



Poverty Reduction Framework

Presentation to Hackney Scrutiny Commission
Hackney Panel, January 2024



Purpose of this policy review



To review how the Council's Poverty Reduction Strategic Framework is working in practice, the impact it is having and how it has been embedded across council services.

The Scrutiny Panel also wishes to understand how the council is working in partnership with key local stakeholders in the voluntary sector to meet the needs of residents.

This policy review is being carried out over two sessions:

- 1. Case studies and information about the impact of the Council's poverty reduction work in practice. (April 2023)*
- 2. Governance, accountability structures and how the work is being embedded across the Council (January 2024)*

Outline of today's session



The Scrutiny Panel is seeking to understand how Hackney Council's Poverty Reduction Framework is working in practice and any innovative work by the Council or other boroughs

We have been asked to address the following questions

- a. How has the Council's Poverty Reduction Framework guided or facilitated service providers and council services to transition their support to meet the needs of residents?
 - b. How has the poverty reduction framework been embedded across all council services?
 - c. How the Council is working with local partners (particularly HCVS) in this space e.g. funding, infrastructure support, facilitation etc.?
 - d. Governance and accountability structures for poverty reduction work.
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1. Information about the Money Hub (covering governance and funding) and examples of how its work has supported residents.

 1. Following the proposal to move lunch club funding to Sonia's team SP Chair wants to make a note that we want the breakdown of spend on poverty strategy including this at our next session in October.

Transitioning services to meet residents needs



- Tackling poverty and inclusive economy - priority since 2018
- High housing costs, low pay and inadequate benefits driven up poverty
- Pandemic emphasised importance of system wide collaboration
- Poverty Reduction Framework (adopted in 2022) makes connection between crisis support, early help and prevention and tackling longer-term drivers of poverty e.g. employment and housing costs;
- Emphasises key role of frontline workers, support and learning needed to support residents, importance of relationships and networks to share information, learn and collaborate together

Embedding the framework across Council services



Social value

Money Hub - single access point for emergency funding. Data used to identify those at risk. Maximising income and benefit take-up. Outreach workers collaborate with community partners.

Radical innovation

Since February 2023, 14 council, health and care services can make fast referrals for financial support for residents who need it. This builds reach and encourages preventative approaches.

Learning

Equipping frontline staff to better support residents. Regular partnership-wide newsletter describing help available and a fortnightly 'tools for front line practitioners' session

Working with partners and the Voluntary and Community Sector



Community partnerships

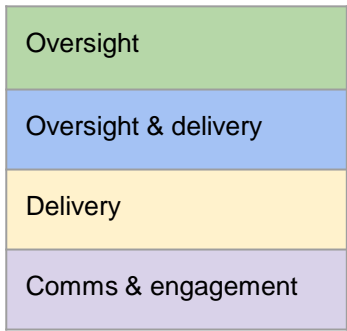
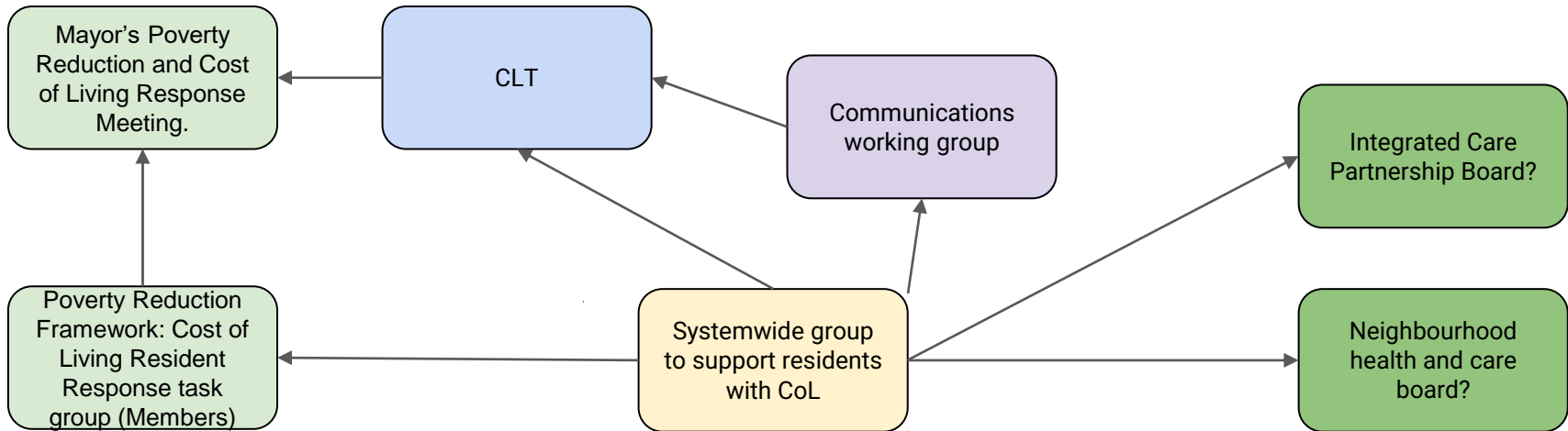
Community partners are better able to reach diversity of residents than the Council. Investing in them builds community wealth. Mapped organisations and created open ways to bring people together. Routed funding like Household Support Fund to community partners to reach those in need,

