



London Borough of Hackney  
Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission  
Municipal Year 2016/17  
Monday, 4th March, 2019

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

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<b>Chair:</b>	<b>Councillor Sharon Patrick</b>
<b>Councillors in Attendance:</b>	<b>Cllr Michelle Gregory, Cllr Anthony McMahon, Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Ian Rathbone and Cllr Penny Wrout</b>
<b>Apologies:</b>	<b>Cllr Sade Etti</b>
<b>Officers In Attendance:</b>	<b>Kevin Thompson (Head of Private Sector Housing) and Lesley Weber (Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager)</b>
<b>Other People in Attendance:</b>	<b>Mark French (Representing Sedgwick (loss adjusters for Thames Water)), Cecilia Larkin (Local and Regional Government Liaison, Thames Water), Councillor Rebecca Rennison (Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs), Sean Walden (Head of Regional Networks, Thames Water) and Councillor Aron Klein</b>
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## **Councillor Sharon Patrick in the Chair**

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
  - 1.1 Apologies had been received from Cllr Etti who was abroad.
- 2 Urgent Items / Order of Business**
  - 2.1 There were no urgent items and the order of business was as laid out.
- 3 Declarations of Interest**
  - 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.
- 4 Thames Water Main Burst in the Leabridge Ward - second update**

- 5.1 Guests in attendance for this item were:
- Sean Walden, Head of Regional Networks, Thames Water
  - Mark French, Sedgwick (appointed loss adjusters for Thames Water).
  - Cecilia Larkin, Local and Regional Government Liaison, Thames Water
  - Aled Richards, Director of Public Realm, Hackney Council
- 5.2 The Chair welcomed guests.
- 5.3 A Commission Member who represented the Ward affected by the flood suggested that opening comments from Thames Water should cover the latest situation on residents' parking amenity which the flood had impacted upon, the current position in regards to Thames' liaison with the charity owners of the Old School House (the renovation of which and a schedule of fund raising activities had been impacted by the incident and its aftermath), the latest progress on compensation payments to effected residents and businesses, and an update on Thames Water's putting right of damage to a convenience store.
- 5.4 The Loss Adjuster, Sedgewick said that in terms of loss of parking, Thames Water had worked with Hackney Council to mitigate the issue. This had resulted in the Council providing temporary free of charge on-street parking permits to those residents who had lost their parking spaces in a private carpark. The Council had also agreed to reimburse the costs of penalty charge notices issued where the contravention had been associated with the incident and its immediate aftermath. Feedback from residents who had been through these processes showed them to have been working well.
- 5.5 In regards to the damaged shop – Archie Express – Thames Water continued to work closely with the owners. The owners had asked that repair work did not start until after the busy festive period. They had made the request that the task of putting right the shop was allocated contractors and engineers delivering improvement work on the wider affected area. Work had started in early 2019, as planned.
- 5.6 However - unfortunately – the damage incurred had been found to have been worse than first envisaged, with added complexities in regards to health and safety aspects. This had meant the project had needed to be larger and longer than initially forecast. Target for completion and reopening of the shop was now scheduled for the 27<sup>th</sup> April. The owners were being kept fully informed of developments. Thames Water had sought to provide financial assistance via interim payments.
- 5.7 Moving to the Old School House, the Loss Adjuster, Sedgewick advised that a recent meeting had taken place with the owner. Since that meeting and despite having made the request a number of times, some information required from the owner in order to move forward with the case, had yet to be provided. They would continue to liaise with the owner on the matter.
- 5.8 At this point the Chair noted that Long Huynh - the Chair of the charity (Chan Khong Monastery UK) which had bought the Old Schoolhouse – was in attendance. She recalled that in November the Commission had heard how the

flood had impacted on the work of the charity to bring the asset back to community use. This was both in terms of damage to the building and also the impact that the incident had had on the ability of the organisation to deliver activities to raise funds for the restoration. She asked if Long Huynh wanted to make any comments.

- 5.9 The Chair of Chan Khong Monastery UK advised that the organisation was continuing to dry out the building. In the last four weeks they had been liaising with Thames Water and UK Power Networks to get water and power installed. They had made the choice to go down the Thames Water general channels for the water arrangements, rather than seeking any special treatment.
- 5.10 Regarding the charity's liaison with Thames Water in terms of claims for loss and damages, he said that the loss adjusters had been very helpful in meetings. This said - and following a range of advice that he had received – the charity was currently giving consideration to whether to go down legal routes separately of the Thames Water processes. He said that this explained why he had not yet provided the information as mentioned by the Loss Adjuster, Sedgewick.
- 5.11 He appreciated the approachability and helpfulness of the Loss Adjuster staff. However, the charity did wish to reach a settlement which properly put right both the damage caused by the incident and the impact of it on the fundraising activities which would have otherwise been delivered. He was giving consideration around how this could be best achieved.
- 5.12 Adding to this point, a Member said that - in addition to Thames Water needing to fully put right the physical damages to the building and the impact on fundraising which the flood had caused – he was aware of previous discussions around the potential for Thames Water to make a contribution to the organisation as a good will gesture for the community. The whole community had been hurt by the event. A donation towards the work to make this a centre for community use could go some way to remedying this.
- 5.13 Sean Walden, Head of Regional Networks, Thames Water came in at this point. He appreciated and respected the considerations of the Chair of Chan Khong Monastery UK around the approach to take to the case. He only wished to add that both he and other members of Thames Water would continue to make themselves available to him if he wished to escalate any actions needed by Thames Water around putting the water supply in place.
- 5.14 On the matter of a potential contribution by Thames Water to the Old School House, Cecilia Larkin, Local and Regional Government Liaison, Thames Water advised that in order for this to be considered, information was required on specifics around how the asset would benefit the community.
- 5.15 The Chair of Chan Khong Monastery UK confirmed that he would be providing this information.
- 5.16 Moving to the latest position around compensation payments generally, the Head of Regional Networks, Thames Water clarified that there were two elements to compensation payments.

