



London Borough of Hackney – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Monday 11 December 2023

This document outlines the decisions taken by Cabinet on Monday, 11 December 2023.

Decisions listed below that are Key Decisions will come into force and may then be implemented on the expiry of 5 clear working days, unless called-in by at least 5 non-executive members in writing and submitted to the Monitoring Officer using the attached form;

[Executive Decision Call-in Request](#)

Date of Publication: 11 December 2023

Last Date for Call-In: 18 December 2023

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Part A – Items considered in public

8	F S209 2023/24 Overall Financial Position Report - October 2023	<b>RESOLVED:</b>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="891 1086 2063 1150">1. To approve the savings summarised at paragraph 2.9 of this report and set out in detail at Appendix.</li><li data-bbox="891 1190 2024 1353">2. Approve the acceptance of the grant of £2,938,093 from the Department for Energy Security &amp; Net Zero’s Green Heat Network Fund (GHNF) managed by Triple Point to support decarbonisation of the Colville and Britannia Heat Network and agree to enter into a grant agreement and associated documents with the applicable parties in respect of such funding.</li><li data-bbox="891 1393 2063 1422">3. To note the overall financial position of the Council as at October 2023 as set out</li></ol>
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		<p align="center"><b>in this report.</b></p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>To facilitate financial management and control of the Council's finances and to approve the 5 savings schemes and the acceptance of the GHNF grant allocation</p> <p>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>This budget monitoring report is primarily an update on the Council's financial position. On the proposal to accept £2,938,093 of funding from the Green Heat Network Fund (GHNF), the alternative is not to accept this grant. This would mean missing out on this opportunity, and the Colville and Britannia Heat Network would either not go ahead as planned or we would need to reprioritise and displace existing projects on the capital programme. The savings listed at 2.9 are necessary to achieve a balanced budget in 2024-25</p>
9	F S208 Capital Update and Property Disposals And Acquisitions Report	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p>1. That the scheme for Childrens and Education Directorate as set out in section 11 be given approval as follows:</p> <p><b>Care Leavers Hub (Relocation):</b> Resource and spend approval of <b>£300k (£15k in 2023/24 and £285k in 2024/25)</b> is requested to enable Council Officers to develop a Hackney Care Leavers Hub, which will provide a physical space in the borough for Hackney Care Leavers to come together and access support.</p> <p><b>Ferncliff Family Centre CCTV Installation and Repairs Work:</b> Resource and spend approval <b>of £82k in 2023/24</b> is requested to re-establish a secure CCTV system and remedial works at the site which will allow the Ferncliffe Family Centre to maintain a secure and safe area for its service users and for the security of the building in general.</p>

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		<p><b>Shoreditch Park New Play Hut:</b> Resource and spend approval of <b>£223k in 2024/25</b> is requested to enable the Council’s Officers to appoint a contractor to carry out the construction works of a new play hut at Shoreditch Adventure Playground and the demolition of the existing play hut.</p> <p><b>2. That the scheme for Finance and Corporate Resources Directorate as set out in section 11 be given approval as follows:</b></p> <p><b>40-43 Andrews Road (Rerouting of Existing Electrical Intake Supply):</b> Resource and spend approval of <b>£72k (£58k in 2023/24 and £13k in 2024/25)</b> is requested to enable Council Officers to progress the urgent health and safety works of re-routing of existing electrical intake supply at this site.</p> <p><b>3. That the scheme for Climate, Homes &amp; Economy Directorate as set out in section 11 be given approval as follows:</b></p> <p><b>Millfields Depot (Electrification Feasibility and Replacing Obsolete Charging Infrastructure):</b> Resource and spend approval of <b>£120k in 2023/24</b> is requested to enable Council Officers to replace the obsolete charging infrastructure and to engage UK Power Network Services to conduct a feasibility study which will identify potential strategies to successfully deliver the long term ambition to electrify Hackney’s fleet of vehicles.</p> <p><b>4. That the s106 Capital scheme summarised below and set out in section 11 be approved:</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="938 1362 2009 1398"> <tr> <td align="center"><b>S106</b></td> <td align="center"><b>2024/25 £'000</b></td> </tr> </table>	<b>S106</b>	<b>2024/25 £'000</b>
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		<table border="1" data-bbox="936 411 2007 480"> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="947 419 1794 443">Capital</td> <td data-bbox="1794 419 1995 443">126</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="947 443 1794 467"><b>Total S106 Capital for Approval</b></td> <td data-bbox="1794 443 1995 467"><b>126</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p data-bbox="891 517 1659 544"><b>5. That the schemes outlined in section 12 to be noted.</b></p> <p data-bbox="891 584 2063 815"><b>6. Authorise (1) the surrender of the head lease to Shoreditch Town Hall Trust of the land under title number EGL446822 shown for identification purposes edged red on the plan at Appendix 1; (2) the simultaneous regrants of a superior lease of the Annexe for 150 years to Shoreditch Town Hall Trust; (3) the simultaneous regrants of a superior lease of the Car Park Site for further 78 years to Shoreditch Town Hall Trust and (4) approval of a new sublease to be granted by Shoreditch Town Hall Trust to The Office Group for 150 years.</b></p> <p data-bbox="891 855 2051 951"><b>7. To authorise the Acting Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services and the Director of Strategic Property Services to agree all commercial terms of the transactions.</b></p> <p data-bbox="891 991 2029 1086"><b>8. To delegate authority to the Interim Group Director of Finance and the Acting Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services to agree to all other terms and documentation.</b></p> <p data-bbox="891 1126 1442 1153"><b>9. Reason(s) for the recommendations:</b></p> <p data-bbox="891 1193 2063 1326"><b>9.1 Proposed Disposal of Shoreditch Town Hall Annexe and Car Park Site, Rivington Place, London, EC2A 3BA: The proposed set of transactions will be subject to the receipt of a premium paid by The Office Group. This amount will be subject to a fair and reasonable split between the Council and Shoreditch Town Hall Trust.</b></p> <p data-bbox="891 1366 2029 1393"><b>9.2 The capital receipt by Shoreditch Town Hall Trust will assist the organisation in</b></p>	Capital	126	<b>Total S106 Capital for Approval</b>	<b>126</b>
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		<p align="center"><b>funding essential works that it is required to carry out to the building under the terms of its long leasehold interest from the Council.</b></p> <p align="center"><b>9.3 This proposed transaction, which exceeds the Council's current freehold value, has the potential to unlock a significantly higher marriage value and provide a substantial capital receipt for the Council, as well as Shoreditch Town Hall Trust.</b></p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>The decisions required are necessary in order that the schemes within the Council’s approved Capital programme can be delivered and to approve the property proposals as set out in this report.</p> <p>In most cases, resources have already been allocated to the schemes as part of the budget setting exercise but spending approval is required in order for the scheme to proceed. Where, however, resources have not previously been allocated, resource approval is requested in this report.</p> <p>To facilitate financial management and control of the Council's finances.</p> <p>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p><b>Proposed Disposal of Shoreditch Town Hall Annexe and Car Park Site, Rivington Place, London, EC2A 3BA:</b> The alternative option for the Council is to reject the proposal. This would mean that the existing lease arrangements remain in place with expiries in 2101.</p> <p>This option has been considered but rejected because both the Council and Shoreditch Town Hall Trust stand to benefit from the transaction by way of a capital receipt. The Office Group is a special purchaser that may not be willing to pay such a sum or proceed with the transaction</p>

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		<p>at all at a later date. If the Council does not take the opportunity now, it may not be available again in the future.</p> <p>Shoreditch Town Hall Trust will use its share of the receipt to invest in essential works to the building. The business plan attached to this report sets out the necessity and benefits of these works. Shoreditch Town Hall Trust has made clear the difficulties it has had in obtaining alternative funding sources and it could potentially rely heavily on the receipt from this proposed transaction. The fair and reasonable allocation to Shoreditch Town Hall Trust will not cover all of the proposed works but it will allow Shoreditch Town Hall Trust to at least consider and undertake works that it considers to be a priority.</p>
<b>10</b>	CE S283 Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p><b>Cabinet agree to:</b></p> <p><b>3.1 close (discontinue) De Beauvoir Primary School from September 2024</b></p> <p><b>3.2 close (discontinue) Randal Cremer Primary School from September 2024.</b></p> <p><b>3.3 close (discontinue) Colvestone Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Princess May Primary School if they want it.</b></p> <p><b>3.4 close (discontinue) Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, guaranteeing all children a place at Nightingale Primary School if they want it.</b></p> <p><b>3.5 increase the published admission number of Nightingale Primary School by adding an additional form of entry to all year groups. This proposal is related to the recommendation at 3.4.</b></p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p>

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		<p><b>Background</b></p> <p>Following seven years of unprecedented growth, the number of primary aged children joining reception classes in Hackney primary schools peaked in 2014/15 and has been in steady decline since, a trend observed across London and most prevalent in inner-London boroughs. Applying the information available to us, pupil numbers joining reception classes are not forecast to rise significantly in the medium to long-term, for the time we have forecasts for (up to 2031/2032 see Appendix C). School funding is primarily determined by the number of children on roll, and falling rolls equate to reduced funding to deliver education across the borough.</p> <p>The School Organisation Plan (SOP) and Education Sufficiency and Estates Strategy (ESES) form the policy basis for the proposals which relate to priority 2 of the ESES: to address falling primary school rolls, by working with schools with budget pressures and falling pupil rolls to seek viable long-term solutions. (see section 10 for further detail)</p> <p>If the proposals in this report are taken forward, the Council will consider whether any vacated site could reasonably be utilised in addressing priority 1, the significant increase in demand for SEND education provision.</p> <p>At the time of writing schools in Hackney are 98% good or outstanding and the proposals in this paper are no reflection of the quality of the leadership or teaching, only the falling rolls issue which is faced across London. The schools in these proposals have gone above and beyond to ensure that the falling rolls have impacted as little as possible. However it is not sustainable to continue running half empty schools. The council acknowledges the outstanding support these schools have provided to children with SEND, across Hackney.</p> <p>The Council acknowledges the outstanding support offered to Colvestone Primary School by</p>

