

<b>Title of Report</b>	Update on development of Strategic Plan
<b>For Consideration By</b>	Health and Wellbeing Board
<b>Meeting Date</b>	9/11/22
<b>Classification</b>	Open
<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All
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Is this report for:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information
<input type="checkbox"/>	Discussion
<input type="checkbox"/>	Decision

Why is the report being brought to the board?

Has the report been considered at any other committee meeting of the Council or other stakeholders?

## 1. **Summary**

Hackney Council adopted a corporate plan in 2018 which set out borough and corporate challenges. This was refreshed in the light of the pandemic with a direction of travel for the plan agreed in July 2020. The plan identified the direction of travel for new ways of working, learning from work that had been accelerated during the pandemic. With new corporate leadership and a new political administration elected

in May 2022, a new Strategic Plan has been developed. The move to describe this as a “Strategic Plan” rather than a “Corporate Plan” is reflective of the outward facing nature of the plan, which considers the role of the Council within a wider partnership.

The Strategic Plan:

- considers the Council’s role within the wider operating and external context;
- sets out the key political and corporate commitment for the next four years, which we will report on annually, so that residents and stakeholders can hold us to account;
- outlines the values, the way we will work in partnership, the priorities for change and for the workforce.

## 2. **Recommendations**

To note that the Council has developed a Strategic Plan that will be taken to Cabinet for adoption this month.

To note the key issues that the plan is seeking to address which are set out in this report.

## 3. **Background**

### 3.1 Developing a new Strategic Plan

In 2018, Hackney adopted a long term vision for the borough, [the Community Strategy](#), that has informed our plans and strategies including the [Local Plan 2033](#):

1. A borough where everyone can enjoy a good quality of life and the whole community can benefit from growth
2. A borough where residents and local businesses fulfil their potential and everyone enjoys the benefits of increased local prosperity and contributes to community life
3. A greener and environmentally sustainable community which is prepared for the future
4. An open, cohesive, safer and supportive community
5. A borough with healthy, active and independent residents

Even when this vision was adopted four years ago, there was a recognition that we were operating in an increasingly constrained and difficult context. Having this long term strategic vision helped ensure that the actions taken as part of the pandemic response were designed to still help us achieve our longer term goals. We also continued to progress work to understand what life is like for younger and older

people and what action is needed to improve this. This is reflected in the Young Futures report and Ageing Well Strategy which are both being progressed.

Hackney also adopted a corporate plan in 2018 which set out borough and corporate challenges. This was refreshed in the light of the pandemic with a direction of travel for the plan agreed in July 2020. Updates on progress against the last Corporate Plan were provided to Cabinet in July 2021 and February 2022 and have been published on the Council website here:

<https://hackney.gov.uk/corporate-plan>

The new Strategic Plan for 2022-2026 has been developed through an iterative process, including dialogue with partners. It is grounded in a rich analysis of the current context, as well as the updates on progress made against the Corporate Plan adopted in 2020 which was reported to Cabinet in July 2021 and February 2022.

### 3.2 Risks and issues that plan is seeking to address

The biggest risk to our long term vision is the way that the pandemic and now the cost of living crisis has led to even greater inequality and poverty, impacting those who were already disadvantaged the most. This has also exposed even more greatly the deep rooted structural and systemic racism in Hackney and in wider society. Poverty is entrenching and more people are falling into difficulty. A cost of living crisis disproportionately impacts lower income groups, as more of their income goes on essential costs. Nationally, there is no coherent policy relating to poverty or the cost living crisis. We are also now concerned about an even greater range of impacts on households, regardless of their income, including those with children or with high mortgages, people running businesses and freelancers.

There has already been a strong focus on tackling underlying causes, developing earlier help services and developing the skills of frontline staff to support residents. This becomes more difficult, however, in the face of the growing demands, costs and reduced resources. Daily life is becoming so much more of a struggle for individuals. This places a greater strain on communities and affects economic opportunity, health and wellbeing, how well children thrive, and educational outcomes. As a consequence, we are seeing a growing complexity of need across all frontline services, health inequalities have got worse and we have seen a sharp increase in mental health needs.

