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London Borough of Hackney  
Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission  
Municipal Year 2021/22  
Date of meeting Tuesday, 26 October 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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<b>Chair</b>	<b>Cllr Sharon Patrick</b>
<b>Councillors in Attendance:</b>	<b>Cllr Clare Joseph, Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Ajay Chauhan</b>
<b>Apologies:</b>	<b>Cllr Soraya Adejare</b>
<b>Officers in Attendance</b>	<b>Katie Glasgow, Strategic Planning Manager, Rotimi Ajilore, Head of Procurement, Mary Aladegbola, Head of Energy and Carbon Management, Aled Richards, Strategic Director Sustainability and Public Realm, Racheal Weaver, Planning Policy Officer, Andrew Amoah, Project Manager, Barry Coughlan, Major Project Planner</b>
<b>Other People in Attendance</b>	<b>Cllr Vincent Stops, Chair of Planning Committee, Cllr Guy Nicholson, Deputy Mayor for Housing Supply, planning, culture and inclusive economy, Cllr Mete Coban, Cabinet Member energy, waste, transport and public realm</b>
<b>Members of the Public</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	<b>Tracey Anderson</b> <b>☎ 0208 356 3312</b> <b>✉ tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk</b>

## **Councillor Sharon Patrick in the Chair**

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

- 1.1 The Chair updated on the meeting etiquette and notified meeting attendees the meeting was being recorded and live streamed.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence from Cllr Adejare
- 1.3 No apologies for lateness
- 1.4 Virtual attendance from Cllrs: M Can Ozsen and Penny Wrout.
- 1.5 Virtual attendance of officers invited to the meeting.

### **2 Urgent Items/ Order of Business**

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

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### **3 Declaration of Interest**

3.1 None.

### **4 Energy Strategy and Energy Systems**

4.1 The Chair opened the meeting and explained the Scrutiny Panel's initial session reviewed the council's governance and co-ordination of the net zero carbon work across the council. Following on from that session each scrutiny commission would review the net zero carbon work within their remit.

4.2 This item is an overview of the Council's Energy strategy, its objectives and the energy systems needed to meet the Council's net zero carbon targets.

4.3 This session will cover:

1. Review of the Council's energy strategy and the road map to achieving net zero carbon by 2040 for Hackney council emissions.
2. Consider and explore the trade-off between new technologies and going greener against higher bills/cost implications.
3. Looking at local planning policy in relation to achieving net zero carbon targets and sustainable development.

4.4 The Chair welcomed the following officers and cabinet members to the meeting

- Cllr Guy Nicholson Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for housing supply, planning, culture and inclusive economy
- Cllr Mete Coban Cabinet Member for energy, waste, transport and public realm
- Cllr Vincent Stops, Chair of Planning Committee
- Aled Richards, Strategic Director, Sustainability and Public Realm
- Rotimi Ajilore, Head of Procurement
- Mary Aladegbola, Head of Energy and Carbon Management
- Katie Glasgow, Strategic Planning Manager
- Barry Coughlan, Major Project Planner
- Rachael Weaver, Planning Policy Officer
- Andrew Amoah, Project Manager

4.5 The scrutiny commission received presentations from the Chair of Planning Committee followed by Planning Services and the Energy and Carbon Management Team from London Borough of Hackney. The Chair thanked officers for their hard work and reports submitted to the commission in the agenda.

4.6 The Chair of Planning Committee Councillor Vincent Stops commenced his presentation about the use of engineered timber in constructions as a possible solution to achieving the net zero carbon targets. The main points from the presentation were:

- 4.6.1 From the global production of carbon, 8% of the worlds carbon is connected to the cement that goes into the worlds concrete. Resulting in a large proportion of carbon being associated with the construction industry.
  - 4.6.2 Hackney Borough we have the largest timber constructed building. Instead of the classic construction material of concrete. The construction material is engineered timber and can be built up to 10 storey. It is also renewable.
  - 4.6.3 This timber sequestrates so it holds carbon in its structure for the next 60 years. This type of construction material is available for use now.
  - 4.6.4 This material can be sourced from well managed forests. There are a number of these forests in Europe and across the world.
  - 4.6.5 The planning process is flawed in the sense that it is concerned with energy operational carbon. Although it was acknowledged the Planning Service does a lot of good in terms of sustainability.
  - 4.6.6 There is a lot of focus on water, energy, climate and managing the future of our borough. There is also concern about the volume of heat used and cooling used in those buildings.
  - 4.6.7 The planning process is not concerned with embodied carbon. This is a huge gap for two reasons a) historically it has been difficult to gauge how much is involved over the lifetime and b) the industry is not interested in understanding these issues. They would like to continue with the same materials they have used for the last 1600-1700 years.
  - 4.6.8 However, building regulations are changing and will look at how much carbon is embodied in building. But the planning process needs to address these issues.
  - 4.6.9 Hackney is leading in the use of this material across the world. The single architect in this field is in Hackney.
  - 4.6.10 The second building picture displayed to the commission will be the largest building in the world made of cross laminated timber. This will be the first timber office constructed since the great fire of London.
  - 4.6.11 The Chair of planning committee acknowledged there are fire safety issues, but the Government misunderstands the difference between fire performance and combustibility. This needs to be worked through and the planning system needs to work through how to encourage more timber renewable buildings.
  - 4.6.12 From site visits to construction sites using this material the Chair of Planning Committee highlighted worker like this material and it is less dusty. The neighbours like the material because only 20 vehicles arrive on site instead of several concrete missing vehicles.
  - 4.6.13 For this reason, there should be more construction in timber and protection to use this material.
- 4.7 Planning Team Presentation