Enterprise and social economy

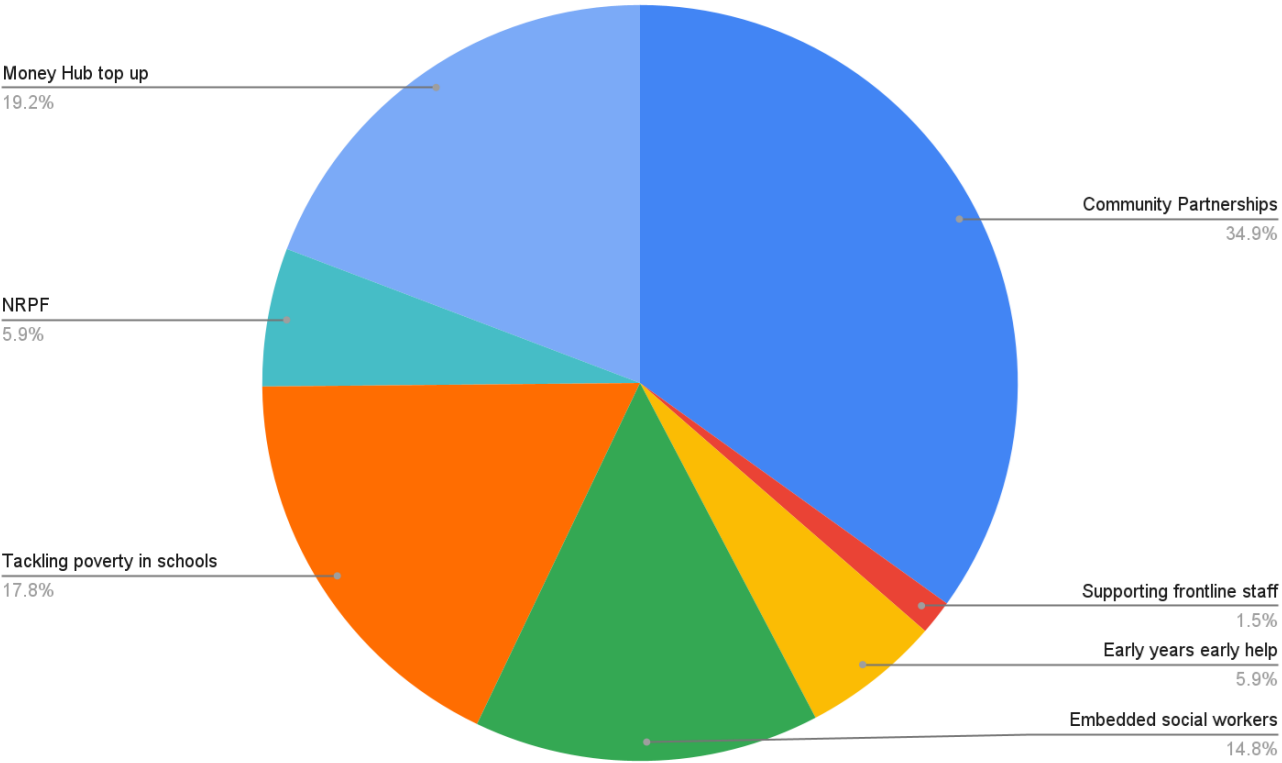
Worked with community partners to develop more sustainable ways to support residents through community shops. Invested in infrastructure needed to manage food surplus so it can be centrally stored and distributed to a wide range of partners. Exploring how we can better tackle food poverty in schools, looking at ways we might offer healthier food that costs less, through different business models and collaboration with community organisations. Building links between the Food Network and Lunch Clubs - just over £200,000 invested annually to support 12 clubs.

