



London Borough of Hackney
Full Council Meeting
Municipal Year 2023/24
Date of Meeting: Wednesday, 28 February 2024

Minutes of the proceedings of
the Meeting of Council held at
Hackney Town Hall,
Mare Street,
London E8 1EA

Councillors in Attendance:	<p>Cllr Anya Sizer - Speaker of Hackney</p> <p>Elected Mayor, Caroline Woodley.</p> <p>Cllr Kam Adams, Cllr Grace Adebayo, Cllr Soraya Adejare, Cllr Frank Baffour, Cllr Polly Billington, Cllr Alastair Binnie-Lubbock, Deputy Mayor Anntoinette Bramble, Cllr Robert Chapman, Cllr Mete Coban, Cllr Sophie Conway, Cllr Michael Desmond, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas, Cllr Zoë Garbett, Cllr Margaret Gordon, Cllr Ben Hayhurst, Cllr Christopher Kennedy, Cllr Lee Laudat-Scott, Cllr Hershy Lisser, Cllr Richard Lufkin, Cllr Anna Lynch, Cllr Yvonne Maxwell, Cllr Sem Moema, Cllr Jon Narcross, Deputy Mayor Guy Nicholson, Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren, Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Benzion Papier, Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr Clare Potter, Cllr Fliss Premru, Cllr Steve Race, Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Ali Sadek, Cllr Caroline Selman, Cllr Ian Sharer, Cllr Gilbert Smyth, Cllr Simche Steinberger, Cllr Sheila Suso-Runge, Cllr Lynne Troughton, Cllr Claudia Turbet-Delof, Cllr Joe Walker, Cllr Jessica Webb, Cllr Carol Williams, Cllr Penny Wrout, and Cllr Sarah Young</p>
Apologies for Absence:	<p>Cllr Humaira Garasia, Cllr Eluzer Goldberg, Cllr Clare Joseph, Cllr Michael Levy, Cllr Clayeon McKenzie, Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Midnight Ross and Cllr Ifraax Samatar (dispensation).</p>
Apologies for Lateness:	<p>Cllr Clare Potter and Cllr Ian Sharer.</p>
Absent:	<p>Cllr Shaul Krautwirt</p>
Officer Contact:	<p>Natalie Kokayi, Governance Officer governance@hackney.gov.uk</p>

Councillor Sizer [Speaker] in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Garasia, Goldberg, Joseph, Levy, McKenzie, Ozsen, Ross, and Samatar (dispensation).
- 1.2 Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Potter and Sharer.

2. Speaker's Announcements

- 2.1 The Speaker informed the Council of recent civic events and projects which she had supported since the last Council meeting, and forthcoming events which included:
- Holocaust Memorial Day
 - The Grenada 50 years of independence celebration
 - Hackney Youth Awards
 - Fundraising event for the Speaker's charities at Hoxton Hall for the Bright Art Healthy Minds event
 - Colourful and positive events to celebrate Chinese New Year
 - Visit to Hackney Food Bank
 - School crossing patrol awards
 - Celebrations to mark LGBTQI month
 - The Speaker noted the forthcoming Easter event on 25 March at the Mare Street Salvation Army.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting on 24 January 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting on 24 January 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

5. Deputation - School Exclusions in Hackney

- 5.1 The Speaker noted that the deputation was withdrawn today by Hackney REP.

6. Questions from Members of the Public

- 6.2 To the Deputy Cabinet Member on Homelessness and Housing Needs from Lisa Neidich

I read that the new homelessness strategy was passed in Cabinet in December. How will this impact on and reduce the number of homeless residents?

Response from the Deputy Cabinet Member for Homelessness and Housing Needs

Cllr Etti noted that the housing crisis had been driven by issues outside the Council's control, such as Government policies on austerity, house building, rent control, welfare reforms, and the economy. The Council had worked to mitigate these impacts and had updated the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, "the Strategy"

The Strategy built on positive actions that addressed the key challenges of homelessness. These actions included maximising access to short and long-term affordable housing; support for rough sleeping, including residents with complex needs; addressing homelessness amongst young people responding to inequality and the cost of living crisis; advice and assistance to people with no recourse to public funds (NRPF); and managing the pace of change in the homelessness environment.

It was noted that it was important that the ambitions of the Strategy were translated into a concrete action plan with clear targets and goals working in partnership across the Council and with stakeholders in the community. This included working and supporting residents to use the tools to prevent them becoming homeless.

Together with the Housing Strategy Team new housing models were being explored to increase the supply of good quality affordable housing in the borough, which included temporary accommodation for people who had lost their homes.

The Council worked with partners to tackle the increased levels of rough sleeping and to support individuals into appropriate provision. There was an expansion of supported provision through engagement with young people that addressed the housing crisis, setting realistic expectations for housing options, and building an understanding about independent living.

Oversight of the delivery of the action plan was held by the Homelessness Partnership Board, which included all the homelessness charities in the borough. The Board included statutory, commissioned providers, and voluntary partners.

Cllr Etti thanked partners for her recent visit to Agudas Israel Housing Association in conjunction with Interlink. Cllr Etti had visited schools, care homes and the Interlink offices and held conversations about homelessness, the housing register, and the continued work to improve the partnership. It was noted that Cllr Etti had also recently visited Shelter and Shoreditch Housing Partnership (SHP) which demonstrated the Council's continued commitment to partnership working.

6.4 To the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport from Hendrik Wittkopf

How does Hackney Council support residents living near Lea Bridge Road, to expand nature in the marshes, i.e. through the East London Waterworks Park

initiative, in line with the Mayor's '30 by 2030' pledge, and to enlarge the corridor north and south of Lea Bridge Road?

Response from Mayor Woodley

Mayor Woodley confirmed that the Council was committed to working towards a greener future for residents, which included the maintenance, improvement, and expansion of nature resources and the promotion of biodiversity.

Mayor Woodley also confirmed that she led on the delivery of the commitments in both the Green Infrastructure Plan and the Local Nature Recovery Plans. The Local Nature Recovery Plan was adopted in 2023 with 5 nature recovery areas across the borough.

The East London Waterworks Park was focused on a site in Waltham Forest. Hackney Wick was within Hackney Wick and London Fields recovery area. The borders of Hackney Marshes had been planted with native woodland which created a corridor along both sides of the River Lea. A wild flower meadow had been established close to Middlesex filter beds, which strengthened ecological connectivity between Walthamstow Marshes and the naturalistic landscape in the northern part of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

The local nature recovery plan had identified priorities for Hackney Marshes to optimise ecological values. This included active management of the planted woodland on Hackney Marshes, selective coppicing to promote new shoot growth, and planting native shrubs underneath the tree canopy on the southern boundary of the marshes. To support this work specialist arboriculturists, agriculturalists, and habitat experts were engaged to support a range of initiatives, many of which had received funding from the Mayor of London.

The Council had started to implement the Hackney Buzzline in Milford Park, which was a long corridor of meadow planting that stretched along the entire length of the cycle track in the park, and created a new habitat and corridor through the park for a range of pollinators.

Supplementary Question:

Will the Council oppose the upcoming planning application for the Waterworks site?

Mayor Woodley noted that the Council had expressed an interest in acquiring the Thames Water Depot on Lea Bridge Road, currently managed by the Department for Education. There were also proposals for a pan-London secure children's home on the Thames Water site, which had been under consultation with an application anticipated by the end of July 2024. Hackney Planning Services had not been involved in the London Borough of Waltham Forest application, but it was confirmed that the Council would be consulted as a neighbouring borough. The application required both Greater London Authority (GLA), and London Borough of Waltham Forest approval, as the property had metropolitan open land status. The Mayor encouraged residents who wished to express their views to submit them at the [consultation website](#). It was

reiterated that the site was in the ownership of the Department for Education and that there was a need for a secure children's home.

6.5 To the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport from Reiner Tegtmeier

Why has the annual Citizens' Assembly of Hackney's Climate Emergency Declaration and Labour's Manifesto been changed to a Citizens' Climate Jury and will three evenings be enough to thoroughly scrutinise the Council's progress and explore climate change challenges solutions, set as the Assembly's goal?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Cllr Coban noted the Council's journey since it had declared a climate emergency in 2019 and recognised this as a social justice issue in Hackney. The Council wanted to work with the people of Hackney and had undertaken a number of initiatives, including related to transport, and the community energy fund which included green recovery initiatives. Cllr Coban noted the action plan had to adapt to people's needs. The 2022 manifesto had a commitment to localise citizen assemblies to ensure neighbourhood-led services and that community voices were heard.

Citizens Juries were the next step in collaborative democracy, with 15 residents empowered to participate as experts from their own experience. It was noted that the conversation would extend beyond that forum to ensure that the theme for the jury this year addressed ways to respond to extreme heat, and to ensure that Hackney responded to the challenges faced across London. It was also important to ensure that progress was made on other key thematic areas in the action plan, including transport and environmental quality. The citizens jury model supported this approach.

