



Havering

LONDON BOROUGH

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD AGENDA

7.00 pm

Tuesday
7 May 2024

Havering Town Hall,
Main Road, Romford

Members 12: Quorum 5

COUNCILLORS:

Conservative Group (4)

Dilip Patel
Keith Prince
Timothy Ryan
David Taylor

Havering Residents' Group (4)

Laurance Garrard (Vice-Chair)
Gerry O'Sullivan (Chairman)
Natasha Summers
Bryan Vincent

Labour Group (2)

Mandy Anderson
Matthew Stanton

East Havering Residents (1)

Martin Goode

For information about the meeting please contact:

Anthony Clements 01708 433065
anthony.clements@oneSource.co.uk

Under the Committee Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution the Chairman of the meeting may exercise the powers conferred upon the Mayor in relation to the conduct of full Council meetings. As such, should any member of the public interrupt proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned. If they continue to interrupt, the Chairman will order their removal from the meeting room and may adjourn the meeting while this takes place.

Excessive noise and talking should also be kept to a minimum whilst the meeting is in progress in order that the scheduled business may proceed as planned.

Protocol for members of the public wishing to report on meetings of the London Borough of Havering

Members of the public are entitled to report on meetings of Council, Committees and Cabinet, except in circumstances where the public have been excluded as permitted by law.

Reporting means:-

- filming, photographing or making an audio recording of the proceedings of the meeting;
- using any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later; or
- reporting or providing commentary on proceedings at a meeting, orally or in writing, so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later if the person is not present.

Anyone present at a meeting as it takes place is not permitted to carry out an oral commentary or report. This is to prevent the business of the meeting being disrupted.

Anyone attending a meeting is asked to advise Democratic Services staff on 01708 433076 that they wish to report on the meeting and how they wish to do so. This is to enable employees to guide anyone choosing to report on proceedings to an appropriate place from which to be able to report effectively.

Members of the public are asked to remain seated throughout the meeting as standing up and walking around could distract from the business in hand.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Under the Localism Act 2011 (s. 9F) each local authority is required by law to establish an overview and scrutiny function to support and scrutinise the Council's executive arrangements.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board acts as a vehicle by which the effectiveness of scrutiny is monitored and where work undertaken by themed sub-committees can be coordinated to avoid duplication and to ensure that areas of priority are being reviewed. The Board also scrutinises general management matters relating to the Council and further details are given in the terms of reference below. The Overview and Scrutiny Board has oversight of performance information submitted to the Council's executive and also leads on scrutiny of the Council budget and associated information. All requisitions or 'call-ins' of executive decisions are dealt with by the Board.

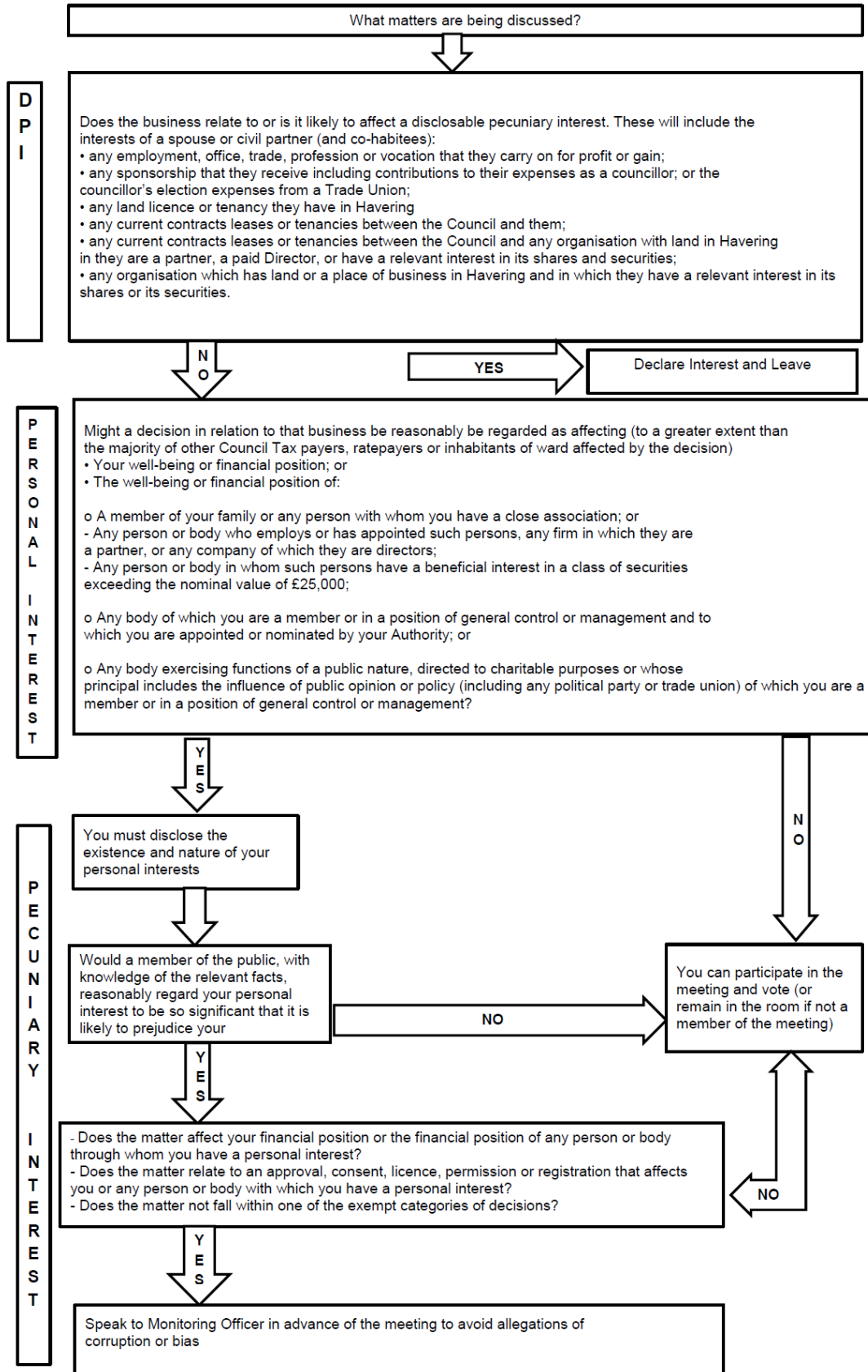
The Board is politically balanced and includes among its membership the Chairmen of the six themed Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committees.

Terms of Reference:

The areas scrutinised by the Board are:

- Strategy and commissioning
 - Partnerships with Business
 - Customer access
 - E-government and ICT
 - Finance (although each committee is responsible for budget processes that affect its area of oversight)
 - Human resources
 - Asset Management
 - Property resources
 - Facilities Management
 - Communications
 - Democratic Services
 - Social inclusion
 - Councillor Call for Action
-

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



AGENDA ITEMS

1 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman will announce details of the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies have been received from Councillors Mandy Anderson and Laurance Garrard.

To receive any other apologies for absence.

3 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members are invited to disclose any interest in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting.

Members may still disclose an interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

4 MINUTES (Pages 7 - 16)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 31 January 2024 (attached) and to authorise the Chairman to sign them.

5 CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS (Pages 17 - 44)

Report and documentation attached (exempt appendices not available to press or public).

6 CRM DIGITAL PLATFORM PROGRAMME (Pages 45 - 68)

Update report attached.

7 REPORT OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT TASK AND FINISH GROUP (Pages 69 - 76)

Report attached.

The Board is invited to agree the report and that it should be referred to Cabinet for response.

8 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

To consider whether the public should now be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public were present during these items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972; and, if it is decided to exclude the public on these grounds, the Sub-Committee to resolve accordingly on the motion of the Chair.

9 EXEMPT MINUTES OF MEETING, 31 JANUARY 2024 (Pages 77 - 78)

To agree as a correct record the exempt minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 31 January 2024 (attached, not available to press or public).

Zena Smith
Head of Committee and Election Services

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD
Havering Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
31 January 2024 (7.04 - 10.15 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group	Dilip Patel, Keith Prince, Timothy Ryan and David Taylor
Havering Residents' Group	Laurance Garrard, Gerry O'Sullivan (Chairman), Philip Ruck (Vice-Chair) and Bryan Vincent
Labour Group	Matthew Stanton Martin Goode
East Havering Residents' Group	

All decisions were taken with no votes against.

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Councillors Mandy Anderson (Pat Brown substituting) and Natasha Summers.

27 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

28 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of the Board held on 15 and 29 November 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

29 2024/25 BUDGET SETTING CYCLE

Bridge Close Regeneration Business Plan and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan

Officers clarified that the wording in the report in relation to the view of Savills regarding their view of the HRA business plan was based on an early draft and was no longer accurate. Savills had concluded that the business

plan was on a relatively sound financial basis. The revised advice would be circulated to Members.

It was confirmed that it was sound financial practice for the HRA to borrow from the General Fund. This continued to be assessed as a cost effective option and it was currently more cost effective for the HRA to borrow in its own right. This meant the HRA could access better rates in its own right when borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board. The average cost of borrowing was considered over the course of a year and officers would circulate further details about this area.

For next year's budget, the HRA would borrow in its own right. There was no formal policy on this area as it often varied what was the most cost effective option. Any loans would be short term of up to 2 years duration with a current interest rate of 4.58%. The Council would look to refinance within 2 years as it was unlikely that repayment of the principal would be achieved within this time. Officers would monitor interest rates very closely.

It was **AGREED** that the following comments on the HRA and Bridge Close reports made by the Places Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee should be included in the Board's report to Cabinet on the overall budget papers:

BRIDGE CLOSE REGENERATION LLP - IN YEAR REVIEW OF 2024/25 BUSINESS PLAN

- 1. That Officers suggest a frequency for regular reporting on the project to Places OSSC**
- 2. That a metric is identified to quantify savings to the General Fund, such as a reduction in pressure on the social care budget. We recommend that an Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit (AMAT) assessment is conducted**
- 3. That the term "affordable" in the report is broken down to identify the products on offer**

HRA BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE, BUDGET 2024/25 & CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 – 2028/29

- 1. That Members note that the advice from Savills, in section 7.3 of the HRA report, in which they appear to question the viability of the scheme, was based on an early draft and is not the current position. The final advice from Savills to be appended to these comments or otherwise made available at the Cabinet Meeting and to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.**
- 2. We recommend that the Council revisit the infill scheme, regarding Council garages, in order to reduce anti-social behaviour and provide new homes.**
- 3. That Members be mindful of the potential telecare costs, relating to the digital switch over.**
- 4. That the negative Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA), on all characteristics be noted by Cabinet.**

5. **We recommend that the Section 151 Officer should explain the need to borrow from the general fund, as opposed to the Public Works Loan Board or other external sources, also commenting on the impact that this has on the General Fund and deficit**
6. **That Members be provided with an update on work undertaken to increase the number of bedrooms in homes, with a view to ensuring residents can remain in their home as opposed to being moved to a larger property.**
7. **That the Places OSSC be provided with a breakdown on the charges relating to heat and water**

Budget, Capital Programme and Treasury Management Strategy Statement Reports

The reports had been brought forward by one week to allow full scrutiny although it was noted that the figures in the reports were draft as the final Local Government Finance Settlement had not yet been received. Further changes to the reports were therefore possible.

It had been recommended that Council Tax should increase by 4.99% which included the 2% adult social care precept. New savings proposals shown in the report had been consulted on. Officers emphasised that the budget had been set as robustly as possible using the information that was currently available. A balanced budget required agreement on the level of fees and charges, Council Tax, savings and capitalisation direction. It would not be possible to set a balanced budget without the capitalisation. It was also likely that further capitalisation directions would be needed in future years.

The Strategic Director of Finance, thanked her team, the Executive Leadership Team and Councillor Wilkins for their support.

The overall capitalisation order has been requested for £54m. This would be used to cover the overspend for this year of £21-22m and to close the anticipated budget gap for next year. Officers would check if Council was required to approve the capitalisation order although the Strategic Director of Finance felt that this was part of her statutory duties as s. 151 officer. The interest cost of £3.4m would be borrowed as part of the £54m capitalisation. The loan would currently have to be repaid over 20 years although officers were trying to change these terms.

There was no specific threshold at which officers would advise against further borrowing. Capitalisation could continue as long as the Council could generate sufficient income. Officers agreed that there were unlikely to be any changes to the funding formula for at least two years but it was hoped that more recent census data could be used by Central Government.

