

Hackney Council Equality Plan 2024-2026

1. Why we need a plan

In 2022, Hackney Council adopted a new Strategic Plan. This presented the Council's ambitions for the next four years. It also described the key challenges. The plan sets out how we will need to respond, working with residents and partners. The plan includes commitments for how the Council maximises its own resources - jobs, contracts and making best use of our spaces and assets.

We are in one of the most difficult times in post war memory, with deep inequalities in society, and in our borough. The UK faces the most severe cost-of-living crisis in 40 years. Hackney residents are really struggling with this latest crisis. This comes after over a decade of austerity from national government cuts. It comes after the pandemic.

This means that demand for support is increasing. Council budgets cannot keep up with the level of demand. We expect this situation to become even worse and we expect government cuts over the next few years. This is a very challenging context. An equality plan will help focus on achieving fair outcomes for Hackney residents.

We will have to make very difficult decisions about budgets and services over the next few years. The equality plan will help us understand the context for these decisions. It will help us to consider what we can do, if anything, to mitigate these actions. Inequality of outcomes has a huge cost on residents' lives and affects the whole community. It leads to wasted talent and increased costs to the state. This plan recognises that bias and discrimination can be deeply embedded into our processes and cultures. When we fail our residents, we make unfair decisions, waste our resources and create wider problems. By focusing on institutional change, the Equality Plan can support us to be more efficient and high performing.

2. What the plan covers

The final plan identifies the key objectives that will frame and guide our approach to equality, by seeking to eradicate inequality at every life stage, building opportunity, and well-being and celebrating and serving diverse communities and valuing the contribution they make. The plan is clear that to have an impact on these objectives, we need to change as an institution to better meet residents' needs. This means embedding equality into everyday service design and practice. It also means that we need to change our leadership and management culture and to see a Council workforce that reflects the diversity of Hackney communities at all levels. We want this change to happen across the system that residents come into contact with. So this is not just about the Council. It is about statutory partners, the voluntary and community sector, local businesses and employers. It is about representative and participatory structures and boards and committees.

There is good practice in progress across the system. We will lead by example and bring partners together to support change.

Some residents feel that Council communication does not resonate with their experience of life in the borough. They feel we are too defensive when presented with new ideas or challenges. Although trust in the Council is high for the whole population, it is much lower for Black and Global majority residents and social housing tenants. In response, we need to develop a culture that is comfortable with hearing uncomfortable truths. We need to be more open and confident about working with residents as part of the solutions. We must pay attention to residents who we are least likely to hear from. We have to remain agile and adaptive to meeting new needs that we identify through this dialogue.

In the last Equality Scheme, we committed to developing a new LGBTQIA plan. In response, we have developed the LGBTQIA strategic framework. In July 2020, the Council passed a motion to work towards becoming an anti-racist organisation. This helped strengthen the focus on what we need to change within institutions. We have now developed an anti-racism action plan. We are sharing both these plans alongside the Equality Plan and inviting engagement.

Over the last few years, the Council has adopted motions that champion the needs and rights of groups. This Equality Plan considers how we can include these motions.

The motions cover:

- anti-racism
- supporting trans rights
- considering the impact of perimenopause and menopause
- understanding the needs of single parents
- tackling islamophobia and anti-semitism
- becoming age friendly and dementia friendly
- being committed to the “right to food.”

3. How we have developed the plan

The plan and approach builds on past work and learning. It has been developed through reviewing progress on our existing work including a full review of the last single equality scheme, which was summarised in the Corporate Plan Update 2022.

In March 2020, a [Community Impact Assessment](#) was established, so that the likely direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic in the short, medium and long term, could at least be understood, in advance of the official data. We have drawn on data from this Community Impact Assessment and analysis of impacts from the cost of living crisis and worsening poverty. We combined this with data we hold internally and data from the 2021 Census, bearing in mind that this was a snapshot of a time when we were in lockdown and that the picture may change. We have noted that the way we collect and use data around equalities needs improving and this forms part of the plan.

We have also developed this plan in tandem with looking at the budget for 24/25 and implications of savings.

We received 90 online responses, but engagement activity involved a further 701 people: 355 staff, 239 partners and 107 residents (of which 53 completed monitoring information). We have also drawn on the insight from the 65 events that happened during the Council's anti-racist summit in October and November 2023.

A breakdown of who we reached can be found in the Consultation and Engagement Report.

The online consultation was designed to check if we have got the objectives right and if we are explaining them in an accessible and relevant way. The resident engagement was designed to gather new insight about what is driving inequality, understand what is working and is valued and develop specific thematic areas of work. It has also helped us to develop richer deeper links into communities with insights, actions and to develop ideas for how we involve partners and residents in working with us to help us tackle inequality and provide critical challenge and accountability.

From the Consultation and Engagement, it was clear that residents wanted to see the detailed actions below this high level plan. We will bring a full action plan back to Cabinet which draws on all the rich data and insight gathered.

We were asked to show how we were building on previous learning and work. The outline plan sets out how the objectives will build on existing work and also provides a summary of progress made through the last Single Equality Scheme (an update was published as part of the Corporate Plan Update in February 2022). We will also look at sharing progress in an equality hub, similar to the anti-racism hub published in 2022.

We received feedback that our objectives were too soft and reactive. We have used bolder and more positive language.

Prosperity jarred. We have amended the second objective to talk about opportunity and wellbeing.

There were strong views that we needed to celebrate and stand up for communities who are seen as a "problem" in society. We were urged to see community tensions and strengthen efforts to build good relations. We have strengthened the focus on this, and including actions to review cohesion and how communities get on with each other.

