



REBUILDING A BETTER HACKNEY

The impact of coronavirus on Hackney
and our priorities in the next phase

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FOREWORD

Coronavirus has had a devastating impact on Hackney. Too many families have dealt with the grief of losing a loved one too soon, with many more still recovering from the effects of the virus.

At the time of writing, 225 Hackney residents have died from coronavirus. These are parents, grandparents, friends, community leaders and NHS heroes and key workers who put themselves at risk to help others and they leave a deep gap not just in the lives of those who knew them, but the borough as a whole.

We will continue to mourn these tragic losses, and do everything we can to help those still being affected, whether getting back to full health or being struck down by the thankfully smaller and reducing number of new infections.

This year has been a test for our country, our borough and every household. Many of us have worried about our health, our job and income, or simply not being able to see our loved ones.

As a Council, we've prioritised those most vulnerable in our response. We've delivered thousands of food boxes and essential supplies to those that need help. We've put an unprecedented financial support



package in place for residents who are struggling and small businesses facing an uncertain future. And our staff have worked tirelessly to continue to maintain our public spaces to give everyone a place to exercise and relax – often in the face of huge challenges.

Alongside the incredible efforts of Hackney's NHS workers and Council staff, I've never been prouder to represent you. To everyone who has volunteered their time to support those who need help, helped through mutual aid groups or

made supplies for those on the frontline, or simply stood shoulder to shoulder with your neighbours to pay tribute to key workers – thank you.

I make no claim that Hackney's response has been 'world-beating' or perfect – simply that we listened to our local communities and together, as residents, staff and partners, tried to do what was right for our borough.

By working together, we have seen the rate of new infections and deaths come down, Homerton Hospital has not been overwhelmed and – while we are not out of the woods yet – some local businesses and services are starting to reopen. This new normal looks set to stay for some time, and it's essential that everyone continues to follow the rules, observe social distancing and treat their community with respect.

Sadly, while we have all been affected in some way, this crisis has exposed the cruel inequality in our society, including a disproportionate impact on our diverse communities. We also cannot ignore that those with the least resources to cope have been affected most. This report sets out what we know so far about the impact of coronavirus on Hackney and what our priorities will be as we enter a new phase of managing it.

The crippling impact of additional spending to deliver essential and new services, coupled with a loss of income from closed services and properties, means we face a £68million budget shortfall this year alone – equal to half of the entire Government cuts to our budget since 2010 in just one year.

Despite these challenges, we are clear that we must support those most disadvantaged in our borough, campaign on their behalf and seek a more equal recovery. We must stand behind our small businesses, and seize the opportunity to rebuild a more inclusive local economy driven by what profits our society, not just big business or shareholders. And we must build on some of the emergency transport and environmental measures we've taken as we make a permanently greener and cleaner Hackney.

We must rebuild a better Hackney as we come out of the first phase of this crisis. It must be our mission to end rough sleeping, ensure nobody in Hackney goes hungry, get the vulnerable the support they need, support the inclusive economy, keep building the homes the borough needs and ensure a clear employment and skills offer available to all – whether someone is coming off furlough and losing their job, or is a young person leaving school or college and needing support to start their career.

Over the next few months, we'll get on with implementing some of the plans in this report, consult and listen to you about your ideas and, where we need extra powers or funding from the Government, we will ask for them. At the heart of all our work will be our ambition to make Hackney a fairer, more equal borough.

Philip Glanville
Mayor of Hackney

CORONAVIRUS – ITS IMPACT ON HACKNEY

At the time of writing, 225 Hackney residents have died with coronavirus, and while the confirmed number of cases stands at more than 920, earlier difficulties in accessing testing mean this figure is likely to be much higher.

We know that factors like age, sex, ethnicity, deprivation and occupation have an impact on the risk of contracting and dying from coronavirus. In particular, the

risk of infection for South Asian and Black adults is significantly higher compared to their White counterparts.

IN HACKNEY:

Almost half of all confirmed coronavirus cases have been among residents aged 60 or over (this covers both Hackney and the City of London).

90%

of those that died had other pre-existing conditions.

54%

of people who died were employed in routine and manual occupations, where their occupation was known whereas only

32%

of Hackney residents worked in these jobs at the last census.

69%

of residents who died with coronavirus were born outside of the UK, but only

37%

of Hackney residents were born outside of the UK.

The odds of infection for South Asian and Black adults are significantly higher compared to White adults.



This is echoed in the Public Health England report, which found that those of Black African or Black Caribbean ethnicity are almost twice as likely (1.9) to die due to Covid-19, as are men of Bangladeshi and Pakistani ethnicity (1.8), with women of Bangladeshi and Pakistani ethnicity (1.6) also facing a heightened risk.

We know that this points to far wider inequalities in our society. For example, we know that those underlying health conditions which increase the risk of dying from coronavirus are more common among people living in deprived communities. We also know that systematic discrimination means that minority ethnic groups, and in particular Black people, are more likely to work in those manual occupations where there is a higher risk of dying from coronavirus. These, and other systemic inequalities, have led to the disproportionate impact of coronavirus on Hackney residents.



We need to acknowledge this and work to address these inequalities. We will be leading work here in Hackney to do this through our Health and Wellbeing Board and repeat here our call on the national government for a full, independent inquiry into coronavirus so that we can fully address the underlying inequalities in our society that the disease has made so apparent.