Officers confirmed they had explained to Central Government that a further capitalisation order was likely to be needed for succeeding years and that

another solution was needed. The issuing of a s. 114 notice would still lead to capitalisation but applying for capitalisation voluntarily would give a greater element of control. Ministers understood that the budget issues facing Havering were the result of structural issues of underfunding and were not due to bad decisions having been taken.

Borrowing could continue depending on the response of the lender but Council services would still have to be provided. The option of a Judicial Review of the use of old census data had been explored but officers felt this could be difficult and costly. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy had indicated that capitalisation was an acceptable option and could be continued. A Member was concerned that continued borrowing could lead to the Council becoming a bad risk. Officers confirmed that there was no official credit rating for the Council. The Strategic Director would confirm the amount the Council had borrowed in the last 10 years.

Even with the capitalisation order, there would still need to be savings and reductions to services year on year. Statutory services would always have to continue to be provided and it could be possible to dispose of Council assets more easily in the future.

A review of library provision had been supported by 53% of consultation respondents with 37% against and 9% having no opinion. A Member felt that the treatment of people with no opinion in the results could be misleading and should be reconsidered.

Members raised concerns about stopping the Christmas lights programme and the high cost of visitor parking permits. Officers could supply specific figures on the amount of Council Tax that was paid in advance at a discounted rate. Officers added that offering the discount helped to maintain a high collection rate. The cost of the Council Tax Support Scheme could also be confirmed. It was clarified that many former tenant arrears were still being pursued and that this was not a budget savings proposal.

Fortnightly bin collections were being considered as new legislation could introduce weekly food waste collections. This would however be subject to further consultation. There were targets for increasing recycling and officers agreed that it was important to seek to increase recycling rates in flats.

Decisions on the extent of the business rates pool were taken annually but this did not represent an additional cost to the Council.

It was clarified that three Children's Centres were closing due to decisions taken last year. The proposed further closures had however been withdrawn.

The fact that some costs in the budget papers had still to be finally agreed would not impact significantly on the proposals as a 6.1% uplift had been applied to the majority of income streams. Clarification of rates was awaited from a number of suppliers. Many adult social care charges were based on

an uplift in state benefits but the extent of this would not be known until after the budget had been set.

The delegation to the s 151 officer to accept grant funding was not a new power. The relevant governance route to accept funding of this nature would continue to be followed. The scheme of delegation would also still apply.

It was accepted that the impact of e.g. a rise in business rates had not been modelled for the whole borough. This was however modelled for individual decisions. Members asked if modelling had been undertaken on the impact of introducing parking charges in parks. Officers responded that the assessment of new income could be very difficult but that efforts had been made to make a prudent assessment of park usage and income. Members remained concerned however that there was no data on the current use of car parks in parks.

A Member expressed concern that the savings proposed were going too far and asked if they were all necessary. It was also felt that an increase in parking charges could deter people from using local businesses. This could negatively impact on obesity levels in the borough and a Member felt that the Council should seek to borrow more rather than cut services. Officers accepted that these were difficult decisions but the Council was required to demonstrate that it was minimising the level of capitalisation order requested.

The proposed level of parking charge increases had been reduced and would now only generate an additional £200k in 2024/25. It was accepted that there needed to be a balance between officer recommendations on budget matters and Member decision making. Car parking charges had been raised as a concern by residents during the consultation and so it had been decided to retain the 30 minutes free parking. Officers would also map where the free parking sessions were available and see if this could be extended outside of Romford town centre. Work was also in progress to launch an annual resident car parking pass.

Since austerity began, the Council had delivered more than £160m of savings. Day care provision was not a statutory service but officers felt that scrapping this could lead to more intensive support being needed for service users. The numbers of buildings used for Children's Centres had been reduced but it was hoped to retain the actual service.

A Member felt that the proposed reduction in street lighting would take too long to reclaim the costs involved but officers felt that the proposals were balanced and had been consulted on with residents. The £300k on street lighting was capital expenditure but savings would be applied to the revenue fund. It was confirmed that capital receipts could not be used to subsidise revenue costs.

Members felt that the level of response to the budget consultation remained very poor and that it was not possible to judge issues such as the

introduction of parking charges in parks on this basis. A Member also raised the issue that charges for private car parks in Romford were tied to those of Council car parks and so may also need to rise if the Council charges increased. Officers agreed to investigate if this condition could be removed.

A temporary exemption to business rates could be granted if e.g. a business was closed for refurbishment and officers would confirm the duration of this. The liability if a business ceased trading mid-year could also be confirmed. If the business remained the landlord for the building then business rates liability would remain.

Figures on the amount of compensation paid to people injured by potholes could be obtained from the insurance team. There was an insurance fund of £900k to pay court claims. Contributions to this would be stopped for the next year but there remained a healthy balance. Lower contributions would also be made to the pension fund but the Council was still required to cover its liabilities. The next valuation of the fund was due in 2026/27. It was emphasised however that the Council would not be reducing employer contributions to the pension fund. The proposed reductions related to topping up of the pension fund cash account, the current balance of which was already in excess of policy thresholds. This account was also not included in the pension scheme valuation.

Licensing for private rented homes was covered by statute and hence could only be extended to areas with particular problems with condition of housing stock. Income from this scheme could not be used for other services. Officers did however agree to work with ward Councillors on where the scheme could potentially be extended.

Officers felt that it would take time for the spending reductions agreed on 9 October 2023 to work through. The reduction in use of purchase cards and the re-establishment of a recruitment panel would also require a cultural change in the organisation. There were no specific figures for these savings as yet but £9.6m savings had been achieved last year with £1.8m unlikely to be achieved.

Members were not confident that the required savings would be achieved next year but officers confirmed that monthly reports on the delivery of savings would be given as part of management meetings. This would include the reasons for any slippage in savings.

The decision on the level of uplift to social care providers had been delegated to officers as this could not be finally agreed until after the budget had been set. The budget had been calculated on a 5% uplift this year which officers would work with as a target.

Members raised concern about the numbers of long standing agency staff and asked whether these could be recruited automatically as a cost saving. Officers responded that using agency staff was cheaper in some cases and that individuals may not wish to switch to permanent employment in some

cases. Efforts were also being made to build up apprenticeships at the Council.

A Member expressed concern that the budget reports were not robust enough and contained a lot of qualifications and instances of insufficient data. The Strategic Director of Finance felt that it was not possible to determine exactly what would happen over the next year but any assumptions made had been set out in the detail of the report. Growth had been built into the budget for areas such as building control fees.

Concern was raised by a Member that the £2m contingency for non-delivered savings may not be enough. Officers confirmed that a £3m contingency had now been put in the budget to cover the rising cost of social care and temporary accommodation. An overspend in social care was not expected next year due to more prudent setting of the budget.

It was suggested that it may be prudent to pause plans to cease the Romford Sunday market given legislation proceeding in Parliament around the relocation of markets. Officers agreed that they would seek further advice re whether the removal of the Sunday market would be in breach of the market charter.

It was **AGREED** that the following comments on the 2024/25 Budget Setting Cycle reports should also be included in the Board's overall response to Cabinet:

2024/25 BUDGET AND 2024/2028 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

- 1. The Board notes the issues and difficulties faced by officers in applying for the Capitalisation Order and supports the view that a more up to date funding formula and census data should be used by central Government when deciding on the Council's level of funding.**
- 2. More emphasis should be placed on the future cost of capitalisation requests.**
- 3. The treatment in the consultation results of people who have no opinion on an issue should be reconsidered.**
- 4. The Board is concerned at the proposed increase in parking charges for e.g. visitor parking permits.**
- 5. The Board is concerned at the lack of historical data on the use of car parks in parks.**
- 6. The planned increase and expansion of parking charges for parks is a source of significant concern to the Board.**
- 7. That a list of organisations exempt from charging such as 'Friends' groups and other recognised organisations like the archaeological dig in Bedfords Park be drawn up, in the event of charges for parking in parks being introduced.**
- 8. The Board recommends that proposal Places 02 regarding the introduction of parking charges in parks is not proceeded with.**

- 9. That a review be undertaken of the availability of the free half hour parking offer for small shopping areas located in the Romford Town ward but outside the main Romford shopping area.**
- 10. The Council should continue its efforts to increase recycling rates in flats.**
- 11. There is concern over the impact of savings on local businesses and the Board would wish to ask if this has been modelled sufficiently.**
- 12. An expansion of the licensing scheme for private rented homes should be investigated, subject to any legal restrictions around this.**
- 13. More details should be given of the impact of the proposed savings announced in October and details of progress with meeting the savings targets should be brought to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee/Board on a regular basis.**
- 14. There is a lack of confidence in the savings proposals being accurate as a number of the templates submitted admit that there is a lack of reliable data on which to base the proposal.**
- 15. The Board has concerns over the legal implications of closing the Sunday market and feels that these should be carefully considered before any closure takes place.**
- 16. The Board recommends that the £16.5m list of planned savings is revised to total a maximum of £15m.**

30 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

It was **AGREED** that, for the relevant section of agenda item 5 only, the public should be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that it was likely that, on view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

Chairman

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Overview & Scrutiny Board

7 May 2024

Subject Heading:

SLT Lead:

Report Author and contact details:

Policy context:

Financial summary:

REPORT

Call-in of Executive Decisions -
Authorisation to provide additional
equity funding to Mercury Land
Holdings Ltd to enable the
purchase of sites in accordance
with the approved 2023-26 MLH
Business Plan and Disposal of
Council-owned sites to Mercury
Land Holdings

Gavin Milnthorpe – Deputy Director of
Legal Services
Anthony Clements Principal Democratic
Services Officer
anthony.clements@onesource.co.uk

The report deals with a statutory process.

There is no significant financial impact
from the statutory processes as these
requirements are being met by existing
budgets.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy **X**

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

SUMMARY

In accordance with paragraph 17 of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Rules, a requisition signed by at least six Members representing more than one Group (Councillors Pat Brown, Judith Holt, Trevor McKeever, Nisha Patel, Matt Stanton, David Taylor, and Katharine Tumilty) have called-in the Key Executive Decisions dated 5 and 8 April 2024.

The grounds for the requisitions are attached as are the Executive Decisions themselves. A response by officers to the grounds for the requisitions will follow when available.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board considers the requisition of the Key Executive Decisions and determines whether to uphold it.

REPORT DETAIL

As per Appendices

- Grounds for requisition
- Key Executive Decision reports (Appendices A and both decisions not available to press or public)

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks: None of this covering report.

Legal implications and risks: None of this covering report.

Human Resources implications and risks: None of this covering report.

Equalities implications and risks: None of this covering report.

Environmental and Climate Change implications and risks: None of this covering report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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Overview and Scrutiny Board, 7 May 2024

Decisions to be called in:

- Authorisation to provide additional equity funding to Mercury Land Holdings Ltd to enable the purchase of sites in accordance with the approved 2023-26 MLH Business Plan
- Disposal of Council-owned sites to Mercury Land Holdings

The reasons for the call-ins:-

- To understand the implications of disposal of the sites to MHL as opposed to the sale on the open market.
- Potential missed revenue opportunities for Havering Council.
- To understand how these sites would contribute towards Havering's housing needs, given MHL inability to develop social housing.
- To understand the full ownership of the land in question.
- The council seems to have not considered all options available. Namely, to use the funds it intends to loan MHL to develop social rented housing on the land it owns

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Notice of KEY Executive Decision containing exempt information

This Executive Decision Report is part exempt and Appendix A is not available for public inspection as it contains or relates to exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is exempt because it refers to confidential commercial information and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

Subject Heading:	Authorisation to provide additional equity funding to Mercury Land Holdings Ltd to enable the purchase of sites in accordance with the approved 2023-26 MLH Business Plan
Decision Maker:	Councillor Graham Williamson Cabinet Member for Development & Regeneration
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Graham Williamson Cabinet Member for Development & Regeneration
SLT Lead:	Kathy Freeman Strategic Director of Resources
Report Author and contact details:	Mark Butler - 01708 432947 mark.butler@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	Asset Disposal Programme 2022-2028 MLH Business Plan 2023-26 Medium Term Financial Strategy Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 London Plan 2021
Financial summary:	Provision of loan and equity funding totalling £10.69 million to MLH for the purpose of acquiring Council sites (£8.69 million - equity) and progressing design and planning activities (£2.00

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

	million - loan), in accordance with the approved Mercury Land Holdings Business Plan (approved July 2023).
Reason decision is Key	Expenditure or saving (including anticipated income) of £500,000 or more
Date notice given of intended decision:	19 th February 2024
Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee:	Overview & Scrutiny Board
Is it an urgent decision?	No
Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	No

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Things that matter for residents

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy X

Resources - A well run Council that delivers for People and Place. X

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

For the reasons detailed in this report and its exempt appendix, the Cabinet Member for Development and Regeneration, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources (S151 Officer), the Strategic Director of Place and the Deputy Director of Legal and Governance, is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the provision of additional equity funding in the sum of £8.69 million to Mercury Land Holdings Ltd (MLH) for the proposed acquisition of council-owned sites in accordance with the updated MLH Business Plan as identified in Exempt Appendix A and to enter into the relevant funding agreements to enable the sale by the Council and acquisition by MLH.
- (2) Approve the provision of £2m loan funding to Mercury Land Holdings (MLH) to undertake design and planning activities relating to the achievement of planning permission.

