
London Borough of Hackney
Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission
Municipal Year 2021/22
Date of meeting Wednesday, 14 July 2021

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

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| Chair | Cllr Sharon Patrick |
| Councillors in Attendance: | Cllr Penny Wrout, Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Ajay Chauhan, Cllr Anthony McMahon, Cllr Soraya Adejare, Cllr Clare Joseph |
| Apologies: | Cllr Penny Wrout, |
| Officers in Attendance | Interim Director, Regeneration, Chris Trowell; Head of Planning and Building Control, Natalie Broughton Deputy Strategic Planning Manager, Lizzie Bird; Head of Building Maintenance, Steve Platt and Gabrielle Abadi, Planning Officer, Strategic Planning |
| Other People in Attendance | Cabinet Member for Families, Early Years, Parks and Play, Cllr Caroline Woodley |
| Members of the Public | None |
| Officer Contact: | Tracey Anderson ☎ 0208 356 3312 ✉ tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk |

Councillor Sharon Patrick in the Chair

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence from Cllr Wrout.
- 1.2 Virtual attendance from the following Councillors on the Commission.
 - Cllr Clare Joseph
 - Cllr Ajay Chauhan
 - Cllr Soraya Adejare.
 - Cllr Anthony McMahon.

2 Urgent Items/ Order of Business

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

3 Declaration of Interest

3.1 None.

4 Play Infrastructure, Planning and Design Principles for a Child Friendly Borough

4.1 The Chair welcomed officers to the meeting and outlined the discussion item. In attendance at the meeting was Cabinet Member for Families, Early Years, Parks and Play, Cllr Caroline Woodley; Interim Director, Regeneration, Chris Trowell; Head of Planning and Building Control, Natalie Broughton Deputy Strategic Planning Manager, Lizzie Bird; Head of Building Maintenance, Steve Platt and Gabrielle Abadi, Planning Officer, Strategic Planning from London Borough of Hackney (LBH).

4.2 The Living in Hackney (LiH) Scrutiny Commission discussed the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy in January 2021. The scrutiny commission decided to follow up on this work to look at play infrastructure on estates, regeneration and in planning policy to support play provision across the borough.

4.3 The first section of this item covered Planning's role in creating a child friendly borough. The Deputy Strategic Planning Manager from LBH commenced the presentation. The following main points were made.

4.3.1 The presentation covers the work of the strategic planning team over the last 18 months.

4.3.2 The strategic planning service has been working on producing the child friendly places guidance for the borough.

4.3.3 The child friendly places supplementary planning document (SPD) was approved for adoption at Hackney Council Cabinet in June 2021. This supplementary planning document looks to deliver the Mayor of Hackney manifesto commitment to ensure Hackney is a child-friendly borough through establishing child friendly principles and design guidelines for Hackney's built environment. This SPD will sit alongside and compliment policies in the borough wide Local Plan (LP33).

4.3.4 The guidance was developed drawing on national and regional planning policy including the new London plan adopted earlier in the year (2021).

4.3.5 Hackney's Local Plan is designed to support the future growth and regeneration in the borough up to 2033.

4.3.6 The LP50 policy within the local plan is a new policy that aims to bring children's place space and child friendly requirements into new developments.

4.3.7 In practical terms the policy means that residential developments must devote some of the open space provision as child friendly spaces. The policy allocates 10 square metres of dedicated play space per child on a site of any new major residential developments and mixed-use schemes. This is for developments that anticipate having 10 or more children in the space.

