

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 12 December 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://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uyyk0Ty7Tm8>

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

https://youtu.be/hVLiAX_K6ds

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 Wrouth, 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 Housing Repairs (Pages 9 - 32)
- 5 Housing Support for Care Leavers (Pages 33 - 50)

- 6 Child Q Safeguarding Practice Review (Pages 51 - 62)
- 7 Minutes of the Meeting (Pages 63 - 78)
- 8 Living in Hackney Work Programme 2022/23 (Pages 79 - 88)
- 9 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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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 12th December 2022 Item 4 – Housing Repairs	Item No 4
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Outline

During the pandemic, the Council built up a backlog of around 7,000 repairs which led to significant delays to the completion of housing repairs across council properties.

The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission is keen to hear about the progress the Council has made in clearing the backlog and returning to business as usual.

This discussion will feed into the Commission's wider work to understand the experiences of social housing tenants in Hackney.

As part of this work, the Commission held a meeting to review the progress of Housing Associations in implementing the Charter for Social Housing Residents. The minutes of the meeting held in July 2022 can be accessed [here](#).

Discussion

To review the Council's housing repairs service and progress against its action plan to tackle the backlog built up during the pandemic.

Particular focus to be given to:

- Impact on residents and progress made in clearing the backlog and returning services to business as usual
- What mechanisms have been put in place to allow residents to report issues easily, and how the Council has engaged with residents who may be in need of repairs but unable to report issues e.g. digitally excluded
- How the Council has learned from what happened, and how this learning will lead to service improvement going forward

In addition to evidence submitted by council officers, the Commission has also invited residents to submit information about their experiences of the Council's repairs service which will be share at the meeting.

Report(s)

To support this discussion the following presentation was included for background information:

- Item 4a. Presentation from Strategic Director of Housing
(attached)

Invited Attendees

- Councillor Clayeon McKenzie - Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation
- Steve Waddington - Strategic Director of Housing

Action

Members are asked to consider the resident information and presentation and ask questions of those in attendance.

Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

12th December

Housing Repairs

Key Areas

- Impact on residents and progress made in clearing the backlog and returning services to business as usual
- What mechanisms have been put in place to allow residents to report issues easily, and how has the Council engaged with residents who may be in need of repairs but unable to report issues e.g. the digitally excluded
- How has the Council has learned from what happened, and how this learning will lead to service improvement going forward

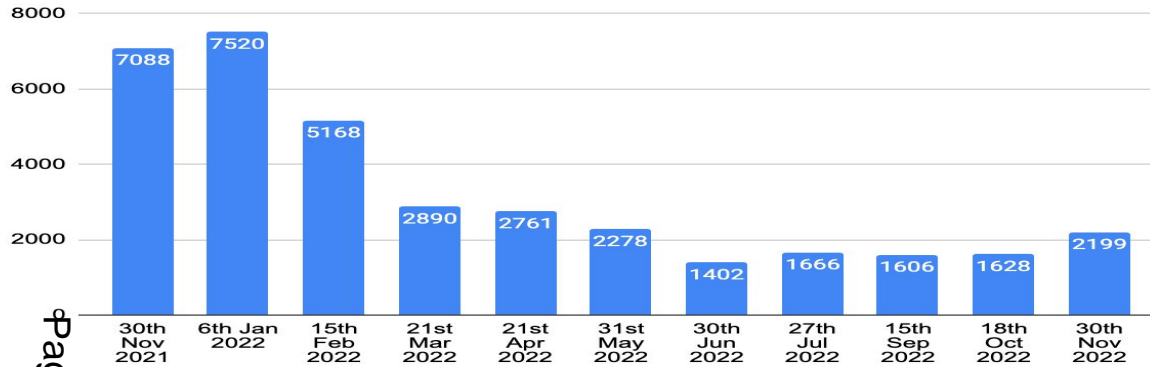
Repairs Backlog

Challenges and issues:

- Recovery from **Covid** and **Cyber Attack**
- **7,000+ Repairs Backlog @ 30/11/21 with newly arising cases every month**
- **700+ Disrepair Cases**
- **Recruitment and retention** of external supply chain contractors to back up the DLO
- Attracting **qualified operatives** to join our DLO to boost capacity and grow DLO, reducing reliance on sub contractors
- Development of **Repairs Hub IT system** to reduce paperwork and manual workarounds

Clearing Pandemic Backlog of Repairs

Overdue Orders Snapshots



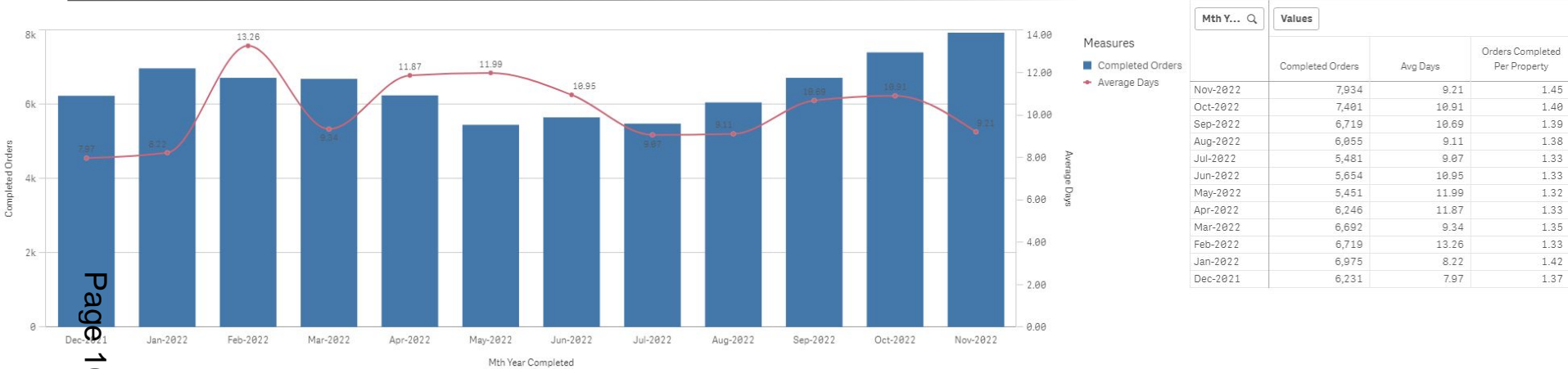
All of the 7088 repairs that made up the backlog on 30th November 2021 have now been completed.

However, despite completing more repairs in November 2022 than any month since the pandemic, the number of repairs raised each month continues to rise and the number of repairs due is outweighing the number of repairs completed. This has resulted in there being 2199 overdue repairs at the end of November 2022.

Completed Orders



Repairs Performance - Average time to complete Repairs



Mth Y...	Values		
	Completed Orders	Avg Days	Orders Completed Per Property
Nov-2022	7,934	9.21	1.45
Oct-2022	7,401	10.91	1.40
Sep-2022	6,719	10.69	1.39
Aug-2022	6,055	9.11	1.38
Jul-2022	5,481	9.07	1.33
Jun-2022	5,654	10.95	1.33
May-2022	5,451	11.99	1.32
Apr-2022	6,246	11.87	1.33
Mar-2022	6,692	9.34	1.35
Feb-2022	6,719	13.26	1.33
Jan-2022	6,975	8.22	1.42
Dec-2021	6,231	7.97	1.37

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The average number of days to complete repairs was 9.21 in November. We are unable to compare this to pre-cyber attack data because the recovered data does not have completion dates so we are unable to compare our previous performance.

Unfortunately we cannot track repeat visits in Repairs Hub because each order only holds one appointment date and follow-ons and recalls are not linked. Whilst we can count the number of repairs completed per property, we cannot tell whether the repairs are for the same issue without checking the order descriptions. In November, for the properties attended, on average we completed 1.45 repairs per property.

Customer Care

Link Work - Customer Services

Customer services have a team of officers who are trained in link work .

The aim of link work is to ensure that vulnerable residents are supported early on and prevented from reaching crisis - specifically through supporting early referrals into the system.

Currently where a resident is over 70 years of age and has not contacted the council to raise a repair for over 2 years their details are flagged as a potential concern to their welfare and an officer trained in link work will proactively make contact.

Officers will have holistic conversations with residents and refer, recommend or navigate them to a services (particularly internal to the Council).

INCREASE IN COMPLAINTS AND CASE WORK

We have seen an expected increase in complaints and case work as a result of only providing an emergency repairs service for over 15 months.

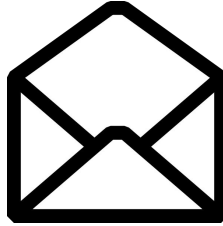
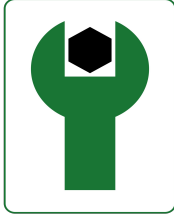
- 2019/20 - 928 Cases received
- 2020/21 763 cases received
- 2021/22 1320 cases received
- 2022/23 (so far) - 1362 cases received, we have already received our highest number ever, five months before the year end arrives and before we have experienced the worst of winter.

The above shows the scale of the increase that has been seen as a result of the pandemic / cyber attack. When considering our performance responding:

- 73% increase in the number of cases closed per month comparing 2021 and 2022 (January - September)
- Average days taken to respond to a stage 1 complaint
 - September 2021 - 27.73 days and in October 2021 - 20.89 days,
 - September 2022 - 11.52 days and in October 2021 - 9.01 days

These results demonstrate how well new innovative ways of working have succeeded despite these challenging circumstances and how it puts us in a strong position to enter 2023 with a chance to provide better services to our residents than ever.

Complaint Process



The complaints process demands that we respond to all stage 1 Building Maintenance Complaints within ten working days. This year has seen great steps taken to improve the average day response time, at stage 1 for Building Maintenance, despite the continuing challenges with ICT systems and operational resources due to repairs backlogs that have impacted our complaints teams.