There was wide support for the existing focus on institutional change and on the need for the Council to serve residents better. There was a strong demand for us to be trauma informed and to find ways to collaborate with communities in an ongoing way.

There was a need for more of a focus on groups who were in precarious housing situations and temporary accommodation, more comprehensive work looking at disability equality and carers, including children with special educational needs. We also needed to look at gender and sex based inequality and discrimination. We have added these as new priorities in the high level Equality Plan.

4. Which groups are considered in the plan?

How we meet our legal duties

The Equality Plan will set out how we meet our legal duties under the Equality Act. The Equality Act identifies “protected characteristics” which are listed below. It is illegal to discriminate against someone because of their:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Public bodies are required to work really proactively to tackle discrimination and disadvantage that is related to a protected characteristic. We have to think about how we foster good relations between all groups. This is called “Due Regard.”

Marriage and civil partnership is only a protected characteristic when we are thinking about discrimination.

Public Bodies are also expected to publish draft objectives and consult on them. This Equality Plan presents a set of draft objectives for consultation. We are also asked to publish data about communities and workforce, which is also being updated as part of the development of this Equality Plan.

Other groups considered as part of this Equality Plan

As well as thinking about protected characteristics, there are other groups we are considering in this Plan. We understand these groups are not protected under law. By identifying these groups, we are able to consider a wider set of needs that we need to consider in order to focus on fairer outcomes for residents. The original draft of the Equality Act contained a “socio-economic duty.” The Duty did not become law but Hackney adopted it on a voluntary basis. This means that the Council tries to tackle inequality that we know will lead to socio-economic disadvantage. We also try to consider how someone could be more disadvantaged because of their socio-economic status. We have considered this in our plans in 2013 and again in 2018.

Socio-economic disadvantage could be about education, occupation, income, locality, housing or social class. There is no singular way to measure “social class.” Hackney’s approach considers income inequality and poverty, housing, skills levels and occupation. As there is no national measurement, we have to draw on academic research and qualitative insight. In this new plan, we want to focus in particular on:

- 20% of households living in poverty which rises to 36% of households after housing costs are taken into account
- 48% of children who live in poverty
- People on low incomes in the private rented sector

The new plan also focuses on those who are vulnerable because of life experiences. During consultation and engagement, we heard about other groups who we needed to consider for this reason. This is not an exhaustive list:

- Looked after children, care experienced people and care leavers
- Single parents and teen parents
- People with insecure immigration status
- Ex Armed Forces
- People with multiple interconnected challenges (“complex needs”) including those who fall below statutory thresholds
- People experiencing perimenopause and menopause
- People in insecure private rented accommodation, at risk of homelessness or living in precarious conditions (eg sofa surfing) and people in temporary accommodation
- Domestic abuse victims and survivors
- People with an offending history

5. Financial context

Inequality of outcomes has a huge cost on residents’ lives and affects the whole community. It leads to wasted talent and increased costs to the state. This plan recognises that bias and discrimination can be deeply embedded into our processes and cultures. When we fail our residents, we make unfair decisions, waste our resources and create wider problems. By focusing on institutional change, the Equality Plan can support us to be more efficient and high performing.

The Equality Plan is, however, being drafted at a time when the Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan presents an indicative budget gap of £22.5m in 2025-26. The indicative cumulative budget gaps in the following two years are £34.6m and £52.3m respectively. We face these challenges off the back of a sustained period of funding cuts where we have seen a reduction of £156m in real terms (40%) in our spending power (excluding council tax) since 2010-11. The Council is seeking to deliver as large a proportion of the budget reductions required through transforming the way the Council delivers some of our services, but are inevitably some difficult choices to make. In this very challenging context, an equality plan will help us keep focused on equality, diversity and inclusion.

It will help us continue to consider the cumulative impacts on our residents of savings and how these will be managed. A Cumulative Equality Impact Assessment has been developed iteratively as the budget for 2024/25 has been developed. The assessment will be kept under review to support future budget setting, the implementation of savings and to help shape transformation and inform corporate planning. The assessment has been done at the same time as we have been developing this new Equality Plan for Hackney for 2024-26. The plan has been informed by the cumulative impact assessment in the following ways:

Savings proposals will seek to move to more positive, enabling and empowering model of public service delivery and to move resources “upstream” to be more preventative.

- We will ensure that we are able to understand if these intended outcomes are achieved, and to feed this learning into the wider work relating to prevention under the Equality Plan.
- Having ongoing resident check and challenge, as is proposed in the Equality Plan should help us to capture resident insight into how these changes are being felt in communities.
- The Equality Plan can also help create the right conditions for early help and prevention across the system, which will be reliant on partnerships focused on tackling inequality and developing solutions with partners.

Savings may have an impact on place and on community tensions

The Equality Plan will have a priority to review cohesion and actions needed to strengthen communities.

Savings may impact on staff

The Equality Plan should help us focus on understanding differential impacts and mitigations needed, and should support change being delivered in an inclusive way, as part of wider workforce strategy.