This plan sets the vision and priorities for the Council for the next four years. It is ambitious in what it sets out to achieve, but it is recognised that this needs to be

delivered in the midst of economic uncertainty and within shrinking resources, which is set out in the Chief Executive's introduction.

[National trends show](#) that trust and confidence in the state is on the decline. Locally, residents still have a relatively high level of trust in the Council, although this is much lower for Black and Global majority residents and social housing tenants. This indicates a polarisation of views and we cannot just focus on the headline. This needs attention and a much more segmented and targeted approach if we are to get actions right to become a fairer borough. This can make it more difficult to reach and engage with residents and start to tackle inequality and meet complex needs. We have worked hard to respond to the Cyber attack in 2020 and the review into the treatment of Child Q in 2022 as these presented key risks to trust and confidence.

A key part of maintaining the current levels of trust and confidence and building trust where it is low, will be improving services, where needed, and this also recognises that those most reliant on Council services will be most greatly impacted by poor services.

The progress that has been made towards the Council becoming more inclusive, humble and anti-racist, including future planned work such as implementing the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standards, is also going to be critical to us rebuilding trust and confidence. The work done during the pandemic to develop more collaboration with the voluntary and community sector, and grassroots and hyper-local networks, who have the reach and trust of residents, is integral to the way we can reach and engage residents. This includes through the eight local Neighbourhoods focused on preventing ill health, by joining up the work of Council, NHS and community partners.

Another risk to all our ambitions relates to the uncertainty surrounding our population and growth, in the wake of Brexit and the pandemic. In the longer term growth is still forecast and we estimate that, at the time of writing, Hackney's population is likely to be higher than at the time of the 2021 census, when growth was slower than expected. This makes it more difficult to plan services and places for the future. This is in the context of a housing market which remains buoyant and makes buying a house out of reach for most Londoners.

When we adopted our long term vision, increasing local prosperity by harnessing the benefits of local growth seemed far more feasible than it does now. Nationally, nearly three quarters of businesses are concerned about their future. The high employment rates we see nationally and locally, mask growing inequality in the labour market, as demonstrated by the [Deaton Review](#) - with wages stagnating and less secure work. In Hackney one in six people of working age are self-employed but

this is much more likely to be an indication of labour market inequality than a positive choice. Whilst Hackney's out of work claimant count has come down since the height of the pandemic in March 2021, it is still much higher than pre pandemic.

We have focused on attracting businesses and employers that can help us shape growth that benefits residents. We have also secured good quality local jobs and increased the number of London Living Wage employers, alongside a proactive response to poverty, but this is not enough.

Hackney continues to build affordable homes and improve the private rented sector, including through licensing schemes and improving temporary accommodation. The high cost of housing and the greater complexity of need in communities, is, however, making meeting housing needs and finding temporary accommodation for homeless people virtually impossible.

London and Hackney are also seeing increased numbers of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants because of a number of global crises. Whilst Hackney remains a welcoming place that is, in many ways, defined by migration, the number of vulnerable people seeking sanctuary is placing an additional pressure on already stretched services and housing. Taken together, this is seriously undermining our first aspiration that everyone can enjoy a good quality of life and that Hackney can be a safe supportive community.

Hackney's aspirations to be a greener, more sustainable community have really galvanised in recent years in response to the global climate, pollution, and biodiversity emergencies. Extreme weather events like flooding and overheating are starting to have an impact locally. The UK has committed to net zero by 2050. In 2019, Hackney declared a climate emergency, recognising that if we act now we can impact on this crisis before it is too late, and mitigate impacts. The Council is committed to a 45% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040. We are, however, limited in what we can do on our own, at a local level without national policy, funding and intervention.

Taking action to tackle climate change is also helping transform the public realm to make it easier to be physically active through improving parks and open spaces, greening our streets and bringing a 'child friendly' planning and design approach to road closures. The pandemic has impacted on residents health and wellbeing but also accelerated efforts to tackle health inequalities and encourage healthy active lifestyles and integrate health and social care.

The work of a Council is very different now from a decade ago, or even 2018, when we set a new vision. Responding to unexpected crisis events is likely to be the "new normal" for many years. National policy is also working against local aspirations -

across education, housing, planning and economic development The Council is committed to a 45% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and net zero green.

