



# CABINET

<b>7.00 pm</b>	<b>Wednesday 13 August 2025</b>	<b>Council Chamber - Town Hall</b>
----------------	-------------------------------------	----------------------------------------

Members 9: Quorum 3

Councillor Ray Morgon (Leader of the Council), Chairman

**Cabinet Member responsibility:**

Councillor Gillian Ford (Vice-Chair)

Lead Member for Adults & Wellbeing

Councillor Oscar Ford

Lead Member for Children & Young People

Councillor Paul McGeary

Lead Member for Housing & Property

Councillor Paul Middleton

Lead Member for Digital, Transformation & Customer Services

Councillor Barry Mugglestone

Lead Member for Environment

Councillor Natasha Summers

Lead Member for Housing Need & Climate Change

Councillor Christopher Wilkins

Lead Member for Finance

Councillor Graham Williamson

Lead Member for Regeneration

**Zena Smith**

**Head of Committee and Election Services**

**For information about the meeting please contact:**

**Bernadette Lynch**

**e-mail: [bernadette.lynch@havering.gov.uk](mailto:bernadette.lynch@havering.gov.uk)**



**Please note that this meeting will be webcast.  
Members of the public who do not wish to appear  
in the webcast will be able to sit in the balcony,  
which is not in camera range.**

**Please would all Members and officers attending ensure they sit in their allocated seats as this will enable correct identification of participants on the meeting webcast.**

***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.

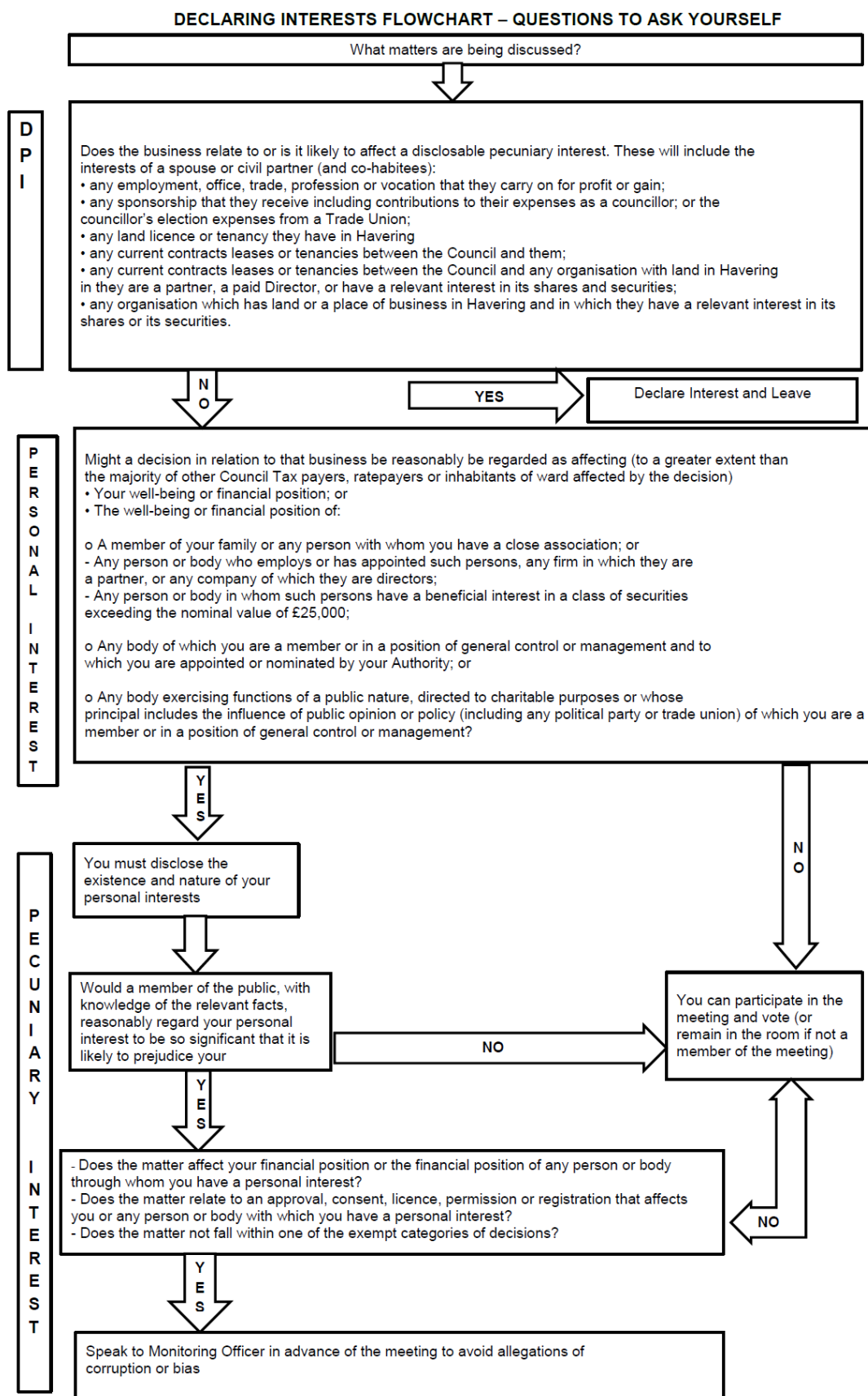
Reporting means:-

- 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.



