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## Mayor's Report July-September 2017

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### Philip Glanville Labour Mayor of Hackney

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Dear Member,

Welcome to my July to September Mayor's Report.

I want to first thank and pay tribute to all those who put their names forward to stand as Hackney Labour Councillors in next year's local elections and to those members that took part in the process. We now have fantastic teams in place in every ward in the borough with in an increase in our diversity and I look forward to campaigning with them in the weeks and months ahead.

Over the summer we have seen continued success in our schools, the formal launch of the Hackney 100 work experience programme, new apprentices recruited by the Council and the re-naming and expansion of the Council's employment support and training service as Opportunity Hackney with Hackney Works at its heart. This is the foundation of my commitment in last year's election to expand opportunity for all Hackney's residents.

We continue to campaign on education, police cuts, business rates, acid sales and regulation, against the 1% pay cap and now on behalf of our fellow Hackney EU citizens – making good my promise to be a campaigning Council. Only today I was proud to join Cllr Jonathan McShane as he and Dave Prentis, General Secretary of Unison signed the Ethical Care Charter building on our work as a London Living Wage borough.

I think we were all inspired by Labour Party Conference and together we can now start work on Hackney Labour's Manifesto for 2018 with the first event our Hackney Ideas Factory taking place for members on the weekend of 14/15 October at Urswick School. Please put the date in your diary and look out for the email from me and Labour Group.

Best wishes,



### Mayor's Diary Highlights

#### September 23-27 Labour Party Conference

- AirBnB Meeting with Cllr Moema
- Meeting with Leaders of Islington and Haringey
- Hackney Labour Dinner
- Sustainable Education Roundtable
- Meeting with Dolphin Living
- LGBT Homelessness Fringe
- London Councils and Core Cities Roundtable
- Meeting with Lord Kennedy

#### September 21

- Meeting with Amazon UK

#### September 20

- Meeting with East End Trades Guild with Cllr Guy Nicholson

#### September 19

- Guildhall Breakfast on Housing
- Meeting on the future of the LLDC and Foundation for Future London
- Meeting with Hackney Walk
- Hackney Labour Group

#### September 18

- Strategic Transport Board
- Economic and Community Development Board
- Hackney Cabinet

## Hackney Summer GCSE and A-Level Success

Students across Hackney are celebrating, after results show the borough's improvements in A levels have been maintained, despite a period of major change when many A levels have become two year courses with no interim AS exam; instead students only take a final, more rigorous, exam at the end of year 13.

The number of students achieving top grades in Hackney has increased from last year; the percentage achieving A\*/B grades has increased to 48.4% (from 47.8%) and percentage of students achieving A\*-C grades has increased to 75.3% (from 73.8%), closing the gap with the provisional national figures at 52% and 77.3% respectively. There has been a slight dip in A\*/A from (20.1%) to 18.5% while the national provisional figures rose slightly from 25.8% to 26.2%.

Students who took vocational courses have beaten the success rate of last year, with a high proportion of Distinction\*/Distinction/Merit Grades.

Many students have also achieved individual successes getting university offers for Oxbridge, offers from institutions within the Russell Group and from top Medical Schools. High standards set in previous years have been maintained despite the challenge of the new reformed and more rigorous exams, thanks to the hard work of both staff and students.

Schools across Hackney who have also received their GCSE results have performed extremely well with students achieving strong results under the new grading system for GCSEs which has changed from A\*-E to Grades 9-1 in core subjects.

Two thirds of pupils passed English and Maths GCSEs, achieving grade 4 (equivalent to grade C) and nearly 50% of pupils achieved a 'strong' pass at Grade 5 (between grades C to B).

Students achieved exceptional results in English Language and English Literature which were at least 10% higher than national figures; over 76% of students received a pass at grade 4 in English Language compared to the national figure of 64.9% and 82% achieved grade 4 in English Literature compared to 72% nationally.

Again this year, over 30% of pupils achieved the academic-subject based English Baccalaureate in Hackney.

The results are a welcome achievement at a time of significant change for GCSE exams after a new grading system was introduced in September 2015 which replaced the A to U system with a new 9 to 1 scale. These are the first GCSE

### September 16/7

Hackney Labour Selection Weekend

### September 15

Visit to Volunteering Matters with Cllr Burke

Rainbow Grow Fundraiser

### September 14

Colville Phase 3 topping out

Employment and Skills Briefing

### September 13

Corporate Induction of new staff

Hackney Gazette and Hackney Citizen Fire Safety Briefing

### September 12

Oldhill Street Businesses Meeting

### September 11

Capital Investment Board

Britannia Board

Hackney Wick Campaigning

### September 10

[Hackney Carnival](#)

### September 9

Hidden River Festival

### September 8

London Councils Labour Group Meeting

### September 7

Woodberry Down Round Table

Hackney Council cross cutting fire safety meeting with Cllr McKenzie

Labour Selection Meetings as an LCF Observer

### September 6

Meeting with Shomrim alongside Jennette Arnold AM

### September 5

results to be achieved under the new grading for English and Maths. Results from other subjects will be released next year.

## Integrated Communities programme set to support migrants in Hackney

Hackney Council has received £431,000 in funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government to deliver a new Integrated Communities programme. Which aims to improve the support on offer for migrants, empowering migrants through training, language and employment support and helping them settle into the community.