IMPACT OF LOCKDOWN ON RESIDENTS

According to NHS data at the time of writing, 7,760 residents in Hackney and the City of London were identified on the shielded patients list, meaning they were at a higher risk from coronavirus and are clinically vulnerable. These residents were advised to take extra steps to protect themselves and received food and essential supplies directly from the Government.

70 % of the people who approached the Council for help said they were struggling to pay for food, and a large majority receive Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support and live in social housing.



There has been a significant financial impact for many households as workers have been furloughed or made redundant. According to HMRC data, as of 11 June, 34,000 workers had been furloughed from businesses registered in Hackney through the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. While this accounts just for those jobs registered in Hackney (not jobs Hackney residents hold in other boroughs) it illustrates the scale of the furlough scheme and the potential impact, both now and as the scheme comes to an end, on residents.

The Council's Housing Needs team has seen an increase in requests for advice. As households' incomes drop, more households are likely to experience rent arrears, and for those in the private sector in particular, the relatively low levels of Local Housing Allowance, coupled with the benefit cap for households where no one is working, leave households exposed to the risk of eviction when the current ban ends.

The Greenhouse, which provides housing and health support for homeless people in Hackney, has seen approaches double.

At the time of writing, Jobcentre Plus centres are processing around 1,000 new Universal Credit claims a week, a 60% increase and since the beginning of March, there have been more than 1,000 new applications for Council financial support, including:

716

applications for
Discretionary Housing Payments

168

applications to the
Discretionary Crisis Support Scheme

157

applications to the Council
Tax Reduction Scheme

Over 4,000 Rose Vouchers, which can be exchanged for fresh fruit and vegetables, have been accepted at Council-run markets.



Referrals to the Council’s Domestic Abuse Intervention Service have increased by 60 per cent during lockdown, from around 25 cases per week to almost 40.

From March until June, schools in Hackney were closed except to children of essential workers and vulnerable children. A phased return of most primary schools – for early years settings, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 – started in June, with secondary

schools opening similarly for Year 10 and 12 later that month. We argued that it was important that reopening was safe, and the Hackney Learning Trust and the Council supported schools to make individual decisions about opening and provision for parents to continue education at home. More recently we were finally able to distribute over 1,500 laptops to vulnerable young people impacted by the digital divide.

IMPACT ON BUSINESS

The enforced shutdown of many businesses and social distancing rules have had a significant effect on Hackney’s local economy and the ability of businesses to operate.

The Council’s recent surveys of businesses found that:

77%
were closed

95%
had lost income

25%
had staff who were self-isolating and unable to work

24%
had made staff redundant

7.5%
had staff who were scared to work because of infection risk

79%
had furloughed staff

3 in 4
faced a loss of more than three-quarters of their income

50%+
More than half cannot sustain further losses in income

Only around 2,500 businesses in Hackney will receive the Government’s 100 % business rate relief applied in response to coronavirus, and around 5,000 are eligible for the Government’s grants programmes. This leaves thousands of businesses in Hackney who are in premises and pay business rates but cannot access this support. The £3.4m provided by the Government for the Council to run a further discretionary grant scheme will not be enough to provide support to most of these businesses.

1 in 10 jobs in Hackney is in the creative industries. The majority of cultural organisations that responded to a Council survey said they have suffered a loss in income, expect to be moderately or severely affected by coronavirus, and to date have not been able to apply for Government funding packages.



IMPACT ON COUNCIL SERVICES

Frontline staff – such as care, parks and waste workers – have worked tirelessly to ensure vital services that residents rely on continue, often in the face of increased demand. Those traditionally seen as back office staff were critical to ensuring those residents and businesses that needed advice, humanitarian assistance and financial support got it.

While Council buildings have been closed to the public, services continue to operate and the majority of the Council's staff now work from home. Some staff have volunteered to be redeployed to support essential services during the crisis, stepping into new roles to help ensure we can continue to meet residents' needs.

As a result of coronavirus, the Council faces a £68million budget shortfall this year



Additional spending on key frontline services during the pandemic, coupled with losses in Council Tax, Business Rates and other income, have also impacted on the Council's finances:

- As a result of coronavirus, the Council faces a £68million budget shortfall this year
- The funding gap is equivalent to half of the £140m in government grant cuts the Council has received since 2010 – in just one year
- So far, the Council has received around £20million from the Government in emergency financial support – a quarter of what is needed. While an arrangement to cover some of the Council's lost income has been announced, it will still leave a funding gap.



OUR RESPONSE SO FAR

Hackney Council has worked hard to respond to the coronavirus pandemic and ensure that residents and businesses who need support get it.



600 volunteers
deployed



800,000 items
of PPE issued to staff
and external providers*



14,000
emergency food
parcels delivered



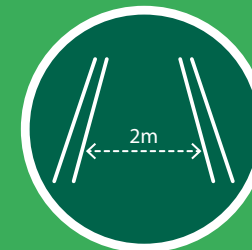
7,300 calls made to
vulnerable tenants
and leaseholders



170 rough sleepers
off the streets



£62.5 million in
government grants paid to
nearly **4,300** businesses



7 pavements widened
6 roads closed to aid
social distancing



Over **1,500** laptops
sent to students that
need them



£62,000 in Council rent
relief for voluntary and
community organisations

Protecting public health

The Council has supported the Government's testing programme, including the operation of Mobile Testing Units in Dalston and Stamford Hill. More than 5,000 people have been tested at these centres and we are creating more capacity in response to local need.