**Principles of conduct in public office**

In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, when acting in the capacity of a Member, they are committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve best value for the Borough's residents and to maintain public confidence in the Council.

**SELFLESSNESS:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

**INTEGRITY:** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**OBJECTIVITY:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**OPENNESS:** Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

**HONESTY:** Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**LEADERSHIP:** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

## **AGENDA**

### **1 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

On behalf of the Chair, there will be an announcement about the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

### **2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

If any receive;-

### **3 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Members are invited to disclose any interests 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 9 - 18)

To approve as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on **11<sup>th</sup> June 2025** and to authorise the Chair to sign them.

### **5 PROCUREMENT OF FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT- FROZEN FOOD AND GROCERY** (Pages 19 - 28)

Report attached.

### **6 STARTING WELL IMPROVEMENT PLAN YEAR TWO MAY 2025 - MAY 2026** (Pages 29 - 58)

### **7 PERMISSION TO RE-PROCURE A SEXUAL HEALTH E-SERVICE VIA THE LONDON SEXUAL HEALTH PROGRAMME** (Pages 59 - 90)

Report attached.

### **8 WORKFORCE STRATEGY REFRESH 2025-2027** (Pages 91 - 122)

### **9 CORPORATE PLAN ANNUAL REPORT** (Pages 123 - 164)

Report attached.

### **10 2024-26 1ST QUARTER REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING** (Pages 165 - 204)

Report attached.

This Report is part exempt and **Appendix C** 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 information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information



This page is intentionally left blank



**MINUTES OF A CABINET MEETING**  
**Council Chamber - Town Hall**  
**Wednesday, 11 June 2025**  
**(7.00 - 8.27 pm)**

**Present:**

Councillor Ray Morgon (Leader of the Council), Chairman

**Cabinet Member responsibility:**

Councillor Gillian Ford (Vice-Chair)

Lead Member for Adults & Wellbeing

Councillor Oscar Ford

Lead Member for Children & Young People

Councillor Paul McGeary

Lead Member for Housing & Property

Councillor Paul Middleton

Lead Member for Digital, Transformation & Customer Services

Councillor Barry Mugglestone

Lead Member for Environment

Councillor Natasha Summers

Lead Member for Housing Need & Climate Change

Councillor Christopher Wilkins

Lead Member for Finance

Councillor Graham Williamson

Lead Member for Regeneration

**In attendance:** Councillor Michael White (CON), Councillor Matt Stanton (LAB) substitution for Councillor Keith Darvill, Councillor Martin Goode (EHRG), Councillor Laurance Garrard (Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Board)

**87 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

On behalf of the Chair, there was an announcement about the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

**88 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**89 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

90 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings held on **7<sup>th</sup> May 2025**, were agreed as a correct record and the Chair signed them.

91 **THE MAKING OF TWO VILLAGE GREENS IN HAVERING**

**Report Title:** Proposals for the voluntary making of two Village Greens within Havering.

**Presented by:** Councillor Graham Williamson – Portfolio Holder for Development and Regeneration.

**Summary:**

This is a report to enable Cabinet to consider proposals to make voluntary village green registrations of two green spaces in the borough. If the recommendations in the report receive approval, Officers will carry out the necessary actions to ensure the delivery of the village greens.

**Cabinet:**

1. **Agreed** to apply for the voluntary village green registration of the two pieces of open land considered in this report.
2. **Instructed** officers to carry out all necessary actions to achieve successful registration as agreed in recommendation 1 above.
3. **Agreed** the attached engagement and consultation process.

92 **TOBACCO HARM REDUCTION STRATEGY**

**Report Title:** Tobacco Harm Reduction Strategy 2024-2029

**Presented by:** Councillor Gillian Ford, Cabinet Member for Adults & Wellbeing

**Summary:**

This strategy supports Havering Council to meet its People Theme priorities of ensuring that people are helped to live independent, socially connected and healthier lives as set out in the Corporate Plan 2022/23 – 2026/2.

Addressing the wider determinants of health, including lifestyle factors such as smoking behaviour, supports the vision and broader objectives of reducing smoking-related harms and inequalities as set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Place Based Partnership Strategy.

