



Overview & Scrutiny

Annual Report 2017-2018



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Foreword

Effective governance requires effective scrutiny.

At its best high quality scrutiny can lead to better policy and decision-making, ensuring lessons are learnt and elevating the understanding and quality of the debate.

We are all too aware that scrutiny has, and is, withering in many other London Boroughs and local authorities across the country – with residents suffering as a result.

We have a proud record in Hackney of supporting members to undertake their scrutiny function, and notwithstanding the fact we can be challenging and probing of them, we are grateful to both the Officers and the Executive for recognising the benefits of scrutiny, facilitating our work and implementing our recommendations.

This was the first year of the new scrutiny structure with four re-configured commissions and the newly created Scrutiny Panel at its apex, holding the Chief Executive and Elected Mayor to account.

There are many examples in this report where scrutiny has made a meaningful impact, to name just a few –

- The **Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission's** review of unregistered educational setting which received significant national publicity.
- **Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission's** work looking into supporting adult Carers and encouraging the council to strategically plan as to how it can best help rebuild and modernise the GP estate across the borough.
- **Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission's** work in providing public reassurance through questioning the Council and partners on their responses to the Grenfell Tower tragedy
- **Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission's** review on Future World of Work and Skills which made us aware of the sheer diversity of small businesses and residents with portfolio careers in the borough who will need support in a rapidly changing labour market
- **Scrutiny Panel's** enquiry into cross cutting issues such as civil resilience and emergency planning in light of tragic events such as Grenfell Tower.

I commend this report.

Cllr Ben Hayhurst
Chair of Scrutiny Panel for 2017/18

Holding the Executive to account

The Cabinet, led by the Mayor, is responsible for making sure that people receive the services that Council has agreed. Scrutiny is responsible for ensuring the Cabinet and the Mayor do their job. The main way we do this is through the four themed Scrutiny Commissions.

These are:

1. Children and Young People (CYP)
2. Health in Hackney (HiH)
3. Living in Hackney (LiH)
4. Working in Hackney (WiH)

Above these is an overarching **Scrutiny Panel** which is made up of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the 4 Commissions.

The Commissions look at how the Council and its partner organisations can improve the services that they provide to the people of Hackney. They are made up of Councillors who are not members of the Cabinet. Their role is to review performance and examine the decisions of the Executive from a non party-political perspective, and to conduct in-depth investigations into key issues for Hackney. They also provide advice and guidance to inform Executive decisions.

Commissions conduct investigations into areas of policy, taking into consideration the views of local people, and experts in an area. They can then recommend changes if they think that there are better ways of doing things.

Unlike the decision-making bodies, such as Cabinet and Council, Scrutiny Commissions cannot enforce their policy recommendations. Instead they help shape Executive decisions through undertaking in-depth analysis and providing clear guidance on relevant issues.

Who decides what a Commission reviews?

Reviews may arise as a response to public interest or concern, national or local changes, or an area of service delivery that requires improvement. The Commissions consider areas for review and The Scrutiny Panel ensures there are no overlaps in work programmes and that best practice is shared. At the beginning of the year the Scrutiny Chairs meet with their relevant Cabinet Member to discuss planned work programmes.

How does a Commission conduct a review?

At the start of a review we gather evidence, taking into account the views of expert witnesses, service users and other key stakeholders. Members usually visit service users or residents affected by the issue under investigation. Recommendations based on this evidence are negotiated with Cabinet Members and then the Commission agrees its Report. This is sent to Cabinet who are required to formally respond. This Executive Response is presented to a Cabinet meeting. For a selection of the reviews the report and the response are debated at Full Council.

Each Commission re-visits its reviews six months after completion in order to check progress on the implementation of the recommendations. This ensures that pressure is brought to bear on driving improvements, that scrutiny can be sure that its work has added value, and possibly identify topics for further inquiry.

The final reports of each review can be downloaded from www.hackney.gov.uk/scrutiny - or obtained from the Scrutiny Team.

The sections in this report for each Scrutiny Commission summarise the reviews that have been carried out this municipal year. It is important to note that Commissions have

other duties which form part of the routine business of their meetings. Health in Hackney for example receives regular updates from each of the local NHS bodies and the Council's Adult Social Care and Public Health departments and has to respond to local health issues which arise. LiH has a duty to scrutinise updates to the Community Safety Plan and the effectiveness of the local Community Safety Partnership and CYP monitors the statutory plans in its area. Both HiH and CYP receive formal updates on the work of the Adult and Children's Safeguarding Boards respectively.

While the effectiveness of scrutiny can be measured by how many of its suggestions and recommendations get implemented it also has a broader and ongoing impact, in that often ideas first developed in scrutiny can prompt policy developments down the line. Also by casting a spotlight on particular areas Scrutiny often acts as a catalyst for change both within the Council and its partner organisations. In this way, while Scrutiny has no executive power it has influence.

In 2013 the Council was externally assessed as 'Excellent' on the **Equality Framework for Local Government**. It was reassessed in 2018 and again rated 'Excellent' and this important peer review acknowledged how Scrutiny has often been a regular driver for change on equalities issues. Equality considerations are central both to selection of topics for review and to how the reviews are scoped and how evidence is gathered.

Cabinet Question Time

Following the format in central government of ministerial appearances before Select Committees, the Mayor and each Cabinet Member take it in turns to appear before the relevant Scrutiny Commission. To make it manageable it is arranged that the questioning focuses on key areas within their portfolio, which would be agreed with them in advance.

The aim here is to provide a 'critical friend' challenge to services, addressing issues of public concern and any deteriorations in

performance and to enable the Mayor and Cabinet Members to demonstrate transparency and accountability in public for the performance of services within their portfolios.

This approach allows performance and budget data and other insight to be used to hold the portfolio holder to account whilst all the time focusing on the bigger picture. Cabinet Question Time with the Mayor and the Chief Executive is carried out by the Scrutiny Panel twice a year.

Budget Scrutiny

Scrutiny of the Council's budget and financial planning has evolved over the years. In the past themed Budget Scrutiny Panels were created as Task & Finish groups for this job. More recently it is done by a combination of the Scrutiny Panel (which has regular finance items with the Group Director Finance and Corporate Resources) and via Audit Committee. This approach allows backbenchers to input early to the budget planning cycle.

Statutory Framework for Scrutiny

Local government scrutiny was formally introduced in the *Local Government Act 2000*, however law affecting scrutiny goes back to the *Local Government Act 1972*, which established modern local government. The 2000 Act of course radically altered the way in which councils operate. The remit of local scrutiny was soon expanded to include local health care in 2001, with PCTs (now CCGs) and local hospitals being expected to engage in the process. Hackney has benefited from very positive engagement from the outset by health partners.

Between 1972 and 2000 came other Acts that are relevant to the operation of scrutiny committees including: the *Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985*, *Local Government and Housing Act 1989* and *Data Protection Act 1998* or which are relevant to the function such as the *Freedom of Information Act 2000*.

Since 2000, there has been a slew of Acts, often accompanied by secondary legislation, which have gradually strengthened the powers of scrutiny, albeit in a haphazard way. The *Health and Social Care Act 2001*, *Local Government Act 2003*, *Police and Justice Act 2006*, the *NHS Act 2006*, the *Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009* and the *Health and Social Care Act 2012* have all made changes to the scrutiny process. *Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007* enhanced Partnership Scrutiny powers as it increased the list of partner organisations who are required to engage with scrutiny. The *Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013* govern how joint scrutiny is now carried out. Generally speaking however the view in Hackney has been that if a Commission has to rely on legislation to get partners to the table then the relationship has already failed.

Community Safety and CYP Scrutiny

The Council has a statutory duty to scrutinise the local Community Safety Plan. In Hackney that Plan is the responsibility of the Community Safety Partnership and the scrutiny of it is delegated to Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission.

Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission also has a statutory duty to include on it voting co-optees from the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church and two Parent Governor representatives. In addition, Hackney itself has decided to also have non-voting co-optees from the Orthodox Jewish, Muslim, and Free Churches' faith groups, as well as a representative from the Hackney School Governors Association and up to 4 representatives from the Hackney Youth Parliament.

CALLING TO ACCOUNT

Call-In

'Call-in' is a tool to temporarily freeze a decision that has been taken by the Cabinet but not yet implemented, to allow for further consideration. To do this, five councillors have to sign a request that a decision be called in, if they believe it does not meet the Council's 'Principles of decision-making' as set out in the Constitution. The Scrutiny Panel then holds a special hearing to decide whether the decision should be referred back to Cabinet, discussed further at Full Council, or upheld. The two most recent uses of this power were in 2008 and 2010.

