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Dear Member,

Welcome to my February-March Mayor's Report and the last of the current administration.

This month has been dominated by the finalising the manifesto (#100IdeasforHackney), local election campaigning and completing all the Council's formal business before the start of purdah. As you can see from this packed report we have been busy completing a range of projects and policy developments before the elections.

I am really proud that we are continuing to see new council housing projects start on site, schools develop, the Britannia project go into planning and the ongoing detailed work to tackle air pollution. All themes we return to in our Hackney Labour 2018 Manifesto. We have been reflecting on what we have achieved over the past four years and I am pleased to say that 98% of our 2014 and 2016 pledges have been met or are underway. Inevitably we local focus on political campaigning as the Council goes into purdah, but I am pleased we were able to launch one last Council campaign on safeguarding bus services in the borough.

The recent snow while beautiful, created some challenges, but I am pleased we were able to respond to help the most vulnerable, especially those who were rough sleeping and that we were also able to keep nearly all council services going, when many across London faltered.

This month, I've been going out to meet our key partners like the Homerton, CCG and police. I've seen first-hand the challenges faced my emergency services and we will continue to do what we can to support them and keep residents safe.

It's been an honour to serve as your Labour Mayor over the past 18 months, myself and our council candidates need you help to continue this work. Please support us as we head towards election day on 3rd May and together we can 'Build a fairer, safer and more sustainable Hackney'.

Best wishes,



Mayor's Diary Highlights

March 21

Hackney Integrated Commissioning Board

[Visit to Homerton Hospital with Cllr McShane](#)

Shoreditch Park Academy School Governors Meeting

March 20

Meeting with the new BCU police commander

London Councils Labour Group and Leaders Committee

Celebration of World Social Work Day

#GrillPhil Twitter Q&A

Labour Group

March 19

[St Leonard's groundbreaking with ward councillors in Hoxton West](#)

Orchard, Hoxton Garden and Southwold School Councils Q&A

[Interview with the Hackney Citizen](#)

Cabinet

March 18

#HackneyatHome Dalston

Rogue landlords forced to clean up their act under new measures to protect renters

Landlords in Hackney must bring more than 1,500 privately rented homes blighted by serious hazards or disrepair up to scratch or face prosecution or financial penalties after new powers to protect the borough's growing number of private renters were approved.

The new property licensing measures will mean that landlords letting out a property in the Brownswood, Cazenove and Stoke Newington wards will need to hold a licence requiring them to meet acceptable standards. Landlords of Hackney's 4,000 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) – homes with two or more households and shared facilities such as kitchens, bathrooms and toilets – will also have to apply for a licence under the new arrangements approved by the Council's Cabinet last night (19 March).

The measures follow research commissioned as part of the Council's Better Renting campaign, which estimates that more than 15% of the 4,700 privately rented homes in these three wards, and one in five of all HMOs across the borough suffer from serious hazards ranging from damp and mould to dangerous boilers, exposed wiring and vermin infestations. This means that over 1,500 properties covered by the new licensing schemes don't meet minimum standards and will need to be brought into line by their landlords.

Affected landlords who don't acquire a licence or fail to comply with its conditions will face a fixed penalty, a criminal prosecution leading to an unlimited fine, or be forced to pay back up to a year's rent. Serious offenders can be served with a banning order, preventing them from letting out a property, and placed on a rogue landlords database.

The move is the latest initiative in the Council's [Better Renting campaign](#), which aims to protect Hackney's 33,000 private renting households and tackle the minority of landlords who take advantage of this growth in demand by letting out homes that don't meet modern standards and put tenants' safety at risk. The campaign has already seen the Council lead the way by introducing a voluntary ban on letting fees charged to tenants, on-the-spot fines for rogue landlords, and plans for new living rent homes.

One in three households in Hackney now rents privately, leading to rent increases of 36% since 2011. A two bedroom privately rented home now costs over £1,800 a month on average. To find out more about the new property licensing schemes visit: <https://hackney.gov.uk/property-licensing>

March 17

Hackney Cycling Campaign Tour
#HackneyatHome Haggerston

March 16

HereEast Business Breakfast
Chats Palace Market and Fundraiser

March 15

Speech at Inside Government seminar on new Council Housing
Meeting with Hackney Citizens
Hackney Labour Campaign Forum

March 14

[Loughborough London UCU Picket](#)
Corporate Induction for new staff
[The Stage Art Wall Unveiling](#)
De Beauvoir Ward Meeting

March 13

[East End Trades Guild Assembly with Mayor John Biggs](#)
Shoreditch Trust Board Meeting

March 12

Economic and Community Development Board
British Kebab Awards

March 10

Hackney South film showing of SINK

Huge credit to my Mayoral Adviser for Private Renting Cllr Sem Moema for leading on this issue and leading the campaign on private renting, she said only this week:

“As a long term renter in Hackney myself, I’ve experienced first hand a private rented sector in which the odds are stacked all too firmly in favour of landlords. These new measures are a milestone in our commitment to challenging this and creating a better system for renters in the borough. We know that many landlords provide a good service to their tenants, but all too many fail to do so. Introducing additional property licensing will mean landlords will have to bring hundreds of homes up to scratch in hazard hotspots where conditions are at their worst.

“In Hackney we’ve always provided advice and support to those struggling in the private sector and pushed government to do more to help renters - but this move shows that we’re also willing to intervene in the market to get renters the protection they deserve.”

Hundreds of new trees for Hackney's parks

I saw firsthand with Cllr Feryal Demirci how council staff, contractors and volunteers have been busy planting trees across 22 parks since January, and are on target to plant 229 new trees by the end of March. We took part in the programme, planting a new cedar tree at Springfield Park – one of 24 new trees being planted there.