Delivery of the strategy will be supported largely by government grant and public health grant. In 2023, the government announced commitment to five-year funding

to local authorities from 2024/25 to 2028/29 to boost stop smoking activities as part of national drive to achieve a smoke-free England by 2030. In 2024-25 Havering was allocated £307,543 and £315,471 in 2025-26. Public health grant contribution is £36,040.

This five-year Tobacco Harm Reduction strategy sets out the vision and aims of the Havering Tobacco Harm Reduction Partnership (THRP) group to jointly reduce tobacco harm and address the rising youth vaping in line with national ambition of creating a smoke-free society by 2030 set out in the National Tobacco Control Plan and the 2023 policy paper Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smoke free generation.

The strategy outlines a comprehensive approach to tackle tobacco use and its associated harms emphasising collaboration with various partners, enabling more people to stop smoking, preventing smoking initiation among youth, creating and expanding smoke-free environments to protect children and vulnerable from second-hand smoke whilst also strengthening regulation and enforcement.

Insight into the extent of smoking and vaping, the impact, challenges and groups disproportionately affected by smoking are highlighted in the strategy as well as the growing trend of youth vaping propelled by significant vapes marketing to young people.

Recommendations from the Tobacco Harm Reduction needs assessment such as expansion of local services, prioritised tailored support for groups with high smoking levels, training of health and social care professionals, communication and strengthened capacity of trading standards underpin the ambition and strategic objectives and the need for tailored interventions to address the inequalities caused by smoking.

There are four clear strategic priorities set out over the coming years as below:

- Supporting smokers to quit and reducing variation in smoking rates.
- Prevention - empowering individuals to avoid smoking and vaping.
- Creating smoke-free environments
- Strengthening local regulation and enforcement

Progress will be tracked by specific targets and indicators with a focus on achieving a downward trend in smoking prevalence by 2028/29. Delivery is through a yearly action plan, refreshed annually in line with funding allocation, reflecting new developments and Havering changing needs. The strategy incorporates feedback from public consultation and has been agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 7th May 2025 to proceed to cabinet for approval.

**Cabinet:**

**Approved** the Havering Tobacco Harm Reduction Strategy 2024-2029 for implementation.

93     **DAMP AND MOULD POLICY (2025)**

**Report Title:** Damp & Mould Control Policy for HRA Housing (2025)

**Presented by:** Councillor Paul McGeary, Cabinet Member for Housing & Property

**Summary:**

This report sets out the proposed policy for dealing with Dampness and Mould and clarifies the Council's commitment to supporting residents' health and wellbeing, through addressing any detected presence of damp and mould in its properties.

The goal is to provide excellent customer service, and we recognise that timely and high-quality repairs are a priority for all residents. The new damp and Mould Policy is based on the proposed Awaab's Law, the Housing Act 2004 and the Decent Homes Standard.

This policy sets out to clarify the Council's commitment to supporting residents' health and wellbeing, through addressing any detected presence of damp and mould in its properties.

We plan to revise the policy as guidance and legislation evolves. This policy explains the circumstances in which we will manage the treatment of damp and mould.

**Cabinet:**

1. **Approved** the Damp & Mould Policy (2025) for HRA Housing set out in Appendix A of this report.

94     **HAVERING LONDON - CHARITABLE STATUS APPLICATION**

**Report Title:** Havering London - Charitable Status Application

**Presented by:** Councillor Gillian Ford, Cabinet Member for Adults & Wellbeing

**Summary:**

Havering London Limited (HL) is registered at Companies House as a Council controlled company limited by guarantee. HL was established as a new cultural and place making organisation that would support the Council to deliver the London Borough of Culture (had the application been successful), and to realise future opportunities.

Cabinet agreed the recommendation at the meeting on 13 March 2024 to establish HL. The report also stated the company be established initially, with a longer term ambition to evolve into charitable status which would be subject to an options appraisal and relevant governance decisions.

This report seeks authority to apply for charitable status for HL for the reasons set out.

**Cabinet agreed:**

1. that an application is submitted to the Charity Commission for Havering London Limited to become a registered charity. Following registration, HL will be a charitable company limited by guarantee.
2. to delegate to the Strategic Director of People in consultation with the Deputy Director of Legal Services to take all steps necessary to establish the charity if the application is successful.

**Cabinet noted** that the Council nomination for appointments on the Charity Board will be made subject to the Council's Constitutional Rules.

95 **REVISION TO THE CABINET PAPER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO PROCURE ADULT SOCIAL CARE FRAMEWORK**

**Report Title:** Permission to procure a framework for Adult Social Care Residential & Nursing Care Home, Homecare and Supported Living Placements.

