

London Borough of Hackney
Full Council
Municipal Year 2023/24
Date of Meeting: Wednesday 27 September 2023

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

**Councillors in
Attendance:**

Mayor Caroline Woodley, Cllr Kam Adams,
Cllr Grace Adebayo, Cllr Soraya Adejare, Cllr Frank Baffour,
Cllr Polly Billington, Cllr Alastair Binnie-Lubbock,
Deputy Mayor Anntoinette Bramble, Cllr Robert Chapman,
Cllr Mete Coban, Cllr Sophie Conway, Cllr Michael Desmond,
Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas,
Cllr Humaira Garasia, Cllr Zoe Garbett, Cllr Eluzer Goldberg,
Cllr Margaret Gordon, Cllr Ben Hayhurst, Cllr Clare Joseph,
Cllr Christopher Kennedy, Krautwirt, Lisser,
Cllr Richard Lufkin, Cllr Anna Lynch, Cllr Clayeon McKenzie,
Cllr Jon Narcross, Cllr Guy Nicholson,
Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren, Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli,
Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Benzion Papier,
Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr Clare Potter, Cllr Fliss Premru,
Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Ali Sadek, Cllr Anya Sizer,
Cllr Gilbert Smyth, Cllr Simche Steinberger, Cllr Sheila Suso-
Runge, Cllr Lynne Troughton, Cllr Claudia Turbet-Delof,
Cllr Joe Walker, Cllr Jessica Webb, Cllr Carole Williams,
Cllr Penny Wrout and Cllr Sarah Young

Apologies:

Cllr Lee Laudat-Scott, Cllr Michael Levy,
Cllr Yvonne Maxwell, Cllr Sem Moema, Cllr Steve Race,
Cllr Midnight Ross, Cllr Ifraax Samatar and
Cllr Caroline Selman

**Apologies for
Lateness:**

Cllr Sophie Conway, Cllr Benzion Papier and Cllr Sharon
Patrick

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Councillor [Speaker] in the Chair

1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Laudat-Scott, Maxwell, Moema, Race, Samatar, Selman.

1.2 Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Conway, Papier and Patrick.

2 Speaker's Announcements

2.1 Citing the importance of public standards, expectation and hope, the Speaker challenged all present to consider how they could contribute to kinder and more compassionate politics.

2.2 The Speaker informed Full Council of recent and upcoming civic visits which Included:

- Dalston Curve Garden - A neighbourhood garden which provided an oasis of plants, and a community gathering place.
- SWAPA (Shakespeare Walk Adventure Playground) Stoke Newington - A free playground which encouraged children to discover themselves through play
- Made in Hackney carer's cooking class - A vegan community cookery school and charity, that taught food growing and cooking skills.
- Hackney Migrant Centre celebration at St Mary's Church - A free support and advice centre for migrants, asylum seekers and other immigrants.

Forthcoming events included:

- Silver Sunday Event 1st October (Celebrating Older People) - Intergenerational Biography & Reflection Event
- Local Democracy week events at Hackney Town Hall
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) art event
- George Orwell's 1984 an immersive experience at Hackney Town Hall
- Hackney Legal Walk, Saturday 30 September - a 10km sponsored walk to raise vital funds for the provision of free legal advice in Hackney. The Speaker, Labour colleagues and officers in Legal, Democratic and Electoral Service would all be participating.

3 Declarations of Interest

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

5 Deputations

Submitted deputation included in the agenda

As long-term residents of Victoria Park Road (VPR), we live with an inexorable increase in traffic related problems, including high pollution levels, noise, and danger to vulnerable road users (pedestrians and cyclists).

With the advent of Sat-Nav, this mile-long stretch of road has become a short-cut from the A12 for heavy goods vehicles and cars. VPR was neither designed for lorries nor for this quantity of vehicles. Most are not local.

Our ideas could remedy the situation and not for the first time, we respectfully ask Hackney Council to work with Tower Hamlets, Transport for London (TfL) and the Department for Transport, to implement some, or all, of the following:

1. Reduce commercial and heavy goods vehicles, by implementing a weight restriction with an exemption for TfL buses like the 388.

2. Monitor air quality where queues regularly form.
3. In the morning rush hour, adjust the phasing of the traffic lights at the junction of Cambridge Heath/Hackney Road to improve traffic flow and reduce tailbacks.
4. Enlarge the yellow boxes at the Mare Street/VPR junction to protect the pedestrian crossings.
5. Enforce the 20mph speed limit and yellow box restrictions, either with average speed check cameras or CCTV at key locations.

Deputation Leader: Christine Jackson

Introduced by: Cllr Penny Wrout

- 5.1 Cllr Wrout introduced the deputation, highlighting that Victoria Park Road (VPR) had become the preferred route of choice for Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) that were headed to the City, Islington and Camden. Subsequently this resulted in heavy polluting traffic on the Low Traffic Neighbourhood boundary routes of Hackney Road and Graham Road.
- 5.2 Christine Jackson addressed the chamber. She had been a resident of VPR for over 40 years during which there had been a steady increase in traffic levels, in particular HGVs. This had led to severe congestion at two pinch points; at Lauriston Road and the junction with Mare Street, which experienced daily tailbacks and polluting traffic from lorries. Residents had been significantly impacted by this as they were unable to open their windows at certain times of the day due to idling traffic which caused pollution. Pedestrians were also significantly impacted as they were unable to safely cross the road at the Mare Street Junction; the main crossing used by visitors, staff and patients of St Joseph's Hospice.
- 5.3 It was reported that VPR had approximately 1000 residents and consisted of accommodation for the elderly, two homes for people with complex medical needs, and a secondary school. Nearby were two nurseries and two primary schools. The road attracted a high percentage of families, cyclists and runners due to its close proximity to Victoria Park, all of whom were subjected to the daily traffic conditions and emanating pollution.
- 5.4 Following a monitoring exercise of VPR and the A11 Mile End Road, 9 HGVs were counted on VPR which experienced gridlock traffic in comparison to 2 HGVs on Mile End Road where traffic was flowing freely. It was noted that the majority of HGVs using VPR originated in South London or the dock areas. Concerns were raised about the infrastructure of the road not being built for HGVs and collapsing under their weight.
- 5.5 Concluding, Christine Jackson suggested a total ban on HGVs on Victoria Park Road between 7am and 1.30pm as she believed this would ease congestion at pinch points, reduce pollution levels, and improve cycle safety. This would also lead to environmental benefits; contributing positively to the Air Quality Action Plan, Transport Strategy and the development of the Freight Policy. Due to concerns about vehicle speed outside of these hours, the Council was implored to re-explore a trial of Average Speed Cameras.
- 5.6 Members welcomed the deputation, and asked questions of the deputation leader. Cllr Binnie-Lubbock's questioned the Cabinet on the budgetary implications for implementing the measures that had been set out by the deputation leader. This question was not responded to at the meeting.