Clissold Park, Mabley Green, Hackney Downs, Haggerston Park and Shoreditch Park are amongst other sites receiving a variety of trees. The planting includes native trees such as English oak, common beech and hornbeam, which are particularly beneficial for urban wildlife, as well as selected non-native trees such as walnut, Japanese elm and swamp cypress. The council’s Arboricultural officers view this increased diversity as important, making the borough’s trees more able to cope with climate change and the arrival of new pests and diseases.

We are fortunate in Hackney to have so many wonderful mature trees in our parks, many of which were planted a hundred years ago or more. This is our opportunity to do something for future generations, so they can enjoy our green, beautiful parks for decades and centuries to come. We have big plans to continue this work in our new 2018 Manifesto.

Further divestment of Hackney pension fund

Hackney Council’s Pensions Committee is taking another big step towards a fossil free pension fund after approving ambitious plans to cut the fund’s exposure to future CO2 emissions. This move follows a review which looked at the financial risks posed to the pension fund’s fossil fuel investments in light of the Paris Agreement, a global action plan to help limit global warming. The Fund will be

March 9

Hackney Police Rapid Response Team visit with Cllr Selman

Visit to EdSpace EduTech incubator at Hackney Community College

Visit to Colville

Tree Planting with Cllr Demirci in Springfield Park

March 8

Meeting with ward councillors on King’s Crescent Masterplan

Bump Buddies at Hackney Museum Meeting with Hackney Trade Unions

Better Homes Partnership Meeting

Opening of Velorution cycles

[Hackney Stars Awards](#)

March 7

Visit to Mossbourne Community Academy

Visit to Stormont House School

March 6

Visit to Skinner’s Academy in Woodberry Down

LGA Communications Q&A

Labour Group Executive

March 5

Catch up with East End Trades Guild

March 3

making a number of changes to its equity portfolio of stocks. Such as investing 10% of its assets, which is around £145m, into a newly created type of fund, the MSCI Low Carbon Target Fund. This reduces the funds exposure to fossil fuels and carbon emissions while still offering access to a wide range of global markets.

On top of this a further £180m will be invested in the socially responsible investment, the RBC GAM's Global Sustainable Equity strategy via the London CIV, a collective investment for Local Authority pension funds. This strategy aims to invest in companies with long term, sustainable revenues, with a strong focus on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors. These two changes are accompanied by a significant reduction in exposure to the FTSE Allshare Index, which represents the Funds most significant exposure to fossil fuel companies, further assisting the Fund in reaching its carbon reduction target.

As Cllr Robert Chapman, Chair of Pensions Committee has said: "Climate change is probably the greatest threat facing humankind that's why last year, the Hackney Pension Fund committed to reduce its exposure to fossil fuel reserves by 50%, reducing the Fund's exposure to carbon risk and aligning it with the 2 degrees scenario set out in the Paris Agreement. These new changes to our equity portfolio represent a significant step towards achieving this target and reflect our long term ambition to move away from fossil fuel investments."

Switch off for Earth Hour

At 8.30pm on Saturday 24 March 2018, Hackney Council will switch off its lights for one hour in solidarity with millions people across the planet as part of the World Wide Fund for Nature's 'Earth Hour'. Hackney Town Hall will join other buildings across the world, including the Eiffel Tower and Buckingham Palace, in being plunged into darkness to highlight the urgency of taking action on man-made global warming and its climate change consequences.

The scale of the challenge presented by climate change is unprecedented in human history. The planet is now the warmest it has been for 115,000 years, when sea levels were 20-30 feet higher; the atmosphere has the highest concentration of heat-trapping carbon dioxide for 800,000 years; and 2017 was the second hottest year worldwide on record, with signs of climate change ranging from wildfires to the continued thaw of Arctic ice. Meanwhile, warming oceans are threatening the existence of natural marvels, such as the Great Barrier Reef, and 1 in 6 species face extinction from climate change. The World Meteorological Society recently declared that man-made climate change is now taking us into "unchartered territory".

Now is the time to call for rapid global action on climate change. Earth Hour will bring millions together across the world in a symbolic show of unity to remind people that, if we work together, positive change is possible.

[International Women's Day and #100HackneyWomen takeover of Well Street Market with Cllr Williams, the Speaker and Cllr Rathbone](#)

March 2

Social Enterprise and Co-working Business Visits in London Fields and Hackney Central to WeWork, Second Home, Space Studios, Allia and Kreative House with Cllr Nicholson and Cllr Williams

March 1

Interviews for new Housing Services Director

Dalston & Hackney Downs Ward Meeting

February 28

[End of Hackney LGBT History Month and Pride 365 Celebration](#)

February 27

LLDC Board Meeting

#HackneyatHome Campaigning in Victoria

February 26

New Community Strategy Partnership Board Meeting

Introductory meeting with the new BCU police commander with Cllr Selman

February 25

#HackneyatHome Campaigning in Stamford Hill West

New homes for Hoxton as latest Council development starts

Dozens of new family homes for local people moved a step closer after work started on the latest phase of Hackney Council's ambitious regeneration programme.

Construction at St Leonard's Court, on New North Road, will take place over the next two years and see 15 new Council homes for social rent and eight for shared ownership, alongside homes for outright sale to help pay for them in the absence of any government funding. The project is part of the Council's Estate Regeneration Programme, which will see around 3,000 new Council homes built across 18 sites, with more than half for social rent or shared ownership.