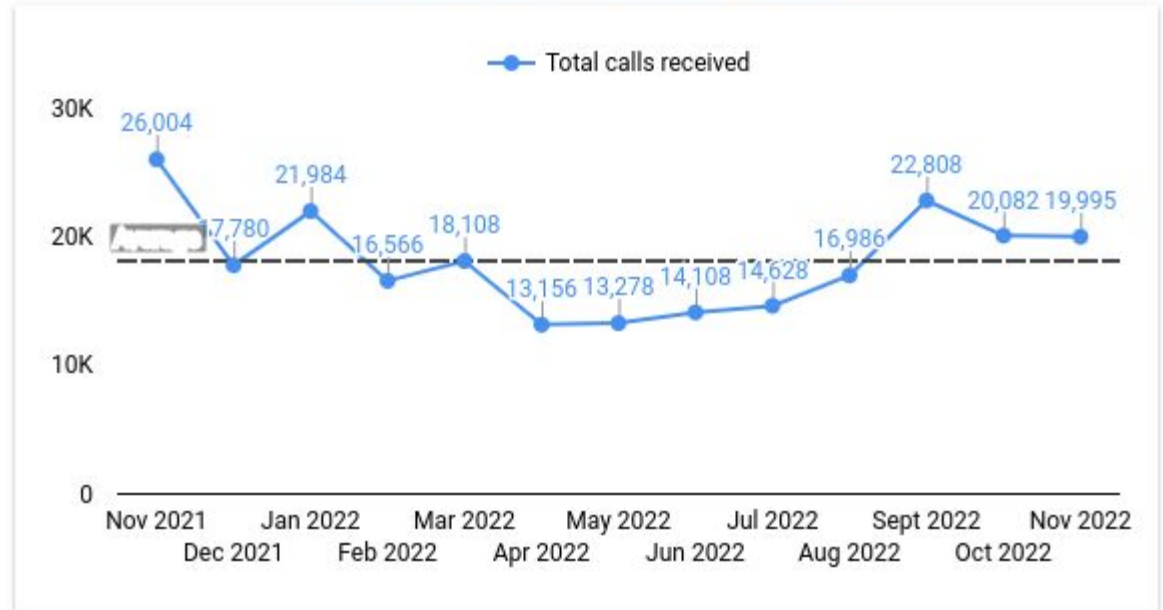
Month Completed	Total
October 2021	20.89
November 2021	12.98
December 2021	18.60
January 2022	16.33
February 2022	14.98
March 2022	13.98
April 2022	18.54
May 2022	15.82
June 2022	13.52
July 2022	10.30
August 2022	16.65
September 2022	11.52
October 2022	9.33

Repair Call Demand Levels

Highlights:

- Demand reduced by **8%** in October.
- Predictions for November however show volumes have increased again by **15%** (estimate **23,700** calls in total)
- Average call volumes **5,520** per week
- Call demand is **15-20%** higher than pre-pandemic volumes.
- When comparing call numbers with job orders placed, the ratio is under 50%

Telephone: Call Volumes (Monthly)



Contact Centre Performance Comparison

January 22

- Total calls received - 11,602
- Total repair calls answered (including call backs) - 79%
- Total emergency calls answered - 83%
- Average wait routine calls - 2hrs 7 minutes
- Average wait emergency calls - 8 minutes

November 22

- Total calls received - 19,469
- Total repair calls answered (including call backs) - 81%
- Total emergency calls answered - 92%
- Average wait routine calls - 21 minutes
- Average wait emergency calls - 4 minutes

Difference

- Increase of 7867 calls
- 2% increase in total calls answered
- 9% increase in emergency calls answered
- 1hr 46 minute reduction in wait times for routine calls
- 4 minute (50%) reduction in wait time for emergency calls

Tenant Satisfaction

Contact Centre

Month by Month

- Oct - 69.62%
- Sep - 74.14%
- Aug - 70.51%
- Jul - 77.92%
- Jun - 69.47%
- May - 65.53%
- Apr 22 - 71.28%
- Mar - 71.89%
- Feb - 70.44%
- Jan - 64.39%
- Dec - 62.81%

Quality of Work

Month by Month

- Oct - 66.24%
- Sep - 69.40%
- Aug - 67.74%
- Jul - 73.33%
- Jun - 62.11%
- May - 59.00%
- Apr 22 - 67.84%
- Mar - 66.80%
- Feb - 66.18%
- Jan - 57.11%
- Dec - 59.43%

Overall Satisfaction

Month by Month







- Oct - 62/95%
- Sep - 68.53%
- Aug - 65.44%
- Jul - 69.58%
- Jun - 58.59%
- May - 56.90%
- Apr 22 - 66.33%
- Mar - 66.20%
- Feb - 60.87%
- Jan - 56.61%
- Dec - 59.43%

Lessons Learned and Service Improvement

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Lessons Learned and Service Improvement

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- Backlog of open and overdue repairs 
 - Poor contractor performance 
 - Low DLO productivity 
 - Lengthy wait for repairs e.g. leaks 
 - Long wait times for calls to be handled 
 - Increase in complaints and disrepair cases 
- Clear pandemic backlog and Grow DLO
 - Improve supply chain and contract management
 - Mobile working and bonus DLO
 - 24 Hour response time to leaks
 - Improvement in call handling and callbacks
 - Lessons learned from complaints and developing ADR to deal with disrepair quickly



Improvement Actions:

- Developing new approaches to tackle high demand repairs challenges **Damp & Mould** and **Leaks Hub**
- Shift in approaches to provide a customer focussed repairs service that is more proactive and reduce the risk of disrepair, **Property MOTs**
- Implementing **DLO growth** and solutions to deal with repairs backlog and simultaneously improve the customer journey experience for new repairs
- Designing and rolling out an integrated IT platform **Repairs Hub**, to include mobile working, planned works, bonus and stores
- The BM Commercial Team leading on **supply chain** procurement and management of existing contracts

Collaborative working:

- Continue to work with **PAM** to identify works which can be prioritised in the planned programme or delivered directly by BM
- Working closely with **Housing Transformation** and **RCC IT** teams to develop and implement Repairs Improvement Plan
- **Housing Management** working together with legal services to improve Disrepair case management and temporary decant process
- Collaborative work with **Allocations** to arrange decants and incoming tenancies into void properties

Grow the DLO

In the last year we have increased the number of in house DLO operatives to 150, an increase of 13 from 2021.

We have recruitment ongoing to increase the number of operatives to 170, by a further 15 posts, in line with the manifesto commitment of growing the DLO by 20%.

The number of jobs being completed by the DLO in the last 3 months is over 30% than the same period last year.

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There is scope to further increase the in house team and reduce the amount of work that is currently being contracted out, however we need to invest in the development of the service, IT systems, depot and stores, fleet, training and skills.

We have a successful apprenticeship programme and need to plan ahead for succession of staff and skills, particularly with regards to new technology and approaches.

Contract Management

Main contractor had been overwhelmed with volume of work raised and as a result not performing as required across multiple work streams.

We have Increased DLO capacity and onboarded additional contractor capacity to reduce reliance on single main contractor.

Paraphrasing
2028
simultaneously we have added contractors on to the Repairs Hub system and produced regular performance data to hold them to account at performance contract review meetings.

Financial penalties have been introduced where poor performance has led to delays in completing works within timescale.

Procurement ongoing for main contract suppliers, as well as continued growth of our in house team to reduce reliance on external contractors.

Resolving Leaks

- 24 Hour leaks has been in pilot since August with the Leaks Hub Team and has now expanded to the Repairs Contact Centre.
- We are this week going live with a new inbox for the plumbers, that will mean they can send follow on reports and pictures directly from site to the Leaks Hub Team instantly for the first time since the Cyber Attack.
- We are also in the first stage pilot of the new Leaks Hub Case Management system, that will be the hub for all Housing Teams to see live information on what the status is of an ongoing leak. This system will fully go live across the service in January 2023 and will be a huge step forward in information sharing and joined up working across Building Maintenance.

Tackling Damp and Mould

In addition to the targeted approach to respond quickly to leaks, we have also implemented changes in the way we tackle damp and mould in homes.

All cases are referred to a surveyor and inspected within 5 days of customer contact.

We have been advising residents on how to prevent and manage condensation in the home, with our guides, online content, and social media and comms campaign.

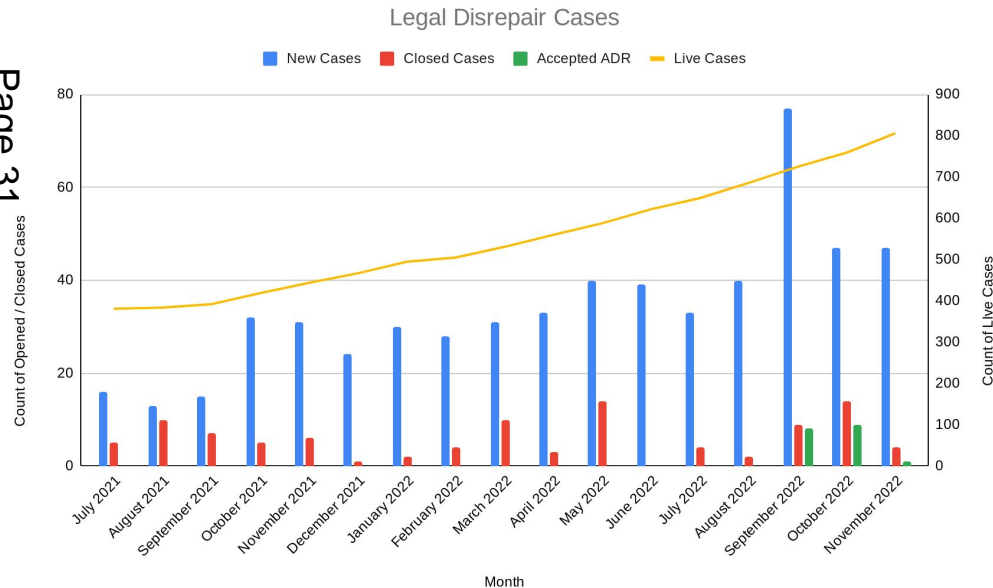
Surveyors are using damp monitoring equipment and providing residents with comfort monitors that identify and advise the resident on heating and ventilating the home, by reading temperature, humidity, and air quality.

We are reviewing damp and mould as part of our stock condition surveys via PAM next year, and developing targeted MOT style inspections where data and intel suggests there may be a wider issue in a block.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

A new ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution Team) has been piloted within the Customer Relationship Team, to change the way we deal with potential Legal Disrepair claims in the future. The pilot has been successful in showing that an ADR process can work for the residents, in getting issues resolved fairly and speedily and also for the organisation, in already demonstrating its ability to avoid legal litigation and potentially save the Council lots of money in the future. A new system, process and designated team within the Customer Relationship Team is in the process of being set up for this and will go live in January 2023.

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Questions and Discussion



Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 12th December 2022 Item 5 – Housing Support for Care Leavers	Item No 5
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Outline

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission and Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission held a joint scrutiny session on housing support for care leavers as part of the 2021/22 work programme.

The Commissions have agreed and finalised their recommendations over summer of 2022 for presentation at Cabinet for a response. The agreed letter to the Executive is attached.

Action

Members are asked to note the agreed letter to the Executive in response to the joint scrutiny session on housing support for care.

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Room 118, 2nd Floor
Hackney Town Hall
Mare Street
London, E8 1EA

21st October 2022

martin.bradford@hackney.gov.uk

Cllr Anntionette Bramble,
Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education,
Young People and Children's Social Care
&
Cllr Sade Etti,
Mayoral Adviser for Housing Needs and Homelessness

Dear Cllr Bramble and Cllr Etti,

Housing Support for Care Leavers (Recommendations)

The Children and Young People and Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commissions have completed their joint scrutiny of housing support for care leavers which they commenced earlier this year. Both Commissions would like to extend their thanks to you both for attending the dedicated scrutiny session, and for the ongoing collaborative support of your officers from across Corporate Parenting, Benefits & Housing Needs and Housing Strategy throughout the summer.

This was an extended piece of work in which members of both Commissions conducted focus groups with care leavers, undertook site visits to supported housing schemes and received evidence from Leaving Care and Housing Needs Teams from a number of other London boroughs. Wide ranging [documentary evidence](#) was also submitted and considered by Commission members, which together with the meet [recording](#) and [minutes](#) provide a public record of scrutiny activity.

Hackney Leaving Care Service has a statutory duty to support children leaving care until the age of 25, including the responsibility of finding suitable accommodation between the ages of 18 and 21 years and currently supports around 400 young people who have left care. Many of these care leavers will have experienced significant personal challenges and family upheaval in their lives which makes their journey to adulthood and living independently more difficult, especially as they may not have access to the same support network of families and friends that many other young people do. Further to discussions with care leavers, members of the

Overview & Scrutiny

Commission know how important accessible, sustainable and affordable housing is in their journey to independence, but officers face real difficulties in meeting these needs given the lack of local housing options available resulting from the ongoing housing crisis.