The programme will provide advice, signposting, engagement, employment training and English lessons for migrants, enabling those involved to contribute to their communities, while increasing their confidence and independence.

One of the main aims of the programme is to increase the awareness of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses. ESOL classes in Hackney are free and take place on a weekly basis at venues across the borough including children's centres, primary schools, a library and the museum. Hundreds of residents attended ESOL courses every year, which helps people access further education and improve prospects for employment.

Alongside a programme directed at migrants, some of the funding will also be made available to train Council staff and those in the voluntary sector, and to improve their understanding of support available. This will make better use of services on offer for migrants, and appoint a single point of contact in the Council who can provide advice on issues that affect migrants.

Hackney has a long history of welcoming new arrivals to Britain from across the world, and it's this legacy that makes the borough the welcoming place it is today. We know that migrants do very well, but there are also those whose voices are not heard. We want to ensure all migrants have the support they need to prosper and contribute to community life, and so Hackney is very pleased to have secured this much needed additional resource. It will help us enhance the work we are already doing with our partners.

The funding has been made available through the Department for Communities and Local Government, to help support wider community cohesion and the integration of recent migrants.

To join an ESOL class, potential students need to attend an ESOL advice session, where an adviser will check their level of English before helping them find a class which will best suit their needs. Advice sessions take place regularly at five venues across Hackney. For more information call 020 8820 7043, email [esol@learningtrust.co.uk](mailto:esol@learningtrust.co.uk) or visit [www.learningtrust.co.uk/esol](http://www.learningtrust.co.uk/esol).

Meeting with Hackney Unison, GMB and Unite alongside Cllr Williams

Hackney Labour Group Executive

### September 3

Hackney Downs Campaigning

### September 2

Nightingale Temporary Community Hall Opening

Hackney South and Shoreditch Summer BBQ

### September 1

Pearson Street Adventure Playground Reopening with Deputy Mayor Bramble

### August 29

Lunch with the leaders of Camden and Islington

Rainbow Grow get together

### August 27

De Beauvoir Ward BBQ

### August 26

Hackney on Tour campaigning in Westminster

[Hackney 365 Pride in the Park Picnic](#)

### August 25

Mayor's Casework Surgery

Hanover 40 years in Partnership Celebration

### August 24

Visited Tropical Isles Carnival Workshop

### August 23

Children with Voices sports day at St Luke's Church in Homerton

Bootstrap LGBTQI+ Fundraiser for Kaleidoscope Trust

## Thousands more residents to have access to employment support and training

Hackney Works, the Council's free employment service, has extended its support to include residents on low incomes as well as those who are out of work. More Hackney residents can now benefit from the free service which connects local people to opportunities in the borough's business community and beyond. They will also have access to a range of services including personalised employment support; job and training opportunities; CV, job applications and interview help; links to volunteering, work placements and apprenticeships, and access to IT facilities.

Thousands of residents have already found jobs and training opportunities through the employment and skills support service, and even more are set to do so under the new Hackney Works eligibility criteria.

We are committed to building strong relationships with key growth industries across the borough, including for example the technology, digital, leisure and construction industries, and to helping local people access better quality jobs.

By extending the Hackney Works programme to those on low incomes, we can help residents move into higher paid jobs and truly benefit from Hackney's growing local economy and opportunities across London.

Cllr Carole Williams, Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Human Resources said:

"Hackney Works, previously Ways into Work, supports local residents to find employment in jobs across a wide variety of sectors including construction, design, IT, retail, security and hospitality. Since 2012, the service has placed over 6,000 people into employment as well as providing training opportunities to develop candidates' skills."

For more information on Hackney Works and to register for the service visit [hackney.gov.uk/hackney-works](https://hackney.gov.uk/hackney-works) or call 020 8356 5700.

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### August 22

Met with Rising Tide Youth Org

Hackney Council cross cutting fire safety meeting with Cllr McKenzie

Attended Speaker's Reception for Homerton nurses and midwives visiting Haifa

### August 21

Meeting with Rashan Charles' Family alongside Cllr Selman

### August 17

Hackney Caribbean Elders Exhibition  
Hackney Central Library

Hackney LCF Meeting

### August 12

Pride 10k at Victoria Park

Housing Debate at London Young Labour Policy Day

Disco Loco at Springfield Park

### August 11

Joined Mayor of London Sadiq Khan at the Woodberry Wetlands for the launch of his Environment Strategy

### August 9

World Athletics Championships

### August 8

Final Hackney Cycling Training

### August 5

Queer Person of Colour and Moonlight Screening at the Rio

## Hackney shopkeepers agree to restrict sales of corrosive substances

Hackney Council has renewed its campaign for shopkeepers to stop selling the dangerous products and report any suspicious attempted purchases.

Products containing acid and ammonia can cause serious burns, blindness and irreversible damage when they come in to contact with skin. Corrosive substances like drain cleaner have recently been used in violent attacks in Hackney and other parts of London.

Although there are currently no legal restrictions on the sale, the Council runs a voluntary scheme where shops agree to ask customers who appear to be under the age of 21 for ID and to not sell acid or ammonia to anyone they suspect may cause harm with these products.