The Council has developed a Local Outbreak Control Plan to guide the Hackney & City response which will be a constantly evolving document overseen by our new Local Outbreak Board, and will shape our implementation of the NHS Test and Trace system. On a day-to-day basis, this work will be managed by a local Health Protection Board which is made up of key local partners and involves the voluntary sector. The Council is also participating in the London Good Practice Network (one of 11 nationwide and led in London by Camden), to play a critical friend on issues of concern and rapidly implement this plan, evaluate and share learning. Within this network, the Council is co-leading on the communications strategy and the use of data, and training up a network of community outreach workers.

At-risk residents

The Council has placed over 170 people in emergency accommodation including those with 'no recourse to public funds', to make sure those sleeping rough – or at risk of sleeping rough – during the coronavirus crisis have a safe place to live, in line with our commitment to end rough sleeping.

In partnership with Volunteer Centre Hackney and Hackney CVS, around

600 local volunteers have been recruited to support vulnerable residents – whether helping to do shopping or pick up essentials or simply regularly checking in with isolated or lonely people. Despite shielding or staying at home, many residents have still played their part in supporting their community.

The Council set up an emergency food distribution centre in Hackney Wick – an entirely new service – to deliver essential food and supplies to residents who needed support. This service has delivered more than 14,000 parcels since March, with a dedicated helpline taking thousands of calls from people asking for different forms of assistance. It also acted as a PPE hub and distribution centre for Hackney Foodbank.

There are specific religious barriers that might have prevented the Orthodox Jewish Community from finding out about coronavirus with not all households online or accessing national media. We therefore set up a dedicated helpline in the community. The Orthodox Jewish community also faces very specific barriers to accessing government support for shielding residents, because of the way food needs to be stored to be in line with Kosher requirements. We have worked with partners from the Orthodox Jewish community to set up a Kosher food hub run by Bikur Cholim, with support from the Council.

Ridley Road Market remained open throughout the crisis to traders selling fresh fruits and vegetables and essential supplies, with vouchers accepted for families on low incomes.



20,000 families and single people on low incomes have received a further rebate of up to £150 on their Council Tax bill

The Council's Adult Social Care service has continued to care for its clients, with hundreds of thousands of items of PPE provided so that staff can continue to complete their vital work. The Council's four care homes have also been supported with extra funding and a dedicated team.



With schools closed and warnings about the risks of children spending more time online, the Hackney Safer Schools app, which offers vital safeguarding information and advice, was launched by the Council to provide support on topics including online bullying, mental health, sexting, media literacy, gaming and sexual exploitation online.

Nearly 400 older and vulnerable Council tenants are receiving help, advice or simply a friendly chat through the Council's Let's Talk initiative – ensuring that self-isolation

doesn't mean social isolation for people feeling lonely, stressed or anxious during the pandemic. Older people are most likely to be digitally excluded in Hackney and are more likely to be cut off from social contact and services that have gone online, hence the importance of initiatives like Let's Talk.

Schools have provided Free School Meal vouchers for the parents of eligible students – including through the school holidays and we successfully fought for it to be expanded and continued into the summer holidays.

Financial support for residents

To date, around 20,000 families and single people on low incomes have received a further rebate of up to £150 on their Council Tax bill through the Government scheme, and the Council has invested an additional £500,000 into its Discretionary Crisis Support Scheme, which residents can apply to for urgent financial support with emergency needs. A further £120,000 has been invested to support Discretionary Housing Payments for those needing support to pay rent.

The Council has also set up a £100,000 fund to support local residents financially impacted by the coronavirus crisis but unable to access the welfare system due to their immigration status and the inhumane 'no recourse to public funds' classification.

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

The Council's measures to support small businesses – including its own tenants – and boost the local economy have included:

- **A three-month no-quibbles rent deferral for all 300 commercial tenants, with an ongoing review of future payments, as well as suspension of enforcement or eviction proceedings**
- **Application of the Government's business rate relief for eligible businesses, with the cancellation of direct debit payments due for existing 2020/21 bills**
- **Urgent payment of coronavirus business grants and a new discretionary business grant scheme, with £60 million distributed to date**
- **The suspension of all commercial waste payments for businesses that have been forced to close**
- **The suspension of any fees and charges due from street market traders unable to trade**
- **Payments to local businesses for services provided to the Council made immediately rather than within 14 days**

The Council's Hackney Business Network has regularly communicated with its members and worked with the Federation of Small Businesses and East End Trades Guild to connect businesses to support. The Hackney Business Network has also provided businesses with free social distancing materials to use in premises that have recently reopened.