Supplementary Question:

Why has the name changed from Citizens Assembly to Citizens Jury? What has changed?

Cllr Coban indicated that the focus was not on a one-off debate and was instead focused on key themes in the Climate Action Plan to ensure Hackney was ready to meet the challenges of adaptation to extreme heat. The current approach would not exclude other approaches, including the assembly model. It was noted that deliberative forms of democracy took many forms and that different engagement methods would be utilised accordingly. It was anticipated that there would be many events and initiatives as part of the deliberative form of democracy.

The Speaker noted that Derek Miller was not in the Chamber and had requested that the question be asked in their absence.

6.1 To the Mayor from Derek Miller

In light of John Henderson's investigation into the resignations of Tom Dewey and Philip Glanville, would you ensure that no councillor will be exposed to our most vulnerable residents including visiting schools without having been DBS checked?

Response from the Mayor

Mayor Woodley noted that the Council was doing everything to safeguard children, young people, and vulnerable adults. It was highlighted that a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check of Tom Dewey that followed his election would not have raised any concerns, as he had not been charged or convicted of any offence at that stage. It was also noted that DBS checks were good only for the day on which the check was undertaken. The independent investigator found no evidence that young or vulnerable people had been put at risk.

Following discussions with the Interim Chief Executive, it was agreed that the Monitoring Officer would bring forward a policy for review, approval, and adoption to a future Full Council regarding DBS checks for the Elected Mayor and Councillors that would take into account the best practice recommendations in the investigation report. This included a requirement for mandatory enhanced DBS checks in unitary and upper tier authorities for appointment to any committee involved in decisions for provisions or services to young people and vulnerable adults. The Mayor indicated that she had not pre-judged the policy development, but was supportive of the approach for all Councillors and the Elected Mayor to be subject to enhanced DBS checks.

The Speaker noted that Mr Anthony had confirmed that they were unable to attend and had requested a written response at Appendix A.

7. Questions from Members of the Council

7.1 Cllr Adejare to the Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing and Customer Service

Amid the cost of living crisis, the Household Support Fund has allowed us to help our most vulnerable residents. With the government proposing to end this financial lifeline, can the Cabinet member advise on how residents most in need will continue to be supported?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing, and Customer Service

Cllr Chapman noted residents had benefited from the Household Support Fund (HSF) and related funding since 2020, which had helped children, families, and vulnerable people from the worst of the cost of living crisis. Cllr Chapman also shared his disappointment that the Government appeared likely to cut the fund and that the Mayor and other local authorities across the country had called on Ministers to extend funding. After years of austerity the Council was unable to fund a like-for-like replacement.

The Council worked hard to support residents who needed it most. This included the use of holiday activities that tackled holiday hunger and Officers communicating with community groups about the support that residents were entitled to receive. The Council continued to fund the Money Hub, launched in 2022, which had helped Hackney residents claim over £2m in unclaimed benefits. The Council continued working with partners through a range of initiatives, which included surgeries delivered by Hackney Housing in community settings, hostels which provided a wider range of health and social support to residents in temporary accommodation, and embedded advice and support at doctors surgeries.

The HSF had been too short term and too limited to address the impact of austerity, however its potential loss was a severe loss to the Council's anti-poverty work. The Council continued to lobby the Government and the motion later on the agenda, at item 16b, was noted. The Council continued to provide services to residents to the best of its ability.

Cllr Adejare did not have a supplementary question, however, noted the importance of the HSF for many residents and thanked Cllr Chapman and Officers for the work undertaken.

7.2 Cllr Garbett to the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

Given the successful summer Ridley Road Market event, the Council's commitment to an inclusive economy and intention to 'activate' spaces in Dalston, its heritage and the views of residents and traders - will the Council review the Hackney Carnival route to ensure it goes through Ridley Road?

Response from Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

Cllr Kennedy celebrated the return of an in-person carnival in 2024. It had been nearly five years since 100,000 people had been on Hackney's streets at a carnival. The Council had worked hard with the Police, Transport for London (TfL), and Hackney Highways Services to balance the needs of performers and spectators, with the need to keep traffic moving around the Borough. Cllr Kennedy outlined the route for 2024, which would not include Ridley Road. Ridley Road had become a victim of its own carnival success with the evaluation of the 2018 event noting concerns about crowd safety and circulation by the Police and the Council which resulted in the route being amended for the 2019 carnival.

The Council wanted businesses to benefit from the carnival and Cllr Kennedy confirmed some of the Ridley Road summer events and Inclusive Economy events that were planned for 2024. Cllr Kennedy also noted that the Council had spent £1.2m on Ridley Road market infrastructure and that the Markets Team would work with the Economic Development Team, the Carnival Team, and Licensing Services to hold another summer event which would enable trading for local businesses associated with the carnival.

Supplementary Question:

What further information was there regarding the risks associated with Ridley Road and what alternative options were considered for ways to bring the carnival to Ridley Road or Gillett Square.

Cllr Kennedy confirmed that the approach had developed following the risk assessment outcome and feedback in 2018. It was noted that there was a strong focus on Ridley Road, including input from Economic Development Services and people at the carnival were directed to businesses at Ridley Road as well as to other businesses across the borough.

7.3 From Cllr Lynch to the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

What was the impact of the Hackney Health and Wellbeing Day, held at the Town Hall in partnership with the Richmond Road Medical Centre and have any lessons been learnt for the future?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

Cllr Kennedy noted the event was held in conjunction with Richmond Road Medical Centre and had been a great success. 1,500 people pre-booked appointments with over 2,000 people attending on the day. There were over 55 stalls representing community health services, children, young people's and family services, and voluntary and community organisations. Volunteer Centre Hackney recruited 10 new volunteers on the day. It was anticipated that the event would be replicated at other locations, starting with an event focused on vaccinations for measles, mumps and rubella for children and young people.

Cllr Kennedy highlighted that most people had pre-booked appointments following text messaging and landline phone calls, which demonstrated the positive use of technology. Cllr Kennedy also noted some of the challenges from the day, including queues for lifts to access the venue. Alternative venues were to be considered for future events. It was noted that so many people attended the event to get health checks and that the Government had not helped the Council or the health service to deliver services that residents needed.

Cllr Lynch noted that equity for access to healthcare was positive and appreciated that the event was being planned to be repeated.

7.4 From Cllr Binnie-Lubbock to the Mayor

How would five and a half million pounds of cuts to children's and youth services square with the Mayor's manifesto commitment for "a bright future for every child and young person" in Hackney?

Response from the Mayor

Mayor Woodley stated that the Council had seen sustained cuts in external funding alongside increases in demand and increases in inflation. 14 years of austerity and the use of one year central government settlements had destabilised local government. As a result, it was not possible to exempt any directorate from consideration for cuts.

Childrens Services had a range of statutory and non-statutory services and the Council had to examine every part of these services to ensure priorities remained appropriate. This included discretionary and frontline services the Council had fought to retain in order to ensure that the overall service remained sustainable. The Mayor outlined the savings delivered across the Council in 2024-2025, which included children's centres, Young Hackney, and early help provision.

There had been mitigations which had resulted from the three year funding secured in 2022 for children and family hubs., This meant the Council had retained family support through universal services at the heart of the children's centre networks. There was no guarantee of funding from 2025 onwards. The phasing in of free entitlement hours for childcare support was being negotiated. This might make childcare more affordable for families, however, the impact on childcare settings had yet to be considered.

Children and Family Services had seen budgetary growth of £3.2m, recognising the financial pressures that had been experienced. An additional social care grant of £2.6m had also been allocated and the Council was working to make the best use of whatever support may be available in its determination to balance the overall budget. The Council had a statutory duty to provide, as far as was practicable, sufficient childcare for working parents and there was a network of private, voluntary, and community run spaces as well as the children's centres. There was a need to provide sufficient space to promote early integrated childcare. Although there was no statutory duty to provide this directly, Hackney had a proud history of children's centres and childcare provision that the Council had retained.

The Council currently had a 12 week consultation to run until April on proposed changes to the Council's children's centre provision, which included how to better support children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The Council ran many of the children's centres in partnership with schools and charities, and the consultation would consider whether alternative provision was preferable for some centres that might otherwise close. The Mayor encouraged anyone who wished to express their views on the proposals to do so through the [consultation webpage](#). Through the period of austerity the council had worked harder for services that were delivered at reduced cost. The changes that had already been made and options being explored were part of this work going forward.

Supplementary Question:

The Children and Young People's Scrutiny Commission had seen the Ernst and Young report which suggests that the upcoming new free entitlement will plug the gap in funding and proposed savings. So arbitrarily forcing cuts on this vital service makes no sense. These proposals include lining up two centres for privatisation. How does this align with the Council's stated aim to insource where possible? Were the savings proposals an admission that the Mayor had no confidence that any change in government this year will allocate the funds to the Council in order to make the investment in Hackney's children's future?