Four shops signed up to a trial last year, but the Council is now calling for all shops to join. All shop keepers who sign up will be trained by council officers and provided with a notice which tells customers they are a responsible trader who will not sell to under 21s.

I said: "I'm glad that the Home Office is considering tough new restrictions on corrosive substances. We have taken the initiative by asking shop keepers to voluntarily ID customers and report suspicious sales. Over the next few weeks we're going door to door handing out leaflets and speaking to shop keepers to ask them to join our scheme and help keep these dangerous substances off the street.

"Our trading standards officers already carry out test purchases and enforce against the sale of restricted items to underage people – a shopkeeper was recently prosecuted and fined £2000 for selling a knife to a teenager in Hackney – so we will certainly enforce the sale of corrosive substances if there is a change in the law that allows us to do so."

Traders wishing to sign up or find out more should contact [trading.standards@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:trading.standards@hackney.gov.uk) or 020 8356 4929.

## Hackney agrees late night levy to fund policing and community safety

The levy is expected to raise almost £400,000 per year, with the proceeds to be spent on managing the impacts of the night time economy, including additional enforcement by the Police and Hackney Council enforcement officers.

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### August 4

[King Edward's Road Final brick/topping out](#)

Took part in Picturehouse Strike picket.

### August 3

Guinness Estate Coffee Morning in Stamford Hill West with Cllr Sales

[Abney Park Cemetery Chapel reopening with Cllr Demirci](#)

Charlie Burns Foundation Meeting

### August 2

Visit to Hackney Law Centre

### August 1

Hackney Council cross cutting fire safety meeting with Cllr McKenzie

Visit to London Fields Lido and King's Hall Leisure Centre with Cllr Burke

### July 31

Meeting with UpRising about mentors Programme

### July 30

Hackney South and Shoreditch Labour Young Labour Breakfast

### July 28 and 29

Meeting at the Crib and responding to the death of Rashan Charles

### July 27

Radio interview on Reel Rebels Radio

Hackney North and South GMs

Hackney has over 1,000 licensed premises, with 429 licensed to sell alcohol between midnight and 6am. From 1 November, all premises in Hackney that are licensed to sell alcohol between midnight and 6am will pay a levy on top of their licensing fee.

Around 40 businesses in Hackney already take part in a voluntary scheme, raising around £56,000 per year. This voluntary levy has helped to fund additional patrols by Council enforcement officers on Friday and Saturday nights in Dalston and Shoreditch. The service has been well-received by residents and is central to addressing anti-social behaviour in the area.

The Council wants to help support and sustain the borough's nightlife, which has made a valuable contribution to wider cultural and economic growth, however it has also had an impact on public services, with increased levels of anti-social behaviour, crime, noise nuisance and litter. Responding to these issues creates an extra cost for the Council and Police at a time when budgets are already extremely stretched.

Hackney Police estimate the cost of policing the night-time economy in the borough to be around £1.4 million per year, of which £890,000 is specifically required to fund the dedicated Night-Time-Economy teams.

Evidence included in a report to the Council last year suggests that there is a strong correlation between the locations of licensed premises and the level of crime and disorder which warrants this action.

The Council consulted on the proposed levy from February to May this year, writing to all late night licensees asking for their feedback. 52% of respondents supported the proposed levy, with 48% opposing the proposal.

Cllr Guy Nicholson, Cabinet Member for Planning, Business and Investment said:

“Hackney has a great reputation as a destination with an exciting and original entertainment and hospitality offer, but this can come at a cost to public services and have an impact on the quality of life in the borough. There can be problems with late night noise, anti-social behaviour and litter. The late night levy will help public services manage this impact by paying for more police officers, enforcement officers and street cleaners into the early hours of the morning.

“The late night levy expands and formalises the voluntary levy that local businesses and the Council established in Dalston to help support local public services managing the streets in the town centre.

“The aim of the late night levy in Hackney is to ensure that public services can support a successful night time economy, whilst helping to mitigate the environmental impact on local residents and that visitors enjoy their visit to the borough, returning time and again to enjoy what Hackney's businesses have to offer.”

## **‘Help us deliver the affordable homes Hackney needs’ – Mayor’s challenge to housing associations**

Housing associations in Hackney were today challenged to use an innovative new £16million Council fund to increase the number of genuinely affordable homes being built in the borough.

The Mayor of Hackney's Housing Challenge programme will issue grants – made up of money from council homes sold under the Government's Right to Buy scheme – to help fund new developments for social or living rent.

Rising land values and changes in Government policy mean 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.

London is facing an unprecedented housing crisis, and our city needs to build thousands of genuinely affordable homes if the capital is to work for everyone.

We're playing our part by building a new generation of modern, high-quality council housing, but we can't solve this crisis alone.

Housing associations have always played a vital role in keeping our borough a place that people of different backgrounds and incomes can call home.

That's why today I'm making this new fund available to help them continue that work long into the future, using money that the Government makes it difficult to spend ourselves.

The Council's own landmark Estate Regeneration Programme will see around 3,000 homes delivered directly by the Council over the next few years – with more than half for social rent and shared ownership.

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 restrictions placed on local authorities by ministers mean the money must be spent within three years and can only pay for 30% of a new development – leaving cash-strapped councils struggling to find ways to fund the remainder of the cost.

Rather than give this money back to the government with interest, the Mayor of Hackney's Housing Challenge will make it available to housing associations to help fund genuinely affordable new housing in the borough.