Councillor Call for Action

CCfA enables any Member to ask Overview and Scrutiny to investigate an issue affecting their ward, particularly issues that remain unresolved despite all efforts to get them fixed. Overview and Scrutiny can then choose to take-up the issue, investigate it thoroughly, and make recommendations to the relevant decision-makers. This was introduced because some councils were obviously not considered to be sufficiently responsive. In Hackney it hasn't been used to date as existing mechanisms have enabled issues to be raised by members of the

public through ward members or at a scrutiny commission. CCfAs are generally a last resort mechanism if other avenues, such as the Member Enquiry process, have been exhausted.

Petitions

The Council's constitution includes various powers in relation to residents running petitions. These include opportunities for groups of local people to trigger 'Petitions for Debate' at Full Council, or to hold an Officer to account. The former requires **750** signatures from across the borough. Alternatively, if a petition has received **250** signatures from a single ward, it could be scheduled for debate at the relevant Ward Forum.

A 'Petition to hold an officer to account' would trigger an open meeting of the Scrutiny Panel at which a named senior officer would be called to answer questions about the subject of the petition. **500** signatures are needed for this process. Scrutiny Members would ask the questions at this meeting, but petitioners could suggest questions to the Chair by contacting them or the Overview and Scrutiny team up to three working days before the meeting.

General Exception and Special Urgency

The key executive decisions in the Council are usually taken at the monthly meetings of Cabinet or its Cabinet Procurement Committee. To ensure the decision taken is lawful at least 28 days before the decision is to be taken details must be listed in the 'Executive Meetings and Key Decisions Notice' which is published monthly. Where this has not been

possible a **General Exception Notice** must be issued and the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel notified. Additionally if the agenda has been published and a decision must be taken which has not been notified and cannot wait until the next meeting this will require the publication of a **Special Urgency Notice** and the approval of the Scrutiny Panel Chair. The Mayor is required to report to full Council on a quarterly basis any use of the Special Urgency Procedure.

Lifecycle of a Review – a brief guide

Our Scrutiny Reviews generally follow the following format:

Suggesting the topic

Suggestions come from a variety of sources such as: Members own areas of interest, residents' surveys, performance data, ideas from Hackney Youth Parliament and suggestions from the Cabinet & Corporate Directors. The scrutiny officer will advise on the Commission's capacity and the scale of work which can be tackled.



Drafting the Terms of Reference

This uses comments from the first scoping meeting, desk research by the scrutiny officer and suggestions by the relevant Cabinet Members, Directors and stakeholders.



Gathering evidence

Information is sought from as wide a variety of stakeholders as is possible in order to ensure a wide range of perspectives. This often includes site visits, which are suggested at the scoping stage. Importantly, not all evidence is discussed at commission meetings but it will be referenced or linked to in the final report.



Agreeing recommendations

By their very nature proposals can arise throughout the course of the review. These are recorded and the scrutiny officer will research their viability. The Commission will usually agree the broad recommendation at the review's final meeting and these are then refined whilst the report is produced.

Drafting the report

The report draws together the findings and the officer makes sure that all perspectives that were shared are included. The Chair and scrutiny officer then meet with the relevant Cabinet Member/Director to discuss what will be in the report. This helps to provide reassurance that the recommendations are feasible, but it usually does not alter the main thrust of the recommendations which the Members wish to make.

Final report

The evidence used to support the findings and recommendations is summarised but for brevity all evidence taken is not repeated again in the report. Links are added to the relevant agendas and minutes for the source material.

Agreeing the report

The draft report is published in an agenda when it first goes in the public domain. This is formally agreed and the report is sent to Cabinet for an 'Executive Response'. Within 1 to 3 months the response, in the name of the relevant Lead Cabinet Member, is produced and agreed at Cabinet. This returns to the Commission where comments can be made and for some reviews, the Report and the Response are discussed as an item at a meeting of Full Council.

6 month update

At an appropriate stage, usually about 6 months after the recommendations and response have been discussed at Full Council, the Commission receives an update about the implementation of the recommendations and they can then take a variety of actions if they are dissatisfied with the progress.

Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission



Chair
Councillor
Christopher Kennedy



Vice Chair
Councillor
Margaret Gordon

Unregistered Educational Settings – review impact

When we decided to conduct an investigation into unregistered educational settings we knew it would be difficult but at the same time of great importance. The investigation was started in 2015/2016 and spanned across most of 2017/18. However, thanks to our members, Council officers, community representatives, partners in other organisations and members of the public, and their diligence and sensitivity, this review was made possible and has already had significant impact.

This review was prompted by national and local concerns about unregistered educational settings which highlighted the unsafe conditions in which some children were being taught, the lack of safeguarding controls in those settings and the teaching of a narrow curriculum.

Locally, the lack of safeguarding procedures in unregistered educational settings was brought to the attention of the Commission and local and national media, when 34 children from Hackney who attended an unregistered educational setting had to be rescued by Kent Coastguard after getting into difficulties on an outing. Thus, for this investigation the Commission set itself the following objective: *“Is the Council doing all it can to ensure the quality of education, the safety and the*

safeguarding of children in unregistered educational settings in Hackney?”

Our investigation revealed a complex and difficult situation in which the cultural and educational traditions of one particular group, the Charedi Orthodox Jewish Community, are at odds with the Council’s statutory duty to safeguard local children and Central Government’s duty to ensure they receive an appropriate education which conforms to national standards.

All our recommendations aimed to ensure improved outcomes for children and young people by ensuring that all educational settings are registered and therefore children in them enjoy the same protections and access to high quality education as other children in Hackney.

Our review received an exceptional amount of national media coverage (e.g. *The Sunday Times, The Independent, Jewish Chronicle*) and I, as Chair, completed both radio and TV interviews with BBC Breakfast and BBC Radio London following the publication of our report. Shortly afterwards the BBC itself conducted an investigation into unregistered educational settings in a few different locations which highlighted similar issues to those which we had encountered.

Furthermore, on the back of our findings the Local Government Association is hosting a conference this summer at which I’ve been

asked to speak about how local authorities can make sure educational settings are safe and that all children in their areas are receiving a good education at a time when increasing numbers of children are being educated at home or in unregistered settings.

In addition, we anticipate that not only will our findings help to improve local policies, such as in the way that children are safeguarded in unregistered settings, but also contribute policy development at the national level through our work with the LGA.

Foster Carers - recruitment and retention

For a number of years the Children's Social Care Bi-Annual Report has highlighted that

- Comparative policy and practice;
- Specialist insight;
- The views of foster carers;
- The views of looked after children in foster care.

Ahead of the day, we identified and reviewed background literature which identified policy documents (legislative framework, duties of the LA); indicative data on looked after children, fostering and use of in-house placements; foster carer research and development; and comparative recruitment and retention strategies used in other boroughs. The key documents along with a survey we developed and distributed to all in-house foster carers



there had been difficulty in recruiting and retaining local in-house foster carers. Therefore, we sought to assist local recruitment and retention of foster carers by conducting this review. We did so by conducting a Scrutiny-in-a-Day exercise, which allowed a short but focused review of the evidence. Five themes emerged from the evidence we collected:

- Local policy and practice;

(c. 80) informed and guided our questioning of the focus group on the day. In addition and in agreement with the Children and Families Service, we consulted a small number of children in foster placements in Hackney ahead of the 'scrutiny-in-a-day' exercise. The Vice Chair and I met young people from Hackney Gets Heard, Hackney's Children in Care Council, and reported back their findings to the Commission.

We learnt that the level of support provided to foster carers by both professionals and their peers is of particular importance to retaining them in the service. In this respect, as Corporate Parents the Council (members and officers) have a duty to make sure that foster carers are recognised and valued for their work, and properly supported for their role in caring for some of the most vulnerable children in our community. Our recommendations included:

- More bespoke training, support and respite to foster carers to increase retention;
- Develop new strategies and set more ambitious targets to increase recruitment;
- Further develop collaborative working with other fostering agencies in both the local authority and IFA sector.

We hope our recommendations will further support the turnaround in the fostering service in Hackney, which has begun to see more people applying to become foster carers, more people being recruited and fewer choosing to de-register.

Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Recent national data suggests that 1 in 10 of children and young people have some form of clinically diagnosable mental health disorder. We also learnt that over 50% of all mental ill health starts before the age of 14 and 75% has developed by the age of 18. However, a national review of service provision showed that in 2015 over one in four of children referred to mental health services received no help – even amongst those who had attempted suicide.

Central Government has also published a Green Paper outlining how they propose to ensure that children and young people showing early signs of distress are able to access appropriate help when needed and locally recent tragic suicides of young people have highlighted that more needs to be done.

At the beginning of the year we agreed to conduct a review of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Hackney with a focus on the current mental health



pathways for young people, early intervention, identification and prevention. We aimed to start this once our 'Unregistered Educational Settings' review had completed. That review did over run but in February we decided to proceed with some initial scoping with a view to starting a review in the new municipal year if the new Commission was in agreement. For the scoping session we heard from key stakeholders including CCG Commissioners, CAMHS Alliance, Children and Families Service, Young Hackney, HLT, Mind, Cariss Creative, Place2Be, Off Centre, ASpace and Stoke Newington School.