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

Cabinet agreed, at its meeting on 19th July 2023, when considering the Mercury Land Holdings Business Plan Update (item 6):

2. to delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Development & Regeneration, in consultation with the S151 Officer, the Strategic Director of Place and the Deputy Director of Legal and Governance, to approve the detailed business cases, related viability assessments and funding requirements for the individual schemes noted within the Business Plan as they may be presented during the business plan period, including the authority to enter into all relevant agreements to give effect to the schemes

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

At its meeting on 8th February 2023, Cabinet agreed a medium-term asset disposal programme spanning 2022-2028, to provide a pipeline of capital receipts as an integral part of the council's wider Capital Strategy. Authority was granted for the disposal of a number of sites, set out within Appendix A to that report, including several sites intended for sale to Mercury Land Holdings Ltd (MLH), the Council's wholly owned housing company.

The disposal of these sites for an initial value of £8.69 million, would count towards the £20 million capital receipts earmarked for 31 March 2024.

To maximise the capital value of the sites, it has been necessary to undertake some preliminary design and planning work to secure planning consents. It is estimated to take between 12 to 18 months to secure a valid planning consent beyond the target date of 31 March 2024 for some of the disposals.

It will be necessary to put MLH in funds to progress the necessary planning and design work during this period. An additional £2 million of loan funding would be advanced.

The February 2023 Cabinet report recognised that planning permission may not be secured for each site by the end of the 2023/24 financial year and in anticipation of this scenario set out proposals for an unconditional purchase by MLH by 31st March 2024, subject to an independent valuation to determine the interim purchase price. An overage provision is to be included within any disposal where planning permission is yet to be granted, enabling a balancing payment to be made to the Council at the point where planning consent is forthcoming. A final valuation would be undertaken at this point, with a further issue of share capital from MLH to the Council in recognition of any uplift in value.

In the event planning is not secured, or the Council does not agree to the redevelopment of the site post planning, the Council would be obliged to buy back the land at its original value, along with reimbursing MLH in full for any abortive work undertaken.

The above proposals were approved by Cabinet as part of the February 2023 report.

A follow-up report to Cabinet on 9th August 2023 confirmed the proposed sale of 4 car park sites to MLH, provisionally agreed in February subject to a public consultation process.

These proposals were incorporated within the MLH Business Plan Update approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 19th July 2023. As part of the decisions arising from the report, Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Development & Regeneration, in consultation with the S151 Officer, the Strategic Director of Place and the

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

Deputy Director of Legal and Governance, to agree a number of matters to progress the MLH Business Plan, including funding arrangements.

This report now seeks to agree the additional equity funding required to enable MLH to complete the purchase from Havering Council of the subject sites identified within the February 2023 Cabinet report, prior to 31st March 2024. There will be a separate report detailing the disposals to be made between the parties.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Decline the additional equity funding required by MLH to conclude site acquisitions

This option was dismissed as it would frustrate both the delivery of the MLH Business Plan objectives and efforts within the Council's Asset Disposal Programme to conclude the sale of sites in the current financial year.

Seek disposal of the subject sites to another purchaser

This option was dismissed as it would frustrate both the delivery of the MLH Business Plan objectives and efforts within the Council's Asset Disposal Programme to conclude the sale of sites in the current financial year.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

None relating to this specific funding decision

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER

Name: Mark Butler

Designation: Assistant Director of Regeneration & Place Shaping

Signature:

Date:

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Members established MLH, a company limited by shares and wholly owned by the Council subject to Part V Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Authorities (Companies) Order 1995. The company's business is the provision of homes for market rent and for sale, and if required through compliance with planning obligations, the construction of affordable homes. Agreement in principle is sought to provide funding to MLH in the form of

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

either equity or loans which will be secured by way of registered charges on acquisition from the Council. Such loans will enable the Company to make its acquisitions from the Council in respect of sites; that decision to be dealt with under separate governance.

S1 Localism Act 2011 provides the Council with General Power of Competence, to do anything an individual may do subject to statutory limitations. The Council may exercise this power for its own purpose, for a commercial purpose and/or for the benefit of others. Operating a business to let homes at market sale or rent with the intention of making profits is considered a commercial purpose and the Council, in compliance with s4 Localism Act 2011 undertakes that activity through its Company, MLH. S4 Localism Act 2011 prohibits the Council from engaging in activities for a commercial purpose if legislation requires the Council to fulfil those functions under statutory duties.

S24 Local Government Act 1988 provides the Council with the power to provide a wide range of financial assistance to MLH including making a grant or loan to it and as MLH is a body corporate the Council may under Section 24 (2)(d) acquire share or loan capital in it. S111 Local Government Act 1972, provides Councils with the power to do anything whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition of property rights which is incidental, conducive or calculated to facilitate the exercise of any of their functions. This would include the exercise of functions under S1 Localism Act 2011. The Council could rely on this power to provide the company with loans such as those detailed in this report. Any support provided must be subsidy control compliant (see below) and will be the subject of agreements between the Council and MLH.

If the Council intends to borrow to lend to MLH, Reg 25 Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/3146) treats the giving of a loan by a local authority to a third party (such as MLH) towards expenditure (e.g. works on a new buildings) as capital expenditure providing that if the local authority itself incurred that expenditure (it borrowed to undertake the works itself) it would treat that expenditure (under proper accounting practices) as capital expenditure. It should be noted that the Council borrowing to lend to MLH in connection with revenue funding is not permitted. Any Council borrowing must comply with prudential borrowing code under Part 1 Chapter 1 Section 1 Local Government Act 2003, a local authority may borrow for any purpose relevant to its functions or for "the prudent management of its financial affairs"

The finance requested (whether on commercial terms or otherwise) constitutes 'financial assistance' under the terms of s24 Local Government Act 1988 which permits the Council to provide financial assistance to any other person for the provision of "privately let accommodation". If the Council exercises its powers under this section then under s25 it must obtain the consent of the SoS to do so. The SoS has set out pre-approved consents in the "General Consents 2010" (July 2011 updated in 2014). If the circumstances of financial assistance meet one of the criteria in the General Consents then the SoS consent is given.

S24 Local Government Act 1988 provides the Council with the power to provide a wide range of financial assistance to MLH including making a grant or loan to it and as MLH is a body corporate the Council may under Section 24 (2)(d) acquire share or loan capital in it. The current version of the General Consents 2011 contains Consent C. Under this consent the Council could provide financial assistance to any person.

When exercising its powers, the Council must, as with any other power, have regard to its own procedural rules, the Wednesbury principles of reasonableness and its fiduciary duties. It must also ensure that its powers are used for the proper purpose.

The Council's fiduciary duties could be briefly summarised as it is acting as a trustee of tax and public sector income on behalf of its rate and Council-tax payers. The Council in effect holds

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

money but does not own it; it spends money on behalf of its business rate and Council tax payers.

In making the decisions concerning MLH, the Council considers whether making investment and or extending loans to that body (and similar activities) should give proper consideration to the risks and rewards of approving the recommendations. In practice consideration is given as to whether the Council will achieve an appropriate return for its risk and that the Council has minimised the risk and potential cost to it if MLH became insolvent and/or defaulted on its loan(s).

Consideration should also be given to whether the Council's involvement in this arrangement is proportionate and properly balanced against the anticipated benefit as well as the wider interests of its local business rate and tax payers. On a practical basis this means that consideration is given as to whether the monies they requested to approve for investment/lending, could be better used for the wider interests of its local tax payers. This should include considering the impact on the Council (and therefore its local tax payers) if MLH became insolvent or otherwise defaulted on loans it had taken from the Council.

The Council is required to provide funding and ensure it operates in accordance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022. It is important that any loans/credit or other support provided to MLH are subsidy control compliant. Loans/credit which the Council generally makes available to MLH must be made on commercial terms and at a commercial interest rate. If the Council subsequently chooses to make an equity investment into MLH its must ensure this is done on commercial terms as a market investor. It will be necessary for the Council to obtain independent confirmation that such arrangements have been made on commercial terms prior to them being entered into.

The disposal of assets from the Council will be dealt with under separate governance and are therefore not covered here by way of implications.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

MLH are seeking to promote the redevelopment for sale of the Council sites set out within confidential Appendix A. The acquisition and redevelopment of these sites for sale is within the scope of the approved Mercury Land Holdings Ltd (MLH) Business Plan.

The disposal of these sites for an initial value of £8.69 million, would count towards the £20 million capital receipts earmarked for 31 March 2024. To date a total of £8.725 million comprising £6.9 million linked to the disposal of the old Quarles Campus and £1.825 million generated from open market disposals of other sites has been realised.

Underpinning the current MTFS is an assumption that c. £20 million of disposal receipts would be yielded by 31 March 2024, or as soon as practical thereafter. The realisation of £8.69 million of receipts would count towards this target.

To achieve this outcome the Council and the MLH board have jointly agreed to dispose of the sites in advance of securing a valid planning consent. The disposals would be advanced on an initial valuation basis, with MLH issuing share capital as consideration. The share capital issued by MLH qualifies as capital expenditure for the Council. Subject to planning consent, these costs would be treated as qualifying development expenditure for MLH and would be considered relevant in determining the final land value payable to the Council (subject to planning approval).

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

The disposal agreement would make provision for a subsequent valuation to take account of any uplift in value once planning has been secured, alongside an overage clause, to enable the Council to demonstrate best value.

In addition, MLH are assuming the full cost of any planning and design work, including the costs incurred by the Council to date. To facilitate the transfer of costs, and enable MLH to fund future liabilities, the Council would advance up to £2 million in the form of a loan secured against the land assets transferred to MLH. Interest would be chargeable on the loan to MLH (rolled up), the total value of which is to be deducted against the initial land value but the Council would recognise the interest as income. As a result, the overall financial return to the Council would remain unchanged.

The investment is critical to ensuring that the Council derives the maximum benefit from the underlying land values. A valid planning consent could enhance land values, with a provision in the agreements to ensure any uplift is paid over to the Council. The redevelopment of the sites could lead to an overall uplift in homes in the borough, alongside a likely increase in the number of PRS homes for MLH. Increasing the PRS portfolio is key to MLH's long-term future, with an aspiration to deliver 400 PRS homes.

The approved MLH Business Plan focuses on supporting the Council's Disposal programme, with necessary funding set aside to achieve this aspiration. The long-term target of delivering 400 PRS homes remains and it is anticipated that the roadmap for achieving this target will be set out in the next MLH Business Plan.

MLH continues to operate as a going concern, with the latest accounts for the period ended 31 March 2023 affirming this position. As set out above, the current focus of MLH is to support the Council's disposal strategy. Significant investment will be required during this period to fund the construction and disposal activities, to deliver a return for MLH and ensure the Council realises the maximum value from the earmarked sites. The business plan outlines the financial parameters for funding, which need to be carefully managed.

In the event planning is secured, and both the Council and MLH agree, it is anticipated that MLH would furnish the Council with a detailed Business Case to secure a lending facility to take forward the site(s) to develop and resale. The advancing of a lending facility would be subject to a subsequent approval.

A final valuation would be undertaken at this point, with a further issue of share capital from MLH to the Council in recognition of any uplift in value.

With the facility in place, MLH would proceed to take the sites forward for development and sale. The sales proceeds from a successful development would be first used to repay:

1. Senior debt
2. Loan Notes
3. Equity / share capital including shares issued in lieu of the land and pre-development expenditure.

It is at this point; the capital receipts are converted from share capital (not usable) to cash (usable) subject to governance and agreement between the parties. As a final step, overage would be assessed, and a further payment in cash would be made to the Council.

In summary, these disposals would deliver capital receipts in up to three tranches:

1. Initial disposal (pre-planning)
2. Post-Planning (start on site)
3. Overage (sales completion)

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

The direct financial implications of taking forward the development of the disposal sites is set out in the Mercury Land Holdings, update to Business Plan 2022/23 Cabinet Report, approved by Cabinet on 19th July 2023.