I joined local councillors, residents and staff from Countryside Properties, who are building the new homes, to see construction get underway. The new, high-quality homes will replace original outdated bedsits that no longer met modern standards. They will be a mix of one, two and three-bedroom homes better matching the need for family-sized housing in the area.

Homes for social rent would be prioritised for those most in need on the Council's housing waiting list, while shared ownership properties and homes for outright sale will be marketed to people living and working in Hackney. One family who were leaseholders in the former block will return to a new home. Construction of the 71 homes is set to be completed in 2020.

The Mayor warns that local future funding of the NHS must be secure

This week, alongside Cllr Jonathan McShane, Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care and Devolution, I visited Homerton University Hospital to meet staff, patients and Homerton Helpers volunteers in a range of services including Sexual Health, the Neonatal Unit, the Integrated Independence Team, Patient Advisory Liaison Service and the Emergency Department.

Each person across all departments has an important role to play whether it is a volunteer who is helping a patient or their family at what can be a very unsettling time for everyone, to highly trained and skilled medical staff in the Neonatal Unit looking after incredibly small and premature babies, while sharing their expertise with other hospitals thanks to their excellent track record.

With changes to health and social care, both in Hackney and across the country, there is uncertainty about what happens in the future and we all know parts of the NHS continue to face significant challenges. I'm however very proud that we have somewhere like the Homerton in Hackney, a hospital which is not only

February 24

[Visit to An Viet Community Centre and celebration of Chinese and Vietnamese New Year](#)

February 23

Visit to Ickburgh School

London Councils Labour Group

Meeting with a representative from the City of Austin

Interview with the Hackney Gazette on Hidden Homelessness

February 22

Topping out of the new Nightingale Primary School in Tiger Way, Hackney Downs with Deputy Mayor Bramble and local councillors.

Post Full Council #GrillPhil Twitter Question Time

Visit to the New Economics Foundation to discuss housing policy and the Hackney model

Hackney North and Stoke Newington GM

Hackney South and Shoreditch GM

grounded in the community, but also made up of so many regional and national centres of excellence like the Emergency Department, the Sexual Health service and Neonatal Unit .

The partnership between Homerton Hospital, City and Hackney CCG and the Council is a great example of local funding spent well. Meeting the staff in the A and E department and hearing how they were able to maintain their excellent service and performance even in the extreme cold weather this winter is a key reminder of why we need to ensure that future funding is secure. The Homerton was one of the best performing hospitals in the country, underpinned not just by the amazing teams in A and E, but also the joint Council and hospital Integrated Independence Team who work with people who need extra support to return home.

As we move towards integrating health and social care we must ensure the excellent work within our local health system is not lost. The North East London Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) continues to raise questions as there has been a lack of transparency and not enough engagement with the public and councils. I hope that this is now more understood and that the situation will improve.

We are one of 44 NHS STPs across the country. Our STP covers seven London boroughs and 'The City', and it must make around £500 million in savings by 2020/21. Councils have no formal sign-off on its proposals, this sits with the area's seven Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and NHS London, but it is supposed to be a collaborative process.

Communication and engagement has improved around these changes, but we must make sure that there is less confusion about what is taking place so that residents can be reassured, patients are clear on what to expect and there is less anxiety for health professionals already working extremely hard to future proof these vital services.

Within our STP, key decisions proposed by NHS England include replacing the seven Chief Officers of the seven CCGs in our STP area with one Accountable Officer and creating Accountable Care Systems (ACS) which will mean grouping together across some local authority areas.

Previously the seven Chief Officers worked closely with their partner councils, but under the proposals there will only be one person with responsibility for all these roles. This has raised concern over fewer decisions being made in the local interest and less effective scrutiny, with more decisions being made at a regional level. These fears also raise concerns over how decisions can be made on a local level so health and social care can be tailored to meet the needs of different communities.

Hackney Council, Homerton Hospital, City and Hackney CCG and other health organisations in the borough have a good track record of working together. We are one of the few areas in London delivering on performance targets and able to invest in new services.

As far as we're concerned, local organisations working with their residents, patients and voluntary sector are best placed to deliver an effective and sustainable person-centred system, alongside the wider NHS.

Our local NHS performs well and has managed its finances better than most other areas. We are clear that we won't accept any proposal that takes vital funds away from Hackney to plug gaps in other parts of North East London. Robbing Peter to pay Paul is not a long term plan for our NHS, and nationally policy makers could learn a lot from Hackney.

Hackney Black History flag winner announced

Young artists visited Hackney Town Hall on Thursday 1 March to receive awards for their creativity and hard work in designing a Hackney Black History Flag.

Deputy Mayor Anntoinette Bramble presented certificates to the winner and 5 runners up who made it out of 75 entries sent in from young people across Hackney. The winning design will now be made into a real flag and will be flown above Hackney Town Hall for Black History Month in October.

As well as receiving commendations the finalists also received love to shop vouchers and the winner also picked up a free t-shirt from local clothing start-up Future Royals.

Winner, 13 year old Malaika Parillon Langlais Baron, a Year 8 pupil from The Urswick School said: "I have African roots and my design is inspired by my own experience of growing within a black community and culture in Hackney."

The final designs were picked out by a panel of judges and were awarded on distinctiveness of design, being exciting and colourful and celebrating the present and future while honouring the past. Cllr Anntoinette Bramble, Deputy Mayor of Hackney who helped judge the completion said:

"There were so many fantastic designs. I am always amazed by the creativity of the borough's young people, all of the entries were a celebration for Hackney and the contribution that African and Caribbean communities have made both locally and across the globe. The winning design embodies a sense of pride taken from the very same contribution I mentioned, I'm excited to see it flying above the Town Hall as an important symbol for Hackney and Black History later this year."