- 5.17 The first of these was general goodwill payments which were being made to every affected household. These payments were based on standardised calculations according to the number of adults and children in each property. He could confirm that payments had now been made to all households which had applied for this (and had their application accepted). Thames Water had worked hard to inform affected households of this compensation offer and the application process.
- 5.18 The second element of compensation were payments in recognition of damages and losses incurred as a result of the flood. This matter was one which needed to be dealt with on a case by case basis, each on its merits. These cases were still being worked through.
- 5.19 The Chair recalled from the November meeting that some residents were concerned about any risk of damage caused to buildings by the flood only becoming apparent at a later point, and property owners / leaseholders finding themselves financially liable. She asked what the extent of surveying had been following the flood.
- 5.20 The Loss Adjuster, Sedgewick confirmed that the carpark area had been surveyed and structurally checked with no damage identified. The carpark was the main area affected. The survey had found there to have been no structural damage to the carpark and that consequently there was no structural damage to the Clarion Housing blocks surrounding it.
- 5.21 In response to a question from another Member on whether residents would be given access to the structural reports, the Loss Adjuster, Sedgewick confirmed that owners of properties had been. He agreed with the Member on the need for transparency, and for assurance to be given on the detailed assessment which had been carried out.
- 5.22 The Chair also recalled that at the time of the November meeting, the reasons for it taking so long to have turned the main off and to have diverted water from the site were still being investigated. She recalled that - as with a previous incident where a Thames Water main had burst - the company had been slow to provide sandbags. She asked if Thames Water were now able to advise the findings of its investigation, and also what had been learnt from the incident in terms of future practice.
- 5.23 The Head of Regional Networks thanked the Chair. He recalled that at the November meeting he had been unable to answer questions on the reasons for the delays in getting appropriate equipment on-site, including both vehicles and sandbags.
- 5.24 Following the investigation, he could now confirm that – unfortunately – two errors were made in the response. In short, these firstly involved relying on word of mouth to arrange and track the arrival of relevant equipment, and secondly not treating and approaching the incident primarily as a flooding event.
- 5.25 It had been midnight before Thames Water realised that the water which residents had reported seeing at 11pm, was water from a burst main. Up to that

- point Thames Water believed the water to be from sewer flooding, reflected in a waste water team being deployed.
- 5.26 This explained the 1 hour delay in the request to Thames Water's Logistics Command Centre for the company's flood vehicle to be deployed.
- 5.27 A further and more substantial delay in the deployment of the flood vehicle was caused by the lack of an effective request and tracking process. For reasons which were still being explored, the midnight request for a flood vehicle did not reach the on-duty driver of the vehicle. The impact of this was compounded by those on site of the flood losing track of the request for the vehicle (which was partly due to staff being focused on isolating the leak).
- 5.28 This was the case until around 5am the following morning when the request was chased. This resulted in the request reaching the driver. At that time the flood vehicle was in South London. The vehicle then arrived on site at around 9am or 9.30am. Flood vehicles held sandbags and barriers, but by that time these were redundant given the levels the water had reached. The pump which it also held was employed but was not adequate to deal with the level of flooding.
- 5.29 Later in the day Thames Water hired in a group of pumps, generators and other equipment. This enabled a truly affective response to be in place from late afternoon. As the people affected were well aware, this was far too late. By that point the carpark and some properties had been significantly flooded. Water was flowing through a building into the river, which was rising to high levels and was close to overflowing onto dry land.
- 5.30 He did not wish to shy away from acknowledging the errors above. He now wished to make some points around learning from the event and response.
- 5.31 Flood vehicles were not often used. While this would give little comfort, incidents like the one at Leabridge were very rare. This explained why Thames Water had felt that holding one vehicle for its region was sufficient. They had now reached a view that it was not.
- 5.32 They now had two flood vehicles in place; one based in North London and the other in South. The vehicles required HGV drivers. Thames had recruited 36 extra HGV drivers. These drivers would cover the flood vehicles and also tankers which were typically used in waste water situations where excess rain had caused flooding from sewers. However, they could be deployed and used in water flooding incidents also. 20 additional tankers had been procured.
- 5.33 On an associated matter, another point of learning was that in clean water flooding incidents the primary focus should be enabling a full response to the flooding event drawing on all relevant resources, rather than treating the incident primarily as a burst main events.
- 5.34 Water mains were usually relatively easy to isolate. The main challenge in these cases was managing any flooding. Waste Water Teams should have been used at the Leabridge incident to help manage and contain the flooding rather than not being deployed due to the type of water involved.

- 5.35 Thames Water were focused on reducing the number of mains bursts. The impact of main bursts in its region could be greater than bursts in some others. The size of the population and population density meant that its mains needed to carry very high levels of water in a relatively small area. They were negotiating with the regulator around an investment plan.
- 5.36 This said, while work was ongoing to seek to reduce the risk of bursts, Thames Water had also – following the burst in the Leabridge area and others – reached a view that it also needed to invest to improve its responses when these incidents did occur. A new Head of Event and Incident Management was now in place.
- 5.37 He recalled from the November meeting the suggestion of Councilors that Thames Water might seek advice from the Council's Emergency Planning Service, which had strong processes in place to deal with emergencies. He confirmed that the company's Head of Event and Incident Management had had discussions with Andy Wells, the Council's Civil Protection Service Manager, other local authorities, and with the Fire Brigade. Thames Water were seeking to learn from these experts around their Gold and Silver Command arrangements and to explore whether they could replicate these.
- 5.38 Thames Water had also drawn learning from the customer service-related response to the incident. They had Customer Liaison Officers who had been deployed to the site and who had done a good job in difficult circumstances. However, the scale of the incident had meant that they had been overwhelmed. Thames were building up the capacity of this function.
- 5.39 Thames Water were committed to work to reduce these incidents and to manage them more effectively if and when they did occur. In addition to the investment proposals being negotiated with the regulator Thames Water would be delivering more routine management and monitoring of major mains, overnight when the roads above them were quieter. More effective monitoring would enable them to better identify issues at early points and to be less reliant on residents reporting escaping water at stages when issues had escalated. Thames Water did not wish to be a brand associated with incidents such as the one in Leabridge.
- 5.40 A Member noted from the timeline on the event available in the report that Thames Water had requested the return of the Fire Brigade to the site, after they had left. She asked why Thames Water could not resolve the issue themselves.
- 5.41 The Head of Regional Networks said that Thames Water had a good relationship in place with the Fire Brigade, where both helped the other in addressing challenging incidents. Thames Water were fully committed to providing prompt support to the Fire Brigade whenever this was required.
- 5.42 The reason for the callback of the Fire Brigade was linked with the putting in place of the equipment on site mentioned earlier. This was the first time that Thames Water or any water company had put equipment on site of such a scale. With the Fire Service having experience of using such a range of equipment in responding to floods on similar scales, Thames Water sought

their advice and oversight on the site. Thames Water had sought their advice on other incidents.