We learnt that Hackney has one of the highest spends on CAMHS in the UK (c.£7m per year) and so the local offer is more responsive and more comprehensive when compared to our neighbours and yet there are concerns that provision in Hackney is fragmented and waiting lists are too long.

Hackney also have a number of services for our more vulnerable groups – CAMHS for children with disabilities, and those known to Children's Social Care. Also 'Improving Emotional Health and Wellbeing' is one of 3 key priorities for the Children, Young People and Maternity Services Integrated Commissioning Workstream and we will pursue how central CAMHS is to the current work in integrated commissioning.

We learnt that there is a strong schools CAMHS component in development and there is also a focus on transition between schools and more importantly between CYP and adult services, which there is a desire to strengthen. Our scoping session formed the basis for a proposal to be put to the incoming Commission to complete a full review in the new municipal year.

Children in Temporary Accommodation

This year we continued to look at the issue of children in temporary accommodation following on from a joint session we had with Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission in December 2016 and an update we'd taken in April 2017.

We had raised concerns about visiting policies in hostels and the need to monitor the management and suitability of the hostels while also considering alternative ways of providing separate family only hostels. We made a number of recommendations to ensure children and young people are provided with sufficient support to mitigate the negative impact of living in temporary accommodation.

At a subsequent Commission meeting, in April, we noted that while work had commenced it had not been fully implemented and we wrote to the Cabinet Members requesting:

- further information on how we are now tracking the social and emotional development of children in temporary accommodation and how this compares to other children;
- what has been learnt from other local authorities who support similar populations of families and children living in temporary accommodation;
- And what outreach now takes place in local temporary accommodation settings, such as hostels, to link residents to local services provided by the Council and its partners.

We learnt that the 'Troubled Families' database will be used to identify a cohort of children in temporary accommodation, and match them with other children not in temporary accommodation to create a control

group. After 6 months, outcomes for the two groups will be compared.

We learned that families in temporary accommodation are supported by a number of agencies as well as the Council and that the Benefits and Housing Needs Service has been in contact with neighbouring boroughs to establish a benchmarking/peer review group to look at hostel management and related service provision. Living in Hackney Commission is also looking at future management approaches to best cater for the needs of families and new approaches to minimising the numbers going into temporary accommodation in the first place.

Integrated Commissioning of children's services with the NHS

City and Hackney Integrated Commissioning Board is a new structure, began in May 2017, whereby the bulk of health and social care commissioning is now agreed jointly between the Hackney Council, City of London Corporation and NHS City and Hackney CCG using pooled and aligned budgets. The Board comprises 3 members of the CCGs Governing Body, 3 Cabinet Members from the Council and 3 executive members from City of London Corporation. The work is then delivered by 4 themed Integrated Commissioning Workstreams.

In March we were invited to participate in a joint session with Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission when they, as a part of a rolling programme of hearing from each of the 4 Integrated Commissioning Workstreams, heard from the lead officers for the *Children Young People and Maternity Workstream*.

We learnt about this significant change to ways of working in health and social care and we noted that NHS partners seem to be further along with this approach and we had some concerns that the Council needs to retain a strong hand in the process. We have decided that the monitoring of the outcomes of the Children and Young People and Maternity Workstream will now be a standing item on our agendas.

Other work

As part of our regular duties we kept an eye on school attainments and performance. We considered the annual update on **School Admissions** including early years' settings, the **Children and Families Service** mid-year summary and full year report as well as the annual update from City and Hackney **Safeguarding Children Board**.

We also had a full **Cabinet Question Time** session with Cllr Bramble holding her to account. We questioned her about how we keep the Hackney family of schools together in a changing educational environment and the mismatch between local demand for SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) services and the central funding allocation and the subsequent review of all local SEND services.

In addition, we heard about the **Contextual Safeguarding** programme. This refers to a new approach to safeguarding which focuses on how, for example, peer groups, social media, neighbourhoods and schools, impact on young people's vulnerability just as much as their immediate family. This work has been pioneered by Dr Carlene Firmin at the University of Bedfordshire and we heard about a pilot project in a school in Hackney where a range of contextual safeguarding processes were being developed. The aim is to support practitioners in developing new approaches to how they respond to the risks faced by young people.

We learnt that the Hackney Schools Survey revealed that residents want to see the **Council having continued involvement in the education system**. Officers have begun to develop the vision and look at the legal ramifications and sought legal advice in regards to using a federation framework that will still allow for all school formations to exist within it. This would capitalise on the experience of Hackney Learning Trust and ensure that schools and the wider community have an active voice in the further development of this model.

We learnt that in Hackney, in comparison with bordering local authorities, there was a higher demand for **SEND services**. There has also been an increased number of children accessing the SEND service and an increase in the complexity of those cases needing support. We learnt that the Council was facing a situation where needs far outweigh the budget provided by Central Government. We learnt that the Council welcomed the change in legislation where children would receive help and support from 0 to 25 which was an extension to the previous plans that stretch from 5 years to 19 years of age. We learned that the Council have sought to work with partners and parents and carers to find a workable solution as well as continue to lobby Central Government in regards to this looming national crisis.

Members of Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission 2017/18

Members: Cllr Christopher Kennedy (Chair), Cllr Margaret Gordon (Vice-Chair), Cllr Sophie Conway, Cllr Tom Ebbutt, Cllr Abraham Jacobson, Cllr Emma Plouviez, Cllr Tom Rahilly, Cllr Michelle Gregory, Cllr Richard Lufkin, Cllr Katie Hanson and Cllr M Can Ozsen

Co-optees: Rabbi Judah Baumgarten (Orthodox Jewish faith representative)
Richard Brown (Church of England faith representative)
Jane Heffernan (Roman Catholic Westminster Diocesan Schools Commission faith representative)

Jo Macleod (Hackney School Governors Association representative)
Sevdie Sali Ali (Parent Governor representative)
Shuja Shaikh (North London Muslim Community Centre faith representative)
Ernell Watson (Free Churches Group faith representative)

The co-opted members from Hackney Youth Parliament for the year were:

Louis Comach, Skye Fitzgerald McShane, Kairi Weekes-Sanderson and Maryam Mohammed

Officer contact: Sanna Melling, **020 8356 3661** sanna.melling@hackney.gov.uk

Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission



Chair
Councillor
Ann Munn



Vice Chair
Councillor
Ben Hayhurst

Supporting adult Carers

Carers are people who provide help and support to a friend or family member who, due to illness, disability or frailty, cannot manage without their support. Carers are unpaid, although they may be in receipt of benefits related to their caring role. Performing a caring role can have major implications for someone's life: young carers can suffer a loss of education

and life chances; carers of working age can see their employment opportunities limited and suffer poverty as a result; and older carers are particularly vulnerable to the impact on health and wellbeing that caring for someone else can have.

In our review we examined the current offer to carers in Hackney and took evidence from Adult Services, City and Hackney Carers Centre,



Alzheimer's Society, East London NHS Foundation Trust and spoke to a wide range of service users in various support groups and focus groups. We also visited some of the services such as the Dementia Café and the Singing for the Brain social group for those with dementia and their carers. We examined the national policies in the area and we completed a benchmarking exercise with Camden Carer's Centre.

We made 16 quite detailed recommendations covering such areas as improving the thicket of care pathways that carers have to negotiate on behalf of the person they look after, greater and more flexible respite care, ways to improve early diagnosis of dementia and improve interaction with busy GPs, how services can get better at reaching hidden carers, improving outreach and communications, improving accessibility of current services, improving the vital Carers Needs Assessments, legal and housing issues for carers and how to improve employment and skills provision and advice services for carers.

Our review was timely in that Adult Services was about to embark on designing a new model of support for carers and we requested the Director of Adult Services to take our recommendations on board as they set about co-designing the new model and consulting stakeholders on it. We look forward to receiving a follow up presentation from him on the new Model as soon as it is launched. Integral to ensuring that the New Model is fit for purpose, is the need to co-produce and shape with carers and wider stakeholders the services and support available and we look forward to seeing how this co-production approach has been used.

The evidence presented to us demonstrated the sheer diversity of caring relationships and the range of problems which those cared for suffer from. We suggested that when the new Carers Service is commissioned, that ideally, a generic provider and not a provider of specialist support is commissioned. This would ensure that caring is not seen as related to one particular condition e.g. Alzheimer's or cancer.

While we acknowledged the restrictions on resources due to the current financial climate, we nevertheless believe that it is essential to

maintain services to support carers and to help them continue the crucial work they do. This is both important to maintaining good care but also cost effective in preventing the need for more costly caring solutions in the long run.