Risks

The maximisation and realisation of the capital receipt to the Council is subject to a number of risks including and not limited to the following .

1. Planning consent: without a valid planning consent it would not be possible to realise the full value of the sites. In such an event the Council would be obliged to buy back the land at its original value, along with reimbursing MLH in full for any abortive work undertaken.
2. Approved Tenure Mix: to optimise capital receipts, it would be necessary to ensure that the approved tenure mix seeks to maximise the number of private sale homes for resale, where possible.
3. Market / Economy: the wider economy is likely to have an impact on future sale values, and therefore Council coverage / receipts. Sales values are forecast to be stagnant for the next year to 18 months. In most instances it is unlikely that any homes for sale would be brought forward within this period. Construction costs have continued to escalate, which has the potential to erode future receipts.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)

There are no anticipated HR implications arising from the proposals within this decision

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

An EqHIA (Equality and Health Impact Assessment) is usually carried out when a current or planned service/policy/activity is likely to affect staff, service users, or other residents.

Some of the sites for proposed acquisition by MLH are no longer operational and have been declared surplus, meaning that there is no material impact upon groups with protected characteristics.

The proposed acquisitions include a number of car parks with varying levels of disabled parking provision within. Consideration has been given to the proximity and capacity of alternative disabled parking provision (provided by both the Council and others) within Romford and Hornchurch town centres in order to mitigate the impact of withdrawing the subject car parks

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

from their current use. For the time being these facilities remain in operational use and a full EqHIA will be conducted in advance of any change of operational status.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

There are no Health & Wellbeing risks specifically related to this funding decision

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Acquisition of the proposed sites will not, in itself, generate any environmental or climate change implications. Subsequent development of the sites will be subject to seeking planning permission and building control approvals, the process for which will require the applicant to demonstrate how any potential impacts are addressed.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Cabinet – 9th February 2023

Asset Disposal Programme 2022-2028

Report to Cabinet - 19th July 2023

Mercury Land Holdings – Update to Business Plan 2022/23

Report to Cabinet – 9th August 2023

Site Disposals under the Asset Disposal programme 2022-2028

Non-Key Executive Decision issued 21st December 2023

Authorisation to release the working capital increase of the Overarching Facility Agreement for Mercury Land Holdings Ltd

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Schedule of Council site acquisitions by MLH

Exempt

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Decision


Proposal agreed

Delete as applicable

~~Proposal NOT agreed because~~

Details of decision maker

Signed



Name: : Councillor Graham Williamson

Cabinet Portfolio held: Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Development

Date: 5/4/24

Lodging this notice

The signed decision notice must be delivered to Committee Services, in the Town Hall.

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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Notice of KEY Executive Decision containing exempt information

This Executive Decision Report is part exempt and Appendix A is not available for public inspection as it contains or relates to exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is exempt because it refers to confidential commercial information and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

Subject Heading:	Disposal of Council-owned sites to Mercury Land Holdings Ltd
Decision Maker:	Assistant Director of Housing, Property & Assets
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Paul McGeary Cabinet Member for Housing & Property
SLT Lead:	Neil Stubbings Strategic Director of Places
Report Author and contact details:	Simeon Nnyombi- 01708 432573 Simeon.nnyombi@onesource.co.uk
Policy context:	Asset Disposal Programme 2022-2028 MLH Business Plan 2023-26 Medium Term Financial Strategy Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 London Plan 2021
Financial summary:	The proposals within this paper seek to support the Council's broader Capital Strategy by delivering capital receipts to support delivery of capital investment priorities whilst reducing the need for capital borrowing.
Reason decision is Key	Expenditure or saving (including anticipated income) of £500,000 or more

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

Date notice given of intended decision:	28 th February 2024
Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee:	Overview & Scrutiny Board
Is it an urgent decision?	No
Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	No

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Things that matter for residents

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy X

Resources - A well run Council that delivers for People and Place. X

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

Pursuant to Cabinet decisions on 8th February 2023 and 9th August 2023 the Assistant Director Housing, Property and Assets in consultation with the Deputy Director of Legal and Democratic Services is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the disposal of the following Council-owned assets to Mercury Land Holdings Ltd on terms contained in the exempt appendices of this report:
 - a) Como St Car Park, RM7 7DN
 - b) Keswick Avenue Car Park, RM11 1XR
 - c) Dorrington Gardens Car Park, RM12 4HX
 - d) Angel Way Car Park, RM1 1HR
 - e) Former Century Youth House, Albert Rd, RM1 2PS
 - f) Land at Priory Rd, RM3 9AL

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

The Cabinet decision on 8th February 2023 :

1. *Agreed the disposal of the larger sites contained in Appendix A (detailed above) of that report to Mercury Land Holdings Limited.*

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

- 2. Delegated authority to the Director of Asset Management in consultation with the Deputy Director of Legal and Democratic Services to conduct all appropriate steps to progress and conclude the 2022/23 asset disposals in a manner that satisfies all legal/regulatory requirements. This delegation to include the terms for any interim lease-back of operational assets and/or subsequent buy-back of assets not subsequently progressed by Mercury Land Holdings*

A subsequent Cabinet decision on 9th August 2023:

- 1. Confirmed authority to the Assistant Director Housing, Property and Assets to dispose the car parks (listed above) having considered the outcome of a statutory consultation relating to their removal from the Council's off street parking, modification of Traffic Management Orders and pursuant to the Cabinet decision of 8 February 2023.*
- 2. Delegated authority to the Assistant Director Housing, Property and Assets in consultation with the Deputy Director of Legal and Democratic Services to conduct all appropriate steps to progress and conclude the asset disposals in a manner that satisfies all legal/regulatory requirements.*

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

At its meeting on 8th February 2023, Cabinet agreed a medium-term asset disposal programme spanning 2022-2028, to provide a pipeline of capital receipts as an integral part of the council's wider Capital Strategy. Authority was granted for the disposal of a number of sites, including several sites intended for sale to Mercury Land Holdings Ltd (MLH), the Council's wholly owned housing company.

The disposal of these sites for an initial value of £8.69 million, would count towards the £20 million capital receipts earmarked for 31 March 2024.

The sites designated for disposal currently lack planning approval, necessitating investment in developing outline designs and submitting planning applications. Direct market disposal prior to planning could lead to suboptimal outcomes, as potential buyers may discount the value to mitigate risk and planning uncertainty. An alternative approach, where the Council directly invests in design and planning, is not viable due to the potential revenue implications.

To maximise the capital value of the sites, it has been necessary to undertake some preliminary design and planning work to secure planning consents. It is estimated to take between 12 to 18 months to secure a valid planning consent beyond the target date of 31 March 2024 for the disposals.

The February 2023 Cabinet report recognised that planning permission may not be secured for each site by the end of the 2023/24 financial year and in anticipation of this scenario set out proposals for an unconditional purchase by MLH by 31st March 2024, subject to an independent valuation to determine the interim purchase price. An overage provision is to be included within any disposal where planning permission is yet to be granted, enabling a balancing payment to be made to the Council at the point where planning consent is forthcoming. A final valuation would be undertaken at this point, with a further issue of share capital from MLH to the Council in recognition of any uplift in value.

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

In the event planning is not secured, or the Council does not agree to the redevelopment of the site post planning, the Council would be obliged to buy back the land at its original value, along with reimbursing MLH in full for any abortive work undertaken.

The above proposals were approved by Cabinet as part of the February 2023 report.

A follow-up report to Cabinet on 9th August 2023 confirmed the proposed sale of 4 car park sites to MLH, provisionally agreed in February having considered the outcome of the statutory consultation process for their removal from the Council's off-street parking provision.

Terms have now been agreed for the disposal of the sites to MLH including the initial prices payable based on advice contained in Red Book valuations which have been commissioned.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Seek disposal of the subject sites on the open market

This option was dismissed as it would frustrate both the delivery of the MLH Business Plan objectives and efforts within the Council's Asset Disposal Programme to conclude the sale of sites in the current financial year.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

None relating to this specific funding decision

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER

Name: Simeon Nnyombi

Designation: Strategic Asset Manager



Signature:

Date:08.04.2024

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Council has the power to dispose of the land under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (“LGA 72”) subject to obtaining the best consideration reasonably obtainable. In exercising the delegated authority recommended by this report, the Assistant Director Housing, Property & Assets will be required to comply with this requirement.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

This decision is seeking approval to dispose of the following Council-owned assets to Mercury Land Holdings Ltd on terms contained in the exempt appendices of this report:

- g) Como St Car Park, RM7 7DN
- h) Keswick Avenue Car Park, RM11 1XR
- i) Dorrington Gardens Car Park, RM12 4HX
- j) Angel Way Car Park, RM1 1HR
- k) Former Century Youth House, Albert Rd, RM1 2PS
- l) Land at Priory Rd, RM3 9AL

The disposal of these sites will result in initial receipts of £8.69m. The sites are being disposed in advance of securing valid planning consent with an overage/balancing payment to/from the Council once planning consent has been finalised.

MLH will issue share capital as consideration for the disposals.

Once MLH has completed the development and sale of the sites, the proceeds will be used to repay the loans extended to MLH to develop the land and the share capital issued as consideration for the purchase of the sites i.e. it is at this point that the capital receipts are converted from share capital (not usable) to cash (usable).

In summary, these disposals would deliver capital receipts in up to three tranches:

1. Initial disposal (pre-planning)
2. Post-Planning (start on site)
3. Overage (sales completion)

The sites being disposed of include off-street car parks, which would be leased back to the Council at a peppercorn rent, until planning is secured, and development is ready to proceed. This arrangement allows the Council to continue to benefit from car parking revenues, which are estimated to yield £190k net of costs per annum. Once timelines for re-development have been established there will be a need to build in any resulting impact on parking income into the Councils MTFS.

The redevelopment could result in a loss of income to the General Fund, which could be partially offset by an increase in parking income from nearby sites. A successful redevelopment of the car park would likely lead to increase in the number of homes in the borough leading to an increase in Council Tax revenues, and potentially savings against the homelessness budgets. The impact of which is likely to more than offset the loss of parking income.

The redevelopment of the sites by MLH is likely to take 2 to 3 years, at which point the share capital would be redeemed using the cash proceeds from a successful sale programme. The

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

direct financial implications of taking forward the development of the disposal sites is set out in the Mercury Land Holdings, update to Business Plan 2022/23 Cabinet Report, approved by Cabinet on 19th July 2023.

Risks

The maximisation and realisation of the capital receipt to the Council is subject to a number of risks including and not limited to the following .

1. Planning consent: without a valid planning consent it would not be possible to realise the full value of the sites. In such an event the Council would be obliged to buy back the land at its original value, along with reimbursing MLH in full for any abortive work undertaken.
2. Approved Tenure Mix: to optimise capital receipts, it would be necessary to ensure that the approved tenure mix seeks to maximise the number of private sale homes for resale, where possible.
3. Market / Economy: the wider economy is likely to have an impact on future sale values, and therefore Council coverage / receipts. Sales values are forecast to be stagnant for the next year to 18 months. In most instances it is unlikely that any homes for sale would be brought forward within this period. Construction costs have continued to escalate, which has the potential to erode future receipts.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)

There are no anticipated HR implications arising from the proposals within this decision

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

An EqHIA (Equality and Health Impact Assessment) is usually carried out when a current or planned service/policy/activity is likely to affect staff, service users, or other residents.

Some of the sites for proposed acquisition by MLH are no longer operational and have been declared surplus, meaning that there is no material impact upon groups with protected characteristics.

The proposed acquisitions include a number of car parks with varying levels of disabled parking provision within. Consideration has been given to the proximity and capacity of alternative disabled parking provision (provided by both the Council and others) within Romford and Hornchurch town centres in order to mitigate the impact of withdrawing the subject car parks

Key Executive Decision – Part Exempt Report

from their current use. For the time being these facilities remain in operational use and a full EqHIA will be conducted in advance of any change of operational status.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

There are no Health & Wellbeing risks specifically related to this funding decision

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Disposal of the proposed sites will not, in itself, generate any environmental or climate change implications. Subsequent development of the sites will be subject to seeking planning permission and building control approvals, the process for which will require the applicant to demonstrate how any potential impacts are addressed.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Cabinet – 9th February 2023
Asset Disposal Programme 2022-2028

Report to Cabinet – 9th August 2023
Site Disposals under the Asset Disposal programme 2022-2028

EXEMPT APPENDIX

Sale Terms Agreed for the disposal of the Council-owned sites to MLH

Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Decision

Proposal agreed

Details of decision maker

Signed



Name: Mark Butler

Cabinet Portfolio held: Assistant Director, Regeneration & Place Shaping

Date: 8th April 2024

Lodging this notice

The signed decision notice must be delivered to Committee Services, in the Town Hall.