- 5.43 The Chair recalled from the last meeting that the Council had been shown to have responded to the incident very effectively. She asked Aled Richards, Director of Public Realm if he wished to make any comments at this point.
- 5.44 The Director of Public Realm said that the Council in generally worked well with Thames Water. This said, there was one failure on Thames Water's part which had brought both inconvenience to residents and reputational risk to the Council. This regarded the alternative parking provision which the Council had needed to put in place for residents on a nearby park, due to their car park being taken up by Thames Water response equipment. The use of the park for the carpark had brought a loss of amenity for residents in the local area, and despite the Council making requests to Thames Water to put in place an alternative solution they had not. Communications by Thames Water over this issue had been disappointing. Thankfully, the park was no longer performing the carpark function and had been returned to full use as a green space. The Council had been forced to enact the permit and PCN cancellation measures mentioned earlier due to limited action to provide solutions by Thames Water. In terms of lessons learnt, he suggested that the need for improvement in these areas could be one.
- 5.45 The Head of Regional Networks thanked the Director of Public Realm. He said that Thames Water would take lessons from this point. There had been challenges around finding a suitable car parking venue in what was a busy area, but said that the response could clearly have been more effective.
- 5.46 An effected resident said she appreciated that the Council had provided alternative parking solutions. However, it was important to note that both she and other households had now been without use of their own dedicated garages / parking spaces for a period of five months. She had small children. She now needed to park someway from her property which caused real inconvenience and difficulty. The time it took to get herself and her family to and from the locations she now needed to park the car at meant that she now avoided using the vehicle.
- 5.47 She had heard both at the previous meeting and in her liaison with Thames Water separately, that Thames Water were sorry for what had happened and that they were keen to put things right. However, this did not correlate with Thames Water not having been willing to approve claims for compensation for the loss of parking amenity. These were for very modest amounts compared to the scale and overall costs associated with the response to the incident. She was continuing her dialogue with Thames Water on the matter. She said that it was unfair that the burden had been put fully on her to justify in such detail the time costs incurred by the loss of parking amenity.
- 5.48 The Head of Regional Networks said he fully appreciated the point around the claim for loss of parking amenity likely to be tiny relative to the costs incurred from the incident overall. However, while he understood the frustration, it was the case that Thames Water and its loss adjusters had the responsibility to ensure that claims were assessed within a stipulated criteria. Claim records were subject to audit.

- 5.49 While he appreciated the frustration, his advice to the resident would be to pursue the claim, and to provide the information requested. For his and the Loss Adjuster's part, they would both check over the details personally to ensure that the case was dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner. As a final point, he advised that Thames Water equipment was due to be removed from the carpark on the 11<sup>th</sup> March.
- 5.50 Bringing the discussion to a close the Chair thanked guests. She said that the Commission may request a further update.
- 5.51 The Head of Regional Networks thanked the Chair. He advised that Thames Water would be conducting a snagging walk further to completion of works, where any final issues could be identified and then resolved. He suggested that any further update might be provided after that point.
- 5.52 Cllr Rathbone asked that he be advised of the date of the snagging walk which he would like to attend.

## **5 Cabinet Question Time - Cllr Rebecca Rennison, Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs**

- 5.1 Guests in attendance for this item were:
- Cllr Rebecca Rennison, Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs
  - Lesley Weber, Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager
- 5.2 The Chair welcomed the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs to her question time session. She noted the first section of questions would be focused on the work of the Council and partners to tackle and alleviate rough sleeping over the winter period. She invited the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs to make any opening comments.
- 5.3 The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs made the following substantive points:
- The Council was committed to working to prevent and intervene early to support those rough sleeping. This was in relation to both those who were long term rough sleepers and those who were doing so for the first time or intermittently.
  - It was important to note that Hackney was working to support a rising street population. This was a vulnerable group which often engaged in begging activity, but one which was not generally rough sleeping. The Council was committed to supporting this group, through work being led by the Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Policy, and the Voluntary Sector. She would restrict her points to those relevant to work to tackle rough sleeping.
  - The annual count of street sleepers carried out in November 2018 had shown a rise in numbers in Hackney; from 18 in 2017 to 23 in 2018. This rise was significant. However, the increase in Hackney over recent years had been lower than in many other boroughs. A nearby inner London borough now saw rough sleeper numbers of over 100, for example.



Monday, 4th March, 2019

- In her view the relatively low numbers in Hackney did partly reflect the level of investment and work by the Council in this area.
- On the prevention side, the Council sought to work with those who were at risk of becoming homeless. The borough was part of the No First Night Out Pilot. This aimed to better enable the identification of those within the cohort of individuals who were at risk of homelessness, who were at greatest risk of becoming a rough sleeper. This would enable rough sleeping prevention interventions to be effectively targeted. The service was incorporating learning from this exercise across all relevant areas. Changes brought by the Homelessness Reduction Act had better enabled prevention approaches.
- On the early intervention side, the GLA-funded No Second Night Out Hub provided 50 sit up beds in a centre in the borough. These provided up to three night stays for rough sleepers, during which time staff carried out assessments leading to referrals into relevant services.
- Dedicated hostel provision was provided by partners including St Mungos.
- There was a very wide range of voluntary sector provision in the borough. This included the Hackney Winter Night Shelter which provided overnight beds and a meal in a rolling range of venues around Hackney.
- The Council did a wide range of work with its partners. A Rough Sleeper summit last year had been very successful in bringing partners – including Hackney specific and national / regional charities, community groups and other organisations – together. Its success led to it being repeated in 2019.
- The recent summit had been focused on embedding an approach to homelessness across the Council and the borough.
- The interaction between rough sleeping and both physical and mental health had been commonly mentioned at the event. An attendee had explained that rough sleeping was often a health need manifesting itself as a housing need. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs felt that this really illustrated the point that the task of tackling and alleviating rough sleeping was a lot more nuanced than solely resolving accommodation factors. She was aware that commissioning teams within Council and Health services were exploring the potential introduction of mental health outreach for rough sleepers so that support could be delivered directly rather than provision being reliant on individuals actively accessing it. This would be a positive and important move.
- There was also a view that the services and responses needed to be better built around an individual and their needs and wants, rather than having pathways set down according to views of services around what that individual needed.
- The learning gained from the summit was helping to inform the refresh of the Rough Sleeper Strategy.
- A frustration for the Council was that it had not been able to secure some of the funding which the Government was now putting in to help address the rise in rough sleeping. They had been encouraged to submit funding bids. The bids

made had been for innovative pieces of work which would have helped to address the gaps that the service was aware were there.