Engagement and co-production

Developing hyper local partnerships, supported by two “system convenors.” Aided mobilisation of warm spaces and network of 25 organisations funded because of community reach. Now, social prescribers, Money Hub and employment support deliver outreach in community settings. Now enabling VCS organisations to shadow Council services and vice versa. Creates connections between Council led services and grassroots support.



£1.69m Council additional investment in poverty reduction: 2020 and 2024



2020-23 -£840k
23-25 £850k

Community partnerships, developing social economy, developing hyper local partnerships, inc right to food

Supporting frontline staff - digital tools, support to 100+ frontline workers

Early years early help: Fresh food voucher scheme linking with markets and development of early help work

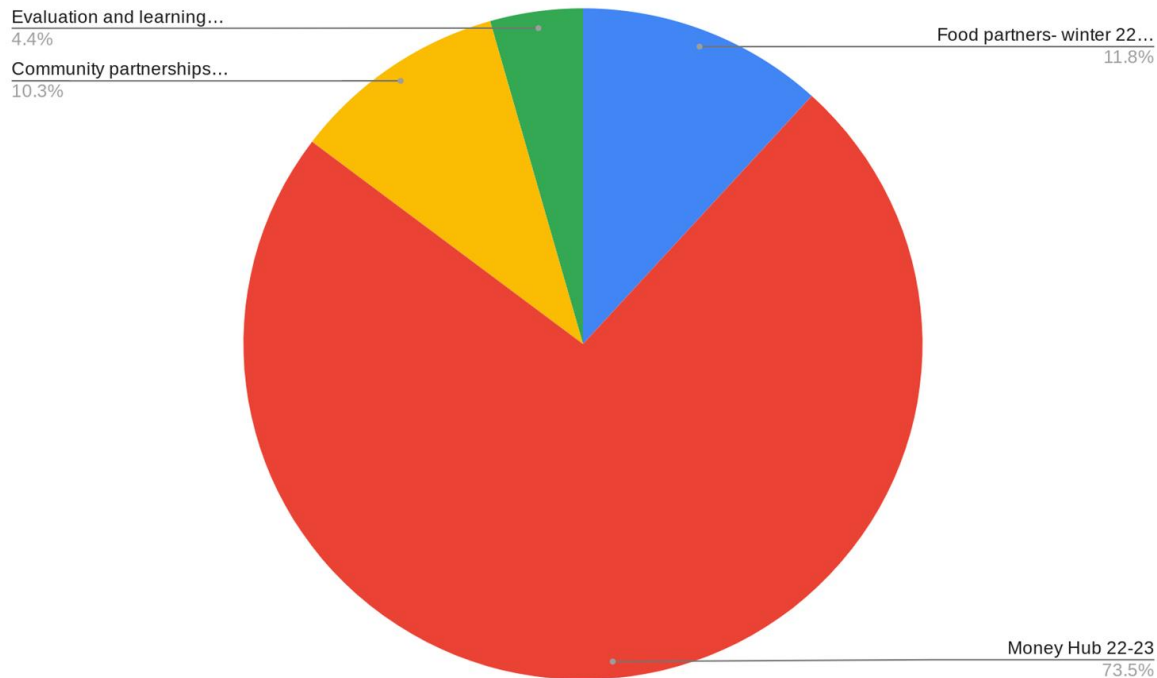
Social workers embedded in homelessness prevention- to help them secure and maintain housing tenancies.

Tackling poverty in schools

NRPF: hardship and advice

Money Hub - advice and partnership work

£680k Health additional poverty reduction investment: 2022 to 2025



2022-23

£80k Food partners- winter

2023-25

£500k Money Hub

2024-25

£70k Community partnerships

£30k Evaluation and learning

Implications of discontinuation of Household Support Fund



- £5.6m Household Support Fund programme used to support these approaches- £3m children in poverty, £2.2m vulnerable adults
- HSF not mentioned in the Autumn statement and will likely end in March 2024
- Budget restrictions mean the Council will not be able to replace this funding

Key groups impacted:

- Residents in Social Rented housing
- Younger residents, especially those living alone, e.g. Care Leavers
- Children, especially those in larger families and those with primary aged children
- The Orthodox Jewish Community,
- Disabled residents
- Residents in Temporary Accommodation
- VCS organisations providing food and advice, community infrastructure organisations, Orthodox Jewish, and smaller VCS organisations

Trust, confidence and community relations

- Availability of crisis support encouraged residents to come forward for longer-term support. Removal of this will make it harder to build trust of residents often reluctant to access services.
- Individuals and organisations depend on support. Removal may lead to significant unease and tensions.