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		<p>the Blossom Federation, who have expertly stabilised the school’s financial position, having inherited an historical deficit from the previous leadership of the school. This temporary soft partnership (recently extended until July 2024) allows Colvestone to receive leadership and business support to improve standards and children’s outcomes, all of which has been achieved with the support of The Blossom Federation, who led the school to being assessed as ‘Good’ by OFSTED in October 2023.</p> <p>The Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are a sufficient number of school places for pupils and that places are planned effectively. The Council monitors surplus reception places, a key measure of demand, and aims to maintain a 5-10% surplus across all Hackney primary schools.</p> <p>Despite removing 375 reception places through formal reductions in published admission numbers (PANs) (as distinct from unofficially ‘capping’ admission numbers) across Hackney schools between 2019 and 2023, the projections still indicate a steady increase in surplus reception places from 19% in 2023/24 up to 23% in 2025/26. This surplus is then projected to slowly decrease and stagnate at 20% until the end of the projection period in 2031/32. Analysis of past, current and projected demand and summary of reception places removed to date is provided in Appendix C. There will still be unutilised capacity in schools and over 200 additional places that could be reinstated should they be required in future years (table 7, appendix C).</p> <p>Financial reserves are reducing at an alarming and unsustainable rate across Hackney’s maintained primary schools, or the federations they form part of, and are projected to fall by £6.48m or 70% in the two years to March 2024. The combined surplus totalled £9.08m in 2021/22, fell significantly to £5.8m in 2022/23, and is forecast to drop further to £2.6m at the close of 2023/24 financial year.</p> <p>Over two thirds of Hackney’s maintained schools, or the federations they form part of, are predicting they will over-spend during the 2023/24 financial year.</p>



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		<p>For schools to remain financially viable, school governors and leaders are forced to make difficult decisions about whether to reduce the number of teachers or teaching assistants and support staff. School leaders tend to delay investment or maintenance of school buildings and equipment or find other savings, all of which impacts negatively on the quality of education and school experience for Hackney children and staff.</p> <p>The recently undertaken Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2023 indicates that household growth in Hackney between 2022 and 2039 will be predominantly single people (+45.1%) and cohabiting, i.e. shared living, households (+44.2%). In comparison, there is little change in the projection for families with children over the same period. With the exception of Stamford Hill, the majority of Borough-wide housing need is for smaller homes. This is important in considering the likely effect of such housing on pupil numbers.</p> <p>While there are variances across the different housing tenures, across the Council’s programme as a whole, just over 70% of the homes delivered have been 1 and 2 bed homes; with just under 30% comprising a mix of 3 and 4 bed family sized homes. This is broadly consistent with policy LP14 as outlined in LP33, which, depending on the tenure of housing, requires all new developments to comprise a mix of family sized homes, ranging from 15 to 36%. Despite Hackney building new homes the numbers will be insufficient to have any significant impact on the proposals in this report for schools in scope for closure and/or merger.</p> <p>Hackney Education’s senior leadership team took the decision to propose closure and amalgamation/merger of the student body of six schools in September 2022 following analysis of a range of objective measures evidencing the impact of falling rolls on school’s viability. Following early engagement with head teachers and chairs of governors from January 2023 the proposals were publicly launched on 28 March 2023 and school community engagement activity was undertaken with staff and parents in April 2023. Community queries and feedback from March to May period can be seen in Appendix D by theme (as it was detailed in May 2023</p>

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		<p>Cabinet report - Appendix E).</p> <p>Throughout the process, officers followed the process set out in the Department for Education (DfE) publication, Opening and closing maintained schools Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers, January 2023, (the Guidance). The Council must have regard to this Guidance which sets out the considerations that should be made by the decision maker when deciding proposals to discontinue (close) a school. It requires that those making the decisions on the proposals should be satisfied that the proposer has carried out the requirements of the statutory process satisfactorily and should have due regard to all responses received during the representation period. Cabinet members should review all responses before the meeting. These are substantial.</p> <p><b>Cabinet decisions in May 2023 and September 2023</b></p> <p>On 22 May 2023 Cabinet decided to proceed to consultation on all five proposals (The May cabinet paper is included as Appendix E). As part of this decision, the Cabinet considered comment and feedback received during a period of early engagement and this is provided with this report in Appendix D for the consideration of decision makers. Following the May Cabinet decision a consultation ran for 6 weeks, from 5 June to 16 July 2023, gathering feedback on the proposals from parents and staff of the schools in scope and other stakeholders that may be impacted by the decisions. The key themes raised in the early engagement period were raised again during the consultation and are addressed in the response and commentary in the September 2023 report.</p> <p>On September 25 2023 cabinet members considered the consultation feedback and agreed to publish statutory notices for the proposals. The September cabinet report (Appendix F) included a paper detailing the analysis of comments and objections received during the consultation. Comprehensive summaries of this information have also been provided for this and the previous engagement.</p>

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		<p>The local authority’s detailed responses to the previous stages of engagement and consultation feedback are provided as above. Details can be seen in the September 2023 Cabinet paper (Appendix F), which summarised the Kwest report from the consultation phase (Appendix G) and reviewed by cabinet in September.</p> <p><b>Statutory notice summary</b></p> <p>Following the Cabinet decision on 25 September 2023, statutory notices in respect of the five proposals as outlined in section 3 above were issued for a period of 28 days. The evidence for and rationale for the decision to move to statutory notice is set out in the September cabinet report (Appendix F).</p> <p>The statutory representation period ran from 6 October to 3 November 2023. Statutory notices which were posted for 28 days for objection or comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal to discontinue Randal Cremer Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Appendix H)</li> <li>• Proposal to discontinue De Beauvoir Primary School under s15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (Appendix I)</li> <li>• Proposal to discontinue Baden Powell Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Nightingale Primary School (Appendix J)</li> <li>• Proposal to discontinue Colvestone Primary School and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School (Appendix K)</li> <li>• Proposal to increase Nightingale Primary School from 1 form of entry (1FE) to 2 forms of entry (2FE) (Appendix L)</li> </ul> <p>The Guidance states that “The proposer must publish the full proposal on a website along with a statement setting out: • how copies of the proposal may be obtained; • that anybody can object to, or comment on, the proposal; • the date that the representation period ends (4 weeks</p>

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		<p>from publication); and • the address to which objections or comments should be submitted. A brief notice containing the website address of the full proposal must be published in a local newspaper.</p> <p>In accordance with these requirements, notices (Appendix H to L) were published in a local paper, Hackney Citizen newspaper on 6 October 2023. The Statutory notices were also published on Citizen Space (the Council’s engagement platform) in English, Bengali, Turkish, Portuguese, Slovak and Spanish, and on Hackney Education’s website. The notices were posted publicly outside the school premises and all parents/carers, staff and school governors received copies of the notice pertaining to their school with signposting to the council’s website for further information.</p> <p>Other stakeholders, internal and external audiences, local residents and partner organisations were informed about the statutory notices and invited to comment. Copies of all statutory notices were also sent to neighbouring Local Authorities, Hackney MPs and Councillors and Trade Unions representing school staff in accordance with statutory guidance. Copies were sent to all those required under the Guidance.</p> <p>The Council utilised a variety of methods to publicise the notices such as website updates, newsletters, social media posts, a press release, an article in Love Hackney (distributed to 120,000 homes and businesses in Hackney), email and digital screens across council sites. Publicity exceeded that required by the Guidance, because of the significance of the proposals to residents and the desire to engage as many residents as possible.</p> <p><b>Responses to the statutory notices</b></p> <p>There were 164 responses during the representation period received via Citizen Space (Hackney’s online platform), 10 emails and 1 letter. The responses included one from Save Colvestone, consisting of 284 pages. Five responses were received past the deadline of 5pm</p>

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		<p>on 3 November 2023. These late submissions have not been included for analysis.</p> <p>The representation period provided a further opportunity for stakeholders to comment on the proposals, the first being pre-engagement events in March through to April 2023, followed by the consultation period which ran from 5 June to 16 July 2023.</p> <p><b>Analysis of statutory notice submissions</b></p> <p>The representation period response has been analysed and reviewed by an independent third party, Kwest (Appendix M). Of the 175 responses received (164 citizen space, 10 emails and 1 letter), each respondent could comment on one, several or all of the statutory proposals and therefore the number of responses per proposal is greater than 175. Kwest have analysed 172 of the responses together, excluding 3 emails submitted with large PDF attachments, which have been analysed separately in their report. These large PDF submissions are included, in full, in appendix 3 of the Kwest report (Appendix M).</p> <p>Across all 5 proposals, there were 219 responses that were clearly supportive or not supportive. Of these, 207 responses (95%) did not support the proposals and 12 responses (5%) were supportive. With the exception of the proposal to close Colvestone and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School, only a small number of comments were received in response to each of the other statutory proposals.</p> <p>Over 60% of all responses that appeared relevant related to the proposal to close Colvestone and amalgamate the student body with Princess May Primary School (143 responses). The number of responses to the other four proposals ranged from 20 to 30. Many of these responses were short words or sentences comprising a broad statement of the respondents' views. For the proposals on the closure of De Beauvoir and expansion of Nightingale, these short comments made up half of the feedback that appeared relevant.</p>