- One of these gaps was dedicated provision for non-UK rough sleepers from the EU who had lost their right to housing benefit due to having been out of work for 6 months or more. One of the bids if successful would have seen basic housing provision targeted at those within this group. This would have been coupled with intensive employment support aimed at enabling them into work and - depending on their income - benefits. From this point they could be supported onto a sustainable pathway to settled accommodation.
- It had been very disappointing that despite the bids being fully aligned to gaps in provision, they had not been successful. The frustration was that the assessment of bids had included criteria around the count numbers of rough sleeping in different local authorities. Hackney fell outside of the top 83 of count numbers. However, Hackney was being effectively penalised for having given the level of investment into rough sleeping which it had, and for the impact of this work. The innovative approaches and initiatives in place in Hackney were not necessarily in place in other areas. It was not right that this work should impact on the ability of the Council to receive fair shares funding to deliver further support for a vulnerable group.

- 5.4 The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs. She noted that there were a lot of people sleeping on buses rather than the streets. She asked if this group might be hidden from count data.
- 5.5 The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs said she reviewed 'Chain Data' on a Quarterly basis. This looked provided ongoing trend data on referrals into services from rough sleepers. She understood that these contained counts of the referrals of people found to be sleeping on public transport.
- 5.6 The Chair noted that during summer months an area close to her Ward saw some people sleeping in tents, but that this appeared to be less in evidence in winter. She asked whether performing the annual count in November might mask the overall numbers.
- 5.7 The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs confirmed that the service was exploring the potential of conducting a summer count in addition to the one delivered in winter within Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government policy.
- 5.8 It was the case that in some instances there were groups of people who slept rough in order to maximise income instead of having more of this accounted for by housing costs. She had spoken with outreach workers around the appropriate offer for this group. This was a complex area. She would need to refer to the Rough Sleepers Strategy to see what actions were planned in support of this group.
- 5.9 A Member asked a question on StreetLink, the app which enabled people to alert local authorities and outreach services to rough sleepers, so that they could provide support. A resident had advised her that despite reporting someone sleeping in a doorway she had not heard anything. She had used the

app herself and found it not fully accessible; registration was needed in order to make a report which would be a barrier for some. She asked if work was being done to make the app better. Another Member said that he had received feedback from a resident that support was not provided to a rough sleeper they had reported through the app.

- 5.10 The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs said that while the Council did not run or manage the app, she was aware that it was currently being refreshed. She hoped that this refresh would address the accessibility issues mentioned.
- 5.11 She appreciated that StreetLink committed to reporting back to the party reporting the rough sleeper on action taken, and from casework she had received knew that these updates were not always provided. She hoped that the refresh would help iron out these issues.
- 5.12 She also received feedback from residents who were concerned that rough sleepers had not been immediately supported further to their reporting it.
- 5.13 However, in these cases when she had taken the matter up with Officers, she had found that they had made contact and were working to engage the person. This sometimes did take significant periods of time. Also, some people reported to be rough sleeping were found to be part of the street population, but not rough sleepers, requiring a separate response.
- 5.14 She wished to assure the Member that outreach was deployed upon reports being received. During periods of severe weather the response was immediate. In other cases, outreach workers would seek to engage the reported individual on their next engagement round.
- 5.15 A Member noted the 23 rough sleepers recorded in the November count. He asked if there was case management of these. He asked what data was available to gauge the success of outreach and interventions. He asked what the numbers were of rough sleepers over time.
- 5.16 The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs said it was not possible to provide churn data on the profiles of those currently rough sleeping in Hackney in terms of the time that they had been known to services. However, the chain data she mentioned earlier broke down rough sleepers in terms of whether they were first time, long term, or intermittent rough sleepers. This could help give some limited indication of the effectiveness of outreach work. She would check if this data could be made publically available. She said that as the Cabinet Member for the area she had and did seek assurance from services around their work with those who were rough sleeping. Without being able to divulge confidential information, she was able to confirm that services were actively working to engage rough sleepers in the borough. Case management was in place.

**ACTION 1 – Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs**

To seek clarity on whether Rough Sleeper Chain Data can be made publically available with a view to providing to the Commission

- 5.17 The Chair agreed with this point. When she had raised cases of rough sleepers with Officers, she had generally found that the service was already aware and was working to engage the individual concerned.
- 5.18 The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs added that there were cases of entrenched rough sleepers where intensive and long term engagement was needed, including through GLA initiatives. People who were rough sleeping had – by definition – already been failed by the state. It was fully understandable that in many cases it took rough sleepers time to trust services aiming to support them. She and those in the service always sought to make sure that rough sleepers were aware of the offer of the Greenhouse. This provided a range of support; including to people who were – for whatever reason – not ready or able to stop rough sleeping at this point. These individuals were still able to use the Greenhouse as a postal address and to access GP, benefits, and other services through the centre. This could support them onto pathways eventually leading to accommodation.
- 5.19 A Member said she had visited the Greenhouse recently as it was based in her ward. During discussions with staff they had fed back how much the centre could benefit from greater space. She asked if options were being explored, including any potential use of a building at the back of the Greenhouse.
- 5.20 The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs acknowledged that space was limited, and did impact on the scale and reach of services. Options for increasing space capacity were being explored, but this was within the context of wide ranging demand for sites across Council and community and voluntary sector services, and these being in relatively short supply.
- 5.21 In terms of numbers, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs advised the counts for 2016 and 2017 were 17 and 18 respectively. These were based on the snapshot November counts which were carried out in all local authority areas. Data was validated by Government before being used to report on national rough sleeping figures. On a national basis, figures had fallen slightly, but with rises in London; some of which were dramatic. Chain data which she would look to provide gave more granular information, over shorter time periods.
- 5.22 The Chair invited Cllr Klein who was in attendance to ask the question of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs she understood him to have.
- 5.23 Addressing Cllr Rennison, Cllr Klein advised that he had an inquiry about a named family.
- 5.24 At this point the Chair explained that the Commission would not take questions or casework regarding individuals. She advised that these matters should be emailed to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs.
- 5.25 Cllr Klein advised that he had made contact with Officers but that a solution had not been achieved.
- 5.26 The Chair advised Cllr Klein that individual cases could not be discussed in what was a public meeting. She said that if a response to his enquiries had not