The Mayor noted that the proposals were not arbitrary. The Council had considered proposals to sustain childrens centre networks since 2018, if not before. The Council had brought forward one proposal before which had been paused when it was felt there had been an opportunity to consider options. The Council had now brought forward those alternative options.

The Mayor was a champion for insourcing where possible and of working in partnership, and considered outsourcing as a possible way to save the Council money and retain some centres that might otherwise be closed. This might allow children to continue at those centres undisturbed and the Council had considered those options in order to maintain provision.

7.5 Cllr Suso-Runge to the Deputy Cabinet Member, Private Rented Sector and Affordability

Given the significant pressures renters are experiencing, including unaffordable rents, poor quality homes and illegal evictions, could the Deputy Cabinet Member please provide Council with an update on the progress of the Private Sector Housing Strategy?

Response from the Deputy Cabinet Member, Private Rented Sector and Affordability

Cllr Moema noted the draft Private Rent Sector Strategy that would be going onto the Council website shortly. The Strategy, including priorities and objectives, was to be discussed through conversations with residents and the community from late spring through to the summer with final proposals being reported to Cabinet in the autumn.

The Strategy was one of the most important areas of work in Hackney with 8,500 households on the Council social housing waiting list. Hackney faced an unprecedented housing crisis particularly related to affordability. The growing population had to rely on the private rented sector, with the number of private rented homes doubling in the last decade as the supply of homes had not kept pace with demand. The average market rent in Hackney was now over £2,000/month, which was a 49% increase since 2010 and required a £65,000 household income. Many private renters earned under £30,000, meaning rents in Hackney had become unaffordable.

Whilst many landlords provided a professional service, some landlords had exploited this poorly regulated sector with poor housing conditions. Hackney

had continued to advocate for change, which included campaigning against Section 21 'no fault' evictions, and banning rogue landlords. The Council continued to lobby the Government to give Royal Assent to the Renters Reform Bill to introduce a regulatory framework for landlords and better protections for tenants.

Alongside the strategy the Council would also launch the 'Better Deal for Renters' campaign to address rent levels and conditions, and ban rent auctions. Discussions with residents and tenants had helped to shape the campaign.

Supplementary Question:

Can the Deputy Cabinet Member offer reassurance that updates on progress on the strategy will be brought to Full Council

Cllr Moema was committed to provide updates on the progress of the Strategy to Full Council. It was noted that the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission had invited Cllr Moema to update the Commission on the Strategy.

7.6 Cllr Garbett to Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation

The Speaker noted that Deputy Mayor Nicholson was responding on Cllr McKenzie's behalf.

What action does the Council plan to take to account for, and reduce payouts to scaffolding providers incurred because of delays to the start of building works?

Response from the Deputy Mayor for Delivery, Inclusive Economy, and Regeneration

Deputy Mayor Nicholson outlined the current scaffolding contract was based on a tendered schedule of rates for contracts, with an average cost for use of between 1-28 days. For longer than 28 days the Council paid an additional percentage for weekly hire. The cost of hire stopped on the date the Council notified the hire company that scaffolding was to be removed, although it may be removed at a later date. Scaffolding payments were scrutinised, which ensured the Council paid only for the period it was used. A recent system had been put in place which updated the monitoring processes as part of the administration of scaffolding contracts and their use on housing estates.

Supplementary Question:

What plans are there to review the terms of the scaffolding contracts to minimise the spend to the Council

Deputy Mayor Nicholson confirmed that Housing Services were exploring the approach taken to scaffolding contracts. This was pertinent where, for example, there was a roofing contractor and scaffolding contractor with different timetables. The Council was exploring the potential for roofing contractors who

brought their own scaffolding. Deputy Mayor Nicholson invited Councillors to contact himself or Cllr McKenzie with scaffolding issues they had identified.

7.7 Cllr Walker to the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

With local government budgets pushed to breaking point, this will have a direct knock on effect for many community services. Will the Cabinet Member comment on how more effective partnership and collaboration with the voluntary community sector is being encouraged to ensure services to our most vulnerable residents are protected?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture

Cllr Kennedy thanked Cllr Walker for being a champion for the voluntary sector and confirmed that the voluntary and community sector played a vital role for local residents, and the Council continued to work in partnership with the sector. This included shared approaches and community partnership including in relation to health inequalities and anti-racism. The Council continued to facilitate community champions through the grants programme, food programmes, support for subsidised rents to voluntary organisations in council premises, and via discretionary rates relief.

The Council had extreme budgetary constraints and increased demand for services. The budget report, later on the agenda, outlined the cumulative impact of the savings the Council had to make with less capacity and resources. This highlighted the importance of collaborative approaches to investment and funding for the sector. Without partners the Council was not able to achieve its ambitions of fairer outcomes in the strategic plan, or the priorities in the equality plan and the anti-racist framework.

The Council had moved away from project grants to community infrastructure grants, and had brought partners together in localities across the Borough. The Council introduced 2 System Convener Officer roles who would work with the voluntary sector and helped them work together in consortia. In the future, the Council would look to refresh the Voluntary Sector Strategy so that it ensured new ways of working were embedded across the Council. To support this approach, the Council was bringing together voluntary sector organisations with Council Officers in workshops and events from the Spring to consider how the sector could be supported.

Cllr Walker did not have a supplementary question, but noted his pride in the support Hackney had given to the voluntary sector and the support the sector provided throughout both the pandemic and the cost of living crisis. Cllr Binnie-Lubbock wanted to raise a supplementary question, however, the Speaker noted the agenda item had reached the end of the 30 minutes that had been allocated.

The Speaker noted that those questions that had not been answered, 7.8, 7.9, and 7.10, would receive a written response included at **Appendix B**

8. Elected Mayor's Statement

- 8.1 Mayor Woodley was encouraged by the dedication and drive of the residents of Hackney and of Council staff who had maintained services through innovation and creativity, even through the pressures from austerity. It was noted that too many residents had faced hardship and tragedy in Hackney in recent months. Since the last Full council meeting another young person had lost their life, and Mayor Woodley sent condolences to the family of Nathan Bawuah. The Mayor thanked the Police and NHS staff involved in the incident. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Cllr Fajana-Thomas, and the Community Safety Team were thanked for their work supporting the people affected.
- 8.2 It was noted that the Mayor saw the hardest and most uplifting sides of the Borough. The Mayor highlighted a recent visit to Hope at Morningside Community Centre where local people and Councillors volunteered. The centre offered a range of services and support to residents who faced challenges, which included fitness and learning classes, hot meals and a food hub. This demonstrated how people coming together in unity supported residents and communities through difficult times. Hope at Morningside was an example where the HSF was supporting residents, however, the Government had indicated they proposed to end the fund removing £5.6m of crisis support funding away from Hackney residents in need. The Mayor continued to press the Government to maintain this funding, which helped to enable the Council's continued investment in the future of local communities.
- 8.3 Mayor Woodley highlighted a series of uplifting events for young people that she had attended which celebrated skills in creativity, music, and play. Deputy Mayor Bramble and Cllr Kennedy were thanked for their leadership in this work. The Council continued to foster young people's talents through Discover Young Hackney grants, a programme of up to £6,000 for young people's cultural organisations. Mayor Woodley noted the energy and talent at the Youth Awards, Alter Ego, and at the Hackney Empire Music Awards. The adventure playgrounds exhibition at Hackney Museum was a point of pride, where children had space given over to designing play. These events reminded Councillors of what united them all, regardless of political differences, with the shared goal to create a better Borough for Hackney's young people.
- 8.4 This month had also seen the launch of the consultation on children's centres, and the Mayor acknowledged the important role the centres played in many people's lives. The strong emotions expressed by many residents was acknowledged, and the Mayor was committed to taking on board the views of parents, staff, and trades unions in the consultation process.
- 8.5 Mayor Woodley also marked the start of LGBT+ month with Cllr Williams and the Deputy Speaker and raised the Inclusive Progress Pride Flag above Hackney Town Hall as well as joining with the Speaker at a ParaPride event. The Equality Plan, which was on the agenda, was intrinsic to this work.
- 8.6 The Mayor noted that her first budget as Mayor of Hackney came during difficult financial circumstances and rising demand, rising costs, and over a decade of Government underinvestment which had put immense pressures on local government across the country. In the next 3 years the Council had a forecast

deficit of over £50m; savings that had to be found by this administration, a process that would start with the Budget set out in the agenda for this meeting. The impact of the Government's financial management of the public sector had hit services, residents, and staff. The situation in both the NHS and the social care sector highlighted the negative legacy of this Government.

- 8.7 Hackney would meet the challenges head on, and had worked to achieve the Council's ambitions with a balanced budget through sound financial management, and the Mayor noted that this was the last budget before the next General Election.