- 5.7 In response to questions, Christine Jackson stated that there were no intentions to divert traffic to Wick Road which she understood to be a B road. She advised that the campaign and monitoring was in its infancy, however was becoming more scientific in its approach. The hours of 7am to 1.30pm were requested as this was when the issue was most prevalent. VPR had a high presence of vulnerable road users, pedestrians and cyclists. Residents believed that any action taken would not only benefit residents and road users in the area but all of South Hackney. Bus route 388 and public service vehicles would be exempt from any requested restrictions. The deputation leader confirmed that she had not been involved in any previous deputations to the Council on this matter. She reported that earlier in the year, a yellow box junction had been installed at the Mare Street/VPR junction. This had greatly assisted with traffic turning right and was a low cost solution which was welcomed by residents. The residents welcomed a partnership approach and invited Councillors and officers to visit VPR.

Cllr Coban's response

- 5.8 Cllr Coban, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport paid his respects to the cyclist who had tragically passed away over the weekend following a collision on Whiston Way.
- 5.9 Cllr Coban, welcomed the deputation and the monitoring that had been undertaken by residents. He acknowledged the ongoing issue of traffic across Hackney, with over forty percent of traffic not starting or ending in the borough. He advised that this was the catalyst for the Local Implementation Plan, the Climate Action Plan, Quality Action Plan and the Main Road Traffic Reduction Plan. In relation to speed cameras, he informed all present that the Council continued to lobby Transport for London (TfL) to trial speed cameras in the area.
- 5.10 In response to the deputation, Councillor Coban committed to:
- Ensuring that a walkabout was organised with himself, Cllr Wrout and relevant officers
 - Working in partnership with residents to develop an appropriate solution.
 - Ensuring that monitoring equipment was available to better understand the issues.
 - Developing a holistic approach to traffic reduction in line with the Main Road Traffic Reduction Plan
 - Commission officers to update the traffic study to better understand where traffic in the borough emanated from.
 - Ensuring air quality was central to any action

RESOLVED: To note the deputation.

6 Questions from Members of the Public

The Speaker decided to vary the order of public questions, giving priority to the questioner present in the chamber.

6.2 To the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration From Ms Chesca Walton

Research by the Big Issue has revealed that Hackney's total Council Tax debts have tripled in the last 3 years - the second-highest council tax debt per person in the Country. Can the Council outline the impact this has had on council services and any remedial action taken to date?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing and Customer Service

Cllr Chapman stated that Council was required to set and collect Council Tax to help pay for vital services for all residents. This however had been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic (when action to enforce debts was suspended) and the criminal cyber-attack, which meant that the Revenues service was unable to process updates to their system while system recovery work took place.

Following work to clear backlogs, the Council Tax team endeavoured to ensure a return to historic high levels of collection. However, the Council recognised the financial strain that Council Tax put on many residents, in addition to the wider Cost of Living crisis.

Cllr Chapman reported that the Council supported 30,000 residents to pay through its Council Tax Reduction scheme. This ensured that the Council Tax levied on a household matched its ability to pay. Qualifying residents could get their Council Tax bill reduced by up to 85%. In line with Labour's manifesto commitment, the Council was consulting on improving the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, which would see qualifying residents get a discount of up to 90% next year.

Cllr Chapman explained that through the Community Grants Programme, the Council invested £1m in advice and £460k in supporting community organisations that provided vital ongoing support for residents in debt. As well as helping residents to manage debt and advocate on their behalf they also provided help to deal with urgent debt such as rent arrears and Council Tax arrears whilst ensuring that incomes were maximised through advice on benefits take up.

Concluding, Cllr Chapman stated that whilst he was proud of the support offered by the Council and its partners, this was part of a bigger problem which could only be solved by Government action. He condemned the Government's decision to withdraw the uplift from Universal Credit from October 2021 which took away approximately £35m from Hackney residents who were much in need.

Supplementary Question: Given the Council's relatively poor track record of ensuring that residents feel heard, how will the Council ensure that the services that residents rely on are protected given the reduced revenue?

Cllr Chapman disputed that the Council had a poor record of listening to residents even amidst the difficult situation of the pandemic and cyber-attack. It was anticipated that Council Tax collection rates would return to what they previously were prior to those events. He advised that the Council would continue to campaign for more government support and ensure that its budget setting was prudent and efficient, to provide services, despite financial pressures.

6.3 To the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services From Mr Faruk Tinaz

Last year, approximately 22,000 dog attacks were reported in England and Wales. A recent investigation revealed that the number of attacks has increased by over a third within the last five years. What is the Council doing to ensure that dogs are not a source of harm in Hackney? <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-64798162.amp>

Response from the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services

Cllr Fajana-Thomas advised that the police was the lead agency in investigations under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (as amended). Under this Act, the police were able to prosecute an owner who possessed a dog that was “dangerously out of control.” If prosecuted and found guilty, the courts could make an order for the dog to be destroyed or for conditions to be applied. The Council’s Community Safety Team worked closely with the police to share information on dangerous dogs to ensure that if a dangerous dog was identified that their owner was held responsible for ensuring that they comply with the law.