SUPPORTING CHARITIES AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Local voluntary and community organisations have played a crucial role in the borough’s response to coronavirus while facing their own financial challenges, we have:

- **Cancelled** rent for four months for voluntary and community organisations who rent Council buildings
- **Signed up** to the London Funders commitment to the sector, offering flexibility with programme delivery, finance and reporting together with support
- **Lifted** restrictions on how organisations can use our normal grants
- **Funded** an accelerated small grants programme to support hyper-local and grassroots-based responses to coronavirus
- **Invested** in Hackney Giving’s coronavirus grants programme to encourage match funding from individuals and corporate donors
- **Provided** further financial support to organisations to mitigate long-term financial impacts

Cancelled rent for four months for voluntary and community organisations who rent Council buildings



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

From the initial announcement of schools closing on 17 March, Hackney Learning Trust has been providing guidance and support for all Hackney schools. We provided initial support on early set up of learning at home and safe provision in school for key workers’ children and vulnerable children. We have provided daily bulletins to schools with the latest local and national guidance. School

improvement partners have been in weekly contact with headteachers of maintained schools. As we moved towards further opening from 1 June, Hackney Learning Trust has run online webinars for headteachers and governors. This is in addition to weekly meetings with special school headteachers and weekly meetings with union representatives.

During the crisis, on behalf of the Council, the Hackney Learning Trust has:

- **Supported** secondary schools through the unprecedented process of having no formal examinations this summer, providing advice and guidance about the process of teacher assessment including how to ensure the avoidance of bias in the awarding of grades
- **Worked** closely with schools and Children and Families Service to ensure a safety net of partnership work between education and social care was in place to support vulnerable children – or those for whom safeguarding concerns emerged during this period
- **Worked** to ensure that for pupils in Year 6, the transition from primary to secondary school goes as well as possible
- **Provided** online learning materials for all ages via its website and worked to distribute the laptops provided by the government
- **Preparing** for the summer, facilitated 15 school based summer activity camps, providing for over 600 children





Children's centre staff have supported families to access necessities such as food and nappies where needed.

Young Hackney ran an online programme during the Easter holidays, and continues to run its Youth Hub activities online where possible. Youth workers have stayed in touch with young people, continuing to support them remotely, and families linked with Hackney Children's Centres have received practical resources to support their wellbeing and parenting. Children's centre staff have also been available to provide advice on housing and welfare, and have supported families to access other necessities such as food and nappies where needed.

have remained open throughout the lockdown for the children of key workers and vulnerable pupils, and most schools have now reopened for some pupils ahead of the summer holidays.

The early years team have been supporting the wider network of childcare provision by independent nurseries, childminders and playgroups. They have provided guidance and individual support.

Finally, the Council's Young Futures Commission has organised a series of

Young people have raised a variety of issues affecting their lives – including education and employment, health and wellbeing, the impact of domestic violence, digital poverty and the length of lockdown restrictions

The Disabled Children's Service opened up its Short Breaks offer, enabling options such as the purchase of equipment to use at home, and is now expanding this to include outdoor face-to-face or online sessions such as sports, exercise, cycling, drama, dance coaching and lessons. The Local Offer was updated to reflect the changes to services and to offer online resources to children, young people and families with SEND, such as social stories explaining the changes brought about by coronavirus.

Individual schools are providing educational materials and support where possible to help parents to home-school children. Schools and childcare settings

video calls for young people to give them a safe space to discuss the issues affecting them. Young people have raised a variety of issues affecting their lives – including education and employment, health and wellbeing, the impact of domestic violence, digital poverty, disproportionate policing and the length of lockdown restrictions. Students raised specific concerns about predicted grades, applying and starting University and other courses in September and general disengagement, amid family conflict and overcrowding at home. All of these have helped inform our response to the crisis and will continue to shape future work going forwards.

Council tenants and leaseholders

Clear measures have been put in place to protect tenants and leaseholders in the Council's 30,000 homes as much as possible during the pandemic, while ensuring the Council continues to fulfil its responsibilities as a landlord during the lockdown period.

The priority has been to ensure the most vulnerable Council residents have the help they need by identifying those who require additional assistance due to their age, health or other circumstances, with some housing staff redeployed to focus on this essential support.

The Council has continued to provide repairs and maintenance services for urgent and emergency issues throughout the lockdown, and all evictions and pursuit of arrears for rent and service charges were paused at the beginning of the pandemic. Estate-based offices, facilities and play spaces have closed to aid social distancing, and estate cleaning and management prioritised to ensure communal areas are as hygienic as possible.

Hackney's Housing team have continued to deliver essential services to tenants and leaseholders.



CULTURAL AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

The Council brought together more than 220 representatives from cultural and creative industries to hear the challenges the sector faced and support them in calling for more support from the Government.

Hackney Carnival, the Windrush Generations Festival and the Discover Young Hackney festival are all taking place through a mix of online events and direct engagement, with new projects such as Hackney Social Radio FM, a programme focussing on digitally excluded older residents, and Hackney Circle, a free cultural membership scheme for over-55s, designed to help prevent self-isolation meaning social isolation.



The Council also responded to the Black Lives Matter movement through a new review of the naming of landmarks, streets and public spaces, and the announcement of two new permanent public artworks to pay tribute to the Windrush Generation.

Faith and religious communities

The Council has convened the Faith Forum on a fortnightly basis so that we can bring everyone together during this crisis. This has helped us provide better advice and support to residents observing Passover, Easter and Ramadan, including working with faith leaders to communicate how to safely celebrate and carry out religious ceremonies.

The Council has worked particularly closely with the Orthodox Jewish community, rabbis and community leaders to ensure that Government advice and information about services reaches members of the community who may not normally access mainstream communications channels.



On 3 May, a virtual prayer session hosted by Hackney's Speaker saw members of various beliefs come together in support and solidarity for Hackney's communities, including leaders of Muslim, Jewish and Christian faiths, as well as a reverend from the New Unity non-religious church.