Conservative Group Response

- 8.8 Cllr Steinberger welcomed back Jacquie Burke, Group Director Children and Families, and thanked Tessa Mitchell, Team Leader Governance for the Cabinet and Council agendas. Cllr Steinberger noted that the Stamford Hill Area Action Plan was on the agenda, in addition to the Budget and Council tax agenda item.
- 8.9 Cllr Steinberger also noted concerns related to a fox that had caused a nuisance and had bitten residents in some roads in Stamford Hill. Some residents had been concerned about walking on local roads at night.
- 8.10 Cllr Steinberger highlighted the importance for Shomrim, the volunteer first responders from members of the local community, to find a hub. Shomrim provided work opportunities for all communities and the organisation worked in partnership with the Council and partners.
- 8.11 Cllr Steinberger highlighted concerns about residents unable to apply to the Council housing register, and he expressed concern that residents may be getting an incorrect banding. The position of a resident in temporary accommodation was noted, with concerns about the lack of support available to the resident. Cllr Steinberger indicated that there was nobody in the Council he had been able to discuss this issue with, and wanted support identified for the resident in temporary accommodation.
- 8.12 Concerns were raised about Council works at the West Reservoir, relating to the bat population, which had caused a nuisance to residents.

Green Group Response

- 8.13 Cllr Garbett noted that at the last Council meeting the Green Group had made efforts to get the Ceasefire Motion passed by the Chamber. The Green Group had not had the opportunity to note that the Labour Group amendment to the Green Motion removed the call for lasting peace. It was suggested that Hackney Labour had suspended members who had voted for the Motion to be heard at November Council meeting, a Motion that had since been amended and accepted by Hackney Labour. Cllr Garbett wanted to know when the delayed Hackney Solidarity Campaign Deputation was to be heard by the Pensions Committee.
- 8.14 It was highlighted that papers in the Cabinet agenda earlier in the week confirmed that trust in the Council from Hackney residents had fallen from 73%

in 2018 to 67% today. Cllr Garbett believed that trust can be rebuilt through action.

- 8.15 As part of the process of rebuilding trust, the Green group wanted a transparent investigation by the Labour Party about who knew what regarding the arrest and resignation of former Councillor, Tom Dewey. In addition, Cllr Garbett wanted an open and transparent process of committee seat allocation that ensured the Green Group were not blocked from sitting on Scrutiny Commissions. In addition the Green Group wanted to ensure resident concerns about damp and mould were heard, the Council worked with unions about the ethical use of funds, improved procurement, and considered union representation on the Pensions Committee.
- 8.16 Cllr Garbett outlined issues from Green Group's Wards and applauded the green corridor on Amhurst Road, whilst the Council impact assessment from Graham Road was noted. Cllr Garbett outlined the need for the Main Road Strategy so that everyone benefited from clean air and improved neighbourhoods.
- 8.17 Cllr Garbett thanked Mayor Woodley for agreeing to visit Kidzmania, which demonstrated to Peabody the support from the community. Cllr Garbett encouraged Councillors to join the visit at the end of March.
- 8.18 Cllr Garbett expressed concern that the national Labour Party had dropped the £28 billion green investment pledge. Cllr Garbett noted, in relation to the Budget and Council Tax on tonight's agenda, that the Green Group had shown since they had been elected almost two years ago that they wanted to work together with the administration, and hoped the administration took the Green Group budget amendment in that spirit.
- 8.19 In conclusion, Cllr Garbett wished everyone celebrating a meaningful and connected Ramadan.

The Mayor's reply

- 8.20 Exercising the right of reply, Mayor Woodley stated the following:
- The Mayor was shocked that the Conservative Group had shown no appreciation for the stress and strain of Housing Services and Housing Needs staff who were unable to accommodate the people who needed the Council's support with accommodation. There was a lack of central government support for house building and a cap on benefits.
 - The Government's approach had led the Mayor to hear from residents that rents had increased £300-400/month, that mortgages had increased, and inflation had gone up.
 - The Mayor had concern that the Government had not carried through legislation on no fault evictions.
 - The Mayor had been in touch with a colleague who looked after foxes across the borough for help, as the Council worked in partnership with experts even though it was not a Council duty.
 - Cllr Steinberger was invited to share information about the nuisance foxes.

- The Council had sought external funding for West Reservoir, as there was no Government funding available. The Council had fought for it, consulted on proposals, and made best use of funding that increased access around the reservoir and access to swimming. Local Ward Councillors worked cooperatively with Woodberry Down Community Organisation (WDCO)
- Mayor Woodley asked the Green Group to stop using defamatory phrases related to lasting peace. Mayor Woodley had put in the amendment to the Motion and had said in the letter to the Foreign Secretary that there had to be lasting peace; those exact words were in the Motion.
- Internal Labour Party disciplinary matters were not the business of the Chamber.
- There had been a Scrutiny Panel and Extraordinary Council meeting as part of the transparent processes related to Tom Dewey that asked questions of the independent Governance Review report author and of the Interim Chief Executive. It was for the Labour Party, which had its own procedures, to undertake an investigation into the former Mayor.
- Acknowledged the Green Group support for the green corridor in Amhurst Road and the Main Road Strategy, which was underway. The challenges on pressured roads was also recognised. It was important that there was a reduction in traffic on the road and cleaner air.

9. Budget and Council Tax Report

The Speaker outlined that this report was covered by section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992. The Speaker advised Members of the action they were required to take if section 106 was applicable to them. Members were informed that this would be a recorded vote, and only those present in the Chamber for the duration of its consideration would be eligible to vote.

The Speaker noted that since the publication of the Mayor's Budget Report for Cabinet and tonight's Council meeting, that the introduction at 1.7 of the report had been corrected to update figures related to social rent homes being started and completed this year, and had been published as part of supplementary Pack 3.

- 9.1 Mayor Woodley introduced her first budget as Mayor and noted that it delivered on the commitment to work for a better Hackney for all residents. Protection of front line services and residents most in need had been the priority. Although the financial position had been challenging, the Council had invested in a fairer, greener, safer, and healthier Hackney. It had not been an easy task and many difficult decisions had been made. Mayor Woodley thanked Officers for their support in the development of the budget. In spite of the difficulties, the Council had produced a budget that delivered for Hackney residents and maintained financial sustainability. Mayor Woodley thanked Cabinet colleagues and all Councillors in the Chamber, specifically Cllr Chapman, Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing, and Customer Service.
- 9.2 It was noted that the budget came on the back of Government cuts. Excluding Council tax, core funding had sustained a real term cut of 40% since 2010 and the Council expected to deliver a further £22.5m in savings in 2024-2025 rising to a cumulative £34.6m in the following year, and then rising to £52.3m in the subsequent two years.

- 9.3 The budget proposed a 4.99% rise to the Council element of Council Tax, a decision that had not been taken lightly. The additional £5m raised was vital to people who relied on Council services. The budget proposed to increase the maximum Council Tax discount to 90%, which was a significant step towards a 100% discount by 2030 for residents who needed it .
- 9.4 It was highlighted that the Council continued to work towards a fairer Hackney and the proposed expenditure included £4.7m on the award winning employment and lifelong learning initiatives, maintenance of the capital housing programme, including £50m towards improvements and maintenance of council homes, and £94m towards the new homes target.
- 9.5 The budget fostered a safer Hackney with investment of over £12.3m on services delivered through the Community Safety Team, who worked in partnership with the Police, probation services, and public health partners. The Council supported businesses that created a welcoming environment through the Hackney Nights Accreditation Scheme, which underlined the Council's commitment to end violence against women and girls (VAWG).
- 9.6 The budget reinforced Hackney's status as a climate leader, providing opportunities that demonstrated innovation across the borough and delivered benefits to residents which included cheaper electricity bills and training in green skills. The budget invested £55m towards the net zero ambitions in the next financial year.
- 9.7 Hackney aspired to be the best place to grow up and raise a family, with £85.4m expenditure across Children's Services, including education. The Council proposed £93m expenditure on adult social care (ASC) which was the largest single investment of the Council.
- 9.8 Mayor Woodley noted that it was an ambitious budget that protected universal services, built resilience, created opportunities, and supported people most in need in challenging times.
- 9.9. Cllr Chapman thanked the Mayor, Councillors, Scrutiny Commissions, and Officers for their support throughout the budget setting process. The budget had been developed against the backdrop of significant real-term cuts to Government funding since 2010, and disappointment with the 2024/2025 settlement. The late announcement by the Government of additional social care funds was welcomed, however it was far lower than was needed to meet the cost pressures, inflation, and increased demand.
- 9.10 The increased core spending power in 2024/2025 was far short of the 2010 real term levels, and had not provided for current or future impact of increased demand and rising costs, particularly in ASC, Children's Services and temporary accommodation.
- 9.11 The Council had to make significant savings to balance the budget. The majority of expenditure was on statutory services, with limited options for savings. The Council was committed to financially stable and well run services, that maintained a balanced budget and ensured residents had value for money, and delivered to those people in greatest need.

The Speaker noted that amendments to the proposed budget had been put forward by the Green and Conservative Groups and those amendments were taken in the order they were received.

