

Proposed Amendments to the 2026/27 Budget and Council Tax	
Proposing Amendments	Green Group
Proposer and Seconder of Amendments	Proposer: Cllr Binnie-Lubbock Seconder: Cllr Davis
For consideration by	Full Council
Meeting Date:	4 March 2026

Summary

The Green Group has presented a budget amendment grounded in core Green values and community priorities. We've worked closely with our Hackney Independent Socialist Colleagues on this budget and in our community work. The Labour administration here would have you believe that austerity is over, and their Government in Westminster are increasing our core spending power by 25% over a number of years, however this is not all an increase from central government grants, as it assumes a large council tax increase for Hackney residents and does not reflect the scale of increases to demand pressures.

Any increase in the Council's ability to serve residents is welcome, however this increase must be seen in the context of years of austerity which saw Hackney's core spending power fall by 40% since 2010. This means services which have been cut again and again face further cuts. This includes our libraries, which after big community and union push back, have had further cuts to hours stopped but which are still facing the threat of further cuts by this Labour administration, alongside other services that provide for the community.

The national government is choosing to continue down the path of austerity as inequality widens, instead of addressing inequality with a wealth tax, properly funding local authorities by overhauling local government funding and investing in the next generation of council housing.

Our largest amendments will help fix **what's broken in Hackney**. Three key areas would get year-on-year increases in Council funding from a Green budget amendment. These are:

- Hackney's Community and Voluntary Sector
- Youth Services
- Libraries



These increases are all sound social investments which reap rewards throughout our communities, and are all areas which have seen cuts from this Labour administration.

We've also worked closely with the Hackney Independent Socialists Group (HISG) to find funding to invest in Hackney's vibrant carnival community and ensure it has the space it needs to thrive. We've also worked with HISG to find resource to refurbish more community halls, spaces which are vital to so many of the Council's objectives around combatting social isolation, building community and supporting the local economy and opportunities for everyone, from the very young to our elders. In addition, HISG councillors have been excellent champions for Hackney's migrant communities. Our amendment would see members of the public trained to help migrants with paperwork. Many migrants have no recourse to public funds, thanks to the governments' ramped up hostile environment policies, so this initiative would help leverage the community spirit to help them on their journey of integration and settlement. Truly making Hackney a borough of sanctuary.

Residents have told us that they want to see cleaner, safer streets with more cycle parking and trees and those improvements to our public realm have been prioritised in this amendment. From more cycle hangers, to a community skip travelling round the borough, to more trees planted on our streets and estates. We're also proposing the introduction of weight-based parking charges to discourage large, polluting and dangerous vehicles that leave our roads littered with potholes, with exemptions for those with genuine need including those with Disabilities or large families. We cannot slow our efforts to address the climate emergency and the nature and biodiversity crisis. The climate crisis and the cost of living crisis are one and the same, and we need to invest in measures to mitigate their worst impacts.

It's so important that we **make Hackney a place you can afford to stay.**

We will fight for more Council housing in new developments as well as adjusting the Community Interest Levy to better meet the needs of everyone in the community. We will reallocate homelessness prevention funding to direct grants to homeless people, because they know best what they need to help get them back on their feet.

Getting childcare right is an important part of this budget, and we'll reintroduce tiers to a subsidy system that many felt had been flattened to create a cliff edge scenario. We'll also reinvest so more parents can benefit from Hackney's much-loved children's centres.

To make sure people's private rented housing is of fit quality, we'd explore expanding the selective licensing scheme to take in the remaining of the borough, so that wherever you live, you can be assured that the Council has your back.

Green councillors have already secured around £200k for carbon reduction measures for Traveller sites. Now we want to make retrofitting our homes simpler and more accessible for everyone. That's why we'll be using money from an expanded landlord licensing scheme to provide trusted, accessible and coordinated retrofit advice for the private sector.



We will protect small independent businesses like those on Ridley Road Market from unfair costs. Green councillors have already been able to save traders hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of unfair costs, and we will protect traders from changes to waste charging fees until we deliver the improvements the Council has long agreed.

We will work to keep money in the community, rather than sending it to profit-hungry corporations by making sure they're paying their business rates. We will implement a voluntary hotel levy to reflect tourism's true costs and ensure its benefits are felt locally.

Following the withdrawal of Zipcar, we will aim to save residents money by introducing a municipal car hire offer.

We will respect and champion the expansion of trade unions and make sure that they are remunerated and have facility time to increase their participation in Council committee meetings. Their insights and energy will help unlock improvements across Hackney's services.

We're going to use this budget amendment to **get the basics right**. We'll bring transparency to the Council by publishing the Mayor's diary, so everyone can see who they prioritise meeting with. Trust in politicians and public institutions has declined, we will do all we can to bring faith and hope back to Hackney.

We will also get the basics right by listening to residents in a deeper way than we ever have before. We'll institute Hackney's first ever citizens' assembly. It will be a rolling forum, made up of a representative sample of Hackney's population, selected by a democratic lottery, to deliberate on the big issues Hackney's facing.

And we'll begin the preparatory work for a four-day workweek pilot to improve staff wellbeing, increase staff retention and reduce reliance on costly agency staff. We'll do this despite a national Labour government who seek to ban councils from enacting this basic and proven workplace improvement. We would also move to a single deputy mayor and review cabinet costs / work patterns.

Thanks to a longer term settlement from national government we are able to present our first 3 year budget amendment. This gives us the flexibility to propose a balanced budget amendment for the year 2026/2027 and plan ahead to provide a balanced budget over 3 years with invest to save measures to deliver best value for residents.