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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LB Havering Scrutiny Report - CRM Digital Platform Programme

Presented by: Gareth Nicholson (Programme Sponsor)

1. Report Contents

1.1. This report has been prepared to answer the following questions as requested by the panel:

- What was the purpose of the project and timescales?
- What were the key deliverables and are we on track?
- Reasons for any delays etc
- Where there any efficiencies and savings attached to the project - are we on track?
- What if anything could we have done differently?
- What are the next steps?
- When is the project due to end?
- What has it and will it improve for residents?

2. Background

2.1. The Digital Platform CRM (Customer Relationship Management) programme formally started in 2020 with a Cabinet decision in April of that year to commit a total of £5.075m to deliver a new CRM system. The Council's then current 2011 system was approaching end of life with external support for systems and software ending, creating significant risks around operational integrity and cyber security/GDPR. The intention behind the programme was:

- *...an opportunity to review the way services are designed and delivered and improve accessibility for our customers... to become an efficient, effective, customer centric organisation. The aim is to empower residents and service users to serve themselves using a 24/7 seamless, simple responsive service, backed with assisted digital services where required. The new CRM /digital Platform is scalable and flexible to support the Authority's evolving needs as service delivery and new operational models are developed to meet budgetary pressures.*

2.2. The programme was intended to have two main phases:

- Phase 1, the replacement of the out-of-support 2011 system, re-engineering processes and customer flows and building replacement modules in D365;
- Phase 1A, quick wins that would save money by replacing bespoke software used by services with new D365 modules or securing productivity gains by building new modules where no digital methods are currently being used; and
- Phase 2, a cross-Council review of all customer-facing services identifying where D365- either as a CRM system or an ERP (enterprise resource planning) system could improve outcomes and/or productivity and generate cashable savings.

2.3. The programme initially sat from 2017-2019 with the One Source IT team but was transferred to Havering's Chief Operating Officer (COO) portfolio in 2019. The programme was to form part of a wider digital programme, of which Digital Customer (including CRM) was one part (Digital Council and Digital Borough were the other parts of the programme).

- 2.4. The governance of the programme was one based in partnership: two co-SROs were appointed, one representing the Council's Customer Services senior leadership (Gareth Nicholson has served in this role since 2019) and the Council's IT Director serving as the other co-SRO. Since 2019 there have been six incumbents in this IT Director role during the lifetime of the current programme.
- 2.5. The SROs Chaired the Digital Platform (CRM) board which reported into the Transformation Strategy Board, chaired at SLT level by the Chief Executive.
- 2.6. The cabinet decision coincided with the Covid pandemic and focus for the entire Council switched to critical issues management. For this and other reasons discussed below initial timescales as set out in the Cabinet report quickly became undeliverable.
- 2.7. By mid-2021 the programme was significantly underperforming, with poor quality deliverables and significantly behind schedule, so much so that the Programme Sponsor (Gareth Nicholson) and new Director of Transformation (Paul Fisher) who joined in November 2021 recognised that a significant structural change to the programme was required.
- 2.8. The then programme leadership team (all agency workers) were released and a new programme management team were established by April 2022 to reset and deliver the programme objectives. At this point, a new programme manager was recruited (Gareth Charles) and took over the management of the CRM project.
- 2.9. The initial work of the new programme team was to simultaneously maintain delivery pace of in-flight work whilst assessing the capability of the remaining team members. It was determined that a number of agency workers were not of sufficient skill or capability and they were immediately released.
- 2.10. Understandably there was a significant level of frustration and expectation that the programme should be delivering valuable outputs by this stage, and the programme board and management team worked hard to rebuild confidence within the organisation that the programme would ultimately deliver its objectives
- 2.11. A new delivery plan was established that offered initially built momentum (noting that a new delivery team had to be established during this time) with a significant number of deliverables and objectives being achieved from autumn 2022 onwards.

3. What was the purpose of the project and timescales?

- 3.1. On establishing a new Programme Board in April 2022 the programme redefined its mission as follows.
- 3.2. **Purpose:**
 - The overarching purpose of the programme is to delivery an excellent online experience for Havering residents when making Service Requests and general enquiries relating to the processes within the scope of work.

- In doing so the programme will implement a modern, flexible and scalable digital platform that will support further development and improvement of service delivery, and replace a number of ageing legacy technology systems that cause business constraint, poor operational performance and are present a cyber-risk or operation failure threat.

3.3. Objectives:

- Improve resident experience and convenience through high quality online service offering, backed up by effective assisted support for those who need it.
- Increase channel shift and back-office efficiency improving service performance and enable efficiency and savings.
- Remove critical operational risk of systems failure, and escalating support costs for legacy digital platform.

3.4. How:

- The programme was planned to be delivered incrementally over 4 years through a combined team of internal Havering staff, technical expertise from OneSource, third party suppliers and augmented with agency expertise where required.

3.5. Key Risk:

- The fundamental programme risk is that it covers a wide number of council services and teams requiring a detailed and well managed plan to synchronise with their own priorities and projects in order to maintain pace

3.6. It was agreed that the initial phase of work (Phase 1) must prioritise the decommission of the legacy CRM Digital Platform consisting of a number of technologies including:

Microsoft CRM2011	An aged Microsoft technology no longer supported acting as the central component of the legacy digital platform storing customer details, transaction details and an interaction point to other systems.
Microsoft Biztalk	A supported but aging Microsoft platform acting as the integration technology that controls interaction between CRM2011 and other systems. Whist Biztalk is a currently supported technology its general industry use is diminishing along with skilled workers and increasing support costs.
My Havering	An aged bespoke platform acting as the resident front end for the My Havering Account and a number of online transactions.
Windows Servers	The legacy Digital Platform runs on a number of on-premise hosted aged Windows Servers that are no longer supported or security patched.

3.7. The aged nature of the legacy Digital Platform presented a number of critical operational risks to the council:

- As these platforms are no longer supported by Microsoft they do not receive regular security patching and therefore present a significant potential breach point for cyber-attack.

- As they are no longer supported by Microsoft they present a greater risk to business continuity in the event of failure.
- 3.8. It was therefore agreed by the Programme Board safe transition from the legacy platform and its decommissioning must be the overriding objective for Phase 1 of the programme.
- 3.9. It was also agreed that were possible there should be no degradation in the level of service offered by the new solution during Phase 1, but that the ambition to deliver improved resident experience and service efficiency needed to be balanced against the priority of decommissioning the legacy platforms.
- 3.10. An ambitious timeline was agreed to complete the migration of services from the legacy platform by September 2023, with the decommissioning activities to commence from September 2023 and be owned by OneSource IT.
- 3.11. It was also recognised that the programme faced a significant number of risks, and that this deadline may be required to flex accordingly. Those risks can be characterised into the following groups.
- 3.12. In April 2022 a number of other in-flight projects were identified that could have a direct impact on the programme due to the necessary integration work required with CRM to enable end-to-end processing. Those included:
- The replacement of Mayrise with Alloy as the core line of business system across Environment Services (Trees, Highways, Grounds and Street Lighting).
 - The replacement of Civica App as the core line of business system across Public Protection
 - The replacement of Info@Work as the document management system for a number of Council Tax and Benefits transactions.
 - The second phase of the project to implement CivicaPay (removing the legacy Paris system from back end processing).
- 3.13. It was also recognised that a general lack of end-to-end knowledge of how legacy systems and processes worked could cause significant challenges to the programme's delivery timeline.
- 3.14. A number of strategies were taken to mitigate these issues wherever possible including:
- Bringing forward and adopting a less ambitious 'like for like' implementation for Highways and Public Protection. This allowed the project to complete work in these service areas ahead of any subsequent systems implementation and so both breaking the project interdependency and incurring significant 'process re-engineering' work that would be done again under the main line of business system project.
 - Managing the delivery plan around other dependent project delivery to ensure minimal impact on programme milestones from external forces.

4. What were the key deliverables and are we on track?

- 4.1. The programme was restructured into a number of work packages, each delivering a number of service lines enabling residents to make service requests directly online or by phone to the contact centre, management of that request in the CRM system and integration through to the service line of business system where appropriate.
- 4.2. The following tables provide the position of this structure at the end of phase 1, explaining how the end scope differed from the starting point. Appendix B provides a complete listing of service lines delivered.

4.3. Original Phase 1 Scope Delivered

Service Area	Service Lines	Explanatory Text
Registrars	5	Online services for booking Birth Registration appointments and ordering Copy Certificates
Highways	9	Online and phone services for reporting issues on Havering highways (e.g road defects)
Highways Enforcement	2	Online and phone services for reporting Highways issues requiring enforcement action (e.g. abandoned vehicles)
Trees	1	Online and phone services for reporting issues with Trees
Grounds	2	Online and phone services for reporting issues with Grounds maintenance (e.g.weeds)
Recycling and Waste	9	Online and phone services for requesting Waste services (e.g. bulky collections, garden collections) and reporting issues (e.g. missed collection)
Street Cleansing	6	Online and phone services for reporting issues with Street Cleansing issues (e.g. graffiti, litter etc)
Planning and Building Control	3	Online services for requesting Planning and Building Control services (Pre application Planning Advice, Site Visits and reporting Dangerous Structures)
Public Protection	17	Online and phone services for reporting public protection issues (e.g. noise and pollution)
My Havering Account	n/a	My Havering online account enabling residents to track the status of requests
Single Signon to Housing and Council Tax	n/a	Enables residents to link through from My Havering to their online Council Tax, Benefits and Housing accounts.
Contact Centre CRM	n/a	Comprehensive Contact Centre solution enabling staff to receive calls, raise issues and report status to residents.
Data warehouse integration	n/a	Integration of enquiries from CRM to the council's Data Warehouse system enabling continuation of the view of interaction by resident or property across many council services.
Ctax and Bens document integration	17	Integration of a number of online forms supporting Council Tax and Benefits claims and enquiries to the councils Ctax and Bens system and document management system storing any attached documentation.

Transition to Service	n/a	Handover of all developed solutions to the councils establishment teams including ongoing platform costs, support documentation and decommissioning requirements.
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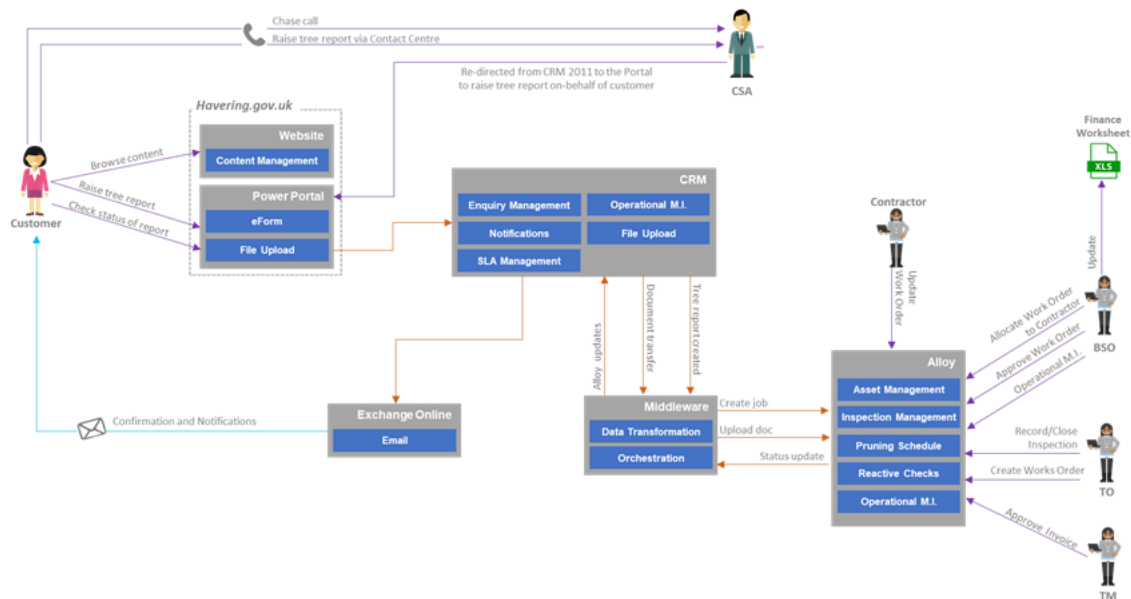
4.4. Additional Phase 1 Scope added during project

Service Area	Service Lines	Explanatory Text
Registrars Notice of Marriage	1	Mid-project the rules for booking notice of marriage appointments reverted back to pre-covid conditions, and the Registrars team requested that the legacy functionality for booking Notice appointments online be incorporated into the project.
Registrars Priority Appointments	n/a	Through the success of the new solutions for Birth and Notice appointments the Registrars team identified an opportunity for revenue uplift and improved customer service through offering priority appointments outside standard working hours.
Street Lighting	9	Due to delays in the implementation of the Alloy project for street lighting an opportunity was recognised to being this functionality into the scope of Phase 1 and in doing so remove the council's use of Love Havering and associated license fees.