6. Equality Plan Objectives

Working with communities to:		
1. Eradicate inequality at every life stage by taking protective, preventative positive action	2. Building opportunity and well-being	3. Celebrate and serve diverse communities and value the contribution they make
<i>Rationale</i>		

<p>Some groups are more likely to face inequality and experience poor outcomes and to live in poverty. This is because they have experienced structural disadvantages that are rooted in prejudice and discrimination. This is both historical and current and deeply embedded into societal structures, including public institutions.</p> <p>There is proven bias and prejudice in the system that impacts on life chances and outcomes. This can include access to early help.</p> <p>We can have the greatest impact on life chances in early years. We need to recognise that inequality usually gets worse as people get older.</p>	<p>Poverty and socio-economic disadvantage are the main causes of inequality.</p> <p>Poverty in London and in Hackney is largely driven by market forces - housing costs, the stagnation of wages and greater job insecurity.</p> <p>For people who were already in poverty, it is getting worse. Other groups are falling into difficulty. Many more people are living in more insecure and precarious situations and in work poverty. This is leading to growing inequalities. This affects the whole community.</p> <p>This is then leading to a “hollowing out” of London and growing inequality, with middle income households and those with children leaving the city.</p>	<p>Hackney’s diverse, dynamic and changing population is what makes Hackney feel unique. It gives different areas their unique sense of identity.</p> <p>The borough is a cohesive borough where people from different backgrounds generally get on with each other.</p> <p>There is, however, a risk that the very communities that helped create a sense of place are excluded and marginalised in a changing borough.</p> <p>Community and community organisations are under strain and there are lines of tensions in communities. This is not helped by the current national sentiment which is hostile to the very communities that need support and advocacy, including refugees and asylum seekers and trans people. Other groups have been positioned as a “burden on the state”- including children with special educational needs.</p> <p>Although there is a high level of trust in the population overall, this is much lower for Black and Global majority residents and social housing tenants.</p>
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<i>Our response</i>		
<p>We will take protective, preventative and positive action at every life stage from maternity to old age, working with communities and across the system:</p> <p>to address the root causes of inequality and dismantle structural disadvantages so that we see equity of outcomes at every life stage: Pregnancy, School readiness, Key Stage 4 (GCSE), Leaving school, Employment, Parenthood, Caring and Old age This work needs to be specific and intersectional.</p> <p>the Council will need to: work preventatively with partners to expose and eliminate bias and prejudice in the system.</p> <p>Examples include- Assessment of additional needs, Exclusions, Entering the criminal justice system, Unemployment, Eviction, Debt and Illness.</p> <p>We will create fair access to early help and support for residents experiencing difficulties, recognising the community and informal support that residents need.</p>	<p>Work with partners to create a safety net for those in poverty.</p> <p>We will support people to thrive and access opportunity and shape the local economy and growth so that it benefits residents.</p> <p>We will do what we can to tackle the market forces that drive poverty - housing costs, the stagnation of wages and greater job insecurity.</p> <p>We need, however, to see national policy changes to bring about a benefits system that makes work pay, a national economic strategy that brings better paid, secure jobs and major interventions to tackle the housing crisis. This needs to include improving standards in private rented housing.</p> <p>We will make Hackney a more inclusive and accessible place and promote wellbeing.</p>	<p>We need to put residents and communities first, thinking about underserved communities.</p> <p>Residents will be involved in shaping plans through effective engagement and collaboration.</p> <p>We will develop partnerships with communities and community organisations. They can help us support communities and build trust and confidence in the state.</p> <p>We will celebrate all our diverse communities and stand up for groups who face hostility.</p> <p>We will break down barriers that limit our reach, like language and digital barriers.</p> <p>We will develop a segmented, targeted and intersectional approach to community needs.</p> <p>We will review how well communities are getting on with each other and refresh our approach to how we bring different communities together.</p>

Underpinning organisational objectives

4. Embed equality into service plans and practice across the council and the borough

Inequality is deeply embedded into societal structures and institutions. We need to change as an institution in order for this plan to have an impact. We need to embed an inclusive, humble, anti-discriminatory, anti-racist approach into service planning and practice.

Service planning and design and decision making

- We will develop new service planning and design guidance in line with these objectives, improving the way we use service and population data to develop a more consistent method for understanding inequality
- We will review and refresh guidance on monitoring / information collection of all equality groups
- We will develop our approach to impact assessments- strength based, systemic, trauma informed, anti-discriminatory and bringing in a community impact assessment
- We will update our commissioning and procurement guidance
- We will focus on disability equality and access in service planning

Language and communication

- We will refresh the current Inclusive Language guide and develop a consistent approach to accessible communications
- We will adopt guidance and resources on tackling language barriers

Participation and engagement

- We will develop consistent engagement and co-production principles that encourage ongoing collaboration with residents on long lasting solutions
- We will establish more collaborative ways to engage residents on equality issues

Developing our understanding of communities

- We will develop our understanding of different communities, identifying gaps in our understanding
- We will refresh our approach to reaching diverse communities

5. Change as an institution to ensure internal and systemic change

Rationale:

Inequality is deeply embedded into societal structures and institutions. We need to change as an institution in order for this plan to have an impact.

We need to develop an inclusive, humble, anti-discriminatory, anti-racist workforce that reflects the diversity of Hackney at all levels, and is confident working with communities from a trauma informed perspective.

- We will take action to develop the leadership and management culture and ensure that there is workforce diversity at all levels.
- We need a workforce that:
 - understands what being inclusive, humble, anti-discriminatory and anti-racist means

- is trauma informed
- leads / works as a system- from a resident / borough not service perspective
- understands Hackney's diverse communities and is aware of the impact of poverty
- reflects the diversity of Hackney, at all levels
- can collaborate with communities

Anti-racism Framework Objectives

The anti-racism framework objectives reflect the Equality Plan objectives. They were developed first and influenced the wider objectives.

