
London Borough of Hackney
Skills Economy & Growth Scrutiny
Commission Municipal Year: 2021/22
Date of Meeting: Monday 21st June 2021

Minutes of the proceedings of
the Skills Economy and growth
Scrutiny Commission held
from Hackney Town Hall, Mare
Street, London E8 1EA

Chair	Cllr Polly Billington
Councillors in Attendance	Cllr Clare Potter, Cllr Steve Race, Cllr Richard Lufkin, Cllr Patrick Spence, Cllr Vincent Stops, Cllr Nick Sharman
Officers in Attendance	Stephen Haynes (Strategic Director Inclusive Economy), Andrew Munk (Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning), Suzanne Johnson (Head of Area Regeneration)
Other People in Attendance	None
Members of the Public	None
YouTube link	The meeting can be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-ig90Oloao&t=2705s
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Councillor Polly Billington in the Chair

- 1 Apologies for Absence
 - 1.1 Note: Cllr Sam Pallis & Cllr Gilbert Smyth attended the meeting virtually.
 - 1.2 There were no other apologies for absence.

2 Urgent Items / Order of Business

- 2.1 As the first meeting of the commission in the municipal year, election for chair was required.
- 2.2 Cllr Clare Potter nominated Cllr Polly Billington for chair. This was seconded by Cllr Gilbert Smyth. There were no other nominations, therefore Cllr Polly Billington was duly elected to chair.
- 2.3 Chair nominated Cllr Clare Potter for vice chair. Cllr Steve Race seconded this. There were no other nominations and so Cllr Clare Potter was duly elected to vice chair.
- 2.4 Chair invited Cllr Sam Pallis to speak on the response to a letter regarding the use of neighborhood CIL that the commission had previously sent to DM Guy Nicholson.
- 2.5 Cllr Sam Pallis observed it had been a long-running enquiry, and the letter was regarding the neighborhood CIL, which acts as the Hackney Cultural fund. The letter received by the commission didn't sufficiently address the commission's points and requested that a further letter be sent to officers seeking further clarification.

ACTION:	Scrutiny officer to draft further letter on the subject of Neighbourhood CIL.
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- 2.6 The chair observed that the letter received in response was not sufficient, that it demonstrated a lack of appetite for transparency from the administration and requested that her comments be included in the further letter to officers.

3 Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4 Skills Economy & Growth Work Programme 2021/2022

- 4.1 The chair thanked the attending scrutiny officer and vice chair for their contributions to the work programme, noting that other members contributed to it also.
- 4.2 The chair observed that the commission will be overseeing and trying to understand better what the administration can do in relation to kick starting the economy as the borough emerges from the pandemic and identify what the prospects are for preexisting parts of our economy, such as a nighttime economy and the very strong, small and medium sized business sector in the borough. Understanding the new opportunities that are arising out of a shift to a greener economy, and how the commission can make sure that the council builds on the learning on how to involve the community in decisions around how we shape that economy, what is needed from the local workforce, what kind of support that workforce needs were also mentioned.

- 4.3 The chair noted that there is an appetite from the Children and Young People's commission to gather evidence from young people about transport.
- 4.4 The chair stated that the commission can explore corporate intensive procurement and how money is spent, the future of high streets, health of micro businesses, and that the focus will remain on what the commission has remit over.
- 4.5 Cllr Steve Race observed that the work programme is strong.
- 4.6 Cllr Nick Sharman welcomed the cooperative approach with other scrutiny commissions.
- 4.7 Cllr Clare Potter stated that green agenda items on the programme are appreciated.
- 4.8 Cllr Gilbert Smyth expressed excitement about the green elements also.

5 New Members Start Here

- 5.1 The chair introduced the item, noting that the commission has new members, that the borough has gone through significant changes in terms its economy over the last year; the commission therefore needs to have a stock check of where the borough is, what is known about what has happened, and understanding about what kind of horizon scanning and future forecasting the council is already engaged in, as well what might be the opportunities, what might be the stress points for our economy, what that means for our small and medium sized businesses, what it means for our skills demand, what it means for our overall economy
- 5.2 The chair welcomed the strategic director inclusive economy to the meeting.
- 5.3 The Strategic Director Inclusive Economy introduced the presentation on "Introduction to the 'Inclusive Economy, Corporate Policy and New Homes' group of services" noting that he would be covering the mission for the strategic group & headline work from the last 6 months.
- 5.4 The strategic director inclusive economy explained that the council's teams are working to deliver a fair and inclusive recovery - and a more sustainable future - for Hackney, not a return to business as usual. We'll work to enable a more inclusive economy, tackle poverty, inequality and climate change. This is so that everyone has the opportunity to thrive and prosper in a borough that local people feel is theirs to shape, driven by our shared social goals.