4.5. Scope removed from Phase 1

Service Area	Service Lines	Explanatory Text
Complaints, FOI requests and Members' Enquiries	1	Removed from scope in-line with the agreed priority of retiring the legacy digital platform. Agreed that these services would be delivered through another project implementing an off-the-shelf solution.

- 4.6. Each of these service areas has a technical footprint varying based on the specific needs of the service lines. The following diagram provides an end-to-end illustration of customer, staff and system interaction takes place to satisfy an enquiry about a problem with a tree.



4.7. The table in Appendix C identifies the various technical deliverables associated with each service category.

5. Reasons for any delays etc

5.1. The programme had set an ambitious target of migrating from the legacy platform by September 2023, but significant external factors have impacted that timeline. The programme is now scheduled to complete this work and handover to IT for platform decommissioning on 16 April 2024.

5.2. Additional Scope

The reason for including the following items within the scope of Phase 1 is provided in section 4.4. The following table describes impact on the programme timeline.

Description	Impact
Registrars Notice of Marriage	Additional three months effort partially absorbed due to parallel with Urbaser delay.
Registrars Priority Appointments	Additional two months, partially absorbed due to parallel with Urbaser delay.
Street Lighting	Additional three months effort partially absorbed due to parallel with Urbaser delay.

5.3. Alloy trees project integration

Description	Impact
Incorporation of Alloy Trees implementation into Programme	Three months delay and significant additional effort from project team to enable delivery of Alloy system.

5.4. Urbaser contract delays

Description	Impact
Implementation of Urbaser as council's primary contractor for Recycling, Waste and Street Cleansing services was delayed by three months from June '23 to October '23.	Direct three month impact to project timeline.
12 week commercial system implementation in Urbaser plan led to significant post-go-live remedial work to complete full service implementation.	Two month impact on project resources to complete Urbaser implementation post go-live on 22 nd October 2024.

5.5. Information @ Work project impact

Description	Impact
The project to replace the Information@Work system as the document management system for Council Tax and Benefits experienced significant issues with its implementation.	Impact on CRM project resources to assist info@work project with issue diagnosis, remedial work and testing.

6. Where there any efficiencies and savings attached to the project - are we on track?

6.1. A savings target of £193,000 was allocated to Phase 1 of the programme. Cashable savings have been delivered as per below:

Saving Description	Value per annum	Owner	Realised
Reduction in software license costs for core CRM solution	£50,000	OneSource ICT	From 1 April 2024
Removal of annual license fee for Love Havering	£18,000	Business Support/Environment Services	Nov 2024
Revenue uplift from Registrars priority appointments	£20,000	Registrars	January 2023

6.2. Further financial savings are being identified as part of the scoping of phase 1 A opportunities. Current areas being explored are:

Benefit Description	Value per annum	Owner
Death registration moving back online due to change in rules post Covid.	Up to £25,000	Registrars
Online service for citizenship ceremonies	Tbc	Registrars
Online service for ceremony booking (e.g. marriage)	Tbc	Registrars

6.3. A significant number of indirect and/or non-financial benefits have been realised:

Benefit Description	Value Type	Owner
SME appointment reminders resulting in reduced missed appointments	Resident convenience Service efficiency	Registrars, Planning and Building Control
Channel Shift e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bulky Collections now fully integrated online removing dual keying in contact centre and resident able to select collection day at time of booking Improvement in online uptake e.g. Green Bin renewals currently at 76% online (60% in 2023) 	Resident convenience Service efficiency	Contact Centre
Contact centre call handling has been made more efficient by providing officers with an identical version of the resident online form. This has both a simple efficiency in terms of processing time against the cumbersome screens of the old system, and an added benefit that officers are now intimately familiar with the online experience and are well placed to help those who do call and encourage uptake of online self service	Resident convenience Service efficiency	Contact Centre
Many processes are now fully automated from resident to front line without an intermediate handling by staff. For example, Garden Waste contracts are now fully systemised, with the only required human interaction where a bin is physically delivered (the work order to raise the bin delivery is automated from the contract request).	Resident convenience Service efficiency	Contact Centre, Various Services
Significant improvements have been made across registrars service with birth registration appointments, copy certificates and notice of marriage appointments now fully online with appointment booking and rescheduling all self-serve. We receive a significant amount of positive feedback from residents for these services.	Resident convenience Service efficiency	Registrars
All services now have conditional feedback to residents (in email) based on the outcome of their request. In the example of trees we now provide feedback at multiple stages of the request (request raised, reviewed, inspection required, works to be conducted, works complete) with informed responses based on the outcome of each request (e.g. we have conducted an inspection and decided not to take any further action because..)	Resident convenience	Various Services

7. What if anything could we have done differently?

- 7.1. **Stakeholders.** We should have identified stakeholders at senior leader level, secured buy-in and their agreement to require their services to identify service design changes that might deliver more benefits from using D365. We found that, with some exceptions, services came on board expecting a simple like-for-like replacement and some services were unprepared or unable to identify resource to engage in a broader service review approach to identify where CRM could deliver further benefits. Stakeholders became frustrated at the lack of progress during 2021 and 2022 and this affected the reputation of the programme, thus requiring the re-set in early 2022.
- 7.2. **Programme scheduling.** We could have adopted a more aggressive approach to migrating from the legacy platform if we had accepted a reduction in service quality of increased manual back-office activity. For example, systems integration is a significant component of a number of the solution delivery and could have been re-keyed rather than building automated integration. However, this had the potential for significant service issues due to errors in rekeying or timing issues and was discounted as a viable option.
- 7.3. **Skills and capacity.** The unique nature of the governance of the board did not make for effective decision-making and challenge, particularly pre-reset. The IT co-SROs tended to operate more as 'commissioned consultant experts' rather than take a one Council approach and support initiatives on service design. The Customer co-SRO lacked the product knowledge to effectively scrutinise the work programme management were carrying out. Attendance at Board at senior level in IT was not consistent or regular, meaning that some decisions that might otherwise have been subject to more technical scrutiny were not effectively challenged. This contributed significantly to lack of progress in 2021 and 2022. That the team was set up outside of the existing OneSource ICT structure also indicates the lack of skills, capability and capacity for our inhouse professional IT function to run a project of this scale and complexity. It has also led to an 'hands off' approach by the current ICT team which has meant it has taken longer to handover the project to BAU staff. The IT function needs to develop these core change skills in the future.

8. What are the next steps?

- 8.1. In terms of the core public-facing elements of Phase 1, the programme is complete. However, the following activities need to be completed as part of Phase 1 of the programme.

Task description	Date	Owner
Completion of data archiving activity	16/4/24	Programme Team
Commencement of decommissioning activity	16/4/24	OneSource ICT
Development of Data Ware House integration from new platform (no dependency for decommission)	Tbc	OneSource ICT
Phase 1 Closure Report	April 2024	Programme Team

- 8.2. Final planning and baselining of Phase 2 activity including:

Item description	Indicative timeframe	Dependency
Implementation of Alloy for Highways and associated enhancements to Digital Platform	August 2024	Alloy commercials and project plan
Implementation of Alloy for Highways and associated enhancements to Digital Platform	October 2024	Alloy commercials and project plan
Implementation of Alloy for Highways and associated enhancements to Digital Platform	December 2024	Alloy commercials and project plan
Reintegration and enhancements for Public Protection driven by Arcus system implementation (replacement for Civica App)	Subject to planning	Arcus project plan
Implementation of Death Registration appointment booking for Registrars	Subject to approval and planning	Business case signoff
Implementation of Citizenship Ceremony appointment booking for Registrars	Subject to approval and planning	Business case signoff
Implementation of Marriage Ceremony appointment booking for Registrars	Subject to approval and planning	Business case signoff
Further enhancements to Waste and Street Cleansing services as part of Urbaser service improvement activity	Subject to approval and planning	Business case signoff
General platform improvement and management	Ongoing	Programme Team
Establishment of permanent team to manage and develop platform as part of IT disaggregation project.	December 2024	Havering

9. When is the project due to end?

- 9.1. The core project activity for Phase 1 is now complete, with the residual tasks identified in section 8.1 largely falling to OneSource ICT to complete.
- 9.2. Based on the identified scope above Phase 2 of the programme is likely to run to mid 2025.

10. What has it and will it improve for residents?

- 10.1. Online reporting has been significantly improved making it quicker and easier for residents to raise requests and report issues online. Some example feedback has been provided in Appendix D. Where residents provide negative feedback or opportunity to improve the project team discuss appropriate action with the respective Service Area.

- 10.2. Residents are now able to track the status of their requests if they log in to My Havering whilst raising the request online. Whilst fairly basic the intention is to improve this functionality in Phase 2.
- 10.3. The staff interface for processing phone requests has been significantly streamline meaning resident calls will be quicker to process.
- 10.4. We now send SMS reminders for all appointment bookings at three and one day intervals before the appointment date. This has led to a significant reduction in missed appointments.

Appendices:

Appendix A: High level scope diagram

Appendix B: Full list of online/offline services delivered

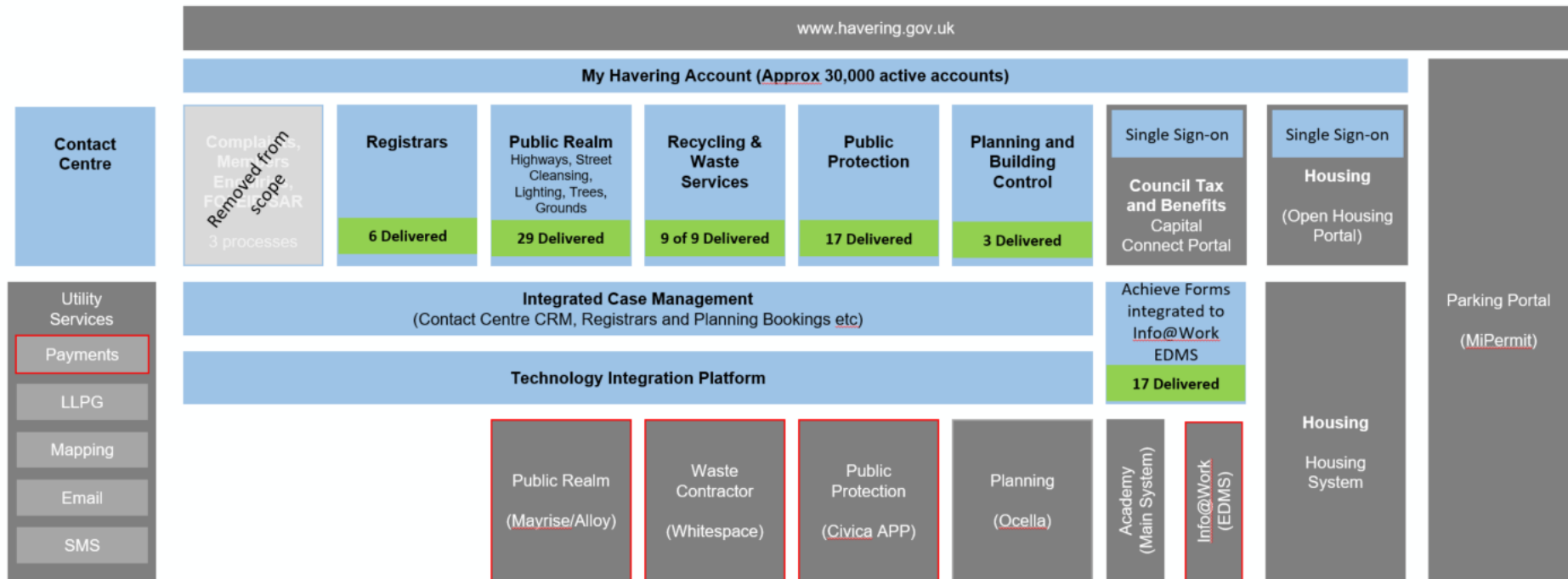
Appendix C: Technical footprint by service area

