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| Councillors in Attendance: | <p>Cllr Sharon Patrick - Speaker of Hackney</p> <p>Elected Mayor, Caroline Woodley</p> <p>Cllr Kam Adams, Cllr Grace Adebayo, Cllr Frank Baffour, Cllr Alastair Binnie-Lubbock, Deputy Mayor Anntoinette Bramble, Cllr Sophie Conway (late), Cllr Liam Davis, Cllr Michael Desmond, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas, Cllr Zoë Garbett, Cllr George Gooch, Cllr Margaret Gordon, Cllr Clare Joseph, Cllr Christopher Kennedy, Cllr Ben Lucas, Cllr Jasmine Martins, Cllr Clayeon McKenzie, Cllr Jon Narcross, Deputy Mayor Nicholson, Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli, Cllr M Can Ozsen (part), Cllr Samuel Pallis, Cllr Benzion Papier (part), Cllr Patrick Pinkerton (part), Cllr Clare Potter, Cllr Fliss Premru, Cllr Ian Rathbone (part), Cllr Midnight Ross, Cllr Ali Sadek, Cllr Ifraax Samatar, Cllr Ian Sharer (late), Cllr Anya Sizer, Cllr Gilbert Smyth, Cllr Sheila Suso-Runge, Cllr Faruk Tinaz, Cllr Lynne Troughton, Cllr Joe Walker, Cllr Jessica Webb, Cllr Carole Williams, Cllr Penny Wrout and Cllr Sarah Young</p> |
| Apologies for Absence: | <p>Cllr Soraya Adejare, Cllr Robert Chapman, Cllr Humaira Garasia Cllr Michael Levy (dispensation), Cllr Anna Lynch, Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren, Cllr Caroline Selman, Cllr Simche Steinberger, Cllr Claudia Turbet-Delof</p> |
| Absent: | <p>Cllr Ben Hayhurst, Cllr Shaul Krautwirt, Cllr Hershy Lisser, Cllr Richard Lufkin</p> |
| Officer Contact: | <p>Natalie Williams, Senior Governance Officer governance@hackney.gov.uk</p> |

Councillor Sharon Patrick [Speaker] in the Chair

- 1. The Speaker's Welcome**
 - 1.1 The Speaker welcomed all attendees, both in person and online
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
 - 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Adejare, Chapman, Garasia, Lynch, Moema, Oguzkanli, Ogundemuren, Selman and Turbet-Delof.

2.2 Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Conway and Pinkerton.

3. **Speaker's Announcements**

3.1 The Speaker informed the Council of the civic and community events she had attended since the last meeting which included:

- Festive events such as carols in the Narrow Way, St Joseph's Hospice and Broadway Market, various community Christmas lunches, concerts and thanksgiving services,
- Hosting Hackney's entry into the New Year's Day London Parade where the Hackney float came fourth. Thanks were relayed to Gary Kousoulou, Tony and Jody Sawyer of Centre Transport Sales for providing the truck, Tony Humphries from Kiss FM for the music and the art competition winner Didem from year 5 Buttercup class, Betty Layward School, whose design was used on the T-shirts.
- Attending the London Government dinner at Mansion House, an opportunity for leaders, mayors, and chief executives to network.
- Citizenship ceremonies
- Hosting Hackney's Holocaust Memorial Day ceremony here in the chamber yesterday.

3.2 The Speaker confirmed that fundraising activities for her three nominated charities:- Hackney Foodbank, Hackney Marsh Partnership, and the Pedro Club:- were ongoing and had included:

- The Pig's Ear Beer Festival
- Carol singing by the Hackney Singers both at Broadway Market lead by Cllr Troughton and their magnificent Carol concert in De Beauvoir.
- A fundraising VIP reception and panto evening at Hackney Empire

3.3 The Speaker's upcoming charity events included:

- Quiz at Concorde in Kingsmead Way
- A comedy night at the MOTH Club on 8th March
- Dinner at De Beauvoir Block on 20th March
- Elvis and Tina night at Concorde on 18th April

3.4 The Speaker acknowledged the loss of local community hero Dabirul Choudhury OBE, the father of local business owner of Yum Yums restaurant, Atique Choudhury. Dabirul, who raised £420,000 walking around his garden during Covid, had recently passed away aged 106. Thoughts were with Atique Choudhury and his family at this sad time.

Cllr Papier arrived at the meeting.

4. Declarations of Interest

- 4.1 There were no declarations of interest

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2025 be agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

6. The Elected Mayor's Statement

- 6.1 Mayor Woodley echoed the Speaker's sentiments on the passing of Dabirul Islam Choudhury OBE, the father of local business owner of Yum Yums restaurant. The Mayor paid tribute recognising his deep commitment to the Hackney community and charitable work, including raising hundreds of thousands of pounds for charity during COVID. The Mayor sent condolences to his family and friends.
- 6.2 Mayor Woodley commended the work led by Cllr Williams and Council officers in collaboration with community partners in submitting Hackney's application to become a Borough of Sanctuary. The Mayor reflected on her remarks made at Holocaust Memorial Day, underscoring that the Borough's commitment to sanctuary was not abstract, but was rooted in its history as a place of refuge. It was noted that achieving official Borough of Sanctuary status would serve as a testament to years of work dedicated to ensuring that all individuals seeking sanctuary felt safe and supported in Hackney. The Mayor emphasised the borough's diverse population as key to its identity as a culturally dynamic, open, and creative community, expressing pride in the Council's work to action its inclusive and compassionate values.
- 6.3 Mayor Woodley believed that the Council had reinforced Hackney's position as a national leader in climate action. She had recently welcomed Ed Miliband, Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, to the Wrens Park Estate, who, alongside Cllr Young and Deputy Mayor Bramble, met residents benefiting from the Residential Solar Power Pilot Project. The pilot aimed to reduce energy bills and provide access to greener, affordable power. The Mayor noted Hackney's energy delivery pilot as a national blueprint for clean, accessible, and affordable energy, featured in the Government's Warm Homes Plan (2025–2030). The Council requested Government aid to expand the work across the Borough, with the Mayor stating that improving housing stock was crucial as "everyone deserved a warm, safe home that they could be proud of."
- 6.4 Other areas where the Council had made strides in climate action included: increased enforcement against fly-tipping and working collaboratively with residents to choose locations for thousands of new EV charging points. Mayor Woodley announced the Council had hit another milestone in its target of delivering 1,000 new council homes for social rent in 14 locations across Hackney, following the approval at Cabinet. New Homes funding was expected to result in 400 new homes across the borough, 300 of which were for social rent. The new homes included: 9 new terraced houses on the Nye Bevan Estate, net energy-efficient homes at Morris Blitz Court, and a block of 18 homes in place of underused garages at Blackwell Close in Clapton. It was

further noted that the homes were energy efficient and designed in partnership with the local community.

- 6.5 Mayor Woodley highlighted the continued support for residents facing the cost of living crisis, referencing the work of the Labour government to: lift the national and minimum wage, improve renting and working conditions, lift the two-child benefit cap, and provide free school meals and breakfast clubs.
- 6.6 The Mayor and Madam Speaker had attended the Music Service's 25th Mayor's Music awards at Hackney Empire. The Mayor also announced the formal accreditation of Hackney Archives, a status achieved by only 8% of UK archives and relayed thanks to the Archives team.
- 6.7 Mayor Woodley concluded her statement by welcoming the upcoming debate on school exclusions, emphasising that strengthening school inclusion was a Council priority. The Mayor believed that the areas outlined demonstrated an ambitious, hopeful, and proud Labour administration. The Mayor reaffirmed the administration's commitment to borough residents, expressing pride in the community's culture, creativity, and resilience.

Cllr Conway arrived at the meeting.