This will be delivered by:

- Providing, directly and through partnership working, genuinely affordable and safe homes for the people that need them
- Supporting our businesses and high streets to recover, championing SMEs and social enterprise

- Shaping our town centres in partnership with local people and businesses – and driven directly by their ambitions for their communities
- Supporting those who have lost work to retrain and re skill through our adult learning offer; providing high quality apprenticeships and placements to young people; and helping people to find and move into quality jobs
- Insourcing Council services wherever possible, with a local supply chain with fair pay and employment rights
- Using our land and buildings for public good, not just to generate income
- Transforming our approach to poverty reduction, inequality and reducing harm - working with communities and civil society to bring about long-term systems change.

5.5 Underpinning these objectives - and those of the wider organisation - is our work to:

- Support the political and corporate leadership to keep its focus on its long-term strategic vision for a fairer, safer and greener borough, through corporate planning, supporting decision making and promoting an inclusive, collaborative, transformational leadership culture
- Champion our diverse communities, helping the whole organisation to understand Hackney's rich history and communities
- Provide citizens with the opportunity to share and express their concerns and aspirations with us, by enabling effective engagement and through supporting effective local democratic approaches.
- These priorities have long been important to our staff, councillors and residents – but the pandemic has made them more important than ever.

5.6 The strategic director inclusive economy gave the following headlines for work focused on over the prior 6 months.

5.7 **Employment, Skills and Adult Learning**

- Ensuring that Hackney Works, working closely with partners, is able to respond effectively to the impacts of the pandemic
- Delivering of the Hackney kickstart programme, creating over 400 paid work placements for unemployed young people
- Re-setting of adult learning provision to ensure delivery of key

inclusive economy priorities

- Establishing the STEM commission, a key manifesto commitment.
- Re-establishing the Growth Borough Partnership and leadership of the LLDC transition agenda

5.8 Area Regeneration

- Delivering business grants programmes (short-medium term)
- Short, medium, and long term Covid recovery and rebuilding work: town centres and high streets, economic development, business support and engagement
- Affordable workspace strategy and delivery
- Service resource planning
- Development and delivery of strategic area regeneration (physical, social and economic initiatives and programmes) to deliver the objectives in the Corporate Plan, Inclusive Economic Strategy and Local Plan with a focus on Dalston, Hackney Central, Hackney Wick, including the Council town centre sites programme, development sites, economic development, and capital projects.

5.9 Regeneration

- Continuing project and programme delivery to meet manifesto commitments for new homes delivery (despite Brexit, Covid, cyber-attack etc.).
- Commencing the asset review process in earnest and identify the first batch of future new build sites.
- Contributing to the successful review of development and wider capital programme strategy and delivery.
- Embedding former Regeneration services in the wider EPNH strategic group and share ways of working.
- Delivering the Regeneration recruitment and retention strategy, in order to attract, retain and develop good staff.

5.10 Housing Strategy

- Delivering the first Hackney Housing Association Compact.
- Mayor of Hackney Housing Challenge - confirm £20 million projects first six months, another £15-20 million second half 2021/22.
- Focusing on licensing scheme inspections and beginning projects to

extend the Private Sector Housing Licensing Scheme across the whole of Hackney.