Appendix D: Resident feedback

Appendix A – High level phase 1 scope diagram

Phase 1 Scope

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Colour Key

Programme footprint – Microsoft/Dynamics implementation
Existing/remaining technology
Subject to concurrent change

Appendix B: Full list of online/offline Services Delivered

Service	Area	Web Page to access Service	Direct link to the online form
Report a damaged road or pavement	Highways	Damaged roads and pavements The London Borough Of Havering	Report a damaged road or pavement
Report flooded roads and blocked drains	Highways	Drains, flooded roads, rivers, streams and road spillages Hazards, pollution and flooding The London Borough Of Havering	Report flooded roads and blocked drains
Report an issue with road markings	Highways	Road markings Road signs, bollards, barriers, markings and lights The London Borough Of Havering	Report an issue with road markings
Report a damaged road sign	Highways	Road signs, bollards and barriers (non-illuminated) Road signs, bollards, barriers, markings and lights The London Borough Of Havering	Report a damaged road sign
Report a problem with a highway bridge or structure	Highways	Highway bridges and structures The London Borough Of Havering	Report a problem with a highway bridge or structure
Report an issue with street and utility works	Highways	Roads The London Borough Of Havering	Report an issue with street and utility works
Report debris from a road traffic accident	Highways	Parking, roads, transport and travel The London Borough of Havering	Report debris from a road traffic accident
Report a damaged bollard, barrier or other street Furniture	Highways	Road signs, bollards and barriers (non-illuminated) Road signs, bollards, barriers, markings and lights The London Borough Of Havering	Report a damaged bollard, barrier or other street Furniture
Insurance Claims (defects)	Highways	CRM / Contact Centre only Process - not accessed from the council website.	Accessed directly in CRM by Contact Centre Agent (requires CRM access)
Report an abandoned vehicle	Highways Enforcement	Abandoned vehicles Keeping Havering clean The London Borough Of Havering	Report an abandoned vehicle
Report a blocked pavement or road	Highways Enforcement	Blocked pavements and roads Road works and obstructions The London Borough Of Havering	Report a blocked pavement or road

Report a tree problem	Environment - Trees	Trees Trees, grass, hedges, leaves and weeds The London Borough Of Havering	Report a tree problem
Report a dead animal	Environment - Street Cleansing	Dead animal removal Keeping Havering clean	Report a dead animal
Report fly-posting	Environment - Street Cleansing	Graffiti and fly-posting Keeping Havering clean	Report fly-posting
Report dog and animal mess	Environment - Street Cleansing	Dog and animal mess Keeping Havering clean	Report dog and animal mess
Report dumped rubbish	Environment - Street Cleansing	Dumped rubbish (Fly-tipping) Keeping Havering clean	Report dumped rubbish
Report graffiti	Environment - Street Cleansing	Graffiti and fly-posting Keeping Havering clean	Report graffiti
Report litter or an issue with a bin	Environment - Street Cleansing	Street litter and bins Keeping Havering clean	Report litter or an issue with a bin
Report Noise pollution	Public Protection	Hazards, pollution and flooding The London Borough of Havering	Report Noise pollution
Report a problem with private drains	Public Protection	Drains, flooded roads, rivers, streams and road spillages The London Borough Of Havering	Report a problem with private drains
Report contaminated land to us	Public Protection	Contaminated land Hazards, pollution and flooding The London Borough Of Havering	Report contaminated land to us
Report dust pollution	Public Protection	Hazards, pollution and flooding The London Borough of Havering	Report dust pollution
Report light pollution	Public Protection	Hazards, pollution and flooding The London Borough of Havering	Report light pollution

Report smoke pollution	Public Protection	Hazards, pollution and flooding The London Borough of Havering	Report smoke pollution
Food safety enquiry	Public Protection	Food safety regulations Food business registration and safety The London Borough Of Havering	Food safety enquiry
Report pollution from smells	Public Protection	Hazards, pollution and flooding The London Borough of Havering	Report pollution from smells
Filthy and Verminous Properties	Public Protection	https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20013/environment/915/pest_control	Accessed directly in CRM by Contact Centre Agent (requires CRM access)
Private Sector Housing and HMO	Public Protection	https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20060/information_for_landlords/336/landlord_licensing_for_private_rented_properties/6	Accessed directly in CRM by Contact Centre Agent (requires CRM access)
Report Pests	Public Protection	Pests and dead animals Animals The London Borough Of Havering	Accessed directly in CRM by Contact Centre Agent (requires CRM access)
Report Found Dog	Public Protection	Found dogs Animals The London Borough Of Havering	Accessed directly in CRM by Contact Centre Agent (requires CRM access)
Report Lost Dog	Public Protection	Lost dogs Animals The London Borough Of Havering	Accessed directly in CRM by Contact Centre Agent (requires CRM access)
Air Quality	Public Protection	Air Quality	Accessed directly in CRM by Contact Centre Agent (requires CRM access)
Report Water issue	Public Protection	Drains, flooded roads, rivers, streams and road spillages The London Borough Of Havering	Accessed directly in CRM by Contact Centre Agent (requires CRM access)
Commercial Health and Safety Accidents	Public Protection	Health and safety at work investigation Health and safety The London Borough Of Havering	Accessed directly in CRM by Contact Centre Agent (requires CRM access)
Commercial Health and Safety Complaint	Public Protection	Health and safety at work investigation Health and safety The London Borough Of Havering	Accessed directly in CRM by Contact Centre Agent (requires CRM access)
Book your birth registration appointment	Registrars	Register a birth The London Borough Of Havering	Book your birth registration appointment
Order a copy of a certificate - Civil Partnership	Registrars	Copy certificates Copies or changes to certificates	Order a Copy of a Certificate

Order a copy of a certificate - Birth	Registrars	Copy certificates Copies or changes to certificates	
Order a copy of a certificate - Death	Registrars	Copy certificates Copies or changes to certificates	
Order a copy of a certificate - Marriage	Registrars	Copy certificates Copies or changes to certificates	
Notice of Marriage and Civil Partnership	Registrars	Giving notice of marriage or civil partnership Marriages and civil partnerships The London Borough Of Havering	Notice of Marriage and Civil Partnership eform
Apply for pre-planning application advice	Planning and Building Control	Planning pre-application advice Planning pre-application advice The London Borough Of Havering	Apply for planning pre-application Advice
Book building Control site Visit	Planning and Building Control	Book building control site inspection Apply for building regulation approval The London Borough Of Havering	Book building Control site Visit
Dangerous Structures	Planning and Building Control	Report dangerous structures	Accessed directly in CRM by Contact Centre Agent (requires CRM access)
Problem with weeds	Environment - Grounds	Grass, shrubs, hedges and weeds Trees, grass, hedges, leaves and weeds The London Borough Of Havering	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-Grounds-GroundsMaintenance-Location/
Shrub bed problem and grass cutting	Environment - Grounds	Grass, shrubs, hedges and weeds Trees, grass, hedges, leaves and weeds The London Borough Of Havering	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-Grounds-GroundsMaintenance-Location/
Spillage / Split sacks	Waste Services	https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20013/environment/126/keeping_havering_clean/5	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-Waste-Spillages-RelationTo
Apply for help with your rubbish and recycling	Waste Services	Get help with rubbish and recycling The London Borough Of Havering	Currently retaining achieve form for public us. Contact Centre Agent has full D365 functionality (requires CRM access)

Book a bulky waste collection	Waste Services	Bulky collections The London Borough Of Havering	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-Waste-Address/?type=BWC
Apply for or cancel a clinical waste collection	Waste Services	Clinical waste collections The London Borough Of Havering	Currently retaining achieve form for public us. Contact Centre Agent has full D365 functionality (requires CRM access)
Check your collection day	Waste Services	Check your collection day The London Borough Of Havering	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-Waste-Address/?type=CD
Compostable sack service	Waste Services	Compostable sack service Garden waste The London Borough Of Havering	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-Waste-Address/?type=CSC
Manage your garden bin service	Waste Services	Garden waste service Garden waste The London Borough Of Havering	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-Waste-Address/?type=GWC
Report a missed collection	Waste Services	Report a missed collection The London Borough Of Havering	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-Waste-Address/?type=MW
Request Green Re-usable bags	Waste Services	Garden waste service Garden waste The London Borough Of Havering	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-Waste-Address/?type=CSC
Faulty bollard	Environment - Street lighting	Street lighting (including illuminated signs and bollards) Road signs, bollards, barriers, markings and lights	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-StreetLights-Location
Damaged bollard	Environment - Street lighting	Street lighting (including illuminated signs and bollards) Road signs, bollards, barriers, markings and lights The London Borough Of Havering	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-StreetLights-Location
Faulty Sign	Environment - Street lighting	Street lighting (including illuminated signs and bollards) Road signs, bollards, barriers, markings and lights	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-StreetLights-Location
Damaged Sign	Environment - Street lighting	Street lighting (including illuminated signs and bollards) Road signs, bollards, barriers, markings and lights	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-StreetLights-Location
Street light damaged	Environment - Street lighting	Street lighting (including illuminated signs and bollards) Road signs, bollards, barriers, markings and lights 	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-StreetLights-Location

Street light flashing	Environment - Street lighting	Street lighting (including illuminated signs and bollards) Road signs, bollards, barriers, markings and lights	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-StreetLights-Location
Street light out	Environment - Street lighting	Street lighting (including illuminated signs and bollards) Road signs, bollards, barriers, markings and lights 	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-StreetLights-Location
Subway Light faulty	Environment - Street lighting	Street lighting (including illuminated signs and bollards) Road signs, bollards, barriers, markings and lights	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-StreetLights-Location
Subway Light damaged	Environment - Street lighting	Street lighting (including illuminated signs and bollards) Road signs, bollards, barriers, markings and lights	https://portal.havering.gov.uk/Process-StreetLights-Location
Council Tax and Benefits – deliverable of integrating the following existing forms with the Information@Work document management system			
Council Tax - Student Certificate	Revenues & Benefits	Exemptions Reduce your Council Tax bill The London Borough Of Havering	Council Tax Student Discount eform
Benefits - Benefit Claimant Change of Income	Revenues & Benefits	Benefits - tell us about changes The London Borough Of Havering	Change of Income eform
Benefits - Direct Payment of Housing Benefit via BACS	Revenues & Benefits	housing benefit and council tax support/352/how benefit payments are made	Request Direct Payment of Housing Benefit eform
Benefits - Discretionary Housing Payment Application	Revenues & Benefits	Discretionary Housing Payments Money advice and benefits help The London Borough Of Havering	Discretionary Housing Payment eform
Benefits - Dispute a Council Tax Benefit Decision	Revenues & Benefits	Is my CT benefit right? page	Council Tax Support Disputes eform
Benefits - Dispute a Housing Benefit Decision	Revenues & Benefits	Is my Housing Benefit right? page	Housing Benefit Disputes eform

Benefits - Payment of Local Housing Allowance to Landlord	Revenues & Benefits	Benefit information for landlords Page	Advice only for LHA - not an eform process
Business Rates - Charity Relief	Revenues & Benefits	Business Rates - Discounts and exemptions The London Borough Of Havering	Business Rates Charity Relief eform
Business Rates - Move In / Move Out	Revenues & Benefits	Register or change your Business Rates address The London Borough Of Havering	Business Rates Address Change eform
Business Rates - Small Business Relief	Revenues & Benefits	Business Rates - Discounts and exemptions The London Borough Of Havering	Small Business Rate Relief eform
Council Tax - Charity Exemption	Revenues & Benefits	Exemptions Reduce your Council Tax bill The London Borough Of Havering	CTax Charity Ctax Exemption eform
Council Tax - Copy Bill Request	Revenues & Benefits	Council Tax bands and bills Council Tax bands and bills The London Borough Of Havering	Council tax copy bill request eform
Council Tax - Disabled Relief	Revenues & Benefits	Reduce your bill Reduce your Council Tax bill The London Borough Of Havering	Ctax reduction disabilities eform
Council Tax - General Enquiry	Revenues & Benefits	Council Tax The London Borough Of Havering	CTax general enq -eform
Council Tax - Landlord Reporting a Change	Revenues & Benefits	<u>No website landing page - not accessed via website</u>	Landlord Council Tax Change eform
Council Tax - Move In or Out	Revenues & Benefits	Moving home The London Borough Of Havering	Change of Address eform
Council Tax - Refund	Revenues & Benefits	Refunds The London Borough Of Havering	Council tax refund eform