On the evidence provided and through extensive consultation with officers, members of the Commission have made 10 recommendations to help extend and improve the range of housing options available for care leavers in Hackney. In particular the Commission have made recommendations in the following priority areas:

- To enable more care leavers to develop access to the social housing register;
- To ensure that there is parity of support for care leavers required to seek accommodation in the private rented sector;
- To improve future housing supply for care leavers.

The recommendations of the Commissions are timely. Both the Hackney Care Leaver Offer and the Hackney Housing Strategy are due to be updated and refreshed in 2022, so the Commissions' hope that its recommendations will guide and inform new iterations of these key policy documents and help to improve Hackney's offer to care leavers. Hackney's offer to care leavers is important, as it will come under further scrutiny and challenge from Ofsted which has recently amended its inspection framework to include the specific assessments of '*The experiences and progress of care leavers*' and which will contribute to its overall determination on the quality of children's social care.

The Commission would particularly like to thank those care leavers that shared their experiences of their journey into independent living with members as part of this review. The number of care leavers who were eager to engage with this scrutiny process, and their willingness to engage and talk openly with members is perhaps a testament to how important quality, safe and affordable housing is in their (and other young people's) journey into independence.

The Commission would also like to thank the working group of officers from across Corporate Parenting, Benefits & Housing Needs and Housing Strategy which was convened to support this scrutiny process, and hopes that this work will continue as they oversee and implement those recommendations which are approved by the Executive.

It is hoped that the recommendations given below will contribute further to the positive work that is already taking place across the Council for our looked after children. We look forward to receiving an update on the agreed recommendations at a future scrutiny meeting.

Yours sincerely

Overview & Scrutiny

Cllr Soraya Adejare

Chair, Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

Cllr Sophie Conway

Chair, Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission

Cllr Clare Joseph

Vice Chair, Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

Cllr Margaret Gordon

Vice Chair, Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission

Cc:

- Jacquie Burke, Group Director Children and Education
- Diane Benjamin, Director of Children's Social Care
- Laura Bleaney, Head of Corporate Parenting
- Stephen Haynes, Strategic Director Inclusive Economy, Corporate Policy and New Homes Strategic Director Customer and Workplace
- Jennifer Wynter, Head of Benefits and Housing Need
- James Goddard, Interim Director, Regeneration
- Naeem Ahmed, Head of Corporate Finance
- Ben Bradley, Cabinet Office

Overview & Scrutiny

Recommendations of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission and Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission [The Commission].

Improving quality, consistency and timeliness of Housing Advice & Support for Care Leavers across the Council

1. Whilst the Commission recognises the complexity of the housing support landscape for care leavers, it was apparent from the testimonies of young care leavers themselves, that improved quality and greater consistency was needed in the provision of housing advice that was provided to care leavers.

The Commission therefore recommends:

- a) That additional specialist housing advice and support is commissioned to meet the housing needs of care leavers across both Corporate Parenting and Housing Needs services (in particular for care leavers seeking accommodation in the private rented sector - see recommendation 3);
- b) That Social Workers and Personal Advisers in the Corporate Parenting team and housing workers in the Housing Needs team are provided with regular updates and dedicated training to maintain and improve the quality and consistency of housing advice for care leavers;
- c) That at least two housing support officers within the Greenhouse (which supports local homeless young people) are dedicated to support/ or identified as nominated leads for care leavers (to help improve consistency
- d) That in collaboration, the Corporate Parenting and Housing Needs team regularly audit the quality and timeliness of advice and assess and validate with care leavers / prospective care leavers.

Improving strategic oversight and coordination of housing support for care leavers across the Council

2. The Commission has noted the positive working relationships developed across Corporate Parenting, Benefits & Housing Needs and Housing Strategy and Supply resulting from this scrutiny exercise. The Commission recommends that this should be formalised and structured through the establishment of a joint corporate parenting and housing protocol. The development of such a protocol (as recommended by government departments) will ensure that there is a strategic and coordinated approach to supporting the housing needs of care leavers across the Council and bring greater transparency and accountability for the provision and delivery of housing support and accommodation for care leavers.

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In developing the joint housing protocol for care leavers, the Commission recommends that Corporate Parenting, Benefits & Housing Needs and Housing Strategy:

- Note the [Care Leavers Accommodation and Support Framework](#) developed by St Mungo's & Barnado's
- Note the [information and advice](#) provided by government departments (DCLG/DfE/DLUHC) to support the development of local protocols;
- Engage and involve local care leavers, other looked after children, foster carers and other stakeholders;
- Develop and agree on oversight and monitoring arrangements with the Corporate Parenting Board to ensure that there is ongoing review of delivery across children's and housing services;
- The protocol should be agreed and implemented by the end of financial year 2022/23 at the latest.

Improved support for care leavers seeking to live independently within the private rented sector (PRS).

3. Given the limited availability of social housing lets, the reality for most care leavers in Hackney who are seeking to live independently is to source accommodation within the private rented sector (PRS). From the evidence presented the Commission noted a number of key issues:

- Many care leavers held a number of genuine and well founded anxieties about accessing accommodation in the private rented sector including; transitioning from more more supportive housing arrangements, high rental costs, insecurity of tenure and the location of affordable options.
- Although the Council has equal responsibility for all looked after children in its corporate parent role, the Commission felt that there was little parity in the nature of support offered to care leavers seeking independent tenancies in the PRS compared to the social housing sector.
- Care experienced young people face three significant barriers to renting privately; access to a deposit, the need to provide rent in advance *and* access to a guarantor.
- Other London boroughs have responded to similar concerns and developed a PRS support strategy for care Leavers (e.g [Wandsworth](#)). (Whilst the Council operates a deposit and rent in advance scheme - is this only available through the homeless route - to clarify?)

The Commission recommends that additional specialist support should be commissioned to provide more help to those care leavers transitioning from supported housing into the private rented sector. To support this the Commission recommends:

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- a) That further investigative work should be undertaken to assess the **experiences of care leavers in the private rented sector** to further understand issues around the acceptability and accessibility of tenancies and what support might be needed to help them sustain their tenancies (e.g. how well are care leavers sustaining PRS tenancies at the moment);
- b) The Council considers commissioning the [The National House Project](#) (or similar) which provides a peer support framework to assist care leavers to develop the skills, confidence and social networks to progress to independent tenancies within the PRS. This will help young people to leave supported housing earlier and live independently, if they wish to do so.
- c) Corporate Parenting and Housing Needs should consider how **additional floating support** can be commissioned to help young people transitioning from supported housing to housing within the private rented sector;
- d) That the Council considers developing an **accredited landlord scheme**, which identifies those local landlords who would be willing to work with care leavers, their personal advisers and housing officers to help support them into and maintain tenancies in PRS accommodation (e.g. flexible tenancies, commitment to work with the LA to avoid eviction, reduced deposit);
- e) That the Council considers **providing a deposit / rent in advance** scheme (outside homeless route) and considers developing a pilot scheme in which the **Council acts as a guarantor** for care leavers seeking accommodation in PRS for the first 6/12 months of tenancy.

Improving how the local quota system for social housing works for care leavers.

4. For looked after children who have experienced significant personal upheaval, placement instability and possible breakdown of care arrangements, independent social housing tenancies can offer an affordable, secure and supportive accommodation option for when they leave care. The Council currently operates a social housing quota with 18 social housing tenancies available per annum available for care leavers (16 x 1 bedroom 2 x 2 bedroom). The total number of social lets that the Council is able to provide has reduced significantly in recent years, with latest figures indicating that this totalled just over 400 lets annually.

Given that the number of care leavers (376 in year to March 2021) far exceeds the number of social lets available (18), the Commission noted a number of challenges with the current social housing quota in Hackney:

- The eligibility criteria and prioritisation process for care leavers to be considered for social housing tenancy has not been sufficiently defined and / or communicated to social workers, personal advisers or care leavers themselves.

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- The lack of clarity around eligibility has resulted in possibly inaccurate information given to young people by personal advisers/social workers which has led to inflated expectations among care leavers, with many believing that this is a realistic and possible accommodation option for them, when in reality just a small fraction will be eligible and put forward for consideration for social housing via the quota.
- Whilst acknowledging the totality and scale of local housing needs in Hackney, and the individuality of housing demand and supply across other London Boroughs, it would appear that comparatively, fewer care leavers are placed in social housing in Hackney than many other boroughs. Evidence presented by Lambeth indicated that they found permanent social housing for 103 care leavers in the 12 month period to November 2021.
- A number of other London Boroughs operate social housing quotas for care leavers. In [Sutton](#) this is set at 28 and in [Haringey](#) it is 66. In the former, 15% of all 1 bedroom lets in the borough were made to care leavers in 2019/20 and was running at 22% mid-way in 2020/21.
- At present most care leavers put forward for social housing tend to be aged 20 years (so that they can get a tenancy before reaching the age of 21). The Commission noted that this approach created a number of challenges:
 - The age 'restriction' is unrelated to the actual support needs of individual care leavers;
 - It may encourage more young people to remain in supported housing for longer in the hope of obtaining a social rented tenancy (inflated expectations);
 - Creates an unnecessary 'cliff-edge' in service provision, which may leave limited time for care leavers to plan and prepare for independent tenancy.

The Commission also discussed with officers the possibility of moving away from a social housing quota altogether and instead placing all care leavers on the local housing register at the age of 18. Under this process all care leavers would be encouraged and supported to bid for a social rented tenancy for the three year period until they reach the age 21 (with those not successful during this time, providing they were actively bidding, being given a direct offer). Whilst this would give all care leavers an equal opportunity to bid and achieve consistency and parity of housing service offer, a number of uncertainties would remain:

- Whether this would actually result in a high number of care leavers being placed in social housing tenancies;
- How care leavers who attended university outside the borough be included (possible deferral);
- How care leavers with families would be impacted (bidding for 2 bedroom properties).

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This is clearly a complex issue which needs further investigation and modelling by the Housing Needs and Corporate Parenting services. Irrespective of the outcome of any further investigation the Commission is of the view that the number of social housing tenancies let to care leavers should increase from current levels. The Commission therefore recommends that:

- a) That Council considers ways in which the social housing (Council) quota for care leavers can be increased from 18 units **to a minimum of (30)** units per annum;
- b) A defined set criteria should be developed to determine care leavers eligibility for permanent social housing tenancy through the council quota. The eligibility criteria should be:
 - i) Developed in consultation / co-produced with looked after children /care leavers;
 - ii) Underpinned by an open and transparent scoring system;
 - iii) Clearly communicated to professionals supporting care leavers (Social Workers, Personal Advisers, Housing Support Officers and Foster Carers) and care leavers themselves (in particular details to be set out within the local offer).
- c) Housing Needs and Corporate Parenting undertake further research and modelling to assess the impact of placing all care leavers on the housing register at the age of 18, in particular:
 - i) Whether this would lead to more care leavers placed within permanent social housing;
 - ii) How the rights of care leavers with children or those attending university could be preserved in such a system.

Improving housing supply for care leavers

5. The Commission was in broad agreement that many of the issues and concerns that care leavers face in relation to housing was a result of the lack of quality and affordable accommodation options available to them in Hackney. This remains a significant and ongoing challenge for the Council (and many other inner London boroughs).