1. Identify and eradicate racism and racial inequality at every life stage by taking protective, preventative and positive action (as well as an equitable approach).
2. Build opportunity and wellbeing; ensuring a focus on racial equity
3. Celebrate and serve diverse communities and value the contribution they make.
4. Embed anti-racism into service plans and practice across the council and the borough.
5. Change as an institution: the leadership and management culture and diversity of leadership; to ensure internal and systemic change.

LGBTQIA Framework

LGBTQIA Framework thematic areas set out shared goals for the Council to work towards to become inclusive of LGBTQIA staff and residents and to eradicate inequalities. It has also influenced the emphasis in the wider Equality Plan on how we need to change as an institution and specifically the Underpinning Organisational Objectives.

1. Accessibility & Service Provision
2. Intersectionality
3. Demographics & Data
4. Informed Allyship
5. Participation & Engagement
6. Community Resilience & Belonging

7. Accounting for the impact of the plan

We will need to set up the right oversight to ensure that we are:

- Working together towards a common set of outcomes and intermediate outcomes.
- Embedding equality, diversity and inclusion into service design, delivery and practice.
- Developing an inclusive, open and humble and anti-racist leadership style
- Progressing action to ensure that the workforce reflects the diversity of Hackney's population at all levels.

- Tracking progress against intermediate outcomes and regularly assessing if these are making a difference on our long term outcomes.

Residents have told us that we need to be open and self-critical about past shortcomings and set out measures to avoid repeating these patterns of failure. They want to see the involvement of residents and community partners, including the voluntary and community sector, in holding the Council to account, as well as frontline workers. There are existing examples of working with the community that the Council leads or has helped shape that could be learned from.

There need to be anonymous feedback loops for both residents and staff to share their experiences about equality in Hackney. There is a call for brave and courageous leadership that is able to listen and be more creative and open in order to move further forward.

The Council will use this feedback to establish final governance arrangements, based on the following components:

- We will draw on the feedback from consultation and engagement to establish final governance arrangements which will identify how we gather community feedback on an ongoing and dynamic way that helps hold us to account, act as critical friends for new and current work, as well as mapping the journey travelled
- A delivery group representing all involved in progressing this plan
- A thematic exploration of progress and impact led by the lead Cabinet Member for Equality
- Oversight of progress by the Council's Corporate Leadership and Cabinet will jointly consider progress on a six monthly basis.
- An annual report on progress against this plan that is resident facing and in an accessible form

We will ask formal partnerships and partners to commit to working towards a shared approach to tackling key inequalities. This work builds on extensive collaboration with partners in recent years. This will be formalised and will start with a focus on anti-racism. From this, we have identified the shared areas we will want to progress together.

- Outcomes and data and insight / lived experience
- Service design
- Developing leadership culture and workforce
- Accountability
- Resident engagement and collaboration

7. Outline plan

These priority areas build on what is in the [Strategic Plan](#).

1. Eradicate inequality at every life stage by taking protective, preventative positive action

Rationale:

Some groups are more likely to face inequality and experience poor outcomes and to live in poverty. This is because they have experienced structural disadvantages that are rooted in prejudice and discrimination. This is both historical and current and deeply embedded into societal structures, including public institutions.

There is proven bias and prejudice in the system that impacts on life chances and outcomes. This can include access to early help.

We can have the greatest impact on life chances in early years. We need to recognise that inequality usually gets worse as people get older.

Our response:

We will need to:

- **address the root causes of inequality and dismantle structural disadvantages so that we see equity of outcomes at every life stage: Pregnancy, School readiness, Key Stage 4 (GCSE), Leaving school, Employment, Parenthood, Caring and Old age. This work needs to be specific and intersectional.**
- **work preventatively with partners to expose and eliminate bias and prejudice in the system. Examples include- Assessment of additional needs, Exclusions, Entering the criminal justice system, Unemployment, Eviction, Debt and Illness.**

Existing priorities:

Children

- The City and Hackney Place Based Partnership has a strong focus on giving children the best start in life with ambitions to reduce infant and neonatal mortality, increase immunisation, improve early childhood development, improve healthy weight, reduce mental health crisis and reduce unplanned pregnancy. Supporting children and young people's emotional wellbeing is key to early help and prevention and since the pandemic, we have seen an increased demand for support.
- Supporting first time young parents - Enhanced Health Visiting Service
- Developing integrated family support services to meet families' social care, education, mental and physical health needs through the Children and Family Hub
- Provide an excellent, inclusive and equitable local experience for all Hackney children and young people with SEND
- Improve the life chances of every child, young person and learner in Hackney, where schools, settings and partners provide an exciting environment which

ensures safety, inclusion and success for everyone through Schools Improvement

- Work across the system to Improve Outcomes for Black Children and Families and progress work under Hackney's Anti-Racism Framework

Health inequalities

- Ageing Well: making Hackney a place where residents can age well, making the place and services more age friendly and dementia friendly valuing the contribution of older people to life in the borough.
- Improve health and wellbeing in Hackney whilst also reducing health inequalities - the avoidable and unfair differences in health between different groups and communities:
 - Support the priorities of the City and Hackney Health and Care Board (the local Place Based Partnership of the ICS) focus on children, mental wellbeing and long term conditions.
 - Support the Health and Wellbeing strategy priorities for 2022-2026 which has a specific focus on mental wellbeing, social connection and financial security.
 - Ensure that the Population Health Hub (PHH) is a resource for all partners to draw on to improve population health and reduce health inequality.
 - Co-produce a new Integrated Mental Health Network and establish a commission to ensure that local mental health services are meeting the needs of all residents and tackling inequality of outcomes.
 - Continued partnership action to through Hackney Healthy Weight Strategic Partnership
 - Deliver actions across the whole system to support people to stop smoking, that will be led by the recently re-launched Hackney Tobacco Control Alliance and local strategic priorities to reduce alcohol-related harms
 - Commit to ensuring there are no new HIV infections by the year 2030

Carers

- Develop Carers Strategy -to set out the Council's approach to supporting carers and those who need them, especially unpaid carers.