- 4.7.1 The Strategic Director for Sustainability and Public Realm commenced the presentation and made the following opening points:
- 4.7.2 The purpose of the low carbon development programme and action plan is to secure low carbon buildings and infrastructure via borough planning by 2030. The aim is for the local plan to have robust policies and guidance that support low carbon development and adaptation to climate change.
- 4.7.3 Across London Councils workstreams Hackney Borough is the lead on low carbon development.
- 4.7.4 Ensuring communities are part of the climate action mitigation plan and understand how the various climate action measures form part of the coordinated plan is crucial.
- 4.7.5 The Council is confident most residents in the borough are supportive of the work to address climate change. The council is aware it needs to tap into this support.
- 4.7.6 Planning has a pivotal role as it brings together a whole range of climate change initiatives such as green infrastructure, play streets, sustainable transport, green economy, green building construction, living roofs, walls and green energy low carbon new development into a spatial plan.
- 4.7.7 The Council want this to be information that residents can relate to and understand how all these initiatives fit together to create a sustainable community for the future.
- 4.7.8 To ensure they have community buy in and addressing the climate emergency. It is crucial they develop innovative techniques with communities especially the hard-to-reach communities. It will be key to hear from the silent majority and those who feel excluded.
- 4.7.9 The draft action plan will aim to ensure a consistent approach to community engagement and low carbon development policies and spatial planning across Hackney and all London boroughs.
- 4.7.10 In relation to Governance London Councils in partnership with the Transport Committee set up 7 working groups and each have a lead authority. The working groups cover the following area: retrofit, low carbon transport, renewable energy, reducing consumption emissions, building a green economy and creating a greener resilient London. All these working groups will have action plans associated with them. Leading to a borough action plan for Hackney and other boroughs.
- 4.7.11 Within the London Councils governance structure are officer groups. Effectively the lead officer for all these work streams feed into the climate change mitigation across London.
- 4.7.12 The officer explained the low carbon development work stream intrinsically links into other workstreams like retrofit and creating a resilient green London.

- 4.7.13 In Hackney they have emulated the same structure as London Councils. There is an officer group in Hackney which oversee all the seven work streams.
- 4.7.14 In terms of the internal governance the seven workstreams in Hackney feed into London Councils seven work streams. This feed into a strategic officer climate group which in turn feeds into the Environmental Sustainability Board. The membership has been refreshed with senior officers of the council and Cabinet Members of the Council. This board will have a key role in developing the climate action plan over the next few months.
- 4.7.15 Hackney Borough is in a positive position in relation to green development due to having several talented sustainable thinking architects in the borough, who are keen to push green architecture within Hackney.
- 4.7.16 The presentation was continued by the Strategic Planning Manager from Planning Services. Covering low carbon development and the action plan objectives. Highlighting the emerging actions and the role of planning in achieving net zero carbon. The following main points were made:
- 4.7.17 Low carbon is not just about individual developments but also about the wider programmes and the collective influence to ensure all developments are low carbon.
- 4.7.18 The core purpose of planning is to create places that enable people to live happy and healthy lives. It is not possible to think about this without thinking about climate change, adaptation, and resilience measures through spatial plans.
- 4.7.19 It is also key to ensure communities are engaged as part of the process.
- 4.7.20 The low carbon action plan is a combination of influence and impact.
- 4.7.21 The first area is control and influence. Building regulations set the initial baseline and in London we have a good number of policies on achieving low carbon and zero carbon. This gives planning the control and influence to make change.
- 4.7.22 The local context is guided by the adopted local plan, and this requires all new development to be zero carbon. This goes beyond the London Plan policy. The requirement in Hackney's local plan reflects local circumstances.
- 4.7.23 In Hackney they have a large number of small-scale developments, and they want to ensure they make a difference. Where a development cannot meet the requirements, contributions are made to the carbon off set fund. To date the council has negotiated contributions totally £4.5 million to this fund.
- 4.7.24 There are also policies related to existing developments ensuring the reuse and extension of building achieve the maximum feasible reductions in climate emissions whilst being sensitive to character and heritage considerations.
- 4.7.25 Rising to the challenge of climate change is a theme throughout the plan. The LP33 has a range of other policies linked to promoting climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience measures.