Bids will be assessed against strict criteria, including housing affordability, quality of housing management, and their contribution to the Council's wider regeneration objectives – such as new jobs and training opportunities.

The deadline for housing associations to submit a bid for the first round of funding is 29 September.

## **£7m fund to support Hackney businesses hit by rate hikes**

Hackney Council has launched a consultation on how to allocate £7.1 million to support local businesses whose Business Rates have increased due to Government reforms.

Under its proposals, the money will be targeted at the borough's most severely affected small and medium businesses. However, certain types of businesses, such as betting shops, payday lenders and national and multi-national chain stores, as well as empty properties, would be excluded.

The extra funding follows the national revaluation of business premises, announced by the Government last year. New 'rateable values' were published in March and are now being used to set Business Rates.

Because property prices have risen dramatically in Hackney over recent years, the borough experienced an average rateable value increase of 46%, the largest in London and five times the England average. Thousands of businesses now face bills thousands of pounds higher than they were in 2016/17.

Hackney Council is not involved in setting rateable values or Business Rates, these are set by the Valuation Office Agency and the Government. Because the borough was so disproportionately affected, the Council called on the Government to offer more support for businesses. This included writing to the Chancellor in November and running a joint-campaign

with the East End Trades Guild which resulted in a petition with 10,500 signatures being handed in to Downing Street in March.

The Chancellor subsequently announced the Discretionary Relief Scheme in his spring Budget to help businesses facing rises due to its revaluations. Councils have been allocated part of a £300 million fund, proportionate to how adversely affected businesses in their area have been. It covers 2017/18 to 2020/21 and councils must design their own scheme to distribute it locally.

Hackney Council received £7.1m in total, and £4.1m is available in 2017/18. The Council had been waiting for detailed information from the Government about the new fund before proposing its local scheme for consultation with the business community.

The Government's severe and disproportionate Business Rates hike has hit many of Hackney's businesses. Government has taken an extraordinary long time to instruct Councils to start offering support through the Discretionary Relief Fund. Now the Council has the information it is important to make sure that the most appropriate scheme for Hackney is designed and implemented as soon as possible.

Cllr Guy Nicholson, Cabinet Member for Planning, Business and Investment said:

"The Council's priority is to support the small and medium businesses which are at the heart of Hackney's diverse communities and make up the boroughs unique character. Whether it be the established family firms or innovative start-ups, the funding is proposed to be focused on the enterprises which create Hackney's thriving and vibrant high streets and business clusters.

"Though this extra funding, and the other support measures announced by the Chancellor, is welcome it is not enough and we know that many businesses will still face difficult months and years ahead trying to cope with the Government's hikes. Hackney Council will keep doing all it can to offer support and advice to our business community, and make sure the call for a reasonable, fair and affordable rate system is heard in Westminster and City Hall."

Under the Council's proposed scheme, the amount of relief given to a business will be proportionate to the amount its bill has increased from 2016/17 to 2017/18.

Relief will only be provided to ratepayers whose 2017/18 rateable value is £200,000 or less, and whose 2017/18 Business Rates bill, after exemptions and other reliefs, increased by 12.5% or more due to the Government's revaluation. It's anticipated that 2,200 small and medium businesses may qualify for support.

Full details on Hackney Council's proposed Discretionary Relief Scheme are available at [www.hackney.gov.uk/businessrates](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/businessrates). The closing date is 26 September.

The Discretionary Relief Scheme was one of three measures announced by the Chancellor. The two others relate to businesses which have lost some or all of their Small Business Rate Relief, and pubs with a new rateable value of below £100,000. About 450 Hackney businesses and 120 pubs are expected to benefit.

These two measures do not form part of this Council's consultation, but more information is available at [www.hackney.gov.uk/businessrates](http://www.hackney.gov.uk/businessrates)

## Deputy Mayor responds to the Government's announcement on funding for schools

Responding to the Government's announcement on the national funding formula for schools, Cllr Anntoinette Bramble, Deputy Mayor of Hackney, said:

"It's reassuring that the Government listened to councils, teachers, parents and children in places like Hackney which would have been devastated by its original, ill thought-out reform to the national funding formula. Hackney is a fantastic example of how you can improve educational standards, and the life-chances of children, through proper investment and a long-term strategy.

"What is not clear from yesterday's announcement is what happens after 2019/20, nor what will be cut from Department for Education's budget to fund the extra £2.6bn promised by the Education Secretary.

"We remain firmly of the view that any reduction to schools funding in Hackney is wholly unacceptable and would jeopardise the borough's record of improving educational standards. We also remain concerned over the increasingly unsustainable situation regards funding for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

"Should the Government's new formula mean Hackney schools suffer cuts in the long-term, we will be very clear and vocal in our opposition and ensure the voices of our teachers, governors and parents are heard in Westminster."

Under the Government's original proposals for the new national funding formula, funding for Hackney schools would have been cut by £25m by 2019/20. This translated to £914 less per pupil – or 692 fewer teachers across the borough.

In July, headteachers and governors from about 50 Hackney schools signed a joint letter from Deputy Mayor Bramble and Mayor Philip Glanville calling on Justine Greening to reconsider her proposals.