New priorities:

- Through continued work under Hackney's Anti-Racism Framework, work with statutory and community partners and residents to review and address root causes of inequality for:
 - Turkish Kurdish communities (including Alevi community)
 - Charedi (Orthodox Jewish Community)
 - smaller populations - beginning with Gypsy Roma Traveller. Insight has previously been shared about the needs of South and Central American, Chinese community and Somali residents.

As part of this work, we will seek to improve our understanding of the population, because we know Census data can give us an inaccurate picture of populations that do not fit into the traditional equality monitoring categories.

- Review sex and gender equality and identify actions needed, with statutory and community partners and residents

- Review disability equality and identify actions needed, with statutory and community partners and residents

Create fair access to early help and support for residents experiencing difficulties, recognising the community and informal support that residents need

Existing work:

- Fairer Help work between Council, health partners and community partners: Equip workers with knowledge, skills, relationships, confidence, resilience and connectivity to strengthen the quality of community based help for residents who may be experiencing hard times and may go on to experience multiple and complex needs and further disadvantage.

Key strategies:

- [Ageing Well Strategy](#)
- [Hackney Young Futures Commission](#)
- [Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)
- [Integrated Care System Place Based Plan](#)
- [Poverty Reduction Framework](#)
- [Schools Improvement Plan](#)
- [SEND Strategy](#)

2. Building opportunity and well-being

Rationale:

Poverty and socio-economic disadvantage are the main causes of inequality.

Poverty in London and in Hackney is largely driven by market forces - housing costs, the stagnation of wages and greater job insecurity. For people who were already in poverty, it is getting worse. Other groups are falling into difficulty. Many more people are living in more insecure and precarious situations and in work poverty. This is leading to growing inequalities. This affects the whole community. This is then leading to a "hollowing out" of London and growing inequality, with middle income households and those with children leaving the city.

We will do what we can but we need to see national policy changes to bring about a benefits system that makes work pay, a national economic strategy that brings better paid, secure jobs and major interventions to tackle the housing crisis. This needs to include improving standards in private rented housing.

Our response:

Work with partners to create a safety net for those in poverty.

Existing work:

- Work with partners to improve crisis support, making the connection between crisis support and early help, including action to support the right to food

We will support people to thrive and access opportunity and shape the local economy and growth so that it benefits residents.

Existing work:

Access opportunity

- Work together with our schools and settings to tackle the attainment gap so great results do not depend on a child's background or where they live.
- Focus employment support activity on priority groups including over 50's, disabled residents, young people and care leavers.
- Provide lifelong learning opportunities to address skills gaps and take advantage of the growth in green jobs, technology and social care sectors.

Shape local economy and growth

- Progress actions to increase diversity in the tech with employers
- Works closely with local employers to encourage them to become LLW employers. Hackney is a London Living Wage (LLW) Accredited employer and expects our contractors also to pay LLW.
- Ensure regeneration creates better places, a more inclusive economy, and the facilities that local communities need.
- Develop and implement a more targeted approach to supporting local suppliers to be contract ready then win relevant public sector contracts
- Support a just transition from carbon-intensive jobs and businesses.

We will do what we can to tackle the market forces that drive poverty - housing costs, the stagnation of wages and greater job insecurity.

Existing work:

- Deliver 300 new social rented homes as part of our commitment to deliver 1,000 social rent homes between now and 2026.
- We are developing a new five year housing strategy that builds on a new Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment and Housing Needs Survey.
- We have adopted a new [Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy](#) which responds to a steep and rapid increase in overall homelessness and rough sleeping, particularly young people, an increase in the number of homeless people with multiple needs, a shrinking private rented sector and increasing competition for accommodation.
- Hackney continues to push for high standards for temporary accommodation with 87% of placements made into registered buildings with the Pan London inspectorate.

- We work as preventatively as we can. Staff supporting homeless people are trained in mediation and trauma informed practice and a new team to assist residents with searching for affordable privately rented homes has been established.
- We have continued to campaign to improve standards in the private rented sector through our Better Renting Campaign, and offer support to residents who face the risk of eviction.
- We are helping those in the private rented sector secure the repairs needed to ensure their homes are safe and free from damp and mould.
- Hackney's Affordable Childcare Commission identified actions in late 2023 which the Council will respond to later this year.

We need, however, to see national policy changes to bring about a benefits system that makes work pay, a national economic strategy that brings better paid, secure jobs and major interventions to tackle the housing crisis. This needs to include improving standards in private rented housing.

<p>We will make Hackney a more inclusive and accessible place and promote wellbeing</p>
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Existing work

Accessible borough

- We will build on the principles we have already established through the Child Friendly Borough planning guidance, the Ageing Well Strategy, and our Hackney an Accessible Place for Everyone and co-produce a new design guide with disabled and older people to ensure that our streets, parks, estates, public buildings, high streets and public spaces are inclusive and accessible for all.
- Promote the Healthy Streets Approach which improves air quality, reduces congestion and helps make areas greener, healthier and more attractive places, to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport
- Continue to support Play Streets and School Streets and the principles as set out in the Child Friendly Places planning document to encourage doorstep play, 'play on the way' and opportunities to connect with nature

Digital access and inclusion

- We are refreshing our understanding of Digital Inclusion provision to provide a comprehensive picture of the current landscape and opportunities to improve impact.

