

Overview and Scrutiny

Annual Report to Full Council
2019/20





Chair's Foreword

It is my great pleasure and privilege to introduce the annual report for Hackney Council's Scrutiny function for 2019/20.

In Hackney we believe that the scrutiny function makes a vital contribution to the work of the Council as a whole. This year, as before, we have continued to develop policy initiatives and also to provide essential challenge to the Executive on behalf of the communities we serve.

We have continued to innovate and in response to the Covid-19 crisis we have prioritised the scrutiny function bringing meetings online which has made them more accessible to the community and enabled a wider range of contributors including national figures to take part. As one of the first local authorities to do this we believe our contribution has sharpened Hackney's response to the crisis as well as ensuring that our leaders continue to act in a transparent and accountable manner.

As ever, this report reflects the contributions and work of hundreds of individuals including councillors, other commission members, the Mayor and Cabinet, officers, contributors from outside bodies and, very importantly, members of our local community who have given up their time to contribute to our meetings and reports. We have benefited as well from reports in the press which have brought our work more immediately to a wider audience.

I'd also of course like to thank Jarlath O'Connell, Martin Bradford, Timothy Upton and Tom Thorn, the brilliant members of our Scrutiny Team, led by Tracey Anderson who all take enormous pride in their work and are instrumental in pushing the boundaries of what can be achieved by a Council Scrutiny function.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret Gordon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cllr Margaret Gordon

Chair of Scrutiny Panel 2019/20



The Overview and Scrutiny function is required to report annually to Full Council on its activities over the previous year. This summary report covers the municipal year 2019/20 but ends with our February meetings as the Covid pandemic lockdown stopped formal meetings from mid March. Work from May 2020 will be reported next year.

Scrutiny in Hackney comprises 4 themed Commissions which meet 8 times per year:

- [Children and Young People](#)
- [Health in Hackney](#)
- [Living in Hackney](#)
- [Skills, Economy and Growth](#)

The Chair and Vice Chair of each panel then comprise the [Scrutiny Panel](#) which meets 4 times per year and which also holds a Vice Chair post for the opposition party. Members are appointed annually at the Council's AGM. Scrutiny holds the executive (Mayor and Cabinet) to account for Executive Decisions and contributes to policy development. It has no role in relation to 'Non-executive functions' such as Planning, Licensing, Pensions.

In 2019/20 meetings in November had to be cancelled because of the purdah period prior to the December General Election and meetings from mid March were cancelled as a result of the Covid-19 until the processes for holding formal meetings online could be put in place.

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The impact of Covid-19



Scrutiny meetings on Covid-19



Lockdown commenced on 23 March near the end of our year. The 30 March meeting of Health in Hackney had to be an informal one as the regulations on virtual meetings were not yet in place. Formal Virtual Meetings re-commenced in May. All the Commissions and Scrutiny Panel cleared their work programmes and focused on how the pandemic was impacting on their remit areas.

Health in Hackney - 30 March

Informal meeting held virtually, focusing on briefings from HUHFT, CACH, Director of Public Health; CCG; GP Confederation on the borough response to Covid-19. Formal items at [9 June](#), [9 July](#) and [30 July](#) with the Director of Public Health on the initial response and the Test and Trace pilot.. 9 June meeting involved national and international experts providing challenge on test and trace and 9 July meeting also had the CCG presenting the local [Restoration and Recovery Plan post-Covid](#).

Joint Scrutiny Panel and Living in Hackney meeting - 13 May

Scrutiny Panel element focused on CQT session with both the Mayor and the Chief Executive on the response to the pandemic. LiH element focused down on two services: domestic violence and the support to those in social housing in the borough.

Children & Young People - 20 May

Initial scrutiny by the Commission on the impact of Covid 19 has focused on three areas (i) support for vulnerable children (ii) impact of school closures on children's education and attainment (iii) mental health. Representations from academic bodies, local headteachers and Hackney Youth Parliament have all provided helpful insight into the impact of Covid 19 on local children and young people. The Commission continues to receive regular updates from both Hackney Learning Trust and Children and Families Service on the impact of Covid 19 in these services

Skills, Employment and Growth

Will be focusing its 20/21 work programme on how a greener, fairer, inclusive economy can be achieved against the backdrop of a drastically altered economic environment. There will be a particular focus on identifying how the work environment has changed, what skills offer Hackney can put forward to fill the gap, and partnering with local business to ensure the change is as smooth and mutually agreed.

INEL JHOSC

On [24 June](#) INEL devoted a meeting with the ELHCP health leaders to the NEL wide response to the pandemic and looked at how scrutiny was handling the issue in each borough.

Building back better: The Role of Scrutiny



The pandemic has shone a light on the stark inequalities of our society. While it is going on it would have been easy to scale back our scrutiny work and review the response after the event but, with rising inequality and the need to create a more inclusive economy post Covid being key challenges for Hackney, we decided it was even more important to commence our scrutiny straight away. This would ensure we focused on how services and support are reaching the most vulnerable now so that the inequalities don't widen further.

This approach has not just helped to keep us abreast of the key challenges here as they evolve but to give us the insight needed to help support the "build back better" efforts of the Mayor and Cabinet. Scrutiny's role is to ensure that the policy approach being taken will tackle inequalities and focus on investment for recovery. We need to challenge the new approaches being set out because of Covid and ask whether they are actually serving to enhance the lives of residents of the borough and those who work here.

How we better engage, communicate and provide access to our Scrutiny investigations can act as a catalyst for how the wider Council and partners might also go about their work. We can draw in a wider circle of advice than normal. In the same way by drawing more on community voices we can enlist them in shaping more responsive policies and so put the focus on where the economic and social investment is needed in order to revive our communities post-Covid.

How Virtual Meetings have altered our work

The volume of new regulations and policy changes from central government arising from the pandemic (not just in Public Health but across all services) has required us to be much more agile and responsive to issues. The switch to virtual meetings has, interestingly, made it easier to reach new audiences and to move beyond our existing networks. It has provided greater accessibility to external experts from national or regional bodies and from other local authorities as they're more amenable to joining us online rather than making a physical trip to come and speak to us.



Scrutiny Panel



Financial overview



Quarterly Financial Updates - the Overall Financial Position, Capital Update, state of local government finances report

The Deputy Mayor and the Group Director for Finance and Corporate Resources take us through the highlights of each [Overall Financial Position](#) report to Cabinet as well as the Capital Update reports. We also widen the frame to look at the state of local government finance generally and what might be coming downstream. In July we debated the financial challenge around **SEND** (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) funding in Education also exploring how improvements in capital funding might assist. We questioned the operation of the finances in **Integrated Commissioning** with the NHS and how this might limit room to manoeuvre in internal finances., We discussed how the council was trying to increase its income from its **commercial property portfolio**. We discussed the finances of the Council's new **Energy Company** and its new **Housing company**.

In [February](#) we discussed the then projected overspend of £6m and the drivers for this - provision of adult social care and SEND and the scenarios for managing these. A key challenge nationally is that demand is increasing but resources are not. We discussed the key aspects of the recent 'financial settlement'. We discussed the government's 'Fairer Funding Review' and the expectation that the Council could lose £17m on it. The factors in the review expected to affect Hackney are: deprivation, area costs adjustments and population. We also discussed how the Council uses and plans for its financial reserves in the context of the major financial pressures.

Mayor's Question Time



Mayor's Question Time

In a very wide ranging session in February we questioned the Mayor on 4 agreed areas: **Devolution** and local government's requests to the newly elected government; the Council's preparedness for **Brexit**; the Council's response to the **Climate Emergency** and how it is being coordinated and monitored and an update on the work by Organisational Development in response to the **harassment and bullying** claims within the workforce.

On the General Election result we discussed how London's councils might brace themselves for further possible funding cuts if central govt shifts resources to the North "as a reward for Brexit support". We discussed the expected move away from EU Standards, acknowledging how a clear "values driven alignment" by the public around issues of environmental and agricultural standards would be hard for government to dismiss. We discussed the support needed for the 14,000 EU nationals living in Hackney to achieve settled status and how the Council might assist. We also discussed: the merger of the 7 CCGs in north east London; the SEND budget crisis, and the resilience of our high streets in the face of higher business rates.

On Climate Emergency we explored how to achieve a just transition for those in jobs that will not translate easily into a new sustainable greener economy. We examined the borough's particular role vis-a-vis central government in achieving the 'net zero' emissions target. The Mayor talked of how there was scope for scaling up VCS and volunteering roles to bolster the work of the council in the green infrastructure work.

In May following the Covid-19 outbreak, we held our first virtual meeting. We questioned the Mayor and Chief Executive on the local response to the pandemic across all the services. Living in Hackney then held a joint session with us where we heard from **Housing Support Services** on how they were helping local residents and from the the **Domestic Violence** Service and the Hackney Borough Police Commander on their joint efforts to support victims. A key concern during lockdown was under reporting of domestic abuse and we discussed how the service will handle an expected spike afterwards.

Our overview role



Complaints and Member Enquiries Annual Report

Each year we review the Members enquiries and the complaints service and we examine outliers and trends in the report and what learning there has been from both. We noted that complaints were down but member enquiries were up in the past year. We debated where the service was on the need to balance quality of response over speediness, so that complaints get sorted rather than just meeting processing targets which might not be the most helpful measure.

We discussed residents problems with having to engage online only with the Noise Service on weekend nights when complaints are highest. We discussed complaints about Traffic Schemes, about the compensation being paid in response to Ombudsmans' findings. We asked that next year's report might detail the steps each Directorate has taken to learn from the complaints they have handled over the previous year and to detail how the learning has been cascaded down to improve services.

Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local Government

We debated the new statutory guidance from central government on O&S, which encompasses 6 areas: organisational culture; resourcing of the function; selecting committee members; access to information; work programme planning and establishment of protocols to assist us in how we interact with officers and stakeholders. All Members were asked to bear these in mind as they carried out their work programmes as this sets out standards we need to continually meet. We noted that much in the guidance was already in place in Hackney but there is of course always room for improvement.

Review of the Work Programmes

The Panel doesn't approve work programmes as each Commission has autonomy but instead we take a strategic overview to ensure there are no clashes which might cause problems for officers supporting our work. We also agree our own areas of focus for the year, over and above our standard required items. We had no Call-In requests this year.

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Other cross-cutting items



Implementing the Sustainable Procurement Strategy

We held an in-depth session with the Procurement Team on the new Sustainable Procurement Strategy 2018-2022. It has 3 themes: Procuring for Green, Procuring for Better Society and Procuring for Fair Delivery. We explored how national standards affect local procurement and how satisfactory are the metrics currently in use. We asked how the ambitions in this Strategy can be balanced against the need to better support local enterprises as the two are often they're inimical. We discussed the new Procurement Impact Assessment procedure. We invited two local organisations - The Advocacy Project and Carers' First to describe their experience with Council procurement and help us provide some challenge to the officers. We debated the many structural barriers for local SMEs such as language and communication. We debated In-sourcing and learned that while services can't be merely dragged and dropped into the existing Council structure from outside, all services have now been asked to actively explore in-sourcing options. Some have come up with a mixed model and we learned about the success of those e.g. in Housing Repairs.

Update on Single Equalities Scheme

We examined the Single Equality Scheme for Hackney 2018 -2022. Key objectives of it are to tackle poverty, to tackle discrimination/ disadvantage linked to the 'protected characteristics' under equalities legislation and we looked at how socioeconomic disadvantage is a key driver but not the only one. We discussed how community cohesion can be improved. We asked about the equalities impacts of the findings of the recent Ofsted inspections and how the over representation of certain minority groups among those affected was being addressed. We asked how businesses were involved in developing the Scheme and about the work being done on reducing hate crime. We sought reassurances about sufficient resources to deliver on the ambitious plans in the Scheme, because without this progress will be impossible.

Communications support for O&S function

We discussed with officers how communications support for the function might be enhanced, in particular digital and social media communications. Scrutiny's voice is independent of the corporate Council position and so this separate identity needs to be delineated.

Children and Young People



Children's Social Care



The Children and Families Service (CFS) reported to us in [October](#) and [February](#). Their reports allow us to maintain oversight of the Council's corporate parenting role and how it supports children and families in need. The mid-year data to September revealed a significant increase in referrals (+10%) and assessments completed (+17%). We also noted a 43% increase in the number of children on a Child Protection Plan over this period, and whilst definitive reasons were unclear, it would appear that there has been some modification in practice as a result of the Ofsted focused visit in early 2019. We will continue to monitor it.

Looked after Children

The number of looked after children in Hackney rose gradually throughout the past year, and there are now consistently over 400 young people in the care of the council. We noticed some key trends in the data: firstly adolescents aged 15-17 make up the majority of children entering care and 60% of looked after children are now aged 13+ years. Secondly an increase in the number of young unaccompanied minors seeking asylum entering care.

We're particularly interested in adolescents entering care as this cohort of young people often have complex needs which require multi-agency support. Reintegrating adolescents back into the family home can also be challenging.

We're keen to investigate this further in 2020/21 by assessing adolescents pathways into care to help identify where prevention or early help can best be provided.

Domestic Abuse Intervention Service (DAIS)

Demand for DAIS was increasing with a 14% increase in referrals for year end 2018/19. In response, CFS were using The Safe and Together model which recognises the support provided by mothers to protect their children whilst holding perpetrators to account for their actions and continued parenting responsibility. The impact of Covid 19 has also seen a further significant rise in referrals to this service, and the Commission will monitor this further in 2020/21 in conjunction with Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission.

Ofsted inspections



Ofsted Focused Visit (February 2019)

In February 2019 Ofsted conducted a focused visit with Children and Families Service (CFS) to review children on a Child Protection Plan and Children in Need. Two priority actions were identified: the need for more timely and effective social work practice/ interventions and more effective managerial oversight and supervision. In [June 2019](#) we welcomed the action taken by CFS in response which included a review of all cases that had been open for more than 9 months and that 'accelerated action' was required in 26 of 175 cases reviewed. We also challenged the action plan, including the need for external independent assessment, and the impact of the inspection and action plan on staff workloads, staff morale, recruitment and overall financial position of CFS.

Ofsted Inspection of LA Children's Services (ILACS)

In a follow up inspection in November 2019, Ofsted downgraded its overall judgement of Hackney Children's Services from 'good' to 'requires improvement'. Ofsted made 6 recommendations for improvement which included greater recognition of the impact on the child living in neglectful environments, more effective information sharing with partners and more effective managerial oversight by leaders and managers at all levels.

We questioned the Cabinet Member and lead officers in [January 2020](#) who reaffirmed their commitment to return the service to 'good' and then to 'outstanding' within 24 months. It was noted that an external partner had been appointed to provide challenge to action plans and the progress made and that new governance arrangements had been established to oversee improvement. We also noted that additional investment would be made available to CFS to support service improvement. We were also consulted on and made recommendations to the [Children's Social Care Action Plan](#) which was published in May 2020. We agreed to continue to monitor service improvements within the Action Plan in our 2020/21 work programme.

Off-rolling in schools



A report from the Children's Commissioner highlighted a growing concern of children being moved 'off-roll' (to another school, to alternative provision or into Elective Home Education (EHE)) to help improve school performance. [In September 2019](#) we invited representatives from the Children's Commissioner, Ofsted, The Difference (an exclusion charity) and HLT to investigate this further.



The nature and scale of 'off-rolling' is difficult to determine given that this practice is illegal and the circumstances of a child leaving school are often complex.

That being said, there were over 60000 unexplained exits from schools in 2018/19 and Ofsted reported concerns with 300 schools nationally. Whilst many unexplained exits may be in the best interest of the child and made with the genuine consent of parents, evidence showed that more vulnerable children (looked after children, children with past exclusion, children in need) and those with lower prior attainment were all disproportionately represented in this cohort. This suggested that more challenging students were more likely to be off-rolled. Locally, HLT visited four schools where the number of children in years 9 and 10 that moved off-roll exceeded 4%. Officers provided challenge to school leaders on the rate of school exit and will continue to monitor this going forward.

In a [letter](#) to Cabinet we made a number of recommendations:

- that HLT continue to monitor school moves between years 9-11 and to provide challenge where rates exceeded local thresholds;
- that additional support be provided to the EHE team to increase oversight of children educated at home;
- that parents should have access to independent advice and support where their child is being moved
- that HLT further develop and support the concept of the 'inclusive school'.

We have also agreed to monitor annually all school moves (exclusion, managed moves, EHE and alternative provision) alongside boroughwide school performance.

Child Friendly Borough



UNICEF first developed the concept of a Child Friendly City in relation to new cities by establishing the rights of children to be involved in decision making and being able to shape the environment in which they live. We sought to assist the Council in its policy ambition to create a Child Friendly Borough with the assistance of young people and other community stakeholders at a dedicated meeting in [January 2020](#).

Engaging and Involving Young People

Representatives from Hackney Youth Parliament, Young Futures Commission and Entity all contributed to this discussion which helped develop a number of key principles in involving young people in decision making. These included:

- Engaging young people in their natural settings
- Ensuring consultations are flexible and responsive to the needs and circumstances of young people
- Where possible, consultations should aim to develop the skills, expertise and understanding of young people
- Ensure that young people are properly compensated for their time and involvement in consultations.

We will review the outcomes of the Young Futures Project in 2020/21, to ensure that effective engagement and involvement structures with young people are embedded across the Council and partners agencies.

Child Friendly Special Planning Document

The Council is also developing a Special Planning Document (SPD) as part of its Child Friendly Borough policy which will provide additional planning guidance to support child friendly development in Hackney. This would be the first Child Friendly SPD in the country. With the involvement of local architects, community construction projects and community development organisations, we reviewed the design principles for the proposed Child Friendly SPD and the planned consultation process. We wrote [a letter](#) detailing a number of recommendations which have informed the development of the SPD, including the need to provide greater clarity on expected outcomes and how the planning policy team will monitor its impact. The formal consultation on this SPD runs in autumn 2020 and we will contribute.



SEND education & training for post-16



We reviewed the education and training pathways for young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) at a dedicated meeting in [March 2020](#) to support the refresh of Hackney's Post 16 SEND Strategy. We aimed to identify:

- what services were working well in supporting young people with SEND and what needed to improve
- How local services could work together better for more effective and coordinated support young people with SEND
- Which priorities should inform the development of the post 16 strategy.

As well as the SEND team, representatives from all stakeholder groups were present including local special schools, colleges, training providers, social care and health. We also conducted a number of focus groups with young people (and their parents) ahead of the March meeting to ensure that their views were represented in the discussion and to inform questioning with local stakeholders.

In response to increased numbers of children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) we identified a clear need for services to develop both the number and range of post-16 training and development opportunities for young people with SEND. From the evidence presented to us we would be suggesting:

- Improved tracking and outcome data for young people to better inform future planning and commissioning
- Increased localised post 16 provision in both mainstream and specialist settings
- That the depth, breadth, accessibility and consistency of supported internships on offer to local young people should be further developed
- Improved support to help young people with SEND and their families prepare and transition to post-16 options

A short report detailing our recommendations will be presented to Cabinet in late 2020.