It was noted that in the borough, a Public Spaces Protection Order was in place in relation to dog control which included the prohibition of dogs in children’s play areas, and putting a dog on a lead when requested by an Enforcement Officer. Additionally, officers engaged with dog owners on anti-social behaviour caused by dogs not being properly controlled by their owners.

Hackney Enforcement Officers had recently used their powers under the Anti-Social, Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act to issue a Community Protection Warning (CPW) to the owner of a dog that was intimidating people in Clapton Square. This power placed restrictions on the owner and dog to ensure that it did not cause harm to people in the area. Should the owner breach the CPW then a Community Penalty Notice (CPN) would be issued; failure to comply would result in being referred to the Magistrates’ Court. This power was also used to encourage dog owners to use a dog lead in public.

Concluding, Cllr Fajana-Thomas highlighted that the Council was consulting on extending the dog control Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for another three years. One of the proposals was to require dogs to be on a lead in a number of public spaces particularly where children and vulnerable people were present. It was believed this would provide a balance between the joy of dog ownership whilst preventing harm to others. Anyone concerned about a dangerous dog was encouraged to report it immediately to the police.

6.1 To the Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing Needs and Homelessness From Mr Stephen Sartain

Could the Council please outline its efforts to prevent homelessness, especially long term solutions explaining how it is assisting rough sleepers and how No Fault Section 21 Notices and Government cuts in funding are impacting homelessness in Hackney?

Response from the Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing Needs and Homelessness From Mr Stephen Sartain

Cllr Etti reported that the Council was updating its Homelessness Strategy which was to be finalised later in 2023. This would set out the Council's plans to tackle the crisis and built on successive Homelessness Strategies since 2002,

Cllr Etti emphasised that the housing crisis had been driven by issues outside of the Council's control; such as central Government public spending cuts, not enough new homes, no rent controls, welfare reforms, Brexit, population change and the economy. These were in addition to the Covid pandemic and the Cost of Living crisis. Support for residents in privately rented accommodation was restricted by the Local Housing Allowance, which the government had failed to raise in line with increased rents.

The Council continued to work to prevent homelessness, through the Moneyhub service. £1 million in benefits and other payments, which residents were entitled but had missed out on, had been claimed with the help of this service. The Council had secured £4.2 million in government funding and to assist rough sleepers services had been expanded which included: access to embedded social workers and psychological support, increased number of beds available for rough sleepers and ongoing support once housed in temporary accommodation.

Cllr Etti advised that those facing homelessness, including those subject to section 21 Notices, had been supported to assist in accessing alternative accommodation including privately rented homes rather than temporary accommodation.

The Council worked with the Single Homeless Prevention Service, which provided advice and support to single adults at risk of homelessness in maintaining their existing accommodation or getting alternative accommodation. The Council was a member of the Capital Letters scheme and also utilised Homefinder UK.

Cllr Etti advised that the Council was aware that some residents faced additional discrimination in the housing market and in response provided specialist advisors, worked with partners and made specific provisions for these residents.

7 Questions from Members of the Council

7.1 From Cllr Clare Potter to the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

This winter the voluntary sector, faith groups and community hubs are gearing up to provide warm spaces, food and advice to some of our most vulnerable residents during the ongoing cost of living crisis. What kind of support and partnership will the Council be providing residents across the borough?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing and Customer Service

Cllr Chapman stated that poverty reduction was a priority for the administration, guided by a Poverty Reduction Framework, with partnership being key to the Council's approach. It was acknowledged that winter was the toughest time of year with fuel bills and additional costs around Christmas, Hanukkah and the festive break.

It was reported that this was the first year that the government's household support fund was confirmed for the entire year. Whilst this was welcomed, there was no clarity over future plans beyond March 2024. He believed that government action on a

permanent uplift in benefits was needed to give residents the ongoing income boost required.

Cllr Chapman outlined the support delivered by the Council through partnerships such as: The Money Hub Service which offered emergency assistance to maximise benefits and the Council's Street Outreach Team which worked with residents sleeping rough throughout the winter months with an offer of housing, support and reconnection. As temperatures near freezing, the Severe Weather Protocol would be activated triggering increased welfare checks and the offer of overnight accommodation. Residents would be signposted to warm spaces and the Council would continue working with Night Shelter, Crisis and other voluntary sector partners to maximise the effectiveness of the services offered. Organisations would also be encouraged to work with libraries that offer support such as Winter Coat donations.

Concluding, Cllr Chapman highlighted the investment and financial support made by the Council which included: an investment of £1m in advice services and over £400k in supporting community organisations through the Community Grants Programme; the launch of a £65K hardship support and preventative help scheme for those with no recourse to public funds; and an additional half a million over the next two years into The Money Hub and the Policy service. The Council had also helped partners access funding from the Greater London Authority (GLA), City Bridge Trust and food partners to make the best use of food surplus and co-ordinate emergency food help. The Council had also started investing in schools and community organisations to help tackle food poverty in education. He welcomed the Mayor of London's Universal Free School Meals programme which would bring a huge benefit to primary school children in the Borough.

Supplementary Question: Would the Cabinet Member commend the support that Brownswood residents and residents in neighbouring wards were receiving throughout the year particularly in the colder months, most notably the warm hubs provided by partner organisations?

Cllr Chapman applauded the work of the organisations and volunteers in Brownswood ward and across the borough who provided a range of much needed services.

7.2 From Cllr Ali Sadek to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport

As we continue to seek to alleviate the financial burden on our residents due to high energy bills, can the Cabinet Member provide an update on the measures and strategies the Council is planning to implement in order to create a more sustainable and affordable energy supply chain within Hackney?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Cllr Coban stated that this question was rooted at the heart of the purpose of the Climate Action Plan which was aimed at reaching net zero ambitions in the most equitable way whilst also supporting residents financially through local job creation.

Cllr Coban outlined a number of innovative schemes, trials and pilots implemented by the Council to help residents in Council properties access reliable and cheaper

energy. This included: solar panels on Bannister house, the Greener Homes programme, setting up of Hacknet Light and Power and the Community Energy Fund.