Appendix C: Technical footprint by service area

Service Area	Resident Online	Contact Center via Phone/email	My Havering integration	Map integration	Appointment Booking	SMS Reminders	CRM Case Management	Payments	Address lookup	Resident email notifications	Line of business System Integration
Registrars	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Highways	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N
Highways Enforcement	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N
Trees	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N
Grounds	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N
Recycling and Waste	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Street Cleansing	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Planning and Building Control	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Public Protection	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Street Lighting	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Ctax and Bens document integration	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y

Appendix D: Resident feedback

Council Service (Enquiry) (Enquiry)	Created On	Is there any other feedback to give us	What information was not easy to understand
Registrar: Copy Certificates	02/02/2024 17:42		It was good. No problems
Registrar: Copy Certificates	02/02/2024 17:42		It was good. No problems
Registrar: Notice	07/02/2024 19:59		Explain why you are charging people extra money. We were forced to pay £30 extra without knowing why. A premium appointment was the only option. Disappointing.
Registrar: Copy Certificates	09/02/2024 13:53	Better communication and next step advice.	I don't understand how a copy of my marriage certificate is not available, no one has called to discuss this, I got married in havering, I don't feel an automated generic email is acceptable, what are my next steps?
Registrar: Copy Certificates	11/02/2024 10:19	Only to pay attention to the high postage costs for a fairly poor service courtesy of Royal Mail	The cost of postage is too high when the certificate is sent in an ordinary envelope. Mine arrives creased and took three days (both the fault of Royal Mail) £5 is excessive. Use a Do Not Bend envelope and tracked costs much less.
Registrar: Birth Registration	14/02/2024 10:46	Very easy process	N/A
Registrar: Copy Certificates	15/02/2024 17:39	Yes, I would like to thanks to your department for the simplicity made to obtain what I nedd. Well done. Kind regards	With the website is some issues special when you make the payment. In rest everything its really easy to use it.
Registrar: Copy Certificates	19/02/2024 16:13		Make the priority service available on the website please
Registrar: Notice	19/02/2024 16:51	The process was pretty simple to follow.	Nothing to improve.
Registrar: Copy Certificates	20/02/2024 13:38		Fine as it is

REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - PARKING ENFORCEMENT TASK AND FINISH GROUP

BACKGROUND

1. In mid-2023, the Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed to establish a task and finish group to review parking enforcement in Havering. This followed a number of issues encountered by Members covering areas such as knowledge and experience of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) consistency in the application of policies and the parking appeals process.
2. The Topic Group consisted of Councillors Gerry O'Sullivan (Chairman) Mandy Anderson, Laurance Garrard, Martin Goode, Keith Prince, Phil Ruck, Matt Stanton and Katharine Tumilty.
3. The Group met regularly between July 2023 and January 2024 and has now concluded its review; identifying findings and recommendations which are detailed in this report.

THE SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

It was agreed that the primary focus for this review would be on the following areas:

- To review the relevant parking enforcement policies and regimes adopted by the Council.
- To make recommendations regarding the Council's parking enforcement policies and regimes going forward with a particular focus on:
 - Improving customer experience
 - Maximising compliance
 - Reducing any confusion
 - Improve communications
 - Digital enabling

METHODOLOGY

The Group met and held discussions with the following colleagues and wishes to place on record its thanks to all these officers for their support with the review. Members would particularly like to record their thanks to the three CEOs who allowed Councillors to accompany them on their rounds and gave invaluable insights into the day to day challenges faced.

Mark Hodgson – Head of Highways, Traffic and Parking
Jo Anne Green – Parking Manager
John Everett – Operations Team Leader
Daniel Onyewuenyi – Senior Civil Enforcement Officer
Craig Wates – Process and Debt Recovery Officer
Civil Enforcement Officers on duty in Elm Park, Harold Hill and Hornchurch.

MEETINGS

The Task and Finish Group met on four occasions conducting the review between July 2023 and January 2024:

31st July 2023 – Initial discussions with parking management officers

7th August 2023 – Observation of CEO pre-shift briefing

27th November 2023 – Discussions with officers of reviews of parking challenges and associated issues

8th January 2024 – Further discussions with parking management officers

Additionally, three Members of the Task and Finish Group met with CEOs in different parts of the borough to observe their work and the challenges they faced.

FINDINGS

1. Training of CEOs

1.1 The task and finish group were very pleased to observe a pre-shift briefing for CEOs but were concerned at the level of facilities available for these staff and felt that these may not be fit for purpose. There were no video screens available for example which could have allowed for discussion of recent parking issues and footage (see recommendation 1).

1.2 Members had concerns that the briefing given was not sufficiently in depth and that daily issues in the borough were rushed through with little time to ensure the understanding of staff. It was felt that handouts or other aids should be given to staff where appropriate (see recommendations 2 and 3).

1.3 It was noted that CEOs often had to refer to either the Civil Enforcement Handbook or the Havering Parking Rules & Regulations document. Both these publications were however very detailed and Members felt that consideration should be given to providing these to CEOs electronically (see recommendation 4).

1.4 During their visits with CEOs on the beat, Members noted

inconsistencies in the approach to certain issues with one example being a lack of a clear procedure around the reporting of faded parking bay markings. Performance issues were a concern in cases such as this and it is suggested that more regular audits of CEO performance could be introduced (see recommendations 5 and 18).

2. Operational Issues

- 2.1 It was explained that the standard policy was to rotate CEOs around different parts of the borough. This was to avoid any potential reprisals should a CEO have suffered abuse etc. when issuing a Penalty Charge Notice and also to allow staff to become familiar with other parts of the borough. Whilst of course appreciating and supporting the importance of the health and safety of staff, the task and finish group nevertheless felt that the consistency of approach resulting from keeping CEOs in the same areas for longer was something that should be considered, where it was safe to do so (see recommendation 6).
- 2.2 CEOs confirmed that there was no direct way for them to communicate with managers while working on street, other than to use their own mobile telephones. Members were concerned at this as it would seem difficult for staff to receive updates of recent incidents etc. during their shift or to summon assistance in emergency situations. Consideration should therefore be given to implementing an electronic communication system for CEOs (see recommendation 7).
- 2.3 During the periods spent in the field with CEOs, it was noted that there were sometimes differences between operating hours etc. shown on main car park signage and on the parking machines themselves. Similarly, it was noted that there were sometimes variations in times and tariffs between on and off street parking areas, even when these were positioned adjacent to each other. It was therefore felt that both these issues could cause confusion and frustration for car park users, as could poor lighting in the areas where parking machines are located. (see recommendations 8 – 10).
- 2.4 The issue of parking machines continued to be something that was regularly reported to Members by residents. It was observed that it was unclear what residents should do if a parking machine was not working and/or they were unable to use the RingGo parking app. It was also important that residents were made more aware of alternative payment facilities that may be available in nearby shops etc. (see recommendations 11 and 12).
- 2.5 A further area of confusion observed was where resident and pay & display parking were located in the same area. Again, the group felt that clearer signage should be available in these areas (see

recommendation 13).

3 Policy Issues

- 3.1 Discussions during the review revealed some uncertainty around how several policies were applied in Havering. These included the use of the discretionary parking policy, the position with motor cycle parking, particularly on yellow lines and whether the free 30 minutes parking concession could be extended to small shopping areas on the outskirts of Romford (see recommendations 14, 16 and 21).
- 3.2 There was a standard amount of time by which people could respond to a PCN at the formal letter stage. Members were concerned however that this could lead, in some circumstances, to appeals being received too late to be considered, especially as appeals at this stage were required to be submitted by post, rather than on line. Whilst elements of the timescales were set by legislation, the group felt that these should be extended where possible (see recommendation 15).
- 3.3 It was accepted that agency workers were employed both as CEOs and to assist with appeal backlogs etc. The task and finish group felt however that, particularly in light of the Council's current financial difficulties, efforts should be made to recruit permanent staff where possible (see recommendation 17).
- 3.4 Members are aware from discussions with residents about the difficulties that can present to car park users when the parking tariffs change from day to night rates. This has caused considerable confusion and misunderstandings among residents and the group therefore feels this area should be reviewed as a matter of urgency. It is suggested that if a resident purchases a parking ticket for several hours just prior to the night time tariff commencing it should run over into the night session (see recommendation 19).
- 3.5 The task and finish group was very grateful for the opportunity to be taken through with officers the reasoning behind parking appeals being accepted or rejected. Members remain unclear however of the process applied when they have supported residents with rejected appeals which were in some cases allowed. The group hence feels that the appeals process should be more transparent with perhaps grounds for appeal being published on the Council's website. Additionally, it is felt it would be highly beneficial if a small cross-party working group of Members could meet with officers regularly to audit, on a random basis, recent parking appeals and the reasons for whether or not they were upheld (see recommendations 20 and 22).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That training for CEOs to be delivered in more fit for purpose facilities. The facility should have video screens so that information can be seen by CEOs.
2. That a more in-depth daily briefing be given at the start of shifts so that CEOs are made more fully aware of all current issues.
3. The structure of the briefing needs to be improved. Handouts of useful information should be provided where appropriate.
4. The civil enforcement handbook and Havering Parking Rules & Regulations document are very detailed. They are too large for CEOs to carry with them. It would help if the information was carried electronically.
5. The service should ensure more consistent advice is given to CEOs whether from service management or shift supervisors.
6. Whilst noting potential safety concerns, that consideration be given to keeping CEOs working for a longer period in the same area of the borough.
7. That an electronic system be implemented to ensure quicker communication with staff in the field, both in response to emergency situations and to give updates during their shifts.
8. The service should ensure that car park signage matches the details for operating hours etc. displayed on machines.
9. On and off-street parking should have the same times and tariffs in areas where these are positioned adjacent to each other.
10. If an off-street parking area is adjacent to a council car park both locations should have the same location number. For example, Fentiman Way in Hornchurch has a council car park and an on-street parking area within 2 metres of each other. This will then stop confusion for residents and reduce the amount of appeals that parking receive. Finally, consideration needs to be given to proper lighting where parking machines are located. Older resident sometime struggle to see the signage and meter screen during the winter months.
11. Signage in parking areas to include procedures to inform residents what to do if a parking machine is not working. In particular, signage should inform residents that if a machine is not working and they are unable to use Ringo or pay by phone, they should park at an alternative location.
12. A clear list of shops etc. offering the Paypoint service near to car parking areas should be compiled and made readily available to residents.
13. Clarity of parking signage is required where resident parking and pay & display parking are in the same location.
14. That more detail be provided to residents on how discretionary parking policies are applied in Havering.
15. Given potential postal delays, that more time, if allowed by statute, be given for people to respond at the formal letter stage.

16. That clarity be given on the policy regarding motorcycles being able to park free of charge on yellow lines.
17. Consideration should be given to employing more permanent staff as opposed to agency workers.
18. Regular audits of CEO performance should be implemented.
19. The change over from day to night tariffs is a major cause of frustration for residents. There must be a review of this process.
20. There seem to be inconsistencies in the appeal process. Members would agree that they have all seen several rejected appeals overturned when queried by members. More consistency should therefore be demonstrated in the appeals process.
21. Consideration should be given to giving the free half hour parking concession to small shopping areas on the outskirts of Romford.
22. That a small cross-party working group meet with officers regularly to audit randomised recent parking appeal decisions and the reasons for them.

Finance Implications

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report. However, prior to the implementation of the task and finish group's recommendations, the service would be required to assess each recommendation's financial implications.

Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications as a result of this report.

HR Implications

Recommendation 17 regarding the employment of permanent rather than agency staff would need to give due regard to both existing budgets and HR policies prior to implementation.

Recommendations 1-5 and 18 relate to staff training and development and are in line with existing policies in these areas.

Equalities Implications

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and

- any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
 - (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

An EqHIA (Equality and Health Impact Assessment) is usually carried out when a proposed or planned activity is likely to affect staff, service users, or other residents.

The Council seeks to ensure equality, inclusion, and dignity for all in all situations.

There are no other direct equalities implications although more clarity around areas such as the implementation of parking policies would allow for more equal access to parking provision for all residents and visitors.

Health and Wellbeing Implications

The implementation of recommendation 7 regarding better communication with staff operating in the field would allow for improved staff wellbeing, particularly when dealing with emergency situations.

Clearer car park signage would reduce confusion among residents and also assist those who may be visually impaired.

Climate Change Implications

None arising directly from this report.

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