## First look at new homes in Council plans to transform under-used land

Proposals for the first new homes in Hackney Council's innovative programme to transform underused Council-owned land into housing for local people have been revealed, showing designs for 39 new homes on two sites in Clapton.

The developments are the first phase of the Council's Housing Supply Programme, which will see hundreds of new homes to help tackle Hackney's housing crisis built on empty or underused sites such as garages, car parks and depots. The programme initially includes nearly 500 homes proposed across 14 sites, with around 70% for social rent or shared ownership.

The first proposals will see a new street with 11 homes, five for social rent and the remainder for shared ownership, replacing empty garages at Mandeville Street. At a second site at Pedro Street, 28 homes are proposed to replace a disused boiler house on Gilpin Square, with 13 for social rent and 15 for shared ownership.

All the new homes at Mandeville Street and Pedro Street will be prioritised for Hackney residents, with the social rent properties available to those on the Council's housing waiting list and the shared ownership properties offering a more affordable route into home ownership for people living and working in the borough.

With 13,000 households on our housing waiting list and around 3,000 households in temporary accommodation, we are absolutely committed to making the best use of all Council-owned land and doing everything we can to provide homes for local people.

These smaller sites have given us the opportunity to work with some fantastic architect practices who, in collaboration with the local community, have come up with designs that both provide high quality, genuinely affordable homes and make a fantastic contribution to their neighbourhoods.

## Grenfell Inquiry must be 'open and transparent', Hackney tells ministers

The public inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire must be broad and have freedom to investigate the role of contractors and building regulations, Hackney Council said today.

How the impact of years of government cuts to council budgets affected maintenance standards, as well as the impact of borrowing restrictions placed on local authorities, should also come under the scope of the inquiry's work, the Council argued.

In their response to the consultation on the terms of reference of the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry, the Mayor of Hackney, Philip Glanville, and Cabinet Member for Housing Services, Cllr Clayeon McKenzie, also said:

- All Government test results relating to fire safety and cladding should be published immediately
- The current system of housing regulation must be reviewed to put safety and residents first
- The inquiry should examine the impact of cuts to local authority budgets since 2010 on fire safety
- The role of ministers in implementing previous recommendations from the Lakanal House, Shirley Towers, Shepherds Bush fires should be within the scope of the Inquiry
- Government documents should be provided to the Inquiry unredacted, with ministers and officials giving evidence in public

Unnecessary burdens placed on councils – including an arbitrary cap on how much they can borrow to finance maintenance work – should be removed specifically to pay for the implementation of lessons learned from the tragedy at a time of already overstretched local government resources, the Council's letter said.

**I said:** "If both the families affected by the Grenfell tragedy and the wider public are to have confidence in this inquiry, it must be broad, open and allowed to investigate the wider causes of the fire.

"Hackney has already started a wide-ranging fire safety review to make any immediate changes necessary to ensure the safety of our residents, as well as publishing fire risk assessments in our commitment to transparency.

"We stand ready to make whatever changes the inquiry recommends in the interests of our residents, and it's vital that no stone is left unturned in its work.

In Hackney, government funding cuts mean the Council has £110m per year less to work with than it did in 2010, despite increased demand for services meaning it is spending £42m more to provide them.

Currently, the Government places a cap on the amount councils can borrow against future income from rent to spend on housing repairs, maintenance and new housebuilding. Research by London Councils has shown that removing this cap could allow an extra £2.5bn borrowing capacity to be released across the capital.

Hackney Council has started a wide-ranging fire safety review to independently test cladding, check existing equipment and work with the London Fire Brigade to keep residents informed about evacuation plans.

An immediate inspection was completed within 48 hours of the fire, and confirmed that no Council housing in Hackney uses the same type of cladding that was installed on Grenfell Tower.

The review includes:

- independent testing of all cladding installed on Hackney housing estates
- additional fire risk assessments for priority blocks
- rigorous checks on all fire safety equipment within buildings, including fire doors
- reviewing appropriate completed refurbishment or maintenance work
- investigating problems or issues raised by residents promptly, with repairs or other work carried out where necessary

- commissioning a report from an independent fire safety advisor on whether sprinklers would improve fire safety in estates
- reviewing fire safety guidance for tower blocks, in partnership with the London Fire Brigade
- working with housing associations and other residential providers to share information and ensure any problems are investigated

The Council also outlined the need for the Inquiry to publish an urgent interim report to reassure those affected by the fire and give local authorities clarity on funding and safety issues.

To read the Council’s submission to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Terms of Reference consultation in full, [download the letter](#) [pdf, 156Kb].

## Hackney Council to introduce fees for bulky waste collections

From Monday 25 September, most residents will pay a small fee for bulky waste collections. Collections will cost just £15, but residents who receive housing benefit will not have to pay.

Currently, all households can book up to four free collections per year, of up to five items per collection, for large items like furniture and appliances.

The proposed charge of £15 for a collection of up to five items will be amongst the lowest in the country. The majority of London councils charge for the service, with collections costing over £50 in some boroughs.

The Council wants to ensure that the charge does not penalise those on low incomes, so residents who receive housing benefit will continue to receive the four free collections per year currently offered to all residents.

Cllr Feryal Demirci, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Transport and Parks:

“Due to government cuts, the Council has to save another £14m this financial year. We do not want to cut front line services like cleaning streets and maintaining parks, but we are also unable to continue providing certain services for free.