We noted concerns from providers that there was considerable uncertainty as to the future direction for carers support in the sector, and that this was hindering service planning, development and recruitment and we hope the new Model will provide the necessary clarification and direction.

We noted the pressures which were being experienced in money advice services, including at the Carers Centre and at the Citizen Advice Bureau and we asked that the internal review of the advice services which are in receipt of Community Grants takes particular account of the importance of advice to carers.

We are expecting the Executive Response in July 2018.

Integrated commissioning of health and social care

In May 2017 the new system for integrated commissioning in City and Hackney came into being. This means that Hackney Council, City of London Corporation and NHS City and Hackney CCG are now jointly commissioning health and social care services

A new *Integrated Commissioning Board* comprising three Hackney Council Cabinet members, three CCG Governing Body members and three Members from the City is now the joint decision maker. Currently they are commissioning from existing pooled budgets and budgets not yet pooled but aligned. This means that they are proceeding as if they were formally pooled but over time the expectation is, and subject to NHS England approval, that all the relevant budgets will be pooled. There are some exceptions for legal reasons. This builds on a solid history of successful partnership working with the local NHS over a number of years. The potential for smarter working and important cost savings across the three statutory organisations is obvious. This approach allows the 'Hackney pound' to go

further and it eliminates duplication of effort.

We are keeping a watching brief on the new ICB and how it develops. In June we had a briefing on the vision for the new system and in November the senior officers from the three organisations presented us with a 'big picture' view of how things were progressing. We then instigated a series of rolling updates, in turn, from each of the four Integrated Commissioning Workstreams which comprise the system and we aim to continue with those. We heard from *Prevention* in Jan, *Unplanned Care* in Feb, *CYP and Maternity* in March and *Planned Care* in June. We held the CYP and Maternity Workstream session jointly with Members of CYP Scrutiny Commission (page 13 in CYP section also refers) as it cuts across both our remits.

As integrated commissioning becomes more embedded one of the challenges will be on accountability and transparency. Another is on budgets and how for example the arrangements for pooling and management of risk will impact on the ability to deal with cost pressures. How the CCG's own commissioning for Hackney's population dovetails with the East London Health and Care Alliance's commissioning programme for the whole sub region will be another key challenge.

OTHER WORK

Our main review takes up a small proportion of our time as our remit is large and we have to respond to topical issues which always arise. Here is a brief summary of the other issues we covered in the past year.

Social care

We examined the ongoing challenges in provision of **Day Services for adults** with care and support needs and heard about the exciting plans for the opening of the new Day Centre at Oswald St, which we aim to visit in July.

The CQC produced a **national analysis of CQC inspections** and we had a session looking at what lessons could be learned from these for Hackney.

We questioned the Director of Adult Services on

the performance of his area at the publication of the annual **Adult Services Local Account** and commended them on continuing to produce this document, which while not a legal requirement is a most useful local summary.

We considered the Annual report of the **City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board** and held the Chair and senior officers to account on their statutory role, as we do every year.

We looked at the work of the Community Health Service with a particular focus on the **Adult Community Nursing**, which is provided by the Homerton, and to provide challenge here we had input to this item e.g. performance data and reviews, from both the CQC and the CCG, which is the commissioner.

Acute health care

We received a final follow up on **safety of maternity service** at the Homerton Hospital after having been closely involved in this issue over the past few years. We have monitored the progress made on the various improvement plans which had been imposed. This issue is obviously also monitored by the CQC whose reports we examine.



We returned twice to the issue of the **future of the Pathology Service at the Homerton**, an issue which does not appear to have progressed much over the past two years. Residents and stakeholders had raised the issue with us and asked us to seek reassurances about the proposed new model. We heard about the concerns of local GPs, residents, staff and trades unions about the, albeit national, plans to consolidate pathology services into a hub and spoke model. We were told by HUH that no final decision had been made. We will revisit this issue at our first meeting of the new municipal year.

Last year we had a major item on **infrastructure planning and health and wellbeing provision**. This relates essentially to the provision of new GP practices (and other primary care facilities) and how this work can be joined up with the development of Hackney's formal planning document, *The Local Plan 2033*. We succeeded here in ensuring that the CCG, the GP Confederation and interested GPs are now more closely involved in meetings with the Planning Service as they develop the Local Plan. Securing new GP premises remains an incredibly complex process as it involves a matrix of organisations liaising with a prospective GP Practice holder who is in essence a private contractor whose negotiations are subject to commercial confidentiality rules.

Pharmacy services

At the urging of the CCG we responded to an NHSE consultation on **medicines which should no longer be routinely prescribed** and we had two discussion items which underlined the concerns we continue to have about the detrimental effect these changes will have on those on low incomes.

The Local Pharmaceutical Committee came to us with serious concerns about the plans by NHSE to de-commission **Pharmacy Enhanced Services** in the borough. Again the success of the Homerton as one of the best performing A&E services in the country (for meeting the less than 4 hr waiting time target) is partly down to the effectiveness of pharmacy enhanced services which again reduce both unnecessary GP appointments and admissions

to A&E. We made these points strongly to NHSE and will continue to support the LPC on this and to press the CCG to come up with suitable local alternatives which might be commissioned locally.

Mental health

We responded to concerns about lengthening waiting lists for **IAPT services** (NHS primary care psychotherapy which is provided by both Homerton and the Tavistock and Portman Institute at St Leonards). At the same time we considered the effectiveness of the **City and Hackney Wellbeing Network** in adequately supporting those with long term moderate mental health problems who do not meet the thresholds for acute services. The CCG provided reassurance that the spikes in demand for IAPT were now under control but these pressures continue.

We had a useful discussion with ELFT (East London Foundation Trust, the local mental health trust) about their hopes for their reconfigured **Early Intervention in Psychosis Service** and their **Mental Health Crisis Service** and we welcomed the improvements which are being made here.

We had a presentation from the borough's Dementia Friendly Advisor on the **Hackney Dementia Friendly Community** which is a social movement, driven by the Hackney Dementia Action Alliance members from across all sectors, which strives to ensure that people affected by dementia are understood, respected and are confident in going out into the community and that they can contribute to community life. It aims to ensure that the public will be aware and understand dementia, and people affected by dementia will feel included and involved. We heard about the ongoing work to raise the profile of the issue, the appointing a Member Champion (Cllr Maxwell) and the plans for the Dementia Arts Festival in May. This happened in parallel with our focus on dementia as part of our review on Carers.

Regular items

We held the CCG to account on the ongoing work to develop a new **Integrated Urgent Care Service** i.e. GP-Out-of-Hours services.

Hackney's GP Out of Hours services run by CHUHSE (City and Hackney Urgent Healthcare Social Enterprise, based at the Homerton) is being decommissioned and is being replaced from August with a service which is being commissioned at a sub-regional level across the whole East London Health and Care Partnership area. The provider across the 8 boroughs will be London Ambulance Service. We continued to argue here, and at the INEL JHOSC, that the local add-on face-to-face element needs to be preserved because having a telephone only service, no matter how effective, across 8 boroughs is unlikely to match the outgoing provision. We noted how the success of our GP Out of Hours provider over the past few years was key to the reducing unnecessary admissions to A&E and that this needed to be recognised.

NHS bodies have a duty to consult local health scrutiny committees before submitting their annual account of quality to NHS Improvement. We considered the draft **Quality Accounts** for HUHFT and for St Joseph's Hospice and formally responded to both. Later both Chief Executives came to the Commission to talk through the issues we had raised and what

actions were being taken to improve.

We had a wide ranging **Cabinet Member Question Time** with Cllr McShane which covered: sustainability of the adult social care market; an update on impact of the Median Rd Care Centre closure; the impact of Brexit on social care and NHS and the progress of the City and Hackney Wellbeing Network.

We had concerns with the Executive Response to our own review on End of Life Care. We felt that, despite the very cross cutting nature of this review, the responses at times displayed silo attitudes and did not demonstrate that our recommendations were being addressed with sufficient rigour. The Cabinet Member admitted that a more joined up response was required here and he had the report and the initial response discussed among the partners at a meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board. A more detailed update on the implementation of the recommendations followed in March and we were pleased then to see that some actions were completed and progress was being made on the rest. All the organisations to whom recommendations were directed provided updates.

Members of Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 2017/18

Members: Cllr Ann Munn (Chair), Cllr Ben Hayhurst (Vice-Chair), Cllr Laura Bunt, Cllr Yvonne Maxwell Cllr James Peters, Cllr Rosemary Sales and Cllr Peter Snell

Plus 1 Conservative vacancy

Officer contact: Jarlath O'Connell, **020 8356 3309** jarlath.oconnell@hackney.gov.uk

Inner North East London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

The Inner North East London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (INEL JHOSC) covers Hackney, City, Tower Hamlets and Newham. London has a number of standing JHOSC committees made up of a cluster of boroughs who are asked to scrutinise changes to the health services across their patch. Generally these cross council scrutiny committees mirror the consolidation of CCGs which has taken place.