Proposed Green Group Amendments

Cllr Garbett proposed the Amendments. Cllr Binie-Lubbock seconded the amendments and reserved the right to speak until a later period in the debate.

- 9.12 Cllr Garbett thanked Officers for their support in developing proposals for the budget amendment. The difficult financial circumstances and the impact of regressive, cruel and harmful Government austerity policies since 2010 were noted.
- 9.13 Cllr Garbett wanted to see a Government after the General Election that included the Green Party, which had demonstrated the impact it had on the Scottish Government. This included the Scottish Child Payment that had taken 90,000 children out of poverty, free bus travel for people under 22 years of age, and funding for nature restoration initiatives. The Green Party of England and Wales had proposed the introduction of a 1% wealth tax and increased taxes on unearned income, to ensure sufficient funding for public services.
- 9.14 Since 2022 the Hackney Green Group had had a seat on the Audit Committee, which enabled the Group to scrutinise finances and financial risks to services. Green budget amendments in the last financial year had been rejected, but were subsequently adopted by the administration. Cllr Garbett invited the Council to adopt the proposed amendments, rooted in core Green values and community priorities.
- 9.15 It was noted that this was a practical amendment aimed at safeguarding vital services. The proposed amendment had identified funding that included saving vital children's services from cuts, funded a creative arts grant programme for young people, proposed the appointment of an Empty Homes Officer, and a seed fund for ward-based community projects. The Green Group proposed that the costs identified in the amendment were paid for through reductions in revenue contributions to capital outlay, the rephrasing of some schemes in the capital programme to later years, increased filming charges, reviewing visitor parking charge discounts for the over 60's age group, increased discounts for Blue Badge holders, and a reduced Cabinet that removed two Deputy Cabinet Member positions and removed one Deputy Mayor role.
- 9.16 In addition to this budget the Green Group worked hard year round to encourage the ethical use of funds and procurement practices for positive change. It was in residents' best interests and the Green Group wanted to work in partnership on the budget process with the administration for the improvement of Hackney residents.

Members debated the amendments

- 9.17 Cllr Moema noted that the Council had a longstanding commitment to increase Council Tax discount to 100% for those residents in greatest need. It was noted

that fire safety, damp and mould, and building safety were statutory duties. The Council had looked at ways of resourcing an Empty Homes Officer post. There was an ambition to have borough-wide licensing which had been piloted in three Wards.

- 9.18 Cllr Kennedy noted that film charges had increased this year by more than the rate of inflation. It was noted the Council had supported existing youth provision, which included Alter Ego, the Mayor's Music Awards, and funding for youth community projects within the Grants Programme. Cllr Kennedy suggested the Green Group now supported the administration's proposed motorcycle charges and the Pensions Committee investment policy.
- 9.19 Cllr Fajana-Thomas noted that the Deputy Mayors were Cabinet Members and had responsibility for a number of portfolios. The Cabinet provided value for money to residents, with responsibility for a £1bn annual budget and more than 5,000 members of staff. Cllr Fajana-Thomas noted the range of portfolio responsibilities in her remit, which included strategic relationship with the Police, community safety, VAWG, commercial and domestic noise nuisance, and environmental protection.
- 9.20 Cllr Coban noted the Council had worked to strike a balance between those people in the borough with the greatest needs, and with the needs of older residents and Blue Badge holders.
- 9.21 Mayor Woodley noted the Cabinet's leadership role. It was highlighted that the Cabinet and Officers had met the challenges which ensured a secure Council budget and had taken the necessary steps that enabled the Council to move forward.
- 9.22 Cllr Chapman indicated that the Council had pledged to maintain a balanced budget and financial responsibility. The Council had been determined to avoid the pitfalls that other boroughs had faced which included S114 bankruptcy.

Cllr Binnie-Lubbock exercised his right to respond

- 9.23 Cllr Binnie-Lubbock noted that the children and young people's proposals in the amendment were not statutory services; they had been presented as invest to save proposals with benefits achieved in later years. The Green Group had wanted to see a borough-wide landlord licensing initiative introduced at the time of the pilot. It was also noted that above inflation increases in film charges this year were a result of no increased charges last year. The Green Group considered that one Deputy Mayor was sufficient. The proposals related to Blue Badge and over 60's parking charges recognised the wealth disparity between older people, who had higher incomes in general, and those people who really needed the support for parking.

Cllr Garbett exercised her right to reply

- 9.24 Cllr Garbett noted the amendments reflected Green Group values, which included more social housing, responding to union concerns, prioritising action on climate change, and advocating divestment in fossil fuel companies. The

proposals related to children and young people had been presented to help ensure Hackney was not a hostile environment for children.

On a recorded vote, there being:

For: (2 Members) Cllr Binnie-Lubbock, Cllr Garbett

Abstentions: 0

Against: (44 Members) Mayor Woodley, Cllr Adams, Cllr Adebayo, Cllr Baffour, Cllr Billington, Deputy Mayor Bramble, Cllr Chapman, Cllr Coban, Cllr Conway, Cllr Desmond, Cllr Etti, Cllr Fajana-Thomas, Cllr Gordon, Cllr Hayhurst, Cllr Kennedy, Cllr Laudat-Scott, Cllr Lisser, Cllr Lufkin, Cllr Lynch, Cllr Maxwell, Cllr Moema, Cllr Narcross, Deputy Mayor Nicholson, Cllr Ogundemuren, Cllr Oguzkanli, Cllr Pallis, Cllr Patrick, Cllr Potter, Cllr Premru, Cllr Race, Cllr Rathbone, Cllr Sadek, Cllr Selman, Cllr Sizer, Cllr Smyth, Cllr Steinberger, Cllr Suso-Runge, Cllr Troughton, Cllr Turbet-Delof, Cllr Walker, Cllr Webb, Cllr Williams, Cllr Wrout, and Cllr Young.

Not present in the Chamber: Cllr Adejare, Cllr Garasia, Cllr Goldberg, Cllr Krautwirt, Cllr Levy, Cllr McKenzie, Cllr Ozsen, Cllr Samatar, Cllr Sharer (for whole item).

The Amendment was **Not Carried**

Proposed Conservative Group Amendments

Cllr Steinberger proposed the amendments. Cllr Lisser seconded the amendments and reserved the right to speak until later in the debate.

9.25 Cllr Steinberger gave thanks to Interim Group Director, Finance, Jackie Moylan, and Neighbourhoods and Housing Finance Assistant Director, Deirdre Worrell, who had supported the Conservative Group in the development of the amendments. The different approach to the Labour Group was noted.

9.26 Cllr Steinberger reiterated previous comments about a person placed in temporary accommodation outside the borough and other people who had been unable to get on the housing register. It was noted that in relation to what was proposed at item 12 (Stamford Hill Area Action Plan), the Conservative Group proposed that Planning be combined with London Borough of Haringey as an emergency measure, and Cllr Steinberger wanted to understand what progress had been made in relation to potential shared services with other boroughs.

9.27 The amendment proposed better use of garages, community halls, and other council buildings to raise revenue. Cllr Steinberger considered that Deputy Mayors be reduced to just one position. Cllr Steinberger also noted concerns related to Council Tax contributions to GLA costs.

Members Debated the Amendments

9.28 Cllr Lynch noted concerns related to the proposed rephrasing of investment for structural engineering work at Kings Hall, which had the potential for significant health and safety risks to users of the facilities.

- 9.29 Deputy Mayor Nicholson noted the amendments to the budget proposed a deregulated housing community, no development control or development management, and no measures that managed traffic in the borough.
- 9.30 Cllr Coban indicated that residents wanted continued Council investment on recycling services. The Council budget was a sensible proposal that delivered a healthier and greener borough.
- 9.31 Cllr Binnie-Lubbock indicated the Green Group proposed to vote against the amendments from the Conservative Group.
- 9.32 Mayor Woodley noted the Council delivered over 800 services to residents and asked staff to do more for less, which was a challenge. It was noted that the Conservative Group proposals indicated a lack of concern for a fairer, greener, and healthier borough for residents.
- 9.33 Cllr Chapman noted the amendments delayed actions that had to be taken, and so were not financially responsible.

Cllr Lisser did not exercise the right to speak.

Cllr Steinberger exercised the right to reply

- 9.34 Cllr Steinberger noted that people wanted housing and the Government had made laws that created more places for housing. The Council's Area Action Plan proposals for Stamford Hill were inappropriate and not acceptable to local communities.
- 9.35 Cllr Steinberger suggested that the Council had over the years wasted £25m on traffic management schemes, including LTNs which had seen buses rerouted away from the Narrow Way. This had increased bus journey times, increased pollution, and had not made the borough greener. Cllr Steinberger recommended the budget amendments to the Chamber.