- 4.7.26 The Council can influence through area-based plans. In Hackney they are producing several area-based plans for key growth areas e.g., Shoreditch, Stamford Hill alongside major town centre plans for Dalston and Hackney Central.
- 4.7.27 There will be further opportunities to develop policy and guidance on climate change adaptations and mitigation to respond to local circumstances.
- 4.7.28 There is also a decision-making function. This is linked to the area of innovation. Planning has the power to influence at the pre-application stage. This provides the opportunity to engage with developers and architects early in the process. They work with them to look at the designs to really innovate and inspire to deliver low carbon or zero carbon.
- 4.7.29 In relation to economic benefits the key driver for this work stream is the green economy incorporating fuel poverty. Thus, ensuring new developments are zero carbon is important where they have ambitious affordable housing targets. In addition, delivering low carbon and zero carbon developments are expected to make a difference.
- 4.7.30 In terms of impact the Council is aware in Hackney borough the vast majority of Hackney's built environment will exist in 2100. These buildings are already standing. They make a significant contribution to carbon emissions. Equally 10% of emissions come from the construction process. In London there is a need to deliver 52,000 new homes per year and this is equivalent to 1300 in Hackney borough. This is in addition to commercial development and the development of the infrastructure to support that growth.
- 4.7.31 In terms of the scope of what they can achieve, the first consideration for zero carbon targets is to look at how a building performs when built. This is embedded within the planning policies and the London Plan. In Hackney they have their own ambitious targets.
- 4.7.32 An area they need to focus on is the differences across boroughs and where there is scope to undertake research to implement policies. Then ensure they can be delivered.
- 4.7.33 Planning would welcome looking at carbon that goes beyond building materials and considers the manufacturing and construction process. Linked to the circular economy, whole life carbon assessment and carbon emissions resulting from materials and construction and the use of the building over its life span including demolition disposal.
- 4.7.34 In terms of how they will get to low carbon. This is linked to the following actions. They are:
- 4.7.35 **Collaborate**
- Working across policy, development management, building control - creating understanding, a common approach, measurable outcomes
  - Create dialogue with communities and industries to understand barriers and opportunities

- Establish the links to other climate programmes, particularly retrofit, low carbon transport, and resilient and green
- Cross boundary initiatives.

4.7.36 Hackney does look at policies across London and each borough develops their own local policy. But there is scope to look at cross boundary issues and consider where they can develop sub regional planning guidance.

4.7.37 The actions for collaborate are:

- Undertake an audit of borough local plans to understand the difference and the reasons for the differences.
- Produce and publish a community engagement guidance document.

4.7.38 **Innovate** – This is to develop low carbon research and guidance to enable boroughs to develop low and zero carbon policies, implement policy and monitor delivery. This is aimed at commissioning research around viability technical research on new technologies. There is a need to understand the constraints and barriers around viability and potential issues with compliance with building regulations. This involves understanding potential conflicts around the objectives and the low carbon operational development and how to address these issues.

4.7.39 The actions emerging under this area are:

- To develop best practice guidance in decision making and how to implement policy. It is not only important to have the policy but also be able to implement the policy.
- To monitor what is built and ensure it is in accordance with planning policy, how much of the development approved is low carbon, how much is approved through carbon off-setting and what is being achieved through the fabric of buildings.
- There is potential to look at adopting agreed performance indicators.
- Inspiring and pushing the boundaries to establish a recognised scheme or an awards scheme to show case low carbon development / zero carbon.

4.7.40 **Simplify** – The need to balance what can be achieved at pan London and at borough level. Where possible and practical develop a pan London approach.

- Simplify by establishing pan-London approaches where appropriate
- Push for effective national policy and legislation in planning and building control.

4.7.41 Actions emerging under this area are:

- To develop a pan London approach on aspects of low carbon development not covered by Pan London. This will include looking at policy guidance for area-based plans.
- Ensuring effective lobbying for national planning and building control reform. Identifying a forward plan of opportunities to respond to consultations in a timely manner.

4.7.42 **Upskill** – this is an area where many boroughs are facing challenges.

- Boost understanding and skills within local authorities
- Create confidence amongst professionals on what can be achieved
- Develop essential skills/jobs for green economy.

4.7.43 Actions emerging under this area are:

To make recommendations to boroughs to increase skills looking at various training initiatives and programmes for councillors and officers.

4.7.44 The key point this is a partnership approach. There are many different communities and organisations that will need to be involved.

4.7.45 The Council is early in its journey in developing the action plan. They have established their working and steering groups. A draft action plan is in place which they hope to finalise and agree towards the end of the year.

4.8 A presentation from Hackney Council's Energy and Carbon Management team. The Head of Energy and Carbon Management commenced the presentation and made the following main points:

4.8.1 The energy strategy document supports the management of the council's assets in alignment with the climate emergency declaration. This document identifies the key carbon footprints resulting from council activities and where the council can influence.

4.8.2 The strategy identifies the policy levers and intervention opportunities, which have been modelled with costing and monitoring options to give a roadmap to 2040.

4.8.3 The suggested interventions aim to balance not only the feasibility of implementation, but also the severity of the climate crisis so the council can understand the challenges they are facing.

4.8.4 The strategy highlights the scope of coverage. This covers scope 1 and 2 emissions across gas and electricity use. In council owned homes and buildings and the fleet of vehicles. It also covers scope 3 emissions across embodied carbon arising from developments, staff travel as well as the borough wide emissions. Especially in homes where they have some influence.

4.8.5 The strategic core areas identified within the strategy:

4.8.6 Monitoring and tracking the systems that the council owns to ensure they can be measured and manage the changes being made. Remaining flexible to changes especially as technology and the information changes in a fast-evolving sphere. This is expected to include better data collection and intelligence.