Outcomes of School Exclusions



Our work last year on assessing the outcomes of young people who have been excluded from school continued into 19/20. We carried out extensive research with all the key local stakeholders including local Alternative Education Providers, the Pupil Referral Unit and of course, young people themselves who had been excluded from school and their parents. We also heard from other local authorities, local community groups and of course HLT.

We produced the following conclusions:

- Schools have a protective influence for children by keeping children in sight and connected to support networks
- Some young people have struggled in mainstream schools because of the narrowing of the curriculum and zero tolerance behaviour policies
- Excluded children can experience trauma through broken school ties and loss of peer support networks which then requires a more therapeutic model of support
- Parents face a ‘perfect storm’ when their child is excluded as they feel judged by statutory services, feel a sense of failure at not being able to support their child and have limited access to independent advice and support
- There will always be a need for a range of high quality alternative provision to meet local needs, which should be commissioned on the basis of young people’s expected outcomes as well as needs
- Alternative provision should be more firmly embedded within the network of statutory services for more coordinated and effective support for excluded children
- To help maintain positive momentum, further transitional support is needed for young people moving on from alternative settings

The report and recommendations are still being developed and refined in consultation with key stakeholders. We anticipate this report will be presented to Cabinet later in the year.

RSE guidance/YBM programme



New Relationship & Sex Education (RSE) guidance

The DfE introduced compulsory Relationships Education for primary pupils and Relationship & Sex Education for secondary pupils from September 2020. As protests had occurred in other LA areas on this issue, we sought to test the preparedness of local schools and council support structures ahead of September 2020.

In [February 2020](#) we spoke to Headteachers from local primary and secondary schools as well as the Health and Wellbeing Team (HWBT), who deliver RSE training to schools. From their briefings it was clear that local schools were already trialling the new RSE curriculum in readiness for September 2020. Schools had also engaged parents to improve awareness of the RSE curriculum and few concerns had been reported. HLT reported RSE had been flagged with head teachers and that additional training and support had been provided.

The HWBT reported a significant increase in demand for pupil training and was at capacity (at 1200 sessions p.a.). We expressed concern that the new guidance would increase pressures on this service and requested an update from Public Health. We were reassured that there would be support for schools in the new RSE curriculum and plans would be put in place to support them should issues escalate.

Young Black Men's Programme

We continued to scrutinise this key Council programme in [February 2020](#). Officers outlined a number of challenges in tackling disproportionality including ongoing difficulties in talking about race, disillusionment and disengagement within the community itself and the continued problematisation of young black men. We provided challenge in relation to the achievability of their targets, outcome monitoring and the provision of mentoring and noted that a new governance structure would be put in place to ensure that there was more accountability to the community.

Contextual Safeguarding

This is a partnership project with the University of Bedford to improve safeguarding practice outside the home environment. As funding was due to cease in March 2020, we requested an update [January 2020](#) to assess what impact this project had on safeguarding practice. It was noted that a systems transformation group was embedding new practice across Children and Families Service and that a number of champions had also been appointed. An independent evaluation has been commissioned which will be reported back to us.

Annual Updates - our overview



As part of our overview function we consider a series of annual updates on the key areas and question the officers concerned:

- Children's Social Care (twice annually)
- School Achievement
- School Admissions
- Childcare Sufficiency
- City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership

School Achievement

The annual update for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), KS2 and KS4 was provided in [May 2020](#). Whilst there was an overall improvement in student achievement at KS4, the Commission was concerned that, counter to national and regional trends, progress was not being maintained at EYFS and KS2.

The Commission noted continued disparity in attainment among children and young people, in particular:

- At EYFS stage, lower attainment of boys and all children attending independent settings
- Lower attainment of boys at EYFS
- Lower attainment of black Caribbean, black African boys at both EYFS, KS2 and KS4

We remain concerned that the attainment gaps between different cohorts of young people are not narrowing, and agreed that this requires additional scrutiny in the 2020/21 work programme.

City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP)

The annual report of CHSCP was reviewed in [January 2020](#). We noted that the strategic safeguarding alliance remains strong despite ongoing austerity and service reconfigurations. Under new guidelines, the Independent Chair has the 'right to roam' which would bring a new level of scrutiny to the safeguarding partnership. Our questions explored the influence of social media in Serious Case Reviews that CHSCP has conducted in relation to cases of self-harm and of serious youth violence. This underlined the importance of the Contextual Safeguarding Project and the support it has provided to safeguarding practitioners. We considered too that in light of Ofsted inspection outcomes the CHSCP would provide a robust challenge to CFS on the pathway to improvement for them.

Cabinet Question Time



Cabinet Member for Education, Young People and Children's Social Care

Schools were the focus of this CQT in [October 2019](#) which incorporated a review of funding, procedures to support a school closure and the development of the Hackney Schools Group.

Although a £7.1 billion funding increase for schools was announced in September 2019, this would result in a small increase (2%) for local schools. As a levelling up model of funding was being used, areas that currently received a higher rate of funding (such as inner city schools) would see a lower increase in per pupil funding compared to other areas. Initial estimates suggested that Hackney schools would benefit by £2.8m in total (£150 per pupil). Accountability arrangements vary for different types of schools and influence the Council's ability to intervene if there were concerns. We were reassured however, that the Council would act to support the positive development and attainment of all children irrespective of the setting where they were being taught.



We learned that Hackney Schools Group had been formally established and an Independent Chair had been appointed. We will invite the Independent Chair to a future meeting.

Cabinet Member for Families Early Years and Play

In [March 2020](#) we focused on three policy areas: Child Poverty, Troubled Families Programme and Children's Centres.

As almost 50% of local children are living in poverty, reducing childhood poverty (and food poverty) are key policy aims. We learned that an additional £500k would be spent on poverty reduction strategies and £70k to 'poverty proof' local policies. We learned too that the Troubled Families Programme had helped over 3500 families to achieve and sustain changes. Funding for this programme was uncertain beyond March 2021, and the Early Help review will consider how this programme can be embedded across the Council.

We received further details of the planned closure of the Millfields Children Centre which is operated by Millfields School. We received reassurance (subject to consultation) if the Children Centre was to close, that universal children centres services such as Stay and Play would continue to operate from the Millfields site.

Following up previous reviews



Unregistered Educational Settings (2017/18)

We continued to monitor the implementation of our recommendations from this review and noted that the absence of effective legal enforcement has meant that progress has remained slow and challenging. In [January 2020](#) we noted that there is still no effective safeguarding oversight of Yeshiva, as the Orthodox Jewish community remain mistrustful of such developments in the belief that this would lead to unacceptable changes in the taught curriculum.

In line with our recommendations we are pleased that further confidence building measures are taking place to help engage the wider Orthodox Jewish community, including work with local independent schools and dedicated special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) provision for this sector. New safeguarding requirements too will mean that all Out of School Settings, including Yeshiva will need to comply with local safeguarding processes and Interlink has been commissioned to work with the local Yeshiva to help develop such compliance. Given the importance of ensuring safeguarding oversight for all local children, we will continue to monitor progress.

Recruitment and Retention of Foster Carers (2017/18)

A net gain of 12 new in-house foster carers was reported in [October 2019](#) which had reduced the need to use independent foster carers. Greater use of social media had resulted in a significant rise in enquiries which it was hoped would lead to further applications. It was noted that having a spare bedroom remained an obstacle to successful recruitment.

We noted that the Mockingbird Model had been successfully trialled and would be rolled out further to increase support for foster carers. However, we wanted to see further progress on the development of a wider package of support for in-house foster carers including housing options and discounted services (e.g. Council Tax). Whilst satisfied with progress, we requested to be updated within the annual Children and Families Service reports which we receive.



Living in Hackney



Housing Associations in Hackney



This review examined the **effectiveness of Housing Associations in best meeting housing need in Hackney**. Over three evidence sessions we [mapped the various types of HA](#) and how they differed and then contrasted that with the [Council's own provision looking at stock, budget and performance](#). We then examined performance on [repairs and maintenance](#) of 7 HAs and ended with an [in-depth debate](#) with senior officers from the Council's Housing Services and Revenues & Benefits joining senior reps from from Clarion, Guinness, ISHA, L&Q, One Housing, Peabody and Sanctuary.

We examined the approach to [new stock](#) and we focused on 4 key standards for Housing Associations: keeping homes safe, decent and in a good state of repair; supporting the Council to best meet local housing need and to fulfil homelessness duties; the scale and nature of development by HAs currently and the approaches they are taking to their existing stock. We also examined how they are fulfilling their social purpose roles in Hackney and what are the mechanisms for partnership working between the Council and Housing Associations and how these can be improved?

We learned that for providers the price of land, building costs and the new requirements to reinvest in compliance and safety (post Grenfell), have brought pressures on their ability to invest in developing more sites. We called on them to ensure they are making full use of the Mayor of Hackney's Housing Challenge Fund which is there to address these issues. In addition, the fast developing sustainability agenda would also bring significant cost implications for the sector. We also called on the providers to adapt their approaches to development, to meet the particular needs of an inner-city borough like Hackney, where the larger sites they generally prefer are not so readily available.



King Edward Road Estate, Hackney

We noted the need for greater sharing of information and data with the Council and the need for all parties to work more closely to achieve a greater common understanding of local housing need.

A fourth evidence session was planned for 30 April with the National Housing Federation and others to focus on the development of formal partnership arrangements, look at Housing Associations community investment, their approaches to support their residents and improving recycling on estates. This had to be postponed due to lockdown.

