

London Borough of Hackney
Council
Municipal Year 2023/24
Date of Meeting Wednesday 29 November 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 Alastair Binnie-Lubbock,
Deputy Mayor Anntoinette Bramble, Cllr Robert Chapman,
Cllr Mete Coban, Cllr Sophie Conway, Cllr Michael Desmond,
Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas, Cllr Zoe Garbett,
Cllr Eluzer Goldberg, Cllr Margaret Gordon,
Cllr Ben Hayhurst, Cllr Clare Joseph,
Cllr Christopher Kennedy, Krautwirt, Cllr Lee Laudat-Scott,
Cllr Michael Levy, Lisser, Cllr Anna Lynch,
Cllr Clayeon McKenzie, Cllr Jon Narcross,
Cllr Guy Nicholson, Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren,
Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Benzion Papier,
Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr Clare Potter, Cllr Fliss Premru,
Cllr Steve Race, 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 Polly Billington, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Humaira Garasia,
Cllr Richard Lufkin, Cllr Yvonne Maxwell, Cllr Sem Moema,
Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli, Cllr Midnight Ross,

Cllr Ifraax Samatar (disensation) and Cllr Caroline Selman
(dispensation)

Officer Contact:

Natalie Williams, Senior Governance Officer

Councillor [Speaker] in the Chair

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Billington, Etti, Garasia, Lufkin, Maxwell, Moema, Oguzkanli, Ross, Samatar, Selman.
- 1.2 Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Premru.

2 Speaker's Announcements

- 2.1 Noting the difficult period the community had experienced and the rise

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in Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia there was a minute's silence that remembered the victims of the devastating events in Israel and Palestine. Citing the importance of public standards, expectations and hope, the Speaker challenged all present to consider how they contributed to kinder and more compassionate politics.

2.2 The Speaker informed Full Council of recent and upcoming civic events which included:

- Marking Adoption Week, National Fertility Week and an event with the local Women's Institute.
- George Orwell's play, 1984, fundraising for the Speaker's charities.
- We See You, a neurodiverse art event by local schools and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) community.
- Democracy Week event that saw over 100 children involved in debates and panel discussions about political engagement.
- Citizenship Ceremonies.
- Numerous School visits.

Forthcoming events included:

- Carol Singing.
- Menorah lighting.
- The pantomime trip.
- Christmas Quiz.

3 Declarations of Interest

3.1 Cllr Binnie-Lubbock declared that he was a member of Adblock Hackney, in relation to agenda item 13b.

4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

4.1 Cllr Steinberger noted under item 8.7 he had not referred to the Planning Sub-Committee regarding a planning application. Cllr Steinberger had made a general point that the application had been badly handled and the inspector's comments had been damaging.

4.2 Cllr Steinberger indicated that at item 8.8 he had given thanks to Jackie Moylan, Interim Group Director Finance.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September, be agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings, subject to the amendments noted at 4.1 and 4.2 above.

5 Mayor for Hackney By-Election Results: November 2023

5.1 The Speaker outlined the results of the election that were set out at Appendix 1 and extended congratulations to Mayor Caroline Woodley. Congratulations were extended to Mayor Woodley from Cllr Steinberger and Deputy Mayor Bramble. The Speaker acknowledged the other candidates and reiterated

comments made by Cllr Steinberger thanking candidates and officers for a well run election.

RESOLVED:

The results of the recent Mayor for Hackney by-election set out in Appendix 1 to the report be noted.

6 Questions from Members of the Public

The Speaker prioritised members of the public present in the Chamber followed by those who had requested their response to be read out in their absence.

6.1 To the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration from Antoinette Fernandez

Why are new developments not prioritising social and affordable housing? Developments of 58 flats like the Laundry building on Mare Street should not be exempt.

Response from the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration

Cllr Nicholson noted the Council had committed to delivering affordable homes to residents for years. The Council had to balance this with other important priorities to achieve sustainable development across the borough. The Laundry building was located in a Priority Office Area (POA), an area of employment floorspace. 6% of land in the borough was in this category where workspace had been prioritised as part of planning policy over residential development. 5000 square metres of workspace had been delivered in the last 2 years.

This had not stopped developers bringing forward housing proposals, however, workspace was the priority. There were 58 residential units at the Laundry building in addition to over 4000 square metres of employment space on the same site.

6.2 To the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport from Louisa Hillwood, representing Plant-based Council Campaign.

In October 2022 I asked whether Hackney Council would switch to fully plant-based catering at internal meetings and events to address food related emissions. Could the Cabinet Member provide an update on this? If Councillors still have concerns I would like to meet with them to discuss further.

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

Cllr Coban noted the Council had committed to move towards plant-based options and reduce meat consumption. The Council recognised the diverse communities across the borough and committed to work with them on the transition to net zero by 2030. This included supporting communities on the journey through the implementation of the Climate Action Plan (CAP). The CAP

set out 5 themes, one of which was food consumption. It was noted that at the Council's 2023 Annual Meeting plant-based catering alongside meat and fish options had been provided which reduced carbon emissions at the event by over 50%.

The Climate and Sustainability Team led on a London-wide campaign, Eat Like a Londoner, a collaboration with other London boroughs designed to reduce waste and use more plant-based food. Cllr Coban noted the climate emergency had been caused by fossil fuel industries.

Supplementary Question:

Will the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport meet the questioner for further discussions.

Cllr Coban welcomed the input from Louise Hillwood and the Plant-based Council Campaign and indicated further opportunities to engage with council forums and for their voice to be heard. The input into the CAP from the campaign had been welcomed. Cllr Coban and Cllr Kennedy had been in correspondence with the campaign to consider what the Council had already done in relation to emissions, transport, consumption and adaptation. The Council approach considered ways to take people on the journey of transition whilst acknowledging the challenges. Cllr Coban noted that he was happy to meet to continue the engagement.

The Speaker noted that questions submitted at 6.3 had requested a written response. Those who had submitted questions at 6.4, 6.5, 6.6 and 6.8 had requested the response be read in their absence, time permitting.

6.7 To the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture from Laura Pascal

What is the Tree of Life project and why has it won an award?

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

Cllr Kennedy explained that Tree of Life was a talking therapy approach developed in Zimbabwe that had responded to the context of existing therapies that had not resonated with individuals or communities. The Tree of Life approach allowed cultures to be reframed as a strength and had been recognised globally as a therapeutic approach.

The project had been delivered as part of the new structures of the Integrated Commissioning Service (ICS) for North East London. The initiative was delivered in partnership with Hackney Community Voluntary Service (HCVS), NHS Mental Health Support Teams in local secondary schools, and was led by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Alliance in City and Hackney. The aim of the programme had been to give young people from Afro-Caribbean and mixed heritage backgrounds space to gain confidence in their own abilities, acknowledge their dreams and talk about difficult experiences in a safe environment. The project received the Health Service Journal's Innovation and Improvement in Reducing Healthcare Inequalities Award.

Supplementary Question:

How will the new Integrated Commissioning Service partnership arrangements support further improvements in the delivery of the service.

Cllr Kennedy noted that the system had moved from competition to a system of collaboration between local authorities and the NHS. Rather than bidding against each other they worked to identify which organisation was best placed to deliver services. It was noted the Integrated Commissioning Service (ICS) had reduced back office administration costs as over 300 Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) had been incorporated into approximately 40 ICS across the country. Cllr Kennedy had delivered a presentation to Health in Hackney about the new structures which can be found [here](#) from [Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 15 November 2023](#)

6.9 To the Mayor from Ifhat Smith

Will the Mayor call on the government to call a ceasefire in Israel/Palestine and for more support to promote community cohesion locally?

Response from Mayor Woodley

Mayor Woodley highlighted the Council was dedicated to local people and understood that local people had been deeply impacted by events on and following 7 October. The Mayor acknowledged the difficulties and recognised the trauma had been distressing for many communities and individuals. It was important that emphasis be placed into building community cohesion and asked political leaders to honour the truce and to find ways to a permanent ceasefire.