“We’ve kept the fee as low as possible – collections will be considerably cheaper than in other London boroughs – and residents who receive housing benefit will not need to pay at all. The income from this charge will help us continue to provide the high quality services expected by our residents.”

### Articles:

#### **“The Social Housing Green Paper is another delaying tactic to put off fixing the broken housing market”**

Albert Einstein is often quoted as saying the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.

I was reminded of those words last week when Sajid Javid told the National Housing Federation’s annual conference that he would start a “nationwide conversation on social housing” by bringing forward a green paper that would be “wide-ranging, top-to-bottom review” of the issues facing the sector.

Presumably this is different to the “proper conversation” that the communities secretary said his damp squib of a Housing White Paper would kick-start just a few months ago.

Javid also said his green paper would be “the most substantial report of its kind for a generation”. Clearly the minister has forgotten about his own government’s Housing & Planning Act – the hugely damaging piece of legislation his

predecessor drove through Parliament just a year ago, against the wishes of local councils, housing associations and tenants.

The Tories are now carrying out the third review of why this country's housing system is fundamentally broken in little over 12 months. And every time they ask people up and down the country what the problem is, they get the same answer – the government's obsession with leaving the market to deliver the hundreds of thousands of new homes we need simply isn't working.

The NHF's own research, published as the minister made his announcement, shows funding for new social homes is at an all-time low – at just 0.2 per cent of GDP.

In 2010, the government decided that there would be longer be any public money to build homes for social rent – and construction of these homes ground to a halt almost overnight. In 2010-11, just under 36,000 social rented homes were started. The next year, work started on just over 3,000.

This is bad for everyone. Bad for the 120,000 children in living in temporary hostels and B&Bs because there's not a council home for them. Bad for private renters, like those in my borough of Hackney who pay nearly £2,000 per month for a two-bed flat while facing the impossible task of saving for their first home as prices hit record highs. And bad for the government, whose housing benefit bill has spiralled to £25.1bn – costing every man, woman and child in the UK £400 every year – with more and more of that money paid to private landlords, who are propping up a broken market by housing those who can't find social housing.

Councils like Hackney, the borough I lead, have repeatedly said that they stand ready to fill this void. Despite getting zero funding to build social housing, we're already building 4,000 homes in the next few years – with more than half for social rent and shared ownership, paid for by some for outright sale. If only ministers would abandon the sell-off of social housing and cut the unnecessary red tape that means we can't access the finance we need to build, we could do so much more.

It seems to be an answer that Mr Javid doesn't like. What other reason is there for this latest "conversation"?

In the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy, there is of course a need to make sure that tenants are properly heard. Clearly, that has gone badly wrong in Kensington and Chelsea. But the failings of one Conservative council should not be an excuse to try to further erode the role of local authorities in providing safe, secure and high-quality housing for their residents.

Instead of pointlessly fiddling around in Whitehall, ministers should abandon their market-led dogma and give councils and housing associations the funding and borrowing freedoms they need to get building in big numbers.

The government's tired old ideas have been failing to fix this housing crisis for seven years, with every previous intervention making the situation worse. Perhaps instead of lecturing from Whitehall, it's time ministers listened and let those who are managing their fiasco on the frontline take the lead in solving it.

To read it online visit: <http://www.citymetric.com/politics/social-housing-green-paper-another-delaying-tactic-put-fixing-broken-housing-market-3357>

### **"I make no apologies for my council's controversial new housing strategy after we were given zero funds from the Government"**

People often ask me why as a Labour council leader, I can't just build thousands of new council houses to solve Hackney's housing crisis and provide a new home to the 13,000 families on our waiting list.

I wish I could do that. I got in to politics because I wanted to do something to improve the lives of struggling people – I certainly didn't ever imagine that as Mayor of Hackney I'd be overseeing the building of homes for sale on the open

market. But the truth is we have no choice, because the Government gives us absolutely no money to build social housing.

Just consider that again. Despite the biggest housing crisis in generations, with more than 120,000 children across England living in hotel rooms, hostels and bed and breakfasts, ministers provide zero funding to local authorities to build genuinely affordable council homes.

We could begrudgingly accept that and carry on fulfilling our other duties – providing schools, care for older people and vulnerable children, maintaining parks and bin collections – all of which are also under huge pressures. But that's not what our residents expect.

It might not be popular with everyone, but we think that building private housing in order to fund social and genuinely affordable housing in our borough is key to us doing our best to help the local people facing crippling housing costs. It's the only funding option we have left.

This strategy will allow us to build around 4,000 homes to rent and buy over the next few years – with more than half of our estate regeneration programme for social rent and shared ownership, and a new programme aiming to push that figure to an even higher 70 per cent of homes.

Last week a picture of a sign at one of our developments, explaining why we were building homes for outright sale, went viral on Twitter. The sign, which is positioned in front of a construction site, reads: "28 new council homes for social renting, 39 for shared ownership and eight for private sale to help pay for them all in the absence of Government funding."

It caused a mixed reaction – some people applauded what they called a "no nonsense" message, explaining exactly why we're doing what we're doing, but some questioned whether we were fanning the flames of gentrification.