- Developing the “Housing Supply Strategy”
- Beginning the development of the new Hackney Housing Strategy for implementation in 2022

5.11 **Policy and Strategic Delivery**

- Transforming the approach to tackling impacts of poverty
- Further embed strategic priorities and the corporate plan
- Securing commitment from partners to a shared approach to anti racism and workforce delivery
- Developing more consistent approaches to community development, co-production and stakeholder engagement
- Embedding all-inclusive leadership and workforce diversity actions

5.12 **Business Intelligence, Elections and Member Services**

- Delivering Covid-safe elections for GLA and by elections in May 2021
- Cyber-attack recovery/implication work
- Recovery of Xpress electoral register and 30k missing postal vote identifier details
- Casework Review
- Improvements to member remote working offer (access to 8356 number, surgeries, video training etc)

5.13 The chair requested the definition for ‘EPNH’ which featured in the strategic director of inclusive economy’s presentation, it was defined as ‘Economy, Policy & New Homes’

5.14 Chair invited the Head of Area Regeneration to present on Covid-19 impact on the local economy.

5.15 The Head of Area Regeneration began with an executive summary. Businesses in Hackney have experienced unprecedented challenges since the start of the pandemic. Local and London-wide data and anecdotal feedback from businesses indicates that the creative sector, retail, leisure and hospitality industries in London have been hardest hit by the pandemic and will take the longest to recover. In Hackney these industries make up almost 20% of Hackney’s business community.

5.16 Whilst financial support provided by the Government such as business rates relief, business grants and the furlough scheme has prevented many

businesses from closing, these industries are still vulnerable and are now faced with the burden of debt, trying to generate income under continuing Covid-19 restrictions, and the imminent loss of the furlough scheme and tapering up of business rates relief.

- 5.17 The long-term structural impact of the pandemic on the London economy and business sectors is not yet known however the Council is working to construct an economic strategy for the borough that will aid the recovery of our town centres, key businesses sectors and businesses through tailored interventions and business support.
- 5.18 In term of London's economic outlook in Spring 2021, it was noted that Some of London's main sectors such as financial services, real estate, professional & technical, and the information & communications sector have been hit less severely by lockdown restrictions and have a relative greater proportion of workers being able to work from home.
- 5.19 People using public transport much less, working from home, and knock-on impact on the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors and Central London and the City (Shoreditch impact).
- 5.20 Very negative shock in terms of the numbers of tourists and international students in the capital and knock-on impact of on other sectors and Central London and the City.
- 5.21 Large and persistent negative shock for certain sectors such as accommodation & food services, arts, entertainment & recreation, education (international students).
- 5.22 All sectors should see a recovery although accommodation and food services, arts, entertainment, and recreation will most likely continue to be the worst hit as they are the most affected by social distancing which is likely to continue for part of 2021 (at least).
- 5.23 Demand for comparison retail stores and leisure units/uses is likely to fall
- 5.24 Online shopping will continue to grow, owners of physical stores switching to e-commerce
- 5.25 Possible further weakening of the relationship between the location of shops and where people work
- 5.26 Continued implementation of the 2017 business rates revaluation will add to the costs for the retail sector
- 5.27 New immigration regime making it harder for the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors to recruit overseas staff leading to pressures to increase wages.
- 5.28 In terms of impacts on Hackney's business sectors, the following observations were included in the presentation:

5.29 Hospitality and Retail sector

- Hospitality businesses are operating at reduced capacity due to social distancing regulations which is affecting income as are Covid-19 secure working practises (e.g., PPE, extra staffing).
- Shops, bars and restaurants have reported lower footfall to their businesses since reopening compared to pre-Covid times although it is starting to improve in the summer period.
- Local Pubwatch leaders and the Federation of Small Businesses representative for Hackney have reported that hospitality businesses are experiencing serious difficulties in recruiting staff with many employees retraining while on furlough, others returning to their home country, and a lack of students looking for positions.
- Many operators are in debt as they have used all reserves and grants have not covered overhead costs during closed periods.
- There are reports that some larger commercial landlords have offered minimal support to tenants struggling to pay rent and some tenants are concerned about the end of the commercial eviction ban on 25th March 2022.
- Anecdotally we know that some areas in the borough are suffering worse than others e.g the retail sector in Shoreditch is experiencing much less footfall compared to other areas in the borough where more residents are working from home
- Acceleration of long-term structural shift to online retail and the need to consider what this means for our town centres collectively and on an individual basis.