Response from Hackney Independent Socialist Group

- 6.8 Cllr Wrout, co-leader of the Hackney Independent Socialist group, responded to the Mayor's statement thanking Mayor Woodley and Madam Speaker for the service to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. Cllr Wrout observed that remembering man's inhumanity to man was painful, yet vital. It was hoped that in due course, recent events in Gaza would also be added to the list alongside post-WWII genocides marked annually.
- 6.9 Cllr Wrout cited Keir Starmer's treatment of Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, as the latest example of the lack of democracy in the Labour Party, and welcomed Cllr Ozsen to the opposition benches, following his resignation from the Labour group.
- 6.10 In reference to new homes, Cllr Wrout noted the administration had four years to meet the thousand-homes target. Residents expected built homes, not homes in design, planning, or subject to developer agreement. Cllr Wrout requested a clear statement on the exact number of homes built.
- 6.11 Cllr Wrout doubted the Labour government's funding, believing the Council still faced significant financial pressures, especially with rising adult social care costs. She criticised the council for asking residents to choose cuts to services like library opening hours, suggesting the Mayor had failed to successfully lobby her own party and secure significant financial aid.
- 6.12 Cllr Wrout raised concerns about the lack of transparency regarding the child safeguarding review into Mossbourne Victoria Park. Noting the lack of transparency, she was disappointed that the Deputy Mayor's letter to the Education Secretary had not been published in contrast with the Thurrock Council Leader. It was argued that secrecy affected parents and children and highlighted the wider need for transparency regarding Academies. Cllr Wrout

asked Mayor Woodley and Labour Councillors to sign a petition launched by former Mossbourne Community Academy students, now young adults, seeking a government review of the long-term impact of harsh, widespread school behaviour policies that originated at Mossbourne.

- 6.13 Cllr Wrout requested that the Mayor confer with the Haringey Council leader regarding support for Hackney's Kurdish community, given the danger posed to Kurds in Syria. A request was also made of the Mayor to raise the case of Hackney resident, Lottie Head, a non-terrorist prisoner held on remand for over a year, with the Justice Secretary.
- 6.14 Concluding, Cllr Wrout spoke against the immigration white paper, "Restoring Control over the Immigration System" and asked the Mayor to oppose the extension of the wait for settled status and to complete the census consultation asking for Latin Americans to be included as an ethnic group.

Response from The Green Group

- 6.15 Cllr Garbett, co-leader of the Green Group, responded to the Mayor's statement and welcomed Cllr Ozsen to the opposition side of the Chamber. Cllr Garbett expressed concerns about poor and shocking housing conditions on the Somerford Grove estate, which had led to families suffering poor health. The Council was urged to complete the stock condition survey to ensure issues were addressed across all estates.
- 6.16 In relation to the Renters' Rights Act 2025, Cllr Garbett pushed for the Council to lobby for the Decent Home Standard for privately rented homes to be implemented sooner than 2035. Concerns were raised regarding Archco Developments' termination of the lease for Argun Printers & Stationers, a much loved business on Mare Street, for a leisure development in the derelict fashion hub. Clarity on the Council's support was requested.
- 6.17 Cllr Garbett sought to garner Council support to save library services in anticipation of strong opposition to closures. The community's dependence on libraries for Wi-Fi, warm space, and cultural benefits was highlighted.
- 6.18 Cllr Garbett encouraged the Council to support the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs' recommendation to keep ketamine as a Class B drug and promote a public health approach, commending the work of the public health team. Opposition was raised to the NHS England data management contract with US firm Palantir Technologies, citing its involvement with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) anti-immigration infrastructure and Israeli targeting equipment. The Council was urged to push back against the contract.
- 6.19 Concluding, Cllr Garbett was deeply troubled about the deteriorating situation and crisis in northeast Syria, and expressed solidarity with Kurdish communities in Hackney and beyond.

The Mayor's reply

- 6.24 In response, Mayor Woodley stated hundreds of homes were currently being delivered across Hackney, including the Colville Estate and Woodberry Down.

It was clarified that *The Thousand Homes Plan* was a plan for identification and design. Although completion within the four-year term was not initially anticipated, 972 homes were progressing, which was an extraordinary feat and a testament to the dedication of officers. The Mayor reported that no other Council had achieved this level of progress while simultaneously completing other phases of work across the borough. Work with the Higgins Group and the Greater London Authority (GLA) to adjust the tenure for social rent and affordable housing were noted as well as the progress towards submitting Hackney's 10-year plan to the GLA, which would reflect the Council's ambitious outlook.

- 6.26 The Mayor highlighted the success in turning around the council's financial position through collaboration with London councils, petitioning, and working with the Mayor of London and MPs, resulting in a 25% increase in funding including council tax since the general election, following £150 million reduction in finances.
- 6.27 Mayor Woodley reported lobbying Georgia Gould, Minister of State for School Standards and Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education, securing £3 billion in capital funding and £200 million for training to support a more inclusive schools approach. The Mayor acknowledged the forthcoming Schools White Paper on SEND reform and noted Hackney's effective use of funding and a commitment to help with the statutory override. The Mayor and her administration were committed to addressing the fractured SEND system, attributing its condition to the former Conservative Government.
- 6.28 The Mayor reported communicating with former Hackney Councillor Feryal Demirci MP, who had met with Home Secretary Yvette Cooper regarding the situation in Syria and was supportive of the lobbying and campaigning. Mayor Woodley also highlighted close work with Haringey Council on these issues.
- 6.29 Mayor Woodley acknowledged the substantial challenge of fixing the housing stock, noting the Council's commitment of over £550 million via its capital programme. A stock survey was underway, and progress reports would continue. The Council was actively engaging Archco Developments as a critical friend regarding the site at Argun's Stationers and Printers and its application to the proposed Hackney Walk development.
- 6.30 In closing, Mayor Woodley stated that Hackney's continuous engagement with a variety of key stakeholders was highly respected because of its recognised ability to achieve positive results. She asserted the effectiveness of her Labour administration over the Hackney Independents due to tangible delivery, over the Conservative group due to its greater financial astuteness, and over the Green group due to its stronger commitment to create a greener fairer borough.

7. Questions from Members of the Public

- 7.1 To the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture from Leonie Brown

What procedures does Hackney Council follow to safeguard medically vulnerable residents when major housing, estate regeneration, highways or extensive internal works are carried out nearby, including the borough wide application of Equality and Environmental Impact Assessments, managed relocation pathways, and how compliance with these procedures is monitored?

The questioner was not present and was sent a written response attached at Appendix A.

7.2. To the Cabinet Member for Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeping and Temporary Accommodation from James Bartholomeusz

We have read about the various homelessness mitigation measures implemented by the council, including buying up properties to provide temporary accommodation. Can the Cabinet Member provide us with an update on the impact these measures have had so far in supporting homeless people in the borough?

The questioner was not present and was sent a written response attached at Appendix A.

7.3. To the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services from Dr. Russell Foster

Could the Cabinet Member responsible for policing, confirm whether the police have been deploying Live Facial Recognition in Hackney, and what the outcomes and community engagement have been to assess its local impact?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services

Cllr Fajana-Thomas confirmed the Metropolitan Police had deployed Live Facial Recognition (LFR) technology in Dalston, Hackney Central, and Shoreditch since July 2024 to combat serious violence and priority crime. She clarified that the deployment was a unilateral operational decision by the Police, not requiring Council authorisation.

It was explained that the Council had implemented robust oversight of the scheme, including personally reviewing deployment results, to ensure fairness and non-discrimination. Since July 2024, LFR had led to 87 arrests for serious offences, 42 interventions with Registered Sexual Offenders, and one stop for Stalking Prevention Order compliance, with zero "false positives." Independent testing had also confirmed the technology did not discriminate against any demographic group. Police had given assurances that LFR was only used for individuals on a "watchlist" for serious offences in violence hotspots, and all deployments were compliant. Cllr Fajana-Thomas confirmed that she would continue to monitor the operations.

There was no supplementary question.

7.4. To the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport from Clair Battaglino

How does the Council plan to reverse the decline in and improve speeds of Hackney's buses, favoured by poorer people and global majority residents, which are now observed to be slower due to decisions by the Council to re-route traffic from other roads onto many of our bus routes?

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

Cllr Young spoke of how the Council was working with Transport for London (TfL) to improve bus journey times and speeds through implementing more bus lanes, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs), and bus gates, for example Shepherdess Walk and Amhurst Road, which was now open only to buses/bikes/pedestrians. The Council was carefully assessing the impact of traffic changes on buses and aimed to improve journey times by removing through traffic. Recent improvements including Balls Pond Road and the Graham Road bus lane extension. The Council was continuing discussions on journey times with TfL, who were adjusting traffic lights and schedules. On the issue of Kings Park, the Council was speaking with TfL, Thames Water, and others, and was monitoring changes affecting the 242 bus. The Council was continuing to develop its 10-year Transport Strategy and it was hoped that Ms Battaglino would participate in the consultation phase for the scheme.

Supplementary question from Clair Battaglino:

For those local residents already using non-private forms of transport and also walking, how does restricting car usage in areas of high car ownership actually benefit them?

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

Cllr Young referred Ms Battaglino to her previous answer.

7.5 To the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport from Otis Rostron

Research shows that children who grow up next to busy main roads can suffer stunted lung growth and other health problems. Please could you tell us what Hackney Council is doing to improve air quality for children locally?

