

Overview & Scrutiny

Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

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

Monday 12 June 2023

7.00 pm

Council Chamber, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, London E8 1EA

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

<https://youtube.com/live/yFMreUxwuMA>

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

https://youtube.com/live/PjMt_1mgqps

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

Contact:

Craig Player

☎ 020 8356 4316

✉ craig.player@hackney.gov.uk

Mark Carroll

Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney

Members: Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Soraya Adejare (Chair), Cllr Clare Joseph (Vice-Chair), Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Ali Sadek, Cllr Zoe Garbett, Cllr Caroline Selman and Cllr Yvonne Maxwell

Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- 1 Appointment of the Chair & Vice-Chair 2023/24 (Pages 9 - 10)
- 2 Apologies for Absence
- 3 Urgent Items / Order of Business
- 4 Declarations of Interest

- 5 Cabinet Question Time - Accountability of Private Rented Sector & Housing Associations (Pages 11 - 12)
- 6 Living in Hackney Work Programme Planning 2023/24 (Pages 13 - 28)
- 7 Minutes of the Meeting (Pages 29 - 40)
- 8 Any Other Business

Access and Information

Public Involvement and Recording

Public Attendance at the Town Hall for Meetings

Scrutiny meetings are held in public, rather than being public meetings. This means that whilst residents and press are welcome to attend, they can only ask questions at the discretion of the Chair. For further information relating to public access to information, please see Part 4 of the council's constitution, available at <https://hackney.gov.uk/council-business> or by contacting Governance Services (020 8356 3503)

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

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

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

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

Rights of Press and Public to Report on Meetings

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Providing oral commentary during a meeting is not permitted.

Advice to Members on Declaring Interests

Advice to Members on Declaring Interests

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Further Information

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

Getting to the Town Hall

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

Accessibility

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

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

Further Information about the Commission

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

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



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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 12th June 2023 Item 1 – Confirmation of the Chair & Vice-Chair 2023/24	Item No 1
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Outline

The confirmed appointments to the positions of Chair & Vice-Chair of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission, as agreed by Full Council at its annual meeting on 17th May 2023, are as follows:

- Councillor Soraya Adejare - Chair
- Councillor Clare Joseph - Vice-Chair

Action

Members are asked to note the confirmed appointments to the position of Chair & Vice-Chair of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission for the 2023/24 municipal year.

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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 12th June 2023 Item 5 – Cabinet Question Time - Accountability of Private Rented Sector & Housing Associations	Item No 5
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Outline

The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission is keen to hear about how the Council works with the housing associations and private rented sector to ensure effective accountability and protection for housing association tenants and private renters.

The Commission sees this discussion as timely given the development of a shared Housing Compact between the Council and housing associations operating the borough, and the Council's ongoing commitment to supporting private renters and challenging rogue landlords.

Discussion

To look at the relationship between Hackney Council, housing associations and the private rented sector and how they work together to ensure effective accountability and protection for private renters and housing association tenants.

Particular focus will be given to how the Council works with housing associations and the private rented sector to:

- Maximise nominations and lettings
- Support tenancy sustainment
- Safeguard adults and children and young people
- Maintain properties in good repair

Invited Attendees

- Councillor Sem Moema - Deputy Cabinet Member for Private Rented Sector and Housing Affordability

Councillor Moema has responsibility for strategic housing; private sector housing (excluding temporary accommodation); housing affordability; fire safety and leaseholders (non-council); promoting shared ownership and other intermediate products; housing association relationships and accountability; Hackney's housing company, living rent homes and older people's housing.

Action

Members are asked to note the verbal update provided and ask questions of the Deputy Cabinet Member.



Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 12th June 2023 Item 6 – Work Programme Planning 2023/24	Item No 6
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Outline

The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission is asked to consider and make suggestions for the work programme for the new municipal year.

The Chair will also outline those suggestions received thus far from Council Officers, Cabinet Members and other key stakeholder groups.

Report(s)

To support this discussion the following reports are included for background information:

- Item 6a. Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission Remit
- Item 6b. Criteria to Guide Scrutiny Topic Decision Making
- Item 6c. Lifecycle of a Review

Action

The Commission is asked to discuss and suggest items for the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission work programme for 2023/24.

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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission Remit

LEGISLATION

Overview and Scrutiny was introduced following [Local Government Act 2000](#).

Local authority Overview and Scrutiny has been strengthened over the years through a variety of legislations.

Since the initial Act, establishing overview and scrutiny, in 2000 there has been a number of further Acts, often accompanied by secondary legislation, which have gradually strengthened the powers of scrutiny. Today, the legislative provisions for overview and scrutiny committees for England can be found in the Localism Act 2011, which mostly consolidated previously existing law. As a note the 2011 Act also removed the obligation on councils using the committee system to have an overview and scrutiny committee.

ROLE OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) in local authorities is the process for holding the Executive to account, ensuring transparency in decision making and encouraging engagement by residents in the way local services are provided.

Traditionally this focused solely on the operations of the council, either through pre-decision scrutiny (where scrutiny committees review the production of formal plans and strategies etc) or reactive reviews that look at the impact and performance of any existing council service. Increasingly the role of elected Members through Overview and Scrutiny focuses on decisions taken not just by the council but by local partners as well, across the whole range of services in the public, private and voluntary sectors. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) – the national body for scrutiny - devised the following four principles for Effective Overview and Scrutiny.