4.8.7 The Council is also aware there is a policy and funding gap they need to address and that they need to take a fabric first approach. Ensuring that energy efficiency is at the forefront of the strategy. Alongside renewable energy generation.



- 4.8.8 The Council is aware they need to move away from gas and going forward they would want to start trailing fuel switching where the opportunity arises. After 2025 gas boilers should only be purchased in exceptional circumstances. This commitment is made within the policy document.
- 4.8.9 The council needs to decarbonise its heat. The council also needs to electrify its fleet. The bulk of this will potentially be through electrification and will require the council to have an electrical infrastructure that is robust and able to cope.
- 4.8.10 The council has identified that a power purchase agreement is one of the ways they want to meet their electricity and supply. This is to ensure they can add additionality to the national grid.
- 4.8.11 Embodied carbon is important but it's difficult to reduce. However, the council has made a commitment to include this within the strategy too. The council anticipates that a large proportion of their residual emissions by 2040 will come from embodied carbon.
- 4.8.12 Between now and 2025 they will be identifying the measures they will need to take. Where they can start trailing retrofit programmes and fuel switching, they want to start doing this. The expectation is the rate of retrofitting and decarbonising heat will increase up to 2040.
- 4.8.13 The actions to achieve the delivery pathway are:
- Emissions from new development: Implementing policy to incorporate district energy requirement into appropriate planning sites and identifying policy levers to support the adoption.
  - Project Identification: Identifying bid ready projects e.g., through the Retrofit Accelerator Scheme
  - Monitoring and Metrics Development: Develop guidance documents for metering, monitoring, energy performance management. Develop carbon metrics to capture co-benefits of carbon measures alongside financial metric.
- 4.8.14 It was pointed out they need to have bid ready projects because financing is a real challenge. They want to be able to take advantage of funding streams. To do this the council will need to develop guidance documents not just for metrics but also for monitoring energy performance. As well as capturing and considering co-benefits. Looking beyond carbon and financial metrics.
- 4.8.15 Further actions include:
- Heat decarbonisation measures to include a mix of heat pump and district heat systems
  - Low carbon infrastructure development: electrical infrastructure and district heat schemes
  - Solar PV rollout: delivery of large-scale Solar PV rollout integrated into our PPA objective and other decarbonisation technologies
  - Fabric first approach through the retrofitting programme: A retrofit rate of 9,000 homes and 206,000m<sup>2</sup> by 2040 will need to be achieved. This is against the backdrop of a complex portfolio and diverse building stock with varying tenancy types, building types and usage patterns.

- 4.8.16 The electrification of heat is the way to get to net zero carbon. They have removed hydrogen as a heat source because the market for hydrogen is not well developed.
- 4.8.17 The Government recently released a heat and building strategy and a decision on hydrogen is expected to be made by 2026.
- 4.8.18 In relation to district heat systems that are communal they have the potential to be swapped for renewable technology because they remain technology agnostic. In the GLA hierarchy of heat it remains one of the top priorities when it comes to heat decarbonisation.
- 4.8.19 A low carbon infrastructure is needed to increase the amount of solar PV that the council generates.
- 4.8.20 The criteria for success in 2040 was outlined to be.
- Improved understanding around cost and effectiveness of the technological measures available
  - Achieve a retrofit rate of 500 homes and 10,000m<sup>2</sup> per year, replace most vehicles with EV and fuel switch 2,000 homes and 50,000m<sup>2</sup> per year. Switching homes from gas to low carbon technology and BTsoc pumps.
  - Data gathering and monitoring on the effectiveness of our actions
  - National policy
  - Collaboration: We are in a similar position to most other LA and there is opportunity to collaborate and build capacity.
- 4.8.21 During 2020-21 the council will explore the actions they need to do. By 2023 they need to be in a position where they start to adopt the actions explored.
- 4.8.22 Community engagement will start at the adoption phase with the PPA piloting programmes. They will identify the projects they need to include in the retrofit plan, what vehicles they need to switch and what a Solar PV programme would look like.
- 4.8.23 By 2023 they want the plans to be fully integrated into business as usual. Peak rollout should be by 2027-2030. Seeing a significant drop in emission by 2030.
- 4.8.24 The work has already commenced, and the council has developed an energy master plan. They know the areas where they want to develop district heat schemes. The council's asset management strategy is to EPC C. However, they need to be targeting EPC B to be in line with the London retrofit plan. There are opportunities to reduce demand across homes and non-domestic assets.
- 4.8.25 The risks and challenges were outlined to be:
- Complex Portfolio
  - Residential building Typologies and Tenures
  - Technological Readiness and the ability for the council to adopt this on mass
  - There are existing assets in good/operational condition that they would not wish to start to retrofit

- Funding
- Expenditure vs Savings. There will be some savings that will not come to the council
- They need to improve user awareness. The council recognises heat pumps in some places will have a visual impact and grid limitations will also have an impact
- Coordinated approach to project scoping and delivery needed to accelerate of the roll out of low carbon projects will decrease.

4.8.26 There will be electric grid limitations, but the council wants to be ahead of this to identify where they need grid strengthening.