Serious violence - review



In December we published the [report of our review](#) on the work of the Community Safety partners in Hackney in tackling a spike in serious violence and in particular in violence related to gang activity. A spike in such crimes and a series of murders in 2018 was one driver for our review. We noted however that while only 5% of 'knife crime with injury' offences in London were gang related, when these occurred the crimes were more violent and they were invariably a driver of other serious forms of violence. We visited and worked very closely with the Integrated Gangs Unit (IGU) on this review.

Over 4 meetings and 3 site visits we examined, for example, the criticisms, from Amnesty and others of the MPS's Gangs Violence Matrix. This is an intelligence tool used to identify and risk assess gang members. We sought assurances that people aren't added unnecessarily to it, that data is tightly managed, and that those who are on it are then protected from unwarranted poor outcomes as a result. We welcomed the IGU moving towards using a broader range of outcome measures to analyse their effectiveness.

We examined the use of special Section 60 powers of stop-and-search and examined the 2018 reductions in funding and in police numbers, providing challenge to the police on how these operational changes have impacted on capacity locally. The previous 32-borough MPS structure was replaced with 12 'Basic Command Units' with Hackney in a joint BCU with Tower Hamlets..

Serious violence review contd.



The Recommendations from our review encompassed:

- developing better outcome measures for the Integrated Gangs Unit
- improved information management of their 'non-live' cases
- the need for greater transparency by IGU on its approach
- the need for greater representation of Children and Families Service in the IGU
- improving mental health services' referral pathways for young people into the IGU;
- greater involvement of ELFT in IGU
- asking HiH to look at post 18 mental health services for young people;
- applying the pilot study on mental health services in community settings
- how IGU cohort can be supported by Hackney Works Service
- asking SEG to explore employment and skills support for ex-offenders
- changing the name of IGU to help reduce stigmatisation
- an action plan to improve mapping
- closer working with the 'Inspirational Leaders of the YBM' programme particularly on business start ups
- need to lobby nationally to reverse the reductions to police numbers
- instigate more regular updates from Police on body-worn cameras engagement of community in training and on need to improve communications around use of S.60 powers
- Community Safety Partnership to provide annual updates on their Trust and Competence action plan.

The Executive has supported all the recommendations made.

Resident engagement and participation



We devoted 3 sessions to this issue. In [July](#) we considered a report from **Housing Services on how they support engagement and participation for tenants and leaseholders** including via Tenant and Resident Associations and Tenant Management Organisations and on the take up of the national Community Development Fund. We examined how the team was communicating this work to residents.

In [August](#) we sent 11 recommendations on the issue to the Cabinet Member for Housing Services.

Our recommendations encompassed:

- Areas of focus for the new Residents Participation Team
- Prioritising for action those estates with relatively fewer numbers of TRAs.
- Responding to the relative size and distribution of TRAs
- Resident Led Improvement Budgets (RLIB) and how to make the resident 'walkabouts' more effective
- Ensuring improvements delivered by the RLIB process are communicated on myhackney.org in order to drive up the engagement of tenants and leaseholders
- Measures to drive the take-up of the Community Development Fund grant locally by clearly communicating the number of applications received, number and value of awards and outcomes
- A communications plan on CDF funding including via myhackney.org
- Confirmation of CDF budget
- Adopting best practice on digital engagement by learning from London Assembly Housing Committee report on this.
- On how Resident Participation Team can contribute to wider Council policies and strategies

Subsequently they commissioned the Tenant Participation and Advisory Service, an external body, to assess how HS was performing against 6 national engagement standards. We reviewed these findings in [December](#) and were updated on the planned restructure and on the development of a new Resident Engagement Strategy. A more formal response to our recommendations is promised once the internal review has been completed.

Floods/ Hackney Carnival



Community meeting on Thames Water's response to floods in N4 caused by burst water mains

In Oct 2019 burst water mains caused extensive flooding in the N4 area of the borough. In early January we asked Thames Water to come and account for their ongoing poor performance of the water network in Hackney. We devoted a full meeting to the issue and took it into the community there holding it at Parkwood Primary School. This item followed earlier items by us in 2018 following similar serious flooding in Leabridge ward.

We debated with Thames Water reps the causes of the flooding, the emergency communications plans, the temporary re-housing plans, the insurance issues, whether sufficient support was given by housing providers and complaints about the quality of the refurbishment on damaged properties. We also heard from the regulator, Ofwat, on the serious concerns they had had with Thames Water's overall performance and about the fines paid for breaches of obligations. We challenged them on how improvements previously agreed had not been acted upon including reviewing the discretionary payments policy. We continue to monitor progress.

Hackney Carnival

We devoted a separate special meeting in January to the challenges and opportunities presented by the success of Hackney Carnival. We heard directly from children of Morningside Children's Centre and School on their role. We then examined the logistics of the event, the benefits to the borough and its impact assessment and debated the issues with the Cabinet Member, the Chief Exec, the Culture Team, a rep from Arts Council England (ACE) and a wide range of the groups taking part: Uprising, St Joseph's Hospice, Taru Arts, Tropical Isles and Jun Mo Generations.



While we noted it incurs high costs for the Council it generates huge social benefits in return e.g. civic pride, community cohesion and engagement of diverse groups. We asked whether more could be done with ACE to provide an analysis of the social impact of the carnival in monetary terms to help inform future plans. We noted that the priority for all was to maintain the Carnival as a local event, to continue to support more vulnerable residents to be involved and to seek involvement from a wider range of community groups. We welcomed how the multi-cultural nature of the event represented the best of Hackney and we asked organisers to be more pro-active in approaching schools, youth groups, community groups and tenants associations who hadn't been involved in the past, in order to broaden participation and embed the Carnival more as an event for everyone in Hackney.

Housing issues/ 'Prevent' update



Role of Community Halls in promoting resident engagement

In an offshoot from our resident engagement investigations we wrote to the Cabinet Member asking for an update on improving the accessibility of our community halls. We subsequently considered a briefing from Housing Transformation and ICT on their own Review of Community Halls. We noted that there was a common perception that community spaces were generally underused and difficult to access. As community champions Members were aware of the barriers impacting usage.



We looked at the assets involved (87 in total); the costs, the levels of usage, the condition of the spaces and their geography in relation to one another. We examined the management arrangements in place, which we learned can differ according to the party managing them. We discussed the many current barriers to driving up usage e.g key holders often being elderly/vulnerable etc and discussed ICTs involvement here including establishing an effective online bookings system for them. We will revisit the issue after the internal review has been implemented.

Management of asbestos in Council homes

We were briefed by Housing Services on the history, processes and procedures in place for the management of asbestos. We sought reassurance about the quality assurance in place on subcontractors here. On ex Council properties, we learned that solicitors acting on behalf of people buying ex Council homes would request both asbestos and fire safety certificates from the Resident Safety Team. Following our discussions we called for greater direct delivery of quality assurance of asbestos works, for greater publicity around asbestos, and for Housing Services to make information on asbestos surveys more readily available.

Update on the Prevent programme locally

Prevent is the Home Office programme on preventing vulnerable people getting involved in terrorism and/or becoming radicalised. Hackney's designation means it's assigned 3 officers for the programme who use a multi agency approach to work with the community and key local partners. We discussed ways of ensuring that the work is proportionate so that local Muslim communities do not feel unfairly and unduly targeted.

Skills, Economy and Growth



Developing the local economy



Review on 'Making the local economy work for Hackney'

All levels of government are under pressure to find economic solutions that spread prosperity, opportunity and reward more fairly. Our review aimed to better understand how we can make the local economy work for Hackney and its residents so that it benefits everyone

Our core questions focused on jobs, education/training and community cohesion. Insight was gathered from the Hackney Quest – Through Young Eyes report, but we thought it imperative to also gather evidence first hand from the community and so we held an evidence session with Hackney's Night Czar, and a variety of restaurants and late night retail businesses including the Arcola Theatre, Hackney Empire, Rio.

Our 20 recommendations primarily dealt with: the need for continual analysis of the borough's needs & how information is gathered; delivering work opportunities specific to the borough; supporting local businesses to facilitate opportunities for residents in a fair way and on how communications and engagement can be harnessed to be ahead of the changing work environment e.g. an expected uptake in education, training and skills.

Our review ran parallel to the Council consulting on and then adopting in November a new Inclusive Economy Strategy for Hackney. This fed into our work.



SEG Commission stakeholder meeting

Since our review, the UK has experienced the Covid-19 pandemic with both the UK and local economy severely impacted. We recognise the local economy changed considerably during the pandemic and of course in the aftermath it will have altered considerably. As a result, we propose to now look at the impact of Covid-19 on our local economy and explore the practical support businesses will need for rebuilding and recovery.

The executive response is expected later this year.

Developing the Inclusive Economy Strategy



Development of the Council's Inclusive Economy Strategy: Consultation on Inclusive Economy Strategy

The development of the Council's Inclusive Economy Strategy was in tandem to the Commission's review *Making the Local Economy work for Hackney*. As part of understanding the development of this key Strategy we heard from reps of the Cabinet Office Business Partnerships Team on the inclusive economy partnerships being developed both locally and nationally. Our review fed into the development of the Strategy and we asked them to address how they plan to integrate adult learning with employment and skills; how to better connect residents into local labour markets and how residents are being prepared for the future. In June we debated these issues with the two Cabinet Members as well as the senior policy leads in the Council. The engagement sessions for our review e.g. business conference and with stakeholders who are key to building an inclusive economy fed into the evidence base. A key contribution from the Commission was bringing in the voice of the community and the Commission's contribution was greatly welcomed.

The core themes in the strategy mirrored our work over the past year. Those leading on the Strategy encouraged us to submit a formal response to the consultation, to share the findings and recommendations from our review and to hold a workshop session with officers during the consultation period.