- 4.3.8 These design requirements encourage play spaces to be suitable for a diverse range of children and young people.
- 4.3.9 The key element of the child friendly SPD document was outlined to be
- Part 1 Moving towards a Child-Friendly Borough
 - Part 2 Policy, Research & Guidance Context
 - Part 3 Hackney's Child-Friendly Principles for the Built Environment
 - Part 4 Child-Friendly Design Guidelines for Hackney's Built Environment
 - Part 5 Shaping My Borough: Engagement Guidelines and Best Practice
 - Part 6 Tools for Implementation & Delivery
- The chapters provide guidance around the child friendly principles; with case examples and best practice guides to shape a healthier and more inclusive environment for existing and future residents.
- 4.3.10 The SPD was informed taking into consideration the findings from the Hackney Young Futures Commission report and engagement work with Hackney Youth Parliament (HYP).
- 4.3.11 The design principles are Hackney specific and a direct outcome of a series of engagement workshops with members of HYP and delivered by ZDC Architects.
- 4.3.12 The project was run over 2 sessions with members of HYP and council members were in attendance. The workshops aimed to equip local young people with the confidence, knowledge, and skills to recognise child friendly design principles. The objective was to enable them to lead on facilitating youth engagement in the future. To ensure young people's views are enshrined in the essential policies developed and shaping the build environment.
- 4.3.13 The first session focused on the skills building for the group. The second session focused on looking at individual lived experience with the Hackney Youth Parliament members. Analysing techniques and creating relevant and effective engagement processes.
- 4.3.14 The design principles that emerged from this work were outlined to be:
- Shaping my borough: to ensure children and young people have the power to influence change in Hackney
 - Doorstep play: to provide easily accessible and overlooked space for play and social interactions immediately outside the front door
 - Play on the way: to provide multi-generational opportunities for informal play, things to see and do around the neighbourhood beyond designated parks and playgrounds.
 - Streets for people: to ensure that children, young people and their families can safely and easily move through Hackney by sustainable modes of transport such as walking cycling or public transport
 - Contact with nature: to design places which increase everyday opportunities for access and connect with nature
 - Destinations for all: to design socially inclusive and accessible public spaces that are welcoming enjoyable and safe for everyone.

- Making spaces young people want to be: to ensure that public spaces are designed, planned and managed to consider the varied needs of teenagers and young people
- Health and wellbeing: to ensure the design of outdoor environments supports improved physical health and mental wellbeing.

4.3.15 The guidelines section of the guidance document is structured by dividing the neighbourhoods into scales that a child in Hackney would typically grow up and experience in their built environment with the neighbourhood.

4.3.16 There are three scales.

- The doorstep
The shared spaces that connect an individual's front door to surrounding streets and public spaces
- Streets
The network of routes that children, young people and their families use to move between their home and destinations within their neighbourhood
- Destinations
The public places that children, young people and their families make frequent journeys to in Hackney.

4.3.17 At the end of each scale a child friendly design check is there for reference. It includes reflective assessment questions associated with achieving the principles at each of the scales.

4.3.18 The design guidelines are supported by the LP33 policies and case study examples. The cases illustrate best practice and creative ways of incorporating the child friendly guidance to achieve successful, high quality inclusive development proposals.

4.3.19 The officer illustrated in the slides an example of the design guidelines for the doorstep scale. (Slide 8). This was referenced as Kings Crescent phases one and two. The development has a play street which makes way for different types of play. Traditional play equipment combined with natural elements such as logs, rocks and water. There are also props for imaginative play such as theatre, a large table and community areas for all ages.

4.3.20 Another example illustrated was Marmalade Lane in Cambridge. The street was not open to cars, the residents used the street for a variety of activities e.g. play, hanging out and socialising. The officer pointed out the design illustrated made use of the street trees, bike storage and planned areas to encourage a play area on the doorstep.

4.3.21 In reference to the street scale the officer illustrated Bridget Joyce square in Hammersmith and Fulham Council. It's located on space between a school and 2 playgrounds in White City. This transformed a previously hazardous road into an urban public park.

4.3.22 The officer also referenced Hackney school streets the pioneering pilot that has transformed roads outside schools so that only pedestrians and cyclist can use them during school start and finish times. The aim of the scheme is to tackle congestion and improve air quality at school gates. Another example illustrated

was Van Gogh Walk in Lambeth. For a street scale this showed informal play on the way opportunities. Lighting and plants are incorporated on the route to a local school.

4.3.23 In reference to the destination scale the example illustrated was Flauders Way. This project successfully provided children and young people with a stake in their local community. The local community witnessed their ideas come to life giving them a real sense of ownership of the space.

- The Engagement Strategy to inform the guidance document was carried out between (Oct 2020 - Feb 2021), the formal consultation period. This involved:
- Engagement with HYP from early project stages
- A dedicated webpage
- Commonplace - Consultation platform to collect online feedback written and on heatmap.
- Targeted social advertisements via facebook, snapchat, Instagram and Twitter to share and amplify message.
- Printed Material
- Cabinet Member Outreach - Joint letter/email to all schools, early years centres etc
- Banners in parks - Springfield Park, Haggerston Park, London Fields, Clissold Park
- Resource packs and materials for schools - To test key concepts and ideas
- 14 Virtual Workshops
- Hackney Design Awards
- Information on how to participate in the consultation was issued via Hackney Education's SEND team.