4.8.27 The impact for the local authority were outlined to be:

- Potential increase in energy cost is likely to be associated with electrification of heat but overall benefits is focus of communication
- Lower carbon emissions would yield savings on utility bills, this is a key benefit of low carbon technology alongside reduced carbon emissions. There is compelling evidence on financial benefit of energy efficiency, retrofitting and low carbon technology. This needs to be balanced with potential and perceived high costs.
- Engaging with residents over retrofit work will be difficult unless they can see how the work fits into the country's wider net zero ambitions.

4.8.28 The Governments heat and building strategy is committed to making heat pump technology cheaper and taking away some of the levies on electricity and putting it on gas to address some of the disparity.

4.8.29 The net zero strategy links into Hackney's climate action plan. The climate action plan has a communication plan where they have mapped out the points at which they will communicate and engage with residents.

4.8.30 The internal governance structures - as outlined in the planning presentation - are there to ensure the actions being disseminated are robust and that they escalate issues where necessary.

4.8.31 The Cabinet Member for energy, waste, transport and public realm explained the Head of Energy and Carbon Management outlined what the Council's Energy Strategy is seeking to achieve linked to the council's net zero ambitions by 2040. This work is covered by sustainable policies from waste management to energy.

4.8.32 It was highlighted that the council has direct control over 5% of emissions and 23% indirect control. The remaining volume of emission are borough wide emissions.

4.8.33 The council relaunched the second phase of the green homes programme to support residents to reduce and lower their energy bills.

4.8.34 The green dividend is about how to create green jobs across the borough, reduce energy bills and ultimately tackle the climate crisis with better air quality.

- 4.8.35 The green homes programme aims to provide support to residents to help shift towards solar energy or replacing gas boilers.
- 4.8.36 The council needs to recreate excitement about the new jobs and the shift towards a greener economy. Ensuring this is carried out in a just transition way.
- 4.8.37 The Cabinet Member highlighted an example of local partnership with a local school, local energy company, GLA and the Council to support the installation of solar panel to help power the school. This is an example of the types of partnership that need to happen.
- 4.8.38 Recognising there are challenges around the finances they will need to rely on partnerships between private and public sectors to meet targets.
- 4.8.39 Public engagement will be incredibly important, and this work needs to be done with residents.
- 4.8.40 Social justice underpins all the net zero work.
- 4.8.41 The Cabinet Member for energy, waste, transport and public realm put on record his thanks to Head of Energy and Carbon Management for all her work on the net zero energy strategy and wished her well in her new role.

## 4.9 Questions, Answers and Discussion

### Q&A with the Chair of Planning Committee

- (i) **Members enquired when the timber building is built, how carbon neutral would it be? Enquiring if they are carbon efficient to build, come from renewable energy and /or carbon negative.**

In response the Chair of Planning Committee explained they are carbon negative. The act of tree growing, and sequestration will take out the carbon from the atmosphere for the next 60 years. This is better than putting it into holes in the ground and hoping it goes well.

- (ii) **Members commented in Planning Committee the Chair asks developers if they have considered using timber and often the response is no. Members asked what the negatives to timber are and why developers are reluctant to use this material for construction?**

The Chair of Planning Committee explained the government announced concern about timber and its fire performance. But a large proportion of architects and the fire people we talk to will dispute this. Adding the tragedy of Grenfell will have negative impacts on timber building for many years in the UK. And so the difficulties of meeting insurance for very tall buildings has become almost impossible. A 6-story timber building is fine and so are offices fine. They can continue to do some, but they need to work at this from 2 angles. The planning process, the concrete industry, and the fire issue. The Chair of Planning from LBH explained heavy timber chares it does not ignite or go up in flames like a box of matches. It burns very slowly and does not go up in flames as assumed.

**(iii) Members asked if there have been major fires?**

In response the Chair of Planning Committee confirmed there was one and that was when it was being constructed. It was open to other elements. The message is care needs to be taken when constructing timber developments. But once constructed they have good life performance.

Q&A Planning Service

**(iv) Members referred to page 1 point 1.13 in the planning report noting that development sites that cannot meet the net zero carbon requirements are asked to provide a one-off payment. Member enquired about the process and decision making to reach this conclusion?**

**(v) Members asked if a large number of sites contributed to the offset fund?**

**(vi) Members enquired if the contributions to the offset fund mainly came from small development sites or large developers?**

In response the Strategic Planning Manager from Planning Services explained when a planning application is received they are assessed by development management. The specialist office that looks at the sustainability aspect. They consider the energy and sustainability statements; this will outline what the development can achieve in relation to carbon off set requirements. If they cannot satisfy the carbon reduction requirements, they will need to contribute to the fund. This is in accordance with their supplementary planning document and the contributions are set out in the document of £95 per tonne over 30 years. This goes into the carbon off set fund.

In relation to the decision making about the spend of the fund. This is made through the S106 board. Projects can be put forward, but they will need to be in accordance with the objectives of the carbon off-set fund. Some projects and funds have been allocated and examples were outlined in section 1.17 of the report (energy company, a solar pilot for a leisure centre project and a green home programme).

In relation to the types of development it is a combination of both major and minor developments. There will be a range of considerations like technical feasibility and viability. It was acknowledged smaller sites can be more challenging to meet those requirements.