The Hackney Works Opportunity Hub in Hoxton

Towards a greener, fairer economy



A Just Transition to a greener, fairer economy

We began in February on this topic with a scoping meeting to help us narrow down and identify key areas of focus for a possible review. The three main factors driving the necessity for a so called just transition are:

- the need for employment justice;
- socio economic demands changing as the greener economies come to the fore
- the knock-on changes in industries which are affected by the shift to greener and fairer economies.

We debated with the Cabinet Member for Energy, Waste, Transport and Public Realm as well as senior representatives from both the Trades Union Congress and LSE who have been working on this problem for 4 years already.

We were guided by how the TUC has framed this debate and we decided therefore to narrow down on the lack of a proper strategic response to SMEs on this and how a 'just transition' can dovetail with the rapid pace of digital change in our economy.

We heard how large employers and anchor institutions in the borough could be encouraged to sign up to a 'just transition' agreement for their workforces via trade unions where these exist. Our experts were calling for government investment to deliver the change through progressive taxation. They also suggest establishing a cross party commission with unions, affected workers, industries and consumers to discuss priorities, concerns and fears so they can be addressed collectively. They also highlighted support for public services and this could be in relation to tackling extreme weather events or delivering greener public transport. They also focused on equalities considerations because, for example, women are less likely to own cars and use public transport. The TUC also stresses that the newly created jobs must be of good quality.

Further discussions about how to implement Just Transition was planned for 20/21 however it was delayed due to the pandemic. The discussions around greener, fairer economy will form part of the 'Building Back Better' items which we plan around strengthening the local economy post-COVID. The information will be crucial to ensuring policy discussions reflect the diverse needs of the community and reflect as many seldom heard voices as possible.

Future of the Night Time Economy



Hackney Council's Vision for the Night Time Economy

In June we debated the cumulative impact of various policies on nightlife in the borough. This led to us holding in October a 'Night Time Economy Summit' in the community at Yum Yum restaurant in Stoke Newington. The aim was to engage directly with residents and business owners. We discussed what an inclusive night time economy might look like; whether the current night time economy was sustainable and what the impact was on the environment and how we might secure sustainable jobs from this sector locally. We heard concerns about exclusion of older and vulnerable groups of residents and those with disabilities from the current night time economy. We heard about the impact on crime levels. We heard calls for an increased presence of arts and culture in the mix, for better utilisation of green spaces and community facilities and also for an increased police presence. Another theme was the need to make businesses and social enterprises more affordable and therefore more accessible to a greater range of residents. There are, inevitably, conflicting interests between businesses and local residents here, so the partnership working between the Council-residents-business owners must be robust if positive change is to be achieved.

The availability of jobs in the night time economy formed a core part of discussions. There was a call for the Council to develop and maintain strong relationships with local venues in order to cultivate the support and training of staff working at night and in so doing to ensure considerate behaviour from venues.

Participants also voiced concern that jobs may not be visible to residents and voiced a need for the Council to work actively towards ensuring that these jobs are well signposted to negate the risk of jobs going primarily to those who live outside the borough.



Our Night Time Economy Summit

We all agreed that the various positive changes being suggested had a common thread running through them about 'inclusivity'. We urged that at all times any steps taken here must incorporate the need to improve workforce diversity and boost social inclusion at the same time. This will be a key part of our ongoing discussions in 20/21 about how to "build back better" and move towards a greener, fairer, and more inclusive economy. The night time economy is a key part of this.

Cabinet Question Time Sessions



Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and HR

During this session we questioned the Cabinet Member on the apprenticeship programme and post-18 skills and adult learning including how the scheme is benefiting small and medium sized enterprises and what the uptake is. We learned that a range of businesses have signed up to the local Business Network covering educational, performing arts and adult social care sectors. They themselves will look at the quality of employment, the number of business that join the network and the outcomes. There will also be a useful dashboard produced from their own internal monitoring.

We learned about the Apprenticeship Network and how the Council wants to drive up the quality of apprenticeships by working with local businesses across the borough to share best practice. We argued for criteria on the percentage of local Hackney apprentices as opposed to just London wide so that local monitoring can be put in place and local impact assessed.

Cabinet Member for Planning, Culture and Inclusive Economy

During this discussion the Cabinet Member invited the Commission Members to input to the officer discussions on shaping the future structure of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocations, how it might be better monitored and how income might be best used for the community's benefit. We wanted to ensure for example that the allocation of CiL and Neighbourhood CiL have criteria that are transparent, that the application process is communicated clearly to all residents and that there is Member as well as officer involvement in the process. We wrote to the Cabinet Member to ask him to confirm the role Scrutiny Commission members will play during the development period to ensure our efforts are noted and that we're included in the methodology.

We discussed how community assets and key local cultural events such as the Hackney Carnival might be better used to strengthen relationship between the council and local businesses. We discussed the important work of the Regeneration Team in ensuring the correct mix of businesses to best serve actual local needs. We also had discussion about the new commercial owners for Hackney Walk in Morning Lane. Following the meeting the Cabinet Member undertook to write to us about how our role in the process might be enhanced by providing Member oversight to the key policies and strategies within his remit.

Recruitment/Hackney Young Futures



Cost of Living and Public Sector recruitment

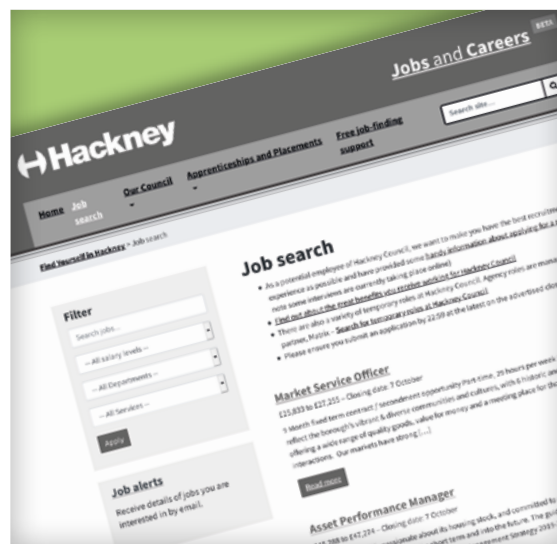
We debated with the Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and HR workforce issues within the council including whether the workforce is reflective of the borough's diversity and if local quality housing is affordable to staff. We also debated Recruitment and Retention within the Council and the cost of living and the economic drivers impacting on recruitment. We examined possible solutions including improving benefits packages and having a market supplement scheme to ensure the council can compete with the wider market in terms of remuneration.

We explored how the Council was going about filling gaps in the workforce and how it was tackling particular challenges in recruitment. It was noted that the council's workforce is older than the profile of the wider borough and that there is a lack of diversity in senior management positions. We heard how they are committed to championing the practical actions that need to be taken to address these disparities and the broader diversity of our workforce. We encouraged the Council to explore setting up its own definition for a key worker to ensure that the discussions didn't exclude key staff.

Hackney Young Futures' young people feedback

We made a particular effort this year to hear more seldom heard voices including young people, thus continuing in our ongoing commitment to engaging better with younger residents and reflecting their views in our work. We did this by working with the Hackney Young Futures' Commission. This is made up of a range of young people from different backgrounds who all have different experiences of living and growing up in Hackney.

They had carried out an extensive 6 month consultation with local young people aged 10-25 yrs and had collected 2400 responses. We discussed the findings of their research with their Chair at our October community engagement meeting, held as part of the 'night time economy' discussions (outlined above).



Health in Hackney



Homerton Hospital items



Homerton Hospital's outsourced contract with ISS and wage dispute

Councillors, residents and unions raised concerns with us about a pay dispute at HUHFT relating to staff employed by ISS the subcontractor which provides **catering, portering, cleaning and security services**. A large number of ISS staff who had not been TUPE'd from the previous contractor, or who had joined subsequently, were not being paid London Living Wage and were not receiving occupational sick pay for their first three days of illness. We debated with the stakeholders and explored with the Chief Executive the potential for insourcing in the medium term. She undertook to report back in 3 months on progress made with ISS. Later in the year this issue came to a head when we held the Trust to account at an [urgent meeting](#) on its rather hasty decision, in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, to renew the ISS's contract for 5 more years. We won the argument about the need to ensure all ISS staff receive the same sick pay terms and conditions as their colleagues (something vital during a pandemic) and we've begun a debate with HUHFT on in-sourcing such key functions.

New Pathology Partnership between Homerton, Barts Health and Lewisham and Greenwich Trusts

An ongoing issue for some years, local health activists, some GPs and the unions at HUHFT claimed to us that this change represented a gradual downgrading of the Homerton's Path Lab which is highly regarded by local GPs. The Chief Exec explained to us that, following a nationally mandated plan to create 'pathology networks', HUHFT had secured a partnership with Barts Health and Lewisham Trusts. The three Trusts would jointly share the benefits and risks and each partner would have equal votes and a veto on decisions. Upgrading the Homerton's own Pathology facility, which some argued for instead, would require significant investments in IT so this plan, in her view, would give added resilience to all three organisations. Critics remained unconvinced that the quality of the highly regarded local service could be maintained in the merged service. The full implementation of the plan is currently on hold due to Covid-19 but we are sure to revisit it.

Homerton Hospital contd.



Overseas' Visitor Charging Regulations at HUHFT

Last year, councillors, local GPs and the Hackney Migrant Centre (HMC) asked us to investigate concerns about how the Homerton Hospital was implementing the government's regulations on charging overseas visitors for treatment. Only UK residents are entitled to free NHS services and everyone else was receiving letters requesting evidence of proof of entitlement, warning them of impending charges and they were then receiving invoices for non-urgent care. This ran the danger of driving underground, many undocumented migrants with a serious health need. It particularly hits those with 'No Recourse to Public Funds' who are generally destitute and so could never pay in any case. Having any debt with the NHS also prevents this cohort from ever securing residency and so it's a major deterrent from seeking necessary medical treatment. This can also pose a public health risk.