5.30 Leisure, creative and cultural sectors

- As with cultural organisations across the UK, pre-covid, Hackney's venues had mixed income streams involving both public subsidy and earned income from bars, venue hires, workspace leases etc. This mixed income approach made our organisations very vulnerable to the impact of the pandemic.
- To date, Hackney's culture and heritage sectors have attracted a total of £18,591,838 of DCMS Cultural Recovery Funding, through 142 grants. This has created temporary liquidity and stabilised organisations that had lost all sources of income. In some cases, it also enabled some to deliver cultural engagement work to support communities that were most impacted by the pandemic, whilst keeping artists in work.
- Many Hackney organisations survived the first phase of the pandemic due to a combination of emergency funding from ACE, DCMS grants, business grants administered by LBH, crowdfunding campaigns, and the use of their own reserves. Many organisations now have no reserves to fall back on.

- Although venues can now reopen, some organisations can't open at a reduced capacity due to overhead costs and are holding out for a later opening in the autumn.
- Venues are concerned about the amount of debt they have built up over the last year
- Earlier in the year, there was concern about the lack of new film offerings / performances being put forward by the relevant industries and no international tours taking place i.e., not enough new work being available to draw audiences in. This may be changing, too early to report.
- Several of Hackney's music venues are now streaming regular, ticketed live gigs. This has kept audiences engaged and provided work for musicians, but it is yet to be established if paywalls for this kind of content can make a significant contribution to the income of small organisations.
- Buying the relevant equipment has been a long-term investment for the venues.
- The Vortex Jazz Club has fully embraced streaming performances - this technology is seen as essential for reaching wider audiences in the future.

5.31 Shared workspaces

- Hackney is home to approximately 125 workspace providers, and they were not eligible for the main government grants programmes. Some providers and their tenants have been eligible for our discretionary business grant programmes.
- Anecdotally, workspace providers have reported that they lost tenants during the pandemic (often when the tenant was not able to access government grants), however units were filled again within a matter of weeks.
- Demand for coworking has decreased during the pandemic because of social distancing, but as restrictions have lifted in 2021, local coworking spaces have become busier.
- Here East had their best lettings year in 2020: anecdotal feedback suggests that this is because of the nature of the space (very spacious, Here East tenants feel that they can easily social distance), another reason is that businesses have less preference for central location because employees prefer to work more locally.
- Workspace providers' cash reserves have been considerably affected by the pandemic, which has an impact on their ability to invest (e.g., in fit-out for new space, expanding their premises).

- 5.32 In terms of financial support for businesses, it was reported that £63m has been paid via Small Business Grant and Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grants as of April 2020.
- 5.33 £44m has been paid to date via Local Restrictions Support Grants and Restart Grants.
- 5.34 >£50m value of Business rate relief has been applied.
- 5.35 The Council has been responsible for developing and distributing two discretionary grants programmes, these have been shaped to target those businesses in the borough that have been identified as in need of financial support and unable to access existing government grants as they don't pay business rates.
- 5.36 Eligible recipients include market traders, businesses that supply the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors, home-based businesses, self-employed businesses, directors of limited companies, Ofsted registered nurseries and childminders.
- 5.37 The Head of Area Regeneration presentation included future strategy and support for sectors and businesses:
- Continued focus on area regeneration and area-based programmes and interventions in town centres, priority regeneration areas and growth areas with stakeholder buy in from residents, businesses and other local representatives.
 - Continued operation of the Hackney Business Network which offers business support and advice, business forums, and networking opportunities.
 - A Council promotional campaign to launch later this summer to support and promote business and venues as they reopen.
 - Development of a borough wide economic development and recovery plan which will focus on our future approach to town centres, businesses sectors, and business support as we emerge from the pandemic
 - The development of an Economic Development function/service for the Council to complement the work of existing services such as Area Regeneration, Employment and Skills, and Culture.
 - The development of a business support programme in 2021/2022 to utilise additional Restrictions Grant funding available from government.
- 5.38 The chair opened the meeting to questions.
- 5.39 Cllr Stops asked whether the population of the borough has decreased, and if so, what effect that will have.