**(vii) Members asked how the construction Co2 emissions can be cut if they are at 10%. Members also asked how this applies to the building of social housing.**

In response the Director of Sustainability and public realm advised there is no one solution to reducing but it will be a plethora of different solutions in terms of land use, planning, green mix with sustainable transport in addition to looking at the information and improvements on the build. A combination of work should bring down the construction emissions. Referring to the Chair of Planning Committee's points that timber construction uses significantly less lorries on site and a smaller volume of materials on site than concrete construction. Therefore,

there is a pallet of different solutions the local authority could insist on to reduce the carbon footprint of construction.

In regard to social housing for planning policy they have the ability to influence and control in relation to new developments. For any application for housing – regardless of tenure – the requirements would apply. The development would need to comply with the carbon reduction targets set out in the London and local plan.

For existing estates where there are refurbishment works the policies are in place to ensure they consider and reduce as far as possible the carbon emission for the development. The Director added retrofit for housing is going to be huge going forward with significant costs too. This will be covered in more detail at the next Living in Hackney scrutiny commission meeting in November 2021.

**(viii) Members referred to the council’s announcement for their retrofit programme and noted that Enfield and Waltham Forest Councils were the lead boroughs on the retrofit work stream. Members asked how much could actually be achieved given that councils have limited resources?**

In response the Director of Sustainability and Public Realm confirmed the anticipated costs associated with retrofit will be high. This will require a combination of using leverage. The Council will not be able to do this alone. Information about this will be in the action plan that Enfield and Waltham Forest Councils are leading on. They has received funding to develop the work so they are more advanced than other work streams. This action plan is being discussed with other councils. The next meeting in November will cover this in more detail and should outline some of the future financing options available.

The Cabinet Member for energy, waste transport and public realm highlighted there is a report published on 26<sup>th</sup> October by London Councils on retrofit. Although Hackney is not the lead borough on this work stream the Mayor of Hackney is heavily involved in this workstream too.

**(ix) Members asked for examples of innovative practice in relation to heating in new development sites. Members made reference to a range of options like district heating, heat pumps, ground source heating, solar panels etc? Members enquired about the types of heating systems new developments were implementing to meet net zero carbon targets.**

In response the Head of Energy and Carbon Management explained due to the planning policies they must encourage net zero carbon and with GLA policies there is a hierarchy of heat buildings need to adopt and comply with.

There is a mix of technology interventions. The route to net zero will require innovations. They are starting to see opportunities where they are using air sourcing pumps and some having district heat networks. There is also a shift away from gas especially for new builds and they are aware of some schemes that are considering hybrid approaches. Essential using heat pump technology as the base and topped up at peak times with gas.

**(x) Members commented from the information presented it seems there needs to be less development and that they should not continue to build in the**

same way. Members asked if the better options would be to refurbish buildings rather than to demolish structurally sound buildings and relatively young buildings.

- (xi) **Members asked if there are any incentives to encourage plans to be put forward for refurbish over demolition? Is this something the council can consider taking forward? Members pointed out potentially buildings that have a longer life span are being demolished.**

In response the Strategic Planning Manager from LBH highlighted this relates to the circular economy and the whole life carbon assessment. This is an emerging picture and they do need to give this further consideration as planning applications come in. Considering how they are addressing the energy hierarchy and whole life carbon cycle is important but there is a need to delivery more homes and development to support the growth. However, the current workstreams are looking at the ways they can innovate designs by looking at the design of schemes, engaging with developers and landowners early in the process to have discussions and ensure they are considering these things and building them into the design from the outset.

- (xii) **Members referred to the negotiated fund pot of £4.5 million and noted currently £1.1 million was received. Members asked if the council anticipated any challenges with obtaining the outstanding funding.**
- (xiii) **Members noted the section 106 Board makes decisions about the spend of the fund but Members queried if this should be taken out for wider discussion on the spend for this fund?**

In response the Director of Sustainability and Public Realm asked the Strategic Planning Manager to clarify if the offset fund was a CiL or section 106. The Strategic Planning Manager confirmed it comes through Section 106 via the SPD.

The Strategic Planning Manager from LBH confirmed they have negotiated £4.5 million through section 106 agreements. They have currently received £1.1 million. The contributions are received once work commences on the site.

- (xiv) **The Co-Chair from the Resident Liaison Group (RLG) referred to the action on heat decarbonisation measures including a mix of heat pump and district heating systems. The RLG enquired what this will look like in the medium to long term?**

In response the Head of Energy and Carbon Management explained this would be covered in her upcoming presentation.

- (xv) **The Co-Chair from the Resident Liaison Group (RLG) referred to the development of a communications strategy to engage residents across the borough. The RLG commented this was a good idea and pointed out there is interest among residents in this topic area. The RLG asked Planning Services to contact the RLG when the council commences its engagement process because they would like to feed into that engagement process.**

The Strategic Planning Manager from LBH confirmed they would welcome their input.

Q&A Energy and Carbon Management Team

**(xvi) Members referred to the scoping that highlights unseen energy. Members asked what is this and how this will be tackled?**

**(xvii) Members referred to the proposal to phase out gas boilers and enquired if this will apply to private households and landlords and how it will be implemented?**

In response the Head of Energy and Carbon Management explained during the scoping they looked at all areas of borough wide emissions. Although they do not have the direct data for this the scoping highlighted unseen energy as things like private homes.