In terms of community cohesion statements had been made by the Speaker and Deputy Mayor Bramble, in her role acting as Mayor. Visits to faith partners, and individuals who had lost family, friends, and colleagues in Israel and Palestine had taken place. As a former Councillor in Cazenove Ward the Mayor noted the pride taken in the area by people from all faiths and people with none. The Mayor indicated that the Council always supported peaceful protest, however, other people had become victims of those passions and it was important to find ways to de-escalate those situations and find ways of healing. The interfaith groups had to find ways that worked to be more inclusive to bring people back together.

Supplementary Question:

Can the Mayor write to the central government to request they call for a ceasefire?

Mayor Woodley indicated that she would write to central government to outline the statement she had made this evening.

The Speaker returned to the following question from the agenda.

6.4 To the Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation from Derek Miller

Can the Cabinet Member for Housing provide an update on the Council's response times for dealing with leaks in its Council homes since its launch of a new faster service in February 2023?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation

Cllr McKenzie noted that leaks caused damp and mould and were distressing to residents. Tackling them early helped prevent the issue spreading or cause potential issues in neighbouring homes. The Council had increased investment and had committed to residents to increase efforts to address this issue. The service had set new targets to inspect all reports of leaks, damp and mould within 5 working days and provided a dedicated hotline in the repairs call centre. The Council had made significant changes in the way it had managed repairs and had completed 8% more repair jobs than a year ago, completing on average 243 jobs per day. Also in February 2023, the Council committed to responding to leaks by the end of the following day, and employed additional operatives to achieve this target. In the first 6 months of 2023 87% of leaks were reported as an emergency repair. Overall average time to attend a reported leak was 1.48 days. Overall satisfaction in the repairs service was up by 5%. It was recognised that this was the start of a journey and the service had to learn from what had gone wrong to ensure the Council delivered a good and improving repair service.

Written responses to questions 6.3, 6.5, 6.6 and 6.8 are attached at APPENDIX A.

7 Questions from Members of the Council

7.1 From Cllr Binnie-Lubbock to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport

In light of the news we heard in the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Committee this month that the Council is likely to fail to meet its 2040 retrofit target and that it could take over 4 decades to retrofit the whole stock, how does the Council plan on offsetting this carbon cost to meet the Climate Action Plan's 2030 target?

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

Cllr Coban highlighted the lack of ambition from central government on the retrofit programme. Councils and cities were leading the way towards climate transition in respect of retrofit. Over 50% of Hackney's housing is social housing and the Climate Action Plan (CAP) set out the strategy of how the Council was working to achieve net zero. The Council targets were to reduce its own emissions by 45% by 2030 and borough wide by 2040. It was difficult due to the lack of central government funding and the regulatory framework required to deliver the retrofit programme. Cllr

Coban noted GB Energy's investment to local councils to support the transition.

Last year the Council rejoined the UK 100 network of local leaders who had pledged to lead a rapid transition to Net Zero. The Council had also engaged, through London Councils, with other London boroughs in the development of their climate action plans and with forums that progressed net zero ambitions. Today the Council launched the second round of the Community Energy Fund to help reduce emissions from Council buildings. It was acknowledged that the Council had to be more creative in supporting residents on the journey to net zero.

The Speaker briefly adjourned the meeting between 7.50pm and 7.52pm to assist a Councillor who had become unwell.

The Council Climate Action Plan had set out an implementation plan for initiatives over the next 3 years that reduced emissions from council buildings. The approach required the council to be smart and deploy resources from other budgets to benefit, for example, from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. The Council considered corporate buildings and businesses to reduce energy and grow green jobs.

Supplementary Question:

Would the Cabinet Member outline how the Council were going to offset the 2040 retrofit target?

Technologies had changed rapidly and new funding opportunities emerged. The Council had to set out what it was doing to meet the emissions targets; and to be prepared for technologies when they were unlocked which provided benefits to residents.

7.2 From Cllr Gilbert Smyth to Mayor Woodley

Would the newly elected Mayor publicly declare her commitment to Hackney being a Fairtrade Borough?

Response from Mayor Woodley

Mayor Woodley reconfirmed Hackney was a fair trade borough. Social justice was key for fair and equitable trade which recognised climate change impacted everyone on the planet. It was noted that not everyone suffered to the same degree and climate change further exacerbated the inequalities in society. Fair and equitable trade was key to climate justice and the systems and processes supported farmers and producers to ensure they received fair prices for their products. This commitment also enabled the Mayor to meet the manifesto commitment to remain committed to being a fair trade borough.

The Mayor outlined her support to Hackney's growing community which had taken produce out to local community park spaces and used local skills and fair trade suppliers. As a Council fair trade was considered a business model that prioritised people and the planet and brought

businesses under one banner to promote fair trade.

The Mayor thanked Cllr Smyth for his work as Fair Trade Champion and acknowledged his commitment to ensuring Hackney was reconfirmed as a fair trade borough. The proposed activities were a tribute in celebration of the 30th anniversary of Fairtrade.

7.3 From Cllr Garbett to the Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation

There are 111 neighbourhoods in Hackney requiring urgent adaptation to heat waves, the fourth highest level in the UK according to University of Manchester research. How is the Council prioritising this adaptation for these neighbours - with a focus on protecting the most vulnerable residents?

The Speaker noted the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport was answering the question.

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

Cllr Coban highlighted the record temperatures seen across London and the wild fires experienced last year. It was important to keep flagging the implementation of the Climate Action Plan and how the Council was supporting transition and adaptation. Mayor Woodley, in her previous Cabinet role, had led on the Green Infrastructure Strategy to make streets more resilient. The Council had planted 5000 street trees since 2018 and actions in the implementation plan will support the most vulnerable residents. An important initiative was to increase the street tree canopy from 20-30% as trees matured. Trees played an important role in helping to cool our streets and made a positive contribution to new build developments as a result of meeting urban green factor standards.

When temperature warming was an issue the Council worked with its partners to support vulnerable individuals and communities during heat waves with measures that included providing advice on staying cool, checking on homeless people, providing water, and advising on existing cool spaces in public areas.

In addition, the Council collaborated with climate resilience groups to strengthen the response to the Climate Action Plan. Research by the University of Manchester indicated the need for government commitment to adequately fund adaptation measures. The cost of adaptation measures around energy systems had been expensive, however, as part of the £61m Climate Action Plan and Green New Deal Hackney saw record levels of investment to help in adaptation and support vulnerable residents.

Supplementary Question:

How are residents included in the Climate Action Plan implementation and does the council consider this a public health priority?

Cllr Coban indicated the Council had committed to continued conversations with residents as part of the 3 year implementation plan and to have conversations with residents in many formats including ward forums and scrutiny commissions, to strengthen proposals as they moved forward.

7.4 From Cllr Turbet-Delof to the Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing and Customer Service

As we enter the winter months, the cost of living crisis continues to leave many in poverty, having a profound impact on residents' mental health. What support is the Council making available for the winter months ahead to both support residents' financial circumstances and their mental health?

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

Cllr Chapman noted continued concern from the impact of the cost of living crisis on many residents. Last week the Mayor and Cllr Chapman had written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to demand adequate funding for Council services. Since 2010 the Council had seen a £150m reduction in external funding. After years of campaigning local housing allowances had finally been unfrozen, however the Customer Support Fund, which had provided £5.6m last year, had not been mentioned in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement and this fund remained uncertain going forward with the services provided to residents at risk.

The Council faced tougher choices ahead due to the lack of sustainable funding for resident services. Hackney Council continued to support residents through the Money Hub which had helped residents to claim benefits they had been entitled to claim. The Council had planned to meet its manifesto commitment by increasing council tax discounts for those residents least able to pay. As winter approached the Council had organised events such as the Winter Warmer event and promoted warm spaces and hot meals to support residents. The council approach supported residents through the cost of living crisis by more connected and preventative measures in line with the poverty reduction framework. Building connections with and between voluntary and community organisations was important to strengthen support to residents. The Here to Help team had produced an updated cost of living support guide that provided information for example on bills, money and debts. Funds from the Housing Support Fund had been used this year to provide food and fuel vouchers to support residents. The Council had supported Hackney Fuel Network's Just Giving Campaign to provide extra funds to community organisations to help residents through the winter. These organisations provided places for connection and community. Even with support, significant hardship was experienced through the winter months which impacted mental health.