On a recorded vote, there being:

For: (2 Members) Cllr Lisser, Cllr Steinberger

Abstentions: 0

Against: (43 Members) Mayor Woodley, Cllr Adams, Cllr Adebayo, Cllr Baffour, Cllr Billington, Cllr Binnie-Lubbock, Deputy Mayor Bramble, Cllr Chapman, Cllr Coban, Cllr Conway, Cllr Desmond, Cllr Etti, Cllr Fajana-Thomas, Cllr Garbett, Cllr Gordon, Cllr Hayhurst, Cllr Kennedy, Cllr Laudat-Scott, Cllr Lufkin, Cllr Lynch, Cllr Maxwell, Cllr Moema, Cllr Narcross, Deputy Mayor Nicholson, Cllr Ogundemuren, Cllr Oguzkanli, Cllr Pallis, Cllr Patrick, Cllr Potter, Cllr Premru, Cllr Race, Cllr Rathbone, Cllr Sadek, Cllr Selman, Cllr Sizer, Cllr Smyth, Cllr Suso-Runge, Cllr Troughton, Cllr Walker, Cllr Webb, Cllr Williams, Cllr Wrout, and Cllr Young.

Not present in the Chamber: Cllr Adejare, Cllr Garasia, Cllr Goldberg, Cllr Joseph, Cllr Krautwirt, Cllr Levy, Cllr McKenzie, Cllr Ozsen, Cllr Papier, Cllr Ross, Cllr Sharer (not present for whole item), Turbot-Delof (not present for whole item)

The Amendment was **Not Carried**

Members moved the the Substantive Budget Proposal which Members debated

- 9.36 Cllr Lynch congratulated the Mayor on her first budget and thanked Cllr Chapman and Officers for their support, which had been a calm and focused approach. As Chair of the Audit Committee she noted that members of the committee had an important role as part of that process.
- 9.37 Cllr Gordon, as Chair of the Scrutiny Panel, echoed previous congratulations to Mayor Woodley, Cllr Chapman, and Officers, who had produced a balanced budget that continued to invest in the future of the borough. The budget setting process had included Members from across the Chamber, and included Scrutiny which added value to the process including proposals to reduce Council Tax contributions to 10% for working age households.
- 9.38 Cllr Binnie-Lubbock noted the proposals related to the 2030 net zero targets included consultations and wanted to know who was consulted and what the processes were. It was noted that there was a perception that the proposals had used the Government as a screen that covered cuts to the Council children's services and youth provision.
- 9.39 Cllr Garbett raised a question about the Equalities Impact Assessments (EQIA) and sought assurances that they were carried out before decisions were made rather than as justification for decisions.

The Speaker noted the question from Cllr Garbett for a response.

Mayor Woodley exercised the right to reply

- 9.40 Mayor Woodley thanked Cllr Lynch and the Audit Team for the work done and their oversight, which included the deep dive into reserves and the benchmarking with other boroughs. The contribution of the Scrutiny Panel, which included constructive challenge, was noted. It was acknowledged that some services had no option other than to make cuts and other service areas had faced further transformation and change.
- 9.41 It was noted that it was important to have an iterative response to impact assessments that provided checks and balances for the work as it was taken forward. The Mayor noted the Council consulted on every aspect of the 2030 net zero proposals, which included the climate jury. It was highlighted that delayed decisions to children's centres and youth services created difficulties for staff who managed those services. The Council continued to invest to save, where that was possible, such as in SEND provision, .

On a recorded vote, there being:

For: (41 Members) Mayor Woodley, Cllr Adams, Cllr Adebayo, Cllr Baffour, Cllr Billington, Deputy Mayor Bramble, Cllr Chapman, Cllr Coban, Cllr Conway, Cllr Desmond, Cllr Etti, Cllr Fajana-Thomas, Cllr Gordon, Cllr Hayhurst, Cllr Kennedy, Cllr Laudat-Scott, Cllr Lufkin, Cllr Lynch, Cllr Maxwell, Cllr Moema, Cllr Narcross, Deputy Mayor Nicholson, Cllr Ogundemuren, Cllr Oguzkanli, Cllr Pallis, Cllr Patrick, Cllr

Potter, Cllr Premru, Cllr Race, Cllr Rathbone, Cllr Sadek, Cllr Selman, Cllr Sizer, Cllr Smyth, Cllr Suso-Runge, Cllr Troughton, Cllr Walker, Cllr Webb, Cllr Williams, Cllr Wrout, and Cllr Young.

Abstentions: 0

Against: Cllr Binnie-Lubbock, Cllr Garbett, Cllr Lisser, Cllr Steinberger,

Not Present in the Chamber: Cllr Adejare, Cllr Garasia, Cllr Joseph, Cllr Krautwirt, Cllr Levy, Cllr McKenzie, Cllr Ozsen, Cllr Papier, Cllr Midnight Ross, Cllr Sharer (not present for whole item), Cllr Turbet-Delof (not present for whole item)

The substantive Motion **was Carried**

RESOLVED:

1. To bring forward into 2024/25 the Council's projected 2023/24 General Fund balance of £17.0m with the aim of increasing this to £20m over the medium-term period to 2026/27 noting the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) projected 2023/24 balance of £15m with the aim of increasing to £17.6m by the end of March 2024.
2. To agree for approval the directorate estimates and estimates for the General Finance Account items set out in Table 2 in Section 14 of this report.
3. To note that the budget is a financial exposition of the priorities set out within the Strategic Plan summarised at Section 6 below.
4. To note that in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Interim Group Director of Finance, is of the view that:
 - The General Fund balances which currently stand at £17.0m and the level of other reserves are adequate to meet the Council's financial needs for 2024/25 and that considering the economic uncertainty they should not fall below this level and that the aim is to increase these to £20m over the medium term period to 2026/27 from a review of current earmarked reserves.
 - This view takes account of the reserves included in the Council's latest published 2022/23 Accounts and the movements of those reserves since that date – which have been tracked through the Overall Financial Position (OFP) Reports, and the latest OFP projections. Note also, that the projections in the HRA Budget to increase the balance to £17.6m by 31 March 2024 are also considered to be adequate at this point in time but will need to continue to be reviewed in the light of the challenges facing the HRA.
 - The General Fund estimates are sufficiently robust to set a balanced budget for 2024/25. This takes into account the adequacy of the level of balances and reserves outlined above and the assurance gained from the comparisons of the 2023/24 budget with the projected spend identified in the December 2023 OFP. The overall level of the corporate contingency has been set at £2m.

5. To approve the proposed General Fund fees and charges as set out in Appendix 7 for implementation from 1st April 2024.
6. To continue the policy requiring the Interim Group Director of Finance to seek to mitigate the impact of significant changes to either resources or expenditure requirements.
7. To require the Mayor, Cabinet and the Corporate Leadership Team to develop robust plans to deliver against the revised Medium Term Financial Plan included at Appendix 5 taking into account the recommendation of the S151 Officer as set out in the Section 25 Statement (Appendix 11). This is needed to maintain the financial resilience of the Council and to avoid the requirement to make short-term decisions which will adversely impact on our residents.
8. To note the summary of the HRA Budget and Rent setting report proposed to Cabinet on 22nd January 2024.
9. To authorise the Interim Group Director of Finance to implement any virements required to allocate provision for demand and growth pressures set out in this report subject to the appropriate evidence base being provided.
10. To approve: The allocation of resources to the 2024/25 capital programme referred to in Section 22 and Appendix 6.
11. To note that the new capital expenditure proposals match uncommitted resources for the year 2024/25.
12. To agree the prudential indicators for Capital Expenditure:- the Capital Financing Requirement; the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt; the Affordability prudential indicators; and the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 as set out in Section 23 and Appendix 3.
13. To confirm that the authorised limit for external debt of £792m agreed above for 2024/25 will be the statutory limit determined under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003. Further reassurance about the robustness of the budget is the confirmation that the Council's borrowings are within the boundaries of prudential guidelines.
14. To continue to support the approach of using reserves to manage emerging risks and liabilities.
15. To note that at its meeting on 24th January 2024 the Council agreed its Council Tax Base for the 2024/25 financial year as 77,766.9 in accordance with regulations made under section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The Council Tax Base is the total number of properties in each of the eight council tax bands A to H converted to an equivalent number of band D properties.

- 16. To agree that the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2024/25 in accordance with Sections 31A to 36 of the Localism Act 2011.**

The authority calculates the aggregate of: (in accordance with Section 31A (2) of the Act)

(a) £1,374.738m being the expenditure which the authority estimates it will incur in the year in performing its functions and will charge to a revenue account, other than a BID Revenue Account, for the year in accordance with proper practices.

(b) £2m being such allowance as the authority estimates will be appropriate for contingencies in relation to amounts to be charged or credited to a revenue account for the year in accordance with proper practices.

(c) £nil being the financial reserves which the authority estimates it will be appropriate to raise in the year for meeting its estimated future expenditure.

(d) £nil being such financial reserves as are sufficient to meet so much of the amount estimated by the authority to be a revenue account deficit for any earlier financial year as has not already been provided for.

