Clarification note for SEG's 14th December 2022 economic update session

There were a few queries about the economic data presented that I said I'd check and provide immediate clarification on. Other points recorded in the official minutes that require more work will follow in due course.

1. **Hackney vs London mean and median wages comparison**
   There was an error in the data in the charts - the figures presented were actually Hackney vs England, and labelled incorrectly. The correct charts are below and show that the gap with London has closed but remains slightly lower .
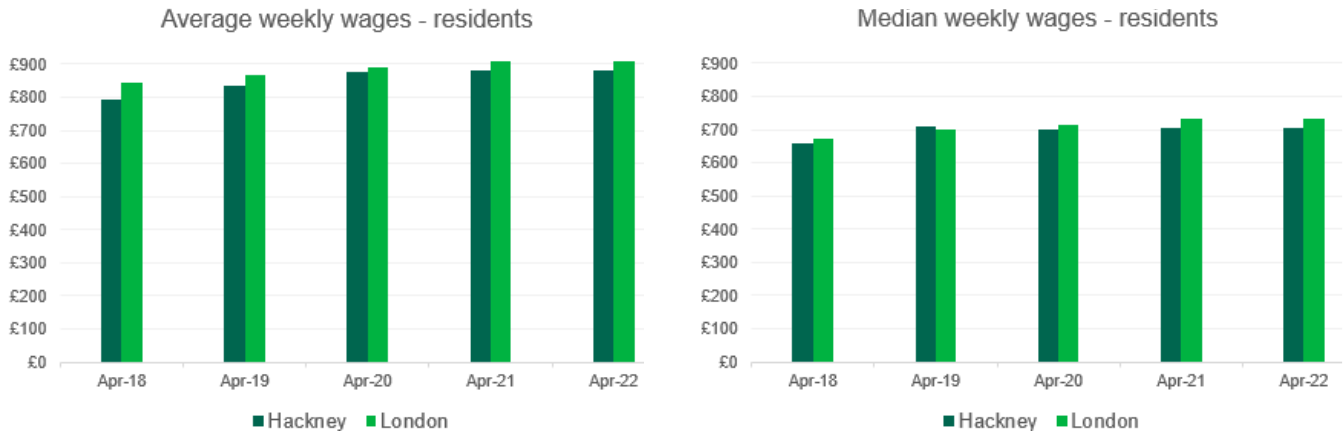