1. provide constructive “critical friend” challenge;
2. amplify the voice and concerns of the public
3. be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role
4. drive improvement in public services.¹

¹ <https://www.cfgs.org.uk/revisiting-the-four-principles-of-good-scrutiny/>

The membership of O&S commissions is politically proportionate. Scrutiny is non-adversarial² and non-partisan³. The role of scrutiny is to be a “Critical friend” challenging decision maker within LBH as well as external agencies.

REMIT

Scrutiny Commission Remit / Areas	
High level remit as per constitution	Quality of life in local communities covering neighbourhoods, place, wellbeing, amenities and the formal crime and disorder partnership function.
Statutory functions	<p>The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission, to discharge the functions conferred under the Police and Justice Act 2006</p> <p>To carry out the functions of a Crime and Disorder Committee in accordance with the Police and Justice Act 2006.</p> <p>3.1 Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 requires every local authority to have a crime and disorder committee with the power to review or scrutinise decisions made or other action taken in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions.</p> <p>a) to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions;</p> <p>b) to make reports or recommendations to the local authority with respect to the discharge of those functions.</p> <p>“The responsible authorities” means the bodies and persons who are responsible authorities within the meaning given by section 5 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (c. 37) (authorities responsible for crime and disorder strategies) in relation to the local authority's area.</p>
Community Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Antisocial Behaviour ● Violent Crime ● Strategic Analysis ● Prevent 	

² Non-adversarial means there is a spirit of co-operation, a passive stance, the parties are willing to reach a mutually satisfying resolution to a problem. There is persuasion rather than coercion.

³ not partisan means not affiliated to, influenced by, or supporting any one political party

Scrutiny Commission Remit / Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emergency Planning
Public Realm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Streets and Streetscene ● Markets and parking ● Environment ● Leisure ● Parks ● Waste and recycling
Housing Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Council homes (ongoing improvement) ● Maintenance, repairs and estate environment ● Asset Management ● Services for tenants and leaseholders ● Housing Policy ● New housing and estate regeneration ● Private rented sector ● Community halls
Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Housing Benefit ● Housing Needs including temporary accommodation
Planning (residents)
Arts & Culture
Cabinet Members LiH holds to account <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cllr McKenzie ● Cllr Nicholson ● Cllr Coban ● Cllr Kennedy ● Deputy Cabinet Member Cllr Etti ● Deputy Cabinet Member Cllr Moema
Service performance issues in the above remits.

STATUTORY DUTIES

The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission has a statutory duty to scrutinise the Borough's Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission has carried out the Crime and Disorder Committee function since the start of the 2017/18 municipal year.

Membership comprises the responsible authorities and lead officers for the community safety plan priorities. It works in partnership with the Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB). These have been set up by the Mayor of London in all London boroughs.

The 2006 review of the Crime and Disorder Act and subsequent amendments to legislation resulted in an approach to CSPs that is more flexible and allows more local discretion. However, there remain some key statutory responsibilities which must be met:

- a strategy group to be made up of senior representatives from the responsible authorities
- prepare, implement and performance manage an evidence led annual strategic assessment and three-yearly partnership plan for the reduction of crime and disorder in the area
- consult the community on the levels and patterns of crime, disorder and substance misuse and on matters that need to be prioritised by the partnership
- reduce reoffending
- coordinate domestic violence homicide reviews
- share information among the responsible authorities within the CSP
- have a crime and disorder scrutiny committee with the power to review and scrutinise decisions made and action taken by the community safety partnership
- assess value for money of partnership activities

Full information about the partnership work, meetings and documents can be found [here](#)

CSP responsible authorities:

- Police – Borough Command Unit commander – co-chair
- Local authority – chief executive – co-chair
- Fire and rescue – borough commander
- Probation – National Probation Service – assistant chief officer
- Probation – Community Rehabilitation Company – head of stakeholder engagement London North
- Clinical Commissioning Group – programme director
- Elected member responsible for community safety

Supported by leads for the community safety plan:

- Director Children and Families
- Head of Safer Communities
- Director Public Health

STAKEHOLDERS IN THE COUNCIL

The directorates the LiH remit covers are:

- Chief Executive's Directorate

- Climate, Homes and Economy Directorate
- Finance and Corporate Resources

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

- Tenant and Resident Associations
- Resident Liaison Group
- Safer Neighbourhood Board

SCRUTINY REVIEWS

The Commission carries out up to one major review each year. Once the review report is agreed it is sent to Cabinet for an 'Executive Response' and this goes on the Cabinet agenda. Some scrutiny reports and their responses are also debated at Full Council.

When reviews are completed there is a system of recommendation trackers whereby officers are required to come back after 6 -12 months to discuss the progress made and to provide updates on the implementation of the recommendations from the review.

SITE VISITS AND OTHER APPROACHES TO EVIDENCE GATHERING

The Commission meetings are just one way in which the Commission collects evidence for its in-depth reviews. Members also go on site visits and use other formats such as focus groups or observing groups or activity. The latter is more appropriate if Members are speaking to service users on sensitive issues which would be difficult for them to discuss in an open committee. The notes recorded from external site visits are placed in the agendas.

CABINET MEMBERS AND CABINET MEMBER QUESTION TIME

In the municipal year the Commission holds question time sessions with the Cabinet and Senior Officers to ask questions about performance and decision-making within the Council related to their portfolio areas. The Cabinet Members are asked to come and answer questions on 3 pre-agreed areas. This is similar to Select Committee operations in the House of Commons, same format. All Cabinet Members and the Mayor must attend at least one of these a year.