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Proposal	Number of responses	Appeared relevant**	Number in favour	Number against
Closure of De Beauvoir	24	22	2	17
Closure of Randal Cremer	26	24	1	20

Proposal	Number of responses	Appeared relevant**	Number in favour	Number against
Amalgamation of Colvestone & Princess May	146	143	2	138
Amalgamation of Baden Powell & Nightingale	30	28	3	24
Expansion of Nightingale	20	15	4	8

*\*\* 7 responses included no comments about any of the proposals.*

**General themes arising from comments and objections received during the representation period**

**Note for decision makers:** Responses to the proposals, made during the initial engagement, the consultation and representation period are appended to this report (appendix D , G , M). Cabinet members are asked to ensure that they have reviewed all these documents before the meeting. A hard copy of the comments and objections made during the statutory representation period will be available at the meeting. Decision makers are also asked to note that while the Kwest report refers to closure for two schools and amalgamation for the other two pairs of schools, this is a difference in nomenclature only.

**Theme: Respondents do not want their school to close/merge**

eg. brief responses, containing only a small number of words or a short statement, for example, “disagree” or “please don’t close this school”.

**Response:** The Council understands children, parents, staff and the wider community do not

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		<p>want to see their local schools close for all the reasons outlined in the feedback received, however the overriding need to reduce the number of primary schools in Hackney is clear.</p> <p>In recent years school leaders and the Council have worked to progress a number of approaches, with a focus on preventing the escalation of risk to those in scope for potential closure or amalgamation. The actions taken include restructuring school staffing levels, reducing the amount of available support staff, limiting extra curricular activity such as school trips, ‘vertical grouping’ by combining different year groups in some schools, formally reducing and capping reception places. Unfortunately, because the fall in pupil numbers is significant and sustained, these actions have not sufficiently addressed the challenge of falling rolls and the level of risk for some schools in terms of sustainability remains unacceptably high.</p> <p>The Council wants every single child to have access to an excellent education that allows them to fulfil their potential and achieve their ambitions. This is why the very difficult options of closures or mergers outlined in this report must now be considered.</p> <p><b>Theme: Existing school provides good support for children with SEND</b>                      Eg. “We have a high number of SEND children on roll and I know we provide an outstanding provision for them. I worry for their future as many schools do not show the inclusion and love and we do, families are heavily supported by us.”</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The Council acknowledges the excellent support provided by Hackney schools for children with SEND and acknowledges in particular that provided in those schools proposed to close.</p> <p>Unfortunately the support provided will become increasingly difficult to sustain for schools with falling rolls. The financial impact of low pupil numbers is cumulative and means that, in the coming years, these schools are unlikely to be unable to continue to provide the same level of support without exhausting contingency funds or going into deficit.</p>

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The number and percentage of children (Reception to Yr 6) with Education, Health and Care Plans and requiring SEND support in schools impacted by the proposals is outlined below (May 2023 data).

School	Number of pupils with EHCPs	% of pupils with EHCPs	Number of pupils requiring SEND support	% of pupils with SEND Support
Baden Powell	8	4.8%	22	13.1%
Colvestone	10	7.7%	21	16.2%
De Beauvoir	10	9.1%	28	25.5%
Nightingale	24	11.9%	30	14.9%
Princess May	10	5.1%	17	8.7%
Randal Cremer	17	7.0%	42	17.4%
Hackney*	843	4.6%	2,656	15.2%
England*	116,661	2.5%	608,827	13.5%

*\* Hackney and England data, DfE SEND National Statistics, June 2023*

Representations made to the Council state that Colvestone School has a higher proportion of children with SEND (17%) than the national average (13%), and that the numbers are such that 25% of children in that school have SEND. Cabinet will wish to be aware of this when taking into account the extent of impact of the proposals and its duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010. (See legal comments, section 13)

**Theme: Larger schools have more problems / less support. Small class sizes / schools are better for children.** eg. “Small class sizes are good for children.”

The National Education Union submitted a response at the request of parents and NEU members of Colvestone expressing the belief that “there are significant benefits in retaining



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		<p>small one form entry primary schools wherever possible. Whilst we understand the financial difficulties presented by years of government underfunding we believe that smaller schools and smaller class sizes are a desirable aim for our students.” As well as improved academic progress they argue that smaller schools and smaller class sizes have benefits including more tailored learning, more social confidence and inclusion, staff know their children better and that parents have a better relationship with schools.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Small and large schools each have strengths and challenges relating to their size. A school’s ethos and leadership are considered more significant factors than school size in determining successful outcomes. The council does not accept that larger schools generally have more problems and less support.</p> <p>While a review of evidence suggests there may be small benefits for student attainment in significantly smaller class sizes, unfortunately the Council cannot retain schools where small classes are bringing significant financial burden and threatening financial viability. Smaller schools e.g. one form entry schools, that are not full in all year groups are disproportionately affected by falling rolls, making them more financially vulnerable.</p> <p>Some schools have had their pupil numbers (PAN) reduced but still have larger buildings and sites to maintain. These schools will have higher premises costs while having a significantly smaller budget. Underinvestment will create longer term issues and increased need for future funding to deal with a lack of maintenance.</p> <p><b>Theme: The School has a good reputation and excellent staff.</b> eg. “These schools, and the staff who work in them, have been pillars of education in our community for decades. Their closure would be a devastating loss for current and future generations. This is an opportunity to reduce class sizes and improve education in the borough, not make it worse.”</p>

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		<p><b>Response:</b> The Council acknowledges the incredible support staff provide for children and families, despite many facing personal stress and uncertainty as a result of these proposals.</p> <p>All six schools included in the current proposals are rated ‘Good’. This is recognised by the Council.</p> <p>While schools’ performance and reputation is an important factor that influences parents’ decision on where to send their children, and can help protect those with the best results, this isn’t the case for Hackney, where over 98% of the primary schools are rated ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted.</p> <p><b>Theme: Move will negatively affect children</b> eg. “Many pupils will be separated from their friends at a key time in their lives, with SEND pupils who have built relationships with staff particularly affected.”</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The council understands that changing schools or the arrival of pupils from a closing school is likely to be a challenging transition for the majority of children. We acknowledge these concerns and are seeking to minimise disruption as much as possible. We acknowledge that change, such as of staff, can be particularly difficult for pupils with SEND.</p> <p>The decision to close or merge schools is not made lightly. Schools with low numbers become less financially viable over time, using surplus funds or going into deficit to ensure the quality of education is maintained. The Council is liable for any maintained school deficits, and must decide annually whether to continue to fund a school in deficit. If the Council allows schools with falling rolls to come under increasing financial pressure and go into deficit by allowing them to stay open when they are not financially viable, they are directly and knowingly taking on increased financial burden and responsibility, which can further negatively impact the quality of the education in the borough. School deficits are borne by the Council in the event of closure.</p>

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		<p>While the council recognises that children will be affected, primary schools are highly experienced in supporting children who transition to secondary schools, as well as those who are transferring from one school to another during the school year.</p> <p>Since the beginning of the year, the Council has been working closely with the six schools, and will continue to do so, offering them the information and assistance needed to help families and children during the process. If the Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposals, the Council will work together with schools and families to make sure that transition plans are in place to minimise the impact on the children’s wellbeing.</p> <p>Specialist SEND professionals including Educational Psychology and Speech and Language therapists will continue to work with settings and pupils to ensure that children with SEND receive robust and appropriate transitional support.</p> <p>The Council is also ready to help schools assist parents and carers when making a decision on moving their children to a different school.</p> <p><b>Theme: Impact on staff &amp; potential loss of jobs</b> eg. “These are not amalgamations, they are closures. Staff in these schools have worked throughout Covid, and are some of the most under-paid and overworked in the whole borough. They are being rewarded with forced redundancies and financial insecurity.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The council acknowledges the serious impact these proposals have on staff wellbeing prior to any final decision and the direct impact on the lives and livelihood of staff should the decision to close or merge schools go ahead. In view of this staff have access to an employee assistance programme, where they can access confidential advice and counselling.</p> <p>The number of teachers and support staff that would be affected if the proposals are taken</p>