From crisis support to early help and prevention



- Working with University of Sheffield to collect case studies and conduct in-depth interviews with HSF recipients to better understand personal, community and institutional supports that prevent crisis, to inform future commissioning and service design
- Analysing Council spending with voluntary and community sector with a view to redirecting funding to support early help and prevention if necessary

Question: What form might an approach based on early help and prevention look like in practice?

Hackney Money Hub



1. Objectives

2. Evolution of the service

3. Achievements to date: data and case studies

4. Key challenges for 2024

Summary



- Money Hub has handled extremely high demand over its first year of operations, paying out **£1.4m in grants and confirming £1.8k in new benefits income**
- This equates to a return on investment of **£2.40 for residents for every £1 spent on staffing**
- However the service lacks core funding and has a budget gap of over **£700k from 2025/26**
- The team's priority in 2024 will be to work with corporate transformation to understand how we can continue to deliver the service, either by **finding new funding** or **merging with other council teams**

Hackney Money Hub



1. Objectives

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Hackney Money Hub was set up to tackle two problems



Hackney residents miss out on **£28m in benefits income** every year due to the complexity and stigma of the welfare system



We distribute millions in crisis funds every year, but **don't make it easy for those who need them most to access them**

Hackney Money Hub



1. Objectives

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4. Key challenges for 2024

Money Hub quickly became much bigger than our initial plans for a small pilot:

Summer 2022:

£500k of funding from the ICS became available to relieve winter pressures on NHS. We scaled up our plans and were successful in bidding for funding

We planned to focus on targeted work but cost of living crisis meant the Council was keen to **advertise the new service universally**

The government's extension of the Household Support Fund meant a **600%** increase in applications to discretionary support

We received **1200** applications in month one of a pilot

In the first six months, around **5%** of households in the borough had applied

To handle the demand we found an additional **£500k** from HSF admin allocation; NLWA and Poverty Reduction budget in order to grow the team to **22 frontline officers**

Hackney Money Hub



1. Objectives

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4. Key challenges for 2024

Since November 2022:

Grants

£1.4m

total paid out

Benefits

£1.8m

total uptake



Since November 2022:



9,000

applications to
the service

Grants

£1.4m

total paid out

4,475

received a crisis
grant

£312

average per
household

50% get relatively small one
off grant

Benefits

£1.8m

total uptake

821

had new income
confirmed

£2,192

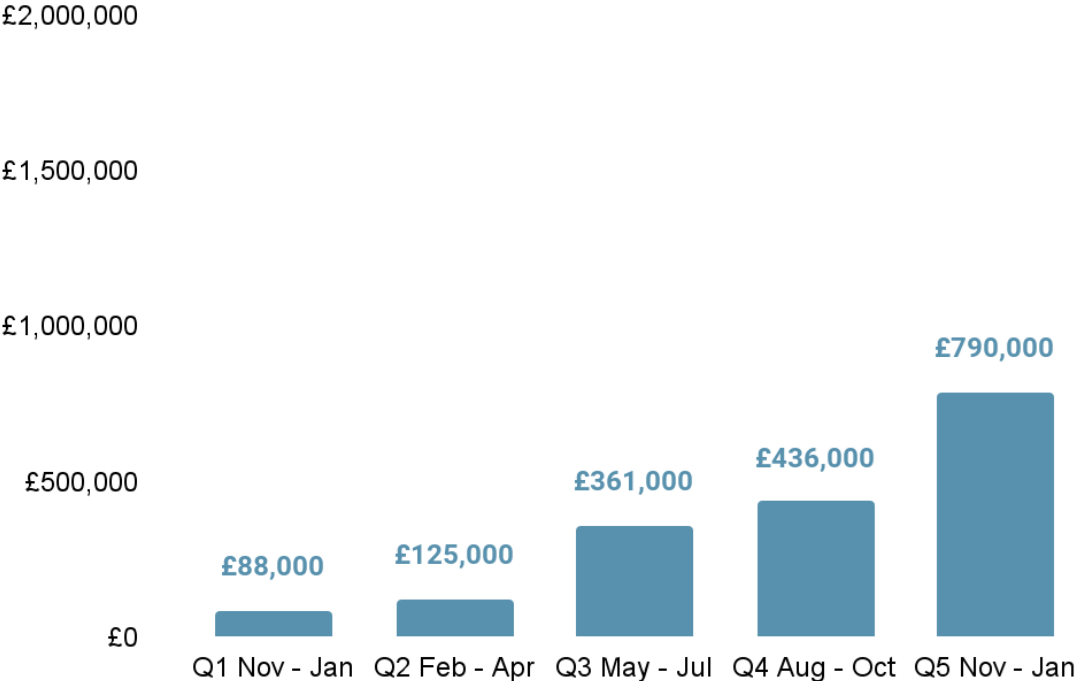
average per
household

10% get relatively significant
sustainable new income

Rate of new benefits uptake has been increasing steadily since we launched



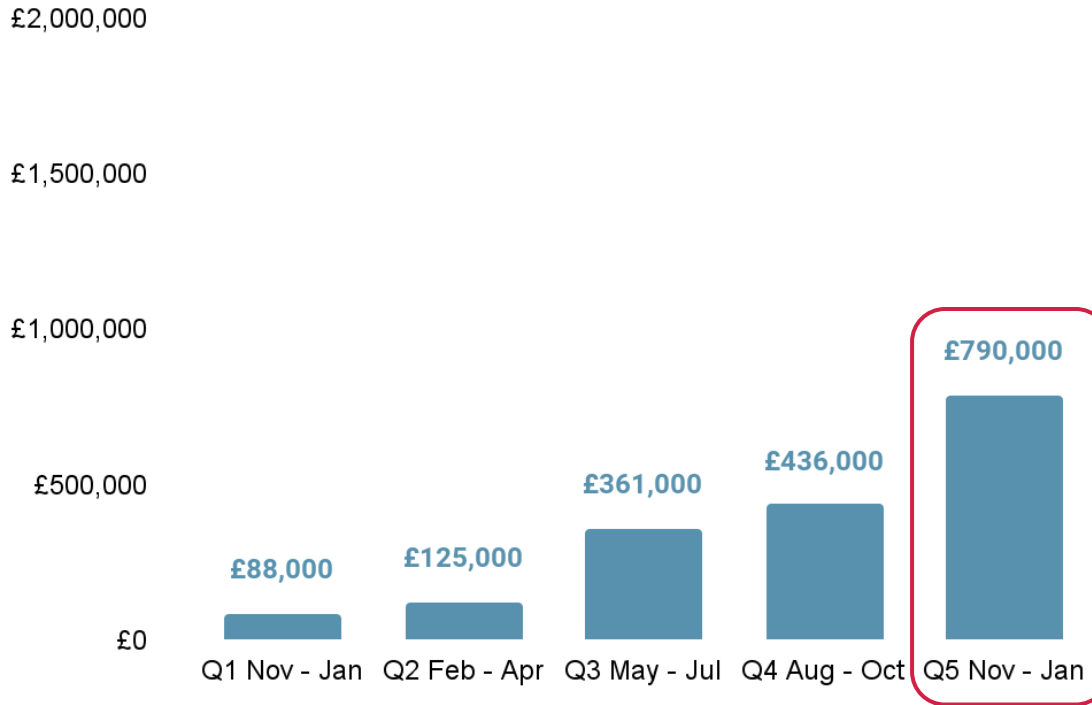
Recorded benefits uptake per quarter



We are now delivering £2.40 for residents for every £1 we spend



Recorded benefits uptake per quarter



This equates to **£12.5k** of new income per day

Versus whole team costs of **£5.2k** per day

Return on investment: **£2.40** for every **£1** spent

What does this look like for residents?

Insert case studies



We know when people thank us, they talk about how we make them feel, more than the outcome we achieved

Being human is -
present him / her self
next to someone
when needed!

Shamsun you are
so brave, kind
and dedicated
person.
I am proud of
you.