The Commission received evidence from a range of other boroughs on their efforts to increase housing capacity and extend accommodation options for care leavers which included:

- [Commissioning modular developments](#) - Lambeth is creating 40-50 such units in partnership with Centrepint;
- [Working more closely with housing associations](#) - Wandsworth collaboration with local housing associations ensures that there are 300 housing units for care leavers;
- The addition of new housing units through an [audit of local housing/ building assets](#).

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The Commission noted that a new 5 year Hackney Housing Strategy was currently in development, which would set out the housing needs and priorities of the borough and how the Council would deliver on these. Given that the current strategy (2017-2022) makes no reference to the housing needs of care leavers, the Commission anticipates that the outcomes and recommendations of this work would help to set out the housing priorities for this cohort within the future reiteration of the strategy which may then begin to address these needs in the medium to longer term.

To improve the supply of housing available for care leavers the Commission recommends:

- a) In line with the actions of [other boroughs](#) regarding this issue, a full asset review is undertaken across the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to identify potential properties which might be reconditioned / repurposed as accommodation for care leavers. (It is noted that a number of community flats on estates, currently being used for tenant engagement, have already been identified as possible units which might be considered for repurposing.)
- b) That the newly developed Housing Strategy:
 - i) Recognises and prioritises the housing needs of care leavers;
 - ii) Set out the approaches the Council will take in responding to the housing needs of care leavers particularly in creating additional housing capacity and broader range of accommodation options:
 - 1) Investment needed to *prevent* housing needs (e.g Staying Put, Supported Lodgings, Staying Close etc)
 - 2) How the role of modular builds can increase and extending housing options for care leavers (e.g. both studios and shared accommodation);
 - 3) Expansion of Peer Landlord Scheme;
 - 4) Utilisation of 'Live and Work Schemes' for care leavers
 - iii) Sets out how local Housing Associations will be directly engaged and involved to create additional social housing capacity to meet the needs of local care leavers;
 - iv) That care leavers are prioritised for opportunities within the *Living Rent* scheme;
 - v) Set out how the role of the Hackney Housing Company can be used to create additional housing capacity and further housing options for care leavers through:
 - 1) Purchase and repurposing of properties (internal and external to the borough);
 - 2) Modular build schemes.

Improving supply, quality and flexibility of supported accommodation available to care leavers

6. Many care leavers are accommodated in supported housing arrangements, generally houses of multiple occupation with different levels of on-site or floating support commissioned by Corporate Parenting. The Commission notes that these housing

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units were generally supplied by independent / private housing providers, many of whom were relatively new to this 'developing market'.

The Commission learnt that commissioning arrangements for supported housing had recently been reassessed and reconfigured to:

- (i) Improve the quality of housing commissioned
- (ii) reduce the size of individual units commissioned (to house max of 7 young people)
- (iii) ensure that there was greater flexibility in support arrangements for care leavers
- (iv) focus provision within Hackney
- (iv) ensure that housing support is delivered in the most cost effective way through a new longer term 7 year contract with providers.

Care leavers consulted by the Commission were generally positive about the range of supported housing provided, though had a number of concerns in relation to:

- Affordability of this accommodation option, particularly when considering options to progress and move on (77% of young people felt 'trapped' by their accommodation);
- The limited agency which they had in their choice of supported accommodation;
- Accessibility and quality of housing support arrangements.

The Commission noted that there are many new and emerging providers in this field of housing support for young people and [reported concerns](#) that national guidance and regulations had failed to keep up with such a new and emerging market of new service provision / providers. In this context, the Commission was keen to ensure that quality services were commissioned, and that there were effective controls in place to assess and monitor the quality of provision and that providers were able to deliver complex packages of care/support to meet the multiple needs of local care leavers.

Whilst the Commission noted that new Commissioning arrangements would aim to ensure that provision was focussed within Hackney, this could not always be the case and that for many reasons (personal safety, specialist support) some care leavers would continue to be placed outside of the borough. In this context, the Commission noted the importance of the need for additional safeguarding controls in light of [safeguarding practice review](#) of the City and Hackney Safeguarding Partnership and the children placed outside of the borough.

The Commission recommended that Corporate Parenting ensure:

- That care leavers are actively engaged in processes to assess, monitor and review the quality of supported housing provided;
- That commissioned accommodation remains affordable to allow care leavers to move on, or that there are adequate step-down arrangements to allow care leavers to transition to more independent living;
- That equally effective processes are in place to monitor and review supported housing which is commissioned in locations outside of the borough;

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- That wherever possible, care leavers are given a choice of available supported housing options suitable to their needs.

Improving the scope and consistency of the Corporate Parenting Offer in Hackney

7. In conducting this review, the Commission noted the wide variations in the corporate parenting offer across London Boroughs to care leavers, not only in relation to housing but also for a wider package of financial support and other benefits that were made available. For example, there were wide variations in relation to Council Tax exemption / reduction support and the age to which care leavers were able to claim this benefit (ranged from 21 or 25). [Analysis undertaken by the Commission](#) highlighted the wide range of different levels of provision for housing support, council tax reduction and support in setting up a home (e.g. provision of contents insurance, Wifi, TV Licence, mobile phone contract and cooking equipment).

The Commission also noted that even when care leavers were in the care of the same borough, there were marked inconsistencies in the range of support and benefits depending on whether they were placed *within* or *external* to that borough boundary. The Commission considered it unfair that care leavers placed outside of the borough which was responsible for them often did not get the same level of support to care leavers placed within its boundaries, especially when care leavers may exercise little choice as to where they may be placed. Thus, for example, care leavers placed outside of Hackney are not automatically exempt from Council tax as those placed in Hackney are.

In this context, the Commission noted the work of the Children's Society to develop a [London-wide offer for care leavers](#) to help develop common standards and to identify good practice across London Boroughs in their respective offers to care leavers. The Commission also noted that Greater Manchester had already agreed a [city-wide offer](#) to care leavers among all its 10 constituent local authorities.

The Commission was strongly of the view that the role of the Corporate Parent does not rest solely with the Corporate Parenting team and wider Children and Families service, but a responsibility that sits across the Council as a whole. In this context, the Commission believes that further work should be undertaken to benchmark local provision and to explore ways in which Hackney's local offer to care leavers (and wider looked after children cohort) can be further developed and extended *through the wider family of council departments* e.g. council tax, sustainable travel, education and training, therapeutic services, youth provision and leisure facilities.

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To improve the consistency, coherence and coordination of the care leaver offer, the Commission recommends that:

- a) The Council makes arrangements (either through reimbursement or reciprocal arrangements) to ensure that all care leavers are exempt from Council Tax until the age of 25, irrespective of which London borough they are placed/accommodated within;
- b) (In the absence of a pan London agreement) The Council works with key local neighbouring boroughs¹ with whom the majority of care leavers placed externally to the borough are located to develop reciprocal housing support arrangements for care leavers;
- c) That the [Corporate Parenting Board](#) is convened periodically (annually) to review the nature and level of the Hackney offer to care leavers (financial and all other support available).
- d) That the Mayor / Council write to London Councils and the GLA to urge them to use their influence and to lead / coordinate or facilitate work with London Boroughs for further the development of a London-wide offer for care leavers.

Making care leavers aware of the local offer website - greater openness and transparency - maintaining contact with care leavers up to age of 25

8. From the consultation with local care leavers, it was evident to the Commission that details of the local offer were not presented in a clear and consistent way to young people and that further work was needed to ensure that this cohort of young people were aware of full extent of their rights, entitlements and how they could access support and services.

Whilst it is a statutory duty for local authorities to publish their local offer to care leavers, it was apparent that these often lack the detail about the full range of services available. The Commission felt that this was illustrated in the [Hackney Care Leaver Offer](#) (both on-line and printed) where there was little detail of the social housing offer, in particular the number of units available through the quota system and the eligibility criteria used to determine access. It should be noted however, that this lack of detail was a common feature of many Local Authority care leaver offers assessed by the Children's Society in their work to develop a London wide offer detailed in their evidence to the Commission.

¹ Current LA location of care leavers: Enfield (40), Waltham Forest (30) Haringey (22), Redbridge (19), Croydon (13), Newham (13), Islington (12) and Tower Hamlets (9)

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The Commission also noted that the local Care Leaver offer is primarily focused on those benefits, entitlements and support which are available through the Council and that there was a wider range of support which could be included, particularly from the independent, community and voluntary sectors. In this context, the Commission noted the approach of Lambeth to set up a **Care Leaver Hub**, in which care leavers can access a wide range of support services from one integrated site. The Commission also heard evidence from Islington about their [Grandmentors Scheme](#) which matches care leavers with older volunteers (aged 50) to provide ongoing advice and support into adulthood.

Care leavers who are settled in independent tenancies may at times also need to be given additional support and be reminded of the care leaver's offer of support up to the age of 25. Evidence provided by Housing Needs service to this work also suggested that some care leavers continue to need additional housing (and other) support after the age of 25 (when legal duties of corporate parenting services cease). Other boroughs which gave evidence to the Commission also identified this as an area of concern, as care leavers often emerged in other areas of the welfare support system. This would suggest that there may be some benefit for local Corporate Parenting services to maintain lines of communication / keeping track / contact with care leavers past the statutory limit (25) to help with signposting of early help and support (with accessing adult social care, CAMHS etc).

To increase awareness, knowledge and understanding of the local offer for care leavers the Commission recommends that the Corporate Parenting (in collaboration with other services):

- a) Establish a local offer website dedicated to the services, entitlements and support available to care leavers;
 - i) That it incorporates not only services available through CPT, but the wider council and non-statutory services;
 - ii) Ensure that this is designed / co-produced with care leavers and foster carers.
- b) Consider how a care leaver hub, with an integrated on-site offer with opportunities for peer support and networking might be provided in Hackney;
- c) Consider ways in which the needs of care leavers beyond the statutory age limit (25) are identified / monitored - and identify ways in which support might be provided in a sustainable way e.g. [Lifelong Links](#) or similar scheme set up in Islington [Grandmentors](#)

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Ensuring that local services remain focused on prevention and, where appropriate, helping more looked after children (potential care leavers) to remain in supportive family / foster homes for as long as possible (e.g. preventing placement breakdowns and enabling looked after children to remain with their foster carers after the age of 18).

9. From the Children and Families Act (2014) looked after children may remain with their foster carer after the age of 18 under *Staying Put* arrangements. *Staying Put* arrangements help bring continuity of support for looked after children as they transition to adulthood. This approach helps looked after children move to more independent living when they are ready and have the emotional and practical skills to do so (rather than just turning 18). Such arrangements can help looked after children to maximise opportunities for education, employment and training, reduce the likelihood of homelessness and social exclusion.

As of January 2022, there were 48 children who were looked after by Hackney within a *Staying Put* arrangement. As part of a [£99.8m national package of support](#) Hackney currently receives [£322k annually](#) to support local *Staying Put* arrangements.

To help more children and young people to remain in family / foster carer homes under *Staying Put* arrangements the Commission recommends that the Corporate Parenting Team (Children and Families Service):

- a) Increase awareness, information and advice for looked after children on *Staying Put* arrangements as part of a wider package of housing options;
- b) Increase awareness, information and advice for local foster carers of *Staying Put* arrangements, particularly aiming to resolve any financial and / or administrative barriers local arrangements;
- c) Work with local foster carers and other stakeholders (e.g. IFAs) to encourage, develop and support a sector wide understanding that young people can (where appropriate) be able to continue to live at their fostering home / family after the age of 18.
- d) The above is accompanied by a renewed focus on the recruitment and retention of in-house foster carers to help replace those who are providing ongoing accommodation and support to looked after children under *Staying Put* arrangements.