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		<p>forward are summarised in the table below (data as at 31/08/2024).</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>School</th> <th>Teachers</th> <th>Support staff</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Baden Powell</td> <td align="center">13</td> <td align="center">22</td> <td align="center"><b>35</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Colvestone</td> <td align="center">10</td> <td align="center">8</td> <td align="center"><b>18</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>De Beauvoir</td> <td align="center">9</td> <td align="center">11</td> <td align="center"><b>20</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Randal Cremer</td> <td align="center">23</td> <td align="center">33</td> <td align="center"><b>54</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td align="center"><b>53</b></td> <td align="center"><b>74</b></td> <td align="center"><b>127</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In the event of closures, the Council will do everything it can to help staff find alternative roles in schools across Hackney. However, as a last resort, some staff will be offered redundancy and/or retirements.</p> <p>In the event of a merger, we will work with the leadership teams of the affected schools to assess the full impact on staff. Governors and school leaders in receiving schools will lead the significant changes brought by these proposals.</p> <p>Staff and all other relevant parties including trade unions would be consulted about any potential changes.</p> <p>Those affected will be supported through practical outplacement support such as application and CV writing, interview skills and potential job opportunities in other Hackney Schools. A particular emphasis will be given to supporting support staff, many of whom are Hackney residents.</p> <p><b>Theme: Demographics of population can change / concerns about what will happen should there be a future shortage of places</b>  Eg. Any decision to close a locally maintained school is likely to be irreversible, as the 2011 Education Act requires future demand to be met by the academy or free school sector.</p>	School	Teachers	Support staff	Total	Baden Powell	13	22	<b>35</b>	Colvestone	10	8	<b>18</b>	De Beauvoir	9	11	<b>20</b>	Randal Cremer	23	33	<b>54</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>127</b>
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		<p><b>Response:</b> The Council aims to hold between 5% and 10% surplus reception places to allow for unforecast growth in pupil numbers in the future. If the demand for places increases significantly in future there are currently between 240 and 330 unused places in Hackney primary schools that could be brought back into use, without capital investment, by increasing these school’s PANs. (Appendix C, table 7)</p> <p><b>Theme: Capacity to accommodate potentially displaced pupils in other local schools</b> Eg. “I still remain concerned about the ‘promise’ that children will be placed in a primary school near their home. Many parents are already unable to find places in the school they want and are on waiting lists. There are also a number of schools locally where PANs have been reduced so year groups are over roll with additional waiting lists.”</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Analysis of vacancies at the nearest schools to those proposed to close shows there is capacity to accommodate all displaced pupils within Hackney settings.</p> <p>The reported number of pupils (at November 2023) in schools proposed to close is shown below by year group.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="842 1058 2067 1259"> <thead> <tr> <th>School</th> <th>R</th> <th>1</th> <th>2</th> <th>3</th> <th>4</th> <th>5</th> <th>6</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Baden Powell</td> <td>19</td> <td>19</td> <td>18</td> <td>27</td> <td>22</td> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> <td>158</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Colvestone</td> <td>12</td> <td>16</td> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> <td>16</td> <td>120</td> </tr> <tr> <td>De Beauvoir</td> <td>6</td> <td>4</td> <td>7</td> <td>3</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>17</td> <td>48</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Randal Cremer</td> <td>10</td> <td>12</td> <td>19</td> <td>11</td> <td>19</td> <td>14</td> <td>34</td> <td>119</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Grand Total</b></td> <td><b>47</b></td> <td><b>51</b></td> <td><b>69</b></td> <td><b>67</b></td> <td><b>58</b></td> <td><b>59</b></td> <td><b>94</b></td> <td><b>445</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Analysis of vacancies at nearby schools (Appendix N - Nearby schools and vacancies - SES - November 2023) demonstrates that there are sufficient places to accommodate all potentially displaced children.</p>	School	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Baden Powell	19	19	18	27	22	26	27	158	Colvestone	12	16	25	26	12	13	16	120	De Beauvoir	6	4	7	3	5	6	17	48	Randal Cremer	10	12	19	11	19	14	34	119	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>445</b>
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		<p>Mapping of potentially displaced children (Appendix O to T) demonstrates they reside across a wide area within and outside Hackney and that families are very likely to have several options of alternative schools within statutory walking distance of their homes (ie. for children aged over 5 but under the age of 8 this is 2 miles from their home and for children aged over the age of 8 this is 3 miles from their home).</p> <p>It should be noted that the analysis provided is based on official school published admission numbers (PAN), which also form the basis of local school place planning. Schools that may be capping their intake in response to falling rolls would be expected to accommodate children impacted by any future decision to close up to their PAN, exceeding any capping that may be in place.</p> <p>If the decision is taken to proceed as proposed, parents will be supported in the Spring term to help them understand their options and find out their preferences for alternative schools for their children.</p> <p>There will be one-to-one support for families to ensure their children have places at suitable schools, including increased priority for places at nearby schools.</p> <p><b>Theme: Use existing schools to address borough-wide shortage of SEND places</b>            Eg. "Hackney council spends vast amounts of money sending SEND pupils to be educated outside the borough, due to a lack of SEND resource bases. These schools should remain open and form part of a wider investment in SEND pupils, by turning them into specialist resources bases, and educating children within their borough."</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Strategic priority 1 of the the Education Sufficiency and Estate Strategy (Appendix Y) seeks to create sufficient in borough special school places through creation of Additional Resource Provision (ARP) in mainstream schools, extending existing special schools by size</p>

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		<p>and or designation, opening a new special school or the re-organisation of mainstream primary places, where feasible, due to falling rolls.</p> <p>Expressions of interest were sought in 2021 from existing Hackney schools with capacity to open ARPs and a programme of work has since been initiated that, upon completion, will increase provision by 300 places.</p> <p>School sites made vacant following any future decision to close them will be reviewed to assess, amongst other options, the feasibility of being repurposed as SEND provision.</p> <p><b>Theme: Future use of school buildings/site</b> Eg. “The decision to close a school without any plan for the future of the site is bizarre.”</p> <p><b>Response:</b> We know that our communities have tight connections to their local schools, and we will seek to preserve the buildings that have a rich history and heritage where possible.</p> <p>The Council has been reviewing options for alternative uses. This is very challenging work in the current economic climate, because it is very difficult to find financially sustainable uses. This means we need to work through the potential for each site in their local context and we will do our best to steer these sites into locally relevant and valuable uses mindful of the extreme financial pressure the Council is under and the need to minimise the impact on our finances.</p> <p>We will take into account the views of the community, the needs of the local neighbourhood, and the need for financial sustainability.</p> <p><b>Theme: School is at the heart of local community</b> Eg. “Colvestone primary school is the beating heart of the area – it has engendered a unique sense of community among the local families and serves as an important counterpoint/softening influence to Ridley Road market.”</p>

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		<p><b>Response:</b> We know schools have very close, sometimes multigenerational, ties to their local area and communities which is why proposing closing and amalgamating schools is one of the most difficult and challenging decisions the Council can make, and not one we would ever choose to do unless we had no other choice. But the quality of education for our children, and stability for our school staff, must remain a priority, requiring that options for closure and/or merger must be considered.</p> <p><b>Theme: Concern about the confusion for parents and staff regarding the terminology used to describe the proposals</b> Eg. “The respondent was critical of the proposal objecting to the use of the word “amalgamate” because they believe this is confusing as children and parents think everyone, including the staff, will be going to Nightingale.”</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The council acknowledges the potential for the terminology associated with school organisation changes to cause confusion amongst parents and staff. The council responded by making the impact of the proposals clear in the September Cabinet report and statutory notices, adopting plain language eg. “close Baden Powell Primary School from September 2024, guarantee all children a place at Nightingale Primary School if they want it.”</p> <p>In addition the September Cabinet (Appendix F) report set out clearly the meaning and impact of “merge” and “amalgamate” specifically for staff ie. “This process would mean that the staff who are currently working at the closing school would be at risk of being made redundant, as merging/amalgamating the children may not result in new jobs being created in the host school. Firstly as stated earlier the parents may not choose to move their children to the host school therefore opportunities for additional roles in the host school will only be known following completion of the schools admissions process. However, as part of the drive to avoid redundancies as much as possible, we are seeking to obtain agreement from the host school and the Hackney family of schools to support job opportunities for those staff at risk of</p>



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		<p>redundancy.” (quoted from September Cabinet report, 6.9, pg 21)</p> <p><b>Arguments raised against the proposal to close (discontinue) Colvestone Primary School</b></p> <p><b>Note for decision makers:</b> In addition to comments made by individuals, the Council received a document entitled “Save Colvestone Final Consultation Response” which can be seen in full in appendix 3 of the Kwest statutory consultation report (Appendix M), written by parents and carers (referred to in the section below as “the save Colvestone submission”). Cabinet members are asked to review the document before the meeting. Hard copies will be available at the meeting. The document, in its introduction, chapters and conclusion, makes many arguments against the proposal to close Colvestone Primary School. These include, but are not limited to, the following which Cabinet members should take into account when determining the proposal:</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> The save Colvestone submission includes an “up-to-date analysis of place data that significantly challenges the underlying rationale of the proposals” and sets out the case that the proposals will not achieve the aim of reducing the number of surplus reception places. The key points from this analysis are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The May Cabinet report sets out that the proposals to close two schools and amalgamate four others into two will lead to a total reduction of 135 reception places. However, the save Colvestone submission observes that the Council has no control over free schools, academies and faith schools nor can it control the choices that parents might decide to make about their children’s education. Therefore, although the Council is trying to reduce vacancies across the borough, “it does not have the power to control most of the players within the system”.</li> <li>• The save Colvestone submission observes that many schools have requested a</li> </ul>