34/08/2023

Lovely compliment from a Money Hub client for [@Gulistan Bogazkaya](#) - you've had a huge impact on someone who was really struggling:
Dear Gulistan,

Thanks you very much with your team for relieving the stress that i hzve been going through fir the past 5 months, i haven't been sleeping, lost interest off every thing almost comming suicide, iam on antidepressant medication, becouse no one was willing to listen to my case, but when you handled my case you were very kind to me you made me calmdown when i was in team, i could tell that you cared for me. Words can't describe my happiness for you but since that day when you told me the big date is off my bill, my life fells better and i starred talk to my friends again, it felt like i was under the tunnel which crushed over me and you rescued me. Thanks you i wish you get promoted Becouse u have saved my life.
Thanks more than 1000%.

👍 3 ❤️ 4 💖 1

Glyn Ashman Yesterday 18:56

G shout out to [@Roland Efedua](#) [@Pauline Johnson](#) [@Maxine Johnson](#) [@Jennifer Baker](#) for their outreach work this week at Hackney works and Frampton Park:

From Frampton Park today for Maxine and Jenny

We had a great session today with a good number of people helped by your amazing team. Looking forward to resume on the 8.2.2024
Best Christmas wishes
Christine

From Hackney works yesterday for Pauline and Roland

Another good session with the team yesterday. They had some complex cases to deal with, but as always they were great.
Thank you
Caroline.

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8.8.23.
Dear Sophie
This is just to say.
Thank you for your
support & help with
filling out for and
advice!!
You've been so kind, thanks!
ESPECIALLY FOR YOU
I really appreciate
your time
even though I know
it's part of your
job I appreciate
it!
God bless you
ook of numbers: ct 6: verse
24-26.

Key challenges 2024



1

Migration to Universal Credit

Ca. 7000 households will be forcibly migrated to Universal Credit starting April 2024

Ca. 25% of households previously migrated have fallen out of the benefits system entirely - presumably many because they struggled with the new application

We need to consider system wide responses to manage this challenge

2

Continuing to deliver with smaller team

Money Hub does not have core funding, but has grown based on availability of short term funding

We have reduced the size of the team to meet funding constraints but this will leave team under pressure as they navigate with reduced scope

3

Securing long term funding for the service

From 2025/26 Money Hub faces a budget gap of ca. £700k

We will need to source additional funds to cover this gap or look at efficiencies by merging with other Council teams, so that we are doing more with the investments the council has already made

Spend on key poverty reduction initiatives (including Lunch Clubs)



Main sources of crisis support provided by the Council (annual budgets)

Household Support Fund: Supports holiday vouchers and food parcels to children on free school meals, benefits advice and small crisis payments through the Money Hub, Children and Adults Social Care and 14 services across the Council and NHS, supports the Citizens Advice and smaller VCS organisations provide help with food, fuel and advice: £5.6m

Discretionary Housing Payments: DWP fund for short-term shortfalls between Housing Benefit and rent in very specific circumstances: £1.1m

Council Tax Reduction Discretionary Fund Help those on Council Tax Relief clear historic Council Tax arrears: £100,000

The Discretionary Household Crisis Support Scheme: Small grants to people facing economic hardship to pay for things like furniture, household appliances and manage rent arrears. £150,000

Section 17 Funding: Available to Social Workers in Children's Services for families with children facing hardship. Families must be assessed by Social Services

Financial Inclusion team: Supports Council tenants make the best use of their income, tackle debt through tailored support plans, signposts tenants to other services

No Recourse to Public Funds Hardship Fund: Crisis support and advice to those with No Recourse to Public Funds. This will be administered by the Hackney Migrant Centre: £100,000

Alexander Rose Vouchers: Alexander Families with young children can obtain Rose vouchers to obtain fresh fruit and vegetables in local markets, £20,000.

Healthy Start: National scheme provides free vitamins to pregnant women, children under 4 and new mothers

Lunch Clubs: 12 Lunch Clubs provide nutritious hot food to Hackney elders: £203,800



Appendix: Useful resources

Healthy Start Vouchers

Who? People receiving Universal Credit or Child Tax Credit with a monthly income of £408 or less with a child under 4, or who are 10 weeks pregnant.

What? Support for families to buy healthy food, milk and vitamins for their children.

Support: Complete this [form](#).

Free childcare for 2 year olds

Who? Children whose parents/carers are on certain benefits, are looked after by the authority, or have an EHC plan in place

See full list [here](#).