Cllr Coban advised that officers were investigating how similar projects like Bannister House could give access to residents on Council estates to a more sustainable and affordable energy supply. This work also included looking at how the Green economy could be doubled which would be investigated collaboratively with the Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities.

Concluding, Cllr Coban stated that the Labour group's climate ambitions were rooted at the heart of social justice.

7.3 From Cllr Lee Laudat-Scott to the Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities

Since 2016, Hackney Works has launched a number of successful employment pathway programmes, including supported Internship programmes and paid work experience including Hackney 100 and Hackney Apprenticeship Network adding huge value to the local job sector. As a result, how many have gone into full time or part time work?

In the absence of Cllr Laudat-Scott, this question was asked by Cllr Adams

Response from the Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities

Cllr Williams advised that Hackney Works was focussed on helping residents find jobs and employment in the long term, offering extra support for residents facing tough obstacles such as poverty, disability or lack of formal qualifications.

Since 2018/19, 8510 residents had engaged across all programmes via Hackney Works, with 26% going on to secure good jobs or apprenticeships. This did not include Hackney residents who had participated in the Leading Inclusive Futures through Technology (LiFT) project - a partnership involving Hackney, Islington, Camden and Tower Hamlets Councils that created opportunities in the science, tech and creative sectors.

Cllr Williams highlighted work placements that had been made through Supported Internships. 57 young residents with Special Educational Needs, Autism or Neurodiversity had been placed across departments at the Council and its main partner, Homerton Hospital. 50 of those had progressed into paid full or part time employment. In partnership with Adult Social Care and local Autism charities, 206 residents with disabilities had been supported to secure employment since 2018. Since 2018, 335 residents had accessed part time work placement opportunities at the council and with strategic partners, completing roles with Amazon, Hackney Light and Power, Berkeley Homes, and Here East. 146 of the programme completers were reported as full or part time hires post placement, 3 as self-employed, and 6 going onto further or higher education.

Concluding, Cllr Williams reported that the Hackney Apprenticeship Network membership was at 213 businesses and reporting 262 apprenticeship starts. Approximately 150 Hackney Apprenticeship Network starts had been in education

professions, with schools contributing 46 member organisations. Whilst education and childcare accounted for approximately 200 apprenticeships, the remaining 60 were from starts in hospitality, tech, digital, health and social care. Cllr Williams stated that these figures demonstrated Hackney's continued efforts to maximise social value from its strategic partnerships and anchor institutions.

Supplementary Question: How many residents have been helped into work through the employment support team, social value contracts and through job fairs?

Cllr Williams stated that since 2016 approximately 2200 residents had been helped into work through the Council's employment support teams. Available data from 2020 to date showed that in excess of 500 residents had progressed into work aligned to opportunities stemming from social value contracts through legal planning commitments, and Hackney Works approach to maximising local appointments to jobs in the Council's supply chain. The Team worked strategically to deliver good jobs in the built environment and procurement sectors. This delivered around 250 London Living Wage paid work placements from social value contracts, 31 apprenticeships, and over 270 jobs, totalling over 550 residents.

Hackney Works Job Brokerage developed a proxy recruitment agency function, linking local residents to Council jobs matching them to job descriptions and hiring managers needs. 88% of starters had their contracts renewed

The team had created a 'Talent Pool' targeting those seeking to re-enter the labour market with childcare and caring responsibilities. From January 2022 to January 2023 a minimum of 39 residents had benefited from the course with at least 30% finding full-time work. In 2022 this work stream saw 65 residents secure jobs at the Council,

Concluding, Cllr Williams stated that she was happy to present these findings to a scrutiny commission. much needed services.

7.4 From Cllr Ben Hayhurst to the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

Please can the Cabinet Member provide an update on the Metropolitan Police announcement that they will stop attending mental health calls from October, whether this is moving ahead and the impact this will have on the local system?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

Cllr Kennedy clarified that the Metropolitan Police did not announce that they would stop attending mental health calls. They had however stated the aim of ensuring that the most appropriate professional sees individuals in mental health crisis. Police would be deployed where a crime had occurred or to protect people when there was a real and immediate risk to life, including when that situation was caused by the poor mental health of one or more individuals.

Cllr Kennedy explained that the scheme being implemented was Right Care, Right Person, which was piloted over 3 years in Kingston-upon-Hull and evaluated as a success. He further explained that it was announced at the beginning of the summer that it was to be rolled out in the rest of the country with just three months' notice. Most partners had indicated that they would have liked to have been given a longer

time frame for implementation. However assurances were given that partners were working as best they could to continue to provide support for those experiencing mental health crises.

From the 31st October call handlers in the Metropolitan Police would employ new prompts relating to welfare checks, including when a patient goes absent from a health partner's inpatient care. This would mean that in some instances a mental health professional and not the police would be the first attender

Cllr Kennedy outlined the steps that had been taken locally to ensure preparation in the short time prior to implementation. This included a focus on supporting those in mental health crises, both through prevention and timely crisis support, as well as looking at wider London commissioning around mental health ambulances. In addition, changes were being made to local policies and procedures to ensure appropriate actions were evidenced where there were welfare concerns.

In conclusion, Cllr Kennedy stated that it was recognised that Right Care, Right Person would impact every system; however, there was partnership work across London with the Metropolitan Police, London Ambulance Service, NHS Health Bodies and Local Authorities. He hoped that governance from these partners would help to ensure development and implementation of the programme, monitoring its effectiveness and safety. Cllr Kennedy reported that in Hackney, weekly meetings with local partners to take action to mitigate risks would continue post implementation to monitor operational effectiveness..

7.5 From Cllr Sarah Young to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Since the introduction of the Sir Thomas Abney school street, signs and cameras have been repeatedly vandalised, and children continue to be at risk from careless and inconsiderate drivers. What steps are being taken to identify and prosecute the offenders and to ensure that the school street serves its function?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Cllr Coban shared Cllr Young's concern about the vandalism of School Street enforcement cameras and signage and the risk posed to children. This illegal activity was something that the Council was tackling throughout the borough. A recent study showed that over 800k had been spent by Council's accross London owing to camera vandalism, 400k of that was spent by Hackney. The Council had considered a range of options to address this including: different enforcement technology and protective equipment.