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		<p>temporary reduction in their PAN number. The latest school vacancy data, provided by Hackney Education on 19th September, shows 391 surplus places in reception classes (14.5% vacancy rate) and across all year groups the overall vacancy rate is 12.7%. The vacancy rates are higher in faith schools (30% for reception classes) and it is argued that the Council target of 5-10% will not be achieved without addressing this. Excluding faith schools, the overall vacancy rate across all other school types is 11% and popular schools have very few vacancies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The save Colvestone submission claims the council fails to account for up to date pupil numbers in the September Cabinet Report and that this invalidates many of the suppositions in that report;             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The proposed outcomes (to reduce PAN) will not be achieved</li> <li>○ The vacancy rates are significantly higher in faith schools and the overall target of 5-10% will not be achieved without addressing vacancies in these schools</li> <li>○ There are insufficient places at the nearby schools to accommodate all the pupils being forced out of closing schools.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The save Colvestone submission includes worked examples from each of the schools in question to argue that the proposals will reduce the surplus reception places by 60, rather than 135 places. It looks at whether there are enough vacancies in other local schools as well as whether parental choice is maintained. In addition, it discusses the risk of further closures because the authors understand that this is only the first consultation and others are planned, potentially affecting up to 16 schools.</li> <li>• Based on the analysis provided, the Save Colvestone submission demands an urgent review of the latest vacancy data for each proposed school rather than on a borough</li> </ul>

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		<p>wide basis. It also insists that each of the proposed school closures should be considered and assessed on an individual basis. Furthermore, it recommends not closing one of the Dalston one-form community schools but rather exploring a potential merger between them.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The council acknowledges that “it does not have the power to control most of the players within the system”. The Council will continue to work within a collaborative process and take a graduated approach to managing surplus places in partnership with faith schools, free schools and academies, which form an important part of the Hackney family of schools.</p> <p>The detailed analysis provided in the save Colvestone submission does not correctly reflect the vacancy position of schools, nor the surplus places across the borough. This is because it is based on data that reflects the ‘capping’ of some year groups in some schools, in place at the request of the leaders of those schools, to assist in the management of their falling rolls.</p> <p>Cappings are unofficial reductions to school intakes and do not form the basis of school place planning nor the future projections of demand used by local authorities. A school’s published admission number (PAN) forms part of its admission arrangements which are formally determined by the admission authority for the school and published in accordance with the Admissions Code. An assessment of capacity in nearby schools to accommodate children potentially affected by the proposals is provided at section 4.37 of this report and is based on schools’ officially published PANs.</p> <p>For each of the schools proposed to close the assessment (at section 4.37) lists nearby schools within statutory walking distance and provides up to date vacancies by year group based on PANs. This assessment identifies, for each school under proposal to discontinue, that across nearby schools there are 100s of alternative school places available in every year group.</p>

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		<p>If the Cabinet decides to close Colvestone, the local authority will comply fully with its obligations under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 and ensure compulsory school aged children can access full time, efficient education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs that a child may have.</p> <p>The offer of places at Princess May that will be made, should Cabinet decide to progress the proposal, satisfies these obligations, however parents have a right to express a preference for any alternative school if they wish.</p> <p>Parents have a right to express a preference for a particular type of school, for example a non-faith school, a one form entry school or an academy, and may seek a place at schools outside their local area in preference to local schools, if that is what they wish. The local authority is under no obligation to ensure parents have all of these options within walking distance of their home or their local area, but in Hackney many are.</p> <p>The primary motivation when proposing a merger of the student body of a school proposed to close into an existing school, is the impact on families and children and the benefits it could bring in terms of children being able to move together with some of their friends to a new setting. The proposal to discontinue Colvestone and offer a guaranteed place at Princess May for Colvestone pupils is not dependent on the assumption that a specific number of children will transition to Princess May.</p> <p>If the Cabinet decides to progress the proposal, the council will work closely with both schools to understand the number of and impact on children joining Princess May and to support them welcoming the families that do choose to take the offer of guaranteed places.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> The save Colvestone submission outlines perceived flaws in the consultation process. A summary of some of the issues raised are:</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The save Colvestone submission observes that “there are multiple instances where the consultation process has failed to follow or deliberately misrepresents” the Statutory Guidance for opening and closing maintained schools and the Council’s Estates Strategy. Several examples are detailed on pages 14-17 of the save Colvestone submission.</li> <li>• The September report to the Cabinet is considered to have been “ill informed and lacking detail”, whilst the design of the consultation is considered “ineffective” for the stated purpose of determining whether to close the schools. The rationale behind this viewpoint is set out in pages 18-21 of the save Colvestone submission.</li> <li>• The save Colvestone submission asserts that the consultation was “inaccessible to some of the groups that should have been included” and the process “damaged the financial viability of the schools in scope”. It states that the consultation documents were not sent to local residents, despite the Cabinet report listing them as a group to be included and criticises the lack of information provided in alternate languages and the lack of engagement with families or staff at local nurseries and other childcare settings.</li> <li>• The save Colvestone submission claims the council have not provided information as requested and that some of this has been acquired by other means and used to support the alternative analyses presented in the submission. It asserts that this information should have been presented by the Council to enable a more informed consultation.</li> <li>• The save Colvestone submission claims the Council should have consulted on each proposal individually, with information made available as a context for each including the circumstances and locality for each school. Because this was not done, informed scrutiny and consultation was not possible.</li> <li>• The save Colvestone submission objects to the fact that the Council has not consulted</li> </ul>

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		<p>on alternative proposals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Save Colvestone submission states that part of the consultation was undertaken during school holidays.</li> </ul> <p><b>Response:</b> The council considers it has consulted lawfully. Officers followed the Guidance and took legal advice. The process is detailed in this report under Statutory Notice Summary, points 4.20 to 4.23. Paragraph 4.21 deals with the translation into other languages of the Statutory Notices. The Council held early engagement sessions before meeting to decide whether or not to consult. The Guidance states (at page 7) that “Both the consultation period and the representation period should be largely carried out in term time to allow the maximum numbers of people to see and respond to what is proposed.”</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> The save Colvestone submission presents data that challenges the Council’s interpretation of child yield and related time frames from the Dalston plan developments. It submits that this information is specifically relevant to Colvestone as the nearest primary school to all of these developments. Some points raised are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Dalston Plan forms parts of commitments made and adopted in 2020 as part of the Hackney Local Plan (LP33). These proposals would benefit Colvestone by delivering new children to the immediate locality in need of primary school provision in the short to mid-term, and long term place demand downstream from these projects. These committed projects would be harmed by the closure of Colvestone Primary School.</li> <li>Most of the development would be concentrated at the Kingsland Shopping Centre with around 30% of the proposed housing being 3 bedroom family sized units and the aim of 50% of the development to be affordable housing. This could bring 200+ new families into the immediate area.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If Colvestone and De Beauvoir schools were closed, parents in that development would have to travel almost half a mile to get to a non-denominational school. And even the closest one, Princess May, sits next to the A10</li> <li>• The Dalston Plan makes it clear that there is demand for Colvestone’s school places in the medium to long term, because of the large number of new housing which the SPD will encourage in the immediate vicinity, and for which Colvestone will be the nearest primary school.</li> <li>• An assessment of likely child yield is provided and it is claimed the figures demonstrate that the Dalston Plan developments (planned for delivery in the short to medium term) will deliver 76 and 100 children to the immediate vicinity of Colvestone primary school - between 2.5 and 3.5 entire year groups of school aged children within very short (most sites, less than 100m), fully pedestrianised access to primary school provision. This is anything but negligible, and the proportion of 0-4 year olds suggests an even healthier future demand for places downstream. This data draws a compelling picture of future demand for places in the short to medium term.</li> <li>• Closing Colvestone could impede the success of the development by making it hard for developers to sell those apartments to families, given the limited schooling options. The closure of so many local authority schools, and particularly one close to a new development, threatens to lock Hackney into a death spiral when it comes to families living in the area - a reduction in families leads to the closure of schools and reduction of choice, which makes the area unappealing to families, which leads to more closed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Response:</b> There are proposed areas for regeneration and new housing across the borough and in some of the areas close to the schools covered in this report. However, despite the extensive Council and family housing planned, the expected initial child yield is low and would not impact medium to long term demand. For the projected figures we have there would</p>

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		<p>remain enough school places to accommodate need. Projections obtained annually from the Greater London Authority take into account proposed new developments that have attained planning permission.</p> <p>The recently undertaken Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2023 indicates that household growth in Hackney between 2022 and 2039 will be predominantly single people (+45.1%) and cohabiting, i.e. shared living, households (+44.2%). In comparison, there is little change in the projection for families with children over the same period. With the exception of Stamford Hill, the majority of Borough-wide housing need is for smaller homes. This is important in considering the likely effect of such housing on pupil numbers.</p> <p>Adopted in July 2020, the Hackney Local Plan 2033 (LP33), requires that all new development in the borough have regard to existing social infrastructure, which includes the provision of education facilities. Within LP33, policy LP8 states that <i>‘where proposed development is expected to place pressure on existing social infrastructure by increasing demand, these developments will be expected to contribute towards the provision of additional social infrastructure to meet needs, either through on-site provision or through contributions towards providing additional capacity off-site.’</i></p> <p>The Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which informed the policies within LP33, notes that while the borough’s population is expected to increase to 321,000 by 2033 (42,000 higher than in 2018), that the age mix of the borough is anticipated to shift towards the older community with the growth in over 65s being four times greater than the growth in the school age population, ages 0-15. Again, such long term forecasting suggests that changes which forecast increases to the overall general population, need to be balanced against demographic changes over this time.</p> <p>While there are variances across the different housing tenures, across the Council’s programme as a whole, just over 70% of the homes delivered have been 1 and 2 bed homes; with just under 30% comprising a mix of 3 and 4 bed family sized homes. This is broadly</p>