4.3.24 The various people consulted involved young people, elderly people, disability groups, parent groups and the environment professionals to get a wide range of feedback on the emerging guidance. The engagement also used an online engagement platform commonplace. The period of consultation was a challenging time, but they used a variety of resources such as putting up banners in parks in trying to reach children and parents more directly.

4.3.25 Workshops with HYP started in 2019. They also attended children and young people scrutiny commission to present information and consult on the draft SPD and held virtual workshops. They also received feedback from the Hackney Young Futures Commission during the consultation period.

4.3.26 There was also an intergenerational group with younger to older people to help get different views about public spaces.

4.3.27 The consultation feedback helped to shape the final plan. The intergenerational work highlighted similar priorities for spaces and similar comments around:

- safe streets
- adequate seating
- accessible and well-maintained public toilets
- access to green spaces/ nature
- good lighting

- places to sit, dwell or keep active.
- 4.3.28 As part of the feedback received, they have updated the principles for 'people before cars streets' to reflect the focus on people rather than the car element. Also, a greater focus on teenage years has been incorporated into the plan.
- 4.3.29 There was also greater reference to the Local Plan (LP33) and S4 in the newly adopted London Plan and local plan LP50 for play provision.
- 4.3.30 The child friendly SPD aims to ensure all new and existing places consider child friendly design and guidance at every stage in the planning and design process.
- 4.3.31 The next steps were outlined and will involve a number of projects where planning will look to initiated projects to deliver the aims of the child friendly SPD. For example, planning will update their Planning Statement of Community Involvement. Setting out a clear guidance on how to engage young people in shaping their borough.
- 4.3.32 Planning is exploring the opportunity for establishing Hackney Young Place Advisors. This was an ask set out by Hackney Young Futures Commission for planning and regeneration.
- 4.3.33 There is also the desire to work with other service areas particularly corporate policy and planning, estate regeneration, streetscene, parks and green spaces and housing services to ensure this guidance and document is really used.
- 4.3.34 The Cabinet Member for Early Years, Families Parks & Play added the following comments. This work was moving towards a child friendly borough with the focus on the public realm. This work will be the catalyst to making Hackney a truly child friendly borough.
- 4.3.35 The Cabinet Member singled out Principle 6 (social inclusion and accessibility). The Cabinet Member reiterated the challenges with young people engagement. Highlighting that due to Covid the voice of children and young people voices were not heard in the way they would have liked. They are working on rebuilding the pupil forums and pupil voice particularly around SEND. This is an area they planned to focus on as they developed the policy.
- 4.3.36 In reference to retrofitting council estates to make the policy feel real. The officer highlighted there is an opportunity on the street, destination and doorstep scale to do modest pieces of work that can transform. For example, the Virgin estate had been changed with play equipment, log steppingstones, a bench and planting of trees. Transforming a dead space that was previously littered into a place of community ownership.
- 4.3.37 It was pointed out Hackney is not a child friendly borough yet but there has been good progress towards making it one and having child friendly places. These places should be inclusive and accessible for all.
- 4.3.38 There is still a lot of work to do on delivery but there is also opportunities. The Cabinet Member is welcoming the opportunity to work with residents' groups, pupil forms, board members scrutiny.