Monday, 4th March, 2019

been received, she would advise Cllr Klein to write to Officers again, copying the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs into this correspondence.

- 5.27 The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs also offered to take the matter up upon an email being sent directly to Mayor's Office.
- 5.28 Bringing this area of questioning to an end, the Chair suggested that the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs might email all Councillors with details of the Greenhouse, in terms of its offer and location. She said that some Members were not aware of this. She also suggested that information on StreetLink might also be circulated. She said that there were some misconceptions around this scheme.
- 5.29 The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs agreed to build these suggestions into communications plans with Members.

**ACTION 2 – Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs**

To incorporate information and details on the offer of the Hackney Greenhouse and the StreetLink App, into updates to all Councillors.

- 5.30 The Chair brought the meeting onto the next area for questioning; recent work relevant to the domestic violence and abuse portfolio area held by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs.
- 5.31 She welcomed the Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager who was in attendance along with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs.
- 5.32 Asked to make any opening points, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs said the following:
- The Domestic Abuse and Intervention Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager was hosted within the Children and Families Service. This was in reflection of the cyclical nature of domestic abuse and also the need for interventions to address the needs of whole families, including children.
  - Adding to this point the Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager confirmed that in the vast majority of referrals into the service, children were present in the home. The service being based in Children and Families better enabled prevention to be in place from maternity and zero years, and a whole family approach. The service continued to work closely with every directorate.
  - The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs said that the Council's service stood out as one that worked with perpetrators as well as victims. This could be controversial. It was done wholly with the survivor at the heart. This work was delivered within the recognition that in some cases – and sometimes due to couples having children – that the relationship and or contact would continue despite the service's intervention, and also that without prevention work there was greater risk that cycles of violence would be repeated in future relationships.
  - There was refuge provision in place in the borough. It was important to note that the 48 beds commissioned in Hackney were not provided to women from the borough but from elsewhere. Refuges would not take residents from the local authority area in which it was based. This meant that services needing to secure a refuge place for a

Monday, 4th March, 2019

client made contact with those in other areas. Hackney had the third highest refuge bed provision in London. Some recent news stories around Hackney not having provision available was due to the borough being one of the first for calls for other areas due to its relatively high numbers of beds, and supply being exhausted as a result.

- MOPAC were currently looking at the scope for regional funding of refuges. However, at this time there was no needs assessment in place to establish the refuge places required on either a London or national level. She had raised this issue a number of times.
  - The Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy was currently being reviewed.
  - The Sanctuary Scheme provided funding to the Council for it to enable some survivors of domestic violence to remain in their own home when they chose to do so, through adjustments being made where this could make the environment safe. Through a successful bid the Council had received a time limited £100,000 fund to deliver this initiative. While this was positive, it indicated the precarious nature of funding in this area; there was an absence of proper sustainable funding streams from Government for domestic violence work.
  - A project was ongoing to shift the service towards a Children Services Model. This was a more effective, evidence based delivery model.
  - The new model would aim to give greater autonomy back to survivors. It was recognised that the current system often required a range of significant life changes to be made; to the schools which children went to and to the areas the family lived in, for example. The new model would put the survivor family at the centre.
- 5.33 A Member said she used to work in a Family Therapy Centre. Cases managed there had highlighted to her the often cyclical nature of domestic violence, with many perpetrators being found to have experienced violence in the home during their formative years. She asked how the Council and its partners were addressing this.
- 5.34 The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager thanked the Member for the question. Earlier that day she had attended a new Adverse Childhood Experiences working group. Domestic abuse was one of the most major adverse experiences for a young person to go through, and one which had one of the largest negative impacts on both childhood and later outcomes in life. Those experiencing domestic violence as a child were more likely to become abusive to parents, to see their relationship with the non-abusive parents break down, and to become an adult victim or perpetrator at later points in life.
- 5.35 The service was installing an approach based more on addressing the effects of trauma. Safety would always be the priority. However, there would be greater focus on the aftermath, and on work to best prevent patterns of domestic violence reoccurring.

- 5.36 There were relevant interventions to address trauma already in place, including through delivery by the community sector. However, these were often focused on adults rather than children. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) did play a role in supporting young people having experienced domestic abuse. However, more was needed around fully identifying how the trauma caused to children could be fully addressed. This work was high up on the agenda of both the Children and Families Service, and Education.
- 5.37 A Member recalled the Commission's recent visit to the Integrated Gangs Unit. At that meeting a map was shown showing the journey of a young person which had ended in their committing of a serious violent offence. He recalled that exposure to domestic violence had been evident in the case. He said that this helped highlight to him the need for a focus on supporting people to deal with any early traumatic experiences.
- 5.38 The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager said her service in its work with perpetrators followed a behavioural change model. When working with perpetrators to try to enable them to understand the reasons for their behaviour, exposure to violence and trauma as a child often emerged. Domestic violence was generally a learnt behaviour. It was more likely to be exhibited by those exposed to it as a child, and also by those who had been socialised within particular belief systems around masculinity.
- 5.39 Numbers helped to illustrate the scale of the issue. In Hackney, it was estimated that 35,000 women aged 16 and over had experienced domestic abuse. 20,000 were estimated to have suffered from a sexual assault. In terms of children, 6,000 children aged 0 – 17 were estimated to have experienced domestic violence in the home. These estimates were informed by data produced at a national level, which had been applied to population data for Hackney.
- 5.40 The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs noted that these numbers compared to the Domestic Abuse Intervention Service which contained the manager and 8 workers. This highlighted the need to make the issue one which was everyone's business, regardless of service area. This would enable a whole systemic community and professional based model.
- 5.41 Asked how this would be achieved, the Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager confirmed that doing so would be at the centre of the revised Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy. One way would be empowering better and wider screening, where wide ranges of services and organisations coming into contact with people were able to ask the right questions and to respond to those coming forward in the appropriate way. While the new strategy on the topic for central Government was heavily Criminal Justice System focused, research showed that victims often went elsewhere for support (only around 20% of victims engaged with the police). People for various reasons chose to go down other routes. Services needed to be responsive to this. Work was being done to help best ensure that all community groups and professional organisations were able to ask questions and respond to calls for help in a way which was affective and which encouraged continued engagement.
- 5.42 The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs added that there was a range of work relevant to this including a current training and awareness