The Commission's remit covers the following Cabinet Member's portfolios:

- **Councillor Clayeon McKenzie, Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation.** Cllr Clayeon McKenzie has lead responsibility for:
 - Housing Management / Services
 - Housing Service Transformation and Improvement
 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan and Strategic Asset Management Plan
 - Retrofit Council Homes Programme with Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

- Better Homes Partnership
- Fire and Resident Safety
- Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) Champion
- Travellers
- Maintaining Strong Relations with the Tenants and Residents Movement

- **Councillor Mete Coban, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport.** Cllr Mete Coban has lead responsibility for:
 - Climate Change - Including Responding to the Emergency, Mitigation, Adaptation, and Public Awareness
 - Environmental Sustainability
 - Transport (working with Mayor) - Bus Priority, Road Safety, Accessibility, Strategic Infrastructure and Transportation
 - Liveable Neighbourhoods - Promoting Walking and Cycling
 - Clean air and Tackling Pollution
 - Public Realm and Streetscene
 - Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure
 - Energy - Community and Local Generation, Efficiency, and Procurement
 - Retrofit Council Homes Programme with Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation
 - Growing the Green and Circular Economy
 - Waste and Recycling
 - Waste Services and Waste Reduction and Prevention
 - Street and Estate Cleansing
 - Corporate Decarbonisation and Just Transition to Net Zero
 - Vehicle and Cycle Parking

- **Councillor Susan Fajana-Thomas, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services.** Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas has lead responsibility for:
 - Strategic Relationship with the Police inc. Accountability and Improving Trust and Confidence
 - Crime Reduction and Antisocial Behaviour
 - Integrated Gangs Unit
 - Noise Nuisance
 - Environmental Health and Trading Standards
 - Licensing Enforcement
 - Licensing Policy [working with Chair of Licensing]
 - Night Time Economy
 - Markets, Shop Fronts and Street Trading
 - Youth Justice
 - Environmental Protection
 - Emergency Planning and Relationship with London Fire Brigade
 - CCTV and Public Surveillance
 - Domestic Violence and Abuse

- Delivery of Mayor's Young Futures Commission Recommendations [with Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care]
 - Violence Against Women and Girls
- **Councillor Chris Kennedy, Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector, and Culture.** Cllr Chris Kennedy has lead responsibility for:
 - Health and Relationship with the Local NHS
 - Adult Social Care
 - Ageing Well Strategy
 - Carers
 - Mental Health and Wellbeing, inc. Dementia Friendly Borough
 - Public Health
 - Voluntary and Community Sector
 - Arts & Culture
 - Libraries, Museum and Archives
 - Food Justice
 - Communications and Consultations
 - Waterways and Boaters
 - Armed Forces Champion
- **Cllr Guy Nicholson, Deputy Mayor for Delivery, Inclusive Economy & Regeneration.** Councillor Guy Nicholson has lead responsibility for:
 - 2022-26 Manifesto & Council Strategic Plan delivery
 - Capital Programme - new homes, infrastructure and services delivery
 - Town Centre, high street, estates and neighbourhood place making
 - Planning Service - performance, policy, plan making, building control & enforcement
 - Inclusive Economic Development - local business, cooperative & social enterprise led community wealth building delivery
 - Regional & international economic partnerships delivery
- **Councillor Sem Moema, Deputy Cabinet Member for Private Rented Sector and Housing Affordability.** Cllr Sem Moema has lead responsibility for:
 - Strategic Housing
 - Private Sector Housing (excluding temporary accommodation)
 - Housing Affordability
 - Fire Safety and Leaseholders (non-council)
 - Promoting Shared Ownership and Other Intermediate Products ●
 - Housing Association Relationships and Accountability
 - Hackney's Housing Company and Living Rent Homes
 - Older People's Housing
- **Councillor Sade Etti, Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing Needs and Homelessness.** Cllr Sade Etti has lead responsibility for:

- Housing Needs (inc. Lettings and Allocations Policy)
 - Rough Sleeping
 - Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation Including our Work with Young People
 - Internal Advice Services (Particularly Housing Options / Homelessness Related)
- **Councillor Caroline Woodley, Cabinet Member for Families, Parks and Leisure.** Cllr Woodley has lead responsibility for:
 - Early Years
 - Children's Centres and Nurseries
 - Affordable Childcare Commission ● Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
 - Alternative Settings and Additional Resource Provision (ARP)
 - Tackling Child Poverty
 - Supporting Families [with Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care]
 - Leisure and Sport
 - Play and Adventure Playgrounds
 - Play Streets
 - Parks and Green Spaces
 - Green Infrastructure, Nature Recovery and Biodiversity
 - Our Tree Programme
 - Delivering Hackney 'A Child Friendly Borough' [with Deputy Mayor and Cabinet member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care]

WORK OF THE COMMISSION 2022-2023

RECENT REVIEW

Whilst the Living in Hackney Commission did not undertake a formal review during the 2022-23 municipal year, it did look into a number of topics relating to the accountability of registered social landlords in Hackney (including the Council), which included reviewing progress against the implementation of the Charter for Social Housing Residents, and exploring particular issues of local concern such as nominations and lettings, tenancy sustainment, repairs, complaints, safety and resident engagement.