The six finalist designs will go on display in Hackney Central Library throughout Black History Month in October. Black History Flag 2018 Finalists (you can see the designs here: <http://news.hackney.gov.uk/hackney-black-history-flag-winner-announced/>):

1. Winner: Malaika Parillon Langlais Baron, 2. Segun Rasheed, 3. Children with Voices (Sysha Samuels, Reon Dornelly and Kenya Thomas), 4. Emelda Ndifon, 5. Gloria Cumpstey and 6. Angel Levy

National Apprenticeship Week: Get hired – Breaking News we now have over 100 Apprentices at the Council

National Apprenticeship Week ran from 5 to 9 March and was a chance to celebrate the success of apprenticeships and how they benefit individuals, businesses and the economy.

Traditionally, apprenticeships have been associated with crafts and manual trades but this has changed in recent years. There are now many different types of apprenticeship available, from fashion to finance, customer service to construction.

As one of the biggest employers in the borough, Hackney Council is playing a leading role in providing apprenticeships for residents and last year launched its ambitious Hackney Apprentices programme which will see 100 apprentices working at the Council during 2018/19.

The Council is recently recruited for seven Level 3 apprenticeships across a host of Council services including communications and culture, housing, enforcement and executive support.

Last April, the Apprenticeship Levy was introduced to ensure large employers invest in apprenticeships. The Council supports businesses and other employers in the borough to create high quality apprenticeships and use their apprenticeship levy funds.

Hackney Apprentices is open to 16-24 year olds who live in the borough, have been educated in Hackney or are care leavers for whom Hackney Council is a 'corporate parent'. All Council apprentices aged over 18 will be paid a starting salary of over £19,000 per year, which is above London Living Wage, and well above the average apprenticeship salary which is around £13,500 per year.

Council apprentices will be given accredited training from a high-quality provider, a package of support including mentoring and social activities, and support to progress into a permanent job or a higher apprenticeship qualification. The Council will be recruiting apprenticeships again in the summer for over 30 roles in areas including plumbing, electrical, ICT, and youth work.

To find out more and apply for Hackney Apprentices visit: www.hackney.gov.uk/apprenticeships or email apprenticeships@hackney.gov.uk.

Cllr Carole Williams, Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Human Resources who leads on the programme said:

"We are committed to creating more employment and training opportunities for local people and helping to ensure that they have the skills, experience and qualifications to make a success of their chosen career. Our Hackney Apprentices programme has already had a hugely successful year with over 100 apprentices now employed across the Council and schools in the borough.

"We want businesses, big and small, to follow our example and help a young person get a foot on the career ladder, help them to gain qualifications while they earn a fair wage in an increasingly difficult labour market. We will work with businesses if they need support to take on an apprentice and also work closely with Hackney residents interested in finding out more about what an apprenticeship can offer them, whether here at the Council or with a Hackney business."

Hackney women inspire the next generation

Press for progress, that is what the UN is asking of the next generation of young women, to help turn the tide on gender inequality this International Women's Day, on Thursday 8 March.

Across the globe women face an uphill struggle for gender equality, whether it's in regard to pay, education, access to healthcare or safety. In Britain today startling figures show out of all the FTSE 100 companies, only 7 are led by women and at the other end of the scale only 6% of start-ups are women led.

That is why Hackney Council, for the third year running, hosted it's 'inspiring young women day' at the Young Hackney Forest Road Youth Hub in Dalston. Bringing together over 80 schoolgirls from across the borough to meet with 26 inspiring and successful women, who all volunteered their time to support this event, to galvanise, empower and inspire the younger women and show them that they could and should be able make it in a man's world.

Five panellists spoke altogether including Dr Ronx, they were; Deputy Mayor of Hackney Anntionette Bramble; Spurs Ladies Footballer Renee Hector; Firefighter Victoria Archer-Lee; with the panel chaired by Hackney Council Apprentice Akina Okoye. The women got the audience thinking - and laughing - with presentations on their lives and work.

Only 7% of Firefighters in London are women, but that never stopped Victoria and she wanted to encourage more young women to think about the emergency services as a career, she said: "Though I am always in the minority, it never stopped me, at the London Fire Brigade we always work as a team, it doesn't matter about your gender. As long as you are a good communicator and empathetic, our job is about helping people and we always work together to do that."

At the event, held on Tuesday 6 March, students from Our Lady's, Clapton Girls, Stoke Newington School, New Regents, Skinners Academy, Cardinal Pole and the borough's pre-employment programme were able to speak to all of the women in small discussion groups. The speakers gave valuable insights into their chosen career paths, talking about

their real life experiences, successes and failures, which all helped them grow and achieve. The Council is also continuing to nominations for our 100 Hackney Women awards until November 2018. All nominations should include a photograph of the nominee with at least 150 words explaining why they should be celebrated as part of the 100 Hackney women. You can read more about the event here: <http://news.hackney.gov.uk/hackney-women-inspire-the-next-generation/>

Nominations can be made online at www.hackney.gov.uk/hackney-women, emailed to tara.hudson@hackney.gov.uk or posted to: Tara Hudson, Communications, Culture and Engagement, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, E8 1EA.

All nominations will be considered by a panel of judges and announced in December.

Protecting Hackney Wick's creative heart

New affordable workspace will be opened in underused Council buildings in Hackney Wick to help small creative businesses that are facing eviction due to redevelopment remain in the area.