Social distancing

Banners and posters were put up in parks and public spaces in March encouraging residents to ensure we could keep these spaces open while helping residents observe social distancing rules, and these have continued to be updated in line with Government guidance. To try and keep our public spaces safe for everyone, the Council increased enforcement in the borough's parks and public spaces, with social distancing advisors speaking to residents who did not follow the guidance.

Other Council facilities – such as play areas, sports courts and toilets – were closed, although now nearly all have reopened with strict rules in line with public health advice. Enforcement teams have patrolled the borough's parks, issuing fines for littering, urination and defecation to discourage anti-social behaviour and try to ensure our parks remain open to everyone.

Emergency transport and environmental changes

With public transport for essential use only, the Council has taken a series of emergency measures to make it easier for residents to walk and cycle, and support social distancing. The Council has introduced road closures at Broadway Market, Barnabas Road, Ashenden Road, Gore Road and Ufton Road, and at seven sites where residents are experiencing difficulties with social distancing, footpaths have been widened with barriers and parking suspended to help people walk and shop safely.

It has also showcased the best of Hackney – our incredible, talented and committed public servants in the NHS and key services, the community spirit and selflessness of our residents and small businesses, and the local ideas and initiatives run by local people, for local people.

Staying in touch with residents and businesses

To make sure that all residents were aware of key public health messages, information and support for vulnerable residents together with the Council's emergency response work, decisions and service changes we have:

- **Delivered** information leaflets to all homes with public health advice, support for at-risk residents and information on Council services
- **Kept** residents up to date on the latest developments and help available via our e-newsletter, published three times a week and reaching over 6,000 subscribers
- **Published** five editions of Hackney Today and Hackney Life, launched a new online tool to find local support services and created dedicated webpages with information and support
- **Produced** materials for our parks and other public spaces promoting social distancing and advising residents on the steps to take to stay safe
- **Delivered** specific material to and worked directly with the Orthodox Jewish community
- **Launched** a resident survey about the impact of coronavirus

A FAIRER, MORE EQUAL RECOVERY

Coronavirus has had a huge impact on our borough, exposing and exacerbating existing inequality in our society and disproportionately affecting some of our communities.

It has also showcased the best of Hackney – our incredible, talented and committed public servants in the NHS and key services, the community spirit and selflessness of our residents and small businesses, and the local ideas and initiatives run by local people, for local people.

As we enter a new phase of managing coronavirus and reopening parts of our economy, we are determined that there is no simple slide back to business as usual. We must continue to support those disproportionately affected by coronavirus, rebuild a fairer, more inclusive

local economy and transition to a greener, cleaner borough. These are the things that we have always worked for and now they are more important than ever.

At the same time, the financial impact of coronavirus is continuing to have an unprecedented impact on the Council's finances – as well as those of Hackney's households and businesses – and we are clear that the Government must keep its commitment to “do whatever it takes” and to fund councils and their communities.

Together, we can rebuild a better Hackney.



|||||

This crisis has exposed the inequalities – whether racial, health, financial or other – that our society continues to suffer from

REBUILDING TOGETHER: SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES

We cannot ignore that coronavirus has affected some of us more than others. Black and South Asian people represent a disproportionate number of cases and deaths in Hackney, and many residents in these communities are understandably worried about the risk to them as we move into a new phase.

This crisis has exposed the inequalities – whether racial, health, financial or other – that our society continues to suffer from. People are right to be angry about this, and it has always been our mission to change it.

We also know that the unequal impact of coronavirus will spread beyond the disease itself, with the economic fallout that is now emerging affecting jobs, opportunities and income for thousands of people, up and down the country and here in Hackney.

As we move into the next phase of our response, we'll continue to support residents who need extra help, and embrace the opportunity to find long-term solutions to systemic problems like rough sleeping or the digital divide.



We will

- **Support** the recommendations from the Hackney Young Futures Commission
- **Implement** changes learned from our Young Black Men programme
- **Set out** our clear commitment to anti-racism and tackling structural inequality and systemic racism
- **Use** this historic opportunity to end rough sleeping, with no rough sleepers asked to leave their emergency accommodation – including those with no recourse to public funds
- **Boost** our work to tackle the digital divide, including smart device and free or low-cost internet access and bringing connectivity to key community assets and temporary accommodation
- **Launch** a new partnership with the voluntary sector to support vulnerable residents who need extra help, as direct food deliveries come to an end
- **Run** a dedicated summer programme for young people through our Young Hackney service and partners, recognising the anxiety lockdown has caused them
- **Use** the information we have learned about residents accessing support to improve our services for them
- **Develop** new resident engagement and explore partnering with an academic institution to consider new ways we can tackle inequality given the impact of coronavirus
- **Publish** and deliver a strategy to reduce poverty in the borough, ensuring that no one goes hungry in Hackney
- **Make** it easier for residents to tell us if they are struggling to pay Council Tax, rent or other bills through our Talk to Us campaign, reaching out to residents who may not have accessed Council services before