- 5.40 The Head of Area Regeneration advised that this information isn't available now but can be provided as a supplementary but noted that few businesses have been confirmed as having left the borough.
- 5.41 Cllr Stops asked if areas like Stoke Newington, Stamford Hill, Victoria Park & Hoxton will be the subject of further regeneration work.
- 5.42 The Head of Area Regeneration advised the list of areas being regenerated isn't exhaustive, and the remit of the regen team is wide, so there is scope to flex and change which areas are being looked at. It was noted that an action plan for Stamford Hill is currently in production.
- 5.43 Cllr Steve Race requested an estimation of how many vacant commercial units there are and whether that figure is expected to rise.
- 5.44 The Head of Area Regeneration requested this information could be made available as a supplementary, but the council is in the process of signing up to the Mayor of London's datastore. The revamped offer of data will allow us to understand and access good data on highstreets. It was noted the vacancy rate in Hackney has historically been low.
- 5.45 Cllr Richard Lufkin asked what the plan is for increasing footfall in Shoreditch.
- 5.46 The Head of Area Regeneration advised there is a Shoreditch area action plan which is in draft. Research has been commissioned by an economic research development company which will provide more information, and that the information will be more valuable once people who work in the area return to physical spaces for work.
- 5.47 Cllr Gilbert Smyth asked what the tailored interventions for businesses look like.
- 5.48 The Head of Area Regeneration advised that ideally bespoke business support programmes for some of the sectors would be ideal – particularly the cultural sector, retail sector, and hospitality sectors. The £3.6 million and additional discretionary funding that the borough will spend by the end of March represents a significant opportunity to focus on sector specific business support. In terms of rent levels, though it's very difficult to manage those rents directly as the borough doesn't own the buildings, a bespoke area based tenting approach, where the borough gets to know the landlords and work closely with landlords is the best way for the council to convey their expectations on rent levels to them.
- 5.49 The chair observed that in terms of regenerating town centres, facing the challenges of retail collapse, and issues around residents, they were struck by the absence of any information around things like the '15 Minute City' and how that links to the economic regeneration strategy, because the council should be linking these pieces of work to help to maintain local economies, and also help with more active and decarbonize travel.

- 5.50 The Head of Area Regeneration responded by saying that concepts like the '15 Minute City' are a key part of the work around town centres.
- 5.51 Cllr Clare Potter asked whether the head of the Head of Area Regeneration could, in future, provide information on how the borough can support small and medium sized businesses which provide green jobs like heat pump installers.
- 5.52 Cllr Vincent Stops asked whether there is a '15 Minute City' strategy, and if so, where it came from.
- 5.53 The Head of Area Regeneration advised that the strategy doesn't exist as a distinct document but features heavily in the upcoming literature she spoke of.
- 5.54 Cllr Sam Pallis asked whether the borough needs to see potential expansion of article four around preventing units being converted from retail to residential.
- 5.55 The Head of Area Regeneration advised there has been a change in the planning classes which has allowed more flexibility in what retail units can become and that retail units becoming residential units on a large scale is of low risk.
- 5.56 The chair thanked the Head of Area Regeneration for their time and welcomes the head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning to present.
- 5.57 The head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning advised the presentation primarily about adult learning and skills in response to the specific parts of the Commission.
- 5.58 It was stated that a lot of data would feature in the presentation but most of it comes from existing evidence base.
- 5.59 Particular areas discussed where the current skills landscape, and the skills demanded by the labour market, and green economy and green skills and the sort of adult learning delivery model will focus on accessibility and inequality.
- 5.60 Over the last 10 years, Hackney is experienced significant increase in proportion of residents with higher qualifications and likewise, a decrease in proportion of residents with no qualifications. We've seen an increase in a number of residents with level one, level two and level three qualifications, but it's worth saying that that in spite of that, we still have 19% of working age residents, about 40,000 people, with even no formal qualifications, or higher qualifications than level one. Another way of putting that is we've got 20% of people who don't have GCSE English and maths.