(e) £nil being the amount which it estimates will be transferred in the year from its general fund to its collection fund in accordance with section 97(4) of the 1988 Act, and

(f) £nil being the amount which it estimates will be transferred from its general fund to its collection fund pursuant to a direction under section 98(5) of the 1988 Act and charged to a revenue account for the year.

- 17. The authority calculates the aggregate of: (in accordance with Section 31A (3) of the Act)**

(a) £1,263.182m being the income which it estimates will accrue to it in the year and which it will credit to a revenue account, other than a BID Revenue Account, for the year in accordance with proper practices.

(b) £4.218m being the amount which it estimates will be transferred in the year from its collection fund to its general fund in accordance with section 97(3) of the 1988 Act.

(c) £nil being the amount which it estimates will be transferred from its collection fund to its general fund pursuant to a direction under section 98(4) of the 1988 Act and will be credited to a revenue account for the year, and

(d) £nil being the amount of the financial reserves which the authority estimates it will use in order to provide for the items mentioned in subsection (2) (a), (b), (e) and (f) above.

18. £109.338m being the amount by which the aggregate calculated under subsection (1) above exceeds that calculated under subsection (2) above, the authority calculates the amount equal to the difference; and the amount so calculated is its Council Tax Requirement for the year.

19. £109.338m being the amount at (3.2.18) divided by the amount at (3.2.15) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with section 31A of the Act, £1,405.97 as the basic amount of its council tax for the year.

20. That the Council in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables below as the amounts of Council tax for 2024/25 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

Valuation Bands Hackney

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£937.31	£1,093.53	£1,249.75	£1,405.97	£1,718.41	£2,030.84	£2,343.28	£2,811.94

21. That it be noted that for 2024/25 the Greater London Authority has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below.

Valuation Bands GLA

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£314.27	£366.64	£419.02	£471.40	£576.16	£680.91	£785.67	£942.80

22. That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3.2.20 and 3.2.21 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for 2024/25 for each of the categories of dwellings as shown below.

Valuation Bands Combined Hackney/GLA

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£1,251.58	£1,460.17	£1,668.77	£1,877.37	£2,294.57	£2,711.75	£3,128.95	£3,754.74

23. To agree, subject to the decision of Members on recommendations 3.2.16 to 3.2.18 that Hackney's Council Tax requirement for 2024/25 be £109.338m which results in a Band D Council Tax of £1,405.97 for Hackney purposes and a total Band D Council Tax of £1,877.37 including the Greater London Authority (GLA) precept.

24. To agree that in accordance with principles approved under section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, and the new provisions included in the Localism Act 2011, the increase in the Council's Council Tax requirement for 2024/25 as shown at Appendix 8 is not excessive (5% or above) and therefore does not require the Council to hold a referendum.
25. To agree the Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25, set out at Appendix 3.
26. To agree the criteria for lending and the financial limits set out at Appendix 3.
27. To approve the Minimum Revenue Provision statement setting out the method of calculation to be used, as set out in paragraphs 23.19-23.28 below.

10. Equality Plan

- 10.1 Cllr Williams, Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities introduced the report which presented the Equality Plan 2024-2026, the Anti-racism Action Plan, and the LGBTQIA+ Strategy. The Equality Plan consultation was launched in November 2023 with 790 consultation engagements.
- 10.2 Cllr Williams highlighted that the Equalities Plan set out how the Council met its legal duties to those groups with protected characteristics, and included other groups that were not protected under the law, such as looked after children, care leavers, women experiencing perimenopause and menopause, people without immigration status, as well as a socio-economic duty (which tackled inequality that led to socio-economic disadvantage).
- 10.3 It was noted that the Anti-racism Framework was built on the legal duty under the Equalities Act. The framework sought to identify and eradicate racial inequality and embed anti-racism into service plans and practices across the Council. The plan built on the staff summit and reflected on and learned about the inequalities faced by Black and Global Majority staff.
- 10.4 The LGBTQIA+ Framework emerged from the Single Equalities Scheme and was designed to be iterative, collaborative, and flexible to ensure the Council met its legal duties. Cllr Williams thanked Officers who had worked on the report to ensure it was completed in the timeframe.

Members Debated the Report

- 10.5 Mayor Woodley noted the breadth of the Equality Plan. The Anti-Racism work was noted, and the Mayor thanked the Interim Chief Executive and Group Directors for taking the work forward at the staff roadshow, and for their commitment to embed this initiative going forward.

- 10.6 Deputy Mayor Bramble noted the reference to children in care in the report, who had been very engaged and excited to be part of the process and whose feedback had been positive.
- 10.7 Cllr Binnie-Lubbock welcomed the report and thanked Cllr Williams and Officers for the report and also highlighted the work around children in care. It was noted that Cllr Garbett and Cllr Binnie-Lubbock had joined colleagues who had signed the Promise to Children in Care. Cllr Binnie-Lubbock asked how the current context of heightened community tensions due to the Gaza-Israel conflict impacted the implementation of anti-racism initiatives.
- 10.8 Cllr Gordon thanked Cllr Williams and Officers for their work to bring the plan to Council. It was noted that the Council had expanded the envelope beyond the statutory duty, which identified and enabled other parts of the community to benefit from interventions. The consultation fed into a framework of accountability going forward and continued to inform scrutiny across the Council.
- 10.9 Cllr Garbett thanked Cllr Williams and Officers and welcomed the plan. Cllr Garbett wanted to understand what improvements had to be made in the gaps in collecting statistical demographic information in future consultations.
- 10.10 Cllr Suso-Runge gave her thanks to the Cabinet Member and Officers and noted that many colleagues across the Chamber and in the community experienced hatred, violence, and oppression. It was noted that Hackney was proud to be anti-racist.

RESOLVED: To note the contents of the report

Cllr Adams proposed to extend the meeting to 10.30pm and was seconded by Cllr Coban.

RESOLVED: The meeting was extended to 10.30pm

11. Children and Families Service Full Year Update Report to Members 2022/23

- 11.1 Deputy Mayor Bramble highlighted that the report outlined progress in 2022/2023. Work on anti-racist practice was noted, as was the significant learning moving forward from Child Q, and the importance of challenging wider systemic bias throughout society.
- 11.2 Youth Justice had seen positive outcomes and the leadership of Cllr Fajana-Thomas and Officers was acknowledged. The systematic, trauma informed, anti-racist (STAR) approach was outlined as a tool that helped teams think about interventions in practice, and in the way that learning, engagement and the delivery of services was approached.
- 11.3 It was noted that the contact rate increased by 16%, although it had not returned to pre-pandemic levels. The data continued to be monitored to identify possible trends. In September 2023 the Council had 390 children in care, a reduction from 470 children in 2020.

- 11.4 Deputy Mayor Bramble welcomed back the Group Director, Children and Education, after their extended leave and commended the work of Officers. Deputy Mayor Bramble also thanked colleagues who had signed the care leavers charter.
- 11.5 Cllr Binnie-Lubbock thanked Officers for their work and noted that over the last 10 years £12.9m cuts had been delivered with further cuts approved that night. The positive work of the services was acknowledged and he wanted to ensure that a hostile environment was not created for children in the borough. Cllr Binnie-Lubbock also wanted to ensure that the consultation and EQIA were taken into account, and that children's services had protection for generations to come.
- 11.6 Mayor Woodley thanked Deputy Mayor Bramble for her dedication to her work and thanked Officers who worked hard to prioritise and protect the most vulnerable, recognising the pressures that might come with the necessary changes to provide the required savings
- 11.7 Cllr Fajana-Thomas thanked Deputy Mayor Bramble for her leadership and also thanked Officers for their leadership in this work. The work on violence VAWG particularly related to anti-racism was noted. It was also noted that some funding to support VAWG had been allocated to support Black and Global Majority people impacted by domestic abuse.
- 11.8 Cllr Etti echoed thanks to Deputy Mayor Bramble and Officers, which included Officers from Benefits and Homelessness Services. Care leavers had access to go on the housing register at 18 years of age, and dedicated Officers worked with care leavers. Cllr Etti noted, in response to Cllr Steinberger's earlier comments, that Officers had reduced the housing register backlog.
- 11.9 Cllr Lynch highlighted that one of the most most important roles as a Councillor was as a corporate parent, and thanked Cabinet colleagues and Officers for their work.
- 11.10 Deputy Mayor Bramble thanked all Councillors who sat on the Corporate Parenting Board and thanked Cllr Etti for the initiatives related to housing. Opportunities to visit care leavers where they lived and opportunities that provided work experience for them, were noted. Deputy Mayor Bramble indicated that the Council had taken difficult decisions that ensured a balanced budget. There remained much that the Council continued to deliver for children and families, in spite of the financial challenges it faced.

RESOLVED: To note the contents of the report

12. Stamford Hill Area Action Plan

Cllr Steinberger proposed amendments to the report. Cllr Adams raised a point of order that the report had not yet been introduced by the Cabinet Member. The Speaker noted the proposed amendments from Cllr Steinberger which would be considered after the Deputy Mayor introduced the report.