A key part of our decision to build to sell is that every council tenant in all of our estate regeneration schemes is guaranteed the right to return to a better, more modern home. But if we're to get any house-building done, we'll need to sell homes to give us the cash to build more.

The reality is that the Government has tied the hands of councils up and down this country, making it impossible to meet housing demand and subjecting us to nearly a decade of austerity – cutting some of my council's service budgets in half.

This is the longest, most sustained attack on local government finances since Hackney Council was established in the 1960s. Hackney now has £152m per year less to work with than it did in 2010. At the same time, increased demand for our services means we're spending £42m more to provide them.

But schools, leisure centres, parks, new council housing, streets and pavements, our town centres – these all still need investment. We have to find new ways to raise that money, such as building and selling private housing, and we make sure that the profits from new homes in Hackney go into public infrastructure rather than the pockets of developers.

This approach isn't limited to housing. We're having to think completely differently to the councils of 10 or 20 years ago, and raising money – not just through council tax and Government funding, but through other innovative means – is the new norm.

Being close to central London means we can bring in significant cash by using our land and property better. Instead of selling them off to speculators, we've rented our old buildings to workspace providers, and brought Amazon's UK HQ to council land in Shoreditch – bringing in hundreds of thousands of pounds in long-term income and creating hundreds of jobs.

Of course, the flipside of Hackney's high land values is the highest jump in house prices in the country, crippling private renters and leading to a significant rise in homelessness.

Other councils in England, where deprivation is high but land values are low, don't have the opportunities Hackney has had. The bottom line is that local government has spent seven years cutting costs, commercialising and making its land work harder – but these options are running out. If austerity continues until 2022, some councils will fail and that will ultimately have devastating impact on the most vulnerable in our society.

The Government must change tack if it wants to see public services continue to operate at even a basic level. It could start by getting rid of the ridiculous rules that don't allow councils to borrow money to build new homes and leaves a broken market responsible for solving our housing crisis.

Until then, we'll keep on building homes for sale to those who can afford them, to ensure we can provide homes for those who need them most.

To read online: <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/hackney-council-housing-government-austerity-cuts-controversial-strategy-gentrification-a7886331.html>

## Consultations and campaigns:

### Hackney EU Citizens Campaign - #hackneylovesyou

As we enter a party conference season that it is clear will be dominated by Brexit debates, some no doubt more constructive than others, the 3 million EU nationals living in this country may be feeling that they have become collateral damage in the political fallout from last year's referendum. Many of them will be worried about what the future holds, and many will feel that they are no longer welcome in the UK

Here in Hackney, where cultural diversity is integral to our way of life, around 15% of our citizens – that's 41,500 residents - are from other EU countries. The East End has been home to people from across the European mainland for centuries, from the Huguenots who settled in Spitalfields, to the Hassidic communities of Stamford Hill. European citizens in Hackney make an enormous contribution to the civic, economic and cultural life of this borough, and it seems right that at this time of anxiety and change, we should let them know how much we value them, and the contribution that they make.

Hackney had the third highest Remain vote in the UK (after Gibraltar and Lambeth), with 78.5% of people voting to stay in the EU. Part of that is a London thing; this is an international city, and many Londoners hold that very dear. But it's also about what makes Hackney special. This borough has been described as the ultimate global village; its part of what makes us who we are. We value our European citizens because of the cultural richness that they bring to Hackney. They are our friends, neighbours, and colleagues. But we also need them for the skills, expertise, creativity, energy and economic contribution that they make.

It would be very difficult to deliver public services in Hackney, and in particular in the NHS, without EU workers. Visiting the Homerton hospital, and realising just how many of the staff, from nurses, to surgeons, to physiotherapists, are from other EU countries, makes the prospect of running services without them seem very daunting. The social care sector, in London and across the UK is particularly dependent on workers from the EU, and councils and providers fear a recruitment crisis. Many of our thriving local businesses, in tech, fashion, and other industries, have been founded or enriched by EU nationals who chose to make their home here in the most creative and dynamic part of London. We know that their success depends on a global economy, which is why we have worked with them to build international partnerships, and continue to advocate for a Brexit that will work for them, and not just big businesses.

Hackney's economy has grown rapidly over the past 15 years. There are more, and better, jobs here than ever before. We want all local people to benefit from that growth, and if the local economy suffers, so will the opportunities available

to Hackney residents. Staff shortages in public services will directly impact on the quality of life for everyone who lives here. And if Hackney starts to lose its EU nationals, it will lose out in many other ways, that are less easy to quantify but equally important.

As a local authority we can't do much about Brexit, apart from collectively lobby Government to lessen the impact on local services. But what we can do is to tell our EU citizens that they will always be welcome here, and that Hackney values all the positive things that they, collectively and individually, bring to the borough; and whilst we recognise that hate crime in Hackney has not increased a greatly as elsewhere, we must be vigilant and stand up for our shared values. With that in mind, we've produced a special, limited edition 'I Love Hackney' badge that celebrates our EU citizens. As a veteran of many political and charity campaigns, I know that you can't change the world with badges. However, there is something powerful about giving people a way to express the way they feel, and I hope that, even in this small way, we can make our citizens feel welcome and valued, at a very uncertain time.