Supplementary Question:

It was estimated that £28m goes unclaimed in benefits in the borough. What else can the Council do to ensure residents receive their entitlements?

Cllr Chapman advised that it was a problem the Council was aware of and the Money Hub and other voluntary organisations had been successful in identifying and had supported residents to claim benefits. Members helped by referring residents they meet to the Money Hub and other organisations.

7.5 From Cllr Binnie-Lubbock to the Mayor

In the last 5 years, what is the net-loss of mature trees in Hackney?

Response from the Mayor

Mayor Woodley indicated that the council had an ambitious plan to add to the street trees across the borough following the declaration of the climate emergency. The Council had added 5000 street trees over the last 2 years and now had 15,000 street trees and 60,000 trees in parks and open spaces. The Mayor championed the borough tree map, which had been regularly updated, and which helped educate people to learn the benefits that trees brought which included air purification, promotion of species diversity, and health and well-being benefits. A small proportion of mature trees, approximately 38, had been removed due to disease, subsidence, or adjacent development. The Council had sought to replace trees in a suitable location nearby and plant multiple young trees in recognition of the number of trees required to replace the benefits of a mature tree. Mayor Woodley acknowledged support from partners that helped maintain the tree canopy in Hackney.

Supplementary Question:

Can the Mayor confirm 38 trees had been lost in the last 5 years? How long will the new trees take to produce the equivalent carbon capture store to the trees that had been lost?

The Council was confident that the number of trees lost was correct. It was noted that it does take a number of years for young trees to replace mature trees that had been lost, however, replacement demonstrated the council commitment to retain the benefits that mature trees offered.

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

Balls Pond Road has been disproportionately impacted by traffic congestion. Can the Cabinet Member confirm that Balls Pond Road will remain under review, ensuring an ongoing dialogue with residents and other stakeholders to investigate long-term solutions to traffic flow and calming, air quality and noise pollution?

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

Cllr Coban outlined the work undertaken with Cllr Walker on Balls Pond Road regarding traffic that reduced congestion and improved air quality. It was noted that interventions had to be cross-borough, in conjunction with London Borough of Islington. The Council was committed to strengthen monitoring through traffic counting and other measures to better understand the data. Air quality monitoring had also been used as it was a concern identified by residents. Cllr Coban had met with his London Borough of Islington counterpart and had committed to bring partners together to address the issues. The Council recognised this as a priority and wanted to identify measures to get the right response.

Supplementary Question:

Can Cllr Coban commit to ensuring plans to address congestion and air pollution included engagement with residents and Transport for London?

A Main Road Strategy had been developed to complement the Transport Plan. This had proposals that worked to reduce traffic by 15% by 2026. The Council recognised the importance of the Main Road Strategy and a Bus Strategy and noted the 6% reduction in traffic in Hackney compared to pre-pandemic. It was recognised that not all schemes had been right; some roads had been disproportionately impacted by schemes and the Council had made changes as a result. The council was committed to remaining open and listening to ensure it delivered the changes for residents.

The Speaker noted that the meeting had come to the end of the 30 minutes allocated timeframe and those questions that had not been answered (7.7, 7.8, 7.9, 7.10, 7.11, 7.12, 7.13) would receive a written response included at APPENDIX B

8 Elected Mayor's Statement

- 8.1 Mayor Woodley expressed gratitude to be elected as Mayor of Hackney and acknowledged the other candidates. Mayor Woodley thanked Deputy Mayor Bramble, the Interim Chief Executive, Cabinet colleagues and Councillors for their dedicated work. The Chamber showed their appreciation to all Hackney officers, staff, partners and communities who support and challenge the Council.
- 8.2 The Mayor noted that many residents had connections to the Middle East and sent her condolences to residents who lost loved ones in the conflict. The rise in antisemitism, Islamophobia and hate crimes were acknowledged. The Council had committed to keeping people safe and Hackney was a borough where people of all faiths and none lived side by side. November was Islamophobia Awareness month and the Council had offered staff training and reached out to residents to become Hate Crime Prevention Champions or to join the Hate Crime Prevention Forum. The adoption of the renewed Hate Crime Strategy at Cabinet this

week was welcomed and the Mayor thanked Cllr Fajana-Thomas and officers for the work they had done in Community Safety.

- 8.3 The Mayor highlighted the work that had been ongoing in the borough and thanked young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) for the We See You event she attended which provided an opportunity to celebrate their achievements. The Mayor indicated that she had written to the Secretary of State for Education about concerns for SEND funding provision in Hackney. The Mayor had also sent a letter to the government, through the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care with Cllr Turbet-Delof about the need for further support to vulnerable residents.
- 8.4 The Mayor outlined various Council and community partner events attended. These included: black history season, Diwali, Transgender Day of Remembrance, Mental Health Week, various interfaith events and Clapton Common vigil. The Mayor remained conscious of the challenges communities faced and had, as part of the Mayoral campaign, pledged to drive forward better renting, housing, and economic justice to support a more inclusive and anti-racist borough. The Mayor had joined the rough-sleeping count alongside officers and outreach workers and acknowledged the fantastic work that supported vulnerable rough sleepers. The Mayor attended the Council's Anti-Racist Partnerships Day and reaffirmed the Council's commitment to being inclusive, welcoming and kind. She thanked Cllr Williams for sharing the Equalities Plan with community partners. This plan reflected the lived experience of many who had experienced racism and recognised anti-Black racism and maintained a focus on all forms of racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, or bias against Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people and communities.
- 8.5 The Mayor spoke about housing developments over the next 12 months with 585 new homes anticipated. This included completion of Buckland and Wimbourne schemes where over 50% of the 113 new homes were for social rent. Residents were encouraged to attend the Winter Warmer Event on 7 December and the Poverty Reduction Team and Money Hub continued to help residents to get community and financial support. The housing repairs service had a 24 hour turnaround time for broken heating in council homes. It was noted that fairness and justice had to be prioritised as the Climate Action Plan was implemented. The government had not responded to the call for sustainable funding for local authorities; Hackney faced a £57m budget shortfall by 2027 which meant the Council had to make difficult choices. The Mayor noted the Council had brought together campaigners at an event to raise awareness of violence against women and girls (VAWG) where the Council had taken action which included lighting, CCTV and the pioneering in-house domestic abuse service which had helped over 1300 people. Members of the Youth Parliament attended Cabinet and had set out their requests; the Mayor looked forward to participating in their events. The Mayor highlighted the seasonal celebrations ahead and noted the Menorah candles reminded us of the values of solidarity and hope. The Mayor hoped people found fun and joy through the seasonal celebrations.

Conservative Group Response

- 8.6 Cllr Levy congratulated Mayor Woodley on her election to office and

congratulated Cllr Steinberger on what had been a credible campaign reflected in the 42% increase in the Conservative vote compared to the last Mayoral by-election in 2016. Cllr Levy indicated that the Conservative Group continued to challenge schemes that they considered were not in the interests of residents such as School Streets and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs).

- 8.7 Gratitude and thanks were expressed to the former Mayor Glanville for the leadership he had shown regarding anti-semitism; he had campaigned to drive out all forms of racism from the borough. It was noted that Mayor Woodley continued to fight to keep Hackney a safe place.