The Council will refurbish and let two buildings – the Old Baths on Eastway and the Trowbridge Centre on Trowbridge Road – to existing small manufacturers and artistic businesses at a subsidised rate over the next seven years while major redevelopment takes place nearby. The Council's plan aims to allow the existing cluster of creative businesses – one of the largest concentrations of artist studios and cultural start-ups in London – to remain in Hackney Wick whilst works are underway, and move back into new affordable workspace built as part of regeneration plans once it is ready.

Strict planning rules set out by Hackney Council and the London Legacy Development Corporation last year safeguard affordable workspace and cap rent increases in new largely private developments around Hackney Wick Station – with rent set at less than half of the current market rate.

The rules will protect around 8,500sqm of existing creative workspace in new developments, alongside hundreds of new homes, modern retail and community facilities, and better public spaces. But as some existing buildings – largely privately owned – are demolished, existing traders have raised concerns that they will be forced to leave the area before the replacement workspace is completed.

The Hackney Wick and Fish Island Creative Quarter is home to nearly 250 artist studios and more than 100 creative businesses, alongside small traders such as furniture, framers and set builders. Nearly nine in 10 firms employ fewer than five people.

The Council has appointed affordable workspace experts Stour Space and Arbeit, who already manage similar schemes in the area, to manage the new workspaces on its behalf, with the handful of existing traders given the opportunity to remain. As well as providing workspace, Stour Space and Arbeit will be hosting events and activities for the Hackney Wick community. Refurbishment work will take place over the summer, with spaces expected to be available later this year.

Commenting on this work I said: "The creative community is the heart of Hackney Wick, and it's important that we do all we can to protect the industries, makers and artists who make the area the unique and exciting place it is.

"While regeneration will bring new opportunities, it's vital that long-established small traders are given the chance to take advantage of them. We also want to ensure that this new partnership increases the real opportunities available to existing Hackney Wick residents.

"Alongside robust planning rules to guarantee creative spaces remain in Hackney Wick, opening up our own cut-price

workspace in the meantime will mean more businesses can stay and grow in the area they call home – creating new jobs and contributing to our local economy.”

We have also just heard that we have been successful in developing proposals to establish a Creative Enterprise Zone on the Hackney and Tower Hamlets border as we have been shortlisted by the Mayor of London and awarded a grant of £50,000.

Hackney Council and Tower Hamlets Council submitted a joint bid in partnership with the London Legacy Development Corporation aimed at protecting and strengthening the established creative community around Fish Island and Hackney Wick. The former industrial area has been given a new lease of life in recent years and is now home to some 250 artist studios and around 100 creative businesses. However, the community has faced significant pressure as a result of land development.

The trend is one that has been seen across the capital, with creatives being priced out of the communities which they have often helped to revive. Last year, the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, announced plans to support the establishment of three Creative Enterprise Zones (CEZ) in an effort to provide greater protection and security for those at-risk communities, allowing artists to put down roots and thrive for years to come.

The first phase of that initiative asked councils to submit initial bids outlining how those in their areas would benefit from a CEZ. In total 25 boroughs applied, demonstrating the level of interest in this new initiative.

The joint Tower Hamlets and Hackney bid, submitted in partnership with the London Legacy Development Corporation, was one of 10 to receive a £50,000 grant, to read more click here: <http://news.hackney.gov.uk/creative-enterprise-zone-in-hackney-wick-and-fish-island-shortlisted/>

Accepting the challenge – first grant awarded for genuinely affordable housing

The first grant from a Hackney Council fund to kick-start genuinely affordable housebuilding will increase the social housing provided at a new Hackney Central development.

Seven homes under construction behind St John at Hackney Church on Lower Clapton Road, earmarked for near market rent levels, will now be for a much lower social rent after the Islington and Shoreditch Housing Association was awarded more than £500,000 to support its ambition to offer tenants a more affordable option.

The grant is part of the £16 million Mayor of Hackney’s Housing Challenge fund – money made up from Council homes sold under the Government’s Right to Buy scheme – which is granted to housing associations to help them build more homes for social or living rent. The homes that will be managed by the housing association are part of a wider project by developer Thornsett to provide a new community centre and help fund the major restoration of the historic Grade II*-listed church.

Rising land values and changes in Government policy mean that without Council support, fewer than 300 new properties are expected to be built by housing associations in the borough in the next two years – a 90% drop since 2011. Cash from sales under Right to Buy – the Government’s policy of allowing council tenants to buy their home at a discount – is usually reinvested in Council housebuilding programmes wherever possible.

But arbitrary restrictions placed on local authorities by ministers mean the money must be spent within three years of a sale and can only pay for 30% of a new home – leaving councils to fund the remainder of the cost. Often this makes it very difficult for councils to spend the money in reality, and after three years the government takes it off them with interest to use for itself.

To try and ensure this money actually benefits Hackney residents, the Mayor of Hackney's Housing Challenge will make this money available to housing associations to fund homes for social rent and living rent being delivered by March 2020, instead of being forced to hand it to the government.

Celebrating Your Homes

Councillor Clayeon McKenzie, Cabinet Member for Housing Services held the first ever Your Homes Festival this month bringing together Council tenants and leaseholders from across the borough.

Over 650 people attended the event, which was specifically aimed at council tenants and leaseholders. It was a chance for residents to share their stories, while celebrating their estates and communities with free games and live entertainment.

Taking place at Hackney Town Hall on 14 March, the Your Homes event featured information sessions on Council services such as repairs, getting online with the One Account and saving energy in the home. There were also interactive art and craft workshops that residents can take part in on estates including the Hackney Mosaic Project which recently unveiled a new work at the Fellows Court Community Centre.