- 5.61 In London, we have seen the emergence this 'hourglass economy', i.e., a rising number of jobs which are level two and below, and a significant rise in jobs which require level four and above, and it's put an hourglass because you have that bit of a middle which is diminishing.
- 5.62 People who have that mid-level skill are in some difficulties before COVID and are more so now. There is a need to enable people to progress through the skills ladder
- 5.63 A London adult Community Learning review from a couple of years ago identified that young people and care leavers in particular were missing out on a number of adult learning and training and job opportunities. And there is a real challenge with people's retraining and switching sectors.
- 5.64 Moving on to a general skills demanded by the labour market, there's a number of very good reports around this pre-COVID and post-COVID. A local government association report and looked at about the need for a balanced approach between kind of both technical skills and qualifications, as well as more transferable skills, some ethical soft skills; transferable skills include good communication skills, critical thinking, and problem solving.
- 5.65 London has done a lot of work on this with employers, and that they did some important work with Nesta, a think tank who think about these transferable skills around different contexts, which blend skills, knowledge, behaviours, attitude, and we're thinking being from businesses; this will be particularly important in the 21st century.
- 5.66 There are a number of sectors specific skills which are required and building on some of the things the head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning was talking about, there are a number of sectors which are struggling and are likely to continue to struggle, such as retail or hospitality.
- 5.67 There are a number of other sectors which have actually grown during COVID-19 that are likely to continue to grow, particularly that the health and care sector, IT and digital and about the green economy.
- 5.68 An important focus for we as a council in terms of education and with partners, is to focus on the skills needs to be sectors and pathway pathways into job. But it's important to recognise that a lot of these sectors, for example health and social care, don't just require specific skills in for example nursing or social care qualification, but also more generic skills such as administration, finance, and IT. The majority of jobs in IT aren't actually requiring coding and high-level digital skills, but often more generic skills.
- 5.69 In terms of green skills and jobs, there's a huge demand from partners for the council to take a lead on this. Both at a GLA level and London level, the council has huge investment in terms of building a more green economy. The GLA and the green New Deal programmes that focus on decarbonisation and including solar installation with a focus on green transport and public realm, including tackling transport emissions through electric vehicles and charging points.

- 5.70 There is also a focus on green foundations, supporting businesses with green economy, and each of those is going to create a significant number of jobs.
- 5.71 A key focus of adult learning over the next couple of years will be to understand the qualifications and skills required by these areas, and to make sure that we're providing the right skills make sure we're influencing partners such as the GLA, ensuring that it's actually possible to fund these training qualifications, and also making sure there's pathways and ring-fenced jobs for those areas.
- 5.72 More locally, the head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning's team is working increasingly closely with relevant parts of the council to understand particular areas where there are going to be jobs locally through Council's interventions, including through energy company, including through greening our own homes, including things such as putting solar panels on buildings and doing things such as tree-planting programmes.
- 5.73 The pandemic caused all courses to have a very significant move towards more of an outcomes-focused delivery of training. So, rather than quite a traditional focus on learning on outputs, and how many learners getting through there, there has been a shift towards an outcome focus, how many people are moving into employment, how many are progressing to higher learning, and also a number of social outcomes.
- 5.74 As we plan for next year's commissioning, there will be a very explicit focus on three key areas: a) adult learning, and training with a direct link to employment opportunities. b) building functional and transferable skills. c) supporting our residents well-being and positive mental health.
- 5.75 Regarding accessibility points about a quality age groups, the council is very aware that digital exclusion remains a significant issue and has since the start of the pandemic. While courses were moved online because it was a necessity, the team has focused strongly on trying to mitigate the impact of digital excursion. This includes things such as thinking very carefully about how accessible online delivery is and making sure there are programmes such as digital bodies to support people who need extra help to access online delivery, and also rolling out a programme of devices for those who need it.
- 5.76 So far, the team has handed out over 200 devices. And as we go forward, the team is thinking how to work with a number of community partners, libraries, children's centres to provide that more holistic, and offer around addressing digital equation.
- 5.77 In terms of inequality, 75% of learners are women. We know there needs to be more of a focus on aiming for more of a 50/50 in terms of men and women. There is careful thinking around where to deliver the service from to enable a good spread and representation in terms of minority ethnic groups accessing the service.
- 5.78 43% of learners describe themselves as black or black British. In terms of

health conditions associated, 40% of learners identifying as having some sort of learning difficulty, disability or health issue.