- 12.1 Deputy Mayor Nicholson introduced the report noting that over the last decade Stamford Hill was a growing neighbourhood whose growth was led by an increase in large families. The plan presented to Council was a draft proposal which would go out for consultation with communities local to Stamford Hill. Following the consultation the proposals would be presented to the Planning Inspector, who would make recommendations in part based on comments received during the consultation. The Planning Inspector would then assess if the comments made would be incorporated into the updated plan. Council was asked to endorse the draft plan ahead of those next stages.
- 12.2 It was noted that there was a need for an increased supply of family homes in Stamford Hill, which the plan advocated for. The plan also recognised the need for additional community infrastructure to support the growing community, which included accessible public realm, improved open space, and local centres that delivered local services.
- 12.3 Cllr Steinberger outlined concerns about the proposals related to community uses within Use Class F1 which excluded provision for education, public worship or religious instruction, as set out at page 711 in the agenda . Cllr Steinberger also noted concerns about AAP3 on page 705 of the agenda, which related to front dormer roof extensions. Additionally, Cllr Steinberger expressed concern at the 25% figure as outlined under point 5, on page 705. The proposed amendment was to remove these elements from the plan. The Speaker acknowledged concerns raised by Cllr Steinberger, which would be noted, and that a response was to be provided, but confirmed that an amendment was not allowed at this point in the proceedings.

Members Debated the Report

- 12.4 Cllr Desmond noted that the report was a draft proposal which celebrated and enhanced diversity in Hackney and celebrated the diversity of Hackney communities.
- 12.5 Cllr Papier noted the need for more space in large family homes. The report at page 705 of the agenda made reference to the requirement for 25% of existing homes to have had a front elevation alteration where the host building was located. Cllr Papier considered this requirement was inappropriate as few roads fell into this category.
- 12.6 Cllr Pallis stated their pride in how communities had come together and that the plan recognised the needs in the area. It was noted that there had been two neighbourhood plans that had called for separate approaches for the area. The Council had brought the community together and found a compromise that worked for the whole community.
- 12.7 In conclusion, Deputy Mayor Nicholson confirmed that the plan had been in development for 10 years. The approach of communities coming together from opposing positions had been an exemplar in community engagement that had been recognised across London and nationally. The role and contribution of thousands of residents over the last 10 years was acknowledged.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

13. Pay Policy Statement 2024-2025

- 13.1 Cllr Williams outlined the report and confirmed that the Council had a statutory duty to approve the pay policy statement for the coming year. The policy set out the principles that governed remuneration in the Council as required under the Localism Act, 2011.
- 13.2 Section 4 of the report outlined benchmarking with other local authorities, including neighbouring boroughs. The Corporate Committee had reviewed and agreed the statement, which had no substantive changes proposed.

RESOLVED:

- 1. To note that Corporate Committee has reviewed and agreed the Pay Policy Statement 2024/2025**
 - 2. That Full Council are recommended to approve the Pay Policy Statement 2024/25**
- 14. Confirmation of Political Proportionality and Appointments to Committees and Commissions**

The Speaker noted that the item had been deferred from January Full Council to allow Group Leaders sufficient time to consider and present nominations. Cllr Binnie-Lubbock had confirmed that he wanted to speak to the item.

- 14.1 Cllr Binnie-Lubbock noted the Green Group had not been allocated to Scrutiny Commissions. Green Councillors, as resident representatives, considered it their duty to scrutinise Council functions which they had previously done as members of Scrutiny. The Green Group had identified where their skills and experience would be best used to deliver best value for residents.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Full Council note the revised political proportionality that applies to Committees, Sub-Committees, Commissions, Panels and Boards as detailed in paragraphs 3.18, 3.19 and 3.20 of this report following the by-election in the Cazenove Ward. To note the report and appendix.**
- 2. The Full Council approved the appointments appearing in Appendix 2.**

The Speaker noted that the Green Group had not approved the appointments as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.

15. Proposed Calendar of Meetings 2024-2025

The Speaker advised that it was a draft calendar with scheduled meetings and religious holidays, to avoid clashes. The draft had been circulated and any further comments on this were to be sent to the Governance Team governance@hackney.gov.uk The Calendar was to be formally approved at the Annual Meeting on 15 May 2024.

RESOLVED: That the draft Calendar of Meetings be noted.

16. Motions

Cllr Garbett raised a point of clarity. Cllr Garbett gave an apology to Mayor Woodley and the Labour Group for misrepresenting the Labour Group position about the Labour amendment to the Ceasefire Motion, in relation to the phrase 'lasting peace'. Cllr Garbett had reviewed the amendment and noted that 'lasting peace' was included with regard to the Middle East. Cllr Garbett apologised for having said otherwise on this matter.

16a Green Motion - Reduce Glyphosate to Zero now

Amendments to the motion had been received from the Labour Group and contained in the tabled papers circulated. The proposed amendments had not been accepted by the Green Group.

Cllr Garbett reserved the right to speak later.

Cllr Binnie-Lubbock outlined that in 2015 glyphosate was labelled a 'probable carcinogen' by the International Agency for Research on Cancer, and other independent scientific studies had started to reveal acute and chronic effects of glyphosate and glyphosate-based products including cancer, infertility, and birth defects.

Glyphosate had direct and indirect impacts on the environment, including on birds and other animals, destroying habitats and food supplies. Glyphosate was water soluble and had a significant impact on species that underpinned the aquatic food chain. It upset the microbial balance in soil and increased levels of some microbial organisms and decreased levels in others, which had impacted soil fertility. It also had adverse effects on earthworms and other beneficial insects.

Cllr Coban proposed amendments to the motion which were seconded by Cllr Adams.

Cllr Coban acknowledged that glyphosate was a threat to well-being. It harmed soil and disrupted the ecosystem, and threatened the purity of water courses. It was linked to health issues with risks to the elderly, vulnerable, and pregnant women.

Over a number of years the Council had embarked on a programme that had significantly reduced the use of glyphosate, and the proposed amendment recognised the work the Council had done. The Council's housing and grounds maintenance services only used glyphosate for invasive species and environmental services had reduced its use by 58% since 2019 and continued this trend by reduced applications in 2024/2025. The Council had three glyphosate-free areas that promoted biodiversity and increased green infrastructure to see the impact on standards of street and ground maintenance. It was noted that the Council trial to eliminate spraying was different to other local authorities who had eliminated glyphosate completely and then had to

re-introduce its use. The Council wanted to see a reduced use of glyphosate in a balanced way that was fair and equitable.

Members did not debate the amendment.

Following a vote, the Speaker declared the amendments to the motion **CARRIED**

The Speaker proceeded to the substantive motion as amended, which was not debated.

Cllr Garbett had reserved the right to speak.

Cllr Garbett noted the motion recognised the risks associated with Glyphosate use, whilst the amendments removed the urgency and confirmed its current use. It was noted the Council had made some progress, however, it was suggested the Council had further to go to zero use.

Following a vote, the Speaker declared the motion as amended **CARRIED**

RESOLVED:

This Council notes that:

- 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);
- 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;
- 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.
- 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;
- 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;
- The Mayor of London's commitment in the Environment Strategy to "reduce the use of pesticides and peat-based products, such as compost";
- 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.

- 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:

- The work of the council to date in reducing the use of glyphosate with a 50% reduction in on-street spraying against 2017 levels.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- That Hackney Council’s Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport has signed the Pesticide Free Town pledge.

Hackney Council has demonstrated:

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:

- 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’.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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 weed killers and help increase the biodiversity of plants and flowers.

The Council resolves to:

- **Investigate the best way to 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 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;**
- **Consider 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.**
- **Ask the Cabinet Member to consider adopting a clear policy for the council's weed management strategy which details a phase-out plan and timetable.**
- **To engage with organisations working to reduce the use of pesticides, such as the Pesticide-Free London Leaders Network, to work towards developing a clear phase-out plan, as well as share learnings with other councils in the network.**

Amendment Proposed by: Cllr Mete Coban

Seconded by: Cllr Kam Adams

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

In accordance with Part 4A [Rule 16.4](#) of the Council's Constitution, the Speaker advised that this motion which had not been debated would stand referred, without discussion, to the next ordinary meeting of Full Council.

16c Labour Motion: London Charter to End Rough Sleeping

In accordance with Part 4A [Rule 16.4](#) of the Council's Constitution, the Speaker advised that this motion which had not been debated would stand referred, without discussion, to the next ordinary meeting of Full Council.

Close of meeting.

Duration of Meeting - 7.00 - 10.20pm

Chair of the meeting
Cllr Anya Sizer
Speaker of the London Borough of Hackney 2023/24

Attachments

Appendix A - Questions from Members of the public

Appendix B - Questions from Councillors that were not taken at the meeting due to time constraints.