber Attack on the Housing Register	Housing Needs Jennifer Wynter, Head of Benefits and Housing Needs	To look at Hackney Council's efforts to mitigate the impact of the 2020 cyber attack on its housing register. Particular focus to be given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The impact of the cyber attack on the housing register ● What has been put in place to mitigate the risks to residents in need
	LiH Work Programme 2022-2023	Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer	To agree the LiH work programme for the new municipal year.
12th December 2022 Papers deadline: Wed 30 th Nov 2022	Housing Repairs	Housing Services Steve Waddington, Strategic Director of Housing	To look at progress against Hackney Council's action plan to tackle the repairs backlog built up during the pandemic. Particular focus to be given to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Progress made in clearing the backlog and returning services to business as usual ● How the Council has engaged with residents who may be in need of repairs but unable to report issues ● What the Council has learned from what happened, and how this learning will lead to service improvement going forward

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
<p>23rd January 2023</p> <p>Papers deadline: Wed 11th January 2023</p>	<p>Policing of Drugs in Hackney (including response to Child Q Joint Scrutiny Meeting)</p>	<p>Metropolitan Police Service - Met HQ & Central East Borough Command Unit</p>	<p>To look at the policing of drugs in Hackney as part of the Commission's continued work on building trust and confidence and inclusive policing.</p> <p>Particular focus to be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The approach to policing drug use in Hackney ● How effective the approach is and how consistently it is used across communities ● The impact of the approach to the policing of drugs on local communities
<p>16th February 2023</p> <p>Papers deadline: Mon 6th February 2023</p>	<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Arts & Cultural Sector</p>	<p>Arts & Culture</p> <p>Petra Roberts, Strategic Service Head for Culture, Libraries and Heritage</p> <p>Selected partner organisations and resident groups</p>	<p>To look at Hackney Council's progress in advancing equality, diversity and inclusion in the arts and cultural sector.</p> <p>Particular focus to be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How under-represented communities are supported to take advantage of opportunities to participate in arts and cultural activities ● What barriers remain in engaging under-represented groups to take advantage of arts and culture opportunities

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
<p>22nd March 2023</p> <p>Papers deadline: Fri 10th March 2023</p>	<p>Temporary Accommodation</p>	<p>Housing Needs</p> <p>Jennifer Wynter, Head of Benefits and Housing Needs</p> <p>Adult Social Care Commissioning</p> <p>Zainab Jalil, Head of Commissioning, Business Support & Projects</p>	<p>To look at the arrangements in place to provide temporary accommodation to residents in priority need.</p> <p>Particular focus to be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How eligibility is determined and how residents at risk are identified and supported ● The procedure for the placement of households in temporary accommodation, both inside and outside the borough ● The support in place to help residents with the associated impacts and challenges of temporary accommodation

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
<p>20th April 2023</p> <p>Papers deadline: Thurs 6th April 2023</p>	<p>Impact of Housing Regeneration on Residents</p>	<p>Housing Regeneration</p> <p>Stephen Haynes, Strategic Director of Inclusive Economy, Regeneration and New Homes</p> <p>Chris Trowell/James Goddard, Interim Directors of Regeneration & Capital Programme</p>	<p>To look at the impact of Hackney Council's housing regeneration projects on residents.</p> <p>Particular focus to be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The impact of recent regeneration projects on residents and community cohesion, including the approach to the decanting of residents to facilitate redevelopment works ● How residents' are engaged, how their priorities are listened to and how this engagement is reflected in projects