4.4 Play infrastructure and design principles for play

- The Head of Building Maintenance commenced the presentation, and the following main points were made.
- 4.4.1 Housing Services manage 254 play facilities located throughout the 355 housing estates. Most are classified as doorstep play space.
 - 4.4.2 There is strict maintenance, and they are inspected 4 times year with a maintenance cost of £100k a year. In addition, the capital works replacement programme is £200k a year. The Council is aiming to apply for additional funding for further equipment investment.
 - 4.4.3 There are different types of play equipment that Housing Services have installed over the years. In addition, over the years peoples' desires and trends have changed. The officer pointed out 10 years prior the requirements were different to the requirements now. It was also noted that upgrades to play equipment have been achieved through sponsorships and joint ventures with other service areas.
 - 4.4.4 It was highlighted there are also some challenges with managing play areas. Not only the changing fashion, designs and investments but also miss use and ASB. However, play areas are well enjoyed by residents and the children on estates. The officer showed examples of new and traditional play equipment.
 - 4.4.5 It was acknowledged traditionally they have focused on having play equipment for younger age groups. But the officer highlighted although timber play equipment is natural and a good material for play. In a picture the officer showed the failures that can occur in the timber over time. The officer pointed out these need to be managed and monitored over time and ultimately repaired.
 - 4.4.6 The officer showed an example of a joint venture between housing and park services. This was a picture of a landscaped area of timber logs and benches that were likely to be suitable for older children to socialise.
- 4.5 The Head of Regeneration Strategic Design from LBH commenced the presentation and the following main points were made.
- 4.5.1 Existing estates are often in demarcated areas with prescriptive pieces of play equipment. The planning presentation showed how play can be fully integrated into the public realm, roads around it and the thresholds around the building.
 - 4.5.2 The officer pointed out although many developments were all designed before they adopted the SPD for a child friendly borough. Through the forward thinking of external design and Hackney Regeneration team the schemes have incorporated many of the design principles of the SPD. They have also helped to inform the SPD and future play provision in the borough.
 - 4.5.3 The Regeneration service area has an in-house advisory group and this panel has advised them on which has helped to inform the SPD.
 - 4.5.4 It was clarified that reference to housing regeneration related to Hackney's new build housing programme. There are 2 direct delivery estate regeneration programmes and housing supply programmes and the Woodberry Downs joint

venture programme. All three programmes are estimated to deliver approximately 9000 homes.

- 4.5.5 In relation to the design principles for play all the areas are mixed tenure and the public realm is viewed as common to integrate the public realm between existing and new homes.
- 4.5.6 The officer pointed out all spaces need to be multi-generational and appeal to all the generations. Quoting 'if they can build a successful city for children, they can build a successful city for everyone.'
- 4.5.7 The child friendly principles tie in with other council policies such as aging well and public health to achieve a very holistic approach rather than little patches of playable landscapes. In essence being integrated into the public realm and architecture.
- 4.5.8 Once this connection is established it leads into and interconnects to nature and biodiversity linked to the green infrastructure and sustainable strategies.
- 4.5.9 The officer explained play can contribute on all scales of public space. There is the doorstep scale which has a direct link to family housing. With new build they can fashion this and actually dictate and make sure the links / relationships happen.
- 4.5.10 The street scales and play on the move is all designed to reinforce safe and secure routes. Looking at connectivity and activity. Making and sometimes remaking routes in-between through the borough.
- 4.5.11 The destination scale is where the play area is not just appealing to the residents in that location but appealing to the wider neighbourhood and the city.
- 4.5.12 The officer explained engagement with residents has not been in the formal setting but a series of walks and learning about the spaces from the residents who really know the space. Then feeding that back into the design process.
- 4.5.13 Regarding maintenance, it is critical that what they produce is robust and maintainable. Although it can be innovative it must also be sustainable for the long term. Ensuring sustainability is achieved through early engagement with colleagues in housing services, gateway process (their governance) and the new build specification. (This is an iterative document which enables them to feed back in all the lessons learnt.) The officer pointed out they are currently on version six of the document which has incorporated the new child friendly SPD.
- 4.5.14 The officer pointed out from phases 1 and 2 of Kings Crescent they learnt from having closed spaces so for phase 2 this was altered.
- 4.5.15 In phase 2 a play street was built to link the street to the square and this has become a destination. As people are use the route and it starts to open it up it will be used more by the residents on the estate. It can be turned into a space that can take several different activities and can change throughout the course of the day. Moving away from a very mono functional space to create a balance between the natural and fabricated elements.