Photo: Royal London Hospital

The INEL JHOSC Committee comprises 3 councillors each from the London boroughs of Newham, Tower Hamlets and Hackney and 1 member from City of London Corporation. Its remit is to consider formal 'Case for Change' consultations affecting the footprint which are requested by the NHS. The NHS has powers to force local scrutiny committees to form one JHOSC as necessary.

The membership for 2017/18 was:

City of London

Common Councilman Christopher Boden

Hackney

Cllr Ben Hayhurst Cllr Ann Munn, Cllr Yvonne Maxwell,

Newham

Cllr James Beckles, Cllr Susan Masters (Vice-Chair), Cllr Anthony McAlmont

Tower Hamlets

Cllr Shiria Khatun, Cllr Clare Harrison (Chair), Cllr Muhammad Ansar Mustaqim

The Committee, currently chaired by Tower Hamlets, is leading on the scrutiny of the NHS's North East London Sustainability and Transformation Plan (NEL STP) which is now known as the East London Health and Care Partnership (ELHCP).

The ELHCP is a partnership of 8 councils, 7 CCGs and the 3 large acute trusts (Barts Health, BHRUT, Homerton) and 2 mental health and community trusts (ELFT and NELFT) in east London. It will drive all sub-regional planning and commissioning of health and care services over the coming years.

The North East London Commissioning Alliance is the name for the 7 CCGs working together and the Accountable Officer for that, Jane Milligan, also acts as convenor of the wider ELHCP partnership. The Joint Commissioning Committee is the Alliance's new decision making body and is accountable to the constituent individual CCG Governing Bodies but feeds in to the ELHCP. Essentially it carries out sub-regional commissioning. It comprise the Chair and a Lay Member from each of the 7 CCG Governing Bodies and it also has on it a non-voting rep from each of the 8 Local Authorities (a Director level officer). The INEL JHOSC's focus over the next year will be to keep an overview of this new commissioning structure and how it works with local CCGs and councils.

The INEL JHOSC Committee had 4 meetings this past year which focused on:

- Single Accountable Officer for ELHCP and impact on commissioning and governance arrangements

- ELHCP consultation on payment systems (how will payments between commissioners and providers work in the new system)
- East London Local Maternity System (changes in the ELHCP area)
- Workforce strategy within the ELHCP area and the recruitment and retention challenges
- Accountable Care System(s) within ELHCP area and how these are evolving
- Changes to Mental Health services within the ELHCP area

The Committee refused to endorse the move to a Single Accountable Officer for ELHCP because of concerns about local accountability and transparency, nevertheless this has been implemented.

In March the Committee sent a long list of concerns about the new arrangements to the

new Accountable Officer. These covered: creation of the Single Accountable Officer; operation of the Joint Commissioning Committee; new integrated NHS 111 service across the NEL area from 1 August 2018; ELHCP finance vis a vis individual CCG budgets; ELHCP work on developing new payment systems; financial challenges across the NEL patch; deficits; concerns about the future of King George V hospital; Cancer (poor performance in Newham, cancer education programmes, reconfiguration of urology services); workforce issues; estates and Integrated Care Systems update.

This was replied to in a detailed briefing in April which gave some reassurance but the new JHOSC when it convenes in July will be taking these issues forward. As more services get commissioned at a sub-regional level there will be a need for greater sub-regional scrutiny.

Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission



Chair
**Councillor
Sharon Patrick**



Vice Chair
**Councillor
James Peters**

The Council's response to the Grenfell Tower fire

The tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in Kensington in June 2017, which took the lives of 72 people, threw a national spotlight on the fire safety of council housing stock and tower blocks in particular. We immediately revised our work programme and took a number of items on fire safety readiness looking at Hackney's response, covering not just council blocks but social and private rented blocks also.

We heard about the immediate response of the Council, involving the inspection of all Council blocks which have cladding, inspections of all blocks and repeating all residential Fire Risk Assessments.

The Commission wanted to make a contribution towards assuring residents that the Council and its partners' responses would be full and wide ranging and that it was prepared to respond to any major emergency. We devoted our September meeting to this discussion with all the key stakeholders including the Chairs of all our Tenants and Residents Associations. This led us to a wider focus on emergency planning overall and the readiness of Council services for a major disaster/incident. As part of this work we visited the Emergency Response Control Centre to examine their plans and procedures.

At the end of this process the Mayor ensured that Fire Risk Assessments for all Council blocks were published online to provide full transparency and Hackney was one of the first councils to do this. Our Cabinet Question Time session with the Cabinet Member for Housing in March then focused on the work which had been delivered by then, future planned work and the current thinking about the ongoing resourcing of this activity.

Cabinet has since endorsed the actions arising from the Housing Services Fire Safety Review including plans to work on fire safety outside of the council owned and managed housing and they have requested regular formal updates.

Temporary Accommodation

The housing crisis affects not just Hackney but is London wide and housing issues continue to take up the bulk of our work. The rising numbers of households living in temporary accommodation waiting for social housing has been a major concern for us all. The increase is largely due to policy changes by central government involving cuts in benefits, rising market rents in the borough, and supply of social housing not meeting demand despite the Council's building programmes. Items at this Commission and others have highlighted the issues around families ending up in generally unsuitable and over-crowded accommodation often for protracted periods

(e.g. 4 years). This is in no small part a consequence of lack of government investment in the building of new homes.

We asked about the Council's preparations to source more private rented sector units in areas outside of Hackney which would be offered to more households currently in temporary accommodation. We also decided to look at some innovative approaches elsewhere in an attempt to learn if lessons could be learned.



We looked at the link between duration of stays in temporary accommodation and the eventual allocation of social housing. Many are encouraged to take up other forms of accommodation e.g. in the private rented sector but this can move people further away from the prospect of gaining social housing in the longer term. In Hackney households going down the statutorily homeless route into temporary accommodation have a higher prospect of gaining permanent social housing than a household taking up a settled private rented sector unit.

We explored the approaches of Camden and Lambeth - two boroughs which have very different models to us. These councils both use their Housing Allocations Schemes (i.e. lettings policies) to incentivise households at risk of homelessness to engage with their council to prevent a need for entry into temporary accommodation. Both enable households to take up settled private sector accommodation and at the same time to increase their prospects of eventually gaining a social home

in the longer term by remaining on the housing list. Importantly, this includes cases where the household has chosen to take up a private rented sector offer outside of their home borough.

This is different to Hackney, and most other boroughs, where, currently, in this scenario, taking up the offer of a private rented sector unit would reduce your prospects of gaining a social housing in the longer term.

We heard from Camden and Lambeth that their approaches enable more positive decisions to be taken by families who are able to take up accommodation which is more suitable to their needs than temporary accommodation, without being penalised by their likelihood of securing social housing in the long term being reduced.

We concluded however that Camden's offer here, for those going down the statutorily homeless route, was problematic because those applicants would eventually be prioritised for discharge into the private rented sector and the council would then have satisfied its housing duty to them.

Over two meetings and site visits to both boroughs, we gave consideration to the pros and cons of this approach and sought to explore whether it was a model which Hackney could follow. Our findings will help inform Cabinet's wider review of the lettings policy planned for the new municipal year.

Segregated cycle lanes

Towards the end of the year we carried out a short review exploring the Council's readiness to deliver segregated cycle lanes in some areas. This is within its stated aim of improving cycling conditions on main roads.





Photo: On site visit to view segregated cycle lanes in Waltham Forest

We looked at the circumstances in which the Council would consider this type of intervention, and how it would work to overcome the challenges to delivering effective schemes, for example their integration with bus stops situated on these routes.

We heard from those experienced in the delivery of segregated cycling provision on what they've learnt from such schemes. We also spoke to cyclist groups and representatives of other vulnerable road users on the cases for and against segregated lanes, and on the principles which they felt any schemes should follow. We also visited Waltham Forest to examine their segregated cycle lane scheme which has been dubbed 'mini Holland'.

Our draft report will be published in July 2018.

Licensing the private rented sector

Our 2015 review on 'Licensing the Private Rented Sector' produced an initial evidence-base to support the establishment of a formal licensing scheme similar to what is in place in other boroughs. Our recommendations helped to directly inform the design of the proposed scheme and this year we examined what was now being proposed and made a formal submission to Cabinet on it. We stressed to Cabinet the need to also push for improved conditions in already licensable properties as the evidence base demonstrated that many of these were also very poor.

Performance of Specialist Electrical Services contractor

Our ongoing focus on housing issues had previously drawn our attention to the replacement due to poor performance of a contractor providing Specialist Electrical Services in our housing estates. This contract involves the provision of lighting, reactive electrical repairs on estates, internal rewires and the upgrade of electrical mains and in-take cupboards.