Supported lodgings offer young people (aged 16-21) an alternative to fostering when they are unable to remain with their birth families, leaving care or at risk of homelessness. Whilst not suitable to all children leaving care, this provides a further housing and accommodation option. The Commission noted that 12 supported lodgings had been recruited since 2020 and that as of the end of January 2022, six

care leavers were supported in such accommodation. In this context, the Commission recommends:

- e) Children and Families undertake a dedicated awareness and recruitment campaign to help increase the uptake of Supported Lodging as an accommodation option for care leavers.

Finding financial opportunities and synergies through further Housing support for care leavers and impact on children and families and wider corporate finance.

10. The Commission noted the forecasted spend within the Children and Families Service for care leavers accommodation for 2021/2 was £4.9 million, £3.8m of which was for the provision of supported housing. This has remained an area of budgetary concern in particular in relation to the provision of semi-independent housing where a cost pressure of approximately £1.6m was recorded in [January 2022](#) for this services alone. Ongoing cost pressures within this and wider corporate parenting budget therefore continues to impact on children's services and in the wider council services beyond.

The Commission received a wide range of evidence on finances and budgets connected to children leaving care. It is clear that this is a complex area of budgeting, which not only interrelates with other aspects of children's social care (e.g. foster care) but also beyond this directorate to other department (i.e. Benefits and Housing Needs). Whilst it has not been possible during the course of this piece of work to undertake a detailed assessment of all such interrelated budgets, the Commission is confident that a more strategic and detailed analysis of both policies and budget can realise positive budgetary developments. The Commission would recommend a time-limited group be established led by corporate finance to identify:

- Opportunities for joint commissioning with Adult Social Care (floating support) and SEND (housing support);
- How helping young people move into independent living from supported accommodation when they were ready to do so rather than at age 21 would help to remove service 'cliff edges' (e.g. opening up the social housing register, further support to PRS);
- Opportunities for an invest to safe approach given that annual average cost of care leaver supported housing is £26,000.

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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 12th December 2022 Item 6 – Child Q Safeguarding Practice Review	Item No 6
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Outline

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission and Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission held a joint scrutiny session on the outcome of the Child Q Safeguarding Practice Review.

The Commissions have agreed and finalised their response to local partners highlighting the key outcomes from the session and its preliminary recommendations. The agreed letter to local partners is attached.

Action

Members are asked to note the agreed letter to the Executive in response to the joint scrutiny session on the outcome of the Child Q Safeguarding Practice Review.

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Room 118, 2nd Floor
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14th November 2022

martin.bradford@hackney.gov.uk

To:

Jim Gamble, Independent Chair City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership

Mike Hamer, A/Detective Chief Superintendent & BCU Commander,

Kenny Bowie, Director of Strategy & MPS Oversight, MOPAC

Mark Carroll, Chief Executive, Hackney Council

Dear Jim, Mike, Kenny and Mark,

Joint Scrutiny of the Response to Child Q Safeguarding Practice Review

Thank you for attending the joint scrutiny meeting of Living in Hackney and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission on 13th June 2022. This was a helpful meeting that enabled members to further understand the response of statutory partners to the Child Q Safeguarding Practice Review (SPR) and those arrangements put in place to ensure that recommendations set out in that report are implemented.

The [video recording](#) of this scrutiny session alongside the published [minutes](#) together provide a public record of the meeting.

Firstly, the Scrutiny Commissions (the Commission) would like to place on record their thanks to the City & Hackney Safeguarding Partnership (CHSCP) for initiating the Safeguarding Practice Review of Child Q and its determination and rigour in ensuring that the key learning outcomes from the review are both recognised and acted upon across the safeguarding partnership. In particular, the Commission recognised the significance of the finding that racism was likely to have been a contributing factor in the decision to undertake the strip search of Child Q. This clearly underlines the need for a fundamental change in the way that the police engage and involve black and global majority communities to ensure that policing is fair, effective and helps to keep children safe from harm.

The gravity of the recommendations within the Child Q SPR has quite rightly precipitated a number of reviews, some of which remain ongoing, and led to a number of plans to improve local child safeguarding and policing arrangements. The aim of the Commission's inquiry on the 13th June 2022 was to help bring public oversight to these plans and ensure that there are effective accountability and monitoring structures in place to oversee the implementation of recommendations and commitments made within them. This letter summarises key issues arising from the session and our requests for further information to Metropolitan Police and

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MOPAC to guide and inform next steps that the Commission intends to take. Preliminary recommendations of the Commission made to local agencies are also set out at the end of this letter.

Key Findings

Strip Searches of Children

As members of the Commission and indeed other community representatives have clearly and consistently stated, whilst shocking, the incident and circumstances surrounding Child Q was not surprising, as black children in Hackney and across London have consistently endured the disproportionate impact of broader *stop and search* activities of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). More challenging to the Commission however, was the understanding that the case of Child Q was far from an isolated incident, and that *thorough and intimate searches* of black and global majority children, some undertaken without a responsible adult present, reflected a wider, institutional practice across the MPS.

Police representatives at the meeting on 13/6/22 acknowledged that there had been seven other intimate searches conducted on children in Hackney and that this approach was used across London by the MPS. This has been substantiated in subsequent investigations by the [Children's Commissioner](#) who noted that 650 children were strip searched by the MPS over a two-year period to 2022. The Children's Commissioner also noted that no appropriate adult was present in 23% of strip searches of children, that black children were disproportionately impacted and that in over half of all cases no further action was taken. All of this data confirms to the Commission that the assault on Child Q was a part of a systemic pattern of abuse of Black and Global Majority children by the police.

Whilst police representatives at the meeting argued that the use of strip searches remained an operational necessity, particularly where children were felt to be at risk or were being criminally exploited, the case of Child Q is emblematic of the problematic nature of their application, indicative of their being used as a reactive tool of oppression and control. In addition, given the scale of which strip searches of children are now known to be used and the failure of police to consistently apply safeguarding controls (e.g. presence of an appropriate adult, recording the location of searches) this would suggest that the Child Q case reflects much broader concerns for the efficacy of this policy in effectively safeguarding children and ensuring that their dignity and rights are protected.

The traumatic impact that a police strip search can have on a child has been devastatingly exposed by the case of Child Q. From the personal testimonies of her family and Child Q herself, the trauma resulting from the search is all too clear where Child Q has experienced panic attacks and no longer feels safe and is afraid to go out. For Child Q and her family, there is a clear sense of injustice, frustration and anger in the understanding that this strip search would have been unlikely to have taken place if she had not been black. These same sentiments have been echoed from communities across Hackney in reaction to this case.

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Whilst the Commission notes the proposed changes being piloted by the police which would require higher authorisation (by an Inspector) to strip search procedures, the current lack of data, monitoring and oversight of strip searches conducted on children means that there is little or no effective scrutiny of this process and child safeguarding cannot be assured. The Commission expects that this will be addressed in the planned review of strip search arrangements announced by MOPAC and the MPS and it looks forward to receiving the outcomes and recommendations of these.

Safeguarding in schools

Parents entrust their children to schools not only to support their learning and development, but also to ensure that they are kept safe and that their rights are protected and upheld in their absence. Rather than adopting a safeguarding first approach, the school initiated a criminal process and deferred to police officers present and did not question or challenge the decision to conduct an intimate strip search. The school did not act on behalf of or advocate for Child Q's best interests which led to a situation in which her welfare and safeguarding concerns were overridden by policing considerations. To ensure consistent and effective safeguarding of all children, it is imperative that safeguarding partners feel *equally* confident and empowered to question or challenge the decisions and or practices of fellow safeguarding practitioners.

[*Keeping Children Safe in Education*](#) requires all schools to establish and publish their own safeguarding policies and ensure that this is updated annually. Whilst individual schools' safeguarding arrangements are formally inspected by Ofsted, such visits are infrequent. Given the events surrounding Child Q there must be some question as to the efficacy of such arrangements, and whether schools should work more closely still with local designated safeguarding partners to ensure that their safeguarding policies are tested and assured within local safeguarding networks and support systems.

Whilst the Commission was encouraged to note that Hackney Education has audited safeguarding policies and practices of local schools, from the meeting it was not clear what learning had been derived from the Child Q SPR and what practical steps school leadership teams had taken to prevent similar events from happening again in the future. The Commission would welcome further transparency and openness on the process and outcomes of the school safeguarding audits to ensure that there is genuine systems wide learning across the safeguarding partnership from the Child Q SPR. This will help to ensure that safeguarding policies across local schools consistently put children first, are publicised and readily accessible to parents and the broader community.

Members of the Commission were also perplexed as to why the school in question did not seek to engage or involve the parent of Child Q leading up to or during the search, particularly given the nature of the incident and the involvement of police authorities. The Commission is of the view that this relates to a broader narrative concerning the accountability of schools to parents. In our own local scrutiny work, increasing numbers of parents have spoken about the difficulty of engaging meaningfully with schools, getting their voice heard and not feeling sufficiently

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involved in decisions about their children. Sadly this does seem to suggest that in some schools at least, there is a growing accountability gap between schools and parents and the community of which they are a part. As a first step, the Commission is of the view that memberships of local school governing bodies should be reviewed to ensure that these truly reflect and represent the views and interests of parents and the local communities which they serve.

The case of Child Q has generated a broader debate as to the role of policing in schools and Safer Schools Officers, who were involved in this case. This is of particular significance because in 2020, following a legal challenge in relation to concerns around the disproportionate impact of the Safer Schools Partnership (SSP) on children from black and other ethnic backgrounds, the Metropolitan Police Service agreed to review the SSP and the role of the Safer Schools Officer (SSO). Whilst the Commissions were informed that this review was ongoing and would report imminently, at the time of writing no reports have been forthcoming.

The Commission notes and welcomes local collaborations to update the protocols for SSO. It is important however, that the overarching review by MPS is completed together with an impact analysis so that local communities are reassured that policing in schools is fair, proportionate and acting in the best interests of children at all times. The Living in Hackney and Children and Young People Scrutiny Commissions have both declared an interest in investigating the SSP and the role of SSO's locally with the MPS to further support improvements and accountability.

Safeguarding / adultification bias training

The case of Child Q has also exposed the differences in safeguarding practices and principles across those local agencies that work with and support local children, and in particular whether a safeguarding first approach is adopted equally for *all* children. At the heart of the SPR is the assertion that Child Q was treated differently and that she may not have been afforded the range of safeguarding protections because of assumptions based on her ethnicity. Members of the Commission rightly focused their questioning on the nature, delivery and effectiveness of safeguarding and adultification bias training across local agencies where it is clear that an improved understanding of the lived experience and history of local black communities should be central to the local training response to Child Q SPR.

The Commission noted plans to develop and extend adultification bias training within the local Metropolitan Police Service and across the broader safeguarding partnership. Further reassurance was however needed in relation to the consistency of this training across partner agencies and the degree to which this demonstrated a shared understanding of the need for a safeguarding first approach for *all* children across Hackney. Given issues raised by the case of Child Q and the long standing nature of concerns around the disproportionate impact of policing and other agency interventions within our communities, it is clear that there is a need for more robust oversight and monitoring within the safeguarding partnership. In short, local agencies need to be held accountable for delivering this change.