A written response attached at Appendix A was sent to the questioner, who was attending online. The Speaker informed the meeting at the start of this agenda item that she would be prioritising the questions of those present in the Chamber.

7.6 To the Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities from Olufunmilola Oni

In light of ongoing pressures on household budgets, can the Cabinet Member set out how our employment, skills and adult learning programmes are

working alongside welfare advice and anti-poverty initiatives to support residents out of in-work and out-of-work poverty?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities

Cllr Williams spoke about the Council's integrated, multi-pronged strategy to combat rising living costs, focusing on immediate financial aid and long-term support for better-paid employment. This merged employment support, adult learning, welfare advice, and anti-poverty services to reduce reliance on crisis support by improving skills and access to good work. From January to November 2025, the Hackney Works programme had assisted 111 residents through the Household Support Fund and had also offered monthly advice sessions with the Here to Help team on issues including council tax, housing, and financial resilience.

The Council's Connect to Work programme supported individuals with disabilities or health conditions in finding suitable work, including early financial assessments to mitigate in-work poverty. The Adult Learning Service offered free courses in accessible locations in high-deprivation areas to help residents build core skills and retrain. Furthermore, the Council promoted local economic growth by working with employers to advocate for the London Living Wage and inclusive recruitment practices, ensuring fair access to good jobs.

7.7 To the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport from Sonya Park

The Council posited that traffic (which exponentially increased on "main roads" due to Council's traffic measures) would "evaporate," yet roads like Dalston Lane suffer worse traffic than ever, with consistently dangerously high levels of NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. What actions will the Council take to mitigate these risks?

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

Cllr Young replied that Hackney's main roads saw only a 1% traffic increase over four years, significantly less than the London-wide 4.6% trend, crediting Council work promoting active travel and reducing traffic. Fifty percent of traffic on Dalston Lane was just through-traffic, causing congestion and pollution.

The Council monitored air quality, particularly Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂), on busy roads like Mare Street, Amhurst Road, Dalston Lane, and Graham Road. Diffusion tubes show a substantial NO₂ reduction over the past decade. New monitors (automatic at Graham Road/Dalston Lane for NO₂ and particulate matter, and Breathe London sensors at Pembury Circus and Dalston Lane) were collecting more data. Changes at Pembury Circus were also expected to cut pollution.

The Council's Air Quality Action Plan would set stricter targets for continued improvement.

Supplementary question from Sonya Park:

Why is the council reporting only average readings of air pollution as opposed to considering the readings on the Airware site that you mentioned, which show that maximum PM10 and NO2 concentrations exceed targets on a nearly daily basis?

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

Cllr Young responded that the Council did report on annualised averages, however, those figures gave the Council a worse record than day by day and hour by hour figures. The Council wanted to be as transparent as possible by providing an annualised report.

7.8 To the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport from Reiner Tegtmeyer

After a number of requests, long-time deteriorated Leswin Road has finally been partly resurfaced. A number of other streets in bad driving and cycling conditions still need urgent repairs, like upper Manor Road. Can the Cabinet member provide a list of planned repair works and their schedule?

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

Cllr Young confirmed that Leswin Road and Manor Road were included in the 2025/26 Highways Planned Maintenance Programme for resurfacing. Resurfacing on Leswin Road, covering the section between Tyssen Street and Manse Road, was completed in November 2025. Manor Road was being resurfaced between Bethune Road and Royal Close. Work was expected to be completed within the next few weeks, subject to weather conditions and operational constraints.

Information on the Capital Carriageway Programme was available on request. It provided details of the approved Highways Planned Maintenance Programme (Carriageways) for 2025/26. Cllr Young asked Mr Tegtmeyer to email either her or Streetscene service for more information.

Supplementary question from Reiner Tegtmeyer:

Can the Cabinet inform the public about priorities set in for the planned resurfacing works?

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

Cllr Young agreed to email Mr Tegtemeyer the information.

7.9 To the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport from Matthew Albrow

What steps is the Council taking to monitor and lower the number of lorries and HGVs using heavily residential streets such as Dalston Lane and other pedestrian corridors, increasing danger and air pollution, as highlighted by the recent fatality near the Town Hall?

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

Cllr Young reported that the reduction of lorries and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) on residential streets was a key priority for the Council's emerging 2026 Transport Strategy. It was hoped that Mr. Albrow would be involved in the consultation phase for the strategy.

Cllr Young spoke of the terrible tragedy of the death on Mare Street after being hit by a lorry and how the victim was a mother, a daughter and a friend to many. Her life had ended far too early.

Hackney Council was employing local restrictions, London-wide controls (like the London Lorry Control Scheme for night/weekend movements), and targeted enforcement, including statutory weight limits, to manage HGV activity and achieve its Vision Zero goal of reducing road traffic accidents while balancing freight efficiency with community safety.

Supplementary question from Matthew Albrow

What was the Council doing to monitor and lower the number of lorries and HGVs using residential streets?

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

The Council monitored a wide range of data, published across various platforms, e.g the London Lorry Control Scheme, which was published via London Councils. Cllr Young offered to email Mr Albrow the link to that data.

Questions from the public that were not taken at the meeting due to time constraints are attached at Appendix A.

Cllr Papier left the meeting.

8. Council Taxbase and Local Business Rates Income 2026/27

The Speaker informed the Chamber that the report was covered by s.106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. This provides that if a Member owes two or more months' arrears of Council Tax, they are obliged to disclose this fact to the meeting and not vote on the matter. Failure to comply is a criminal offence punishable by a fine.

The Speaker advised that a recorded vote would be taken. Only Members who are physically present in the room for the entire duration, from the start of the introduction until the conclusion of the item, will be eligible to vote.

- 8.1 In the absence of Cllr Chapman, Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing and Customer Service, Mayor Woodley introduced the report which set out the statutory calculation of Hackney's Council Tax Base for 2026/27 and the forecast of Local Business Rates income. This was described as essential building blocks of the budget and Council Tax setting process.
- 8.2 Commending the report to Full Council, Mayor Woodley highlighted the following:
- A 94.5% Council Tax collection rate was anticipated, reflecting improved performance despite ongoing economic pressures. This accurate assumption was essential to preventing future deficits and protecting services.
 - The Council was committed to fairness, having cut the minimum Council Tax Reduction Scheme contribution to 10% and aiming for zero contribution for eligible residents by 2030, thus sustaining support for low-income households.
 - Significant national reforms to Business Rates, including revaluation and new multipliers, were expected in 2026/27, impacting local businesses and the Council's income forecasts. Delegating authority to the Group Director of Finance to finalise the Business Rates Base is necessary to meet statutory deadlines.
 - Agreeing these figures would provide certainty for residents and businesses, and be instrumental in finalising the wider budget. The report demonstrated responsible financial management and the safeguarding of vital local services, ensuring a stable platform for future investment in Hackney.
- 8.3 Cllr Kennedy, Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture and Cllr Pallis, Deputy Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy both spoke in favour of the report. Emphasis was placed on the importance of achieving realistic collection rates for setting a solid budget, alongside commendation for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, which offered up to a 90% reduction to 17,000 low-income households.
- 8.4 Cllr Binnie Lubbock stated that the Green group would be abstaining from voting as they believed that changes were required both locally and nationally. He advocated for phasing out the use of bailiffs, accelerating the council tax reduction scheme (CTRS) locally, and lobbying the national government to replace council tax with a land value tax and allow the Council to retain more of its business rates.
- 8.5 Cllr Wrout questioned the plan to achieve a 100% discount under the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) by 2030, given that the discount rate had remained at 90% for three years and the council had received a financial settlement. It was noted that the gulf between those on the bread-line and those with wealth in Hackney was widening
- 8.6 Mayor Woodley responded that reaching the 90% reduction early was a significant achievement due to good governance, and the commitment to 100% remained. Noting that other councils, including Green Party-led

councils, had considered reviewing their reduction schemes. IMayor Woodley also mentioned the need to navigate reforms in 2026-2027 and conduct a consultation before making further changes, assuring that they would look at implementation as quickly and effectively as possible.