Community space

- Through 'SpaceBank,' we are looking at how we can ensure that council owned buildings support local businesses, social enterprises, voluntary, community and third sector tenants.

Wellbeing

- Proactively encourage walking and physical activity, including continuing to deliver the Sport England funded Kings Park Moving Together project and apply these lessons more widely

- Continue to improve leisure centres and parks and invest in a network of new, free, outdoor gym facilities in our parks and green spaces
- Progress work to make Hackney a place where residents can age well, progressing Hackney's Ageing Well Strategy, making the place and services more age friendly and dementia friendly valuing the contribution of older people to life in the borough.

People with care needs

- Through our [Learning Disabilities Strategy](#) we will ensure that learning disabled adults are active and valued in a community which is accessible and enabling
- Our [Autism Strategy](#) help the Council and its partners to work together to make services and the community friendly to autistic residents
- Review our day services provision for residents who are eligible for care and support from the Council, to improve choice and personalisation.
- Improve how we track outcomes in adult social care, with a focus on strength based practice and an understanding of intersectionality (the multiple ways people can be discriminated or disadvantaged because of who they are- e.g. by gender, ethnicity and class)

Refugees and migrants

- Hackney is already committed to being as welcoming and inclusive as possible for migrants and refugees with a cross cutting team leading on Refugee, Migrant & Asylum Seeker support.

New priority:

- Hackney has now signed [a motion](#) to become a borough of sanctuary that signals that Hackney is a welcoming place of safety for all. This is a formally recognised position. We are now identifying actions to formally be recognised as a borough of sanctuary. This is an opportunity to develop our wider work across the system including community partners, raise visibility of work, and leverage support from the local community.

[Ageing Well Strategy](#)

[Autism Strategy](#)

[Child Friendly SPD](#)

Draft Housing Strategy

[Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)

[Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy](#)

[Inclusive Economy Strategy](#)

[Learning Disabilities Strategy](#)

[Poverty Reduction Framework](#)

3. Celebrate and serve diverse communities and value the contribution they make

Rationale:

Hackney's diverse, dynamic and changing population is what makes Hackney feel unique. It gives different areas their unique sense of identity. The borough is a cohesive borough where people from different backgrounds generally get on with each other. There is, however, a risk that the very communities that helped create a sense of place are excluded and marginalised in a changing borough. Community and community organisations are under strain and there are lines of tensions in communities. This is not helped by the current national sentiment which is hostile to the very communities that need support and advocacy, including refugees and asylum seekers and trans people. Other groups have been positioned as a "burden on the state"- including children with special educational needs. Although there is a high level of trust in the population overall, this is much lower for Black and Global majority residents and social housing tenants. We need to put residents and communities first, thinking about underserved communities.

Our response

Residents will be involved in shaping plans through effective engagement and collaboration.

Existing work:

Young Futures

- The [Valuing the Future Through Young Voices](#) report was published in November 2020. To support progress and the embedding of the findings and legacy, we created a Young Futures Legacy programme, which employed young people for 5 hours a week to help progress work between 2021 and 2024. As [reported to Cabinet in 2023](#), fifty of the 73 recommendations have now been embedded into the Council's business as usual commitments.

New priorities:

- Developing a consistent cross Council approach to co-production and engagement.

We will develop partnerships with communities and community organisations. They can help us support communities and build trust and confidence in the state.

Existing work:

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

- We have developed community partnerships and strengthened collaboration on poverty reduction
- We work with residents, artists, practitioners, creatives and performers to help them shape the cultural life of the borough, strengthen our communities, and enhance the quality of life for everyone.
- We have worked hard to respond to the Cyber attack in 2020, Black Lives Matter and the review into the treatment of Child Q in 2022, as these presented key risks to trust and confidence. Progressing work 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.
- Improving trust and confidence in policing remains a key focus of work. The Council has worked closely with the Police and community partners to develop a new trust and confidence in police action plan and also to progress a pilot with the Mayors Office for Policing and Crime, (MOPAC) to establish a new approach to community-led scrutiny of police powers.

We will celebrate all our diverse communities and stand up for groups who face hostility.

Existing work:

Tackling Hate Crime

- Hackney is committed to offering better support to those affected by a hate crime or incident and to give witnesses the confidence to come forward and report. This includes reducing anti-semitism working closely with Shomrim and key stakeholders from the Charedi communities.

We will break down barriers that limit our reach, like language and digital barriers.

Existing work:

- We are identifying actions to improve residents' experience of translation and interpretation as a tool for accessing services. This will include recommendations for a new contract with translation and interpretation services, wider guidance and support for using translation and interpretation services and other solutions that can be introduced in parallel to having translation and interpretation support.
- We are refreshing our understanding of Digital Inclusion provision to provide a comprehensive picture of the current landscape and opportunities to improve impact. This may identify changes for the Council.

New priorities:

- We will undertake a review of how we can make communications more accessible

We will develop a segmented, targeted and intersectional approach to community needs

New priorities:

- We will improve our engagement with residents, taking a more sophisticated and nuanced approach, recognising that communities are not homogenous. This will include faith groups, youth groups, and more transient populations. As part of this work we are committed to developing our approach to engaging with members of the Charedi and Muslim communities, recognising both form significant sections of Hackney's population, and that there is a great deal of diversity in communities.

We will review how well communities are getting on with each other and refresh our approach to how we bring different communities together.