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Trust and confidence of the community in local policing

The case of Child Q has further eroded trust and confidence in policing amongst communities in Hackney. From the work the Commissions have undertaken in recent years, the community response was, unfortunately, anticipated. The Commission therefore sought to explore the role of local communities in policing and the efforts of the Metropolitan Police Service and MOPAC to restore trust in those communities where it is lost.

The Commission recognised the steps taken by the local Metropolitan Police Service and wider safeguarding partnership to meaningfully engage with affected communities in Hackney following the Child Q incident. However, the Commission was keen to see real change in the community engagement structures of the Metropolitan Police Service funded by MOPAC to ensure that they are truly representative of local communities. This is in light of the longstanding concerns around the effectiveness of their community engagement methods, and recognition from both the local Metropolitan Police Service and MOPAC that more needed to be done to ensure their structures were as representative as they should be.

It was also noted that feedback from local community groups had recommended not to hold another public meeting to allow the community time to heal and until further details emerged following the publication of the Independent Office of Police Complaints (IOPC) findings. The Commissions sought reassurance from the local Metropolitan Police Service that it would continue to hold further community engagement events following the publication of the IOPC report to help restore trust and confidence and avert any escalation of community tensions.

Ongoing scrutiny and oversight

From the SPR of Child Q and discussions at the scrutiny session, Members agreed that there were a number of policy areas in relation to statutory functions for the accountability of the crime and disorder partnership and the oversight of education and child safeguarding arrangements which would benefit from further scrutiny by the Living in Hackney (LiH) and Children and Young People (CYP). The following issues have been identified for consideration within forthcoming work programmes, and respective Commissions will look forward to working with partners and local agencies and the local community to support scrutiny of these policy areas:

- Role of policing in schools and role of SSP and SSO's (CYP/LiH)
- School behaviour policies (CYP)
- Anti-racist policies and practices across children services (CYP)
- School accountability to parents and the local community (CYP)
- Trust and confidence in policing (LiH)
- Policing of drugs (LiH)
- Use of stop and search powers (LiH)

From evidence presented and the ensuing discussion at the scrutiny session, members have outlined a number of emerging recommendations from this work which are detailed at the end of this letter. The Commission would welcome a response to these recommendations from respective agencies by **Friday 23rd**

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December 2022, and would like to follow up agreed actions with partners at a future meeting.

Members of the Commission have also agreed that it should meet again in early 2023 with key stakeholders to help maintain public oversight and ensure progress against the recommendations and commitments made by local agencies in relation to Child Q. It is expected that by this time subsequent investigations, reviews and follow-ups by local agencies will have been completed (i.e. Independent Office of Police Complaints) and local action plans to support the local response to Child Q will have been fully developed. This further meeting will provide an opportunity to review action plans and other work undertaken by respective Scrutiny Commissions as a result of the Child Q SPR.

Once again, members of the Commission would like to thank you for your support in the public scrutiny process of the outcomes from the Child Q SPR and the work of your respective organisations across Hackney to ensure such an incident is not repeated in the future. Members of the Commission would welcome a response to the further information requests and the recommendations (which directly impact on the organisations) made that are detailed at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Soraya Adejare
Chair of Living in Hackney Scrutiny
Commission

Cllr Margaret Gordon
Vice Chair, Children and Young People
Scrutiny Commission

Cllr Clare Joseph
Vice Chair of Living in Hackney Scrutiny
Commission

Cc:

- Mayor Phillip Glanville
- Cllr Anntoinette Bramble, Deputy Mayor and cabinet member for education, young people and children's social care
- Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas, Cabinet member for community safety and regulatory services
- Jacquie Burke, Group Director for Children and Education
- Paul Senior, Interim Director of Education
- Rickardo Hyatt, Group Director Climate, Homes and Economy

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Outstanding questions

The Commission has a number of outstanding issues and questions to which it would be helpful to receive a response. We would be grateful if you could provide us with this information by **Friday 23rd December 2022**.

To Metropolitan Police Service and MOPAC

1. Can further data be provided on the outcomes of strip searches (both thorough and intimate) undertaken in Hackney, both for under 18s and adults and ethnicity?
2. Can further information be provided in relation to local stop and search data and the reasons put forward for this to take place:
 - Can video recordings of stop and search incidents routinely be made available via Subject Access Request?
 - Is there any publicly available analysis of stop and search incidents which are not recorded?
3. There has been a relaxation of the Best Use of Stop and Search (BUSS) guidance which means that the police would not need to notify/engage communities ahead of Section 60 being applied. Can the Borough Commander commit to retaining community notification ahead of any Section 60 stop and search notice?
4. It was noted that the MOPAC Disproportionality Board brings criminal justice partners together to tackle disproportionality across the system.
 - How long has the Board been in place, what is its membership and what is its remit?
 - The Child Q case was considered by the Board. What was discussed and what were the outcomes?

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Recommendations to Local Agencies (The Commission would welcome a response to these recommendations from respective agencies by **Friday 23rd December 2022**)

To LBH, CHSCP, Metropolitan Police Service and MOPAC

1. The Commission would welcome the development of a singular partnership wide action plan to coordinate the response to recommendations from Child Q SPR and other commitments stemming from this review. It is hoped that the action plan will clearly set out those priorities for improvement and/or change, together with those agencies who are accountable.

To Metropolitan Police Service and MOPAC

2. Members of the Commission retain strong reservations about the efficacy of the Metropolitan Police Service policy of undertaking strip-searches of children. Whilst additional controls for administering strip searches of children in response to the Child Q SPR have been put in place these do not sufficiently address the need for further protection of children or disproportionate impact on local communities. If this policy is to continue, it is recommended that this is embedded within a safeguarding first approach recognising first and foremost that children being subject to this procedure are children and should be afforded necessary protections to keep them safe, protect their dignity and be effectively safeguarded. In addition, further reassurance will also be required that ongoing use of such an intrusive procedure is appropriately targeted recognising the ethnic disproportionality evident in this data.

To Metropolitan Police Service and MOPAC

3. The Commissions endorse the findings of both CHSCP and the Children's Commissioner in noting that the breadth, consistency and quality of data around the strip searching of children is inadequate. The quality and inconsistency of data available does not befit the intrusive nature of the strip search process and the personal impact it has on children or reflect the safeguarding duties and responsibilities of Metropolitan Police. MOPAC should improve monitoring, oversight and transparency of this data to enhance accountability arrangements for these intrusive and sensitive procedures and to ensure that children are effectively safeguarded.

To CHSCP

4. All local agencies that work with children have an important and *equal* role in the effective safeguarding of children, as it is this broad network of partners which helps to create an environment which maintains oversight of children, promotes their rights, advocates for them and helps keep them safe. The Commission would therefore welcome reassurance from the CHSCP that there is no deference to any agency, and that this local partnership is one of equals in which individual agencies and practitioners are knowledgeable, confident and empowered to challenge and support each other where they see this is in the best interests of children.

To CHSCP and Hackney Education

5. The Commissions recommend that Hackney Education continues to monitor and audit safeguarding policies and practice across local schools to ensure that the

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safeguarding learning from the case of Child Q is reflected in annual reviews and updates of child protection policies which they are obliged to undertake. Alongside many parents, the Commission would like further reassurance that these important policies which help to keep children safe away from home are developed in collaboration and are actively and rigorously tested.

To CHSCP, LBH and Metropolitan Police Service

6. The Commission would like further reassurance that the planned extension of adultification bias training is consistently applied and reflects the values and principles of the safeguarding partnership. The Commission would also like a commitment from the CHSCP that it will fully evaluate this training across the safeguarding partnership to ensure that it is delivering the fundamental but necessary changes to safeguarding practice.

To Metropolitan Police Service and MOPAC

7. The Commissions believe that the Metropolitan Police Service's current arrangements for consultation and community engagement are opaque, where named local community groups involved, the structures through which they are engaged and how the outcomes of consultations are used, remain unclear. The Commission recommends that the Metropolitan Police Service actively works with Hackney Council to review their arrangements and approach to engagement to ensure:
 - There is an agreed understanding between the police, community organisations and other stakeholders on the principles of good local community engagement;
 - Greater clarity on which groups are consulted, in what capacity and how consultation is used to inform policing;
 - That those local groups involved in consultation truly represent the diversity of the community in Hackney.

To LBH and Metropolitan Police Service

8. The Commissions would recommend that Metropolitan Police Service, in collaboration with the London Borough of Hackney, commit to a series of community engagement events after the publication of the IOPC report and work with London Borough of Hackney.

To LBH

9. The Commission recommends that, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, Hackney Education reviews the procedure in which its senior officers are placed on the governing bodies of local schools. If necessary, guidance should be developed to ensure that where appropriate, officers can contribute practically and positively to such educational partnerships yet avoid any conflicts with their duties and responsibilities.

For ALL to note:

10. Members have agreed to convene a follow-up meeting of the Commission to take place in early 2023. The aim of this meeting will be to:

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- To review outcomes of subsequent reviews and investigations (i.e. IOPC and CHSCP)
- To review progress against the emerging partnership action plan;
- To hear from local representatives of local children and young people;
- Update on Living in Hackney and Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission work resulting from Child Q SPR.



Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 12th December 2022 Item 7 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting	Item No 7
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Outline

Attached are the draft minutes of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission meetings held on 7th November 2022.



Action

Members are asked to review and agree the draft minutes as an accurate record of the meeting, 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 7 November 2022

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

Chair:	Councillor Soraya Adejare
Councillors in Attendance:	Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Penny Wrout, Cllr Clare Joseph (Vice-Chair), Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Ali Sadek, Cllr Sarah Young and Cllr Zoe Garbett
Apologies:	Cllr Ian Rathbone
Officers In Attendance:	Rob Miller (Strategic Director of Customer and Workplace)
Other People in Attendance:	Philip Glanville (Mayor of London Borough of Hackney) and Cllr Sade Etti (Mayoral Advisor of Housing Need and Homelessness)
Officers in Virtual Attendance:	Jennifer Wynter (Head of Benefits and Housing Needs), Marcia Facey (Operations Manager - Benefits and Housing Needs), Zoe Tyndall (Change Support Team Manager - Digital & Data) and Andrew Croucher (Operations Manager - Benefits & Housing Need)
Officer Contact:	Craig Player  020 8356 4316  craig.player@hackney.gov.uk

Councillor Soraya Adejare 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 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rathbone.

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 Councillor Ogundemuren declared that he was a London Borough of Hackney resident.

4 Changes to the Housing Register and Lettings Policy

4.1 The Chair opened the item by explaining that the Commission had requested this item as it was keen to hear about how the new Lettings Policy had affected residents since its implementation.

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

4.3 Representing London Borough of Hackney

- Councillor Sade Etti, Mayoral Advisor for Housing Needs and Homelessness
- Rob Miller, Strategic Director of Customer and Workplace
- Jennifer Wynter, Head of Benefits and Housing Needs
- Marcia Facey, Operations Manager - Benefits and Housing Needs
- Andrew Croucher, Operations Manager - Benefits and Housing Needs
- Zoe Tyndall, Change Support Team Manager - Digital and Data

4.4 The Chair invited the Mayoral Advisor for Housing Needs and Homelessness to give a short verbal presentation on the context of local housing needs in Hackney. The main points are highlighted below.

4.5 In 2001, the average house price in Hackney was £139,000. This had since increased to £705,000, meaning an increase of over 407%. This represented the biggest increase across all local authorities in the UK.