	2026/27 £'000s	2027/28 £'000s	2028/29 £'000s
Proposed reductions in expenditure/increase in income			
Additional Temporary Accommodation savings from more acquisitions - this will reduce the growth required in Medium Term Financial Planning	(700)	(1,200)	(1,200)
Expand selective landlord licensing to remaining 4 wards <i>S151 Note: It should be noted that the current approved selective licensing scheme excluded the 4 wards not covered by the scheme because the private rented stock in these wards meets the minimum legal threshold for licensing therefore it may not be legally permissible and if so the income will not be achieved. This does not impact the budget proposals for 2026/27,</i>	0	(300)	(300)
Reallocate Homeless Prevention Grant spend	(110)	(110)	(110)
Increase charge for parking permits for heavy vehicles, those over 1.5 tonnes. Assume an implementation date of 1st October to allow for consultation and exemption schemes based on equalities impacts.	0	0	(1,300)
Increase the Hackney Community Infrastructure Levy from developers - admin impact assuming implementation 1st October to allow for consultation. The additional income will be used in accordance with the Council's approved policy.	0	(360)	(780)
Improve business rate collection - prioritising larger businesses	(115)	(115)	(115)
Introduce a municipal Car club / hire scheme	0	(150)	(200)
Remove one Deputy Mayor role & review/reduce cabinet positions / hours	(106)	(106)	(106)
Introduce a voluntary visitor levy for Hackney hotels at £1 per night <i>S151 note: This proposal will be impacted by the potential introduction of a London wide visitor levy which will probably be mandatory. This could adversely impact the level of income achievable.</i>	(100)	(100)	(100)
Review of discounts on visitor parking vouchers for the over 60s and blue badge holders. (increase discount for blue badge holders to 70%, reduce discount for over 60s who are not blue badge holders to 30%)	(75)	(75)	(75)
Additional Cycle hanger income	(25)	(70)	(115)
4-day work week trial		(30)	(60)
Sub-total of proposed reductions in expenditure/increase in income	(1,231)	(2,616)	(4,461)
Proposed increases in expenditure:			
Investment in Hackney Community and Voluntary Sector grants programme	210	410	610
Investment in Youth Services	200	355	500

	2026/27 £'000s	2027/28 £'000s	2028/29 £'000s
Investment in Libraries	115	340	500
Carnival Hub	0	500	500
Community skip	0	424	424
Create more banding for children centre subsidy	150	250	250
Direct grants to rough sleepers	110	110	110
Community hall refurbishment fund linked to business cases that meet council priorities	0	511	0
Car club investment	50	100	100
400 new cycle hangers - Revenue cost (cost of capital & maintenance)	0	100	200
New street & estate trees Cost of capital and Maintenance	0	100	100
Establish standing citizens' assembly for year round resident deliberations	57	80	97
Freeze Ridley Road market trader waste charges (pitch fees)	78	78	78
Business rates collection resource (prioritising larger businesses)	42	56	56
4-day work week scoping / pilot	60	30	0
Migrant Champions Network to help residents become migrant advisors	30	30	30
Union representation on 3 scrutiny committees / commissions	9	18	18
Increase transparency: publish the Mayor's diary	20	6	6
Retrofit advice service for the private housing sector	100	196	196
Sub-total of proposed increases in expenditure	1,231	3,694	3,775
TOTAL CHANGE IN BUDGET REQUIREMENT	0	1,078	(686)

This amendment would require an early review of the Medium Term Financial Plan and approval of business cases for capital investments. This includes additional temporary accommodation purchases as a vital invest to save measure. Not only would this ensure the Council has more control over the quality of temporary accommodation which so many Hackney individuals and families are forced by circumstance to live in, it will also provide significant additional savings for the Council's finances.

A Green Administration would also undertake reviews in a range of budget areas and focus on delivering more for residents in the following areas:

- Push the London CIV to divest from arms companies and those profiting from human rights abuses and genocide and invest in council housing instead. This is in line with calls from residents and workers.
- Building a Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund reserve in the Housing Revenue Account for match funding against future decarbonisation grants to reduce energy bills for council housing tenants.

- Improving homeswapper and supporting people in underoccupied council homes to downsize.
- Aim to end the use of bailiffs for council tax arrears - taking an approach that prioritises residents' financial and mental wellbeing and avoids pushing people further into debt.
- Financial and carbon savings the Council and education sector could make by moving to fully plant based catering.
- Making Stoke Newington Town Hall and more community halls safe, refurbished, back into action as hireable venues and community hubs.
- An advisory panel on accessibility for Disabled people
- Bringing more empty homes and voids back into use.
- Building of a new high-quality Traveller site.
- Improving access to cargo bike hire schemes.
- Development of a commercial strategy to focus on generating income for the Council and community wealth building.
- Funding legal centre for families and carers with SEND to ensure their rights are upheld
- Phasing in a 100% council tax discount to Hackney's eligible residents
- Publishing a borough-wide "Who Owns Hackney?" report to reclaim space for Hackney residents.
- Look to reduce the reliance of costly consultants and agency staff by bringing more services in-house.
- Compulsory Purchase Orders to buy long term empty shopfronts and utilise them to support local businesses and community groups.
- Speeding up the delivery of the long-delayed Main Road Strategy for Hackney.

Advice from the Group Director Finance and Corporate Resources (Section 151 Officer)

The Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources advises that he can give the reassurances required by Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 with regard to the adequacy of the reserves and the robustness of the estimates on the basis of the notes included with the proposed amendments.