New priorities:

We will undertake a review of community cohesion to understand how well communities are getting on with each other, refresh our approach to how we bring different communities together and identify new actions needed.

Key strategies:

[Culture Strategy](#)

Culture Strategy

[No Place for Hate](#)

[Young Futures](#)

[Voluntary Sector Strategy](#)

Underpinning organisational objectives

4. Embed equality into service plans and practice across the council and the borough

Inequality is deeply embedded into societal structures and institutions. We need to change as an institution in order for this plan to have an impact. We need to embed an inclusive, humble, anti-discriminatory, anti-racist approach into service planning and practice.

Our response:

Data and insight

We are developing a full equality needs analysis to build on high level data about key inequalities and informing performance management metrics. This seeks to go beyond traditional public sector analysis which concentrates on individual and community barriers and factors:

- Cultural and community
- Individual and family factors

This will help us understand drivers of inequality in the wider societal context:

- Poverty and socio-economic inequality
- Institutional, societal and systemic discrimination
- Lack of trust between the community and state
- The impact of trauma

To do this effectively and meaningfully, we need to think forensically about what is driving inequality and the experiences and status of different groups rather than generalise issues.

We understand that census data is unlikely to accurately represent all communities. The 2021 census was taken during the COVID pandemic, where home life for many was different than usual. In 2021, researchers from De Montfort University Leicester (DMU) found that men, people from lower income brackets, young people, and those living in rented accommodations were less likely to fill out census data. Additionally, people lacking trust in the process are less likely to want to complete the census. This can lead to the misrepresentation of certain groups and communities, which is crucial as it can lead to policies and prioritisation of needs aligned with the communities we serve. We are concerned for examples about an undercount in Charedi Jewish communities, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and Turkish Kurdish communities.

This shows that the census data is not truly representative of all communities. To understand the makeup of our communities in Hackney and across London, we need to use multiple sources of information; and diverse and less traditional forms of gathering data. Additionally, it is essential to understand that some ways we obtain data/information about communities can traumatise communities.

Equality data collection

These actions help us take forward part of the LGBTQIA framework, which can be applied to all equality work. We will ensure that:

- Review the Council's data collection strategy and guidance, and ensure personal information data collection is trauma informed and consistently applied across the council

Intersectionality

These actions help us take forward part of the LGBTQIA framework, which can be applied to all equality work. We will ensure that:

- An understanding of intersectionality is embedded into all relevant training
- Equality Impact Assessments have a section designed to draw out potentially intersectional impacts
- Intersecting needs are considered during grant making and commissioning processes
- Equality of outcomes are represented across all council strategies and plans, with clear links and signposting to relevant cross-service work

The new plan identifies groups who are vulnerable because of life experiences. We will ensure that services are taking account of the needs of these groups in policy and practice.

- Looked after children, care experienced people and care leavers
- Single parents and teen parents
- People with insecure immigration status
- Ex Armed Forces
- People with multiple interconnected challenges (“complex needs”) including those who fall below statutory thresholds
- People experiencing perimenopause and menopause
- People in insecure private rented accommodation, at risk of homelessness or living in precarious conditions (eg sofa surfing) and people in temporary accommodation
- Domestic abuse victims and survivors
- People with an offending history

We will do this by;

- including data and an analysis of need in our refreshed equality profile
- developing our understanding of needs through sharing lived experience of inequalities and of council services
- we will identify specific proactive actions that are also needed through this needs assessment

Service planning and design and decision making

- We will develop new service planning and design guidance in line with these objectives, improving the way we use service and population data to develop a more consistent method for understanding inequality
- We will review and refresh guidance on monitoring / information collection of all equality groups
- We will develop our approach to impact assessments- strength based, systemic, trauma informed, anti-discriminatory and bringing in a community impact assessment
- We will update our commissioning and procurement guidance
- We will focus on disability equality and access in service planning

Language and communication

- We will refresh the current Inclusive Language guide and develop a consistent approach to accessible communications
- We will adopt guidance and resources on tackling language barriers

Participation and engagement

- We will develop consistent engagement and co-production principles that encourage ongoing collaboration with residents on long lasting solutions
- We will establish more collaborative ways to engage residents on equality issues

Developing our understanding of communities

- We will develop our understanding of different communities, identifying gaps in our understanding including:
 - Gypsy Roma
 - Insecure Immigration status
 - Dementia awareness
 - Disability equality

5. Change as an institution to ensure internal and systemic change

Rationale:

Some groups are more likely to face inequality and experience poor outcomes and to live in poverty. Groups do not happen to be more disadvantaged by chance. Structural disadvantage is rooted in prejudice and discrimination that is both historical and current and deeply embedded into societal structures, including public institutions.

Our response:

As well as taking action to tackle key inequalities and disadvantages in communities:

- We will take action to develop the leadership and management culture and ensure workforce diversity at all levels.
- We need to work with other institutions across the system- public, private and voluntary and community sector and embed a more inclusive, humble, anti-discriminatory mindset into culture, service planning, practice and accountability.

We need a leadership and workforce that:

- **Can work across the system-** as a Council, we need to be more outward facing and collaborative, 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.
- **Puts trauma informed, anti-racist and poverty informed understanding and ways of working into practice**
- **Is inclusive, humble, anti-discriminatory and anti-racist and reflects the diversity of Hackney at all levels**
- **Takes a strength based approach** - understanding Hackney's diverse communities and has the skills to collaborate with communities, co-designing long lasting solutions

8. Building on the progress made 2018-2022

The [Single Equality Scheme 2018-2022](#) was developed to identify the proactive work needed, informed by a [detailed analysis of demographics and of inequality](#). The pandemic revealed the stark racial inequality faced by some groups and, in response, the Council adopted a further commitment to anti-racism in July 2020. In March 2020, a [Community Impact Assessment](#) was established, so that the likely direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic in the short, medium and long term, could at least be understood, in advance of the official data. This has been informed by national, regional and local intelligence, both quantitative and qualitative and has helped us understand likely impacts and actions needed. A full update is provided on the Single Equality Scheme was provided as part of the update on the corporate plan 2018-2022 which is published [here](#).