With evidence from HMC we lobbied the Secretary of State and received a detailed response from Minister of State, Baroness Blackwood. We invited the HUHFT Chief Nurse and the Chair of HMC to discuss the response and we received undertakings from HUHFT that they would change their processes and communications and would work more closely with HMC from now on in managing the impacts. We asked for further data on costs vs income generated and on how the deterrent effect was being measured.



Our response to HUHFT's draft Quality Account 2018/19

Every NHS Trust has to submit to NHSE an annual Quality Account and has to seek input from the local health scrutiny committee to it. We responded by letter and then invited the Chief Executive and Chief Nurse to attend a meeting to discuss the issues we raised in our letter. We discussed among other things the reasons behind the overspend on elective surgery, the low number of staff appraisals and the poor take-up of training.

Mental health items



Relocating older adult mental health wards (dementia and challenging behaviour) from Mile End Hospital to East Ham Care Centre

East London Foundation Trust (ELFT) consulted us on proposals to consolidate all older adult in-patients beds for patients with behavioural and complex psychiatric symptoms of dementia, across East London, into one ward at East Ham Care Centre. This particular plan envisaged that patients currently in Thames Ward at Mile End hospital be consolidated within



East Ham Care Centre

Sally Sherman Ward in East Ham. The Commission had considered similar proposals in the past relating to moves out of Orchard Lodge in Homerton and into Mile End. Initially unhappy with the proposal in [Nov](#) we decided not to endorse but following site visits and considering a revised report in [Jan](#) we endorsed it subject to undertakings about provision of transport for families and the involvement of Healthwatch to monitor progress. Since then, Covid issues have resulted in a need to move further beds to East Ham Care Centre and this was agreed in an urgent meeting in [July](#). We've asked ELFT to provide a commitment to a fuller and more widespread stakeholder and public consultation if this becomes a permanent move.

Proposals from ELFT on transformation of Community Mental Health

ELFT had been awarded funding from NHSE to undertake a radical redesign of community mental health services arising from a new and mandatory national framework. For 20% of the patients whom ELFT support the delivery happens in Primary Care with 80% in secondary care and the aim was to shift this around. This would represent a huge change of focus to localise and target mental health support into Primary Care.

We challenged them on what medical evidence there was that this would be an improvement for patients and on the impacts on minority ethnic groups where the outcomes remain poorer. We also debated the ongoing problems with both CAMHS and the transition of young people with mental health issues into Adult Services. We challenged ELFT on the need for closer liaison with the Gangs Unit and also the Met Police on certain aspects of this mental health plan. Monitoring of this will form part of our challenge when receiving updates on the Neighbourhoods Programme.

Integrated Care System for NEL



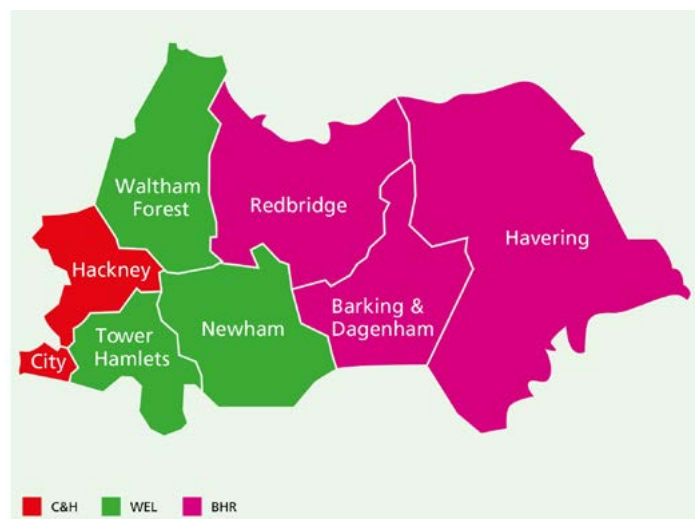
The East London Health and Care Partnership is our **Integrated Care System**. It comprises 8 boroughs, 7 CCGs clustered into 3 sub-systems and 3 large acute trusts (Barts, Homerton, BHR). The 3 subsystems are: City and Hackney, WEL (Waltham Forest, Newham and Tower Hamlets) and BHR (Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge).

City & Hackney's response to the NHS Long Term Plan

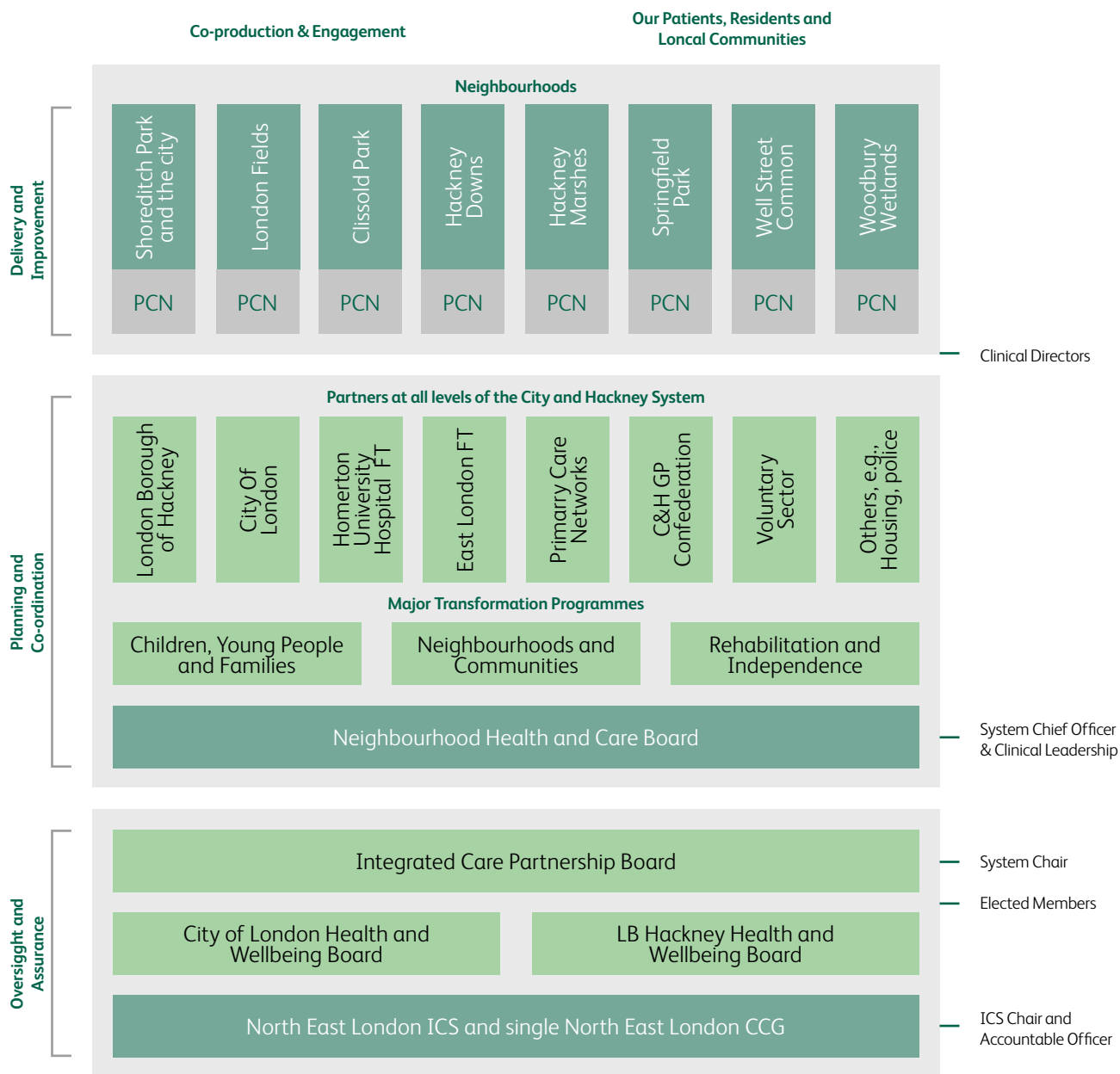
The NHS Long Term Plan (LTP) published in Jan 2019 set out a 10 year vision for the transformation of health and care in England, and a strategy for 'a new service model for the 21st century'. Each ICS area was required to submit a signed-off response by September detailing how they planned to implement it. C&H's plan was complementary to the ICS response. It both fed into it and responded to it. In a number of discussions on the LTP and the plans for the ICS we held local health leaders to account on concerns about centralisation and consolidation of services, on direction of funding flows and on a perceived lack of democratic accountability at local level in these new sub-regional structures.

Integrated Care System for North East London - and the future of the north east London CCGs

In [Sept](#) we debated with the CCG and Keep Our NHS Public the plan to merge the NEL CCGs. The NHS made a strong case that having Providers at the table would now make the system more integrated and accountable. We argued that making savings on administration alone would not trump the loss of local accountability which these changes would incur. We questioned the lack of local public discussion or of any formal public consultation. We argued that under the merger the distinct legal duty to City & Hackney residents would end, potentially weakening local accountability and shifting decision making further away. In [Feb](#) we debated further with the Council and CCG Finance Directors and GP Confederation and asked the CCG to return with assurances about the constitution and governance of the new ICS. Covid-19 has delayed matters but we've asked the CCG to return with a briefing prior to the local CCG Members voting formally on the merger in October 2020. The new ICS will go live 1 April 2021. This will be a key agenda item for both HiH and INEL this autumn/winter.