- campaign. Messaging by the Council was focused on encouraging dialogue and open discussion on the issue. She had noticed during the time she had held this portfolio area how there was sometimes discomfort around talking about the problem, partly explained by a nervousness around saying the wrong thing.
- 5.43 A Member noted the point around victims reporting issues to organisations other than criminal justice. However, she had dealt with a case where the Council had said it could not accept a housing case as being related to domestic violence, as the resident had not reported the matter to the police.
- 5.44 The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager said that it was not the case that Council Services could only treat cases as being related to domestic abuse, where police reports were present. The organisation could and should give consideration to a range of evidence – for example medical records - and should be proactive in seeking this. The team was working on communicating this message more widely. Housing was a crucial area and the service was working with all housing sectors with the aim of best ensuring that they dealt with cases sensitively and effectively, including through not requiring unrealistic levels of evidence from clients who were going through periods of trauma.
- 5.45 A Member asked whether activities were planned to coincide with International Women’s Day later in the week.
- 5.46 The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs said that the service had deliberately chosen the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on the 25<sup>th</sup> November as its annual flagship engagement event to help ensure join up and consistent messaging. This date saw the start of 16 days of Activism, incorporating a range of events. The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager said that discussions were underway around also delivering activities as part of International Women’s Day from next year.
- 5.47 A Member noted the cultural barriers which some groups faced in regards to seeking support for domestic violence. Among some community groups there was still a common view that domestic violence was an issue which needed to be tolerated. He asked about the links between the Domestic Abuse Intervention Service and the organisations representing these communities. IMECE did particularly excellent work in supporting Black, Minority Ethnic and Refugee women experiencing domestic abuse, in his view.
- 5.48 The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager confirmed that the service had good links and worked very closely with a range of culturally-specific organisations. This was crucial to it being effective. Organisations formed part of the partnership. In terms of IMECE, referral pathways were in place between the organisation and the Council. In some cases, victims would not wish to work with a cultural organisation due to fear of reprisals (whether or not this was a valid concern). In others, they would explicitly wish to be supported by the cultural organisation. In other cases still a victim might wish to be supported by professionals in other services – for example – a Social Worker they were already in contact with. It was important to facilitate any support pathway the survivor chose.



- 5.49 The team itself was diverse and had good level of understanding of Hackney's communities. As an indicator of this, six languages were spoken (with access to interpreter services where this was required).
- 5.50 A Member recalled a case he was aware of where a perpetrator of domestic violence who had had mental ill health, had become homeless after being removed from the home by the police and spending some time in custody. He had gone onto take his own life. He asked if the police could be instructed to find accommodation for perpetrators where they were vulnerable.
- 5.51 The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager advised that the team had raised the issue that those being abusive who were taken out of the home should not be left homeless. However, this was not at the expense of expecting them to be returned to the home if they were abusive; the first consideration was for the safety of the victim.
- 5.52 The Member asked if work was done with male victims of domestic violence.
- 5.53 The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager confirmed that it was, and that the service worked with any victim. This included men. This said, it was the case that women were disproportionately affected by domestic violence, including cases of murder.
- 5.54 The Chair noted that the review of the Commission into serious violence had heard about the toxicity of some relationships between some young men and women, and around both males and females having warped views towards acceptable behaviours. She asked if the service was working to address this.
- 5.55 The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager said this was a very important point. The issue was a real one, and was reflected in the Government now making it mandatory for the delivery of healthy relationship teaching in schools. Hackney was ahead of the curve in this; Young Hackney had been delivering PHSE lessons in primary and secondary schools and in Youth Hubs for some years. Material for these lessons and for other forms of engagement were being co-designed with young people so that it spoke to these groups rather than adults.
- 5.56 The Chair asked what impact austerity had had on the capacity of the service to support victims and to work with them and perpetrators.
- 5.57 The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager said that there was a relatively high spend on tackling domestic abuse in Hackney. Service demand was also high; a service transformation in 2016 had been followed by a 42% increase in referrals, almost doubling workloads. The level of outreach work into the community had increased also.
- 5.58 The rise of referrals in Hackney was partly reflective of rises in London and nationally. There was debate around any extents to which the increase was due to an increase in awareness and intolerance of domestic violence and an increase in violence.
- 5.59 Very thankfully, there had been no domestic homicides since 2014. This compared to an apparent escalation of these tragic cases in London. She felt

that this was partly reflective of the active and proactive nature of the service. However, it was a very challenging and high risk area and there could be absolutely no complacency.