Performance management at this level is not Scrutiny's role, however, we do have a duty to question ongoing or systemic poor performance wherever we find it, and to keep a watching brief until it is resolved. We therefore asked for an item where we explored the preparations for the delivery and management of the new contract, and for an account on its performance after it went live.

An update shortly before the new contract started in October 2016 had been positive, however, further updates later on, in April and November 2017, had again been disappointing, with backlogs in reactive repair work being reported and accounts of planned works being delayed and or scaled back. We also learned in the November item that the Council had served the new provider with an 'Early Warning Notice'.

We returned to the issue over the course of the year and at our Cabinet Question Time session

with the Cabinet Member for Housing in March 2018 we questioned him further on the progress being made. We wrote to Cabinet with our outstanding concerns and we will keep this matter under review.

Our focus will continue to be on improvement plans for repairs services and on the plans for a new split of responsibilities between in-house repairs functions and those provided by external contractors in the hope that this might drive up performance.

Local Probation Service

As the designated 'Crime and Disorder Reduction scrutiny committee' we have a statutory duty to scrutinise the overall performance of Hackney's **Community Safety Partnership (CSP)**. As part of that this year we decided to look at recent performance of the Probation Service locally.

Further to the part-privatisation of Probation Services in 2014, the supervision of low to medium risk offenders (forming the majority of cases) was taken over by 'Community Rehabilitation Companies' (CRCs). London has 1 which covers the 32 boroughs. The National Probation Service (NPS) retained responsibility for managing higher risk offenders and for providing services to the courts.

An inspection by Her Majesty's Inspector of Probation in December 2016 into the effectiveness of probation work in north London (including Hackney) found the CRC for London performing poorly in all areas. Issues encountered included excessive caseloads, inadequate oversight and supervision and support of staff, high vacancy rates and high sickness rates. Combined, these had led to issues where some service users had not been seen for months or had been lost in the system altogether. The inspection found the performance of the NPS to be 'mixed' to generally 'good'. It found significant room for improvement however in the ways that the two services worked together.

We heard that a re-inspection of the NPS had showed encouraging signs of improvement in responding to the 2016 recommendations.

While the findings of a re-inspection of the CRC for London had not yet been released, we heard that verbal feedback from the inspection had been largely positive, and that they no longer have an 'Organisational Alert' against them, the only CRC in the country to be in this position.

We plan to receive further updates during the new municipal year and the CRC themselves acknowledge they are only at a start of a journey of improvement. We remain concerned about a number of aspects, for example, whilst improvements had been made to the distribution of caseloads and the oversight of them, we are sceptical that, with average caseloads of 55 per officer, genuine rehabilitation can be truly delivered.

Moped-enabled crime

The issue of moped enabled crime hit the headlines in the borough this year with a series of attacks on moped delivery drivers in east London, some involving acid being thrown at victims. mopeds have also increasingly been used by thieves to snatch phones from pedestrians on the street. At our January meeting we questioned the police on the measures being taken to tackle this. We heard how the crime was a challenging one to police but that a range of responses were having an impact. Training was being delivered to improve the ability for effective pursuit of perpetrators. We learned how 'Smart Water', which leaves a long lasting trace on clothing, was also being deployed on suspects fleeing crime scenes giving the police greater opportunity to catch them. Publicity campaigns giving advice to motorcycle owners around bike security and how they could make themselves less of a target was also taking place. Police were also lobbying both motorcycle and mobile phone manufacturers on how they could make vehicles more secure and phones easier to trace. There is an intensive focus by community safety partners on taking the few people perpetrating these crimes off the streets.

Counter extremism work and reducing hate crime

We receive an annual update on the 'Prevent' programme and related activities. This year we noted that as part of its counter extremism work, the Home Office has started funding a network of Community Co-ordinators, deployed to local authorities around the country. These co-ordinators are responsible for developing knowledge of extremism locally, and identifying and then supporting groups providing challenge on the issue within their communities. Hackney is one of the areas with a Community Co-ordinator in post. Hate Crime is an expression of extremism and as such

within their wider activities, coordinators support work highlighting and tackling this issue in their local area. We discussed with the Coordinator the Council's development of a *Tackling Hate Crime Strategy*.

Other items

During the year we also had single items on the development of the Licensing Policy, the latest developments regarding Hackney's role as a member of the North London Waste Authority, an update on Housing Repairs service, and an update on the approaches of the Housing Supply and Estate Regeneration programmes.

Members of Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 2017/18

Members: Cllr Sharon Patrick (Chair), Cllr James Peters (Vice-Chair), Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Kam Adams, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Yvonne Maxwell and Cllr Vincent Stops

Plus 1 Conservative vacancy.

During the year Cllr Will Brett stepped down from the Commission and was replaced by Cllr Stops.

Officer contact: Thomas Thorn, 020 8356 8186 thomas.thorn@hackney.gov.uk

Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission



Chair
Councillor
Anna-Joy Rickard



Vice Chair
Councillor
Mete Coban

Thematic discussions and engagement with local businesses

This was the first year of this new Commission which has the remit of prosperity in the borough. This includes economic development, employment and adult skills as well as large scale planning and transport infrastructure schemes.

We divided our preferred list of topics for the year into a single review and a series of thematic discussions which we would begin with and which would then inform the review. We began by devoting our June meeting to hearing from the Council's key officers about their current approach to economic and community development. We then focused on *Employment and Skills Services* and the vision of those services and this allowed us to get up to speed with the subject.

The following month we held a session on *Support to local businesses* and for this we invited in local businesses to hear about the support being provided and we received feedback about whether this was adequate and whether it was the kind of support they need.

We heard from a local restaurant *The Good Egg*, a mobile food company *What the Dickens!* and nightclub owner for *Zigfrid von Underbelly* and

Roadtrip. Each business outlined their experiences from their interactions with the Council and made suggestions for improvement. This helped to highlight to them the range of support available but also highlighted to Council officers that too many businesses are not aware of what services the Council is actually providing.

The nightclub owner pointed out that their presence in the borough predated the residents who often complain vociferously about their operations and yet, in their view, the Council too often sided with residents and against them. The mobile food company, while based in the borough, provides services mainly outside, yet such businesses are also deserving of support as they are important local employers. The restaurant owners discussed their frustrations with what they saw as a lack of joined up working in the Council, in relation to how small local businesses are treated, with this leading to perverse and overly bureaucratic decisions.

This very productive debate led to officers taking issues away and undertaking to re-design aspects to the support they provide including the development of the new 'Launch Pad' and 'Landing Pad' concepts aimed at businesses.

Then in September we moved on to *Employment support and the integration of employment and support initiatives*. This discussion covered the employment support

available for people who are not job-ready and how the different employment support initiatives in the borough worked together or could operate better. We were concerned that residents who were further away from the job market or who did not have the skill sets required in the local economy today were not able to access support. This discussion revealed a new focus on a more 'person centred' approach to service provision and the need to widen access generally to these support services.

Future World of Work and Skills

Having learned about the current context in relation to employment and skills we then proceeded with our review on the 'The Future of Work and Skills in Hackney'. This set out to explore trends in the changing labour market, the changing skills system and how it all impacts on London's economy. We wanted to examine the impact that macro level changes will have locally and to identify the policies and practices that will help us overcome the challenges here. We looked at the support which will be needed within the current Skills system to enable local residents to progress and change careers if they wish.

We started by hearing from an interesting selection of 'think tanks' active in this field and a key lobbying organisation. We heard from the Resolution Foundation, the Fabian Society's Changing Work Centre, the Institute of Public Policy Research and Central London Forward. We examined London's changing economy, the labour market, the external drivers for change, current data and trends, the key risks and opportunities which are being presented to us and the impact all these changes might have on policy and Hackney.

Attempting to look five years ahead we explored the changes in demand in the labour market which could come about from Brexit, climate change or our ageing population. We examined the nature of employment, the likely changes in the business environment, the nature of work itself and what the impact of automation and robotics might be and even how climate change might impact supply.

This review highlighted employment trends that are amplified in Hackney and we focused on:

- Growing inequality/polarisation/ in-work poverty and underemployment
- Self-employment
- Land and property values
- The impact of Brexit
- Opportunities for employers to contribute
- Opportunities to lead in a revolution of skills.

We carried out a Focus Group with over 20 residents where we spoke to people in a variety of types of employment. Some self-employed were juggling portfolio careers (one combining being a nanny, a teaching assistant and a journalist!). One of the key issues which emerged was the struggle which all self-employed have, and in particular those over 50 yrs of age, in getting access to any training. An added barrier is being in part time roles and/or with zero hour contracts. These people are often trapped in a zone where they can't afford the time off to access the training that they desperately need to progress. The wastage of skills of those over 50, because of the barriers they face in accessing training, is another major concern.