In relation to gas boiler this is part of a national policy. The route map to net zero necessitates that move. The carbon intensity for gas is higher than electric. All policy and direction are steering towards replacing gas with heat pump technology.

The Government's heat and building strategy not only outlines what it will do to help support local authorities but support members of the public to access lower cost income technology. Taking levies away from electricity to ensure the cost parity between electricity heated building and gas heated buildings is not too much.

In addition, there are several hurdles the council will need to overcome too such as the fabric retrofit of their buildings first.

However, it was recognised that this may be an area of concern to individuals especially if they have not retrofitted the fabric of their home first because it is not a like for like replacement.

As a local authority they need to not only engage residents but educate them too. This is where the green homes programme comes into use. The council highlighted they have used a programme to take one building from EPC E to EPC A using the range of measures outlined and grant schemes to finance.

**(xviii) Members referred to scoping 1 and 3 and the expected decrease. Members acknowledged national policy and type of vehicles on the road could lead to this huge decrease. Members queried if the embodied carbon reduction predicted could only be achieved from less development. Members were not convinced this could be achieved without less development in the borough.**

**(xix) Members commented electricity is generated by fossil fuel, and this was not ideal. In relation to electric cars there is concern about lithium batteries and the components in them being mined in poor countries.**



- (xx) Members recognised that the hydrogen energy was in early stages of development but urged the council to explore using these types of energy sources.**

In response Head of Energy and Carbon Management explained the embodied carbon reduction by 2040 will be from a mix of approaches. This strategy document is forward looking and highlights the interventions the council needs to consider. The actions being taken will shape how they achieve the target.

In terms of hydrogen there is big piece of work to identify if hydrogen can contribute to the decarbonisation of heat in homes. Emerging studies anticipate hydrogen will be able to meet the needs by 2050. The Government sees a role for hydrogen after 2050. The Government is looking at hydrogen zones for some rural areas and hydrogen technology will be trailed. For Inner London boroughs like Hackney that technology is further in the future.

The action plan covers the next 3 years and if technology changes, they will be adopting it. The Council remains flexible.

The Head of Procurement added in terms technology development around hydrogen and the supply chain this is relatively less developed compared to electrification. The Council will always be flexible about how they proceed with technologies. The market will constantly be reviewed for development in hydrogen.

The Chair of Planning Committee commented the 1930s Pembury estate needed to improve its energy efficiency. The housing association Peabody was offered by a gas company the opportunity to transform the estate. However, this was going to change the buildings from red brick to white rendered buildings. The Chair of Planning Committee urged for careful consideration and not to do the cheapest option for innovation.

- (xxi) Members asked how the council plans to engage with non-hackney accountable organisations like housing associations.**

- (xxii) In relation the current cladding issues is there an opportunity for planning to insist on improving the energy efficiency of the building and also for it to be carbon neutral?**

- (xxiii) Members referred to the heavy reliance on electricity for the future. Commenting whilst there has been movement away from producing electricity with fossil fuels to more solar and wind generated electricity. There will be a limit to how much Hackney can produce. Members pointed out increasingly nuclear energy will be seen as clean, but the Member was of the personal view this was not clean and pollutes into the future. The other challenge with nuclear energy is it relies on large water sources and tends to be cited next to the sea.**

- (xxiv) Members were of the view there are dangers associated with relying so heavily on nuclear power in the future. Members asked if the Council was able to take an anti-nuclear power position. Despite relying so heavily on electricity to achieve the net zero emissions policy.**

**(xxv) Members referred to the table in the report titled benefits and risks of different heat sources. The district heat source seems the more positive although possibility the most expensive. Members asked how district heat could be used for council owned buildings and other buildings e.g. having whole private streets on district heat in the future.**

In response the Head of Energy and Carbon Management explained the energy master plan has mapped out the whole borough and they have identified 10 clusters with the potential to use other sources of low carbon from ground source heat pumps to air sourcing pumps.

The role of district energy is not only enabling but for regeneration projects it provides the critical mass to develop district heat schemes. They also want to use this to decarbonise existing buildings. An example of this type of opportunity is the Woodberry Down development. Through planning it does need a district energy scheme. They are also looking at using the Woodberry Down scheme to help decarbonise neighbouring areas.

There is a low carbon infrastructure that is starting to be explored. They can use new build schemes to create the critical mass to help develop the schemes and use it to help decarbonise existing estates.

The Head of Procurement explained in terms of electricity and nuclear development as highlighted in the strategy electrification is part of decarbonising interventions. The council has Rico certificated electricity that is purchased in the current contract. There is no transparency in terms of whether it is from solar farm or from nuclear generation.

In terms of price fixing this is set out in the strategy. They want to go into a Power Purchase Agreement where they go to solar farm or wind generation organisation and request to enter into a 15/20 year contract to allow them to carry out proper generation using some of the technologies that are in the market as opposed to nuclear.

In terms of procurement the negotiation they will undertake will ensure that the product coming through the supply in the specification it will make clear they are not looking for a product that comes from nuclear generation but from wind farm, solar generation or some other renewable energy generation.