- 4.5.16 Phases 3 and 4 will again incorporate the learning phase 1 and 2. Recapping that phase 1 was the play street, phase 2 was linking in the square and phase 3 and 4 it will be the courtyards. After applying the learning these have been amended to be freer flowing (where the existing building allows that to happen) enabling it to be free and open to the public.
- 4.5.17 The officer cited several examples where play has been incorporated into developments. At Tower Court estate this takes into consideration a very functional requirement such as managing rainwater. The officer explained rather than just running into the drains. They are ushered through slow sustainable urban drainage schemes that soaked into the ground. This takes a very functional requirement and turns it into a play opportunity. In this phase they have a series of play bridges across the urban drainage channels. Taking a very functional element and integrating it into the play landscapes and public realm.
- 4.5.18 At Frampton Park estate they have a series of different areas of very different characters responding to the way that the younger people on the estate already use it. The names, 'the yard' and 'the island', came from the young people on the estate. This is used as a way of generating the new spaces.
- 4.5.19 At the Woodberry Down development this has slightly more conventional play equipment, but they are contained within areas that are integrated with the public realm. They have become part of the route round the reservoir. These have ended up becoming pockets and routes that are hugely popular and a destination. Appealing to a broad range of people.
- 4.5.20 Marion Court demonstrates the combination of a destination space that links through with new routes to connect older estates as a continuous route. This uses the changing level of the site to generate different play opportunities whilst being mindful of separating out noisy and quiet play. Creating quieter areas as you get closer to the buildings. Play manifests in many different ways which can be quiet and noisy, and this has tried to accommodate all those considerations in spaces that are multi-generational.

4.6 Questions Answers and Discussions

- (i) **Members referred to social inclusion and the Woodberry Down development pointing out it has an abundance of greenery which has been replicated in new builds. For Members an area of concern with regeneration was the introduction of large elements of private ownership. Highlighting Kings Crescent as an example. Members pointed out although this has a play street it has very hard landscaping and a garden that is closed off to children who live less than 100 meters away. This space is reserved for people who live in the development despite it being a walk-through garden. Members wanted clarity that the planning guidance and SPDs will ensure things like this no longer occur moving forward.**

In response the Deputy Strategic Planning Manager from LBH explained this type of issue was at the forefront of their minds when they were developing the guidance. This is also an issue that has been raised previously by residents of

Hackney. Developers have also been seeking guidance in relation to their designs about creating spaces that are not segregated. This comes down to ensuring there are no fences and barriers put up for no obvious reason. Planning provides guidance in the SPD around what this means. This is particularly important for the doorstep scale. As often they see fences being put up or barriers introduced that are not necessary. These can create division within the public realm. The office confirmed to Members there is guidance in the document about this.

- (ii) Members referred to children and commented when we make reference to children this is often thought about as young children and play. Members highlighted one of the age groups most neglected are older children / teenagers / young people who also need their own space to socialise too. Members acknowledged the borough is good at catering for young children and the play spaces for under 12s are brilliant. But there is a lack of space for teenagers, and they often get forgotten. As a result, they can gather in places that disturb local residents. Then they are moved on or they inhabit the spaces originally intended for younger children. Member urged for the child friendly places to also think about teenagers. Members pointed out from a health perspective it is good for their health and wellbeing to get them out of their houses and away from computer games. Members wanted to see child friendly spaces incorporated for this age group as well as younger children on their doorsteps too, to enable parent supervision.**
- (iii) Members also commented that the play areas shown in the presentation looked like planned and somewhat dangerous. Members were of the view a children’s play should be creative and innovative. Members pointed out they liked to play streets for this reason because children could draw over the pavements. Member queried if the SPD would work for the Victorian/Georgian streets of Hackney because there seem to be a focus on estates.**
- (iv) Members queried if the designs illustrated were very child friendly or more of a designer’s influence. Members asked about the dynamics, creativity, and innovation that children want and queried if children were involved in the design of these spaces.**

In response the Deputy Strategic Planning Manager from LBH explained they recognised the breadth of ages and the different needs / requirements within them. The challenge for the guidance is to acknowledge that difference. But agreed it was important to consider the distinct needs of older children and young people. In the document they have tried to make distinctions about guidance that is relevant for young people.

Following feedback from the consultation they made a specific principle for young people and teenagers; this is principle 7 (making spaces that young people want to be). The update to this principle was as a direct result of the consultation feedback. Picking up on the point to make sure the guidance is not too child focused.

When selecting the examples to showcase Planning were keen to demonstrate moving away from ‘typical play provision’ and showing creative examples. With

the elements of freedom to the public realm. The feedback in the consultation also mentioned the importance of young people having the freedom and risk to explore the environment. This was aimed at getting the right balance.

In response to the involvement of young people in the design and development. The office explained the examples selected received positive feedback about their engagement process and the outcomes for the children living in that location or using the space.