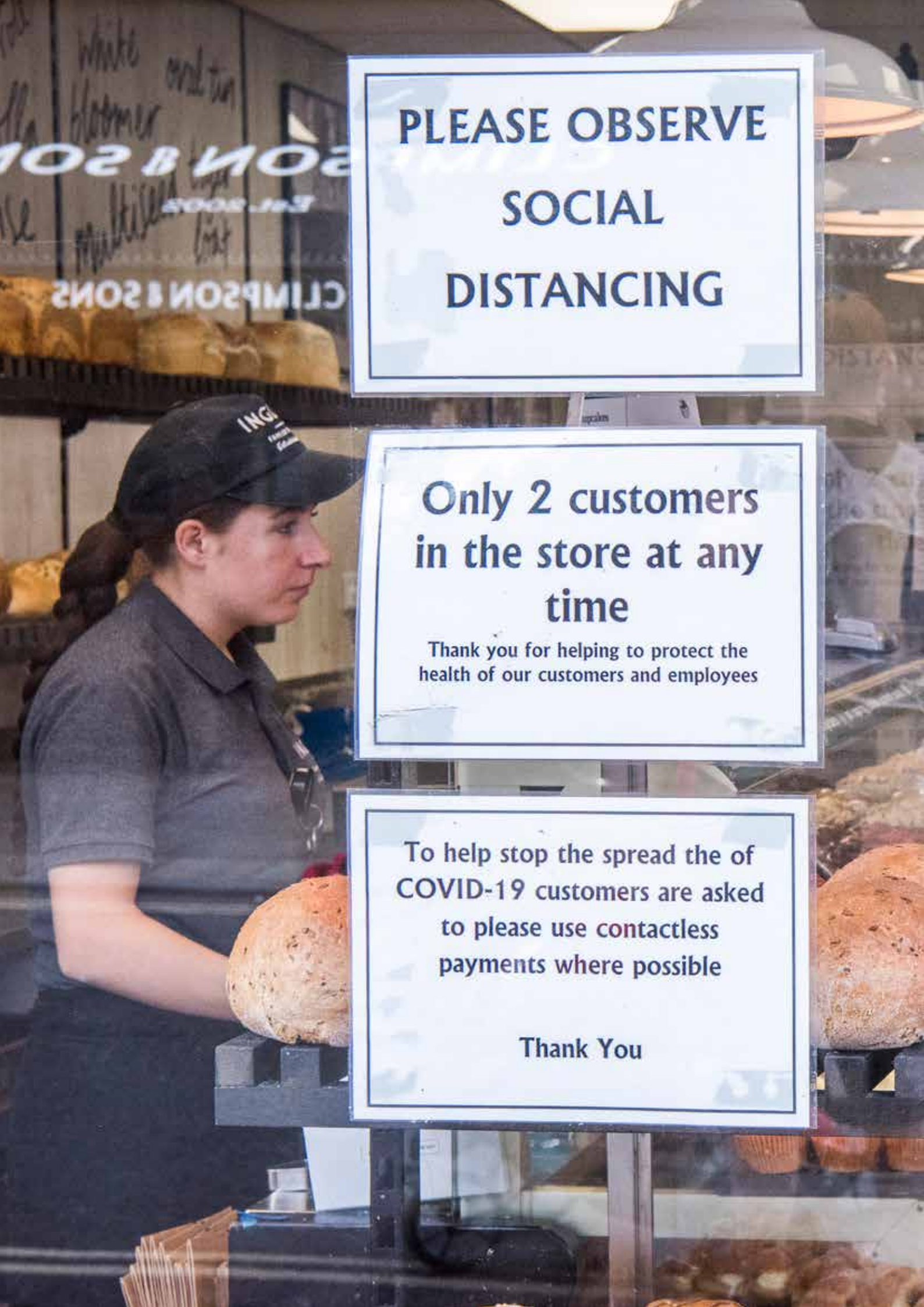
We will set out our clear commitment to anti-racism and tackling structural inequality and systemic racism

REBUILDING TOGETHER: SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES



- **Take** steps to ensure we are addressing loneliness and isolation, including through our befriending and intergenerational volunteering programmes
- **Ensure** that the drive to deliver services remotely in order to support social distancing does not impact on residents access to vital services, particularly health and the NHS
- **Consult** residents and partner organisations on our new Ageing Well Strategy, reflecting on how coronavirus has affected older residents, which will support the lives of our citizens as they grow older.
- **Further** promote and develop volunteering opportunities, helping bring communities and generations together
- **Learn** from the benefits of the hyperlocal approach embedded by mutual aid and explore ways this could be used to address wider needs in the local community
- **Recognise** that our response must reflect the disproportionate impact coronavirus has had on certain residents and communities in the borough

Make it easier for residents to tell us if they are struggling to pay Council Tax, rent or other bills through our Talk to Us campaign, reaching out to residents who may not have accessed Council services before



**PLEASE OBSERVE
SOCIAL
DISTANCING**

**Only 2 customers
in the store at any
time**

Thank you for helping to protect the
health of our customers and employees

**To help stop the spread the of
COVID-19 customers are asked
to please use contactless
payments where possible**

Thank You

REBUILDING A FAIRER ECONOMY

Our business community, town centres and high streets have been badly affected by the impact of closures and social distancing. Thousands of residents' jobs have been affected, with some losing jobs, others seeing working hours reduced and more facing an insecure employment future.

As Government support starts to reduce in the coming months, it will be essential that we do everything we can to support those facing unemployment and underemployment, securing them the skills and training they need. We must support the smaller businesses and social enterprises that are at the heart of our local economy as they face a challenging and uncertain future as the economy rebuilds.