On a recorded vote there being:

For (33): Cllr Kam Adams, Cllr Grace Adebayo, Cllr Frank Baffour, Cllr Sophie Conway, Cllr Michael Desmond, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Susan Fajana-Thomas, Cllr George Gooch, Cllr Margaret Gordon, Cllr Clare Joseph, Cllr Christopher Kennedy, Cllr Ben Lucas, Cllr Jasmine Martins, Cllr Clayeon McKenzie, Cllr Jon Narcross, Deputy Mayor Nicholson, Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli, Cllr Clare Potter, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Clare Potter, Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Midnight Ross, Cllr Ali Sadek, Cllr Ifraax Samatar, Cllr Anya Sizer, Cllr Gilbert Smyth, Cllr Sheila Suso-Runge, Cllr Faruk Tinaz, Cllr Lynne Troughton, Cllr Joe Walker, Cllr Jessica Webb, Cllr Carole Williams, and Cllr Sarah Young

Abstentions(6): Cllr Alastair Binnie-Lubbock, Cllr Liam Davis, Cllr Zoë Garbett, Cllr Fliss Premru, Cllr Ian Sharer, Cllr Penny Wrout

Against(0)

Not present in the Chamber (3): Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Benzion Papier, Cllr Patrick Pinkerton

Due to a technical issue, Deputy Mayor Anntoinette Bramble's electronic vote was not recorded. This was clarified by the Speaker, where the Deputy Mayor confirmed that she would have recorded 'For'.

The resolution was declared **CARRIED**

RESOLVED:

- 1. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Hackney Council as its Council Tax Base for 2026/27 shall be 80,163.35 Band D equivalent properties adjusted for non-collection. This represents an estimated collection rate of 94.5%.**
- 2. Delegated authority be given to the Group Director of Corporate Resources to determine the 2026/27 Business Rates Base.**
- 3. That the CTRS scheme for 2026/27 remains unchanged from that previously approved by Full Council**

Cllr Pinkerton arrived at the meeting.

9. Pay Policy Statement for Chief Officers 2026/2027

- 9.1 Cllr Williams, Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities introduced the report noting that, as in previous years, there were no major changes.

RESOLVED: To approve the Pay Policy for Chief Officers for 2026/2027, as recommended by the Corporate Committee.

The Speaker announced that there would be a five minute break in proceedings.

The meeting resumed at 8.25pm.

10. Questions from Members of the Council

10.1. To the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration from Cllr Suso-Runge

What support can the Council provide to our long standing and cherished local businesses that are the cornerstone of our Hackney community. Can the Council provide assurance that these successful local businesses continue to thrive as a valued resource for our residents?

Response from the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration

Deputy Mayor Nicholson highlighted the Council's support for local businesses through initiatives such as the business support programme, Hackney Impact, and the Hackney Business Network website/newsletter. The Council also distributed grant funding, with the Green Business Support Programme and Local Area Activation Fund recently closing applications, with funds to be distributed soon. There was additional support including the Love Hackney Shop Local campaign and the Council's Regeneration and Economic Development service offering 1-to-1 support.

Supplementary question from Cllr Sheila Suso-Runge

How do we help local businesses have catchment and optimal location in our town centres?

Response from the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration

Deputy Mayor Nicholson explained that the Council's planning policy advocated different sizes of commercial spaces to come forward both in new developments, conversions and renovations. Small commercial space would sit alongside larger commercial spaces. Deputy Mayor Nicholson spoke of how it was important for these types of spaces to lead the way.

10.2. To the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services from Cllr Premru (on behalf of Cllr Turbet-Delof)

Can you give us an update on the progress of the current Anti-Social Behaviour review including how residents with lived experiences are able to participate and inform the process?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services

Cllr Fajana-Thomas affirmed the Council's dedication to efficient, resident-informed Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) services, emphasising accountability. The ASB Case Review was a statutory safeguard, allowing residents to trigger a multi-agency review (Council, Police, Social Landlords) if they report three incidents within six months to any relevant body and deem action inadequate. The panel reviewed the case history to identify failures and create an action plan. Although 21 requests were submitted in the last period, none met the statutory threshold. To ensure all concerns were addressed, the Council used a "Soft Trigger" model, whereby the Community Safety Team performed a secondary review of all cases, actioned through the monthly partnership Anti-Social Behaviour Action Panel.

Supplementary question from Cllr Premru

On ASB in the Victoria area, around the roundabout, Victoria Park and Lauriston Road, where red crosses have been painted on the roundabout, what measures was the Council taking to paint over the red crosses and also with them reappearing were they to be included as ASB and how could people report them?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services

Cllr Fajana-Thomas responded that the Council had dealt extensively with the red crosses in Victoria Park. It was explained that while some people in the local community may find red crosses offensive they were not a criminal offence. Cllr Fajana-Thomas acknowledged that some people were using the red cross to divide communities. The Council was responding sensitively and it had responded over time to catch the perpetrators for example by installing a temporary camera in the area.

10.3 To the Cabinet Member for Finance, Insourcing and Customer Service from Cllr Lucas

The Labour government's Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement covering 2026/27-2028/29, published 17th December 2025, finally put behind 14 years of austerity imposed on councils under Conservative and Liberal Democrat governments. Can the Cabinet Member give an update on what this means for Hackney's finances?

In the absence of the Cabinet member for Finance Insourcing and Customer Service, mayor Woodley responded to this question.

Response from the Mayor

The Mayor announced that the 2026/27 to 2028/29 Local Government Provisional Finance Settlement had provided better-than-forecast funding, allowing the Council to deliver a balanced 2026/27 budget without using reserves and strengthening medium-term projections. This marked a significant turnaround from the £150 million reduction since 2010. The Council now anticipated multi-year funding and a 25% increase in funding (including Council Tax) over the current period since the general election. However, stability relied on robust budget management and delivering agreed savings.

There was no supplementary question from Cllr Lucas.

10.4. To the Mayor from Cllr Davis

What assessment has the Council made of the availability and accessibility of free or low-cost legal advice for Hackney residents - particularly in housing and benefits - and has the Council conducted any survey or mapping of unmet legal need since 2022?

Response from the Mayor

The Mayor spoke of her concern about the national data citing a 2024 report by the Legal Services Board which had stated that 36% of people with a legal need were unable to access support. Hackney residents were able to access free legal advice from the likes of Citizens Advice, Hackney Community Law Centre, the Hoxton Trust, as well as Shelter and Hackney Migrant Centre. The Mary Ward Legal Centre also provided specialist social welfare law. The Mayor explained how these examples showed the value and role of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) within local communities. The Mayor reiterated her support for the sector through the provision of grant funding, local fundraising and partnerships with the Council.

Supplementary question from Cllr Davis:

Does the Council have any recorded data on metric for residents looking for legal advice and the time it takes to receive that support if they do not come to the Council? So the private sector housing team may be thinking specifically around section 21s as the Council waits for them to be banned in May and the kind of uptick before that date. If so, does the Council what that would look like?

Response from the Mayor:

Mayor Woodley stated that the Council would refer people seeking help to partner organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau or Hackney Community Law Centre, with referral times varying based on their caseloads. The Mayor could not provide a specific timeframe but assured members that these dedicated community organisations take cases seriously. The Council aimed to offer comprehensive support, identifying financial needs, checking benefit eligibility, and entrusting legal advice to partner organisations.

10.5 To the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport from Cllr Ross

Local parents have raised concern about a recent increase in high speed cars driving down Dove Row and that some drivers are driving straight through the gate. How is the Dove Row-Goldsmith's Row gate being enforced and what are ways to avoid traffic being directed onto even less suitable roads?

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

Vandalism of the traffic camera at the Dove Row/Goldsmith's Row junction was hampering Council efforts. The camera had been repaired, long-term solutions were in development, and mobile enforcement was in use. A September 2025 survey proved effectiveness, recording 295 vehicles/day at an average speed of 13.2mph. The Council would monitor compliance and report future issues to the Police.

There was no supplementary question from Cllr Ross.

10.6. To the Deputy Mayor Nicholson and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration from Cllr Wrout

The Hackney Labour manifesto in 2022 promised 1,000 new social rent council homes. Please provide an update including how much has been spent trying to meet that target since May 2022 and how close the current administration will have got to 1,000 new council homes by May 2026?

Response from the Deputy Mayor Nicholson and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration:

Deputy Mayor Nicholson clarified that 'delivery' included homes: under construction and contract, planning permission being granted, being tendered for construction, in the planning system and in the design process.

The Council had 972 new social rent homes in delivery, nearing the 2022 target of 1,000. These were at various stages: 237 under construction, 158 tendered with planning, 194 in planning, 293 in design, and 90 buybacks. Addressing the housing crisis, the Council was also delivering 376 new shared ownership homes for middle-income families, for example on Wimbourne Street, where 10 of 12 homes were reserved by Hackney residents on launch day. The Council had secured external investment but was facing some financial hurdles.