The Commission will be bringing the findings and recommendations from this piece of work forward shortly, alongside some of the findings from the Housing Associations Review which was put on hold due to the impact of the pandemic and cyber attack.

HOLDING TO ACCOUNT

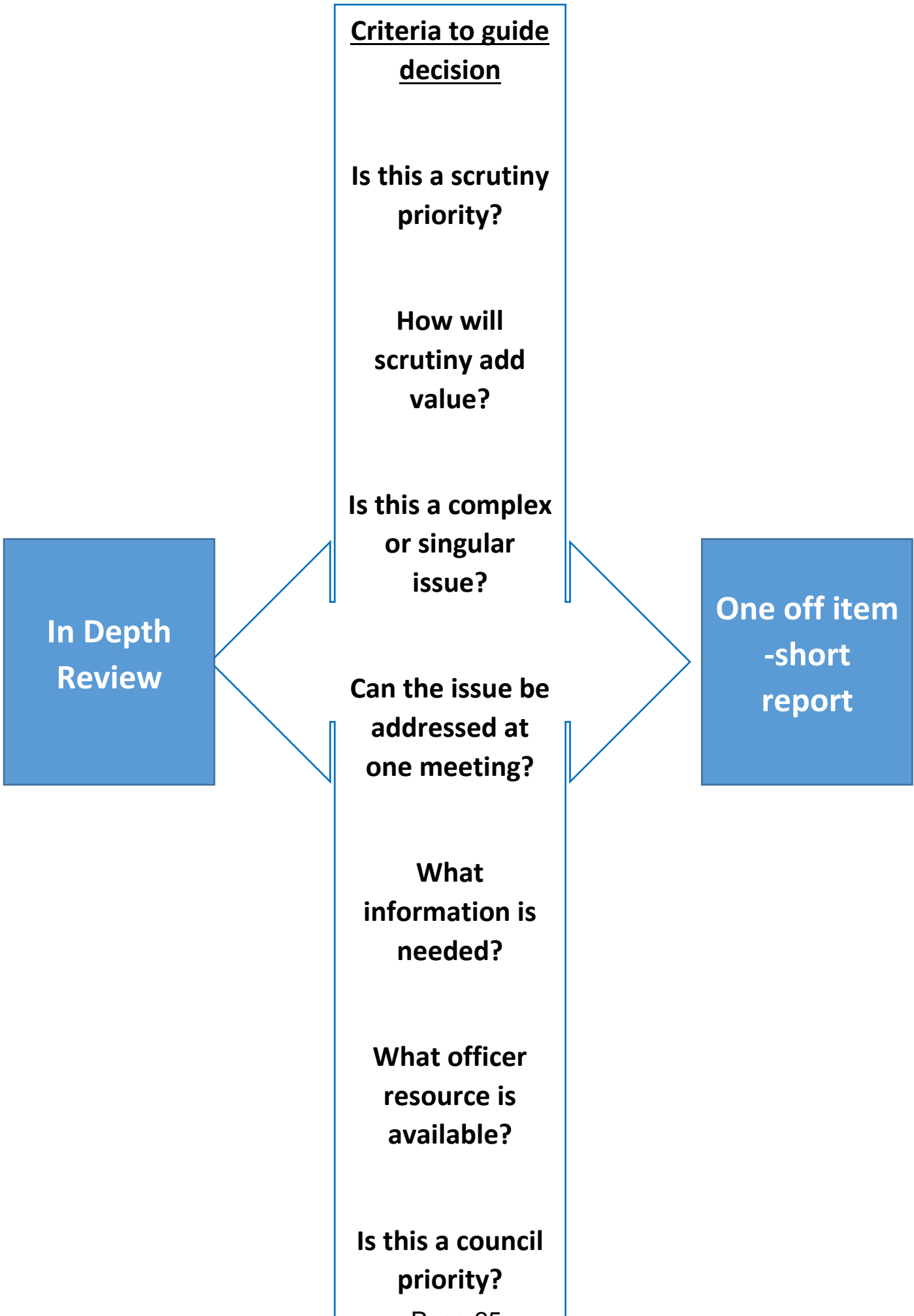
Whilst Cabinet Question Time was not held for Living in Hackney last year, the Commission did hold thematic discussions and invited relevant Cabinet Members to participate in these discussions.

OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS IN 2022/2023

Other discussion topics covered by the Commission were:

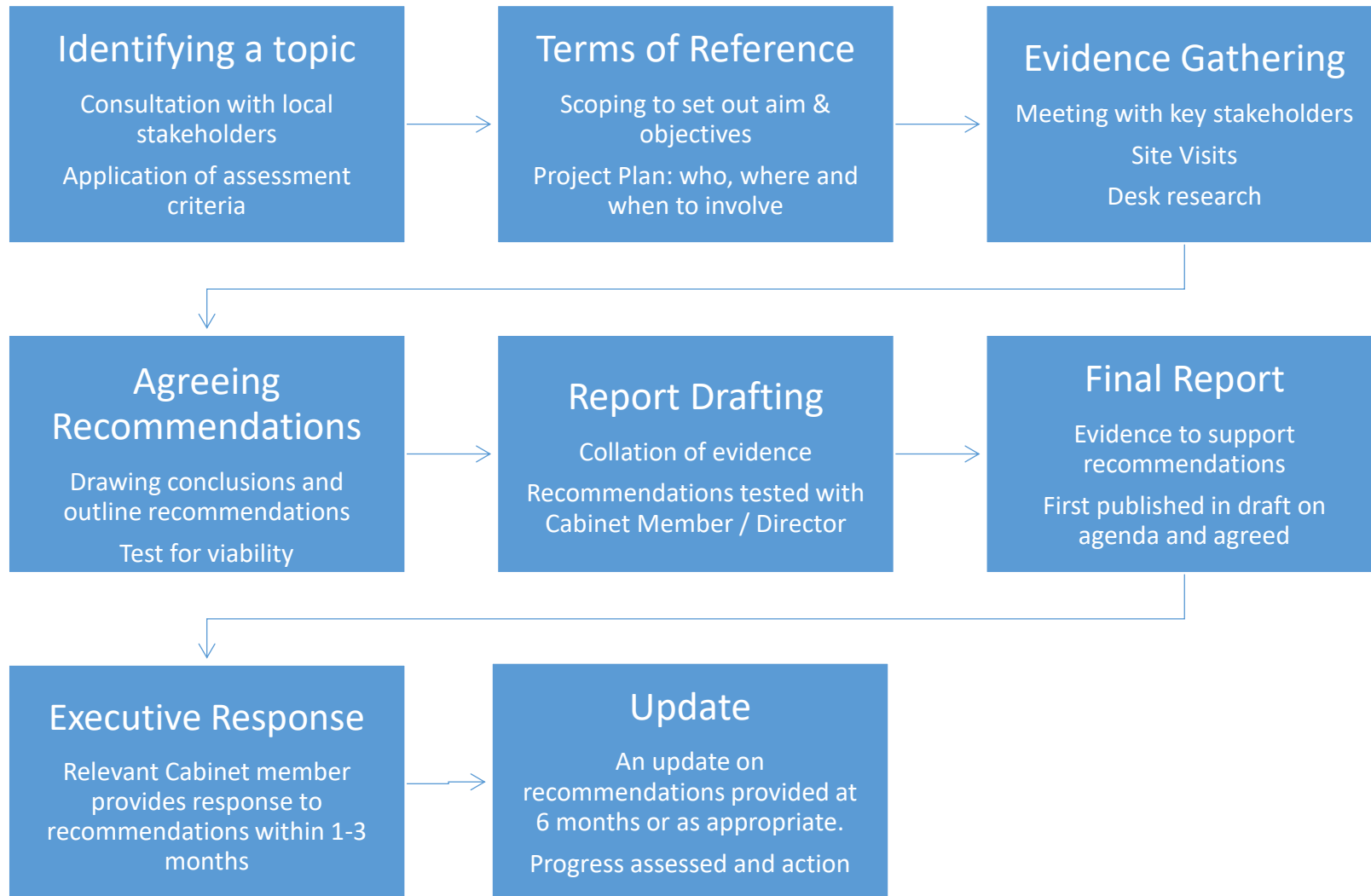
- Strategic Response of Statutory Partners to Child Q
- Housing Register and Lettings Policy
- Policing of Drug Use
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Arts & Cultural Sector
- Temporary Accommodation
- Resident Engagement for Estate Regeneration Schemes

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Lifecycle of a Review



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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 12th June 2023 Item 7 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting	Item No 7
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Outline

Attached are the draft minutes of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission meetings held on 20th April 2023.

Action

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

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London Borough of Hackney
Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission
Municipal Year 2022/23
Thursday 20 April 2023

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

Chair:	Councillor Soraya Adejare
Councillors in Attendance:	Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Penny Wrout, Cllr Clare Joseph (Vice-Chair), Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Ali Sadek and Cllr Zoe Garbett
Apologies:	Cllr Sarah Young
Officers In Attendance:	Rachel Bagenal (Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery)
Other People in Attendance:	Cllr Guy Nicholson (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration) and Paul Watt (Professor of Urban Studies, Birkbeck University)
People in Virtual Attendance:	Steve Webster (Resident Liaison Group Co-Chair)
Officer Contact:	Craig Player  020 8356 4316  craig.player@hackney.gov.uk

Councillor Soraya Adejare in the Chair

1 Apologies for Absence

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

1.2 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Young.

2 Urgent Items / Order of Business

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

3 Declaration of Interest

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4 Resident Engagement for Estate Regeneration Schemes

4.1 The Chair opened the discussion by outlining that estate regeneration could offer existing tenants better homes, more new and affordable housing, and improvements to the local environment. However, when residents were not at the heart of proposals, it could leave residents feeling like they were properly consulted, social housing being lost, and displaces tenants and leaseholders getting a bad deal.

4.2 The Chair explained that the Commission saw this discussion as timely due to the Council's ambitious programme of estate regeneration which were at various stages of delivery, the recent publication of the Housing Services Resident Engagement Strategy, and the ongoing refresh of the Housing Strategy.

4.3 As part of the scrutiny process, Members held a focus group to hear from residents living in council managed estates that had been affected by estate regeneration schemes. This helped Members to understand residents' experiences of engagement, and what they may like to see happen additionally or differently in the future.

4.4 Representing London Borough of Hackney

- Councillor Guy Nicholson, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration
- Rachel Bagenal, Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery
- Hermoine Brightwell, Project Manager Woodberry Down Estate

4.5 External Guest(s)

- Paul Watt, Professor of Urban Studies, Birkbeck University

4.6 The Chair invited the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration and the Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery to give a short verbal presentation. The main points are highlighted below.