There was lots to do for children and young people and alongside a visit from the Playbus, there were demonstrations from BADU sports cheerleading and the Capoeira Palmares club. On the music mainstage there were performances from local up-and-coming musicians Josh Tenor, from Rising Tide, and last year's Discover Young Hackney Alter Ego winner, Chifa K.

To help keep the borough active, instructors from the One You £1 fitness classes, which take place on estates across the borough, gave demonstrations in boxercise and offered free walking tours.

London Fields disposable barbecue ban

Hackney Council has announced its intention to ban the use of disposable barbecues in London Fields this summer as part of a wider crackdown on the amount of waste left in the park. Visitors to the park will still be allowed to use barbecues, but only portable, re-usable ones which will not burn the grass and are more environmentally sustainable.

The barbecue area in London Fields has grown in popularity since it was first introduced in 2011, and hot summer weekends can see thousands of people visit the park for picnics and barbecues. As the number of visitors has grown, so has the amount of rubbish left scattered in the barbecue area at the end of the day and the cost of managing the area.

For several years the Council has been advising visitors to use stands for their barbecues, and has been handing out bricks to raise disposable ones off the ground. Unfortunately, some irresponsible individuals have chosen to ignore the rules for barbecuing in the park, burning the grass and leaving their litter on the ground. As a result the Council is being forced to take action to reduce the impact on the park.

As Councillor Demirci, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Transport and Parks has commented: "Most people in Hackney live in flats without gardens, so our parks are vital places for residents and visitors to get together outdoors. The barbecue area at London Fields is particularly popular, but that popularity has brought with it some problems, like significant amounts of waste and burnt areas on the grass. We are asking the park users to look after the park they love, dispose of their waste responsibly and not to damage the park."

“At the end of a hot day, the bins provided specifically for barbecues and charcoal are overflowing with disposable barbecues - none of which are recycled due to the charcoal and food residue. As the Cabinet Member responsible for parks as well as waste management, I’m glad we are bringing in a policy to help to address the issues seen on London Fields, whilst still allowing people to barbecue responsibly.”

Signs and banners will inform visitors about the new rules. Enforcement Officers from the Council will patrol the park at weekends, remind people of the rules and remove any disposable barbecues.

Council signs landmark Council Tax protocol agreement

Hackney Council is one of the first local authorities in London to sign-up to a landmark new agreement with Citizens Advice to support people in Council Tax debt.

With Council Tax arrears now the biggest debt issue seen by Citizens Advice nationwide, and tightening Council budgets also meaning it’s crucial that councils collect tax that they’re owed, the Council Tax protocol aims to improve the experience of residents in Council Tax debt while helping Councils to collect the money they’re owed.

The protocol will see the Council and Citizens Advice cement existing good practice such as regularly reviewing payment arrangements for residents, making them as flexible as possible, publishing local and national debt advice contact details, and working closely with partner advice agencies and local authorities to make sure that people are supported to pay off their debt.

Cllr Rebecca Rennison, Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs said:

“We already work extremely hard to make sure the information we give about Council Tax is clear and easy to understand, and we also provide lots of different ways for residents to pay. This landmark agreement sets in stone our existing good practice and formalises the really constructive relationships we have with local advice agencies.”

For more information on the Council Tax protocol, visit https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/campaigns/current_campaigns/council-tax-protocol/

Tackling Air Pollution Updates

UK’s first ultra-low emission streets come to the City Fringe

Hackney and Islington councils are leading the charge against air pollution with the UK’s first scheme banning all but the cleanest vehicles from two zones in Shoreditch and Bunhill.

Petrol, diesel and older hybrid vehicles will not be allowed to enter nine streets during the peak commuter periods of 7am-10am and 4pm-7pm Monday to Friday. Ultra-low emission vehicles like electric cars, e-bikes, the newest hybrids and hydrogen vehicles, as well as pedestrians and cyclists, will be allowed.

The scheme was supported by 70% of people living within 10km of the area when it was proposed, and 56% of all respondents to the recent consultation were in favour. The changes will come into effect in July 2018.

Cllr Feryal Demirci, Hackney Council's Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Transport and Parks said:

“The streets around Shoreditch suffer from some of the worst air quality in London – ultra-low emission streets will have reduced levels of air and noise pollution, make it easier and safer to walk and cycle and improve the character of the area for all residents and businesses.

“To start with we’re banning petrol and diesel vehicles in the morning and evening rush hours to reduce people’s exposure to dangerous fumes and make the streets safer when people are walking and cycling to and from work and school. Our ultimate goal is to reclaim the streets from polluting motor vehicles – this ground-breaking scheme is the first step towards doing that.”

£100,000 clean air boost for Homerton Hospital

Hackney Council and Homerton Hospital Trust have jointly been awarded £128,400 funding from the Mayor’s Business Air Quality Fund to deliver a Business Low Emission Neighbourhood (LEN). Hospital staff will trial electric vehicles, and electric charging points will be installed across the hospital site.

Walking routes to Hackney Central and Homerton Stations will be improved and more good quality cycle parking will be installed to enable more people to cycle to the hospital.

The interventions will help reduce the impact of the Hospital on local air quality and congestion and improve the pedestrian environment for residents and visitors. Hackney Council will also work with local residents in the Homerton area to encourage them to walk and cycle more.

School Streets

We are continuing to expand this programme and will be implementing a new range of interventions, including a timed bus gate around London Fields Primary School.

Britannia Update

We have revamped the Council’s website on Britannia (<https://www.hackney.gov.uk/britannia-site>) and also provided a range of updates on the project in the last month, more information can be found here: <http://news.hackney.gov.uk/britannia-project-images-of-homes-and-school-released/> at the same time we organised a range of local drop ins and a further newsletter to local wards near the site.