Green Group Response

- 8.8 Cllr Garbett acknowledged the violence in the Middle East that represented the failure of politics in the region and internationally to find lasting peace that enabled people to live in safety and dignity. Hackney had seen some of the largest protests in solidarity with Palestinians and Cllr Garbett had joined young people at the school strike for Palestine protest last week. Last night, Cllr Garbett and Cllr Binnie-Lubbock joined Hackney Palestine Solidarity campaigners who had a deputation to the Pensions Committee that asked the Council to divest investments in occupied Palestinian territory. The Pensions Committee meeting had moved venue after residents in the gallery had sought to have their voices heard. Spaces were needed that allowed these voices to be heard. Cllr Garbett had prepared a motion later on the agenda to call for a ceasefire.
- 8.9 Cllr Garbett noted the Green Party had increased their vote in the Mayoral election by 7.5% totalling 24.5% of the vote and thanked residents who had voted for the party and the vision of the Green Party which they had encouraged the Mayor to deliver. Having the Green Group in the Chamber demonstrated what had been achieved which included progress on net zero 2030, advertising policy, transgender rights, and support for workers rights.
- 8.10 Cllr Garbett congratulated Mayor Woodley and supported her ambitions to make Hackney fairer and greener. The Green Group ran a hopeful campaign rooted in social justice and considered consultation had to go beyond traditional methods and included initiatives that recognised residents as experts in their own lives. Cllr Garbett wanted to understand how the Mayor intended to develop resident question and answer formats, such as transparent social media forums. Areas the Green Group wanted the Mayor to prioritise, in her first 100 days, were exploring housing buy-back opportunities and building council homes, rent controls and end to right to buy (RtB), the road strategy, and work with young people that reduced youth violence.
- 8.12 Cllr Garbett noted that the 28th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 28) started tomorrow. The Council had to call for the total phasing out of fossil fuels and had to do that both locally and on the international stage. This included divesting fossil fuels from the pension fund, phased

withdrawal from burning waste at the Edmonton Incinerator and commitment to withdrawal from fossil-based fertilisers from estates, parks and roads. The main road strategy Cllr Garbett was sad to hear was not explicit about the World Health Organisation's (WHO) air quality guidance. Cllr Garbett welcomed earlier mentions of the Climate Action Plan and acknowledged that we were deep into a critical decade in determining our future on this planet.

- 8.13 In conclusion, Cllr Garbett acknowledged Young Hackney who, with Deputy Mayor Bramble and herself, had marched from Forest Road Hub to Hackney Town Hall and added their voices to end violence against women and girls. World Aids Day was noted for Friday 1 December.

The Mayor's Reply

- 8.14 Exercising the right of reply, Mayor Woodley stated the following:

- The Mayor thanked Cllr Levy for his kind words and noted that everyone across the chamber wanted the best for residents.
- The Mayor, together with the interim Chief Executive, had committed to do walkabouts in every ward and to meet local organisations that made a difference and to see the challenges they faced.
- The Council had a variety of ways of interacting with the community including Ward Forums, Scrutiny Commissions, community meetings, parents and young peoples voices, and the work supported by councillors through surgeries and casework.
- The importance of standing together against antisemitism and driving out racism was noted.
- The Mayor was open to ideas that improved cohesion across the borough and brought people together to protect one another.
- The Mayor wanted to meet with people, not necessarily on social media, in ways that responded to and connected people.
- Young people's voices were valued as they provided insight into what they considered important.

9 Composition of Cabinet and Cabinet Committees; Appointment of Deputy Cabinet Members and Member Champions; Elected Mayor's Scheme of Delegation

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

- 1. That the Mayor's re-appointment of Councillors to Cabinet and re-appointment of Deputy Cabinet Members and Member Champions is noted, as set out in Appendix 1.**
- 2. That the establishment of, and appointments to, Executive Committees as set out in Appendix 2 is noted.**
- 3. That the Elected Mayor's Scheme of Delegation for 2023/2024 as set out in Appendix 3 is noted.**

10 Standards Committee Annual Report

- 10.1 Deputy Mayor Bramble introduced the report which provided an overview of the work of the Committee in 2022-2023. The Committee's remit ensured that Councillors maintained high ethical standards in their duties and considered concerns or complaints received about Councillor conduct. The role of Councillor had to be held with integrity, diligence, and compassion with care for residents. Members of the Committee were thanked for their work. The Committee had received 13 complaints, none of which met the threshold for further investigation.
- 10.2 Cllr Suso-Runge thanked Deputy Mayor Bramble for the report and indicated that local authorities are required to establish a Standards Committee, to have a Constitution, and a Code of Conduct. Rules and structures had to be underpinned by an organisational culture that valued high standards and a shared understanding. This required constant vigilance and the report reminded the Chamber of this framework and outlined the importance of good governance, personal responsibility and respect for each other.
- 10.3 Cllr Rathbone noted that standards in public life and in democracy had been key to democracy. However, self-righteousness had sometimes taken over to advance a cause and moved into name-calling, shaming, and violence. Social media had been used and hatred blinded people to how far they had gone to achieve their cause. The Pensions Committee on Tuesday evening was disrupted and caused the meeting to be moved elsewhere which had undermined democratic values of discussion and debate.
- 10.4 Cllr Rathbone believed that it was the responsibility of Councillors to set an example to the public as custodians of democracy. Councillors had been democratically elected by residents to run local services that improved the lives of people in the area.
- 10.5 Councillor Binnie-Lubbock noted the Chair's Foreword to the report indicated the opposition group had not taken up its place on the Standards Committee in 2022-2023 and he requested this was amended to indicate that it referred to the majority opposition group as the Green Group was keen to participate in the scrutiny process as much as possible. In addition, it was noted that one of the 13 complaints listed related to transphobia and he considered that this had not been covered adequately in the Equalities Plan.
- 10.6 Deputy Mayor Bramble noted the report had made clear there had been a Conservative Group vacancy on the committee and encouraged the majority opposition group to take up this position. Reassurance was given that the transphobia complaint had not met the evidential threshold for further action. Deputy Mayor Bramble noted that councillors represented the whole community and had to hold that integrity at the heart of the work of the Council.

RESOLVED:

That Full Council notes the Standards Committee Annual Report 2022/2023 appearing at Appendix 1 to this report.

11 Statutory Chief Officer Extension

- 11.1 The Speaker noted the Interim Chief Executive, Dawn Carter-McDonald,

and the Acting Director of Legal Services and Governance, Louise Humphreys declared an interest in the item.

RESOLVED:

To note the Appointment Sub-Committee's decision that the roles of Dawn Carter-McDonald, Interim Chief Executive and Louise Humphreys, Acting Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services and Monitoring Officer are extended for a further 6 month period from 1st February to 31st July 2024.

12 Appointments to Committees and Commissions

RESOLVED:

To agree the appointments and membership changes to Committees and the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Commission as set out at paragraph 1.3 of the report.

13 Motions

Cllr Binnie-Lubbock raised a procedural motion in accordance with Part 4 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 13e - The Crisis in Israel and Palestine: Call For a Ceasefire, Release Of All Hostages and more Support for Local Community Cohesion. He believed it was the most pressing matter on the agenda and how important it was to residents.

This was seconded by Cllr Garbett.

Cllr Adams spoke against the motion

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

Cllr Binnie Lubbock raised a procedural motion in accordance with Part 4 Rule 15 paragraph 15.1 (g) for the Green Group to withdraw motions 13a, 13b, 13c, 13d.

The Acting Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services and Monitoring Officer advised Council that the Constitution allowed a proposer of a motion to propose that it be withdrawn. However, only the proposer of a motion could do so, therefore an en-masse proposal to withdraw a number of motions was not allowed and Cllr Garbett would need to put forward a similar proposal for those motions where Cllr Garbett was listed as the proposer Cllr Garbett confirmed that she similarly requested that those motions she had proposed be withdrawn.

The seconder for each motion acknowledged their consent to the withdrawal of the motions.

The Acting Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services and Monitoring Officer responded to Cllr Rathbone's point of order and advised that the Constitution required that Full Council must decide whether to agree to the

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motion being withdrawn following a request from the proposer of that motion. If the meeting indicated, when a vote was called, that they did not consent then the motions would be debated in the usual manner.

Following a vote on Motion 13(a) the Speaker declared the proposal to withdraw the motion was **NOT CARRIED**.

Following a vote on motion 13(b) the Speaker declared that the proposal to withdraw the motion was **NOT CARRIED**.

Following a vote on motion 13(c) the Speaker declared that the proposal to withdraw the motion was **NOT CARRIED**.