City and Hackney Integrated Care Partnership: Model



Older People Care



Development of Hackney's Ageing Well Strategy

This arises from a Mayoral manifesto commitment. The purpose of the Strategy is to ensure that Council policies are age-friendly, that community partnerships recognise the distinct interests of older people, that barriers relating to access and attitudes are removed and that some creative and innovative proposals for older people are developed with stakeholders and with the older people themselves. We questioned officers on Dementia Friendly aspects, on issues with Dial-a-Ride, on engagement with seldom heard groups on how co-production of this Strategy was being conducted. We invited officers back with a "You Said –We Did" update.

Briefing on new assistive technologies in social care

We explored with Adult Commissioning what was being done to increase the use of assistive technology in adult social care services. We learnt that the key point of the activity was to ensure that the Council, in its purchasing of systems, was not held to a standard led by the technology industry but rather instead focused on local patient need. We also sought reassurances that the technologies would not be used in an oppressive way e.g. tracking people unnecessarily or impinging on their privacy or dignity.



Review of the Legacy Plan for Connect Hackney

Connect Hackney's role is to improve the wellbeing of residents aged 50 and over by reducing or preventing loneliness and isolation. The £5.8m six-year programme, one of 14 such programmes nationally, is funded by The National Lottery. While Connect Hackney has been leading the way with this work since 2015 these issues require a long term, sustainable approach. In December we discussed with the programme director their Legacy Plan and the vital need for commitments from all the local public bodies to these activities beyond March 2021, when funding ends. We reviewed the achievements, learning and legacy objectives of the Connect Hackney project. A notable issue to emerge was how VCS orgs struggle to find innovative ways to support people who need help to leave their homes to attend activities because funders are reluctant to fund the transport element. This has proven self defeating as uptake is then low.

Having a sustainable service after the Project is a key concern for us so we asked for more detailed data on closing outcomes (not yet available in Dec) and we intend to monitor how this develops.

Community Services/ Intermediate Care Beds



Re-design of the Community Services contract

We heard from Integrated Commissioning Board reps on plans for a new Neighbourhoods and Care Service which will, in part, replace the current 'Community Health Services' contract with the Homerton which was to end in March. It's led by a provider alliance and the aim is to help avoid patients having to attend at a number of locations and to break down the health-social care division in delivery of services to patients. We questioned them on how this will work and in particular on the procurement, as no other providers had bid, and also how it would dovetail with the IAPT service and with similar contracts held by VCS organisations in the borough.

Update on Intermediate Care Beds

An ongoing issue for us since closure of Median Rd Care Centre as an intermediate care setting. This update explained how demand had been reduced because of the success of the work of the Integrated Independence Team. Now only 2 to 4 "step-up" beds are required and these are spot-purchased at a centre in St Pancras and so a separate new residential unit was deemed as not justified. We challenged officers on the possible erosion of patient choice here. We also noted that the underspend was invested in a new 'Discharge to Assess' approach which they claim is proving successful and on much closer work with Community Care services.

Sexual health services/ 'Housing with Care'



Sexual and Reproductive Health Services provided in GP Practices

We were asked by the Local Medical Committee (local BMA branch or GPs 'union') to support them in concerns they had about having to implement changes to sexual and reproductive health services which are provided in GP Practices. This arises from a new contract for these services which is commissioned from Public Health and delivered by the GP Confederation. A complex renewal process of this 5 year contract had been unsatisfactory for some GPs and LMC argued that the contract was "over complicated, under funded and undeliverable". We listened to Public Health and the GP Confederation's response and worked through the issues with the partners, encouraging them to renew their efforts to resolve the situation. The issue highlighted again the complexities of closer integration of services.

Housing with Care Service Improvement Plan

Adult Social Care and Healthwatch Hackney returned to us with an update on the improvement plan on the Housing with Care Service which is provided in-house by the Council. The service had failed a CQC inspection in Jan 2019 and we considered both the CQC's re-inspection report and Healthwatch Hackney's own report from Sept. They had been called in by the Council to support the improvement programme.

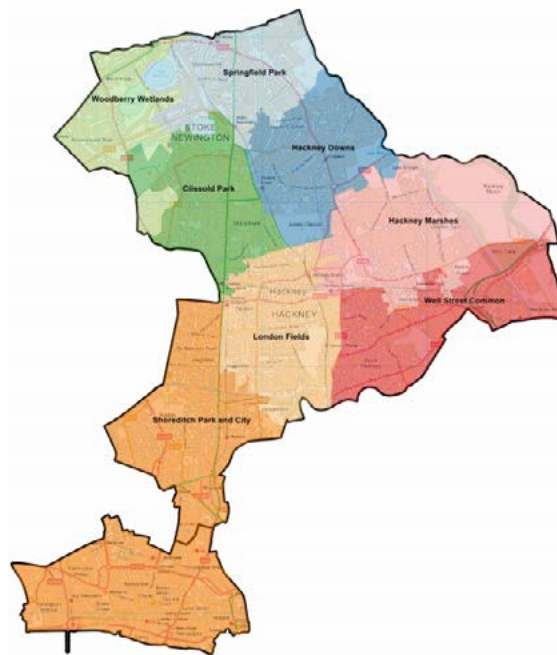
The service supports 222 people in 14 schemes located across the borough which provide care to people in 'supported living' enabling them to live in their own homes as independently as possible. We analysed progress on the Action Plan and challenged them on the sustainability of this improvement programme once the immediate urgency of turning around the poor rating had passed.

Primary Care Networks/ Aligning eligibility criteria in NEL



Developing our 8 Primary Care Networks

We continued to challenge the GP Confederation and the CCG on the roll out of the 8 new Primary Care Networks, called the [Neighbourhoods Development Programme](#) and questioned them on how such ambitious plans for integration of so many services would work. We also dealt with concerns brought to us about the national [service specifications](#) for these, which the government then, mostly, dropped.



[Aligning some commissioning policies across NEL](#)

The NHS in north east London was consulting on changes to eligibility for some procedures which will no longer be routinely offered free by the NHS. It was trying to achieve clinical consensus on the policies for these 12 specific medical procedures. The problem was that the policies overlapped at each level of the NHS and some were now out of sync with best clinical practice. Where NICE guidance didn't exist for a procedure they were trying to better align policies in place across the NEL patch. This produced winners and losers. Some critics accused them of using this opportunity to ration services and so we heard from commissioners (at CCG and NEL levels) on their rationale for making the changes. Some local GPs challenged them on how they could ensure patients (many older and vulnerable) would not be worse off as a result and we also challenged the claims by the NHS that cost savings weren't the driving factor here.

Review follow-up/ Annual updates



In 2018/19 we did a full review on [Digital First Primary Care and the implications for GP Practices](#) It overlapped to July '19 but was covered in last year's report. However because of Covid-19 all primary care suddenly has to be digital first only and so the landscape has changed considerably. In our conclusions we asked for a single NEL approach to mobilising the roll out of digital primary care, which hadn't been there at the time. We also asked for more leadership to be shown in order to ensure more clinical and managerial buy-in to these new ways of working. We argued that there is a significant job to be done in selling the many benefits of digital approaches and to challenge suspicions that these developments are about saving money or cutting jobs. We argued that genuine concerns about surveillance and data capture by the commercial companies involved, or about the overall risk of destabilisation of the system by 'disruptors' from the private sector (e.g. GP at Hand) needs to be responded to. We argued that concerns about safety, once carefully planned local care pathways are severed, and about misleading advertising of services must also be faced head-on if 'digital first primary care' is to be a success. The new Cabinet Member will report to us in Nov with an update one year on.

We also invited our key stakeholders to present the following regular reports and discuss the progress made:

- [Unplanned Care Workstream of ICB](#)
- [Prevention Workstream of ICB](#)
- [Children & Young People & Maternity Workstream of ICB \(joint session with CYP Scrutiny Commission\)](#)
- [Healthwatch Hackney Annual Report](#)
- [City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report](#)
- [Hackney Local Account of Adult Care Services](#)

Planned Care Workstream update was postponed in March due to Covid and will be presented in Sept.

Inner North East London



Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee



What INEL JHOSC does



INEL comprises 3 councillors each from Newham, Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Waltham Forest and 1 from City of London. Its role is to **scrutinise cross borough proposals by the NHS** in their North East London ‘STP’ now known as the East London Health and Care Partnership. Another JHOSC for Outer North East London covers Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge.’

This year the Committee covered the following issues:

Waltham Forest became a full member during this year and Redbridge took Observer status on the committee.

Moorfields Eye Hospital re-location to Kings Cross

Moorfields Eye Hospital consulted INEL on its plan to move the hospital from its current location on City Road to a new building just north of King’s Cross-St. Pancras. The rationale for the move is that the current Victorian era building is no longer fit for purpose. Members went on a site visit of the current site and heard about the development plans and how care pathways have changed so considerably.

New Cancer Diagnostic Hub at Mile End Hospital

INEL considered the plans for a new Early Diagnosis Centre for liver and gastro-intestinal cancers for north east London. Opening in May at Mile End Hospital it’s a major joint project between Barts Health, BHRUT and HUHFT and aims to turn around the historic poor patient outcomes for these conditions locally.



Other items at INEL



New joint Pathology Service across NEL

INEL challenged senior NHS reps on the full business case by Barts Health, Lewisham & Greenwich and the Homerton Trusts to develop a **joint pathology network** between them. Barts will host and Royal London will be the new 'hub' lab. This controversial plan has been discussed at Health in Hackney on a number of occasions as locally some fear a downgrading of the current provision at HUHFT.