- 5.60 A Member noted a recent national case where a woman had been given the right to appeal a conviction for the murder of her husband due to evidence of coercive control by him emerging. She asked if this case had implications for the way the service worked with victims. She noted that this case could bring a realisation among more people that what they themselves experienced was actually domestic abuse. She wondered if the service was open to taking these cases on.
- 5.61 The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager confirmed that all domestic homicides when tracked back showed evidence of coercive control. Any case being referred was taken very seriously. Any non-recognition of coercive control by the service or others meant that risk was not being recognised. Reviews of domestic homicides often found that the victim was not known as a high risk case, and that this was sometimes due to indicators of coercive control not being recognised or at earlier points. The service was working to engage the community on this to increase awareness. A pattern of coercive control could sometimes be mistaken for expressions of love and care by a perpetrator.
- 5.62 The Chair asked what the service offer was for people reporting concerns they had for a family member or friend.
- 5.63 The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager advised that anyone could contact the service for advice. If there was not an indicator that someone was at serious risk, consent by them was generally required for a fuller investigation. Decisions around this were made on a case by case, risk-based basis.
- 5.64 A Member recalled a case where he had supported a victim of domestic violence some years ago. It had been a highly complex case in which he had needed to liaise with a range of Council and other services; for example Housing Officers and solicitors. What had struck him at that time was that there was nobody in a central team helping to co-ordinate support. He asked if this had changed.
- 5.65 The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager said that the reason for the transformation she had mentioned was a review finding that the services had not been accessible and had been little-known about. That review had followed a spate of five domestic homicides in a two year period. Her team now performed the central role described by the Member as being a gap previously.
- 5.66 The Member asked what legal support was available to the service's clients, and about the impact that Government cuts to legal aid had had.
- 5.67 The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager said that the potential to offer legal support differed on the need. In cases where an injunction was needed and legal aid was not available to a survivor, the service could support the client through what was known as DIY injunction. The service also had access to a specialist Domestic Violence Court for East London.

- 5.68 She acknowledged that Hackney was not seeing levels of perpetrator prosecutions that it wished to see, and that these were lower than in the country generally. The service was working with MOPAC to seek to have Officers present in their pan London Domestic Abuse Courts. The service was seeking to improve its criminal justice response, in addition to its successful work in supporting victims and delivering prevention.
- 5.69 The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs and the Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager. She asked if some further information might be provided on the service in terms of its approach, offer, and how people can access it.
- 5.70 The Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager agreed to provide this.

**ACTION 3 – Domestic Abuse Intervention Service Manager**

To provide written information on the Domestic Abuse Intervention Service in terms of its approach, offer and gaining access.

**6 Update on discretionary private rented sector licensing**

- 6.1 Kevin Thompson, Head of Private Sector Housing, was in attendance for this item.
- 6.2 Asked to make any opening comments, the Head of Private Sector Housing said the following:
- The Council like other local authorities had a mandatory licensing scheme in place covering larger Houses of Multiple Occupation.
  - Research into housing conditions in the borough had found there to be some significant issues in the private rented sector which went beyond those covered by mandatory licensing. This research found that around 11% of rented properties in the borough had serious hazards or disrepair in with them. With HMOs this rose to 20%.
  - Based on that data and in line with a manifesto commitment, an assessment was made as to whether this research gave cause for the Council to implement discretionary licensing schemes to run alongside the mandatory one, in order to bring more properties into a licensing framework.
  - This assessment led to the implementation of two licensing schemes, which came into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018.
  - An additional licensing scheme now covered all HMOs in the borough not covered by the mandatory scheme (covering properties occupied by two or more people who were not a single family).
  - A geographically-based pilot selective licensing scheme now covered all rented units not within scope of the mandatory or additional schemes, in the wards of Cazenove, Brownswood and Stoke Newington. The data exercise highlighted relatively high levels of hazards in these three wards. The impact of this pilot scheme would be monitored with the insight used to inform future approaches.

- Prior to their coming into force, the Council had made the decision that active enforcement against those not coming forward for a license would not be started in the first few months of the scheme. At that point and as per public announcements made, enforcement measures would begin. The date for which the enforcement window opened was the 1<sup>st</sup> March. The Council was not about to embark on extensive enforcement activity. Instead at this point it would begin a publicity campaign, writing to landlords and agents and others encouraging them to come forward. Those actively choosing not to comply with the scheme would then be subject to enforcement action.
  - Section 4.1 and 4.2 showed changes to procedures and policies. Section 4.1 related to how the Council would manage cases where landlords of properties in Hackney resided overseas. 4.2 set out the approach to be taken to selective licensing where the licenses were for flats in blocks, and gave consideration to whether a single license could be provided covering all flats, or whether individual licenses would be required for each flat. The policy now allowed for licenses covering more than one flat, in certain circumstances.
- 6.3 The Chair noted the 1<sup>st</sup> March timescale for starting enforcement action. She asked what form of enforcement this would take. She was keen to see what had happened since implementation of the schemes in October.
- 6.4 The Head of Private Sector Housing said that when introducing discretionary licensing schemes, local authorities were known to follow an approach of encouraging applications at early phases. Further to that point, these applications would be validated and assessed (including through inspections where necessary) before licenses were issued.
- 6.5 The compliance stage followed this. At the current time, effort was being put into encouraging and helping landlords to apply. Once that had been worked through, focus moved to compliance, and the targeting of those landlords who despite engagement by the Council, had not come forward for a license and or were deliberately evading the scheme. Civil penalties and prosecutions would not be rushed out at this time. However, when during the current phase any property was found to have poor conditions or management or disrepair, this would be worked through to resolution. Following that, focus would move to those landlords not having come forward, with enforcement action where necessary.
- 6.6 Between the scheme going live in October 2018 and the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019, 2134 license applications had been submitted. This provided an income of £1.56 million. The level of progress reached in terms of licensing coverage achieved was greater at this point than that forecast at planning stages. It was stronger than that which had been achieved in the same time period by comparable authorities which had implemented schemes.
- 6.7 One of the reasons for the strong go live was the good quality online application system. Feedback had been generally positive. 25 minutes was the average time of an application.