Following a vote on motion 13(d) the Speaker declared that the proposal to withdraw the motion was **NOT CARRIED**.

a **Green Group Motion: Call for an Independent Investigation Following the Resignation of Mayor of Hackney**

Cllr Garbett introduced the motion. The ongoing distress to residents was noted and she considered transparency and truth helped towards closure and restored faith. The Green Group had called for an independent review when details had become public. An independent inquiry had been required to establish what the Mayor, Councillors, and Hackney Labour knew about the circumstances surrounding the resignation of Mr Dewey. The Green Group continued to press for transparency and had been informed about the independent review commissioned by the Council. This motion reflected the gap in the independent review for Hackney Labour Party to hold an independent investigation into who had known what, when, and the actions taken.

Following Cllr Garbett's introduction of this motion and prior to Cllr Binnie-Lubbock's seconder speech, Cllr Adams proposed a motion without notice in accordance with Part 4, Rule 15, paragraph 15.1(d) of the Constitution, for the matter to be referred to the Monitoring Officer on the grounds that an independent review had started and several members had spoken to the investigator. The Monitoring Officer should therefore consider whether the motion be the subject of debate once the outcome of the independent review was known. Cllr Rathbone seconded the motion.

Following a vote of the procedural motion without notice proposed by Cllr Adams and seconded by Cllr Rathbone, the Speaker declared the motion **CARRIED**

Proposed by: Cllr Zoë Garbett
Seconded by Cllr Alastair Binnie Lubbock

RESOLVED:

This Council notes:

- The former Mayor of Hackney tendered his resignation on the 15th of September 2023

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- He had misled the public in relation to his actions in the immediate aftermath of being informed by the council of Mr Dewey's arrest.
- The former Mayor was under investigation by the Labour Party for his behaviour.
- The Mayor failed to live up to at least four of the seven Principles of Public Life. He has avoided accountability, failed to act with openness and transparency, been dishonest with the public, and failed to show leadership by exhibiting these principles in his own behaviour.
- The former Mayor called partying with Mr Dewey after learning about his arrest "an error of judgement" and has apologised and has stated that he takes full responsibility for "not being as transparent as [he] should have been".
- That Hackney Council has commissioned an independent review into its handling of "events surrounding" the resignation of former Labour councillor Tom Dewey

The Council believes that:

- An independent investigation is still required into who knew what and when about Mr Dewey's arrest and what actions they took, within the Labour Party

This Council therefore resolves to:

- Write to the chair of the Hackney Labour Party to call for them to hold an independent investigation into who knew what, when and what actions they took following the raid on Mr Dewey's home by the NCA, in the Labour Party.

Proposer: Cllr Zoë Garbett

Secunder: Cllr Alastair Binnie-Lubbock

b **Green Group Motion: Include a Ban on High-Carbon Advertising in the Council's Advertising and Sponsorship Policy**

Amendments to the motion had been received from the Labour Group and contained in the supplementary papers circulated. None of the amendments had been accepted by the Green Group.

Cllr Binnie Lubbock introduced the motion and noted that the Green Party's national conference had proposed introduction of legislation to ban high carbon product advertising. The Council had to discourage these products and promote sustainable products on its advertising sites. Cllr Binnie-Lubbock suggested Councillors considered applications on the Council's planning portal where high carbon product advertising applications had sought approvals.

Cllr Zoë Garbett, as secunder to the motion, reserved her right to speak until later in the debate.

Cllr Kennedy proposed amendments to the motion. He outlined that the Council already had an advertising policy which supported principles of control over advertising which countered Council policy and principles. The amendments to the motion was seconded by Cllr Potter.

Following a vote, the Speaker declared the amendments to the motion
CARRIED

The Speaker proceeded to the substantive motion which was not debated. Cllr Garbett had reserved her right to speak and highlighted the need for leadership and commitment. She believed that sustainable measures represented a very small percentage of their overall work, however, sustainable measures were over represented in their advertising spend.

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

RESOLVED:

This Council notes:

- That the Council's Corporate Advertising and Sponsorship Policy 2022 was adopted as Appendix 4 of the External Advertising Contract by the Cabinet Procurement and Insourcing Committee on 16/01/2023.
- The policy outlines a number of products and services which will not be accepted on council-owned media, including the promotion of products high in fats, sugars and salts (HFSS), alcohol, knives or weapons and gambling services. These proscribed products and services would undermine the Mayor's priorities as set out in the strategic plan for a fairer, safer, healthier Hackney working together for every child.

This Council further notes:

- That it has adopted a Climate Action Plan which acknowledges that consumption emissions - the things we buy, use and sell - currently represent 73% of the borough's emissions
- That one of the five themes of the climate action plan is a reduction in consumption of goods and services that contribute to those emissions
- Such goods and services include "high carbon" items, such as fossil fuels, internal combustion engines and aviation, which must be reduced or phased out to help reach our carbon reduction targets

This Council believes that:

- Advertising can be used to induce demand for "high carbon" products and services where there may be no actual need, and where the products and services run counter to the council's stated policies, aims and objectives.

The Council resolves to:

- Include in the Advertising and Sponsorship Policy 2022 at paragraph 2.3, an additional subsection ix. reading [Advertising will not be accepted if, in Hackney Council's opinion, it is reasonably objectionable on the grounds that it:.....] could promote goods or services that contradict the council's Climate Action Plan, for example by encouraging the use of fossil fuels.
- Encourage event partners to consider their advertising and sponsorship policies in light of the borough's carbon reduction goals, and where possible, stipulate

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that a policy on high-carbon advertising and sponsorship is a requirement in negotiations about the council's support.

Proposer: Cllr Chris Kennedy

Seconder: Cllr Clare Potter

The Speaker noted that it was for members to decide, as the 30 minutes allocated for debating motions had almost expired, if they wished to extend the meeting. Members did not wish to extend the meeting.

The Speaker advised that the remaining three motions 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 - 9:27pm

Chair of the meeting

Chair of the meeting

Cllr Anya Sizer

Speaker of the London Borough of Hackney 2023/24

Attachments

Appendix A - Questions from Members of the public not responded to at the meeting.

Appendix B - Questions from Councillors not responded to at the meeting.

APPENDIX A

Questions from Members of the Public that were not responded to at the meeting.

6.3 To the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport from Dr Noah Birksted-Breen

Will Hackney Council find an appropriate way of marking Earth Overshoot Day annually, the day when humanity uses up more resources than the earth can regenerate in a year, to help educate Hackney residents about the need to focus on reducing and reusing as higher priorities than recycling?

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

It was a shame you could not join us last night at our Full Council meeting, however I thank you for your question concerning Earth Overshoot Day and its relationship to educating Hackney residents about the need to focus on reducing and reusing.

As an initial point, we have a new ambitious Climate Action Plan which places significant emphasis on consumption-based emissions, advocating a transition towards a sustainable, circular economy. The plan promotes low carbon choices and actions that reduce consumption emissions by encouraging the repair and reuse of goods.

This aligns with circular economy principles such as durability, reuse, remanufacturing, and recycling, aiming to reduce borough-wide emissions from Council operations and related contracts. At the same time, Hackney is currently developing a Circular Economy Strategy and Action Plan, a key manifesto commitment. This plan focuses on short to medium-term initiatives aimed at reducing emissions and incorporating social value.

Hackney's commitment to circularity spans nearly two decades. Since 2005, the Climate, Sustainability and Environment Team has been advancing circular economy schemes, delivering over 20 services and initiatives in partnership with over 15 local organisations. The ZeroWasteHackney 'Go Beyond Recycling' campaign, targets vulnerable and low-income households and successfully engages with over 5,000 residents a year, keeping nearly 2 million household items in circulation from clothes, electrical goods and more.

The borough's Reduction and Recycling Plan (RRP), endorsed by the Mayor of London, includes plans for waste reduction and increased recycling. It features initiatives such as the Library of Things and a Circular Economy Strategy, with actions to reduce waste, maximise recycling, and mitigate environmental impacts.

The Sustainability Day 2023 event, taking place during London Climate Action Week every year, focused on sustainable practices and environmental awareness, attracting approximately 800 attendees with over 30 partners on

the day. It offered insights into sustainable living, waste prevention, and the circular economy, alongside interactive workshops and family-friendly activities.