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		<p>consistent with policy LP14 as outlined in LP33, which, depending on the tenure of housing, requires all new developments to comprise a mix of family sized homes, ranging from 15 to 36%.</p> <p>The council considers that there will remain sufficient school places in the planning area, and within statutory walking distance, for the entire length of time for which it has information available to it. Places required to accommodate the yield of school aged children from proposed developments is not anticipated to exceed availability of places even with the discontinuance of Colvestone and progression of the proposed developments.</p> <p>Despite Hackney building new homes the numbers will be insufficient to have any significant impact on the proposals in this report for schools in scope for closure and/or merger.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> The save Colvestone submission points out that the Council has no recent experience of closing schools and should have done so in an “informed, holistic and consultative fashion”.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> For many years school closures were not necessary. The Council’s consultation process included all steps required by the Guidance, as well as an additional engagement at the start and additional action to publicise the statutory representation period. The Council’s powers are limited in dealing with the challenges it faces over falling rolls; parental choice for example, and its very limited powers in relation to opening a new school under current legislation. It consulted on the option of closing some of its schools as a last resort having previously taken steps outlined in this and previous reports in order to avoid this.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> The save Colvestone submission points out that the consultation has had a “chilling” effect on transfers and enrolments into schools that are the subject of the proposals.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The Council acknowledges that the proposals, sadly, and perhaps inevitably, have</p>

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		<p>resulted in changes to choices parents have made, reducing numbers of children in affected schools further.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="842 515 2069 777"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="842 515 1323 643">School</th> <th data-bbox="1323 515 1581 643">Total on Roll (Provisional October 23 census)</th> <th data-bbox="1581 515 1800 643">Change since Jan '23 census</th> <th data-bbox="1800 515 2069 643">% Change since Jan '23 census</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 643 1323 675">Baden Powell Primary School</td> <td data-bbox="1323 643 1581 675">154</td> <td data-bbox="1581 643 1800 675">-8</td> <td data-bbox="1800 643 2069 675">-4.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 675 1323 707">De Beauvoir School</td> <td data-bbox="1323 675 1581 707">57</td> <td data-bbox="1581 675 1800 707">-58</td> <td data-bbox="1800 675 2069 707">-50.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 707 1323 738">Colvestone Primary School</td> <td data-bbox="1323 707 1581 738">116</td> <td data-bbox="1581 707 1800 738">-14</td> <td data-bbox="1800 707 2069 738">-10.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 738 1323 770">Randal Cremer</td> <td data-bbox="1323 738 1581 770">128</td> <td data-bbox="1581 738 1800 770">-114</td> <td data-bbox="1800 738 2069 770">-47.1%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Council is monitoring pupil movement closely and supporting schools as required. The Council acknowledges the impact for staff and pupils to see their peers and friends leaving the school prior to any final decision.</p> <p>The Council acknowledges the uncertainty parents have faced and has supported parental preference as to whether they acted in anticipation of a decision to close their school, or waited until after the decision.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> The save Colvestone submission claims that “through the successful partnership with the Blossom Federation, in only 6 months the new Senior Leadership Team have demonstrated that they can return the school to financial health despite the reduced pupil numbers.”</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Colvestone School submitted an agreed 2023-24 budget to the local authority in May 2023 inclusive of the savings achieved in the previous 2022-23 financial year of £28,320.</p> <p>The school forecasted an increase in the deficit for the following 3 years 2023-26 and were anticipating a significant growth in pupil numbers in academic year 2027-28 which would</p>	School	Total on Roll (Provisional October 23 census)	Change since Jan '23 census	% Change since Jan '23 census	Baden Powell Primary School	154	-8	-4.9%	De Beauvoir School	57	-58	-50.4%	Colvestone Primary School	116	-14	-10.8%	Randal Cremer	128	-114	-47.1%
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		<p>facilitate the process of recovering the deficit to a larger extent.</p> <p>However, following a review of the actual income and expenditure for period 6 (September 2023) the forecast financial position was revised as stated below:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th align="center">Financial Year</th> <th align="center">2023-24</th> <th align="center">2024-25</th> <th align="center">2025-26</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Projected Deficit May 2023</td> <td align="center">-589,261</td> <td align="center">-682,951</td> <td align="center">- 793,491</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th align="center">Financial Year</th> <th align="center">2023-24</th> <th align="center">2024-25</th> <th align="center">2025-26</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Projected Deficit Nov 2023</td> <td align="center">-601,964</td> <td align="center">-819,693</td> <td align="center">-1,041,600</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The revised forecasts show the deficit exceeding £600,000 at the end of the current financial year and growing over the coming years.</p> <p>The Council acknowledges the outstanding support offered to Colvestone by the Blossom Federation who have expertly stabilised the school’s education provision and their financial position having inherited an historical deficit from the previous leadership of the school.</p> <p>After the executive headteacher and head of school left Colvestone in August 2022, the school’s governing body supported by the Council looked at proposals from Blossom Federation and Princess May. This temporary soft partnership (recently extended until July 2024) allows Colvestone to receive leadership and business support to improve standards and children’s outcomes, and stabilise the budget, all of which has been achieved with the support of The Blossom Federation.</p> <p>This expert support was reflected in a recent Ofsted Inspection which found the school good overall.</p>	Financial Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Projected Deficit May 2023	-589,261	-682,951	- 793,491	Financial Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Projected Deficit Nov 2023	-601,964	-819,693	-1,041,600
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		<p><b>Comment:</b> The save Colvestone submission claims that, despite persistent requests, there remains no cost-benefit analysis of each of the individual proposals. Closing a school is hugely costly, and the submission identifies multiple additional costs not budgeted for in any of the consultation documents prepared by the Council. It claims the likely costs declared by the Council for realising the proposals to be a substantial under-estimation.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The council acknowledges the points raised. The rationale for taking action is to ensure our primary schools can continue to offer the very best education for residents and this is directly linked to the financial viability of schools.</p> <p>Decision makers were presented with estimates of the costs of closing schools in the May Cabinet report and are included with this report in Appendix U. The council acknowledges the associated costs are significant and largely fall to the local authority and, most significantly, include any deficit a school is carrying at the point of closure. Without reducing the number of surplus places in our primary schools financial pressure will continue to grow and push a growing number of schools into or toward deficit.</p> <p>In the current climate where supply of school places has exceeded demand for 8 years, reserve funds across maintained schools are being exhausted at an alarming and unsustainable rate (ie. forecast to reduce by 70% in just two years, see section 5.4 to 5.10), and two thirds of maintained primary schools (or the federations they form part of) are forecasting they will be unable to operate within budget this financial year, the local authority will face even greater costs when closing schools in the future as school deficits build.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> The save Colvestone submission includes the 11 September 2023 Judicial Review pre-action letter (Appendix V), which states; the Council has wholly failed to factor air quality impact into the PSED analysis. Negative air quality impacts are known to harm those who are more vulnerable, in particular, children. Hackney’s own Air Quality Action Plan 2021- 2025 identifies school communities as amongst the most susceptible groups to the serious health</p>