- (v) Members referred to children and play space being at a premium in Hackney and suggested developments should prioritise balconies more. Members asked if the council could adopt a policy that states all new homes must have balconies or a street in the sky layout. Highlighting the latter helps people who live on higher floors to have a play space where parents could monitor and check on them. This is essentially a street but with no motor vehicles on it. Members pointed out there are number of flats in the borough that do not have balconies.**
- (vi) In relation to design standards and where areas are being regenerated. Members pointed out residents can be living with things like temporary lights for a long period of time and this can reduce the amount of time pedestrians (including children) have crossing the road. Members asked when making significant changes do developer consider the time families and people will need to cross the road.**

In response the Deputy Strategic Planning Manager from LBH explained in the guidance they do not have further detail around balconies, but they do try to stress the importance about the space outside the front door to play. Especially where they have a walkway, decking etc to make sure it is child friendly.

The Head of Regeneration Strategic Design from LBH added all new build homes must have external space. It is in regulation. Upper floors will have balconies. All the new build homes currently being delivered in regeneration, if not on the ground floor will have a balcony. Therefore, the desire to see all flats have balconies is being delivered.

- (vii) Members asked for clarification if this related to all private and council property build?**

The Head of Regeneration Strategic Design from LBH confirmed it applies to all private and council developments.

The Head of Planning and Building Control from LBH added this is in reference to private amenity space so there is a requirement incorporated in the Local Plan and the London plan. This requires a minimum amount of external private amenity space to be provided. This has been particularly key during lock down and the pandemic. In addition, they have the social inclusion element that is in the Local Plan adopted last year. The Local Plan builds very robust policies around inclusive design, and this stretches across all developments.

- (viii) Members referred to the London Plan and asked if it contradicts any of the Council's delivery for a child friendly borough. And if it did, what were the Council's plans to mitigate them.**

The Deputy Strategic Planning Manager from LBH advised there are no obvious contradictions between the Local Plan and the London Plan. There is support for the Council's plans and proposals for the borough in the guidance and supplementary planning document.

The officer explained the Local Plan in Hackney was developed in tandem to the London Plan. The two plans are very well aligned in terms of the policies particularly around the LP 50 and child play space.

The Mayor of London has developed their own guidance on child friendly design which draws on many of the examples in Hackney. Therefore, it acts as a support for both of the policies in the Local Plan and guidance.

- (ix) Members commented that Millfields play area in the early years had a sand area. This was removed and then more recently reinstated. At the park this and the swings remain very popular. Members were of the view play is about movement using sand, water and softer features. Whereas the play areas demonstrated in the presentation look like hard harsh environments with pavements. Members expressed adventure play areas were good too because they have a lot of wood construction, the children enjoy playing on them and they can make their own play. Members queried if these designs enabled children to be creative and create their own play**

In response the Head of Regeneration Strategic Design from LBH agreed it was about balance. The officer confirmed they do have some open space for this and that there needs to be a balance between what is prescribed and what is allowed to happen. The officer pointed out the illustration may look hard, but all the sites are very varied and there is opportunities to appropriate them in different ways.

The officer explained the amount of play area is prescribed through the planning process. For areas with prescribed play, it can be difficult to get the balance between structured and unstructured play. Pointing out the landscape needs to be able to develop over time. This will not be perfect on day one and they should be allowed to develop and change over time.

- (x) Members asked what the Council is doing to put play on estates with no play equipment. Highlighting a small estate in Kings Park Ward that has a grass area in the middle which could benefit from some play equipment.**
- (xi) Members also asked how the council is engaging with its partners particularly housing associations about play areas on housing association estates. Members added given the volume of housing they own in the borough and that some of their equipment is dated. They would benefit from being upgraded and some innovation.**
- (xii) Members commended the schemes illustrated in the presentations. Members were pleased to hear that the learning from previous schemes**

was being applied to the new schemes developed. Particularly that nosier play is being taken into consideration and located away from households. From previous experience Members noted a good park was built for children but the location and noise angered local residents. Members were pleased the council was thinking about the noise element and residents. Members wanted consideration to be given to not just updating play equipment but providing play provision where there is none. Members also wanted to make sure play equipment meets the needs of all children. Pointing out there are a few estates where the play equipment is aimed at the under 5-year-olds and not older children.

In response the Head of Building Maintenance from LBH explained one of the ways to get play equipment can be through the resident improvement fund for estates. The funding is used after consulting with residents about the improvements they wish to see to their estate. Installing play equipment could be one of the suggestions. The second route could be through a major refurbishment scheme on the estate. However, the first route is usually the most likely option.

