

Council Meeting
Wednesday 28 February 2024

Agenda Item 16: Proposed Amendments to Motions received by the Monitoring Officer prior to 12 noon on Tuesday 27 February 2024.

Underlined text = proposed additional wording ~~Strikethrough text~~ = proposed deletions

The original motions were published in the agenda and can be viewed [here](#)

16. Motions

16a. Green Motion - Reduce Glyphosate to Zero Now

The following amendments are proposed by the Labour Group:

This Council notes:

1. The use of herbicides has a significant impact on the environment by removing plants that are an important food source for a wide variety of native insects. Pesticide product mixtures have also been shown to be toxic to bees and earthworms. There is also a risk of runoff from hard surfaces into waterways, putting aquatic ecosystems at risk. We not only face a climate emergency, we also face the related emergency of collapsing biodiversity that is increasingly referred to as the 'sixth mass extinction' (1):
2. That 99% of pesticides are made from fossil fuels (2). Furthermore, pesticides exacerbate the climate emergency throughout their lifecycle via manufacturing, packaging, transportation, application, and even through environmental degradation and disposal;
3. There is a growing body of scientific evidence showing a link between glyphosate exposure and an increased risk of cancer; the World Health Organisation (WHO) deemed glyphosate a 'probable carcinogen' (3). It has been also shown to worsen chronic conditions such as asthma, and particularly affects children and pregnant people. In addition, it poses a health hazard to workers who spray Hackney's streets.
4. The spraying of glyphosate in Hackney is causing concern among residents and elected representatives about its potential harmful effects on children, animals, wildlife and biodiversity on our streets, housing estates and parks;

5. The contracting staff who carry out this work need to be protected from harm, [which is of utmost importance to the council and is why contractors carry out specialist training and wear PPE;](#)
6. The Mayor of London's commitment in the Environment Strategy to "reduce the use of pesticides and peat-based products, such as compost";
7. The work of Transport for London (TfL) with suppliers and contractors to explore safer alternatives such as hot foam, for essential vegetation management and weed control.
8. Glyphosate, the most used herbicide was narrowly relicensed in the EU with The condition that Member States "minimize the use in public spaces, such as parks, public playgrounds and gardens."

Hackney Council further notes:

9. The work of the council to date in reducing the use of glyphosate with a 50% reduction in on-street spraying against 2017 levels.
10. [That Hackney Council's Environmental Services conducted a trial using pelargonic acid also known as fatty acid, a natural herbicide, but found that this product does not effectively kill the plant root system.](#)
11. [The Council's Housing Grounds Maintenance Service is responsible for the maintenance of 247 housing estates green areas covering approximately 73 hectares, and uses glyphosate to treat invasive species only - in 2022 the Service only used 0.28 litres for this purpose.](#)
12. [The Council's Parks and Green Spaces Service is responsible for the maintenance of 58 sites totalling some 282 hectares, and uses glyphosate to treat invasive species only - in 2022 the Service only used 0.8 Litres for this purpose.](#)
13. [That Hackney Council's Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport has signed the Pesticide Free Town pledge.](#)

Hackney Council has demonstrated:

14. A commitment to further reducing spraying across the borough, including a total cessation of spraying in Hackney's Town centres, by removing weeds by hand; a successful year-long pilot for more than 200 out of a total 237 green areas across Hackney's housing estates which will now go glyphosate-free permanently, with an intention to upscale to all estate-based green areas; a

change in how the council sprays, from operatives mounted on vehicles to spot-spraying with knapsacks; a no-spray 10x Green area around Daubeney Road to explore whether a no-spray approach is more beneficial to biodiversity by avoiding the removal of plants that support insect populations. These changes have been well received by the public.

The Council acknowledges:

15. Several councils around the country have gone fully glyphosate-free including in London. The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham was the first council in London to cease the use of glyphosate, to support biodiversity and protect habitat against any long-term chemical effect by using chemical-free weedkillers, such as hot foam and hot steam, [although the borough do still use it against invasive species](#). Lambeth and Westminster have also gone pesticide-free and are rolling out programmes for increased biodiversity. Lambeth has a community weeding scheme which encourages residents to leave some annual plants to grow, as well as other initiatives, and Westminster is developing a new 'Greening Project'.
16. [That some councils, such as Brighton and Hove, have had to return to using glyphosate following many formal complaints by the public about the uncontrolled growth of weeds on pavements and other public footpaths.](#)
17. Where there is a duty to eradicate Japanese Knotweed because of risk to critical infrastructure or mobility issues risking residents' safety, then glyphosate may be used until an acceptable non-chemical alternative becomes available. But its use should be limited to stem injection rather than spraying.
18. [That Hackney Council's administration committed in their manifesto to extend the Council's commitment to weedkiller-free zones to reduce the use of Harmful weedkillers and help increase the biodiversity of plants and flowers.](#)

The Council resolves to:

19. [Investigate the best way to e](#)Educate residents in the way that weeds are actually 'pavement plants' (4) and a much needed source of biodiversity in the city; [This could take the form of b](#)by maintaining regular communications in all appropriate council forums and on estates, as well as with biodiversity events and workshops for residents if/where financially feasible;
20. [Consider b](#)Bringing forward an action plan which takes into consideration technical and financial concerns and cost-saving opportunities (5), including a timetable for a complete phase-out of the spraying of glyphosate and any

other pesticides, substituting them with non-chemical alternative weed management methods including leaving areas for biodiversity in all council operations.