- 6.8 A Member asked what proportion of properties falling within the remit of any of the schemes, were now covered by licensees.
- 6.9 The Head of Private Sector Housing advised that the data exercise had identified around 9,000 properties as requiring a license. 2134 of these had now come forward for a license.
- 6.10 The Chair noted the breakdowns in terms of the licenses now applied for, in each Ward. She noted that the three Wards in which selective licensing had been introduced had seen a total of around 1,100 applications made. From time spent in at least one of these Wards, she felt that the numbers in each ward were quite low relative to the amount of units which were privately rented in those areas. She had also noted the poor conditions that some of these properties appeared to be in. She wondered whether those landlords with the properties in poorer conditions were among those who had currently not come forward for a license.
- 6.11 The Head of Private Sector Housing said there was a clear need to address this issue. Communications work would be delivered now that the enforcement stage had been reached. There would be dedicated activity in those three wards. Flyers had already been sent to every property suspected to be subject to selective licensing. Other activity would follow, including events. This all said, the positions the schemes were in in terms of the progress they had made, were positive.
- 6.12 The service would be contacting landlords who had not come forward, with help offered. A reminder would be sent to those still not making contact.
- 6.13 The third final stage would be a letter advising that the case had been referred for legal action. Capacity in the service for this escalation was in place. In general, experiences from other authorities showed that published enforcement action against landlords was often the catalyst for the coming forward of others.
- 6.14 The overall approach would be risk based; those properties which evidence suggested were more likely to have hazards, disrepair and or poor management would be prioritised for inspection.
- 6.15 The Chair supported the need for enforcement action where landlords were not forthcoming. She also noted the report's reference to the residents of in scope unlicensed properties having the right to go to tribunal to seek a rent rebate (Rent Repayment Orders). She suggested that this be publicised as part of the drive to increase sign up.
- 6.16 Another Member agreed with this point. She asked that this information be circulated to the Commission.
- 6.17 The Head of Private Sector Housing agreed to provide this information. He said that the tool was a powerful one. He agreed to liaise with the Communications service on publicity of this power.

**ACTION 4 – Head of Private Sector Housing**

To provide information on Rent Repayment Orders to Commission Members.

**ACTION 5 – Head of Private Sector Housing**

To seek to publicise the ability of private rented sector tenants to pursue Rent Repayment Orders in cases where a landlord's licensable property is not licensed.

- 6.18 A Member asked about the standards which the licensing schemes were able to enforce in terms of overcrowding and use of amenities including kitchens and bathrooms.
- 6.19 The Head of Private Sector Housing advised that for HMOs, there were room size and standard criteria for bathrooms, kitchens and bedrooms. For the non HMOs under the selective scheme, there was not provision for setting standards on kitchens and bathrooms. But for sleeping accommodation there were minimum size provisions and licenses could specify the maximum of people who could occupy the premises for sleeping. These stipulations applied from the point of the next tenancy. The standards were not at a high threshold and were based on 1930's regulations around overcrowding.
- 6.20 A Member recalled from the last discussion on this topic that the service was building up capacity to implement the new schemes. He asked if the recruitment had been completed.
- 6.21 The Head of Private Sector Housing confirmed that the service structure was fully in place. The budget was strong.
- 6.22 However, recruitment of the staff with the relevant skill sets was a challenge. Hackney was also competing for staff with other boroughs also introducing schemes. Newly skilled Environmental Health Officers were not coming through the system at the rates required by the industry. A specific post graduate course at Middlesex University was seeking to help fill this gap and the Council was liaising with them.
- 6.23 A Member wished to seek clarity on the numbers of units which required a mandatory HMO license, and the numbers which were covered by a license. In response, the Head of Private Sector Housing confirmed that – prior to the data gathering exercise approximately 198 Mandatory HMO licenses were in place. The data exercise had identified another 991 HMOs in need of a mandatory license. Of these additional 991 units identified, 113 had so far made the application for a license.
- 6.24 The Chair said that she was concerned with the low shares of properties having the mandatory HMO license they required, given the length of time that mandatory licensing had been in place. She asked why this was the case.
- 6.25 The Head of Private Sector Housing advised that the low shares of properties with a mandatory license in place was due to two reasons. The first of these was that only at the point of the data exercise did the Council obtain a clearer picture on the locations of unlicensed HMOs. Before this time the identification of unlicensed HMOs relied on manually surveying areas. The second reason was due to changes in the mandatory scheme enacted in October 2018, which had brought greater numbers of units into this criteria.

- 6.26 In response to the Chair's request, the Head of Private Sector Housing agreed to provide the numbers of HMOs falling under the previous mandatory scheme and the numbers falling into the revised one.

**ACTION 6 – Head of Private Sector Housing**

To provide data on the numbers of HMOs falling within scope of the mandatory scheme before and after Government changes to the scheme enacted in October 2018

- 6.27 The Chair also asked that data was provided enabling Members to gain an insight into the locations of HMOs in the borough.

**ACTION 7 – Head of Private Sector Housing**

To provide data on the locations of HMOs in the borough.

- 6.28 As a final point, a Member noted the reference to events planned in Wards. He asked if Ward Councillors – including himself as Member for Cazenove – could be invited on any engagement events in their areas regarding the schemes.

**7 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

- 7.1 The Minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

**8 Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission- 2018/19 Work Programme**

- 8.1 The work programme was noted.

- 8.2 A Member suggested that the Commission sought an item on the London Plan during the next municipal year.

- 8.3 Another Member had heard some reports of sex workers being treated more punitively by the police, and concerns around this. He suggested that this might be incorporated into a topic for next year.

- 8.4 A Member noted recent press coverage around some London boroughs ending the arrangement of having embedded Home Office workers within their organisations. This was within the context of work to assess and support vulnerable migrants. She understood that Hackney had a worker in place. She suggested that an update might be received around the approach in Hackney.

- 8.5 The Chair thanked Members. She understood that the police would be in attendance at the Safer Neighbourhood Board meeting the following week. As Chair of this Commission she was a Member of the Board. She would seek to raise the issue around the approach to sex workers and would feedback to the Commission. She would also discuss the matter of the Home Office Embedded Worker with the relevant Cabinet Member.

**9 Any Other Business**

- 9.1 The Chair noted that the Commission was nearing the end of its evidence gathering for its review related to serious violence.

Monday, 4th March, 2019

- 9.2 She reminded Members of the meeting scheduled for the 14<sup>th</sup> March, with representatives of the Integrated Gangs Unit and the Children and Families Service.
- 9.3 This was to go through a list of questions which had been shared with these services, and which Members felt to be outstanding from previous discussions.
- 9.4 This was scheduled to be the last piece of evidence gathering for the review. She said that a record of that meeting would be published within the agenda papers for the next Commission meeting in April.
- 9.5 In addition, records of the other site visits and meetings carried out as part of the review, outside of the formal Commission meetings, would be published at that point.

**ACTION 8 – Scrutiny Officer**

To incorporate records of site visits and evidence gathering meetings (outside of formal Commission meetings) relating to the review around serious violence, into the agenda papers for the meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> April.

Duration of the meeting: 9.55 pm