As part of this campaign, we want to hear your stories about the contribution of EU nationals to Hackney life. So whether it's your story you want to tell, or you want to celebrate a friend or neighbour, please write to me at [mayor@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:mayor@hackney.gov.uk), or tweet us using the hashtag #hackneylovesyou, and we'll send you a badge.



### **Have your say on proposed changes to Hackney's Council Tax Reduction Scheme**

The Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) helps residents on low incomes to pay for their Council Tax. The amount of support a household can get through the scheme is determined through a "means test". At the moment, the CTRS helps around 32,000 Hackney residents and costs around £25.5 million a year to deliver.

The scheme has remained unchanged since it was introduced in April 2013 and is now out of date. It no longer aligns with other means-tested benefits, meaning that the current scheme has become less beneficial for working households in comparison to non-working households. It is not designed to interact with the government's Universal Credit system – and as this expands it is important that the scheme is adapted to work with it.

The scheme has also become too costly to administer in its current form. The cost of the scheme is predicted to rise by half a million pounds in 2018/19, with further increases in costs expected in 2019/20. This cost increase comes at a time when the Council faces significant financial and budgetary pressures due to cuts in funding from central government.

Under the current scheme, a Hackney resident liable for Council Tax could get up to 100% of the charge paid through the CTRS if they are a pensioner, or up to 85% of the charge paid if they are a working age household.

A consultation on proposed changes, which would come into force on 1 April 2018, invites feedback on the Council's preferred option, which includes increasing the minimum contribution all working age CTRS claimants pay from 15% to 20% of their total Council Tax liability.

For a single person with no children, receiving Employment Support Allowance, living in a Band B property, this would see the amount they pay per week increased from £2.23 to £4.09. Pensioners will not be affected.

I've said: "When the government handed responsibility for administering Council Tax-related benefits to local government, it did so with a massive funding shortfall, on top of a huge reduction in overall funding for councils."

It's not been an easy decision to increase the minimum contribution we ask working age households to pay. We considered many other options, as detailed in the consultation paper, and we will continue to provide extra support for the most vulnerable people. In addition, local care leavers will now be exempt from paying Council Tax and those fleeing domestic abuse will not have to pay it for a second property.

We think this is the fairest option but we want to know what residents and stakeholders think, so I'd encourage everyone to take part in the consultation to feed back their thoughts so that we can make a decision in the New Year."

The consultation will run until 6 November. To complete the consultation online visit <https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk>. If you would like to speak to someone about the scheme or to request a paper copy, call 020 8356 3399 or email [benefits@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@hackney.gov.uk).

### **Have your say on plans to improve streets in Shoreditch**

The schemes are part of a new approach to how the Council wants streets to work in Shoreditch which aims to create spaces that are safe and easy to walk or cycle in. It means reducing vehicle dependence and improving air quality.

These proposals build on previous works like the award winning redesign of Leonard Circus and the recent improvements to the Rivington Street / Charlotte Road junction. They will contribute to making Shoreditch a place where residents, visitors and businesses will feel welcomed and enjoy a high quality public realm with fewer motor vehicles.

The Council is asking people who live, work or visit Shoreditch for:

- Ideas about how to turn a neglected alleyway between Hoxton Square and Bowling Green Walk into a welcoming, safe environment that encourages people to walk and cycle through it
- Feedback on a plan to close Garden Walk to through traffic to prevent cars and vans from using it as a rat run between Rivington Street and Great Eastern Street
- Making it safer for walking and cycling suggestions for how New Inn Yard can be changed to improve the environment and make it easier to walk and cycle.

Find out more and have your say before 5 October: <https://hackney.gov.uk/street-consultations>

## **One Account: Check parking permits and if you're registered to vote**

Residents in Hackney can now go online to check whether they're registered to vote, in what is thought to be a first nationwide, as part of two new features of the Council's One Account application.

The changes come as part of an update to One Account, which will also allow residents to check and order parking permits using the system.

One Account is the Council's one-stop shop for services online, where residents can easily access Council services, such as Council Tax, housing repairs, business rates and Housing Benefit. It can be accessed using any computer, tablet or smartphone.

The Hackney One Account is an easy way for residents to access Council services online. Residents have told us that they'd like to be able to go online to check whether they're registered to vote ahead of elections, which they can now do on One Account. Residents will also be able to request a postal vote online as part of the changes. The addition of the parking feature means that far more people will be able to access their Council services in one place.

As a Council, we want to get more residents using our services online, because it's much quicker for them and costs us over eighty times less than face-to-face transactions, so our limited resources can be spent on front-line services.

The new parking feature of One Account will link directly to the eStreet system that residents already use to manage their parking permits, and will display information about their parking permits on the One Account dashboard.

Sign-up to the One Account here: <http://www.hackney.gov.uk/one-account>

## **Previous Motions and policy updates**

All policy motions involving the manifesto with the agreement of Hackney Labour Group will automatically be fed into the agreed manifesto process and not be debated.

## **Visiting, speaking and reporting back to branch Labour Parties**

I'm keen to book new dates in the autumn and start of next year. If you want to invite me please email [philip.glanville@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:philip.glanville@hackney.gov.uk)

Since being elected last September I have been to Wick, Victoria, De Beauvoir, Homerton, King's Park, Clissold, Stoke Newington Branch, Hackney Central Labour, Hoxton West and Haggerston Party Meetings. That's 11 branches as well as Hackney Momentum and the Coop party.