Looking ahead, Hackney Council recognises the importance of marking Earth Overshoot Day, scheduled for 25 July next year. The Council plans to use Sustainability Day 2024, during London Climate Action Week at the end of June, to highlight the day's significance. This event will provide opportunities to engage with residents and offer practical ways to reduce collective consumption-based emissions.

Understanding that not everyone may be motivated solely by environmental messages, the Council's approach includes offering economical alternatives and accessible services, such as the Library of Things or clothes swap events. This inclusive strategy aims to make sustainability achievable for all residents, contributing to Hackney's broader mission of creating a greener sustainable and circular economy that benefits both the environment and the community.

6.5 To the Mayor from Ms Sarah Thompson

In light of the circumstances surrounding the resignation of the previous Mayor (Philip Glanville) will you as Hackney's newly elected Mayor lead by example and hold yourself and your Cabinet Members to account in a way that is open and transparent and puts the residents of Hackney first?

Response from Mayor Woodley

I am writing to thank you for your question directed to me in advance of Full Council and I regret that you weren't able to attend the meeting, which is why I am responding in writing.

Firstly, I recognise the responsibility that every elected councillor must take very seriously and as Mayor I'm certainly committed to continuing the Council's strong tradition of conducting itself openly and with transparency. I will honour the trust residents have placed in me to serve our borough and will be guided by the Nolan Principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Councillors sign up to a code of conduct and must abide by these in accordance with the public trust placed in the role, so elected members commit on all occasions to:

- act with integrity and honesty;
- act lawfully;
- treat all persons fairly and with respect;
- and lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of Councillor.

In undertaking the role day to day, councillors commit to:

impartially exercise responsibilities in the interests of the local community;
to not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any Person;
to avoid conflicts of interest;

to exercise reasonable care and diligence;
and to ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with the local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

It's worth highlighting that we have a track record in Hackney of seeking out, listening to and responding to the views and concerns of residents and this is certainly going to continue in this administration.

For example, Hackney Council has a well established system of scrutiny, allowing residents and councillors alike to review the work of the administration and if necessary hold us to account. To share with you just a few areas of review and challenge - our Children and Young People scrutiny commission has closely examined the issue of school exclusions in Hackney. Our Health in Hackney scrutiny commission is looking at the use of digital services in GP practices and how it might affect the most vulnerable. Our Living in Hackney scrutiny commission has recently looked at issues of flooding and the role and work of Thames Water. And our Skills, Economy and Growth scrutiny commission is looking at the skills needed within our local labour market.

I will continue to be open, honest and transparent with the residents of Hackney of the challenges we face with our budget, and the ever increasing need to do more with less. And I expect my cabinet and councillor colleagues to continue our practice of engaging with residents in a meaningful way, not only through formal processes of statutory consultations, but through attending walkabouts with officers, holding surgeries, engaging with community groups and very soon taking myself and the Interim Chief Executive on short tours introducing the highlights and challenges of their wards directly to us.

I hope I have assured you of how seriously I take these responsibilities and commitments having been elected as your new Mayor, and I look forward to leading by example in the conduct of this administration.

6.6 To the Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation from Laura Summerfield

Can the Cabinet Member for housing please advise of its work over the last year to better support the housing needs of Hackney's Gypsy and Traveller community?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation

Thank you for your question concerning work to support the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller population in Hackney over the last year. I regret that you were not able to attend the meeting in person and am therefore happy to follow up in writing.

Hackney Council has long supported the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. Here in Hackney we are proud to have a community of over 800 Gypsies, Roma and travellers.

Some Irish Travelling communities migrated to Britain as long ago as the 13th century, and Roma Gypsies in the 15th. In this time, traveller communities have played a significant role in Britain's history in the development of national institutions, and the construction of our national identity.

Unfortunately Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people are often forgotten. And if they are not forgotten, then they are often being marginalised and maligned. For us in Hackney, that is unacceptable. We are a borough of sanctuary and it is important that we reiterate our total commitment and support for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community.

We are determined to demonstrate that support in practice, and will be reviewing and looking at our whole strategic housing approach for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people as part of developing a new Housing Strategy for Hackney in the next year.

Hackney currently has 27 pitches across five Traveller sites in the borough, which are managed and maintained by the Hackney Traveller Service. The service also provides a holistic support service to families living both on sites and in brick and mortar accommodation, working closely with Health, Education and independent Agencies.

In terms of new sites, although Bartrip Street had been earmarked for a new Gypsy, Roma and Traveller site, our investigations revealed this site would not be right or suitable to use.

Hackney Council has therefore found an alternative potential site that we can use. We have secured funding from the GLA to undertake some initial site investigations. We are currently procuring surveyors and engineers to undertake this work with the aim that they report back early next year.

We have to undertake the site investigations first - to test for things like pollution and noise - before we are able to say that the site is suitable for building pitches. Funding will also need to be identified for any new development.

Assuming a positive response from site investigations then we will be able to move into identifying and naming the site and begin formal consultation with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.

It is difficult at this point to provide precise timescales but, on average, it takes between one and two years, from beginning to end, to build a new Gypsy, Roma and Traveller site of around 8 or 9 pitches in size. We will keep everyone informed of progress made and the Council will give public notice of the formal consultation if the current site under investigation proves suitable.

I would be happy to provide written updates about this work in future, and on our wider work to support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people in the borough.

6.8 To the Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation from Ifeoma Mkparu

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Hackney Council dissolved Hackney Homes in March 2016. Please can the Cabinet Member explain why seven years on there are still Council run estates with old Hackney Homes branding?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation

Thank you for your question regarding the Hackney Homes-branded signs on some of the Council's managed estates. I regret that you were not able to attend the meeting in person and am therefore happy to follow up in writing.

In 2016, the Council made the determination to close its Arms Length Management Company (ALMO) - Hackney Homes, and to bring management of our Council homes back under the council's direct management in order to better serve our residents and provide a higher quality more efficient service.

We acknowledge that the old Hackney Homes branding still exists on some of our signs but we are confident that this does not detract from our ability to deliver a quality housing service. At the time, it was decided that the existing signs were in good condition and provided the necessary information, and therefore only to replace them as and when needed.

This is in line with our commitment to providing value for money for our residents, and the expenditure saved has been used to support the essential functions of our housing services.

We take pride in the appearance and maintenance of our estates and will replace signs as and when they become degraded. What really matters to our residents is good housing, an efficient repairs system, and ultimately a warm, safe, comfortable home; and I would be glad to advise further on all the work we are doing to keep making this a reality.

APPENDIX B

Questions from Councillors that were not responded to at the meeting.

7.7 From Cllr Garbett to the Deputy Cabinet Member for Private Rented Sector and Affordability

What is the average time and the longest time it has taken for applications for landlord licensing to be processed, and how many are waiting to be Processed?

Response from the Deputy Cabinet Member for Private Rented Sector and Affordability (Deputy Mayor Nicholson responding)

Thank you for tabling your question at November's Full Council concerning landlord licensing in Hackney. It was unfortunate that the time allocated for answering Member's Questions expired before we reached your question. I was asked to answer your question on behalf of my colleague Cllr Moema, hence the written response to your question coming from myself.

As you and other Councillors are aware Hackney Council has long campaigned for better housing standards in the Private Rented Sector and has supported Hackney's private renters realise their right to an affordable and good quality home.

The number of households in Hackney privately renting continues to rise and has doubled over the course of the last decade. The most recent housing led survey identified that 30% of households in Hackney now live in the private rented sector, which equates to approximately 34,000 homes.

In October 2018, Hackney Council implemented a pilot Selective Private Landlord Licensing scheme covering three wards in the borough. The scheme fell below the threshold requiring permission from the Secretary of State. The scheme was intended to enable good landlords to be recognised by private renters and, where housing related issues may be prevalent, for a system by which a clear line of accountability could be identified so problems could be resolved – the ultimate objective being to bring about an improvement in housing conditions for private renters through improved property management.

To date the Council has issued 5145 landlord licences as part of the pilot Selective Private Landlord Licensing Scheme. The number of licence applications that have been received and are yet to be issued is currently 1815. The Council is working to have all outstanding licences issued by the end of March 2024.