4.6 For anyone to be able to buy a house in Hackney, they would need to have a household income of £140,000 and a deposit of £70,000. This did not reflect the financial circumstances of most residents in the borough.

4.6 The key support that the Council had provided over the past decade to low-income households that were renting in the private sector was the Local Housing Allowance.

4.7 Before 2013, the Local Housing Allowance was linked to the local cost of rent, meaning that it went up to reflect the rising cost of rent in the borough. However, since 2013 the legislation that provided for this increase had been removed and the allowance had been frozen.

4.8 In addition to this, in 2016/17 there were around 1229 council homes available to local residents in need. In 2019/20, this had decreased to only 409 council homes.

4.9 This had led to a variety of issues for local residents, including overcrowding and exploitation by rogue landlords. It had also meant that many families have had to leave the borough to find more affordable housing options.

4.10 The Chair then invited the Head of Benefits and Housing Needs and the Operations Managers to make any follow up points on the presentation. The main points are highlighted below.

4.11 Over the last few months the housing crisis had worsened further, with increasing volatility in the property and housing markets. This had led to an increase in families presenting to the Council as homeless, particularly those fleeing domestic abuse and gang violence.

4.12 Such families have needed to be provided with emergency temporary accommodation, at a time in which there were 30% less privately rented properties available in Hackney than before the Covid-19 pandemic.

4.13 Should a homeless family approach the Council for emergency temporary accommodation at this time, the closest location that it would be able to offer that family would be Wolverhampton, Coventry or Derby, and for a single homeless person the closest location would be Crawley.

4.14 Capital Letters, the local authority owned and funded housing company along with the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing, had not provided any properties since September as it had not been in a position to do so.

4.15 In regard to what had been put in place to provide housing advice and guidance to residents that no longer qualify for the register, and those that faced a long wait or that were unlikely to get housed, the following points were made.

4.16 The changes to the Lettings Policy had removed 5,000 residents from the housing register, nearly 3,000 of which had been on the reserve band, with the remaining 2,000 on the general band. The reserve band was a band for residents that were housed in their assessed bedroom needs and so the Council considered them to be adequately housed.

4.17 The Council reached out to the 3,000 residents which had been on the reserve band, of which only 5% had responded with queries. Of those removed from the general band, 17% responded with inquiries, 50% of which were Hackney Housing residents.

4.18 Overall, of the 5,000 residents that were removed from the housing register, only 10 raised an inquiry as to why they were being removed. Every resident removed from the housing register had been given the opportunity to rejoin the housing register if they qualified to do so.

4.19 Dedicated, personalised housing advice and support had been provided for those residents no longer eligible for the housing register to help find suitable privately rented accommodation.

4.20 An enhanced mutual exchange offer was in place to help households already in permanent social housing to find and agree a transfer to alternative accommodation. This had included an event for residents in March 2022, and further events were planned.

4.21 Each resident no longer eligible for the housing register that had contacted the Council for support had been provided with an individual tailored plan detailing their alternative housing provision options.

4.22 An example of what had been put in place with tenants willing to consider alternative housing provision was provided.

4.23 A couple were seeking a larger premises in the N16 area so that they could apply to have their child back into their care. Due to their medical requirements, they were in need of a two-bed ground floor property with level access and a wet room.

4.24 The case was taken to court, in which an officer gave evidence of the lack of housing supply in that area and in Hackney in general. It became apparent that a property with those requirements was not available in the area, and the couple decided to seek housing provision in the private rented sector.

4.25 A named officer had been put forward to support their search for a property, and would negotiate with any landlord should they find the right property for the couple. They were also able to access financial support to assist them with a rental deposit and removal costs, and had a tailored housing plan with support from both housing and social care.

4.26 In regard to how resident voice and experience had been used to shape the service and how effective it had been at improving outcomes, the following points were made.

4.27 Whilst it was too early to demonstrate meaningful outcomes from the change to the Lettings Policy, the value of residents' experiences of service delivery was not underestimated.

4.28 For example, the new online form and application process had been developed using small groups of residents trialling iterations of the form. With a dedicated complaints team, the service had been able to monitor trends and to deliver service improvement regarding processes and messaging.

4.29 Recent presentations had also been made to advice partners, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau and Hackney Law Centre, to share resident experiences and to encourage focus on achievable outcomes with clients.

4.30 The service had also been working to further develop its support and information offering for residents, advocacy groups and colleagues in other Council services to help them understand the full range of options available to residents in need.

4.31 In regard to the impact that the policy has had on prioritising residents in need and providing more predictable outcomes, the following points were made.

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

4.33 The new scheme delivered more predictable outcomes as the majority of residents joined the register in Band B and would always have priority over residents with similar circumstances who had joined the list at a later date.

Questions, Answers and Discussion

4.34 *A Commission Member noted that there was a national mutual exchange online service in place for social housing tenants to swap their property with another tenant. It was asked whether the Council had considered a local online service for tenants that were interested in mutual exchange.*

4.35 The Strategic Director of Customer and Workplace explained that the IT team had been working with Housing Needs to develop the mutual exchange process, making it easier for tenants to apply.

4.36 It was noted that mutual exchange cases could be complicated, citing an example of a four way swap facilitated by the Council which involved tenants moving between Hackney, Birmingham, Pontypridd and Great Yarmouth.

4.37 It was also important to note that in many cases tenants were looking to downsize within the local area, and many were looking for accessible housing options, which narrowed the number of properties available.

4.38 The Head of Benefits and Housing Needs explained that Hackney was not considering developing a local online service for tenants that were interested in mutual exchange, as the national service was supported by every registered provider and local authority and therefore had the full range of properties available on it.

4.39 *A Commission Member asked whether the Council was looking at long-term outcomes for residents who had been removed from the housing register and moved into privately rented accommodation, such as how long a tenancy was sustained for, as a measure of success.*

4.40 The Head of Benefits and Housing Needs explained that the Council did not support residents to achieve a letting or tenancy agreement that they could not afford.

4.41 It conducts an affordability assessment beforehand which advises residents on what they can afford, with some private landlords also conducting similar checks prior to a tenancy agreement. Once a tenancy was agreed, a tenancy sustainment service was provided for all residents placed in the private rented sector.

4.42 The Mayoral Advisor for Housing Needs and Homelessness reiterated that all residents placed in the private rented sector were supported with a personal housing plan which took into account their personal circumstances and the housing options available.

4.43 *A Commission Member asked what the customer experience journey for a resident who had been removed from the housing register looked like in practice.*

4.44 The Operations Manager explained that residents were contacted and provided with a Google form which would allow them to make an inquiry about the change. Should an inquiry be made, an officer would call the resident back to discuss the alternative options available to them.

4.45 All officers had been trained to provide trauma-informed customer service to ensure that any options presented to residents are informed by a resident's individual circumstances.

4.46 Contact was also maintained should that resident move into alternative accommodation to ensure timely support should that resident experience a change in circumstances.

4.47 It was noted that the customer experience may vary from resident to resident. Some residents, especially Hackney Housing tenants, were particularly engaged with officers and as such had better experiences.

4.48 The Head of Benefits and Housing Needs explained that there was a desire to publish a Lettings Plan on an annual basis detailing how many properties the Council expected to be available throughout a year, and who it planned to let the properties to.

4.49 This was considered good practice and was routinely done by many local authorities across London. It was hoped that such an approach would help in making the process more open and transparent.

4.50 A Commission Member asked what the outcomes of the inquiries made by residents removed from the housing register (5% of residents contacted on the reserve band and 17% of residents contacted on the general band) had been, and whether their housing needs had been met.

4.51 The Operations Manager responded by explaining that of the 120 inquiries received from residents removed from the reserve band, 107 were sent the form to rejoin the housing register, of which 77 were returned.

4.52 Of the 391 inquiries from residents removed from the general band, 333 were sent the form to rejoin the housing register, of which 115 were returned.

4.53 The Strategic Director of Customer and Workplace explained that multi-disciplinary teams had been set up between Housing Needs and colleagues in health, adult social care and children's social care amongst others to ensure that complicated cases were progressed and outcomes were tailored to individual needs.

4.54 Residents were also being supported to ensure they were financially stable, for example ensuring that residents that qualify for benefits are in receipt of those benefits. It was hoped that such work would go some way to supporting residents into suitable accommodation and support tenancy sustainment.

4.55 The Mayoral Advisor for Housing Needs and Homelessness added that the responses on the housing advice line had improved dramatically, with the line being separated into housing advice, homelessness and temporary housing channels.

4.56 A Commission Member asked how the Council used landlord incentives to secure private rented accommodation for residents in need, and whether it would consider increasing the amount offered to landlords where appropriate.

4.57 The Head of Benefits and Housing Needs explained that an interborough agreement was in place across London, which included all London Boroughs other than Chelsea & Kensington, which had agreed pan London rates for procurement including incentive rates. This ensured that any one Council did not outbid another and perversely increase rents further.

4.58 It was also explained that since the Covid-19 pandemic private landlords had been less reluctant to let to people in receipt of benefits as employment income was now viewed as less stable than benefit income.

4.59 The private rented market across London was extremely competitive, with properties often being taken off the market hours after being advertised. As such officers had to work quickly to secure rental agreements and it was not always possible.

4.60 *A Commission Member asked whether residents had been engaged in the designing process for Council communications about the housing register and the promotion of alternative housing provision.*

4.61 The Change Support Team Manager explained that a new content designer post was being funded by the Housing Needs service to review all existing website information to better inform residents on the availability of social housing and alternative options.

4.62 The post holder would work with residents in the first stages of the review to ensure their voice would be central to the process, and in the later stages take different methods of communication to resident groups to see which of them were most effective in changing behaviour.

4.63 *A Commission Member asked for more information on the aforementioned personal housing plans for those residents removed from the housing register and seeking alternative housing provision.*

4.64 The Head of Benefits and Housing Needs explained that the Council used the statutory housing plan template when assessing residents' housing needs and agreeing housing plans, and felt that Hackney's housing plans were good when compared with other boroughs.

4.65 Personal housing plans were produced with residents, and residents agree to the steps set out within the personal housing plan. The aim was to assist residents to take actions that work for them and their personal circumstances, rather than make decisions for them.

4.66 When producing a personal housing plan, an officer would have an initial conversation with the resident to ascertain what outcomes they wish to achieve in regard to housing, and look to put in place measures to help them achieve those outcomes.

4.67 In regard to wider support included within the personal housing plan, such as employment support or training when a resident wants to increase their income and as such the affordability of a property, officers would signpost to relevant services such as Hackney Works.

4.68 *A Commission Member asked what the impact of the new Lettings Policy had been on officers' workloads.*

4.69 The Head of Benefits and Housing Needs explained that officers were still having to manually support those residents who had had a change in circumstances due to the ongoing impact of the cyber attack.

4.70 As such, officers supporting the housing register were not in a position to be released into other parts of the service until the transition to the new software was complete. However, once the transition was complete (by December 2022) it was expected that these officers would be released into the wider housing advice service, leading to quicker and more receptive housing advice and guidance for residents.

4.71 A Commission Member asked for clarification on the Council's nominations process and how residents were matched with the appropriate number of beds in a prospective property.

4.72 The Operations Manager explained that Hackney Housing was the only landlord in the borough that accepted overcrowding by one. The nomination process was based on the number of rooms in a property, as well as the size of the rooms.