Cllr Coban stated his commitment to working with the Metropolitan Police and Community Safety Team to address this which was now an issue of public safety. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services had been raising this issue with the Borough Commander. He acknowledged the frustrations of Councillors and the school in question as it had essentially made the scheme redundant as signage as well as cameras were being damaged. The Council was however resolute in its plans to rectify the situation with a long term solution, ensure the safety of children and local residents and bring the perpetrators responsible to justice.

7.6 From Cllr Sharon Patrick to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Despite the efforts of the Council's Waste Management service, there has been an increase in the escalation of fly tipping and rubbish being dumped in Kings Park Ward. Could the Cabinet Member inform the Chamber about what actions, including enforcement measures, are being taken to deal with this issue?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Cllr Coban advised that the Council was passionate about tackling fly tipping across the borough and was proud of its record of keeping its streets clean; however, acknowledged that there had been some recent issues.

Within the Sustainability & Environment Service there were two teams responsible for the education and enforcement of environmental policy; the Commercial Waste Enforcement Team, which dealt solely with waste from businesses, and the Behaviour Change Team, which dealt with residential waste from street level properties. They also worked collaboratively with Enforcement Officers from the Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulation Service to undertake targeted action days around waste issues.

Cllr Coban advised that fly-tipping could be reported via the Council's Contact Centre, or the Fix My Street App. There was also an internal system where officers and operatives working on the ground could report instances of unregulated waste.

It was reported that the Behaviour Change Team had won national awards from Keep Britain Tidy and Awards of Excellence, as well as being highly commended at Hackney Stars. He outlined the achievements of the Behaviour Change Team and the Commercial Waste Enforcement Team which included waste investigations, monitoring visits, issuing of fixed penalty notices and conducting Police and Criminal Evidence Interviews.

In the first 6 months of this year the Environmental Services team cleared 881 fly-tips from King's Park, which accounted for seven per cent of the total fly-tips removed across the borough. Of these 881 fly-tips, ten per cent were reported by the public. Without further work it was not possible to break down the education and enforcement actions undertaken in the King's Park ward. Officers concentrated their efforts on improving waste compliance specifically on Brooksby' Walk and Chatsworth Road. Since June 2023 , 19 enforcement notices had been issued on businesses, ten notices on residential properties and undertaken a Police and Criminal Evidence interview, on the back of two targeted action days and numerous monitoring weekly visits.

Concluding, Cllr Coban reiterated the importance of residents utilising the Fix My Street App which assisted the Council in understanding how it could better keep its streets clean. He reported that a poll survey would be launched in the forthcoming weeks to inform how the Council tackled street cleaning and waste collection. He urged Councillors to inform him of any specific issues within their ward.

Cllr Binnie-Lubbock attempted to ask a supplementary question which was not permitted by the Speaker.

8 Statutory Deputy Mayor's Statement

- 8.1 Deputy Mayor Bramble expressed that she was honoured to have assumed temporary leadership of the Council acting in the capacity of the Elected Mayor in spite of the circumstances. She highlighted her commitment to delivering for residents; the challenges the change in leadership had brought with regard to trust and confidence in the Council: the relentless dedication of staff and the importance of Elected Members remaining focussed on the challenges faced by communities in the borough.
- 8.2 The Deputy Mayor acknowledged former Elected Mayor Philip Glanville and the Council's achievements under his leadership. She recognised the opportunity to learn from recent events and welcomed the Interim Chief Executive's announcement of an independent governance review. The review would examine the decisions made by the Council in response to a notification pertaining to a former Councillor. The review would be independent of politicians and political parties and led by someone not affiliated with the Council. This was to ensure that high standards of transparency and accountability remained paramount. The findings of the review along with any recommendations would be reported at a future Council meeting. Deputy Mayor Bramble highlighted that the Council had always prioritised safeguarding and this would continue.
- 8.3 Deputy Mayor Bramble thanked Deputy Mayor Nicholson, Cabinet Members and the Corporate Leadership Team for their leadership during this transitional period. Special thanks were relayed to the Interim Chief Executive for her commitment and dedication. It was noted that the Council was being led by two black women both of whom were born in the borough.
- 8.4 The Deputy Mayor outlined various areas of achievement and forthcoming events. These included: climate action, an increase and investment in the creative sector and the creation of a creative zone, the carnival roadshow, available grants for events to commemorate Black History Season and the borough's GCSE results. It was reported that in response to the issues raised by residents, the Council would pay up 95 percent of Council Tax instead of the current 85 percent. The Council would continue with its aim of being safer, fairer, greener which was demonstrated in its recent response to the Independent Office of Police Conduct (IOPC) in relation to the Child Q Case. The Council remained committed to working with and challenging the police, as well as lobbying the government for a change in the culture of policing.
- 8.5 The Deputy Mayor spoke about the fall in school admissions amidst budgetary pressures which had been discussed at Cabinet a few days prior. Well wishes were relayed to all those standing in the forthcoming Mayoral elections with special recognition given to the Labour candidate; Cllr Caroline Woodley. Concluding, Deputy Mayor Bramble stated that whilst she had chosen not to stand for the position of Elected Mayor, during her interim role remained resolute in delivering for residents and ensuring a safer, fairer, greener Hackney.

Conservative Group Response

- 8.6 Cllr Steinberger expressed his disappointment in the recent comments of local MP Dianne Abbot who questioned whether she would receive a fair hearing in the wake of the Labour Party's recent announcement to launch an investigation following her suspension from the party.