Hackney Council remains committed to the implementation of an extended Selective Licensing Scheme and is currently finalising the assessment and evidence base relating from the implementation of the existing pilot Selective Licensing Scheme. Once the assessment is complete a new application will be developed and because it is intended to cover the whole borough it will be

required to be submitted for consideration to the Secretary of State later in 2024. I hope this response has answered your question.

7.8 From Cllr Anna Lynch to Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services

In light of the ongoing catastrophe in Israel and Gaza and the trauma and distress this has caused many in the communities that we represent, can the Cabinet Member for Community Safety advise on what support the Council has provided for those communities living in our borough?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services

We have all been deeply affected by the tragic events in Israel and Gaza since 7 October. The suffering and loss of life is truly terrible. We know many Hackney residents are of Israeli or Palestinian heritage, or have connections to the region, and will be deeply anxious for loved ones and their wider communities.

In Hackney, we have felt the reverberations in a shocking rise in hate crime in our borough, across London and the UK. I know that anyone with links to the region, as well as our Muslim and Jewish residents in particular are concerned. It is more important than ever that we strengthen our ties as a diverse Hackney community of all faiths and none. We also know we need to engage with the full diversity of Hackney's faith communities.

Though the Council and our partners in the police and community safety groups have taken steps to stamp out hate and abuse, we know there is more to do.

In Hackney, we have a clear commitment to make Hackney No Place for Hate with our objective contained within our recently published Hackney Hate Crime Strategy 2023 to 2026.

In addition, our Muslim and Jewish communities have an established track record of working closely together to enhance community cohesion through close communication and working relationships.

Though there has been a rise in hate crime across London and in Hackney, it is a credit to our Muslim and Jewish communities that they have kept working together despite the difficult circumstances.

The Council's Community Safety Team is in regular contact with our Mosques in Hackney and has provided them with a named community safety contact to ensure we can quickly consider their concerns.

We have also been providing more frequent Enforcement Officer patrols in and around Hackney Mosques and Synagogues in a low key way.

The Muslim Communities' representatives did not want increased high visibility patrols, but wanted a named contact together with a method of reporting Hate Crimes and Incidents via a third party.

We have been responding expeditiously to reports of offensive graffiti and fly posting through our online waste services process [Hackney.Gov.UK/reportaproblem](https://hackney.gov.uk/reportaproblem). Our waste team has been exemplary in removing the offending graffiti or fly posting within 24hrs.

In addition, we meet weekly with a number of our community leaders from our Jewish Communities. During these meetings representatives expressed a need for high visibility uniform patrols in and around Schools and Synagogues and consequently our Enforcement Officers have provided 175 patrol hours in the community since the beginning of the conflict.

To further support community cohesion the Community Safety Team has been included in a Jewish Community Leaders WhatsApp group and through this communication have been able to provide accurate information to dispel rumours whilst providing support to reassure communities.

Our partnership response is coordinated weekly via our Community Safety Partnership Tasking meeting which is attended by the Police and a number of internal stakeholders.

There is also a weekly Police led briefing for the community which details the ongoing Police response to the conflict which Officers from Community Safety and I attend.

The Council has also influenced the Borough Command Unit in setting up a dedicated Team dealing with Hate Crime reports as a result of the conflict and Officers in the Team will be updating a weekly community meeting on the number of Hate Crime reports received in the previous week including if anyone has been charged following any investigations undertaken from reports received and on cases which will result in prosecution.

I know from recent discussions with faith partners that not all hate crimes are reported. I urge anyone who witnesses or is the victim of a hate crime to report it to the police, to our community enforcement teams, or by a third party such as "True Vision" or Tell Mama. Only then can we tackle this problem and show that Hackney is no place for hate.

7.9 From Cllr Narcross to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Following the tragic death of a cyclist on Whiston Road, many residents are concerned that the road remains far too dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians. What action is the Council taking to reduce traffic speed and vehicle number to ensure it remains a safe route for those who use it?

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

Thank you for your question regarding Whiston Road and the terrible collision that occurred which has resulted in the death of a cyclist. I really do appreciate your continued advocacy for this issue.

I share your concerns for the safety of cyclists and pedestrians on Whiston Road. We have not yet received the police incident report, which I am sure will be nothing short of forensic, given the loss of life. The report is likely to detail how/ why the collision happened and highlighted any other causation factors. The report may also make a series of recommendations which we, as the council, will earnestly review and consider.

Whilst I would not want to pre-suppose any actions the council may take once the contents of the report have been digested, we are aware that there is a frustratingly long standing issue with Whiston Road relating to both speed (85th percentile) and volume. Our original solution to this needed a partnership approach but unfortunately, this was not forthcoming from the other involved party.

We are currently going through the process of commissioning traffic surveys on both Whiston Road and the surrounding roads to give us a better understanding of the current traffic patterns. The next step is to determine a solution on what can be done to reduce speeds and enable our residents to feel safer whilst they use this road.

The Council is working on identifying funds to implement measures at Whiston Road. Whilst we await the full report from the Police and possible recommendations we have asked the MET's cycle safety to complete close pass enforcement and we will also encourage residents participation in aiding the Community Road watch which is relevant to speeding concerns.

I do understand the cause of concern. A loss of life on our roads is keenly felt by all those in Streetscene and the community. We will work tirelessly, both internally and with our external partners, to make our roads as safe as possible.

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

The New River Path is a much-loved place to stroll along and enjoy nature. What is the Council doing to improve access for all, explore options for safe cycle routes away from the peaceful pedestrian path and enhance biodiversity?

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

I am writing to thank you for your question directed to me in advance of Full Council. Unfortunately we ran out of time to take the question that evening, which is why I am responding in writing.

Your concern for the New River Path is appreciated - thank you for your advocacy of this issue. In line with your question, the Council has developed a number of initiatives to increase accessibility, explore more safe cycle routes and enhance biodiversity.

Accessibility of New River Path

The New River Path has been shared for many years by pedestrians, runners, dog walkers and cyclists. In recent years the path has regularly become very muddy with numerous puddles proving difficult for those with buggies or wheelchairs to use.

As part of the West Reservoir Improvement Project, we have recently resurfaced the path to make it more accessible, and have plans to replace the existing stepped bridge with a level accessible bridge. Roundels have been painted on the path, along with the words 'pedestrian priority'. Further signage emphasising 'pedestrian priority' will be erected, consistent with signage in some other public spaces in the borough.

The Council is open to exploring suggestions for the provision of an alternative cycle route. However, some of the roads in the immediate vicinity are part of the Woodberry Down development and have not yet been adopted by the Council. As per this adoption process, the Council will enter into discussions with the developer and we will consider what work would be required to provide an additional route. **We would warmly welcome your input as this progresses.**

As part of the wider programme, we know how important it is to provide safe conditions for cycling. Hackney is one of the most cycle friendly boroughs in London with one of the highest rates of cycling and the Council has an ambitious plan to improve conditions for cycling in the borough, which were detailed in the Local Implementation Plan published in January 2023. The plans included increasing coverage of low traffic measures in the borough, as well as several cycling schemes, including Cycleway 23 that runs across the borough from Lea Bridge to Dalston, which is due for completion this year.

Closer to the area in question, in recent years the Council introduced a separated cycle lane along Green Lanes and is currently working with Transport for London to investigate options for improving parts of Seven Sisters Road for walking and cycling.

I hope this sets a firm foundation for managing cycle infrastructure that allows us to direct cyclists to safe routes and prioritise pedestrians on dedicated pathways. We want the borough to become safer, friendlier and more inclusive for all.

Enhancing biodiversity

The Council is working on a number of initiatives to enhance biodiversity and this is a core component of our environmental strategy. With regards to this, we have recently adopted the Green Infrastructure Strategy and Local Nature Recovery Plan. We know that conserving wildlife in urban areas is both a challenge and a necessity, especially as there are multiple competing land-uses in urban areas.

This is only exacerbated by high population density and intense recreational demand on existing parks and green spaces. It's a Council priority because of

the moral responsibility to provide space for wildlife amongst us, but also because we know that making space for nature has associated benefits for our residents.