We will need to work more effectively with partners on shared outcomes and maximise use of the resources we have for community benefit - procurement, jobs, physical assets as anchor institutions.

We need to support our workforce to keep responding to the needs of a community that is struggling. To be equipped to meet the challenges we face, we need a workforce that both understands what being inclusive and anti-racist means and that reflects the diversity of Hackney, at all levels. This requires a rigorous approach to recruitment and we'll need a workforce strategy with creative solutions to attract the right people. Coming out of the pandemic, there is a lot we need to embed so we can be a modern, progressive and diverse workforce that looks to the future.

### 3.3 Outline response

The detailed strategic plan is being finalised before Cabinet in November 2022.

The plan is set under the following vision and priority areas:

#### **Vision for the next four years**

Working together with our communities, and our partners to tackle the unprecedented challenges that we face, we will make transformational change, we will co-produce and co-design solutions with residents, we will campaign for a better deal for Hackney; we will deliver outstanding public services; we will drive a fairer economic recovery; and we will make a better Hackney for everyone who lives and works here.

#### **FOR A FAIRER, SAFER HACKNEY**

We will tackle inequality through poverty reduction, and anti-racism, providing more Council homes as we improve standards of our existing homes, and creating pathways into decent jobs. We will improve our customer services. We will create safe, vibrant, and successful town centres and neighbourhoods and foster strong, cohesive communities and a more inclusive economy.

#### **FOR A GREENER, HEALTHIER HACKNEY**

We will continue to lead the way in the fight against climate change, working towards a net zero Hackney, with cleaner air, less motor traffic, and more liveable neighbourhoods. We will transform adult and children's social care, tackle physical

and mental health inequalities and continue to support, value, and give voice to our older and disabled residents.

### **FOR EVERY CHILD IN HACKNEY**

We will work to ensure every child and young person in Hackney has the best start in life; shaping a more inclusive and high performing education system, maintaining our early years and youth services, keeping children safe and investing in their mental health and well being, providing access to outstanding play, culture, and sport, and opportunities; tackling child poverty, and supporting those families who need us most.

### **3.4 Partnership working**

Systems leadership, or place-based leadership, is the coming together of organisations to collectively solve problems which no single body can do on its own. As a partnership we need to be more outward facing and collaborative, working across the whole system to find the right sustainable solutions. This will require leaders to work across boundaries with a greater degree of flexibility and openness to change than they have perhaps been used to.

We have discussed the strategic plan priorities with partners and have identified the following shared priorities for how we work and what we focus on together:

#### **Rebuilding trust and confidence with communities**

Community confidence in authority has been stretched more than ever in recent times. We need to work in a way which acknowledges and understands how things are for residents through the lived experience of communities and individuals rather than working with a focus on services, plans and numbers. We need to work in a way that acknowledges and celebrates the value of our diverse communities, that understands the need for a change in how we work with different communities and cultures, and which recognises the strengths and the positive impact communities can have on the lives of families within them.

#### **Tackling inequality**

Complex inequalities cannot be addressed by any institution working in isolation. More consistent curiosity, inclusive thinking and humility is needed in understanding the multiple drivers of inequality and the solutions needed across the system. This needs to be followed by a clearer commitment to owning and responding to the multiple drivers of inequality and working towards a single set of outcomes This would, critically, include a partnership wide commitment to anti-racism.

#### **Net Zero Commitment**

The Council has significant work to do in relation to the Climate Emergency as an ongoing and increasing priority. In order to meet its target of a 45% reduction in carbon dioxide equivalent emissions (against 2010 levels) by 2030, and net zero

emissions by 2040, across the Council's full range of functions, working purposefully with partners will be key.