What? 15 hours of free childcare per week at participating nurseries and Children's Centres.

Support: Register an account and complete this [form](#).

Council Tax Reduction

Who? People experiencing financial difficulties or on a low income.

What? This gives extra money to pension age residents with a low income.

Support: Complete this short [form](#).

Pension Credit

Who? Pension age residents (66+) with low income or savings.

What? This gives extra money to pension age residents with a low income.

Support: Apply online with this [form](#) or call 0800 731 0469

**Underclaimed
benefits and how to
apply**

Free School Meals

Who? Parents on benefits like Universal Credit, Income Support and Child Tax Credits who are on low incomes.

What? Free school meals and holiday food vouchers

Support: Complete this [form](#).

**Underclaimed
benefits and how to
apply**

1. Check you are claiming what's yours



Use this [Benefits Calculator](#) to see if you are missing out on any financial support

Some of our most underclaimed benefits include...

2. If you're struggling with a crisis situation, contact Hackney Money Hub

Who we are:

- We are a new team in Hackney Council
- Our team is friendly and non-judgmental and here to help residents struggling with financial difficulties
- We use info about your finances to see if you are missing out on financial support you are eligible for



How does Hackney Money Hub work



Resident is in need of financial crisis assistance.



Resident completes the application form online.

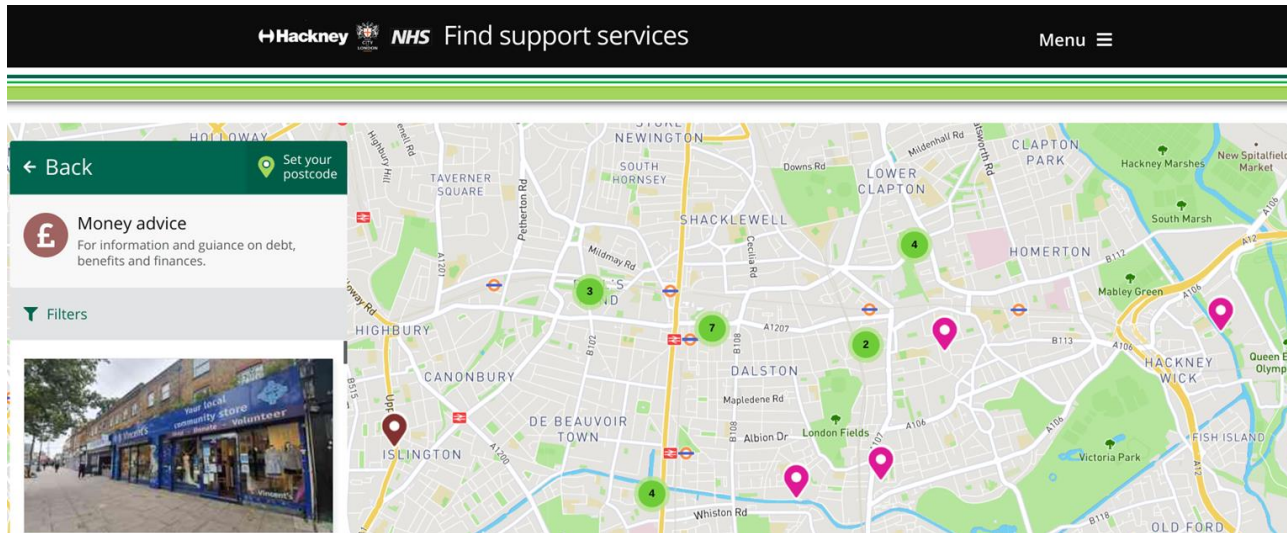


A Support Worker calls the resident back to provide further support if needed.

3. Find support within your local community



Use [Find Support Services](#) to find community groups



Financial Inclusion Team



A Hackney Council service that supports Council tenants to:

- Make the best use of their income
- Tackle debt through tailored support plans
- Signposts tenants to other services who can help

If you would like to be referred to the service contact [Income Services](#) on **0208 356 3100**

Use our Help at Hand guide



Help at hand:

A guide to the support available for Hackney residents during the cost of living crisis



Financial help

Health and wellbeing

Help with food and groceries

Energy bills

This is a **guide** to the support available to residents who are **struggling**:

It includes:

- Financial support
- Energy costs advice
- Water costs support and advice
- Help with your food and groceries
- Help with your health and wellbeing
- Support with employment and skills