The Local Nature Recovery Plan specifically mentions that we need to improve the riverine corridor created by the New River. As such, we have now sown approximately 800m² of wildflower seed along this route, which has very high floristic diversity including excellent pollinator species. The policy case for planting wildflowers is strong - it will vastly increase the diversity of native and water's edge-appropriate flora along this route.

As part of the wider West Reservoir Improvement Project, biodiversity around the reservoir will be enhanced, with bug hotels, new trees, hedges and an extensive new area of reedbeds being planted. The proposed new cafe will have a green roof and Sustainable Drainage areas will be incorporated into the design. This will vastly improve the biodiversity of this important site, and ensure that it can continue to be enjoyed by all.

I thank you again for your question and look forward to working with you closely on New River Path.

7.11 From Cllr Gordon to the Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing and Customer Service

We know Councils have undergone significant cuts in Government funding Since 2010 - in Hackney we've had a real terms cut of 41%. Can the Cabinet Member reassure us that services for our most vulnerable residents will be protected in the coming financial year?

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

You are correct to point out that the Council has incurred real terms cuts in external funding of 41% since 2010. This also means we have had to raise more from Council Tax than ever before placing more pressure on our residents.

That is why in our manifesto we committed to support our most vulnerable residents by giving low-income households a bigger discount on their Council Tax bill, despite no support from the Government for this. The first stage of that commitment was to provide low-income households with a 90% discount on their Council Tax bill by 2026. We've recently consulted on delivering that commitment 2 years early in April 2024

I must also thank you for your role in chairing the Scrutiny Panel in its wide-ranging review of the council tax reduction scheme which provided a range of evidence which fed into our proposal and our consultation process.

We cannot, though, ignore the fact that the Council is facing unprecedented financial challenges, as the increased demand on our services and the recent high levels of inflation alongside funding cuts place pressures on our finances. For the period 2024/25 to 2026/27 we have an estimated funding gap of some £57m.

A primary driver of this is the additional funding we need to set aside to meet the increasing demand for vital social care services for children, young people and adults in a system which is increasingly underfunded. We are also facing unprecedented demand in our homelessness services as more and more of our residents are unable to keep pace with rising rents in the borough.

All of this means that we will have tough decisions to make in setting a balanced budget for next year. As ever, we will do this in a carefully planned and considered way. We continue to make sure our budget proposals are fully worked up with the impacts on our residents fully considered and that they are subject to our now well established budget scrutiny process.

I also must mention last week's Autumn Statement by the Chancellor which announced very little for Local Government. There was no response to the social care pressures with funding no more than had already been announced last year. There was some new money for homelessness prevention - but at £120m nationally this is wholly insufficient to meet the problems faced. While we welcome some support for businesses and increases in pensions and benefits including an uplift in the local housing allowance there was no mention of a continuation of the Household Support Fund - which at £5.6m locally as provided a vital lifeline for some of the most in need in our communities.

7.12 From Cllr Rathbone to the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

The Clapton Portico building was meant to have opened this autumn as the new home of the Lower Clapton GP surgery but has still not done so. Please could the Cabinet Member for Health update Members on the progress of building work here?

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

Thank you for your question in advance of Full Council about the reopening of the Portico as the Lower Clapton GP surgery, which I am now following up in writing.

Practical Completion on this project was due for the last day of November this year. It is important to clarify that "Practical Completion" is the completion of the programme of works and means that the building is ready to be handed over to the Council. The opening of the surgery will subsequently occur when the GP Practice has completed its own preparations.

As you are aware, the Portico is of a certain age, is Grade 2 listed and of a very particular design. As work has progressed, this old landmark has revealed some hidden challenges which the contractor must deal with sympathetically to ensure the quality of the building is kept intact. To date that has led to a delay in Practical Completion. Recent re-calculation of the programme to create the space to accommodate this careful work has led to a projected "Practical Completion" of no sooner than the end of January next year, and that would allow the Practice to commence its own preparation of the new facilities.

A glance into the site will give passers-by a sense that completion is close at hand, and the Council's Project Management team is monitoring the final works closely to ensure that nothing is missed in the process, and before it is accepted and passed over to the incoming Practice.

I hope this has clarified the current position and would be happy to link you with Chris Pritchard in Strategic Property if you wish to discuss this further.

7.13 From Cllr Joseph to the Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing Needs and Homelessness

The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission has focussed on the stressful and isolating impacts of life in temporary accommodation. Can the Cabinet Member tell us what is being done to mitigate the potentially isolating effects of temporary accommodation, to monitor children's welfare and to improve families quality of life?

Response from the Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing Needs and Homelessness

Thank you for our question directed to me in advance of Full Council on support for residents in temporary accommodation. As the meeting did not get to the question on the night I am following up in writing.

I recognise that living in TA can have significant negative impacts on a household's health and wellbeing. Living in temporary accommodation is disruptive and unsettling to residents and their families, and while we work with them to help find accommodation, we also look to provide additional support to mitigate the challenges they face.

Isolation can be a particular concern and we encourage all our residents to speak regularly with officers not just about their housing options but also other support they might need. We will signpost or actively engage with other services and organisations that we work with and could help. One example of this is Engage Hackney, and we have also been working closely with NHS partners on how we can improve access to NHS services through outreach and in practice work, and also by developing community hubs.

We look to offer additional support for households with children, where living in temporary accommodation presents unique challenges. For example, we work with CARIS Families, a grassroots charity that runs support services for homeless children and their parents living in hostels in the London Boroughs of Camden and Hackney. They run an after-school club at Royal Park Hostel, offering play and arts and crafts activities to resident children, and run a Homework Club offering one-to-one academic help and mentoring to school-age residents.

We also support the Hackney Playbus, which is a small charity dedicated to bringing play opportunities and support to families who need it the most. They visit our hostels to deliver play sessions that provide a variety of resources

and activities that support children's early learning and development in all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

City and Hackney's Enhanced Health Visiting team is a universal nurse-led service for all residents with children aged up to five. Specialist public health nurses visit families in their homes and community spaces and use strength-based approaches to support behaviour change, promote health and keep children safe. Their new service was launched in September 2023 called the 'Enhanced Health Visiting Service', which includes eleven senior nursing roles for areas of health that are considered to have the most impact on health and well-being outcomes and are reflective of the needs of families residing in Hackney. This includes a lead role for a senior nurse to support 'homeless or vulnerably housed' families.

Families on this caseload receive targeted levels of care tailored to their specific needs which could include more frequent visits by the health visitor to provide an opportunity to establish trust and develop an understanding of the family's needs. The nurse undertakes an initial holistic assessment and organises support for families to access other services, such as the support available within City and Hackney's early years settings and children's centres or mental health services. The health visitor will help address families' broader health and well-being concerns, such as reducing isolation or providing opportunities for young children to access safe spaces to explore their surroundings and develop their gross motor skills.

Children's Centres in Hackney also conduct extensive outreach across hostels, working with hostel managers to identify support needs. For example, The Sebright Children Centre recently reported successful work with a hotel in Hoxton earlier this year, where 24 families living in a hotel were provided targeted family support. Some examples of support include helping families to access food vouchers through the Alexander Rose Charity. This charitable scheme, partially funded by public health, provides eligible families with vouchers that can be spent in markets to buy fruit and vegetables. Other support included assisting children with speech and language needs to access services and stay-and-play facilities to support child development. This work is not unique and occurs across all the centres, working with health colleagues to provide holistic support for families. Midwives and health visitors refer families living in temporary accommodation to the Multi-Agency Team for early years services that provide a gateway to all available services to families in the borough.

Despite our best efforts to provide good quality temporary accommodation that meets the needs of residents, temporary accommodation is not a substitute for a settled home. The best way to improve family life is to help them into a home. We provide ongoing support and advice to residents so they are able to make informed decisions about longer term housing and can provide financial assistance in meeting rent in advance, deposit and moving costs to facilitate this.

I hope this has clarified the programmes available and our commitment to ensuring temporary accommodation residents are supported as much as possible.