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		<p>impacts of air pollution within its strategy to improve air quality throughout the borough.</p> <p>Air pollution levels are significantly higher at Princess May than at Colvestone. Princess May is on a main road (the A10); Colvestone is on a quiet back street, part of a fully-funded re-greening project which will further improve air quality, meaning that closing Colvestone will inevitably expose children to poorer air quality.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The Council acknowledges concern that children may be exposed to pollution when travelling to schools. The Council’s Air Quality Action Plan seeks to improve air quality in the community.</p> <p>The Council has looked closely at the air quality at Princess May, as we know this is a concern for some parents.</p> <p>Air quality as measured by average Nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) at the six school sites in Hackney was reviewed. For 2022 all of the diffusion tubes located near these schools were well below the Hackney air quality objective of 40 (µg/m<sup>3</sup>), as seen in table below, with some improving since 2021.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="842 1058 2069 1358"> <thead> <tr> <th>Site name</th> <th>2021 NO<sub>2</sub> annual concentration (µg/m<sup>3</sup>)</th> <th>2022 NO<sub>2</sub> annual concentration (µg/m<sup>3</sup>)</th> <th>Pollutants monitored</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Randal Cremer</td> <td>20</td> <td>19</td> <td>NO<sub>2</sub></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nightingale</td> <td>19</td> <td>17</td> <td>NO<sub>2</sub></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Baden-Powell</td> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>NO<sub>2</sub></td> </tr> <tr> <td>De Beauvoir</td> <td>39</td> <td>36</td> <td>NO<sub>2</sub></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Colvestone</td> <td>23</td> <td>21</td> <td>NO<sub>2</sub></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Princess May 1</td> <td>23</td> <td>20</td> <td>NO<sub>2</sub></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Princess May 2</td> <td>32</td> <td>32</td> <td>NO<sub>2</sub></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Source (Air quality Action plan 2021-2025 and ASR Hackney 2022)</i></p>	Site name	2021 NO <sub>2</sub> annual concentration (µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	2022 NO <sub>2</sub> annual concentration (µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	Pollutants monitored	Randal Cremer	20	19	NO <sub>2</sub>	Nightingale	19	17	NO <sub>2</sub>	Baden-Powell	18	19	NO <sub>2</sub>	De Beauvoir	39	36	NO <sub>2</sub>	Colvestone	23	21	NO <sub>2</sub>	Princess May 1	23	20	NO <sub>2</sub>	Princess May 2	32	32	NO <sub>2</sub>
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		<p>Air quality is measured near Princess May School in two places. While the latest air quality monitoring shows that one of them has higher nitrogen dioxide levels than Colvestone, both are within air quality objectives. We will be doing further work to bring this down, as part of the wider mission to improve air quality and reduce traffic around all schools in Hackney.</p> <p>Princess May already has greenery and screening between its playground and the A10, and has been shortlisted for further work as part of our green screen programme involving the installation of 2-3m high ivy plant screens on the perimeter of schools between playgrounds and busy roads.</p> <p>The school has also benefited from the 3.9% reduction of traffic on the A10 side as a result of the wider Stoke Newington Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN), which covers three sides of the school, and has a School Street on two sides, which has further reduced traffic</p> <p>We've rolled out School Streets to nearly all Hackney primaries to tackle air pollution, and we want 75% of the borough to be low traffic by 2026. To keep reducing pollution, we need people to ditch the log burners, and walk, cycle or take public transport, or, if they need to drive, switch to car clubs or EVs.</p> <p>Further information is added to EIA (Appendix B)</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> The save Colvestone submission states that there will be “no going back” should the school be closed. Some points made include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under ‘free school presumption’ a local authority cannot open a local authority school – new schools will automatically be free schools run by the for-profit sector, with Hackney Council forced to give over the historic (or modern) school buildings to the private company, along with all oversight on how the school is managed and what they teach, on a long lease without generating any rental income (and yet incurring costs) for the Council</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Claims the LA has consistently refused to release information related to the deeds of Colvestone school – denying both FOI requests and legal representations.</li> <li>• Due diligence has not been conducted on the status of school buildings as demanded by the Estate Strategy with regards to building deeds / titles, particularly with regards to restrictive covenants, and specifically with regards to restrictive covenants believed to be included in the transfer deeds (1906) of the Colvestone school buildings when they were acquired by the LCC in 1906 from an educational charity (still extant).</li> </ul> <p><b>Response:</b> The Council acknowledges that the free school presumption has limited its powers dramatically. This is discussed within this report at paragraph 10.6 to 10.8.</p> <p>The council’s legal team has confirmed that, having reviewed the title, no such restriction exists. There is no implied assumption that charities have a right of first refusal in respect of education land/buildings disposals.</p> <p>A FOI was received and has been responded to.</p> <p>Further information relating to Recommendations for proposals can be found within <a href="#">the report</a> at paragraph 5.</p> <p><b>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</b></p> <p><b>Option 1 - No action</b></p> <p>The Council has a duty to manage school places effectively, and to ensure that schools provide high quality education for children, and deliver Best Value, and continuous improvement through the efficient, effective and economic management of our school estate.</p>

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		<p>The Council is ambitious for Hackney children; our schools achieve excellent results and we want to ensure they remain among the very best in the country.</p> <p>If no action is taken it is inevitable that quality of education and outcomes for Hackney children are at risk and the Council will be liable for the costs of schools worst affected by falling rolls as they move into debt or increase their deficit and eventually close for financial reasons.</p> <p>As outlined in section 5.4 to 5.10, the operational and financial challenges affecting schools with falling rolls will continue to increase with a negative impact on pupils and the Council's financial position. Taking no action to the issues affecting schools with falling rolls is not an acceptable option available to the Council.</p> <p><b>Option 2 - Phased implementation of the current proposals over 2 or more years</b></p> <p>This option was rejected as there is an urgent need to take action and any delay is very likely to result in increased financial liability for the council as schools at risk move toward or increase their deficit position.</p> <p>Additionally, further measures to address falling rolls are likely to be required in the coming years to bring the primary school estate in line with current and projected demand. If taken forward, the proposals outlined in this report would begin to address the issue of falling rolls by removing 105 reception places; however, in isolation, this is unlikely to resolve the problem and, based on current projections, further action to bring surplus reception places under 10% is likely.</p> <p><b>Option 3: Close/merge more schools than those currently proposed.</b></p> <p>Further measures to address falling rolls, over and above those proposed in this paper, are</p>



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		<p>likely to be required in the coming years to bring the primary school estate in line with current and projected demand.</p> <p>Action to address falling rolls that involve more schools than the six that would potentially be affected by the current proposals was considered. This option might be considered by some to be favourable because it could provide greater reassurance that children, forced to move school as a result of their school closing, would be less likely to have to move primary school again if further action is required in the future.</p> <p>This option was not preferred due to limited resourcing and capacity to effectively manage and mitigate impact of a greater number of closures/mergers.</p> <p><b>Option 4: Alternative options for De Beauvoir primary</b></p> <p>Alternative pairings for the proposals were considered and detailed in the May Cabinet report, additional suggestions have been put forward in the consultation summarised below:</p> <p>Merging De Beauvoir and Randal Cremer on either site was suggested however it was not considered a feasible option for all families as the schools are 1.1 miles apart, walking distance which is a 25 minute walk, and the distance would be a barrier for those living for example, north of De Beauvoir or south of Randal Cremer.</p> <p>Merging De Beauvoir and Princess May on either site was suggested however it was not considered a viable option as it was considered unlikely to lead to sufficiently stabilising numbers of pupils at either school. Although a merger with Princess May was not proposed, at 16 minute walk (0.7 miles away) it is likely the school will have capacity to accommodate any families from De Beauvoir if that is what they want. Colvestone was considered a better school to merge being 0.4 miles and 8 minute walk away from Princess May.</p>

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		<p><b>Option 5: Alternative options for Colvestone primary</b></p> <p>Merging Colvestone and Princess May on the Colvestone site was suggested however this option was considered infeasible as the Colvestone site is unable to accommodate all the children from Princess May. The decision to propose a merger onto the Princess May site may positively impact that schools' falling roll and unused capacity.</p> <p>Merging Colvestone with other schools in the Blossom Federation was suggested however these options were considered unsuitable due to the distance between Colvestone and other schools in the federation.</p> <p>Merging De Beaviour and Colvestone on the Colvestone site was suggested however, based on pupil numbers at the time, Colvestone appeared unable to accommodate all the children from De Beauvoir. The subsequent drop in pupil numbers at both schools makes this option feasible in terms of pupil numbers, however this is not favoured due to Colvestone's financial position. Amalgamating into a one form entry school is not financially preferable.</p> <p>It has also been proposed by those in support of Colvestone remaining open, that it could be a school for pupils with SEND. However in the short term this option is unfeasible because the school would need to be closed while building modifications and arrangements were made requiring all children to move to other schools. However all options regarding future use will be considered for medium to long term should the school close as a result of these proposals.</p> <p><b>Option 6: Alternative options for Randal Cremer Primary</b></p> <p>Options for merging the school were considered but there was no single school located near enough with the sufficient places to accommodate all of the pupils. However, there are sufficient schools nearby with surplus places that could accommodate the pupils from Randal Cremer. Hoxton Garden, Sebright, St Monica's and St John the Baptist are likely alternative</p>

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		<p>schools and all rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted.</p> <p><b>Option 7: Alternative options considered for Baden Powell Primary School</b></p> <p>Options to merge Nightingale and other schools with surplus places rather than Baden Powell, were considered. This option was not progressed primarily because Nightingale did not have capacity to guarantee all children at neighbouring schools with surplus capacity a place, based on pupil roll data at the time, and because the distance between these other schools was less optimal than between Baden Powell and Nightingale.</p> <p><b>The Councils powers in relation to falling rolls</b></p> <p>The limiting factors at play in our options; The Council has to make arrangements for enabling parents to express a preference for their child's school. The Council does all it can to accommodate parental preference for a school. It is of course limited in this when a school is oversubscribed. It can no longer open a new school, as mentioned elsewhere in this report. It has the power to close a school it maintained, but no such power in relation to an academy or free school. Options available to it in taking action to reduce the issues it faces with falling rolls are limited to closure and amalgamating maintained schools. Continuing with current and projected levels of deficit in the circumstances of significantly reduced pupil numbers would be irresponsible.</p>
11	CHE S224 Hackney Central & Pembury Circus Green Corridor	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p><b>For the reasons set out in this report it is recommended that Cabinet:</b></p> <p><b>1. Approve the recommendation to conduct a further non-statutory consultation relating to the proposals described in section 8 of this report to redesign Pembury Circus Junction and implement a green corridor on Amhurst Road and Mare Street between Reading Lane and Pembury Circus.</b></p>

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		<p><b>2. Approve implementation of the proposals described in section 8 of this report, subject to detailed design to be informed by further non-statutory consultation and for the Assistant Director, Streetscene (formerly titled Head of Streetscene) to use his delegated powers to decide on the detailed design.</b></p> <p><b>3. Authorise the Assistant Director, Streetscene to make and implement the necessary Traffic Orders, subject to the requirements of Local Authorities’ Traffic Order (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996; and following the relevant statutory consultation with all objections/responses received to be considered, recorded in writing, and signed by the Assistant Director, Streetscene in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport.</b></p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>This report recommends taking forward major improvements to one of the most dangerous junctions on a Hackney borough road currently suffering from excessive traffic causing congestion to essential users and creating pollution. Despite testing many options It has been found impractical to improve this junction significantly without reducing traffic on at least one arm, and the Amhurst Road approach offers the most benefits to pedestrians and bus users.</p> <p>A bus gate is proposed because it will prioritise bus and rail users, pedestrians and cyclists. This will improve the environment and road safety. It will also enable a major improvement in the form of a Green Corridor, which will be a significant asset to the area. This will add to the visitor experience which can lead to increased dwell time to appreciate local green spaces and make use of local shops and facilities.</p> <p>Our experience with other modal filters is that they can produce an overall reduction in traffic.</p>