4.7 The Council's approach to resident engagement for estate regeneration schemes had evolved over the last decade, and whilst more could always be done to improve the approach, it was a culmination of years of engagement experience.

4.8 The Council was undertaking a programme of over 3,400 Council-led homes across more than 30 sites, alongside partnerships such as Woodberry Down. 1,984 new homes had started construction, completed or received planning permission between May 2018 and May 2022.

4.9 These homes were a mix of large and small brownfield sites, including estate regeneration and infill development. The programme would be funded through social rent, shared ownership, Hackney Living Rent and outright sales, and there were plans for 1,000 new Council rent homes by 2026.

4.10 The programme had four overarching commitments. These commitments set out that estate regeneration should be:

- Not for profit, with homes being built for outright sale to pay for social housing

- Council-led, without private developers or by selling off land and would make the most of the land available
- First dibs for local people, with a right to return for existing residents and local letting policies
- Collaborative, with local people would be at the heart of proposals.

4.11 The Council's consultation principles were informed by the Residents' Charter and Resident Engagement Strategy. These set out that consultation should be:

- Timely, allowing maximum time for engagement
- Meaningful, ensuring input informs changes
- inclusive, including under-represented groups
- Direct, working directly with residents
- Collaborative, giving community members a leading role.

4.12 One case study was Colville Estate. Engagement included the establishment of a Resident Steering Group, which held monthly meetings on areas such as developing and agreeing the brief for the new community centre, and Independent Tenants and Leaseholder Advisors who provided support and advice to individual residents and the Steering Group.

4.13 Consultation had been undertaken with residents to be allocated new homes on internal layouts, windows and balconies through surveys, workshops and in-person exhibitions, with estate wide consultation on public realm and landscape proposals.

4.14 Another case study was De Beauvoir Estate. Pre-pandemic engagement involved in-person consultations, workshops, door-knocking sessions and youth engagement. During lockdown this was moved to online consultation events, a dedicated consultation phone line, printed material and 1,300 e-newsletter subscribers.

4.15 A Resident Steering Group had been established to involve residents in the design proposals, and Independent Tenants and Leaseholder Advisors provided impartial support and advice.

4.16 The New Homes Programme provided another case study. This involved 15 council-owned sites to help towards building 1,000 new Council homes for social rent, in particular the repurposing of underused land without demolishing homes and direct Council investments to build 75% for social rent.

4.17 Early engagement had included a borough-wide survey to inform the choice of suitable locations and engagement before any design work had begun, and an online survey and in-person engagement which had received 445 written responses. Next steps for the programme included ongoing engagement throughout the design process and collaboration with local residents for new developments.

4.18 The final case study was Woodberry Down Estate. A number of commitments were made to residents, including a direct move to new social rent homes for every Council tenant, shared equity and ownership offers for freeholders and leaseholders, and community facilities and social infrastructure to bring new and old residents together.

4.19 The local community was a formal regeneration partner through the Woodberry Down Community Organisation (WDCO). Residents had been extensively engaged with on the masterplan, design of each phase and rehousing processes through resident drop-ins, neighbourhood office, translation services, Independent Tenants and Leaseholder Advisors (IRAs) and fun days.

4.20 The Chair then invited the Professor of Urban Studies, Birkbeck University to give a short verbal presentation. The main points are highlighted below.

4.21 Estate regeneration, especially that which involved demolition and rebuilding, was often advertised as a win-win policy for all involved, which would solve existing problems quickly and would not generate further problems.

4.22 Demolishing and rebuilding existing estates should be considered the last regeneration option due to the extended time involved, complexity of the process, expense, disruption to existing communities, displacement and gentrification effects and negative environmental effects.

4.23 Some of the issues encountered by residents in the consultation process for estate regeneration schemes included unclear regeneration aims, lack of detailed information, meetings not being held at convenient times, unclear consultation formats and a high turnover of regeneration personnel (both in terms of officers and councillors).

4.24 Woodberry Down Estate was an example of where consultation had largely been positive and well received by residents. Reasons for this included there being active members of WDCO who made genuine inputs into the planning process, the long-term employment of IRAs and on-site offices for WDCO and IRAs.

4.25 Some of the problems faced by temporary tenants on estates undergoing regeneration included poor housing conditions, repairs and maintenance problems, a lack of knowledge of the local area, difficulties in socially integrating and a lack of clarity in terms of how long they may be on the estate and their rehousing status.

4.26 Suggestions for how the consultation process may be improved going forward included rebuilding trust through an efficient maintenance and repairs service, appreciating that you are dealing with people's homes and communities, moving away from merely consulting residents to treating them as experts through a dialogic form of participation, and supporting consultation groups such as WDCO.

4.27 Other suggestions included ensuring there was clarity regarding the purpose of regeneration, for example through specifying what the aims and potential benefits would be and for whom, being realistic, and acknowledging potential problems and rehousing may give rise to such as disruption, lengthy regeneration processes and changes to aims and schemes.

4.28 Suggestions for how the approach to temporary tenants of estates affected by regeneration schemes may be improved included ensuring properties were of a decent standard when temporary tenants move in, providing funding to assist with fixtures and fittings, taking steps to socially integrate temporary tenants into estates, ensuring an effective repairs and maintenance service and clarifying and updating their housing status.