This month we also submitted the planning application more details can be found here: <http://news.hackney.gov.uk/planning-application-submitted-for-new-leisure-centre-school-and-homes/>

Half a million pounds awarded by Council and City and Hackney CCG to improve health in local area

Sixteen community groups have been awarded a share of half a million pounds by Hackney Council and the City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) through a new fund aimed at improving health and wellbeing in the local area. The Healthier City and Hackney Fund, thought to be the biggest of its kind in the country, is the first time Hackney Council and the City and Hackney CCG have combined money for this kind of funding.

The community groups who have been awarded grants range from Hackney-based Core Arts, who have been awarded £60,000 to offer sessions to 80 adults who require support after being discharged from mental health crisis support, to the Terrence Higgins Trust, who have been awarded £19,846 to investigate the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ people of colour in the local area, and how racism and heterosexism act as barriers to accessing services and better health outcomes.

They were asked to demonstrate how their projects could tackle one of a number of priority health and wellbeing issues in the borough, including promoting mental wellbeing at times of change, improving uptake of cancer screening and end of life care. More information can be found here: <http://news.hackney.gov.uk/half-a-million-pounds-awarded-by-council-and-city-and-hackney-ccg-to-improve-health-in-local-area/>

Hackney Council selected to share social care practice with local authorities nationwide

Hackney Council has been selected to join the Government's Partners in Practice peer support programme to share its excellent children's social care practice with local authorities nationwide.

The Council is one of eight local authorities selected to join the programme, and has been awarded a share of £15m to help expand support to other children's care services across the country.

Applicants for the programme were invited to come up with ideas on how they would support other local authorities in developing their social care practice.

Hackney's bid focussed on further developing training and support for those who wish to implement systemic social work practice - a model of social work that works with the key relationships in a child's life to promote change - which was introduced in Hackney in the late 2000s as part of the borough's revolutionary Reclaiming Social Work model.

The Hackney model of social work pays careful attention to the organisational structures and leadership approaches that need to be in place to support social workers to practice systemically. Advising on how to make sure these are in place will be a key aspect of the support that will be offered to other local authorities.

Consultations and campaigns:

Save Our Buses Campaign

Hackney's Labour Council has launched a campaign to defend our bus services and we want to hear about residents' experiences of using buses following a series of changes and cuts on routes in the borough.

Feedback from the new survey will be used to inform future campaigns and discussions with Transport for London about Hackney's bus services. Most residents do not own a car and rely on public transport to get around the borough and travel to other parts of London.

In recent years, TfL has made changes to bus routes that go through Hackney. These include cutting the 242 between St Paul's and Tottenham Court Road and the 73 between Seven Sisters and Stoke Newington and between Oxford Circus and Victoria. There are also plans to cut the 277 route between Dalston Junction and Highbury and Islington.

More recently, there has been a reduction in the frequency on a number of bus routes, meaning longer waits between buses. This includes routes: 42, 48, 106, 141, 236, 242, 276, 279, 343, 349, 488, N8, N29, N35, N38 and N55.

Transport for London does not properly consult on reductions in frequency of bus routes but the Council understands that further cuts are to be introduced this year.

As a regular bus user myself I am fully behind this campaign and recently said: "Buses are at the heart of Hackney's transport infrastructure. Some of the most deprived areas of the borough are also the furthest away from train stations, with the lowest rates of car ownership. Many of our housing estates are home to thousands of people, but only served by a single bus route. While the new 'hopper fare' has helped to keep buses affordable, I fear that residents in these areas will be disproportionately affected by cuts to buses. I would urge all residents to share their experiences with us so we can work with TfL to secure the best possible bus services for our residents."

Cllr Feryal Demirci, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Transport and Parks who is leading the campaign said: "The opening of the London Overground means Hackney is more connected than it used to be, but there are still very few train and tube stations compared to other parts of London. A quarter of Hackney residents use on buses as their main mode of transport – commuters rely on them to get to work, children rely on them to get to school, and others rely on them for everyday living – be it shopping, getting to the doctor's or visiting family and friends.

“As the Cabinet Member responsible for the borough’s roads, I am particularly interested to hear about any measures residents think that we could take to make bus journeys better. There are some things we could do on our roads to try and reduce delays, like getting rid of car parking to free up road space, adding “bus gates” that mean only buses can use certain routes, or extending bus lane hours.”

We have already had over 1000 responses to the campaign, please do add your own view here:

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/communications-and-consultation/changes-to-bus-services-in-hackney/>

Hate Crime Strategy (respond until 23rd March)

Hate crime is often targeted towards a person’s identity and can have a harmful effect on its victims and whole communities. The police and the CPS define hate crime as any criminal offence that has been committed which the victim, or anyone else, thinks was motivated by “hostility or prejudice” based on:

- disability
- race
- religion
- transgender identity
- sexual orientation

The draft strategy sets out our strategy for working with our partners and communities to make sure that Hackney is no place for hate.

We would like to know your views on how the draft strategy could make a difference in your community.

We would also value your feedback on the key objectives and actions identified in the strategy and the role you and/or your community could play in helping to implement the strategy.

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/communications-and-consultation/hackney-hate-crime-strategy/>

Previous Motions and policy updates

CTRS Motion Response (approach agreed by Group)

This issue has been extensively debated in wards, CLPs, Labour Group and been subject to the Council’s statutory consultation. The motions came through the ward and GM process after the Manifesto had been agreed, but we were aware of them and have addressed the issue in this pledge:

“Since 2010, we have been fighting the unfair cuts in national benefits that are leaving so many Hackney residents struggling. We will continue to challenge the Government and push for a return to proper national funding for benefits like Council Tax support and Housing Benefit, and we urge a future Labour Government to make them a priority.”