Supplementary question from Councillor Wrout

For the sake of clarity, can the Cabinet Member, please publish a written answer setting out exactly what stage of the various stages you've described those 972 homes are at as of this evening to be published along with the minutes of this meeting.?

Response from the Deputy Mayor Nicholson and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration

Deputy Mayor Nicholson agreed to do this and advised that the cost of the programme to the Council was cost neutral. The programme was reliant on an affordable housing grant from central government and assistance from the London Mayor's office. Shared Ownership homes were to be sold to help deliver the 972 social rented homes.

10.7. To the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration from Cllr Selman

In the absence of Cllr Selman, this question was asked by Cllr Adams.

The Council has committed to maximising the positive impact of community halls. Will the Cabinet Member therefore commit to reviewing what steps can be taken to bring the community halls on Lincoln Court and Woodberry Grove back into use pending any actual or potential regeneration at these sites?

Response from the Deputy Mayor Nicholson and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration

Deputy Mayor Nicholson affirmed the Council's commitment to maximising the positive impact of community halls, keeping Lincoln Court under review. It closed due to confirmed ground subsidence, not leaks, making standalone repairs unsafe and uneconomical. The issue was linked to the paused Lincoln Court regeneration, identified for medium-term housing in the Stamford Hill Area Action Plan. The Council offered alternative free nearby halls or funding local venue hire, with officers supporting the Tenants Residents Association (TRA). The former Woodberry Down social club closed for health and safety reasons (rewiring and roofing) and was scheduled for demolition within the Woodberry Down regeneration scheme, which provided alternative community space.

There was no supplementary question.

10.8 To the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport from Cllr Binnie-Lubbock

The council recently stated it intends to reduce private vehicle ownership by 25% and have 90% of Hackney-based vehicles being 100% electric by 2041. How will you maintain progress in spite of the Labour London Mayor cancelling pay-per-mile which was due to be rolled out this year?

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

Cllr Young reported that over 85% of Hackney journeys were sustainable (walking, cycling, public transport), due to the Council reallocating road space, restricting private cars in town centres, and promoting cycling (free school training, cargobike share). The Council's focus was on traffic demand management, not vehicle ownership. It supported TfL's ULEZ and pay-per-mile plans and was ready to collaborate on pilot schemes, requiring London-wide effort and public consultation. The Council was also committed to cleaner vehicles, aiming for 3,000 on-street EV charge points by 2040 (including 10% for estate residents). Though it did not control prices, permit-holding residents could get discounted tariffs at Council charge points through Hackney Light and Power.

Supplementary question from Cllr Binnie-Lubbock

Is the Cabinet Member concerned about the potential rollout of driverless cars and the impact they will have on residents?

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

Cllr Young stated that the Council was monitoring the trial rollout of driverless cars.

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

Cllr Joseph left the meeting.

11. Borough of Sanctuary Framework and Action Plan

The Speaker advised that, subsequent to the agenda's publication, Cabinet had approved the Borough of Sanctuary Framework and Action Plan at its meeting on Monday, 26 January.

- 11.1 Cllr Williams, Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities, introduced the report and thanked colleagues for contributing to a robust and deliverable action plan. Hackney's long and proud history of welcoming migrants and refugees, including the Windrush generation, Turkish, Kurdish, Haredi and Orthodox Jewish, Ukrainian, African, and Vietnamese communities, was noted. The action plan was co-produced with sanctuary seekers, colleagues from education, health, and the voluntary sector. Thanks were relayed to Cllr Sophie Conway for bringing forward a motion committing the council to becoming a borough sanctuary in 2023. Cllr Rathbone for his long held commitment and work with the informal borough sanctuary network between 2011-2019 and officers who had worked on this. The council would proceed to immediately submit its application to the City of Sanctuary network.
- 11.2 Cllr Fajana-Thomas stated that becoming a borough of sanctuary was a commitment to dignity and shared humanity, which would make the community safer and more resilient, bringing people together and enhancing participation in civic life.
- 11.3 Cllr Binnie-Lubbock while commending the work, expressed concern about the lack of clarity on future funding for the "Welcome Hackney" programme and stressed the need for sustainable funding for immigration advice. He expressed hope that a culture change would occur and that sufficient funding would be secured to ensure the long-term sustainability of the borough's sanctuary. He called for the Council to champion safe and legal routes at a national level. He advocated for a firm firewall between the Council, police, and Home Office to ensure support for survivors of domestic abuse.
- 11.4 Cllr Suso-Runge spoke of her own personal experience of finding sanctuary as a young child within the borough. She commended the sanctuary ambassadors and steering group for the co-production of the framework, which successfully weaves the voices and experiences of residents into the plan.

RESOLVED: To note Cabinet's approval of the publication of the Borough of Sanctuary Framework and Action Plan

12. Children and Families Service Full Year Update Report to Members 2024/25

- 12.1 Cllr Anntoinette Bramble, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Young People introduced the report, highlighting the "good" rating from Ofsted. Emphasis was placed on the commitment of staff and the importance of innovative approaches, such as the care leavers hub, which provided a safe space for young people to receive services and advice. This demonstrated a focus on "reaching differently" rather than focusing on the concept of "hard to reach".
- 12.2 The Council's commitment to keeping children in care close to home, with 91% currently living within 20 miles of Hackney and plans underway to build two council-owned children's homes, was noted. The Deputy Mayor confirmed the continuation of a systematic, trauma-informed, anti-racist approach. Work with care leavers in social housing, an area flagged by Ofsted for improvement, would also continue. Appreciation was expressed to Members and officers for their commitment and focus in this area.

RESOLVED: To note and endorse the report and appendix

Cllr Sharer left the meeting.

13a Green Group and Hackney Independent Socialist Group Joint Motion: Ending School Exclusions and Preventing Harmful Outcomes
and

13b Labour Group Amendments to Motion: Ending School Exclusions and Preventing Harmful Outcomes

- 13.1 Cllr Binnie-Lubbock introduced the motion expressing chamber-wide concern for an inclusive Hackney education system that balances academics with life skills, mental health, and social development. He acknowledged educators' efforts but stressed that unfair, often racist/ableist, behaviour policies and rising exclusion rates are failing and marginalising young people, negatively impacting their health and life outcomes. He urged Members to demand better results, collaborating on preventative safeguarding. He called for schools to urgently become nurturing, compassionate, inclusive beacons focused on mental health and safeguarding to break the school-to-prison pipeline, stating that every excluded young person and person in the criminal justice system signifies systemic failure.
- 13.2 Cllr Wrout seconded the motion, explaining that it sought positive changes, especially benefiting global majority and SEND students who were disproportionately affected by discriminatory exclusions and behaviour policies. Cllr Wrout was disappointed the Labour group's amendments weakened the motion, focusing instead on self-praise. Although the Labour group addressed exclusions and safeguarding, she felt it was insufficient, citing the Mossbourne Victoria Park Review. Cllr Wrout argued that the proposed amendments ignored: inconsistent following of the *No Need to Exclude* guidance; the invisibility of children due to informal exclusions and

unmanaged moves; and the need for parental/professional involvement in managed moves. She urged opposition to policies that weaken local authority accountability for inclusion, safeguarding, and SEND provision, appealing to build trust and ensure fair dealing for parents and students.

Proposed amendments to the motion

Cllr Conway, Chair of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Commission proposed amendments to the motion which were seconded by Cllr Gordon, Scrutiny Panel Chair.

- 13.3 Cllr Conway stated that reducing exclusions and strengthening inclusion remained a priority, and the amendments aimed to acknowledge good intentions but insufficient progress. The amended motion reaffirmed existing commitments, maintaining their importance until meaningful results were achieved.
- 13.4 Cllr Gordon stated that agreed that quality education had the power to transform lives and alleviate poverty. She stressed the need for safe, nurturing learning environments to equip all students for fulfilling lives. The hardship of exclusion was acknowledged. The Council's work to improve outcomes for excluded students and its current review of behaviour management, aiming to identify good practice was noted.
- 13.5 Cllrs Sizer and Deputy Mayor Bramble supported the proposed amendments, stressing that school exclusions should transcend politics and affirming Hackney Labour's commitment to inclusive education. They noted primary schools' success with low exclusion rates and reiterated the focus on improving inclusion, especially for Black and Global Majority children disproportionately affected.
- 13.6 Cllr Davis and Cllr Premru spoke against the proposed amendments. Expressing concern that the amendments would fundamentally dilute the clarity and force of the motion, particularly regarding elements of addressing past failures and ensuring clear accountability.