In relation to the question about housing associations the officer was unable to confirm if the council worked in partnership with housing associations to update their play equipment.

The Interim Director, Regeneration from LBH added regarding new housing developments by housing associations they must comply with the same planning rules and guidance like any other developments. The officer pointed out the real challenge was maintaining existing estates. Therefore, for every new build it will meant that there is more play equipment to look after.

In response to Member’s query about how the Council is working with registered providers about improving their play offer on existing developments. The officer advised he would speak to his housing strategy colleagues and provide a written response to the Commission.

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| ACTION | The Interim Director, Regeneration to provide a written response about how the Council is working with registered providers about improving their play offer on existing developments. |
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- (xiii) Members commented they were pleased to see the second phase of Kings Crescent would incorporate the SPD in full. However, Members reiterated there seemed to be very little soft landscaping and play areas. The play street area already had a hard landscape and there was a deficit of greenery e.g. grass. Members commented they would like to see the second phase incorporate some form of a green element.**

In response the Head of Regeneration Strategic Design from LBH advised for planting they could have done more in phases 1 and 2. However, the use of grass is challenging because this is quite a dense housing development and grass needs very good light and high levels of sunlight. There are regeneration schemes with large areas of grass, and some are more successful than others. Therefore, for schemes they are slightly weary of grass but not planting. The officer also pointed out that Clissold Park was directly opposite Kings Crescent for the access to a grassed area.

The officer informed there is not a lot of grass in the next phase because of the challenges outlined above in relation to dense developments. The last thing the council wanted was failed grass and muddy patches. The officer highlighted a grassed area was recently replaced in Dalston because it became a big brown patch due to not getting enough sunlight. The officer pointed out this can be perceived as a lack of council maintenance.

- (xiv) Members reference timber structures on estates and referred to an estate in Dalston that has some timber infrastructure which is out of date. Members highlighted residents wanted a like for like replacement or repair but were informed this was not possible and as a local authority it no longer provides that equipment. This was replaced with metal and hard board apparatus. Residents were concerned about sustainability in respect of this decision. Members wanted to know will they still be using timber as well as metal infrastructure and asked if the environmental impact were considered and factored in.**

The Head of Building Maintenance from LBH explained in relation to the use of metal and hard board the council has found some serious problems with the timber equipment installed in recent years. This has not lasted long, and it is very expensive to replace. In addition, the council has a limited amount of funds available to carry out repairs and replacement work. Resulting in decisions being made to move away from timber. The Council is aware this has been controversial but accepted they could be more transparent and communicate better about the specific amount they to spend on estates. Secondly there is the testing regime of timber equipment to assess the inside of the timber and its condition. It can become an unsafe piece of equipment if it has rotted internally, and this has not been identified. It was noted that previously timber was implemented without proper consideration of the treatment or how it can be preserved moving forward. Today there may be some more modern options that can be considered.

- (xv) Members reiterated the use of sand and water and highlighted they are good for sensory and there is so much children of all ages can do with it.**
- (xvi) Members pointed out Frampton Park estate has endured 4 different building sites. This brings issues like temporary traffic lights, drilling and areas becoming in accessible. Although residents understand the objectives what efforts are being made to protect children in areas being regenerated.**
- (xvii) Members pointed out play streets can work really well and things like filtered permeability. Members queried if there was thinking about where the traffic is diverted to. Members pointed out many children live on main**

roads as well. Taking into consideration all the roads being closed and turned into play streets what consideration is being given to the children living on main roads and potentially having more congestion around their area.

In response the Head of Regeneration Strategic Design from LBH agreed building sites come with disruption. However, the council works in collaboration with the contractor around the logistics of getting in and out of the site and where the holdings are located. The officer pointed out this is part of the tender process, and the contractor's reply to this consideration helps to determine which contractor is selected to do the work. This helps to identify which contracts are more responsible and who has thought this through. Although the officer pointed out it is inevitable there will be disruption. But with early planning and communication about the change to everyone and how long it will run for.

- (xviii) Members pointed out there is timber equipment in Haggerston Park that has been in place over 20 years and still in very good condition. This can be used by multi age groups. This is environmentally friendly and very useful.**
- (xix) Members recognised the children's SPD has only been in place 6 month but asked about the public reaction to the new SPD. Members asked if there is an internal Board that oversees the planning applications to make sure council applications are meeting the required standard. Members asked how the council ensures the plans meet the borough's vision?**

The Deputy Strategic Planning Manager from LBH confirmed the guidance was adopted at the end of June. The council is currently exploring the opportunity to set up a Hackney young people advisers board. This would be a group of young people that could potentially help guide developments.