Photographer: Andreas Petterson

The self-employed told us how they have to quickly develop other skills if their businesses are to thrive. Expertise in your area and a good product is not enough, you also must have skills in digital marketing and social media in order to grow. Hackney now has a higher proportion of self-employed than either the London or national averages so this will become more of an issue for the Training and Skills sector.

We looked at the polarisation of the economy and the issue of inequalities and in-work poverty and discussed what employers, workers, local government, central government and community leaders could do to help guard against it. We also examined the operation of businesses and how the open, competitive, market is altering the nature of work, leading to the expansion in the use of self-employment

employment and patterns of work. We looked at the local Adult Skills provision; the proposed changes for devolution of the Adult Education Board budget to the Mayor of London and the risks and opportunities which that will present. We noted some of the challenges they face in relation to funding post-Brexit, changes to the commissioning model and Ofsted's model not being really supportive, in our view, of adult community learning. We welcomed that among their priorities is to launch one-stop-shop hubs, to better align the local offer to school improvement priorities and to strengthen collaboration with employers. We also looked at supply of skills in the work force and the skills employers will require in future and how this widening skills gap might be filled.

Shared workspaces are quickly becoming very

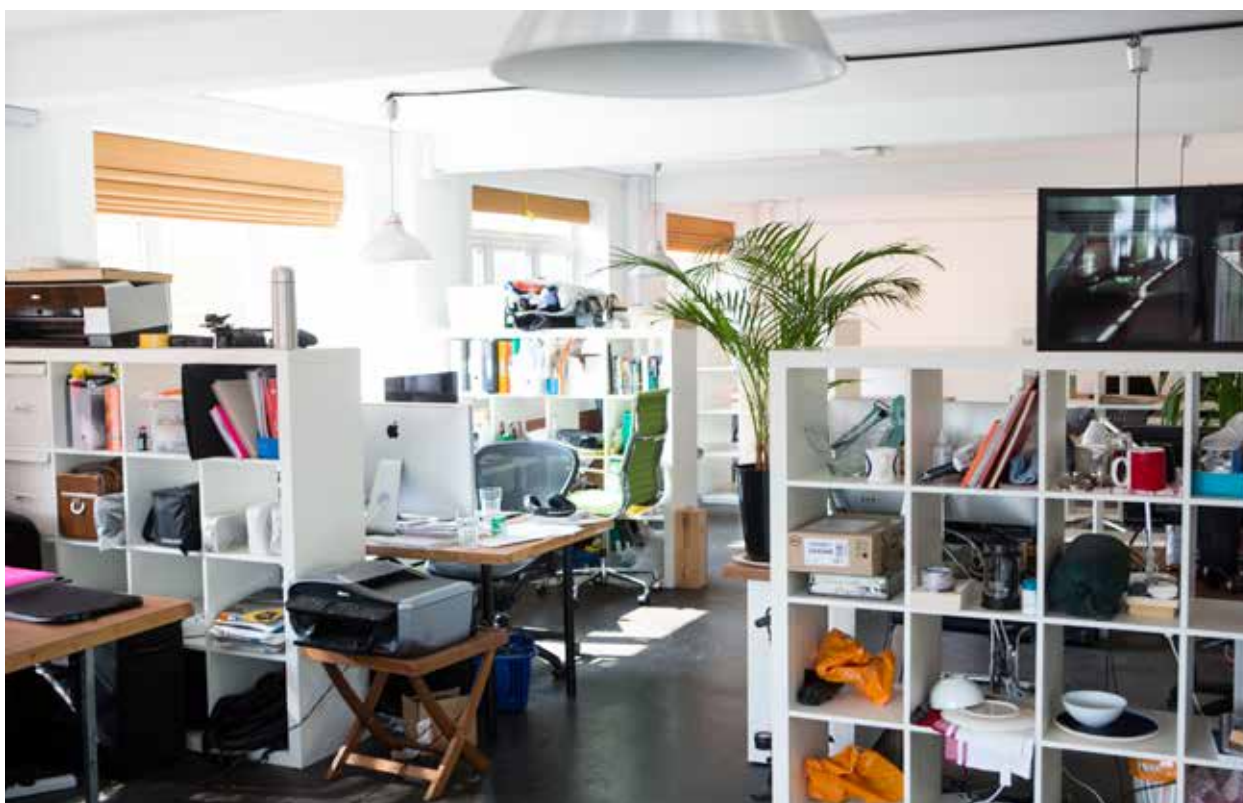


Photo: Shared workspace at Bootstrap

Photographer: Andreas Petterson

contracts by businesses in order to reduce costs. This is an operational model that businesses defend however arguing it is necessary for them to thrive and maintain their market share in increasingly competitive markets.

Looking at skills we examined the seismic changes which are occurring to both types of

prevalent and represent an area where policies and support services need to catch up. We heard how the affordability of properties and rental values in London were changing the demographic. We noted how for example an established business had moved into a shared workspace because they could no longer afford the rent for their own office space in Shoreditch.

The loss of skills as a result of Brexit will be a real challenge for the local economy. Here the Council will have to continue to support and signpost EU citizens to relevant information about their rights to remain. There will be a need to encourage local businesses to view this as an opportunity to do things differently and re-examine how skills can be improved in the capital and locally.

Our draft recommendations cover: the development of a work experience programme for older job seekers; rebranding of work experience; signposting information about being self-employed, with the dual purpose of building up local knowledge about self-employment in the borough.

We are also asking for the new employment support service aimed at the under-employed to demonstrate how they will reach this cohort to offer support and training so they can move into better paid employment. We are asking the Council to include a 'social value menu' for businesses taking advantage of low rental values in the borough and that a mechanism is put in place to follow up and ensure that commitments made are adhered to. We call on the Council to actively demonstrate that inclusion of jobs and employment is in the specification for regeneration and new housing developments. We are recommending the Council takes an active role in lobbying for the Skills system to develop an employability framework and to encourage employers to provide in work/career transition to help workers identify future skills.

As regards building relationships with local businesses, we are recommending there is a specific offer to social enterprises that covers supporting and facilitating their business support needs. We're asking the Council to look at measureable outcomes that chart the journey of a resident through Adult Learning, 'Hackney Works' programme and the Council's own apprenticeships programme. We are asking the Council to ensure it also develops apprenticeships at a higher level (e.g. levels 3 and 4).

We concluded that the security of a job for life was in rapid decline and that workers will more likely have portfolio careers throughout their working life. We need a skills system that will encourage people to develop a career plan which has continuous development at the heart of it. This we believe will enable workers to keep their skills up to date and relevant to employers' needs. Other strong themes to encourage were challenges around in-work poverty, the rise of under employment and people feeling trapped with no ability to 'up-skill'. The Government's focus on apprenticeships and on employer led skills system will offer little to no support to the self-employed or provide any opportunities for older workers to improve their skills. We concluded the only way to support this cohort is to have a skills system that is looking at the future of work so that it would be more relevant to the new world of work and workers.

Our draft report will be published in July and the aim is that the review will feed into the Council's Economic Development Strategy.

OTHER WORK

A presentation on the **Local Economic Assessment** examined the most recent data for Hackney covering population, work and the economy and this helped frame our work programme. We held two **Cabinet Member Question Time Sessions** with the Cabinet Member for Planning, Business and Investment and the Cabinet Member for Employment Skills and Human Resources. In the former we discussed economic strategy and how to improve evaluation measures, the balance of job types and the benefits of large corporations moving into the borough. In the latter we looked at jobs strategies and the evaluation measures again.

A key part of our role will also be to support and provide challenge to the Mayor's new **Economic and Community Development Board** which comprises the Cabinet Members and key officers working in this sphere. Arising from the CQT session with Cllr Nicholson we decided to take a new approach and use our first session on the work of the Economic and Community Development Board to provide

some ‘critical friend’ challenge to the development phase of the new **Economic Development Strategy**. The aim was not to co-produce the strategy but to review the progress made and provide critical challenge to the proposed content. This is an example of pre-decision scrutiny where scrutiny commission members, unusually, have had an opportunity to input at a much earlier stage.

We did this via a Workshop format, breaking into groups to analyse sections of the emerging strategy document. One of the issues we teased out here was now we did not yet have sufficient data to demonstrate to us what initiatives are actually working and we challenged officers to

do more on this. Another key message from this session was that the teams working on economic development issues need to find more ways to communicate what they themselves are doing. We now look forward to receiving regular 6 monthly updates on the Board’s work.

Future issues

One of the key issues for us next will be to look at inequalities in work. The work environment and the nature of work is changing rapidly and we recognise that just getting a job is not enough anymore in order to continue to live and work in an inner London borough.