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

Members indicated that they did not wish to debate the substantive motion

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

RESOLVED:

Hackney Council notes:

1. Strengthening school inclusion is a priority, working in partnership with the voluntary sector, local and central government.
2. The 2025 inclusion Parliamentary Roundtable co-chaired by the Rt Hon Diane Abbott and Deputy Mayor Cllr Anntoinette Bramble 2025.

3. The adoption of the Hackney Education No Need to Exclude guidance (2015), Hackney's commitment as a signatory to the London Inclusion Charter, and Council motion Mental Health: A Human Right for All adopted in September 2023.
4. Hackney has the highest rates of permanent exclusions in London and second highest suspensions. Suspensions rose from 2,775 to 3,207 and permanent exclusions increased from 33 to 52 between 2022/2023 and 2023/2024.
5. Exclusions and disciplinary sanctions disproportionately affect Black and Global Majority pupils and intersect with unmet SEND, safeguarding vulnerability, and involvement with social care and Youth Justice service
6. Recent safeguarding practice reviews, including the Mossbourne review, highlight harm caused by punitive disciplinary cultures, particularly for pupils with SEND and those from Black and Global Majority backgrounds.

The Council recognises:

7. The Council's statutory duties under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 to secure suitable education for children who are out of school, aligned to their age, ability, aptitude, SEND and best interests, and its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 Equality Act 2010) to prevent foreseeable harm and discrimination.

Hackney Council resolves to:

8. Continue working with headteachers, governing bodies and academy trusts across Hackney, including through existing service-level agreements and partnership arrangements, to promote and ensure compliance with current DfE guidance, safeguarding requirements, SEND duties and anti-racist principles, equalities legislation including (the Public Sector Equality Duty) ensuring exclusion is always a genuine last resort.
9. Implement our Education Strategy, shaped by parents, carers, schools, and local voluntary sector through; including the work on Hackney Education Additional Learning Service to strengthen a trauma-informed inclusion approach.
10. Ensure no pupil with identified or suspected SEND is excluded unless statutory SEND duties, reasonable adjustments and early intervention have been demonstrably met and evidenced.
11. Continue to implement the recommendations of the 2021 Children and Young People's Scrutiny review and any further recommendations arising from scrutiny of school behaviour and exclusion practice.
12. Continue to promote trauma-informed, culturally competent and anti-racist practice across Hackney schools, informed by local data on disproportionality in exclusions and disciplinary sanctions.
13. Continue to strengthen peer support and advocacy for parents and carers. Enhance SEND independent advice and guidance wrap-around,

family-friendly support to prevent exclusions, including accessible communication on the Local Offer and early sign posting to access to independent legal advocacy where exclusion or managed move is being considered.

14. Through our School Improvement Partners we will develop our approach to discussing and monitoring managed moves within schools.
15. Improve transparency by publishing validated exclusions data to identify trends. Hackney Education will monitor any potential off rolling and escalate accordingly.
16. Develop our Hackney Alternative Education Learning Service inclusion panel with oversight from the Director of Education to review potential or actual exclusions promptly and prevent exclusion wherever possible.
17. Continue to advocate nationally for a fully inclusive education system

End of meeting.

Duration of the meeting: 7:00pm - 9.35pm

Date of next meeting: 4 March 2026

Contact: governance@hackney.gov.uk

Chair of the meeting: Cllr Sharon Patrick
Speaker of London Borough of Hackney 2025/26

Attachments

Appendix A - Questions from the public that were not taken at the meeting due to absences or time constraints. #

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

Attachments

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

7.1 To the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture from Leonie Brown

What procedures does Hackney Council follow to safeguard medically vulnerable residents when major housing, estate regeneration, highways or extensive internal works are carried out nearby, including the borough wide application of Equality and Environmental Impact Assessments, managed relocation pathways, and how compliance with these procedures is monitored?

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

While there is no agreed definition for the medically vulnerable, I am fully aware of the disruption and impact on residents that sometimes occurs when major works are undertaken in close proximity to their homes. Some residents may also be more acutely affected due to pre-existing conditions but it is impossible to know who and where they are because no single organisation holds an accessible list of people's health conditions and addresses that anyone seeking to undertake major works can access.

With regard to Equality Impact Assessments, medical vulnerability is not one of the statutorily protected characteristics that EqlAs are designed to cover. This means that while an EqlA may be undertaken ahead of major works, it would not account for this cohort of people. However, Environmental Impact Assessments are sometimes required for new build development or refurbishment that require planning consent and are determined on a case by case basis depending on the scale of the proposals. Planning consent for major works or refurbishments are usually granted with the condition that works are only undertaken on certain days of the week and during certain hours of the day to minimise disruption.

In terms of managed relocation pathways, the NHS does provide medical assistance to individuals who are evacuated or relocated temporarily (not rehoused) on a case by case basis, which usually occurs in emergency situations.

Thank you for your question Leonie and I hope my answer provides a degree of comfort in respect of mitigations that developers are required to put in place in certain circumstances to minimise the impact on those residing in close proximity to their schemes.

7.2. To the Cabinet Member for Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeping and Temporary Accommodation from James Bartholomeusz

We have read about the various homelessness mitigation measures implemented by the council, including buying up properties to provide temporary accommodation. Can the Cabinet Member provide us with an update on the impact these measures have had so far in supporting homeless people in the borough?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeping and Temporary Accommodation

Hackney Council's housing measures are delivering tangible improvements to the lives of our residents by prioritising stability, dignity, and financial security. The Council's Transformation Programme is adding to our supply of temporary accommodation.

We are increasing supply through various means, including the Local Authority Housing Fund and the Council Homes Acquisition Programme, which together are on track to deliver over 150 additional units for those in most acute need. By expanding our property portfolio through these strategic acquisitions, we are reducing our reliance on unsuitable, expensive, and short-term commercial placements. Aside from the significant financial savings, the most profound impact is that no families with children have been required to stay in Bed & Breakfast accommodation for longer than six weeks this year. This ensures children remain in a stable environment, allowing them to stay settled in their local schools and connected to their communities.

The here to help initiative also empowers residents by easing the daily pressure of the cost-of-living crisis. By identifying those at risk early, we have helped residents secure an additional £3 million in benefits and awarded over 3,500 food and fuel grants. Furthermore, our data-led campaigns have saved local households £1 million on their water bills. These interventions provide a vital financial safety net, allowing families to remain in their current homes with greater peace of mind.

Ensuring that we make the best use of available properties to better meet the needs of our residents is central to our strategy. This year, 191 households were supported into private tenancies, and 75 families moved into brand-new social homes on the Woodberry Down Estate. By recovering high-demand properties from failed successions and accelerating move-on pathways, we are helping more residents transition into the long-term security of a permanent home.

7.5 To the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport from Otis Rostron

Research shows that children who grow up next to busy main roads can suffer stunted lung growth and other health problems. Please could you tell us what Hackney Council is doing to improve air quality for children locally?

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

Thank you for raising this important question. Nothing is more essential than the air we breathe. London has a history of poor air quality, but in the last few years, we've been able to make real improvements with most types of air pollution falling significantly in Hackney.

Some groups are more vulnerable to the effects of air pollution and these include children as their organs are still developing. In Hackney we're

committed to improving air quality across the borough and earlier this week we approved our new Air Quality Action Plan for 2026 to 2030, setting ourselves tougher targets for lower pollution levels, including actions aimed specifically at making sure that air quality continues to improve around schools.

We monitor air quality at many of Hackney's schools so we can keep track of pollution levels and we publish the data on our website, but you can also look at live independent air quality data from around the borough on the Air Aware website. We have seen reductions at all of our monitoring locations over the past few years. Where long-term monitoring has been carried out, we have seen nitrogen dioxide concentrations drop by more than 50% since 2015.

The Mayor of London's ULEZ scheme has made a big contribution to reducing air pollution.

Our School Streets play an important part in this, with nearly 50 schools restricting traffic on at least one road next to the school at the times when kids are going to and from school, helping to reduce children's exposure to air pollution.

We have also installed green screens at 15 schools. These are screens made up of climbing plants which can help reduce the pollutant concentrations within the school grounds.

We are also supporting the Mayor of London to deliver air filters to 7 schools in the borough.

70 schools have enrolled in the Eco Schools programme and 45 have enrolled in TfL's Travel for Life programme.

And we're also reminding parents and carers not to leave their engines idling by putting up banners outside schools.