- 8.7 Cllr Steinberger questioned why the Mayor's resignation did not take immediate effect and instead was seven days after his announcement. He expressed concern in relation to a number of different issues including: the lack of response from the Cabinet during the Mayor's decision to step aside and subsequently resign, negative headlines pertaining to Hackney in local and national newspapers, the implementation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and School Streets, proposed school closures and the handling of a planning application of a school site in Amhurst Park and what he believed to be the Council's failure to work with the school to address issues.
- 8.8 Concluding he expressed thanks to the Interim Chief Executive, Dawn Carter-McDonald, the Interim Group Director, Finance, Jackie Moylan and other Council officers for the leadership shown during this period of transition.

Green Group Response

- 8.9 Cllr Garbett acknowledged the difficult and challenging time. She welcomed working with the Interim Chief Executive and valued her legal experience, knowledge of the borough, collected manner and continued focus on delivering essential services for residents. She believed that the disruption experienced would not have happened if the former Elected Mayor and Labour Party had been transparent from the outset. It was noted that the Green group had called for an independent investigation into what information was made available, when and to whom and what subsequent action was taken. The Green group welcomed the independent review of actions taken by the Council as announced by the Interim Chief Executive, but acknowledged its limited scope. She believed that this needed to be extended to elected Councillors within the Labour group as detailed in the Green motion which called for an independent investigation, included at agenda item 15c. Dismay was expressed at the Labour group's desire for a limited, behind closed doors investigation, which was set out in their proposed amendments to the motion. Cllr Garbett emphasised the importance of knowing whether or not the Council took all necessary steps in relation to safeguarding, well-being and the timely enactment of processes.
- 8.10 Cllr Garbett stated that the Green group took the role of scrutiny seriously, and thanked officers for responding to their various requests. She reflected on the role of the directly Elected Mayor and Cabinet System which she believed centralised decision making powers and disempowered other elected Councillors. It was hoped that Hackney would hold a referendum on disbanding the post of the directly Elected Mayor in favour of a committee system.
- 8.11 Cllr Garbett outlined some of the recent activities of the Green group which included: joining other Councillors in attendance at the Citizens Advice Bureau's coffee morning to understand how they support residents facing the cost of Living and housing crises; supporting Morning Lane People Space Campaign; liaising with parents impacted by the School's Estate Review and subsequent closures; questioning Thames Water on plans to stop a daily leakage of 1.2 mega litres along the New River and pushing the Council and Thames Water to install rubbish bins along the river path; attending the Kidical Mass Cycle London to encourage safe sustainable travel and cycling infrastructure for children.
- 8.12 Concluding, Cllr Garbett acknowledged the tragic news of the recent death of a cyclist by a motorist on Whiston Road. The Green group wished to revisit questions on cycle

lanes and mitigating against such incidents. Cllr Garbett welcomed the new Hackney Youth Parliament, individually by name.

The Deputy Mayor's Reply

8.13 Exercising the right of reply, Deputy Mayor Bramble stated the following:

- She was unable to speak on behalf of the former Mayor or to the decisions he made.
- As soon as the Council became aware of what was happening, steps were speedily taken and appropriate measures and interim arrangements were put in place.
- The falling number in school admissions in the borough was largely driven by a reduction in birth rates amidst a wide range of other issues which were experienced London wide and not specific to Hackney.
- Extensive engagement with affected parents had been undertaken led by herself and Cllr Woodley.
- The Council was committed to investigating measures that could be taken on Whiston Road.
- Arrangements were being made for Youth Parliament to attend a meeting of the Council.
- Hackney remained a place for everyone.

9 Changes to Cabinet Portfolios

9.1 Deputy Mayor Bramble outlined the changes to Cabinet portfolios as set out in the report. She commended Cllr Nicholson for his leadership as Deputy Mayor as well as other Cabinet colleagues.

9.2 She expressed her thanks for the overwhelming support she had received since assuming temporary leadership of the Council.

RESOLVED: To note changes to Cabinet portfolios as set out in Appendix 1 as published.

10 Rename Aske Gardens to Joe White Gardens

10.1 Cllr Williams, Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities introduced the report. This was a result of a commitment made in 2020 following the publication of a report highlighting the disproportionate impact of coronavirus, the murder of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter movement. The renaming of buildings, street names, parks and other public spaces that were symbolic of racist histories was a pillar of the Council's anti-racism work.

10.2 Following an explanation of the history of Robert Aske (1619-1689) and the decision to rename the Gardens after Joe White (1962-2002), Cllr Williams thanked the project steering group for their input and guidance, Joe's widow, Claire White and Joe for his outstanding contribution to life in the borough.

10.3 Cllr Suso-Runge, Member Champion for Heritage spoke in support and welcomed the approach to a more inclusive public realm. Deputy Mayor Nicholson commended Cllr Williams' leadership in the wider context of increasing representation and reshaping

public spaces; bringing a deeper understanding of the borough's history, heritage and future. Cllr Binnie-Lubbock spoke in support of the report highlighting that Cllr Garbett had welcomed working with Cllrs Williams and Adebayo on the work around renaming Rhodes Estate. The Green group hoped that the Council would use its influence to encourage the Museum of the Home to remove its slaver statue from above the main entrance as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:

1. To approve the removal of the name of 'Aske' from Aske Gardens and rename the green space, Joe White Gardens.
2. To approve the installation of an information board, located in a prominent position close to the basketball court (north entrance). This will contextualise the small park's new name, as well as the removal of the old name.

11 Audit Committee Annual Report

- 11.1 Cllr Robert Chapman, Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing and Customer Service introduced the report. He relayed thanks to the Audit Service highlighting their notable achievement of recovering 1000 Council properties which were operating with illegal tenancies, allowing them to be legally let to those who need them.
- 11.2 Cllr Lynch commended the report, highlighting the importance of the audit function. She welcomed the new Interim Group Director of Finance, Jackie Moylan and applauded the Head of Service, Michael Sheffield. It was noted that this committee operated at full complement with membership from all three political parties. She noted the challenges that lay ahead as a result of reduced Government funding, higher inflation and higher interest rates. Thanks were relayed to officers past and present and to Cllr Chapman and colleagues for their political leadership.
- 11.3 Cllr Garbett spoke in support adding her thanks to the team who work on Audit and reiterated the importance of the Audit Committee. She highlighted the Anti-Fraud Team's work on illegal subletting of Council properties. Cllr Garbett believed that more could be done to make scrutinising the budget more accessible with an eventual move towards participatory budgeting.