### 3.1. Policy Context:

Please detail which, if any, of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy priorities this report relates to?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Improving mental health
<input type="checkbox"/>	Increasing social connections
<input type="checkbox"/>	Supporting greater financial security
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All of the above
<input type="checkbox"/>	None of the above

Please detail which, if any, of the Health & Wellbeing 'Ways of Working' this report relates to?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Strengthening our communities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Creating, supporting and working with volunteer and peer roles
<input type="checkbox"/>	Collaborations and partnerships: including at a neighbourhood level
<input type="checkbox"/>	Making the best of community resources
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All of the above
<input type="checkbox"/>	None of the above

### 3.2. Equality Impact Assessment

Tackling inequality and promoting community wellbeing and cohesion is at the heart of the challenges we face and the response set out in the strategic plan. This has been informed by a detailed [Community Impact Assessment](#) which was first undertaken in March 2020. This assessed likely direct and indirect impacts of the



pandemic in the short, medium and long term and was informed by national, regional and local intelligence, both quantitative and qualitative.

The Community Impact Assessment was refreshed last summer, 2021, as this new Strategic Plan was being developed to consider the ways residents' lives were being impacted by multiple challenges. The Impact Assessment considers issues by groups protected under the Equality Act, by groups who are socio-economically disadvantaged and disadvantaged in other ways. It considers the intersectional issues that might mean one group is multiply disadvantaged or discriminated against, for example because of both age and gender. The Impact Assessment also considers the main risks and concerns from a cohesion perspective and actions needed to mitigate these. In addition, a detailed analysis of equality considerations was undertaken during the drafting of the Strategic Plan, to ensure that any gaps are addressed in our final draft.

This has all informed these draft equality objectives that explicitly set out how we respond to these issues throughout the Strategic Plan.

The Council's approach to tackling inequality is explicitly identified under the following new draft equality objectives:

1. Taking action to tackle structural and systemic discrimination - embedding an anti-racist approach and ensuring accountability
2. Protective, preventative and positive action, that tackles underlying issues, recognising there is proven bias in the system
3. Promote prosperity and wellbeing with targeted, positive action when needed
4. Building strong, cohesive communities that are part of the solution
5. Developing a workforce that is inclusive and anti-racist and reflects the diversity of Hackney, at all levels

The Equality Objectives in this Strategic Plan are still in draft format. Once the Strategic Plan is adopted, work will begin on developing a more detailed Equality Plan that will identify the proactive actions that will be undertaken under each equality objective. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council is required to consult on the Equality Objectives. This is planned for early in 2023, with the aim of adopting new objectives by summer 2023.

### 3.3. Consultation

Has public, service user, patient feedback/consultation informed the recommendations of this report?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

Have the relevant members/ organisations and officers been consulted on the recommendations in this report ?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

### 3.4. Risk Assessment

The main risk of adopting a Strategic Plan is that it will only become more difficult to meet the commitments in the plan because the operating context becomes even more challenging with a worsening economy and increased demand on services. There is a specific related financial risk of being unable to deliver the commitments set out.

The main way that this risk is being managed is to be upfront in this plan about these challenges and how we need to respond. The second way that risk is managed is in the type of plan we are choosing, which is deliberately an adaptive plan that can help us stay focused on our long term vision and key commitments without being too prescriptive. The Strategic Plan is also grounded in an understanding of the conditions that need to be in place for the plan to be successful, and the ways that the Council will need to work differently to achieve this.

The Plan makes it clear that there is nothing in reserve for new commitments in this plan. They will have to be prioritised within existing service budgets.

On balance, there are more strategic risks from not adopting a Strategic Plan. These risks are about “mission drift” away from the outcomes we want to achieve to a more reactive response, as the operating context continues to be challenging, unpredictable and complex. This may result in more reactive ways of working without a careful strategic response.

### 3.5. Sustainability

Hackney’s aspirations to be a greener, more sustainable community have really galvanised in recent years in response to the global climate, pollution, and biodiversity emergencies. Extreme weather events like flooding and overheating are

starting to have an impact locally. The UK has committed to net zero by 2050. In 2019, Hackney declared a climate emergency, recognising that if we act now we can impact on this crisis before it is too late, and mitigate impacts. The Council is committed to a 45% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040. We are, however, limited in what we can do on our own, at a local level without national policy, funding and intervention. The Strategic Plan identifies the main commitments that are in the consultation draft of the Climate Action Plan for the borough that was agreed by Cabinet in October 2022.

### **Appendices**

None

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