Members of Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 2017/18

Members: Cllr Anna-Joy Rickard (Chair), Cllr Mete Coban (Vice-Chair), Cllr Patrick Moule, Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli, Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Clare Potter and Cllr Nick Sharman

Plus 1 Conservative vacancy

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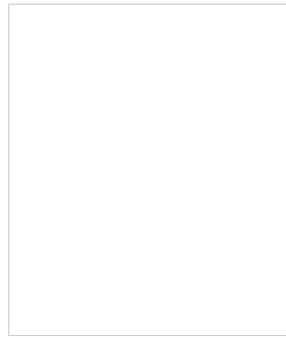
Scrutiny Panel



Chair
**Councillor
Ben Hayhurst**

Vice Chair

**Conservative
vacancy**



The Scrutiny Panel, which sits above the 4 Commissions, comprises the Chair and Vice chair of each of the Commissions and an opposition Vice Chair. The opposition did not choose to take up this position. We met 4 times during the year and carried out the key function of the Panel which is hold the Elected Mayor and the Chief Executive to account in the 'Cabinet Question Time' sessions.

Question Time Sessions with the Mayor

At our first meeting in July we questioned the Elected Mayor on the establishment of a Housing Company to improve the supply and delivery of private rented sector properties in the borough and the future plans for it. We also received an update on the Integrated Commissioning of health and social care including the timeframe for including CYP services in this significant new approach to how health and social care will be commissioned from now on. We also discussed civil resilience and emergency planning and the Gold Command system which is the cross borough cooperation at Chief Executive level to provide leadership during major incidents. This meeting was in the immediate aftermath of the Grenfell Tower tragedy and we noted how Hackney had been asked to support the response and also to assist when residents had to be evacuated from a tower block in Camden following a failed inspection of combustible cladding there. We noted that the Chief Executive, Group Director

CACH and some other key officers had played a very valuable role together with other colleagues from across London in the aftermath of that tragedy.

We also discussed the new government and its possible policy direction and the implications for Hackney and we received an update on the latest situation regarding the redevelopment plans for the Britannia Leisure Centre.

At the December meeting we questioned the Mayor on his work One Year On, what he considered to be his achievements thus far, what learning he had taken away and what his priorities would be for the coming year. Looking back he stated, while it was difficult to choose, he would like to single out the success of the Kings Crescent estates regeneration project, the re-focusing of the Council's Employment and Skills offer arising from listening to young people in the *Hackney A Place for Everyone* consultation and the high level of engagement he had as Mayor with the public and residents.

In terms of future priorities there would be a need to campaign for more resources to fund tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, he added, and the housing regeneration programme, while having got off to a good start, would require ongoing political leadership. He also added that there would be a need for a concerted focus on influencing government policy around the budget.

We also asked him for an update on improvements in Hackney Council's

communications and on future plans and he stated that he continued to feel strongly that Hackney Today was an incredibly effective tool with a great demographic reach and that it was worth defending against the moves by central government to greatly diminish it.

We discussed Housing and Welfare Reform with him and the implications if the Housing Revenue Account debt cap on councils were to be lifted. The current debt ratio in councils was fixed at 7% whereas in the private sector this could be 20-40%. If Councils were allowed to move to a debt ratio of 15%, in Hackney this would currently bring in a borrowing capacity of £230m and so much could be achieved with that.

Question Times Sessions with the Chief Executive

For our first session in October we decided with the Chief Executive to devote it to a focus on ICT services and hold it jointly with the Director of ICT. In a wide ranging discussion we covered such aspects as the development of a 'citizens index system', the incoming General Data Protection Regulation and the impact of that, Cyber Security and how threats are being handled, the use of data analytics to drive up performance in directorates and the Council's switch over to 'g-suite'. We also discussed the progress being made in reducing the so called 'digital divide' and the challenge for services of providing the Council's online offer to more residents especially those, such as the elderly or those on low incomes, who are generally more 'digitally excluded' then say the young, who expect more and more services via their phones.

Our February session with the Chief Executive was used to hold him to account as the statutory Returning Officer for the planning and operation of the local elections in May 2018. We asked about what measures were in place to ensure that postal votes would arrive in good time, after concerns had been raised about this in a previous election. We noted that the procedures here are entirely prescribed by

law so the Council has very little flexibility. We noted there would be four print runs of postal votes with the majority going out in the first run i.e. to those who already have an active postal vote and the later ones for those who request a postal vote after 5 March.

We also questioned him on the progress being made in integrating Hackney Housing into the Council since it came back in-house on 1 April 2016. There had been a number of challenges such as waiting times of the Contact Centre and effective management of contracts. Work had gone on for example to integrate estate cleaning with street cleaning and estate grounds maintenance with parks and open spaces management. A residents' engagement review and a staff survey had unearthed room for improvement with the culture of the previous organisation which was still being tackled. Overall the integration of 850 staff and many complex processes into the Council had been a huge task.

He also provided an update to us on the latest response of the Council to the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire. The Living in Hackney update on p.22 also refers.

Housing Repairs

The challenges in the Housing Repairs Service remain with the volume of complaints and case work rising so we devoted part of our February meeting to a cross cutting discussion on the issue with all the senior officers involved. This followed on from a lengthy item at Living in Hackney in November. We asked for reassurance about the Council's action plan to improve the whole system of the housing repairs service from the first point of call to the feedback request. We also wanted to know if the Council had identified any areas of best practice in other local authorities or RSLs which we could learn from to help advance the progress of improvement for the repairs service.

The discussion highlighted the need for a more joined up approach across sections of the Service. Action to address this was being taken through the Transformation Programme.



Although the Council's preference is to see more repair work done in-house, the challenge with recruitment and retention of skilled workers remains. We learned they were reviewing their procurement process so that it would encourage more local small-to-medium sized contractors to bid for work. We were given assurances that the need for a culture change in the organisation was being taken seriously and that communication and engagement work focusing on raising standards across the organisation was in train.

Monitoring of the work programme of the Commissions

The four Commissions decide on their own work programmes following discussions within their Memberships and consultation with Cabinet Members, officers and relevant stakeholders. One role for the Panel is to take an overview of what is being done and each Chair produces an update to the Panel where they describe their current work and their plans for the next few months. This item is not for the Panel to give approval but rather for ideas and best practice to be shared and for Members to have a greater understanding of the breadth of work being undertaken. This is also the point at

which cross cutting issues are identified and confirmation is provided about how they will be managed within the overall Overview and Scrutiny work programme.

OTHER WORK

Up until this year the Panel received the Quarterly Financial Updates on the budget however it's been agreed that these will now go to Audit Committee and instead the Panel has decided to look at key issues around the current financial pressures as they arise. The first of these was to look at the **finances of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) service**. Here the Council has had to use its reserve funds to significantly contribute to the funding of pupils receiving high level Special Educational Needs support. This has come about following high and rising demand for services at a time of declining central government support. This is an ongoing issue.

In July we had received updates from the Group Director of Finance and Resources on pressures on the SEND budget, on temporary accommodation and on capital risk relating both to mixed use schemes in education and leisure and on the house building programme.

In December we received update from the Group Director on the Chancellor's Autumn Statement and we discussed with him and the Cabinet Member the Council's current budgetary position and the particular financial pressures which need addressing. We learned that the Finance team would be reviewing how to improve the debt collection system. In February the Group Director also took us through the key points in the Council's Budget for 2018/19 prior to it going to Cabinet and Council.

We also looked at the Council's revised **Code of Governance** prior to it going to Audit Committee for approval. It was being revised in compliance with new CIFPA guidance.

We had a wide ranging discussion on the issues that came up in the **Complaints and Enquiries Annual Report**. We noted that, overall complaints were up 13%, which was the highest for a number of years, but the number of escalations of complaints was down, indicating that the council was resolving more complaints than before, despite taking a bit more time to do so. We asked the Complaints team in its next report to provide some benchmarking data from neighbouring boroughs on reports from the Local Ombudsman's Service to see how we are performing as well as some illustrative examples of how complaints data has actually been used as a diagnostic tool by services.

Members of the Scrutiny Panel for 2017/18

Members: Cllr Cllr Ben Hayhurst (Chair), Cllr Mete Coban, Cllr Margaret Gordon, Cllr Christopher Kennedy, Cllr Ann Munn, Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr James Peters and Cllr Anna-Joy Rickard

Plus 1 Conservative vacancy

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London Scrutiny Network

Members and the team continue to be active contributors to the work of the London Scrutiny Network, attending its regular meetings. These provide valuable opportunities to share best practice and to formulate common approaches to shared problems at a time when scrutiny is undergoing significant change. Hackney contributes to a small pooled fund which the LSN uses to programme some training sessions for scrutiny councillors.

Forum for London JHOSC members

The Chair of Health in Hackney also attends an informal grouping of the members of the five Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees in London, where best practice is shared and members hear from key stakeholders on Pan London issues.

How to contact us



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