Earlier this week we approved a new Air Quality Action Plan which (subject to the Mayor of London's approval) sets more stringent targets for reducing air pollution and focussed on a wide range of activities that affect our air quality, including commercial kitchens and wood-burning stoves as well as continuing to look at pollution from transport.

Through all of these actions, and with more and more people using active travel in Hackney, air quality is improving, but there's still more to do and it's great to have people's support in taking the action we need to take to make sure that our children's health is protected as they grow up in Hackney.

7.10 To the Cabinet Member for Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeping and Temporary Accommodation from Joanna Sumner

Can you provide an update on what the council is doing towards reducing the number of people living in temporary accommodation?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Homelessness Prevention, Rough Sleeping and Temporary Accommodation

The Council is dedicated to increasing our permanent housing stock and improving the quality of our temporary accommodation. Our strategy focuses on two key areas: limiting the number of households needing temporary accommodation and speeding up the transition of current temporary residents into permanent homes.

Hackney Council continues to increase both temporary and permanent local housing supply and is directly delivering thousands of new homes, including social rented homes as part of its housing programme. This includes bringing empty properties back into use.

We are also providing residents with homelessness prevention support to help residents remain in their current homes. We prioritise housing stability through proactive initiatives like our new "Staying Put" scheme, which offers financial assistance to residents at risk of being asked to leave by family members due to financial pressures.

Where residents are unable to remain in their homes, we explore a wide range of housing options to support them in securing accommodation before they become homeless. This includes assisting them in accessing the private rented sector and utilising housing mobility schemes.

Under the broader Hackney promise, the council care leavers can now join the housing register from age 18, this offers them earlier access to housing support and reduces the risk they'll become homeless later.

Between April and October 2025, the Council successfully prevented or relieved homelessness in 609 cases. For those already in temporary accommodation, the Council is creating faster pathways to stable housing. In the first half of the 2025/26 financial year, 191 households transitioned into the private rented sector. The Downsizing and Rehousing Team also moved 75 households into new social rent properties at Woodberry Down, while 13 family-sized homes were recovered from failed successions for those in high need.

Our "Here to Help" service has provided residents with increased financial security to help prevent evictions. This includes securing an additional £3 million in benefits uptake and awarding over 3,500 grants for food and fuel. Through this data-led outreach, the risk of homelessness has been successfully reduced for 173 households.

The Council's Transformation Programme is currently intensifying these efforts by redesigning working practices, including streamlining the triage process and expanding and improving our Temporary Accommodation portfolio.

7.11. To the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration from Emmanuel Onapa

Given persistent systemic failures within Hackney Tenant Management Organisations, including poor communication, weak council oversight, and repeated delays addressing disrepair such as damp and mould, what concrete actions will Hackney Council take to specifically hold them accountable?

Response from the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration

Thank you for your question Emmanuel. The Council takes concerns about Tenant Management Organisations very seriously, particularly where residents experience poor communication, delays to repairs, or risks to their health.

Housing Services has a duty to oversee TMOs and to intervene where standards are not being met. We are strengthening how TMOs are held to account in several ways:

First, Housing Services is tightening performance monitoring. TMOs are being required to provide clearer and more consistent information on repairs, complaints, and compliance so issues can be identified and escalated earlier.

Second, outstanding audit recommendations relating to TMOs are being actively reviewed. Where actions remain open, Housing Services is setting clearer expectations, agreeing timescales, and escalating where progress is not made.

Third, from April 2026, TMOs will be expected to meet performance standards aligned with those used across Housing Services. This includes clearer reporting and greater transparency so data reported externally is reliable.

Fourth, on damp and mould, Housing Services sets the policy and approach for all council homes, including those managed by TMOs. TMOs are awaiting the Housing Services damp and mould policy, which will provide clearer standards and processes. In the meantime, Housing Services continues to manage damp and mould cases on behalf of TMOs and intervenes directly where residents' health may be at risk.

Finally, Housing Services is resetting its relationship with TMOs. This includes clarifying roles and responsibilities, addressing the limitations of outdated management agreements, and holding a round table discussion with TMOs to agree firmer expectations going forward.

Where TMOs fail to improve, Housing Services will use the powers available to protect residents and ensure homes are safe.

7.12 To the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services from Jasmine O'Connor

How will Hackney Council implement the national Freedom from Violence and Abuse Strategy to fully include LGBT+ adults and children, adopt a whole-society approach with communities and partners, and ensure dedicated budgets, specialist services, co-production, and transparent outcome measures for effective delivery?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Regulatory Services

The Freedom from Violence and Abuse: a cross-government strategy aims to halve violence against women and girls (VAWG) in the UK within a decade. Our Strategy in Hackney focuses on similar pillars.

In creating Hackney's Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy 2025-2029, I can say that we adopted a whole society approach because the Council consulted extensively with residents, community and voluntary sector partners.

We will continue this inclusive approach and engagement through various methods, including collaborations with the Hackney Faith Forum, Hackney CVS and the wider community. Furthermore, we will work closely with and actively promote agencies that provide 'by and for' support tailored to specific communities, such as those based on language, ethnicity, or groups like LGBTQ+.

The Hackney's Strategy aligns with the national Strategy. Hackney's VAWG Strategic Board oversees our Strategy and ensures its priorities are being delivered. There are a number of groups focusing on specific areas who report to the Board.

The Strategy prioritises supporting victims/survivors of domestic abuse and gender-based violence who have intersecting protected characteristics.

The Council's Domestic Abuse Intervention Service works with all Hackney residents and we are proud that we have invested in this service to enable its continued delivery of inclusive support and protection for those who need our help.

Hackney Council is committed to a whole-society approach to the national Freedom from Violence and Abuse Strategy, supported by our Hackney No Place for Hate Strategy. We ensure inclusion by integrating specialist services and co-production into our core delivery overseen by the VAWG Strategic Board.

From a LGBTQI+ perspective we have:-

- Through the Hackney Nights Portal, we deliver gender-diversity and mental health awareness training to frontline staff, ensuring the specific needs of LGBTQI+ adults and children are met with informed allyship.
- While hate crime in Hackney has decreased, we maintain vigilance. All licensed premises now receive conflict management training, alongside the "Ask for Angela" , a radio scheme and violence prevention posters and communication.
- We utilise pop-up sessions to support domestic abuse survivors and facilitate hate crime reporting. Initiatives like PubWatch further bridge the gap between residents, Licensees and partners.

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

10.9. To the Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture form Cllr Lynch

Could the Cabinet Member explain exactly what the "Go All In" initiative is that I hear the Council are participating in in conjunction with the National Literacy Trust?

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

Hackney's local campaign, launching in January 2026, will involve an official collaboration with the National Literacy Trust to support the UK-wide Department for Education's *National Year of Reading and Go All In* initiative. This initiative is designed to help more people rediscover the joy of reading, and Hackney will mark its commitment with a new Hackney Libraries Reading Charter.

Led by Hackney Libraries, this declaration serves to spotlight the extensive, year-round work across the borough that promotes reading for pleasure and provides crucial literacy support for all residents. To address the national decline in literacy, the library service will partner with other services such as the Family Hubs, Hackney Education, youth service and culture and heritage services to extend the reach of this year-round initiative deep into the community.

The initiative aims for wide-reaching community engagement, catering to all ages - from babies and toddlers to children's groups, young people's challenges, and adults needing literacy assistance. A core commitment is celebrating the borough's wonderful diversity and the service's commitment to tackling inequalities by ensuring libraries provide a variety of books in different languages.

Throughout 2026, each month will showcase a different programme and theme and each month libraries will be supported by a different internal or external partner, including; Hackney Education, Hackney Early Years, Read Easy, National Literacy Trust, Dnipro Libraries (Ukraine), and the Welcome Hackney Team. Highlights of the year include:

- Partnering with organisations like Read Easy to teach adults to read and Hackney Education Literacy Leads for Reading Champions in schools.
- Running the popular summer holidays challenge, The Great Hackney Libraries Quest, alongside monthly Chatterbooks for 8-12 year olds, and sessions like Stories and Rhymes and PEEP to help babies and toddlers fall in love with books.
- Hosting talks by local authors, running writing groups, and using libraries as warm spaces in the winter. Key events will celebrate themes like Black History Season and East and South East Asian Heritage Month, and support groups like the Community Library Service for residents who cannot visit a library.

- 10.10 To the Mayor from Cllr Garbett - Is the council starting contingency planning in the event of a scenario where the national welfare bill by the Labour government to cut disabled people's benefits goes ahead - after the Timms review?