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		<p>This scheme therefore represents a continuing evolution of a Hackney road network in which non-essential traffic is discouraged. Longer journeys will be encouraged to stay out of the Borough altogether and many short trips will shift to walking, cycling or public transport.</p> <p>These proposals are consistent with the requirements of the Levelling Up Fund, as issued by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on behalf of HM Government, and are consistent with the Mayor of London’s Transport Strategy. They are also consistent with the Council’s Transport Strategy.</p> <p>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p><b>A. Do Nothing:</b> This option was rejected on the grounds that it would allow the continuation of poor road safety and high pollution levels in the area.</p> <p><b>B. Do minimum:</b> Standard footpath repairs, parking controls and signal timing adjustments also represent an option but again would not produce the level of improvement required, nor meet the requirements set for Levelling Up Funding.</p> <p><b>C. Re-construction of Pembury Circus without a bus gate.</b> The magnitude of the difficulties at Pembury Circus justify a major re-design of the junction. This option was studied in detail using computer simulation. This showed that because of the number of conflicting demands on the junction there is no option that can cater for all movements and that at least one junction approach needs to be constrained. The restriction at Amhurst is the one that appears to have the most complementary benefits, such as improving conditions for pedestrians and bus users.</p> <p><b>D. Alternatives to a Bus Gate.</b> The use of strategic sections of one-way restrictions could, in part, reduce traffic on Amhurst Road. It would also, in theory, be possible to restrict turning movements at Pembury Circus in such a way that traffic is reduced. These would benefit a minority of motor vehicle users. The use of turn bans and one-way systems, however, does not</p>

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		<p>allow for permit holders to be exempt. This would disadvantage Blue Badge holders. Overall levels of traffic reduction would still not be low enough to allow an optimal design of Pembury Circus.</p> <p><b>E. Alternative locations and timings for the Bus Gate.</b> A total of 4 alternative bus gate locations were analysed including:</p> <p>Option (a): Mare Street between the junction with Graham Road and the junction with Amhurst Road</p> <p>Option (b): Mare Street, between the junction with Amhurst Road and the loading bay outside Iceland</p> <p>Option (c): Amhurst Road between the junction with Brett Road and the junction with Mare Street</p> <p>Option (d): Amhurst Road and Mare Street between the junction with Brett Road and the junction with Graham Road</p> <p>One critical consideration was the need to allow for access to Bohemia Place, the bus garage and the Iceland loading bay. So option (d) was taken forward as the preferred option.</p>
12	AHI S280 Confirmation of Arrangements for the Operations of the Public Mortuary	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. To agree to the proposals for the temporary operations of the public mortuary to be relocated to St Pancras for the duration of the rebuild.</b></li> <li><b>2. To agree to the frozen storage requirements of the deceased to be stored at Jacksons facility as agreed with the Human Tissues Authority.</b></li> </ol> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p>

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		<p>The current facilities at Hackney Mortuary are beyond their lifespan and need expansion and modernisation</p> <p>The extensive renovation work required would not be possible without closing and temporarily relocating the mortuary.</p> <p><b>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</b></p> <p>To maintain the mortuary at another location in Hackney- no such facility exists.</p> <p>To undertake the improvement work whilst the mortuary continued to operate- the nature of the required work is very extensive and it would not be possible to maintain the mortuary within the building whilst renovation work was carried out.</p> <p>For the deceased who need to be frozen to be stored at St Pancras or another London facility- we were unable to identify another suitable alternative at a price that provided best value to the Council.</p>
13	FCR S254 Proposed Changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. That Cabinet and full Council note the contents of the report and the financial implications outlined within the report and that the report be referred to full Council.</b></li> <li><b>2. That Cabinet recommend to full Council that Members, recognising both the ongoing cost of living crisis in Hackney and the financial constraints placed on the Council, agree to revise the Council’s current Council Tax Reduction Scheme by reducing the minimum contribution which all working age CTRS claimants have to pay from 15% to 10% of their Council Tax liability from the 1 April 2024.</b></li> </ol>

**London Borough of Hackney – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Monday 11 December 2023**

Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
		<p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p> <p>When the Council last agreed to amend the Council Tax Reduction Scheme in 2020, it also committed officers to undertake a review of the revised scheme and further reduce the maximum contribution to 10% by 2025/26 and move to a fully funded scheme by 2030.</p> <p>Whilst seeking to provide additional financial support to low income households the scope for amending the scheme is constrained by the need to manage ongoing reductions in Central Government funding. Over the period 2010-11 to 2023-24, the Council has suffered a £150m real terms reduction in its Spending Power which is equivalent to 33%. The Council therefore needs to strike a balance between the need to provide extra support to residents who we think need it, while maintaining a scheme that is financially sustainable for the Council's wider budget and limits the impact on our ability to deliver essential front line services that residents depend on.</p> <p>The option of decreasing minimum contributions from 15% to 10% balances both the increasing financial pressures that our low income households face, against the ongoing cuts in government funding. The change will affect working age households only as the Council is legally prevented from making any changes to the scheme that will reduce the level of support payable to a pensioner household.</p> <p>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</p> <p>As part of the review process, the Benefits &amp; Housing Needs Service commissioned external consultants, Policy in Practice, to carry out the analytical assessment of the revised scheme and to model the financial impact on the Council and on residents.</p> <p><b>Do nothing</b> - Policy in Practice modelling indicates that if we retain the current CTRS scheme</p>



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		<p>into 2024/25 there will still be a cost increase in delivering the scheme as a consequence of increased Council Tax charges and the uprating of applicable amounts. For modelling purposes only a maximum 4.99% increase in Council Tax liability has been assumed along with a benefit uprating of 5.4% (based on projected CPI inflation figures), recognising the Council has yet to make a decision on the actual Council Tax increase for 2024/25. If we make no changes to the scheme costs of the scheme are estimated to rise from £29.32m to £31.01m, an increase of £1.69m or 5.78%.</p> <p>Although the Council's previous commitment was to bring forward a reduction in the maximum contribution to 10% by 2025/26, it was considered appropriate to implement this change earlier, given the depth of the cost of living crisis and the impact on low income residents.</p> <p>Policy in Practice were also asked to model the impact of additional changes to the scheme administration intended to make the scheme more straightforward and reduce the administrative burden on the Council, through simplification of the application process and simplifying the rules related to both earnings disregards (i.e. the amount of earned income taken into account) and non-dependant deductions (i.e. the assumed contribution of other adults living in the household). These changes would increase the total scheme costs by an additional £1.00m in comparison to estimated costs set out in para 1.11.</p> <p>As these additional changes would potentially have significant additional cost increases to the scheme as well as the potential for unintended adverse impacts on groups of residents (e.g. reducing support for larger families), we propose to carry out further modelling and consultation and consider these as part of future changes for implementation at a later date.</p>
14	F S255 The Hackney Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023 -26	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <p><b>That Cabinet approves the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023 - 26.</b></p> <p>REASONS FOR DECISION</p>

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Agenda Item No	Topic	Decision
		<p>The Homeless Act 2002 places an overriding statutory duty on all housing authorities to review homelessness trends in their area on an at least 5 yearly basis, and produce an overriding strategic homeless strategy which reflects the results of that review.</p> <p>Statutory guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) requires Housing Authorities to ensure that strategies are compliant with and take into account the duties introduced by Homeless Reduction Act in 2018.</p> <p>Additionally in 2018 Central Government published its Rough Sleeping Strategy, which requires Councils to update their Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategies to include a focus on Rough Sleeping.</p> <p>The Council’s current homeless strategy is now out of date. Given significant and fast moving changes in the local housing market and the introduction of new legislation and duties under the Homeless Reduction Act, it is necessary for the Council to produce a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.</p> <p>This strategy reflects the latest trends in homelessness, follows best practice and is compliant with current legislation.</p> <p>The Strategy deliberately covers a shorter period than before to reflect the fast paced changes we have recently seen in housing and the wider economy, and the uncertainty of Government policy beyond the general election due no later than January 2025.</p> <p><b>DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED</b></p> <p>The publication of a homelessness strategy is a statutory requirement as set out by the Homeless Act 2002 which has been subsequently reinforced by Government guidance. All Housing authorities are required under Section 1(4) of the Homeless Act to publish a new</p>

**London Borough of Hackney – Decisions taken by the Cabinet on Monday 11 December 2023**

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		<p>homelessness strategy, based on the results of a further homelessness review, within the period of 5 years beginning with the day on which their last homelessness strategy was published.</p> <p>Not having an up to date strategy will make the Council non-compliant with legislation and would place the authority at risk of Government action, which would potentially have an adverse impact on any future funding.</p> <p>Given the current pressures placed on Council services as a consequence of the level of homelessness in the borough, an up to date homelessness strategy that includes a strategic framework that reflects the current market conditions and operating climate is essential if the Council is to respond effectively.</p> <p>A basic refresh of the existing strategy was considered, but given the significant changes in the housing landscape and implications of delivering the Homeless Reduction Act a new strategy was considered to be more appropriate. It was also an opportunity to combine the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategies into a single coordinated document.</p> <p>By not introducing a new Homeless Strategy the Council is in danger of being less effective in both tackling the current levels of homelessness and rough sleeping and in preventing homelessness in the future.</p>