21. [Ask the Cabinet Member to consider a](#)Adopting a clear policy for the council's weed management strategy which details a phase-out plan and timetable.
22. To engage with [organisations working to reduce the use of pesticides, such as the Pesticide-Free London Leaders Network, to work towards developing](#) ~~and use this space to create and keep to~~ a clear phase-out plan, as well as share learnings with other councils in the network.

Labour Group Amendments

Proposer: Cllr Mete Coban

Secunder: Cllr Kam Adams

16b. Labour Motion - Poverty Reduction and the Local Government Funding Crisis

The following amendments are proposed by the Green Group:

Hackney Council notes:

1. Following the Autumn Statement, Hackney Council's Funding will remain below 2010 levels.
2. The Local Government Association (LGA) estimates that Councils in England face a funding gap of £4 billion.
3. The Institute of Fiscal Studies notes that local government funding in London is 17% lower than the relative need - the largest gap of any region in England.
4. Hackney Council has suffered a decrease in core Government funding in real terms of £156m since 2010.
5. The Household Support Fund (HSF) enabled the council to provide a lifeline to tens of thousands of households in Hackney struggling to afford energy, food, clothing and other essentials, particularly the 40% of children living in poverty.
6. The continued calculation of the social care grant using the relative needs formula based on adult need only, fails to provide adequate funding for Hackney with high need for children's social care.
7. Hackney is carrying a deficit in relation to SEND funding and has one of the largest proportions of Education, Health and Care Plan's in the country.
8. The funding gap has forced the Council to increase Council tax by the maximum 4.99%.
9. The Council is honouring the commitment to increase Council tax support for Hackney's low income households and doubling the tax on empty properties.
10. The council has established a poverty reduction framework working with partners to reduce poverty for Hackney Residents. [Hackney communities are missing out on £28 million a year of unclaimed benefits.](#) The framework makes connections between crisis support , early help and prevention and tackling longer term drivers of poverty e.g. unemployment, housing. The framework includes the money hub which has paid out £1.5 m in grants and £2.0m in new benefit income to vulnerable residents.
11. The programme is dependent on HSF and without this funding the programme will be under threat.

Hackney Council further notes:

12. The letter recently sent by the Mayor and the Cabinet Member for Finance to Michael Gove Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, expressing serious concerns about the inadequacy of Hackney's funding and asking Government to implement a sustainable long term funding solution that takes proper account of current and future needs.

Hackney Council resolves to:

13. Call on the Government to restore [urgently](#) the Household Support Fund in advance of the Spring Statement and to guarantee continuation of this funding.
14. Lobby for fair funding for Hackney.
15. Campaign for reform of the method used to allocate social care funding and ensure adequate funding for Hackney's needs.
16. Call for restoration of Hackney's Core Funding to 2010 levels.
17. Call for comprehensive reform of SEND funding and the implementation of a future funding settlement which covers the needs of Hackney residents.
18. Call for Longer-term pooled funding in place of short-term competitive funding pots to prevent councils competing with each other for funding they desperately need.
19. Contact political parties ahead of the general election as to the details of their future plans to stabilise and fix local government finance, and to respond to them with Hackney's requirements.
20. [Locally, protect and grow services that maximise income and reduce poverty such as the Hackney Money Hub.](#)

Green Group Amendments

Proposer: Cllr Alastair Binnie-Lubbock

Seconder: Cllr Zoe Garbett

16c. Labour Motion: London Charter to End Rough Sleeping

The following amendments are proposed by the Green Group:

Hackney Council notes:

1. Despite the Government's commitment in 2019 to end rough sleeping by 2024, estimates show there has been an increase in rough sleeping in all regions of England, with London and the south-east accounting for almost half of the rise.¹
2. Rough sleeping has increased under this Government, with the number of rough sleepers having increased by 74% since 2010.²
3. The most recent annual count by the London-only Combined Homelessness and Information Network (Chain) showed 10,053 rough sleepers spotted on London's streets between April 2022 and March 2023. A total of 4,068 people were counted between July and September 2023 for the most recent quarterly update with half of those new to the streets.³
4. The majority of people sleeping rough in England are male, aged over 26 years old and from the UK. Meanwhile the Office for National Statistics found men who are living on the street outnumber women at a ratio of six to one.
5. Women are often missing from rough sleeping counts because they tend to be less visible than male rough sleepers due to the risk of violence on the streets. A coalition of homelessness and women's organisations in London conducted a women's rough sleeping census in October 2022 and found 154 women, including trans and non-binary women, sleeping rough in London in a week. That number was higher than previously thought with an extra 71 women found across 13 London boroughs when the data was compared to the latest official rough sleeping count.
6. The cost of living crisis has exacerbated longstanding drivers of homelessness, such as a shortage of affordable housing, an often punitive welfare system and increasingly stretched health services.
7. Local authorities and homelessness charities state that street homelessness is just the tip of the iceberg and estimate the number of people living without a home is much higher than the figures show, with many people in informal living arrangements such as sofa surfing.
8. The number of households living in temporary accommodation in England are at an all-time high. As of March 2023, 104,510 households were living in TA, including 65,000 households with children.
9. Over 3,000 households in Hackney were among more than 300,000 nationwide who spent Christmas without a home. In Hackney this includes 3,500 children, and around 50% of TA placements are now outside our borough, severing people from their livelihoods and support networks.
10. Like other local authorities, Hackney has seen a precipitous increase in the number of homelessness applications. The number of households seeking

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/feb/28/rough-sleeping-in-england-rises-cost-of-living>

²

<https://cityharvest.org.uk/blog/homelessness-uk-increased-by-74-since-2010/#:~:text=Recent%20statistics%20indicate%20a%2035.ongoing%20challenges%20in%20addressing%20homelessness.>

³ <https://www.bigissue.com/news/housing/britains-homelessness-shame-cold-hard-facts/>

support is up by 44% from 2017/18 to 2021/22. The Council anticipates the number of approaches will continue to increase at around 8% per year.

11. Hackney's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, adopted at Cabinet in December, will ensure we strengthen the advice, support and tools available to people at risk of homelessness need, and make sure that no one in Hackney is left facing homelessness alone. This will include maximising access to short and long-term affordable housing, tackling rough sleeping and addressing homelessness among young people in Hackney.

[11a. The number of homelessness presentations made by refugees and people seeing asylum evicted from Home Office accommodation increased by 39% from September to October 2023, according to research by London Councils. \(1\)](#)

[11b. In 2023 homelessness among armed forces veterans in England rose by 14%. \(2\) Local authorities must consider the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant when making decisions about homeless applications and when drafting homelessness strategies. \(3\)](#)

Hackney Council further notes:

12. That the Mayor of London's Rough Sleeping Charter was created by a pan-London coalition working to end rough sleeping, and enshrines principles and actions needed to tackle the issue; an example of London's commitment to working together to end rough sleeping for good.
13. The Charter sets out six principles for signatories to uphold in their work including:
 - a. Accepting that whilst people sleeping rough may have problems, they aren't problem people
 - b. Recognising that everyone rough sleeping is unique, and there should be meaningful options for all, regardless of immigration status
 - c. Ensuring that people sleeping rough are safe from violence, abuse, theft and discrimination and that they have the full protection of the law
14. The Charter also includes key actions that signatories commit to undertake and support:
 - a. Acknowledging people when they talk to you or ask you for money, even if you decide you would rather not give it to them directly
 - b. If you see someone sleeping rough who needs help, let Streetlink London know
 - c. Volunteer, donate, or support a charity who has joined this pledge

The Council resolves to:

15. Ask the Mayor of Hackney to sign the London Charter to End Rough Sleeping on behalf of Hackney Council.
16. Continue to call on the Government to:
 - a. Remove the cap on Housing Benefit subsidy for TA, which is currently set at the 2011 Local Housing Allowance rate, to enable local authorities to provide more TA locally.
 - b. Increase the Homelessness Prevention Grant in 2024-25.

- c. Implement an emergency increase in Discretionary Housing Payments in the current financial year.
- d. Provide additional funding to local authorities to support people seeking asylum and armed forces veterans.
- e. Provide additional grant funding to acquire Private Rented Stock released by landlords (currently 40% of all sales listings in London).
- f. Invest in new build affordable housing – bringing London's Affordable Homes Programme target back up to at least 35,000 homes.
- g. Increase the 40% cap on the proportion of individual sites that can be funded through Right to Buy receipts and allow boroughs to use receipts in conjunction with grant funding (particularly Affordable Homes Programme grant).
- h. Address the financial shortfall created by the 7% rent cap in 2023/24
- i. Deliver a long-term rent settlement post-2025 which puts social housing on a sustainable financial footing
- j. Fully fund the new Decent Homes Standard and ensure a long-term and more easily accessible funding pot for home retrofit measures.

Green Group Amendments

Proposer: Cllr Zoe Garbett

Seconded: Cllr Alastair Binnie-Lubbock

Additional sources:

1. <https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/refugees-who-become-homeless-in-london-after-eviction-from-home-office-accommodation-up-39-84272>
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/dec/26/homelessness-armed-forces-veterans-england-rises>
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-covenant-duty-statutory-guidance>