There is a design review panel, this is part of the planning process. Within the panel they have the design expertise to feed into the project. They also have within the Conservation and Urban Design team knowledge about the skills needed and there is the Regeneration Strategic Design team. Therefore, within the council they do have expertise. In addition, they are exploring the use of the Young Place Adviser model as an opportunity to formalise the input from young people in the planning process. The council sees this as a real opportunity coming out of the guidance.

- (xx) Members referred to the Millfield play area and pointed out this was an example of what can happen if there is not adequate consultation or engagement with the local TRA / TMO and residents who were closest to the play area. Members pointed out there was also some hanging plants put up with no forward plan for maintenance. Members highlighted the key is to have the involvements and engage with local people. Members referred to play streets and how they work well because parents were involved.**

In response the Cabinet Member for Families, Early Years, Parks and Play highlighted the staff in the Parks team put in a lot of effort to engage about the play area. The difficulties were who they were engaging with and balancing the

different desires and different needs expressed from the various groups (Park users and estate users). There has been further work to engage to mitigate the impact.

The Cabinet Members acknowledged there is learning they can take away from this process. Notwithstanding there have been some benefits as well as disappointments, the Cabinet Member anticipates this will end in a good place for the residents on the estate.

Members agreed there was consultation but advised some of the points made slipped through the net and as a result not all views were taken into consideration.

5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 5.1 The Chair informed the Commission the minutes of the previous meeting was not available for approval. This was due to the short period between this LiH meeting and the last LiH meeting.
- 5.2 The minutes will be available at the next meeting of the scrutiny commission.

6 Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission- 2020/2021 Work Programme

- 6.1 The Chair referred to the work programme suggestions in the agenda
- 6.2 The Chair explained the work programme suggestions came from various meetings the chair and vice chair held with stakeholders to get their views.
- 6.3 In reference to the work programme the Chair proposed the following items from the list of work programme suggestions for the municipal year.
 - 6.3.1 A joint piece with Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission to look at the housing options for young people leaving care. This would assess the Council's duty and provision to provide suitable permanent accommodation for young people leaving care.
 - 6.3.2 To look at temporary accommodation for Hackney residents in private sector housing out of the borough. There is concern about the conditions of properties Hackney residents are being housed in outside the borough and the state of repair. A look at if the Council can do more to assist residents in private sector housing get repairs carried out and help ensure a better standard of accommodation.
 - 6.3.3 To look at the private sector housing licensing scheme. This is currently operating in 3 wards in Hackney. This would be a discussion to exploring extending the scheme across the borough.
 - 6.3.4 To look at fire safety arrangement to ensure the council has the appropriate arrangements in place to check the fire safety of buildings (this is the landlord responsibility).

- 6.3.5 The Chair recommended the Commission's in-depth piece of work looked at the environment and public realm. To look at climate change and buildings. A look at the Council's work to meet its net zero carbon target in relation to housing, building, and planning in the borough. To ensure they are as green as possible. Covering retrofitting, building materials used, insulation and energy efficiency.
- 6.3.6 To look at the Council's Energy Strategy and consider the following:
 A) resident engagement and consultation to consider how resident views are being captured.
 B) look at how this is embedded within planning policy to shape all future developments in the borough and the material used.
- 6.3.7 To look at electric car charging points. A look at the electric charging costs and how the communal electric charging points will be provided to encourage the shift to electric cars.
- 6.3.8 To look at the refurbishment and the provision of leisure services for Kings Hall leisure centre.
- 6.3.9 The Chair also recommended continuing with their monitoring trust and confidence and the progress of the commitments made in the Mayor of London Crime and Policing Plan by MOPAC and the work of the local MPS.
- 6.4 Members asked if it would be possible to include in the work programme looking at domestic violence and violence against women and girls.

The Chair advised it might not be possible to fit this into the work programme for this municipal year.

- 6.5 Members agreed the work programme suggestions outlined above.

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| RESOLVED: | Members approved the work programme. |
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7 Any Other Business

- 7.1 None.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00 - 9.10 pm