2. **Member question on whether we had data about our residents and the sector they worked in (which might be anywhere in London or nationally)**
   There is some data on this but it is survey based and only captures very high level sectors. The sample of Hackney residents is not large enough or consistent over time to make the data robust. This makes the "confidence interval" poor, ranging from +/- 3% (which is good) to +/- 7% (not good). This means the data value given is the mid point and could vary by the percentage given in each direction (higher of lower). This makes comparisons over time or with other places unreliable. The bar chart below shows a comparison between 2018 and 2022 but some data points are so close that due to the confidence intervals they could be the same, or very different: we will never know.
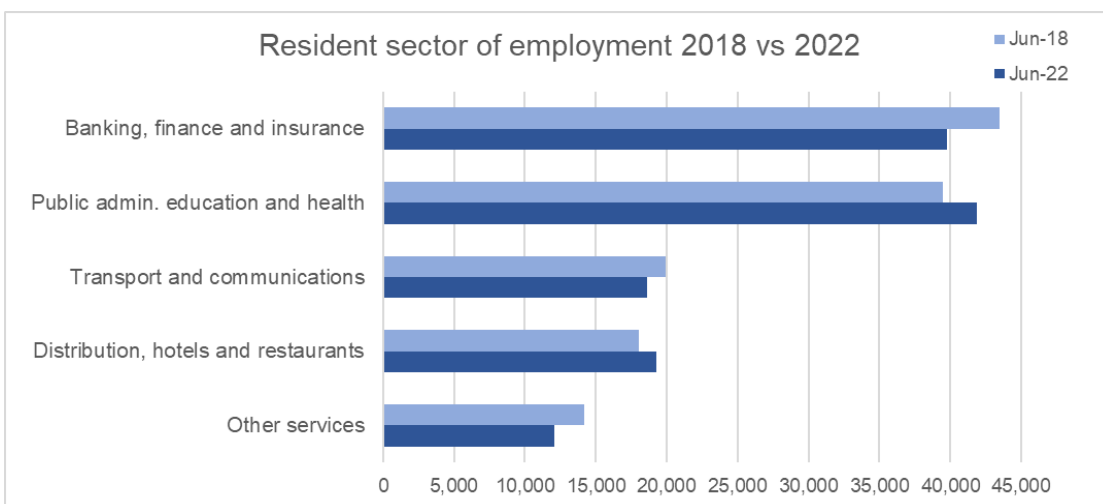
3. **Member question about the timing of the next data release that covers employees in Hackney-based businesses by sector.**
   The chart provided (shown below for reference) showed September 2021 as the most recent data. This dataset is collected by the national Business Register and Employment Survey and has one of the longest "lags" between collection and publication. I thought the next release would be due in February or March 2023 but unfortunately the September 2022 data at local authority level will not be released until September or October 2023.
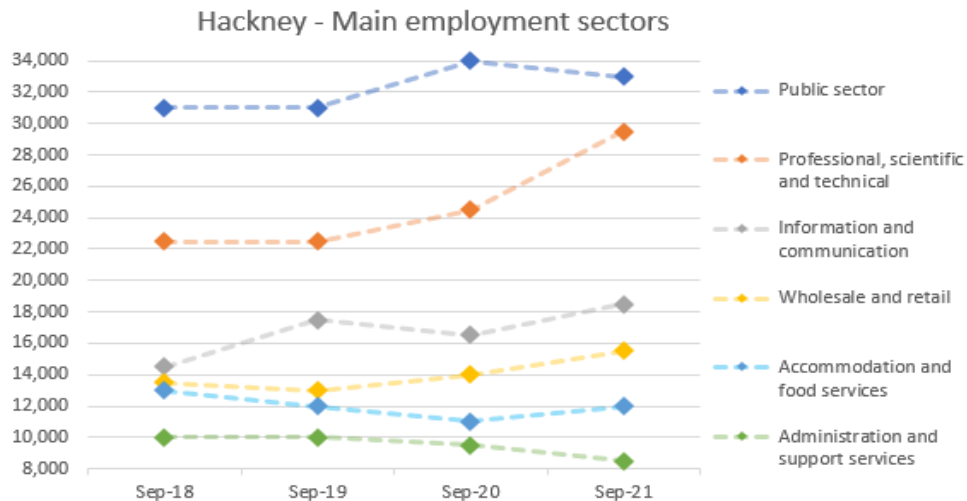
4. **Member question about whether there was a plan for the Economic Development Team to support the recently agreed Council motion on "Cash Welcome Here".**
   I did not know about the Council motion but checked the records of Full Council and can see that the motion covered:
   ● Establishing Hackney as a #cashwelcomehere borough, supporting the campaign started in Victoria Ward, and promoting an inclusive economy by encouraging local businesses and ensuring that council-run facilities accept cash and other payment methods.
   ● Lobbying the Government to include a mandate for businesses to accept cash in the Financial Services and Markets Bill.

   I expect that there will be a combination of promotional/communication activity (most likely led by the Comms Team) alongside lobbying (led by the political advisor and supported by the Comms Team). I can support and advise colleagues who will be leading on those elements. However, I will add that currently we cannot mandate businesses to accept cash payments and we need to recognise in our engagement with local businesses that managing cash payments involves a resource commitment that has some risks attached (tills, float, time cashing up, trusting staff, trips to the bank to get change and/or make deposits, etc). The practicalities of managing cash can be influenced by an ability to access a local bank or post office willing to provide cash facilities. These bank services are generally in decline.

   As per the slide on our economic development "levers" this means we do not have a regulatory one (generally the strongest) and have to rely on our influence (much weaker). In the borough we have approximately 1,300 retail stores (food, drink, household, clothes) and 800 restaurants/cafes/takeaways. However, we will not know how many of those are already cashless or considering going cashless. I suspect that the local knowledge of elected ward members will always be stronger than officers on this topic. My personal view is that the campaign would have more impact if it was targeted by geography, perhaps matching local knowledge on the retailers and food establishments in various areas.