An Integrated Care System and single CCG for NEL

INEL continues to hold local NHS to account on the rapidly evolving plans to merge the 7 NEL CCGs into one and to further develop a local **Integrated Care System** as mandated in the NHS Long Term Plan. NHS maintain the opportunities for proper integration of care, streamlining and efficiencies far out weight any challenges but the Committee continues to raise concerns about transparency, accountability and in the perception that control of local funding shifts upwards.

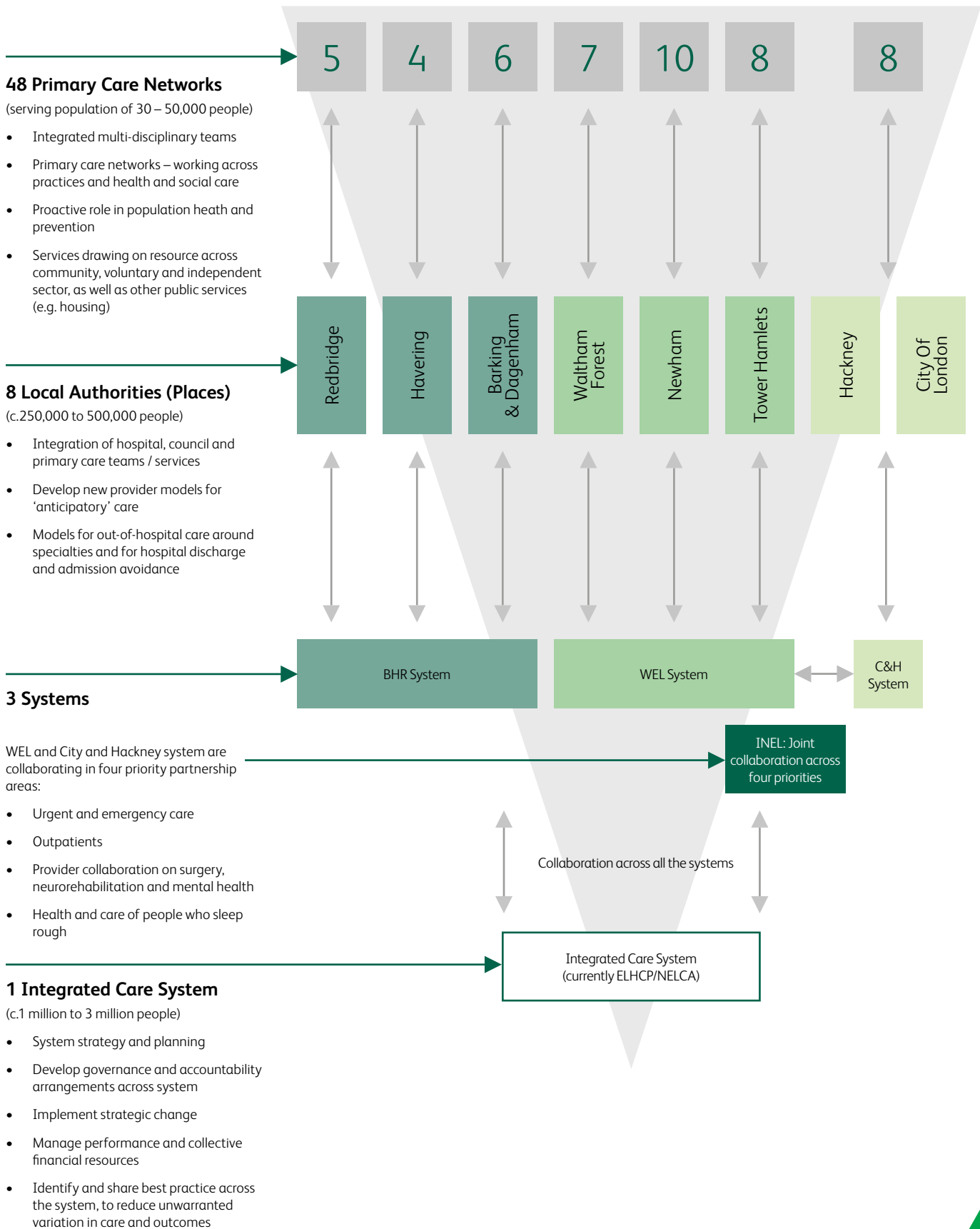
NEL response to The NHS Long Term Plan consultation

In [Sept](#) and [Feb](#) Members questioned the East London Health and Care Partnership leadership on its draft response, on behalf of the sub-region, to the government's new NHS Long Term Plan and the local Strategic Delivery Plan which will significantly re-shape local services over the next decade.

NEL ICS - wider context



City and Hackney as part of the integrated, collaborative health and care system in North East London



The Review process



How we identify topics



The Commissions' work is divided between **single meeting** items, **mini reviews** (over 2 or 3 meetings) and a **Full Review** with items over perhaps a 6 month period as well as site visits. The pressure on agendas and the need to be both responsive and topical means that, of late, in-depth reviews have taken second place to the need to look at a number of short topics over the year. Each Commission tries to achieve a balance of giving sufficient space to an issue to be effective and productive while trying to cover as many areas as is possible over the course of the 8 scheduled meetings.

Commissions in their overview role have to consider a number of **fixed annual items** such as: CYP (Schools Achievement, Children's Social Care, Safeguarding Children's Board annual reports); or Health in Hackney (Safeguarding Adults Board, Local Account of Adult Services and Healthwatch annual reports as well as Quality Accounts of local NHS providers and national consultations e.g. the NHS Long Term Plan); or Living in Hackney (the annual Community Safety Plan).

At the start of the municipal year each Commission **writes to all its own key stakeholders**, the relevant Cabinet Members, relevant Directors and requests suggestions for topics. They are also influenced by issues in the **media**, issues coming up through **Member surgeries, performance reports** on local services e.g. poor CQC or Ofsted ratings, concerns of local third sector, community groups, TRAs, local health or schools campaigners etc They are also influenced by the need to ensure the **manifesto commitments** of the Mayor are being delivered and the priorities of backbench councillors as well as the need for the borough to respond to or be ready for a major **change in the law or new government guidance** which might have significant local impact. All of these are weighed and the Commission tries to come up with a balanced programme of work leaving space to be able to respond to **urgent issues** (a health crisis, floods etc) which will demand their focus and attention.

Each Commission runs a **Cabinet Member Question Time** session with their relevant Cabinet Members where they are held to account. The Mayor's CQT sessions are held by Scrutiny Panel. Scrutiny Panel as well as ensuring no overlap of the work of Commissions also looks at cross cutting issues in single items and requires the Cabinet Member and Group Director for Finance and Corporate Resources to present regular updates on the budget and the Overall Financial Position of the Council.

Lifecycle of a Review



Suggesting the topic

Suggestions come from a variety of sources such as: Members own areas of interest, residents' surveys, performance data, and 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.

Memberships 2019/20



Scrutiny Panel¹

Cllr Margaret Gordon (Chair), Cllr Ben Hayhurst, Cllr Mete Coban, Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr Sophie Conway, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Yvonne Maxwell, Cllr Polly Billington

Children and Young People

Members: Cllr Sophie Conway (Chair), Cllr Margaret Gordon (Vice-Chair), Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Ajay Chauhan, Cllr Humaira Garasia, Cllr Katie Hanson, Cllr Clare Joseph, Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr James Peters and Cllr Clare Potter

Co-optees: Graham Hunter, Justine McDonald, Luisa Dornela, Shabnum Hassan, Jo Macleod, Ernell Watson, Shuja Shaikh, Michael Lobenstein, Aleigha Reeves, Clive Kandza and Raivene Walters

Health in Hackney

Cllr Ben Hayhurst (Chair), Cllr Yvonne Maxwell (Vice Chair until March) Cllr Peter Snell, Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli, Cllr Emma Plouviez, Cllr Patrick Spence and Cllr Kofo David² plus 2 vacancies³

Living in Hackney

Cllr Sharon Patrick (Chair), Cllr Sade Etti (Vice-Chair), Cllr Anthony McMahon, Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Penny Wrouth and Cllr Anna Lynch

Skills Economy and Growth

Cllr Mete Coban (Chair), Cllr Polly Billington (Vice-Chair), Cllr Richard Lufkin, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Steve Race and Cllr Gilbert Smyth

¹ Vice Chair position reserved for opposition party. Held vacant. The Panel comprises the 8 chairs and vice chairs from the 4 Commissions.

² Replaced Cllr Tom Rahilly in March.

³ One to replace Cllr Yvonne Maxwell (Vice Chair) who stepped down in March to become a Mayoral Advisor

INEL Membership 2019/20



Newham

Cllr Winston Vaughan (Chair)
Cllr Anthony McAlmont
Cllr Ayesha Chowdhury (also Chair of Newham HOSC)

Tower Hamlets

Cllr Gabriella Salva-Macallan (Joint Deputy Chair)
Cllr Kahar Chowdhury (also Chair of Tower Hamlets HOSC)
Cllr Shad Chowdhury

Waltham Forest

Cllr Nick Halebi (also Chair of a Waltham Forest HOSC)
Cllr Richard Sweden (also Chair of a Waltham Forst HOSC)
Cllr Umar Ali

City of London

Common Councilman Michael Hudson
(Substitute: Common Councilman Christopher Boden)

Hackney

Cllr Ben Hayhurst (Joint Deputy Chair) (also Chair of Hackney HOSC)

Cllr Yvonne Maxwell

Cllr Patrick Spence

OBSERVER: Redbridge

Cllr Neil Zammett (also Chair of Redbridge HOSC)

Contacts

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