Questions, Answers and Discussion

4.29 *The Resident Liaison Group Co-Chair asked how the Council ensured residents were given the opportunity to have their say on proposals, and that their views and concerns were listened to and acted on.*

4.30 The Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery explained that the Council tried to be as clear as possible at the beginning of the regeneration process about what residents could influence. For example, the Council would give residents the opportunity to have their say on proposals and the design of new homes, and would act on their feedback and tell them what had changed.

4.31 The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration added that the Council remained committed to coproduction and holding meaningful engagement on estate regeneration proposals.

4.32 Woodberry Down Estate presented a good example of this, whereby residents and community groups worked closely with the Council and its partners, such as commercial developers, to influence proposals and design new homes, and ensure regular communication about plans.

4.33 The Professor of Urban Studies, University of Birckbeck added that the approach that residents seemed most amenable to in his research was one where residents were meaningfully involved from the outset in shaping proposals and designs, and where developers were honest about the potential challenges that lay ahead.

4.32 The Project Manager Woodberry Down Estate explained that residents were involved in the Woodberry Down Estate regeneration process in a number of ways, including extensive engagement on the masterplan, design and rehousing through numerous working groups and a design committee.

4.33 Topics engaged on ranged from housing management issues through to more strategic issues such as on new community spaces and the design of new homes. A core principle of this engagement had been to act on feedback and tell residents what had changed.

4.34 *A Commission Member asked for more information on local lettings policies for estate regeneration schemes, for example those developed for Woodberry Down Estate and Colville Estate.*

4.35 The Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery explained local letting policies were put in place to give priority to local residents, recognising the disruption that demolition and construction brings. Further written information would be provided to Members following the meeting.

4.35 *A Commission Member asked how the Council measured the success and impact of estate regeneration schemes and various approaches to resident engagement.*

4.36 The Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery explained that the Council was currently looking at the ways in which it measured the success of estate regeneration schemes and their impact on residents' lives.

4.37 The Council recognised that measuring success and impact was not just about whether or not residents liked the design of new homes, but also about the longer-term outcomes of regeneration such as economic opportunities, health and wellbeing and access to green and open spaces.

4.38 The Professor of Urban Studies, University of Birckbeck added that it was important that the negative impacts of regeneration were measured and monitored, particularly when demolition was involved, such as disruption to the existing community, displacement effects and negative environmental effects.

4.39 A Commission Member followed up by asking what the alternatives to the demolition of homes for estate regeneration schemes were, especially in light of the ongoing need for housing in London.

4.40 The Professor of Urban Studies, University of Birckbeck explained that each borough had its own challenges when it came to housing and the land available to it. Whilst it was recognised that in some circumstances demolition was necessary, it should be the very last regeneration option and refurbishment and infill were preferable alternatives.

4.41 The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration added that the Council was committed to building new homes across the borough, and in particular building or supporting partners to build new social homes.

4.42 If refurbishment was considered a more suitable way forward rather than demolition then that would be prioritised, and there were a number of examples of regeneration across Hackney in which existing homes were being refurbished alongside the building of additional homes.

4.43 A Commission Member asked what the Council did to ensure that engagement over the course of a regeneration scheme, which could last many years, was maintained and meaningful, and how it dealt with turnover of regeneration personnel.

4.44 The Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery explained that the Council had adopted a residents charter which set out the promises the Council makes to residents, and the rights and guarantees they were entitled to if new homes were built in the area they live. In some cases, bespoke resident charters were adopted in local areas - such as with the Tower Court Estate regeneration project.

4.45 In terms of turnover of regeneration personnel, it was recognised that officers would change over the course of a regeneration scheme - especially those that last an extended period of time.

4.46 One way in which the Council was looking to mitigate the impact of staff turnover was by moving to an area based staffing model. This involved teams of officers which would be responsible for projects within a specific area, allowing them to build specific knowledge of a local area and build meaningful relationships with residents.

4.47 A Commission Member followed up by asking how transparent the Council was in explaining how long an estate regeneration project would take to residents and stakeholders.

4.48 The Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery explained that whilst the Council tried to be open and honest when discussing potential timelines with residents, it was difficult to predict exactly how long it would take and the potential challenges which may be faced along the way - especially with more ambitious regeneration projects. For example, volatility in the construction and housing sectors may cause delays for the Council.

4.49 The Council aimed to regularly communicate with residents about plans in a clear, accessible and transparent way, and keep residents informed and updated about the progress of proposals.

4.50 The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration gave an example of residents in Kings Park who were waiting for new homes that were not delivered until three years later than planned due to the pandemic. Whilst this was frustrating for residents, the positive relationships the Council had built with them and constant communication meant that residents were more understanding.

4.51 The Professor of Urban Studies, University of Birckbeck added that it was important to be open and honest with residents from the very beginning, and acknowledge the potential problems regeneration may give rise to such as it taking an extended period of time to complete and the aims of programmes changing over time.

4.52 A Commission Member asked how the Council ensured it communicated with residents about estate regeneration plans in a clear, accessible and transparent way, and how residents were supported to find out more detailed information easily.

4.53 The Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery explained that the Council communicated with residents throughout the regeneration process in a clear and easy to understand way.

4.54 In practice this meant ensuring residents did not receive huge amounts of technical information full of jargon, but easy to digest information which covered all the details which were important to residents.

4.55 The Council also ran workshops and drop-ins with residents which gave them an opportunity to talk through any proposals in person, and to ensure they understand the plans for their local area, and translation services were also made available for residents who may need them.

4.56 A Commission Member asked how much of a leading role residents and stakeholders were afforded in the design and development of estate regeneration schemes.