A significant part of progressing work under the last scheme was focused on poverty reduction and shaping a more inclusive economy. The commitment to anti-racism, adopted in July 2020, was an important public statement that responded to the impacts of the pandemic, the death of George Floyd and the growing Black Lives Matter movement. It was built on the groundwork of Hackney's Improving Outcomes for Young Black Men Programme. Being an anti-racist organisation is about tackling much more than conscious hatred and grappling with racism that is far more embedded in society.

9. Summary of Data considered to develop this plan

This is a summary of the data that has been drawn on. Further work will be undertaken to develop a full equality needs analysis.

The plan has also been informed by census analysis published here: <https://hackney.gov.uk/population>


<u>Group</u>	Demographics	Insight
<u>age</u>	Ageing Well Strategy 2020 includes data on outcomes for older people 0-18 health needs assessment March 2022 includes maternity	Ageing Well Strategy 2020 Young Futures
<u>disability</u>	Disability and Health 2021 Census data Draft initial needs assessment	

	(unpublished as yet)	
gender reassignment	LGBTQIA data digest	LGBTQIA data digest also includes insight
pregnancy and maternity	0-18 health needs assessment March 2022 includes maternity	Insights from Bump Buddies and Homerton (unpublished)
race	<p>Anti-racism action plan summarises key inequalities</p> <p>Inequalities for black children and young people: this data digest drills down into data about inequalities for black boys and young men work.</p> <p>Inequalities in the Turkish Kurdish community: this unpublished review will help frame new cross cutting work</p>	Understanding the needs of vulnerable migrants - helped scope out cross cutting work to support vulnerable migrants
religion or belief	<p>Ethnic Group, National Identity, Language and Religion</p> <p>Profiling the needs of faith communities -2011 data needs updating</p>	Visits to Jewish community partners and issues raised (unpublished)
sex	Needs of women and girls - 2011 data needs updating and to look at key inequalities for men	
sexual orientation	LGBTQIA data digest	LGBTQIA data digest includes insight
Socio-economic	Poverty Reduction Framework 2023 -sets out key inequalities and cumulative impacts	Food Poverty Insight 2019- needs of those in food poverty

	Hackney Economic Profile Indices of multiple deprivation Housing Strategy (not published)	Food poverty workshop insight (MATCH equity work) Case studies about the impact that Household Support Fund is having on residents - case studies.
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Insight into barriers

<u>Barriers</u>	Demographic differences	Insight
<u>Languages</u>	Ethnic Group, National Identity, Language and Religion	Thematic insights from recent workshop on English Language barriers 2023 Translation and Interpretation Review Report
<u>Digital</u>	Digital exclusion - key groups and barriers 2021	Survey of organisations working with digitally excluded residents (unpublished)
<u>Disability</u>	<p>Work was undertaken to scope out work to improve access to face to face, telephone and online front door (customer services) for disabled people. Made a number of recommendations but not yet implemented.</p> <p>Hackney Access for Everyone looked at how we can make the public realm more accessible to promote mobility and greater independence.</p> <p>ASC is developing a carers strategy and will have insights from them</p>	

<u>Trust and confidence in council</u>	Residents' survey	Young Futures Ageing Well Improving outcomes Poverty Reduction Framework LGBTQIA data and insight Child Q review related work KPMT insight
<u>Physical activity</u>	Community Insight Report 1 Community Insight Report 2	KPMT insight
<u>Access and inclusion review of leisure centres</u>	 Access and Inclusion Revi...	

10. Glossary

Term	Explanation
Complex Need	An individual with complex needs is facing multiple interconnected challenges that significantly impact their wellbeing and social function. This could include, for example, poor health, housing instability or homelessness, debt, poverty, disability, substance addiction etc.
Co-design	Co-design is a participatory method in which community members are treated as equal collaborators in the design process. Stakeholders and end users are actively involved in the design of a product or service from the earliest stage.
Equality & Equity	Equality is where individuals or groups of people are able to access the same resources or opportunities. This does not necessarily lead to an equal outcome. Equity is where individuals or groups of people are able to reach an equal outcome. This may require delivering different resources or opportunities depending on the circumstances of the individual or groups in question.

Intersectional	<p>Intersectionality is the concept that where people experience discrimination in more than one dimension, the experience is unique due to the overlap. For example, Black women don't just experience sexism (as women) and racism (as Black people), but their experiences are unique from white women or black men due to the intersection of the two.</p>
Protected characteristic	<p>A "protected characteristic" is an attribute that is protected from discrimination by law.</p> <p>There are 9 protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010: Age, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Ethnicity, Gender Reassignment, Religion or Philosophical Belief, Pregnancy and Maternity, Marriage or Civil Partnership.</p> <p>A person must not be discriminated against for having - or being perceived to have - a protected characteristic.</p>
Socio-economic	<p>"of, relating to, or involving a combination of social and economic factors" (Merriam-Webster)</p> <p>"Socio-economic status" is a way of describing the relationship between groups of people relating to their social class and financial situation</p>