In previous responses I have provided extensive background material on how Hackney compares to other boroughs and the challenge we would face having a fully funded scheme. We have continued to reduce the use of bailiffs and Cllr Rebecca Rennison, Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing Needs is conducting a wide ranging debt and advice review which will involve councillors and key stakeholders and cover the other issues raised.

Response to Hackney North Motion on the NHS (agreed by Group):

The NHS, throughout its history, has suffered from an absence of the level of local accountability that is considered normal for other public services. Whilst the NHS Bill would resolve some of the issues of fragmentation and

marketisation created by the 2012 Health and Social Care Act, it still leaves local decision making in the hands of bodies that are not democratically accountable to local people.

Our own Hackney plans for greater integration of health and social care have accountability to local people at their heart. Our Integrated Commissioning Board is a 50:50 partnership between elected councillors and representatives of the NHS giving democratic accountability for local NHS decisions for the first time. We would like to see other parts of the country adopt models similar to ours.

We have no plans to develop an Accountable Care Organisation and feel that our ambitions for more joined up care can be achieved through more collaborative working between existing NHS organisations and the council.

Hackney Council has always been clear that we will not sign up to the North East London STP until the following conditions are met:

- There has been a genuine consultation with local people Council recommendations on social care, prevention and the wider determinants of health have been acted on
- Our ambitions for integration of health and social care as part of Hackney's devolution pilot are supported
- There are no proposals to take funding from Hackney's NHS to bail out other parts of North East London

Our plans to support our local NHS and to deliver more joined up health and social care will be a key part of the 2018 local election campaign.

Motion on Equity Manifesto (Response from Mayor and Cllr Nicholson:

Equity pledge: Ensure the payment of industry rates for all productions or events which receive support directly or in kind from our local authority, in line with Arts Council requirements for nationally funded work.

Draft response: In our Manifesto we call on all employers in the borough to sign up to the London Living Wage as the minimum rate they pay employees. As part of the Council's procurement requirements it also sets this out. But the Council has no direct authority to intervene into third party employment contracts with sub contractors such as between a producer and performers, however it will always attempt to use its influence to promote the payment of industry agreed rates, terms and conditions even though it doesn't carry this authority. As part of our work on our new Cultural Strategy we will ensure that this issue is raised.

Equity pledge: Guarantee that alongside provision from an arts department, money for professional live performance is part of multiple departments' budgets, showing the key role it plays in delivering a council's strategic objectives – such as regeneration, education, parks, libraries and public health.

Draft response: Yes, the Arts, including the performing Arts, make an important contribution to a wide range of strategic objectives which include all of the above and we refer to this explicitly in the forthcoming manifesto and in the Borough wide Arts & Cultural policy – we are also placing an additional strategic objective for the Arts in Hackney to promote and strengthen a tolerant and inclusive community that is confident and outward looking that embraces and takes ownership of change in our community. Already Young Hackney, Public Health, Parks, Libraries, Hackney Museum, Hackney Archive and Hackney Learning Trust through our Music Services collaborate and support live performances from professionals and local people.

Equity pledge: Ensure at least one 'Creative Enterprise Zone' in our borough by 2022 so as to open up access to live performance for all Londoners, irrespective of their background, both as workers and audience members.

Draft response: The Council is already in the development phase of a CEZ for Hackney Wick and Fish Island with colleagues in Tower Hamlets Council, the London Legacy Development Corporation, the creative sector in the area, which includes the performing Arts in the area and City Hall.

Equity pledge: Establish a twice yearly trades council meeting for professionals working in the creative industries in the borough, chaired by the relevant cabinet member/committee chair, alongside a cultural chamber of commerce for employers and institutions.

Draft response: We are bringing forward through our manifesto, for all businesses in all sectors in the borough a commitment to a 'Landing Pad' and a 'Launch Pad' designed to provide everyone in business a service to assist, advise, refer and connect with services, support and networks. As part of this commitment there is a Hackney Business Network that is both online and made up of area based forums for businesses. Alongside the Network and area forums is a portfolio of sector specific forums proposed one of which could and should embrace the Arts.

Equity pledge: Use the planning process and community infrastructure levy to provide professional live performance spaces, in consultation with the artists who live and work in the borough.

Draft response: We will be drawing on both community infrastructure levy and Planning policy to support an investment into the Arts. This will be a community enabled and sector led approach to the Arts for both event investment, project delivery and to identify the infrastructure needs. The performing Arts are one of the activities but not the only one – the fine Arts and the applied Arts also have a place.

Manifesto Update

The manifesto has now been agreed by Labour Group and is currently being printed.

Please come to the launch at the Old School Rooms in Clapton on Saturday, more details including how to book can be found here: http://www.hackney-labour.org.uk/manifesto_launch_with_philip_glanville_sadiq_khan_meg_hillier_and_diane_abbott.

Visiting, speaking and reporting back to branch Labour Parties

I am keen to book new dates for ward meeting visits after the elections. If you want to invite me please email philip.glanville@hackney.gov.uk

Since being elected in September 2016 I have been to Wick, Victoria, De Beauvoir (twice), Homerton, King's Park, Clissold, Stoke Newington, Hackney Central, Hoxton West, Haggerston, Woodberry Down, Stamford Hill West, Brownswood, Leabridge, Dalston and Hackney Downs Ward Party Meetings. That's 16 branches as well as to Hackney Momentum and the Coop party meetings.