4.57 The Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery explained that Resident Steering Groups were key to ensuring that residents took a leading role in developing proposals and designs.

4.58 For example, on the Colville Estate the Resident Steering Group met monthly with design teams to put residents' views at the heart of proposals, and ongoing engagement was prioritised throughout the design process through workshops and ongoing communication.

4.59 *A Commission Member asked how the Council planned to approach resident engagement for the new programme of council homes which focused on smaller regeneration projects on underused land.*

4.60 The Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery explained that the Council recognised that the engagement approach for these schemes may be different from larger schemes. The focus would need to be on how the Council can demonstrate that those residents disrupted by these schemes would get something meaningful in return, such as public realm improvements and access to community facilities.

4.61 *A Commission Member asked for more information on the role of Housing Officers on estates affected by regeneration schemes, and whether there was scope to enhance their roles and increase the face-to-face support they provide to residents.*

4.62 The Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery recognised the important role that Housing Officers played on council-managed estates, especially in terms of keeping residents up-to-date with estate-based improvements and works.

4.63 The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration added that the role of Housing Officers focused largely on housing maintenance and management, and that a move to treating estates more holistically would be welcomed, particularly in ensuring more joined up working between regeneration and housing services.

4.64 *A Commission Member asked how the Council engaged with diverse groups who may not usually participate in traditional forms of engagement, such as young people and those from Global Majority backgrounds, and those that may not be directly impacted by proposals but live or work nearby.*

4.65 The Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery explained that the Council thought carefully about who it would like to reach when engaging with the public on proposals for estate regeneration schemes. This meant that it did not engage only with those on the estate, but also those in neighbouring areas that may be affected.

4.66 It was acknowledged that the Council did not currently record who attended engagement meetings and activities, and had not undertaken any research into who may be more likely to engage with traditional methods.

4.67 The Council did engage with young people with a particular emphasis on the things that would interest them, but there was perhaps more to be done to utilise the views of young people who may grow up throughout the regeneration scheme and develop a longer-term view of the process.

4.68 *A Commission Member asked what the Council did to ensure social cohesion and integration on estates affected by regeneration schemes, and in particular how it ensured parity of access to those facilities provided as part of the regeneration process.*

4.69 The Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration and Delivery explained that each estate which had undergone a regeneration scheme was mixed tenure, which aimed

to create communities of residents with a mix of income levels and facilitate social interaction and cohesion.

4.70 The Professor of Urban Studies, University of Birkbeck added that in his experience mixed-tenure estates often did not lead to greater social cohesion or mixing. In reality there were significant societal differences between many of the people living on these estates that were difficult to overcome and build a sense of community.

4.71 The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration added that the engagement and co-production was particularly important when developing proposals for community spaces, and ensuring they were designed and delivered in a way which was accessible to all tenures.

4.72 A Commission Member asked how the Council promoted engagement activity that strengthens community cohesion and resilience on estates affected by regeneration schemes.

4.73 The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration explained that engagement activity that strengthens housing communities were led by Housing Services. The transition from engaging with regeneration to housing management was crucial, and it was important that the services worked together to manage the transition closely and ensure there were no barriers for residents.

4.74 *A Commission Member asked whether affordable accommodation for key workers was provided by the Council through its estate regeneration schemes.*

4.75 The Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration pointed out that the Council provided some homes through Hackney Living Rent, which was set at around a third of average local incomes with homes let and managed by the Council. One example of this was at Gooch House in Clapton, in which 16 bedsits were refurbished into Hackney Living Rent homes.

Summing Up

4.76 The Chair thanked Commission Members for their questions and all witnesses for their responses and engagement with the scrutiny process.

4.77 It was explained that, after the meeting, the Commission would reflect on the evidence heard and may make suggestions or recommendations for improvement for consideration.

5 Minutes of the Meeting

5.1 The draft minutes of the previous meeting held on 22nd March 2023 were presented.

5.2 Members agreed the draft minutes as an accurate record.

6 Living in Hackney Work Programme 2022/23

6.1 The Chair referred to the Commission's work programme and highlighted the discussion items planned for the remainder of the municipal year.

6.2 The Chair then thanked all Commission Members for their hard work over the course of the municipal year and highlighted some of the key areas of work it had undertaken.

6.3 The Commission had looked at a number of topics relating to registered social landlords in Hackney (including the Council), which included reviewing progress against the implementation of the Charter for Social Housing Residents, and exploring particular issues of local concern such as nominations and lettings, tenancy sustainment, repairs, complaints, safety and resident engagement. It would be looking to finalise its findings and recommendations for this piece of work over the coming weeks.

6.4 It also looked at the partnership approach to the policing of drug use in Hackney, and in particular how effective this approach has been, how consistently it is used across our communities, and the impact it has had on residents. Again, it would be looking to finalise its findings and recommendations from this piece of work over the next few weeks.

6.5 The Commission reviewed the progress of the Council and its partners in advancing equality, diversity and inclusion in the arts and culture sector, bringing together a number of key stakeholders to understand their views and perspectives, especially in light of the pandemic and ongoing cost of living crisis.

6.6 The Chair reminded Members that the joint meeting with the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission to review the coordinated partnership response to the concerns raised by the Child Q incident would be held on Tuesday 25th April 2023.

7 Any Other Business

7.1 None.

Duration of the meeting: 7pm – 9pm