RESOLVED: To note the Annual Report of the Audit Committee set out in Appendix 1 as published.

12 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report

- 12.1 Cllr Gordon, Chair of the Scrutiny Panel introduced the report. She highlighted the independent (non-party affiliation) and collaborative approach used to represent communities and drive improvements and inclusion. The scrutiny work programme had been energised by the contribution of recently elected colleagues as well as: Hackney Youth Parliament; Hackney of Tomorrow; Hackney Young Futures; Trade Unions and Health Watch. Cllr Gordon highlighted some of the key areas of work undertaken by the various commissions. She referenced the joint meeting of the Children and Young People and Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commissions coming together to scrutinise the Community Safety Partnership response to the assault of Child Q. All parties responsible for safeguarding were brought together to publicly answer questions which reflected community concerns. It was noted that work in this area was ongoing. Cllr Gordon explained that stakeholder and public demands had

resulted in fewer large reviews with shorter cross cutting investigations, with an option to return to persistent areas of concern. The impact of investigations had in some cases been immediate and in others incremental.

- 12.2 Thirteen years of local government cuts had resulted in the budget scrutiny function being a pivotal part of the work programme; with a more thorough, timely and transparent approach in this area. Cllr Gordon also highlighted work undertaken to address the Climate Emergency, the Cost of Living Crisis and maintaining good governance and public trust.
- 12.3 Thanks were expressed to Commission Chairs, Vice Chairs, Committee Members, Co-optees, members of the public and officers.
- 12.4 Cllr Hayhurst, Chair of the Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission highlighted the work the commission had undertaken on air quality. Cllr Conway, Chair of the Children's and Young People Scrutiny Commission, spoke about the commission's work on the broader issues which had emanated from the Child Q case. Cllr Adejare, Chair of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission, referenced the commission's work investigating and challenging the impact of national and local policies on residents. Cllr Billington, Chair of the Skills Economy and Growth Scrutiny Commission highlighted the commission's lead on analysing the post pandemic recovery and the Council's role in addressing the challenges faced by residents and businesses.
- 12.5 Cllrs Rathbone, Etti and Deputy Mayor Nicholson commended the work of the Scrutiny function. The Public Engagement Protocol was welcomed. Cllr Binnie-Lubbock spoke in support of the report and scrutiny function. He stated that the Green group had found it to be invaluable in understanding the work of the Council and in assisting to advocate for residents. He encouraged Conservative Councillors to take up their full allocation of seats on the commissions. Cllr Binnie-Lubbock questioned the Cabinet on how they proposed to take forward actions and recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel in a more timely and coordinated way to protect the community from the effects of climate change. He also questioned how the Cabinet planned to use the Council's convening power to agree solutions across the borough. Welcoming the Public Engagement Protocol, he stated that it would be useful to have feedback so that it could be further improved. Deputy Mayor Bramble commended the report and explained that there was a system in place to ensure Cabinet responded to scrutiny investigations and the recommendations were taken forward by officers. She was pleased that in spite of budgetary constraints, the scrutiny function remained a valuable asset.

RESOLVED: To note the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Function 2022/23.

13 Resolution To Extend Six Month Rule - Section 85 Local Government Act 1972

- 13.1 Cllr Steinberger sent best wishes on behalf of the Conservative group to Cllr Samatar.

RESOLVED: To approve a dispensation for Councillor Samatar from the statutory requirement to attend a meeting of the Council until the Annual Council meeting in May 2024 for reason of ill-health.

14 Appointments to Commissions and Committees

RESOLVED: To agree to the membership changes to the appointments to the Committees, Commissions and Outside Bodies set out at paragraph 1.3 of the published report.

15 Motions

Cllr Binnie-Lubbock raised a procedural motion without notice in accordance with Part 4A Rule 15 paragraph 15.1(c) of the Council's Constitution. He moved to vary the order of business set out in the agenda to bring forward agenda item 15c Green Motion - Call for an Independent Investigation Following the Resignation of the Mayor of Hackney, to be considered as the second motion. He believed that it was important for the motion to be considered in a timely way and to restore trust in the administration. This was seconded by Cllr Garbett and put to the vote without debate.

Following a vote, the Speaker declared the motion **NOT CARRIED**

15a Labour Motion: A Fertility Friendly Borough

It was noted that since the publication of the motion within the agenda, the proposer and seconder had changed.

15a.1 Cllr Suso-Runge introduced the motion highlighting the wide demographic affected by infertility and some of the challenges they faced. The motion was seconded by Cllr Lynch. Cllrs Young, Rathbone, Sadek, Potter, and Deputy Mayor Bramble contributed to the debate, speaking in support of the motion.

Following a vote, the Speaker declared the motion **CARRIED**

The Conservative group did not vote.

RESOLVED:

This Council notes:

- That Infertility is defined by the World Health Organisation as a disease of the reproductive system.
- In the UK, it's estimated approximately 1 in 6 heterosexual couples will struggle to conceive, or 3.5 million people per year. However, this number does not include same-sex couples, single or trans people who must also be afforded the right to try for a family.
- Although often seen as a women's health issue, the reality is that both men and women are just as likely to face fertility problems. Data from the fertility regulator, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, shows that male infertility is the most common reason for a couple to start treatment.
- We welcome the sector leading work of NHS North East London in consulting on and then committing to more equitable access to treatment for all who need it. As a borough we stand on a long history of campaigning around NHS provision and believe all who face fertility issues must be treated with the same dignity.

Wednesday 27 September 2023

- There is no legal right to time off for fertility treatment. But, if a woman is refused leave, it could be regarded as unlawful sexual discrimination. It can be ruled that a failure to accommodate conditions specific to women are unlawful.
- The Trade Union Congress (TUC) has asked the Equal Opportunities Commission to recommend leave for fertility treatment in their equality law reform submission.