Response from the Mayor

I'm very aware of the anxiety that our disabled residents, their families and carers are experiencing in the face of welfare reform. I understand that the Timms Review of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) aims to make it fairer and fit for the future, ensuring it reflects the reality of disabled people's lives and supports independence. As such the review is being produced alongside disabled people and their organisations. The Timms Review is expected to report to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions by Autumn 2026, potentially leading to legislative changes.

Last summer, the Council submitted a response to the Pathways to Work White Paper, which was the precursor to the Timms Review, setting out a range of positive suggestions for improving access to benefits and wider employment opportunities for disabled people. We will take every opportunity to engage constructively with the Timms Review and wider Government on this issue as part of our Public Affairs work.

In Summer 2024, the Council established a working group consisting of officers from across the Council, health and voluntary sector partners, along with representatives from the DWP, to monitor migration to Universal Credit. This group has been instrumental in ensuring that nearly 95% of residents known to be migrating to Universal Credit have migrated successfully.

Now that the migration to Universal Credit is nearing completion for Hackney residents, we intend to review and repurpose this group with a focus on engaging with the DWP on benefits more generally.

When the Timms Review is published, we will analyse its implications for Hackney's residents and work with our partners on our resident-informed response. We will aim to ensure that our approach complements and builds on the good work that the Council and its partners are already doing to support disabled people to claim benefits and access employment opportunities. This includes specialist advice for those who need to apply for disability benefits via our Here to Help service; specialist employment support, including supported internships for disabled residents via Hackney Works; and a new DWP-funded Connect2Work service providing longer-term support to residents with long-term health conditions delivered in partnership with health services.

- 10.11 To the Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities from Cllr Baffour

Can the Cabinet Member provide a summary of how the Council is using commissioning, procurement and employer engagement to promote local employment, training and apprenticeship opportunities for residents, and what outcomes have been achieved to date?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities

Thank you for enquiring about how we make use of commissioning, procurement and employer engagement to benefit our residents - we have a good story to tell on how we support local employment, training and apprenticeship opportunities for residents.

I'll start with a short summary of outcomes achieved in recent years through our commitment of delivering a minimum of one apprentice for all contracts over £2M (with a significant workforce element and over 12 months). 2020-2024 data:

- 151 apprenticeships - building career pathways.
- 1,109 job starters, of which 86 were temporary roles via the Matrix initiative - connecting residents with meaningful employment.
- 550 training opportunities - equipping the local workforce with career-ready skills.
- 70% of apprentices and 64% of job starts were from Black & Global Majority backgrounds.
- 4% of apprentices and 55% of job starters were women.

Delivering even wider community benefits is an integral part of the Council's Sustainable Procurement objectives which are well documented in our new Sustainable Procurement and Insourcing Strategy (SPIS) which was adopted by Cabinet in December 2024

We are taking steps to deliver these objectives by setting clear strategic priorities and putting in place operational activities to ensure we secure more benefits for our residents for every pound spent through our supply chain

In addition to the dissemination of the information in the Strategy to elected members and officers of the Council, targeted training programmes have been and continue to be delivered for commissioners and procurement officers who are directly involved in procuring Council contracts

We are also in the process of implementing a Contract Management System that would enable us to improve the way we track, monitor and report on the outcome achieved in the delivery of the wider community benefits that we secure from our contracting activities.

For all contracts valued above £120,000, our commissioners complete a rigorous process to identify both positive and negative impacts of the procurement, and also ensure that these are proactively addressed over the commercial lifecycle; in the requirement specification and in the evaluation of tenders submitted by suppliers.

We have put in place a procurement governance framework that ensures that at each stage of the procurement lifecycle we can challenge ourselves to deliver our stated objectives; in particular, we use the initial stage of the governance process to ensure that we utilise the preliminary market engagement effectively to shape the specification, ensure the market is competitive, and that quality tenders are received that contain social value

outcomes such as those relating to local employment, training and apprenticeship opportunities for our residents. This stage also involves collaborative working between our Procurement team, commissioners and Employer Engagement team to support the development of suitable KPIs used for monitoring the performance of the social value outcomes from our suppliers.

Also, during the pre-tender stage of the procurement process, the Employer Engagement and Procurement teams support commissioners in drafting employment and skills method statement questions/tender assessment metrics. While at the tender assessment stage, the Employer Engagement team is directly involved in assessing the tender responses relating to the delivery of social value benefits.

Commitments made by suppliers at the contract award stage are monitored and managed throughout the delivery of the contract to ensure outcomes are achieved.

I hope this offers some assurance and thanks again for your inquiry.

10.12 To the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration from Cllr Pinkerton

Residents in Tower Gardens Estate have recently reported issues with their communal boiler system. Can the Cabinet Member outline what is being done to ensure the communal boiler system on the Estate is in proper working order and resilient, including any planned maintenance or improvements?

Response from the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration:

Thank you for your question you tabled at January's Full Council on behalf of Tower Gardens Estate residents who have been experiencing problems with the communal boiler system on the estate. It was unfortunate we did not have time in the meeting to reach your question but please find a written response which I hope responds to the concerns expressed by residents.

The communal boiler itself serving Tower Gardens Estate was replaced in 2015. The boiler has an operational life of 15 to 20 years. The wider system continues to receive regular servicing, safety checks, and responsive repairs to maintain performance and address any issues as they arise. All outages to the communal system on the estate are treated as requiring an emergency response.

Alongside the ongoing maintenance programme on the estate, the Council is also in the process of procuring a communal boiler condition survey programme. The survey once in contract will provide a thorough survey of the system's current condition, performance, and remaining lifespan. It will help identify any underlying technical issues and future risks that could jeopardise full functionality. The evidence based findings about the system and its reliability will directly inform the future investment requirements whilst

ensuring the decision is evidence-based and replacement is focused on long-term reliability.

The Council expects the communal boiler condition survey programme to be in place by this summer. Across the borough there are 69 communal boiler systems in operation All of which would be surveyed as part of this survey programme. The aim being to improve the resilience and long-term management of estate based communal heating infrastructure.

The Council will continue to monitor the Tower Gardens Estate communal heating and hot water system closely and can confirm that the estate's communal system remains a priority.

10.13 To the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration from Cllr Joseph

Some council estates including Frampton Park have recently had no water supply, with some residents going without water for a week or more. What is the Council doing to liaise with Thames Water and ensure residents are kept updated and provided support, including bottled water or decants where necessary?

Response from the Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Management and Regeneration:

Thank you for the question you tabled at January's Full Council on behalf of Frampton Park Estate residents about the recent serious and sudden loss of their water supply caused by a burst water main on the Thames Water network and the impact this had on some of the estate residents and their well being. It was unfortunate that we did not have time in the meeting to reach your question but please find a written response which I hope responds to the concerns expressed by residents.

As soon as the Council became aware of the issue it ensured that Housing staff were on site and Thames Water were alerted and called on site as numbers of residents on the estate were left without water - be it drinking water or to flush their toilets, for a number of days.

Thames Water acknowledged and confirmed it was their responsibility for investigating the cause and resolving the issue and providing an alternative water supply whilst the repairs were taking place.

While both the Council and Thames Water had people on site and the water supply was restored by 9 January, the Council found it quite challenging to coordinate the emergency response with Thames Water and fully acknowledges that communication to residents could have been better.

While Thames Water were ultimately responsible for resolving the fault, the Council took the initiative and wrote to residents to apologise for the lack of coordination between organisations on the ground and on behalf of the Council I would like to reiterate this apology to those who were affected by this loss of supply.

The Council delivered a letter to residents on 8 January to reassure and update them on progress to resolve the issue and a follow up letter was sent on 20 January to inform residents as to how they can report issues in future and register for additional support with Thames Water.

However, during the outage Council officers undertook welfare checks on residents within the affected blocks, including visiting vulnerable residents requiring additional assistance. The Council understood that Thames Water did go on to provide bottled water to households who were on Thames Water's Priority Services Register and they installed a tanker on the estate to boost water pressure while work to fix the issue was being carried out.

The Council's Group Director with responsibility for Housing and Emergency Planning has written to Thames Water to express the Council's concerns about the response and to outline the Council's commitment to improving joint working between the organisations going forward.

The Council is holding an internal debriefing session on the incident in the coming weeks and has extended an invitation to Thames Water to jointly analyse what steps were taken and how by taking coordinated action all can better work together to support residents going forward should such events occur again.

In addition to try and ensure coordination is in place the Council's Emergency Planning and Response Manager has arranged to meet with Thames Water's Business Resilience Lead to discuss the creation of a Joint Fault Investigation on Estates protocol between the two organisations.