Coronavirus has also laid bare the disparities in employment opportunities, terms and practices, with residents from minority ethnic groups over-represented in more manual occupations, many in roles that have made social distancing near impossible during the course of this crisis. To address this we need to invest in our skills and employment services, improving opportunities for all Hackney residents. We also need to look at our own employment practices and those of our partners. We have worked closely with our own suppliers throughout this crisis to ensure their staff are protected on the same basis as our

own, and we continue to progress work to bring more services under direct Council control and where this is not possible, drive up employment standards. We will work to accelerate our own work and to place pressure on our partners in the borough to do the same.

Coronavirus has damaged our economy, it has put residents out of work through no fault of their own and put the borough's small businesses at risk. Even with all this happening around us there are opportunities to grasp. Now is the moment to say that as we return to work it won't be to business as usual, and there is an opportunity to rebuild a fairer economy led by our social values that taps into the diversity and independent entrepreneurial spirit that makes Hackney's economy a place of commerce that generates prosperity for the many in our borough.

This means finding new ways to help people find meaningful work and retraining, supporting our small businesses and social enterprises, and ensuring our town centres and public spaces are used for public good. It means supporting businesses in our borough's economy to be sustainable, competitive and digital, and that we focus on enhancing the growth potential and resilience of our local economy – for people and place, not just for private profit.

We will

- **Provide** support to all those who lose their job in the coming weeks and months, offering skills training and support to find new employment
- **Track** the long-term impact of coronavirus on residents' life chances – the impact time out of school or work has on career progression – and continue to identify actions we can take to address this
- **Act** to address and mitigate against the systemic discrimination that sees those from minority ethnic communities over represented in more manual occupations and underrepresented in senior or managerial roles
- **Continue** to move more services in-house and work with partners to ensure those delivering essential services in Hackney have good pay and employment conditions
- **Map** the needs of residents who find themselves out of work or unable to progress in their career as a result of coronavirus and focus our Adult Learning Service on delivering the skills and training needed to address these
- **Use** our Hackney Works service to provide dedicated employment support, apprenticeships and work placements for those whose employment has been affected
- **Campaign** for the devolution of adult skills services and equal funding for further education so that we can shape the services available for Hackney
- **Create** a hub for all businesses in the borough through relaunching the Hackney Business Network website, bringing together information, support and networking opportunities in the borough as businesses rebuild in the wake of coronavirus
- **Enhance** the town centre based business forum network ensuring that local communities of businesses can connect with the Council on local growth initiatives, address local town centre issues, connect with federations and associations and assist the Council to manage the public realm
- **Map** and respond to the changes in our local economy as a result of coronavirus, and we will identify and work with businesses and sectors that support our social values and objectives using our Hackney business toolkit as the basis for creating a social contract with our business community

REBUILDING A FAIRER ECONOMY

- **Work** with the wider public sector to understand the impact of coronavirus on services and workers and what Government investment is needed to support good employment practices, especially those that have been disproportionately affected by coronavirus themselves
- **Recognise** and support residents who, in response to coronavirus' economic impact, want to start their own businesses or become self-employed
- **Campaign** for a real reform of business rates, local high street and town centre regeneration powers and funding, rather than by Government-led top-down planning and regeneration policy imposed on our local communities
- **Build**, fund and support affordable workspace in our town centres for micro and smaller businesses, providing a supply of space that is affordable and connected at risk of eviction from redevelopment, rising rent or lost income
- **Work** with our business and voluntary sector tenants struggling to pay rents supporting them through this period, ensuring that our buildings are home to a thriving and resilient community contributing to our community and the values we hold
- **Accelerate** our work on supporting the delivery of an inclusive, digital economy – a digital transformation enabling commerce to thrive, connecting people and places and enhancing public service delivery

We will use our Hackney Works service to provide dedicated employment support, apprenticeships and work placements for those whose employment has been affected

- **We** will continue to pay the London Living Wage and provide apprenticeships and training opportunities for local people, and ask others to do the same, recognising now more than ever the importance of good jobs, fair pay and the opportunity to develop new skills
- **We** will work with charities, social enterprises and voluntary organisations in the borough to support them through the different challenges they face, from demand for services to loss of income, as a result of coronavirus.

REBUILDING GREENER

We're passionate about reclaiming our roads and streets for people, reducing carbon emissions and improving our borough's air quality to respond to the climate emergency. We're already London's leading borough for this environmental work, but the traffic-free streets and improved air during the early part of the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown has made everyone stop to think about what the future could look like. We responded quickly to widen pavements in social distancing hotspots and put parking exemptions in place for key workers.

To help maintain social distancing, make it easier for people to walk and cycle while public transport capacity is reduced and make it easier for key workers to get around, we're publishing an emergency

transport plan which builds on some of the measures we've taken so far. We've committed to creating 40 new School Streets, ensuring that when children return to school in September, School Streets are the norm not the exception. We will also build on our record of creating more low traffic neighbourhoods filtering and closing more roads to through traffic.

We can't afford to go back to the car-dominated streets of the past, and we want to use this opportunity to consider who our streets are for. That's why we'll listen to how residents feel about the changes we're making through new methods of engagement and explore together how with our other work we can make this a greener, cleaner recovery.