- 5.79 The chair thanked the head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning and opened the floor to questions.
- 5.80 Cllr potter observed that the mentioned 200 devices isn't sufficient compared to the need and looks forward to learning more about the scheme, and asked regarding the 'hourglass' effect on training, what the council can do to support to progression of level-one and level-two holders.
- 5.81 The head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning responded by saying that rather than thinking about adult education just in terms of what were the council deliver, thinking about what our partners such as New City College, who deliver far more provision than we do as a council in terms of funding provision, and other community partners, and thinking how it all fits together is crucial. He gave an example of New City College probably being better placed to deliver level three courses, and the GLA has freed up some of that provision.
- 5.82 It used to be that all adult education budget vision was able to and below and they are GLA is focusing more on level three. The challenge we have is in the services. It is known that we have 20% of people in the borough who have level two and below qualifications. Private providers who are delivering on a number of government programmes, and noticeably work and health programme and restart are engaging more and more with skills, vision and pathways and investing in skills and pathways to jobs.
- 5.83 Cllr Sam Pallis asked in relation to groups underrepresented in further education, particularly the Turkish and Arabian community, whether the council has seen a decrease increase in engagement, what are the barriers there, and whether working with Haredi businesses to develop particular job placements could be a useful strand of work.
- 5.84 He added that it would be worthwhile for the commission to write a formal letter to Cllr Williams about the Haredi community, requesting an equalities piece of work, as a recommendation.

ACTION:	Commission to draft a letter to Cllr Williams about the possibilities of an equalities piece of work focusing on the Haredi community and skills.
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- 5.85 The head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning responded by saying that how the issues he talked about affect more granular segments of the wider BME community will be clearer in the future as more data becomes available.
- 5.86 It was added that the council will continue to work closely with partners from the community in terms of dialogue and shaping what courses we should deliver, and very much encourage them to bid to then deliver it
- 5.87 Cllr Sharman asked to see the basic business plan that is easily digestible.

- 5.88 The strategic director inclusive economy advised this is possible to provide if advance notice is given.
- 5.89 Cllr Vincent Stops asked about why there appears to be reduced public housing money compared to several years ago.
- 5.90 The strategic director inclusive ECONOMY advised that the council does have GLA funded schemes, is currently going through a funding bid at the moment of GLA but conceded that the provision is scant.
- 5.91 Cllr Vincent Stops asked, since Hackney has always been brimming with local amenities, why the council is gravitating toward the '15 Minute City' as an area of policy development.
- 5.92 The strategic director inclusive economy advised that while there is risk of displacement and gentrification, and there are other critiques of the concept, that the '15 Minute City' is just one of the many ideas that the council needs to consider, particularly in a sort of post COVID world where people are working from home a lot, I'm staying within neighborhoods.
- 5.93 The chair noted that it would be useful to have the strategic director inclusive economy input on decarbonising the economy, including thoughts on housing regen, while noting that it doesn't sit within SEG's remit per se, it will nevertheless be relevant to the commission's work.
- 5.94 The strategic director inclusive economy agreed that this would be valuable given enough time to prepare.
- 5.95 Cllr Patrick Spence asked what the strategy is to address the figure of 20% of the working population that don't have English & Maths at GCSE level.
- 5.96 The head of employment, skills & adult learning responded by saying that skilling people up for the labour market is crucial, particularly with basic functional skills as that provides a foundation for skilling up. they also observed that since pandemic, levels of collaboration with key local anchor institutions such as New City College and Job Centre Plus has never been higher, which is useful as the GLA budgetary provision isn't sufficient to address this skills gap.
- 5.97 Cllr Smyth requested to know more about what can be done to support and strengthen childcare, health work support and mental health services, and trying to connect them up with economic infrastructure agenda. The Cllr also posed a question around how to ensure residents feel like they've contributed to the pathways to skills.
- 5.98 The strategic director inclusive economy responded by saying that its very important to engage as many people as possible, in as many sectors, and including non-traditional methods of engagement to ensure that there are as few barriers to contribution as can be managed. It was noted that there is an upcoming agenda item specifically about engaging with the community in terms of area regeneration.

5.99 The strategic director inclusive ECONOMY also advised that coupling social infrastructure to economic output is important. Within that, recognizing barriers that people face to education and employment is essential, and the need for networking with various teams such as community centres, libraries, and teams working with those with disabilities was stressed.

5.100 Cllr Pallis asked whether shared ownership is a viable option for residents in terms of affordability, and going forward, are there alternative models of housing regeneration that are being considered.

5.101 The strategic director inclusive economy advised that the council is looking at new homes delivery over the next six to nine months. Regarding the affordability of shared ownership and advised that this subject is too broad to answer properly in a Q&A, but that the aim is still to delivery genuinely affordable housing as possible, but that it's as much a political question as it is a policy once.

5.102 The chair closed the item.

6 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

6.1 The minutes were agreed and noted.

7 Any Other Business

7.1 There was no other business.