4.73 Taking the example of a three bed property, should there be two or three double bedrooms the lettings officer would consider nominating a family of six for that property. However, if there were three single rooms, that family would not be put forward.

4.74 For Housing Association properties the process varied. Each Housing Association in the borough had its own allocations policy, so when a lettings officer nominates a household for a Housing Association property the decision would ultimately lie with them.

4.75 A Commission Member asked whether there was a review process within the team for instances in which residents were wrongly taken off the housing register.

4.76 The Operations Manager explained that whilst mistakes do happen, the most common reason for a resident being wrongly taken off the housing register was that the resident had not updated their details following a change in circumstances. Any such instances were being dealt with by officers and where appropriate residents were being put back on the register.

4.77 The Head of Housing Needs and Benefits added that the service was ultimately audited by the Local Government Ombudsman, through which residents could make complaints if they felt it necessary.

4.78 A Commission Member asked for further information on the role of advice partners in providing support and guidance to residents that had been removed from the housing register.

4.79 The Head of Benefits and Housing Needs explained that grant funded advice partners supported residents with housing advice and guidance regardless of where they were on the housing register. There was also a floating housing support officer that was commissioned to work across the Council.

4.80 The majority of residents on the housing register were residents already in social housing and as such would already have dedicated housing officers and support networks in place should any issues arise.

4.81 A Commission Member asked whether there were any plans to engage advice partners to understand some of the issues that residents had been facing as a result

of the new Lettings Policy, and whether this would form part of the evaluation process once the transition to the new system was completed.

4.82 The Head of Benefits and Housing Needs explained that officers met regularly with advice partners to understand the experiences of residents. These discussions were often open and constructive and centred on how the Council and its advice partners could give residents the best possible advice and guidance reflective of their personal circumstances.

4.83 The Mayoral Advisor for Housing Needs and Homelessness added that training was provided for advice partners, as well as ongoing conversations regarding housing support and guidance.

5 Impact of the Cyber Attack on the Housing Register

5.1 The Chair opened the item by explaining that the Commission had requested this item as it was keen to hear about how the cyber attack had affected residents on the housing register and whether the service had returned to business as usual.

5.2 Representing London Borough of Hackney

- Mayor Philip Glanville, Cabinet Member for Digital and ICT
- Councillor Sade Etti, Mayoral Advisor for Housing Needs and Homelessness
- Rob Miller, Strategic Director of Customer and Workplace
- Jennifer Wynter, Head of Benefits and Housing Needs
- Marcia Facey, Operations Manager - Benefits and Housing Needs
- Andrew Croucher, Operations Manager - Benefits and Housing Needs
- Zoe Tyndall, Change Support Team Manager - Digital and Data

5.3 The Chair invited the Strategic Director of Customer and Workplace to give a short verbal presentation. The main points are highlighted below.

5.4 The cyber attack in October 2020 affected all systems hosted on the Council's servers. Many of these systems had already been transferred to a Cloud based service and, whilst the cyber attack was hugely impactful, this therefore meant that some vital systems such as the Council's website, emails and telephone system were not affected.

5.5 However, the attack did lead to the loss of the Universal Housing system. This removed the ability to process new applications to the housing register and changes of circumstances for existing applicants.

5.6 The bidding system was not affected. However, without access to the Universal Housing system, it had meant that officers had to make manual changes to allow residents to bid for appropriately sized properties.

5.7 The service had been developing an in-house IT system prior to the cyber attack to manage the housing register and replace the Universal Housing system, which included a front facing online form and back office processing and administration.

5.8 The online application form sought to make the process easy to understand and complete for residents, reduce the number of questions and make applications aware

upfront of expected waiting times and other housing options. The administration tool would make it easier for officers to view, assign and manage applications.

5.9 There had understandably been delays in replacing Universal Housing due to the cyber attack. The service was prioritising those households that had been negatively impacted, for example those where a change in circumstances would shorten their waiting time or they were close to successfully bidding for a property.

5.10 The Chair then invited the Mayor of London Borough of Hackney to make any additional comments.

5.11 The Mayor, as Cabinet Member for Digital and ICT, had attended weekly meetings as the Council responded to the initial cyber attack, followed by bi-weekly and monthly meetings during the recovery phase. Individual Cabinet Members also attended to respond to issues that affected their service areas.

5.12 This aimed to bring a level of political oversight and sometimes critical challenge to the recovery process. The Audit Committee also had oversight of the recovery process, and Member briefing sessions were also used to keep councillors updated and share experiences.

5.13 It was noted that the cyber attack was a criminal act that had been investigated by the relevant agencies. Many other organisations, both public and private, had been affected by similar attacks, and the Council was in dialogue with many of these organisations to share best practice.

5.14 The Chair then invited the Mayoral Advisor for Housing Needs and Homelessness to make any final remarks.

5.15 There had been an understandable sense of frustration for residents waiting to have applications and changes progressed. The absence of an IT system had resulted in a backlog of applications, assessments and changes to process. Progress was being made, with households negatively impacted being prioritised.

Questions, Answers and Discussion

5.16 *A Commission Member asked for an update on the progress of reducing the backlog of applications, assessments and changes to process on the housing register.*

5.17 The Operations Manager explained that all residents removed from the housing register had been contacted. All residents that had applied for reconsideration and qualified for the register were being processed to rejoin.

5.18 1024 households had been accepted as homeless since October 2020 and were therefore eligible to join the register. Of those, 673 remain to be processed. This was expected to be completed by the end of the calendar year.

5.19 Residents were being prioritised in relation to when they applied to join the register so that none would be negatively impacted, for example if they were very close to successfully bidding for a property.

5.20 *A Commission Member asked whether a high proportion of homelessness cases were of households that had been supported into private sector housing by the Council, and were unable to maintain their tenancy.*

5.21 The Head of Benefits and Housing Needs explained that the biggest reason for residents approaching homelessness in Hackney was eviction from family and friends, many of which were living in overcrowded social housing.

5.22 *A Commission Member asked how the Council had engaged with affected residents both at the time of the attack and throughout the recovery process, and what had been learned about how residents access council services.*

5.23 The Operations Manager explained that each resident that had contacted the team had been called back by a dedicated officer who would be on hand to assist them with their request, whether that be an application, change of circumstances or other issue.

5.24 Speaking more widely, the Strategic Director of Customer and Workplace explained that the engagement methods used depended on the service and where it was at in the recovery process.

5.25 *A Commission Member asked for further information on the impact of the increased number of calls into the Council's contact centre as a result of the cyber attack, and the mitigations in place to reduce waiting times for residents in need of housing advice.*

5.26 The Strategic Director of Customer and Workplace explained that additional staff had been employed and trained to provide the best possible service to residents needing housing support and advice. Officers within customer contact teams were also being cross trained to ensure they were in a position to provide the correct advice and signpost.

5.27 The Council's housing advice contact number had been split into separate queues to minimise waiting times for residents with the most urgent cases, namely homelessness, temporary accommodation, choice based lettings and housing advice queues with the homelessness queue prioritised.

5.28 The average waiting time in the previous week was just over two minutes, with the longest waiting time being 29 minutes, and out of 799 calls 88% had been answered.

5.29 The Mayoral Advisor for Housing Needs and Homelessness added that call handling rates had dramatically improved since July. It was important to note that from April to July, the housing advice contact number was receiving around 5,000 calls per month.

5.30 *A Commission Member asked what the timeframe was for a resident who makes a new application to the housing register, through to that application being accepted and that resident being able to bid on eligible properties.*

5.31 The Operations Manager explained that the timeframe varied from resident to resident. Once an application was received, it may be that supporting evidence was

required such as medical history. In many cases it took some time for a resident to provide the necessary evidence.

5.32 Having said this, officers had to complete the registration process in 20 days and in the vast majority of cases this timeframe was being met.

5.33 A Commission Member asked how the Council had engaged with the Haredi community in Hackney both at the time of the attack and throughout the recovery process.

5.34 The Operations Manager explained that the majority of Haredi households were not removed from the housing register as they were in the urgent band. Those that had received personalised, dedicated housing advice and support from officers.

5.35 The most common contact officers had with the community was in regard to changes of circumstances, and those who were urgent or at risk of being disadvantaged had been prioritised.

5.36 The Head of Benefits and Housing Needs added that the Council also engaged with Agudas Israel Community Services who provided advice on a range of issues to the Orthodox Jewish community.

5.37 The Haredi community was densely populated in the N16 area in close proximity to their synagogue. This, coupled with particular concerns around planning and property standards in that area, limited the community's housing options.

5.37 The Mayor of London Borough of Hackney added that the Council was engaging with community representatives, members of local organisations and developers on how new developments and changes to local spaces can be made, reflecting the unique circumstances of Stamford Hill.

5.38 A Commission Member asked for further information on the Council's relationship with registered social housing providers in Hackney, and on the nominations process in particular.

5.39 The Head of Benefits and Housing Needs explained that a nominations agreement was in place across East London which dictated how many units registered social housing providers should give to the Council.

5.40 The number of units depended on whether those units were new build or existing, and the size of the unit. The nominations process was managed by Housing Strategy on a quarterly basis, and any deficit was discussed between them and the social housing providers.

5.41 Registered social housing providers did hold back a percentage of their units for high profile emergency rehousing cases, particularly domestic abuse and gang violence. Having said this, many of those cases were being referred to the Council despite it not having the housing stock to meet this need.

5.42 The Mayor of London Borough of Hackney added that Housing Strategy were working on updating its dataset on housing needs in Hackney. This data would then feed into key pieces of work across the Council such as the Housing Strategy and planning policy.

5.43 The Council was also working to develop a Housing Compact that would ensure that there is a strategic and coordinated approach to meeting the housing needs of residents across the borough and bring greater transparency and accountability for the provision and delivery of housing support and accommodation.

5.44 *A Commission Member asked when the Council expected the housing register to return to business as usual, and what this may look like.*

5.45 The Strategic Director of Customer and Workplace explained that the road to recovery was complicated due to the interlinkedness of the range of services across the Council and the differing stages at which these services were at in the recovery process.

5.46 The work plan for the housing register was outlined in the written materials provided in the agenda pack. It highlighted three phases of the work plan, with a view to further review and business as usual.

6 Minutes of the Meeting

6.1 The draft minutes of the previous meetings held on 17th January, 7th March and 13th July 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

7 Living in Hackney Work Programme 2022/23

7.1 The Chair explained that this item was to consider and agree the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission work programme for the 2022/23 municipal year.

7.2 The draft work programme had been drafted by the Chair and Vice-Chair taking into consideration the suggestions made by Commission Members, as well as suggestions made in the public survey, by officers and by Cabinet Members.

7.3 The Chair then invited Commission Members to make any comments on the draft 2022/23 work programme.

7.4 A Commission Member suggested additional work programme items on the effect of the cyber attack on housing benefits and the Council's approach to tackling homelessness.

7.5 A Commission Member suggested that a written update be provided to the Commission on the progress of retrofitting since the last discussion held on 8th December 2021.

7.6 A Commission Member suggested that a written update be provided to the Commission on the progress of the programme of weekly housing surgeries across the Council's housing estates.

7.7 A Commission Member suggested that the Commission explored a potential joint piece of work with the Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission on the policing of drugs in Hackney.

7.8 The draft work programme for 2022/23 municipal year, as included in the agenda papers, was agreed by Commission Members.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00 - 9.20pm



Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 12th December 2022 Item 8 – Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2022/23	Item No 8
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Outline

Attached is the 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 note 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