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We'll create new low traffic neighbourhoods across Hackney and introduce 40 new School Streets.



We will

REBUILDING GREENER

- **Publish an emergency transport plan to support the 'new normal', consulting residents about what changes could be made permanent in the future**
- **Continue to close roads to through motor traffic, improve key cycling routes and widen pavements where needed to respond to unprecedented travel restrictions**
- **Specifically, we'll close a further 20 roads to through-traffic and introduce 40 new School Streets in September**
- **Enforce against anti-social behaviour in our parks and green spaces to ensure they can be used by everyone – not just an entitled few**
- **Hold a Citizens Assembly to discuss the Council's climate emergency in the context of coronavirus**
- **Continue the programme to plant 35,000 new trees by 2022, including 5,000 new street trees**
- **Work with residents groups to explore new areas for community growing**
- **Launch two new rooftop solar power sites generating energy locally new areas for community growing**

Hackney's coronavirus budget challenge

Council finances have been cut over a decade of Government-led austerity, and local authorities have already faced difficult decisions about services. Hackney has lost £140m in government funding since 2010 – £1,459 a year per household and the most of any London borough.

Coronavirus has made that shortfall even more acute. Our services face a budget gap of £68million this year – half of those budget cuts since 2010 in just one year. The Government has provided some funding, but it will still leave a massive funding gap. It must step in to stop a health crisis becoming a public services crisis, at the time when these services are needed most.

While our finances have been soundly managed, the lack of meaningful action from the Government threatens our communities, local economy and services. We will be honest and transparent about the challenges ahead and work with our staff and residents on how to address these.

The Government needs to:

- **Recognise the full financial impact of coronavirus on local councils and provide the funding needed**
- **Moving forward, cancel the (Un) Fair Funding Review and properly fund councils based on the needs of their residents, not over simplistic headcounts in the wider three-year Spending Review.**

OUR ASKS OF THE GOVERNMENT



We're doing our bit to get Hackney back on its feet, but we need the Government to do more.

Too often throughout this crisis – whether PPE shortages, testing delays or abrupt changes to lockdown restrictions – decisions have been made in Whitehall without the insight and expertise of local people who know their communities best. The Government has provided vital

support, but it must learn from these lessons, and as we make new decisions about the future, it should devolve power and funding to local councils so that we can take decisions that are right for Hackney. A one-size-fits-all approach to coronavirus will not work.



We ask the Government to

SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITIES

- 1.** Establish a coronavirus public inquiry that includes the disparity in outcomes for Black and other communities in its terms of reference
- 2.** Campaign for the Government to implement the full recommendations of Public Health England's Fenton review into the disparities in risk and outcomes from coronavirus
- 3.** Bring an end to the inhumane 'no recourse to public funds' classification that leaves family, neighbours and friends unable to access vital support; and as an interim measure exemptions for those sleeping rough or fleeing domestic abuse.
- 4.** Deliver meaningful investment in prevention, outreach and move-on pathways for rough sleepers, recognising that it is as much a health issue as a housing one.
- 5.** Keep Local Housing Allowance rates at their current level (30 per cent of local rents) and consider further raising them to their former level of 50 per cent.
- 6.** End the benefit cap, which penalises large families and areas with high rents, and restore the principles of a benefits system based on need.
- 7.** Give us the freedom to spend our Right to Buy receipts, helping us deliver the social housing our residents need faster.

- 8.** Bring an end to Section 21 evictions.
- 9.** Invest in our young people, giving schools the resources they need to help children catch-up on missed learning and development.
- 10.** Deliver on a truly integrated health and social care service, with funding that reflects the role of adult social care as part of our frontline health services.
- 11.** Finally agree on a means of putting funding for adult social care on a sustainable footing, either through capping personal contributions or general taxation, ensuring everyone can receive high quality care when they need it, regardless of ability to pay.
- 12.** Deliver greater devolution of health and social care powers to local councils.
- 13.** Commit to funding the mental health services people need, including through channeling more resources into local organisations better placed to meet the needs of specific communities.

We ask the Government to

REBUILD A FAIRER ECONOMY

- 1.** Invest in the arts and culture sector to ensure the future of vital community venues.
- 2.** Implement a further extension of the furlough scheme and a package of financial support for those businesses which remain unable to fully open.
- 3.** Give us greater control and use of the apprenticeship levy, so we can create more opportunities for Hackney residents, including care leavers.
- 4.** Devolve of apprenticeship, adult skills and employment support services – including job centres – to local authorities who can support residents best.

REBUILD GREENER

- 1.** Fund a Green Council Homes programme to retrofit council stock, so no home falls below an EPC rating of C by 2030.
- 2.** Commit to reach the World Health Organisation's air quality goal of 10 micrograms of particulate matter per cubic metre by 2030, fund local councils to help achieve this and set new legal limits on pollution levels that give Councils greater powers to intervene when they are breached.
- 3.** Address residential waste enforcement legislation to enable councils to make compulsory recycling more easily enforceable.
- 4.** Introduce a legal duty on supermarkets to create packaging-free aisles.
- 5.** Introduce a 'producer pays' principle – taxing the producers of packaging and waste to help fund council recycling services.
- 6.** Include a legally-binding water efficiency commitment in the upcoming Environment Bill, namely reduce water consumption by 30 % and half water leakages by 2040.



hackney.gov.uk/coronavirus-support