**(xxvi) Members referred to heat district again and noted in the response the officers explained they are looking at strategies for new builds and council properties. But there are a lot of areas that do not fall into these categories. Members asked if the council would be moving towards thinking about these areas or was it too early.**

In response the Head of Energy and Carbon Management advised it is not too early. The clusters highlighted in the presentation have identified those areas as well. Some are non-domestic buildings like in the cluster of Hackney Central. These are more corporate assets and less domestic estates. Pointing out the plan covers domestic and non-domestic properties. The officer highlighted the council has a role in enabling district heat for the whole of the borough. There is also a district energy working group. This group is working on a findings paper which will highlight some the actions the council needs to take to prepare and

facilitate the development of district energy schemes that developers can connect to.

In response the Head of Energy and Carbon Management confirmed they have started to engage RPs. Over this year they held a series of events where the council introduced their net zero energy strategy and highlighted good practice guide. This has been with the assistance of the Housing Policy and Strategy team. They are also producing a good practice guide for them. This highlights what net zero looks like for Hackney as a whole.

The Strategic Planning Manager added in terms of engagement this is very important and why it has been identified through the low carbon action work to develop an engagement programme. Taking into consideration residents, businesses etc. They see communities at the heart of the discussions to ensure they achieve buy in.

In terms of developing the local plan and area-based plan community engagement is fundamental and critical to the success.

The Strategic Director of Sustainability and Public Realm added regarding cladding and the role of planning. If works require planning, they will also require building regulations. This regime will have control on the energy efficiency and installation of the buildings. Therefore, it is more building control that would manage this than planning services.

**(xxvii) Members referred to solar panels being a source of energy for the future. Members noted when the Government stopped the feeding tariff people stopped installing solar panels because they were not economically accessible. Members asked about the future of solar panels and the potential of savings to the council if it stopped being reliant on the energy network.**

**(xxviii) Members asked if the council was encouraging the use of solar panels to help resident generate their own energy supply?**

The Head of Procurement confirmed the Government stopped the feeding tariff about 2-3 years ago and this made solar panels less financially viable. Solar panel installation is an integral part of achieving net zero as set out in the strategy. The council carried out a few installations last year and on some of the council corporate buildings. They have done feasibility work to look at existing council roof spaces for the installation of solar panels. This work is in the early stages and is an integral part of the council's work to generate its own electricity. However, this is only going to be a fraction of what is needed from the grid.

The council wants to enter into a PPA with an offshore organisation to create a solar farm and wind generation.

The Chair of Planning Committee from LBH commented post Grenfell there was complaints that the planning process was only concerned with what the building looked like. The Chair pointed out this is their remit and cladding is a building control issue. Secondly the Mayor of London decided to put in the London Plan about fire but there are no fire experts in the planning process. Therefore, they need to be careful about cladding and what planning can do.

## 5 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

5.1 The minutes of the previous meetings for approval were:

The minutes for the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021.

The minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

5.2 Members agreed the minutes.

<b>RESOLVED:</b> Minutes were approved
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5.3 In discussion about the minutes from the previous meeting with the metropolitan police service Members wanted it acknowledged that, that conversation fed into ongoing conversations with the police about how seriously they treat members of the public who are victims of crime and their attitude of defensiveness.

5.4 Members wanted it noted since that June meeting there had been significant developments in that area. Some of the issues discussed in the meeting have developed and become more significant for the police.

5.5 Members commented as a scrutiny commission it was important to keep the pressure up on the police.

5.6 The Chair acknowledged the points raised and advised there would not be a follow up session with the police in this municipal year. The recommendation would be to have the police back at the first meeting of the new municipal year.

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

6.1 The Chair referred to the work programme and outlined the discussion items for the next meetings.

6.2 In November the scrutiny commission will continue its work looking at climate change covering retrofitting of buildings. Non residential building and all residential housing properties.

6.3 The Chair asked the Commission to keep in mind the effects of retrofitting. Pointing out they need to make sure its efficient and the costs are low to ensure residents are not paying more for less heat. In addition to considering if the proposals are adequate for our climate. For example, the Chair highlighted she noted air source pumps do not work effectively when the temperature drops to zero or below.

6.4 The Chair also pointed out one of the key challenges is the financing and to date no solutions have been put forward from the Government to address this.

In addition, some of the technology needs to be developed such as the development of hydrogen boilers.

December 2021  
Electric Charging Infrastructure

January 2022  
Fire Safety – update  
Private Sector Housing – licensing scheme

February 2022  
Joint meeting with CYP Scrutiny commission on Housing Needs for Young People Leaving Care

March 2022  
Leisure Services and Facilities.

- 6.5 Members discussed asking leisure service providers GLL to attend the March meeting to talk about the website and why they do not have a Hackney specific website.

The Chair agreed to this request.

- 6.6 Members discussed the issue of no cash and commented this was potentially a barrier for families being excluded from leisure centres and the café. In addition, all bookings must be made online. Members suggested broaden this discussion to look at the issue of no cash across the borough.
- 6.7 Members discussed reviewing the membership fee for older people.
- 6.8 Members discussed looking at the customer experience in the discussion.
- 6.9 Members asked if this discussion could look at the facilities and redesign of buildings to assist with holding community engagement sessions.

## **7 Any Other Business**

- 7.1 None.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00 - 9.25 pm