This Council:

- Welcomes the sector leading work of NHS North East London in consulting on and then committing to more equitable access to treatment for all who need it. As a borough we stand on a long history of campaigning around NHS provision and believe all who face fertility issues must be treated with the same dignity.

Hackney Council is therefore pleased to announce its commitment to becoming a fully Fertility friendly borough as endorsed by the national charity Fertility Network UK, and resolves:

- **To begin to work towards becoming a beacon of best practice via training for staff and managers, working towards policy implementation and committing to ongoing support for staff facing fertility issues.**
- **To campaign for places of work within the London Borough of Hackney to be Fertility friendly, supportive to staff and to join the work of Fertility Networks own Fertility in the Workplace initiative.**
- **To write to the Government to act upon its own recommendations in the women's health strategy and the recommendations of NICE in fully implementing three cycles of IVF for all who are eligible.**
- **To call for the implementation of recommendations in the national Government's Women's Health Strategy that same sex couples be afforded the same access to treatment as heterosexual couples.**
- **To commit to marking fertility awareness week each year as a Council thereby recognising the need to support and help many of our residents facing this issue.**

Proposer: Cllr Suso-Runge

Seconder: Cllr Lynch

Cllr Adams moved a motion to extend the meeting beyond 10pm to 10.15pm in accordance with Part 4A Rule 7 paragraph 7.1 of the Council's Constitution. This was seconded by Cllr Potter and put to the vote without debate.

Following a vote, the Speaker declared the motion **CARRIED**

15b Labour Motion – Mental Health: A Human Right For All

15b.1 Cllr Turbet-Delof introduced the motion highlighting the need for parity between mental and physical health and various challenges to optimum mental health. The motion was seconded by Cllr Kennedy.

15b.2 As there were no amendments to the motion, Cllr Binnie-Lubbock attempted to raise a procedural motion, requesting that the motion in question be moved to the vote. This was following three consecutive speeches in support of the motion as he believed

there to be broad agreement. The request for a procedural motion was denied by The Speaker.

15b.3 Cllrs Gordon, Cllr Joseph, Etti, Wrout, Troughton, Coban and Deputy Mayor Bramble contributed to the debate, speaking in support of the motion.

Following a vote, the Speaker declared the motion **CARRIED**

The Conservative group did not vote.

RESOLVED:

This Council notes that:

- Across the UK there is an undeniable Mental Health crisis. In Hackney local mental health services are struggling to keep up with rising demand for the services available. The most recent figures point to nearly a quarter of the borough's population over 16 are suffering from common mental health disorders.
- Inadequate Government funding for NHS delivered Mental Health services has amounted to 1.6 million people reported on waiting lists in the UK, leaving local mental health services unable to meet demand. Hackney waiting times are now 2-4 weeks for NHS Talking Therapies and up to 6 weeks for the Wellbeing Network, a service for residents with more complex mental health needs. For some specialist secondary care services waiting times can be up to a year.
- There is an urgent need to place mental health on an equal parity with that of physical health.
- The lack of parity has led to care and support being wrongfully and inhumanely applied as an option, not as a right.
- Young people are amongst those who suffer the most whilst waiting for support. Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) has reported across the UK a 109% increase in referrals. Young Minds 2021 survey reported that:
 - 10% of young people were turned away from support
 - 26% have attempted suicide as a result of having to wait for support and
 - 58% said their mental health had worsened during this excruciating wait

Hackney's CAMHS referrals increased sharply following the pandemic from 3,826 across all three local NHS CAMHS services in 2018/9 to 5,502 in 2021/22. In April to June 2018/19 there were 158 young people waiting for an assessment across the three services, in April to June 2022/23 this number has risen to 356.

- The Office for National Statistics in 2022 reported that there were 5,583 suicides attributable to mental health reasons registered in England and Wales; of those deaths, 74% were male and 26% female. In 2021 17 Hackney residents took their own lives. Mental ill-health one of the most common risk factors for suicide.
- Suicide remains the biggest cause of death in men under the age of 50 in the UK. Females aged 24 years or under have seen the largest increase in suicide rate since 1981.
- A combination of Government austerity policies over the last ten years and the COVID pandemic have had a direct impact on individuals and their mental

health and wellbeing and exacerbated the already existing crisis in mental health care in the UK.

Council believes that:

- Access to Mental Health services and support is not an option, it's a Human Right.
- The global call made by the Human Rights Council for the United Nations and from the World Health Organisation European Region that identifies mental health as a basic Human Right will bring definition to services and ensure parity with physical health in our care system.

Council resolves to:

1. Call on the Elected Mayor to lobby Government on behalf of the Council for Mental Health to be recognised as a fundamental Human Right and to call on Government and the NHS to ensure resources are made available to support Hackney's local mental health services.
2. Working in partnership with the local NHS, the Council will continue to ensure that Hackney residents have access and the awareness of existing mental health services and support.
3. Promote the WAMHS (Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools programme) service available to every child in a Hackney school that helps meet their mental health needs for all students, staff and the parent community.
4. Advocate to local businesses and organisations the adoption and implementation of mental health promoting policies and training
5. Support a Hackney Mental Health Week, to coincide with World Mental Health Day each October. Working with partners the day will aim to identify the impact social inequalities have on the communities' mental health, promote support providers, ensure suicide prevention programmes are identified and work with existing local mental health networks and organisations to further improve outreach, accessibility and the support available

Proposer: Cllr Claudia Turbet-Delof

Seconder: Cllr Chris Kennedy

The Speaker advised that in accordance with Part 4A Rule 16, Paragraph 16.4 the remaining three motions (15c, 15d and 15e) which had not been debated would stand referred, without discussion, to the next ordinary meeting of Full Council. The motions would be listed in the order in which they had been received.

Close of meeting.

Duration of Meeting - 7:00 - 10.18pm

Chair of the meeting

Cllr Anya Sizer

Speaker of the London Borough of Hackney 2023/24