**Presented by:** Councillor Gillian Ford, Cabinet Member for Adults & Wellbeing

**Summary:**

This contract supports Havering Council to meet its priorities in its Corporate Plan 2024/25. This plan sets out how the Council intends to invest and transform the borough with an emphasis on improving the lives of vulnerable children, adults and families. In summary, this framework ensures the Council fulfils its aim of ensuring that the needs of the most vulnerable are met and that people are supported to be healthy and active.

The budget for this procurement will come from Adult Social Care budgets. Placements will be called off as required using the brokerage system, from the framework which will have no minimum or maximum value, nor will any commitment to expenditure by the Council be stipulated within the framework contracts. Expenditure will only be incurred when individual packages of care are purchased.

The expected annual call off from the framework will be approx. £90 million. This is based on 2023/24 spend on ASC placements.

To ensure that all placements can be made through the framework without limitations, £500 million has been established as the maximum value for the 4-year framework. This precaution avoids the risk of depleting funds, which would hinder the ability to call off from the framework.

This decision paper is seeking permission to procure a framework for Adult Social Care Residential & Nursing Care Home, Homecare and Supported Living Placements to replace the current Complex Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) and Active Homecare Framework.

The procurement of a comprehensive framework for Adult Social Care encompassing Residential & Nursing Care Homes, Homecare, and Supported Living Placements is an indispensable step towards enhancing the quality of care and support for adults in need.

This document outlines the fundamental reasons why such a framework is essential and highlights the multitude of benefits and improvements it brings to the realm of adult social care.

**Cabinet:**

1. **Approved** the procurement of a framework for Adult Social Care Residential & Nursing Care Home, Homecare and Supported Living Placements.
2. **Delegated** authority to approve the award of the contracts to the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health.

96 **IMPROVEMENT & TRANSFORMATION PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE AND CIPFA FM REVIEW**

**Report Title:** Improvement & Transformation Plan Progress Update and CIPFA FM Review

**Presented by:** Councillor Ray Morgon, Council Leader

**Summary:**

In 2023/24, our unit costs were the 16th lowest compared to 16 other Outer London boroughs, i.e. the lowest as independently assessed by LG Futures. Our income collection for Council Tax was in the top-quartile in London. We consistently sold off assets (over £160m since 2013/14) to minimise borrowing costs of our capital programme, and Members increased Council Tax throughout austerity.

The Council takes its financial responsibilities very seriously. We have maximised Council Tax income, have one the lowest unit costs in the country, have sold assets, do not have high levels of borrowing and have been forced to use our reserves to mitigate underfunding.

After significant systemic underfunding since 2010, the Council's financial challenge was no longer one we could manage without Government intervention. Exceptional Financial Support through a capitalisation direction was applied for to prevent us from issuing a S114 for last financial year (2024/25). As part of the requirements to receive this support, an Improvement & Transformation Plan was required to be submitted no later than 27<sup>th</sup> August 2024. The plan has been monitored internally, since its approval at Cabinet in July 2024.

Another condition of the Capitalisation Direction was for the Council to undergo an independent Financial Management review to assess the Financial Management and Governance arrangements of the Council. This report provides additional information on the Financial Management review which was conducted last summer, and the recommendations put forward by CIPFA.

Officers received thanks from the Members and asked that the RAG system be used for the Overview & Scrutiny Board projects.

**Cabinet:**

- (1) **Noted** the Improvement and Transformation Plan Updates within the Action Plan.
- (2) **Noted** the CIPFA Financial Recommendations and Updates within the Improvement and Transformation Action Plan.

**Cabinet noted** that the delivery of the actions set out within this plan is the responsibility of the Executive Leadership Team.

97 **Q4 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT**

**Report Title:** Corporate Plan Q4 Performance Report: (2024/25)

**Presented by:** Councillor Ray Morgon, Council Leader

**Summary:**

The report sets out Quarter 4 performance for each of the three strategic priorities (People, Place and Resources)

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. It is expected that the delivery of targets will be achieved within existing resources.

The Council's Corporate Plan was formally adopted in April 2024.

The Corporate Plan is made up of the three Strategic Director Service plans and describes how we will deliver the vision under the following three themes:

- Supporting our residents to stay safe and well
- A great place to live work and enjoy
- Enabling a resident-focussed and resilient council

Under each theme sit a number of outcomes and key deliverables associated to the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that were agreed to be the most appropriate for measuring progress. These KPIs have been brought together into a Corporate Plan Performance Report, which provides an overview of the Council's performance. The report is presented in *PowerBI* and highlights good performance and potential areas for improvement.

The Overall KPI status page identifies where the Council is performing well (Green) not so well (Amber and Red). KPIs which are narrative only, or for which it is not appropriate to set a target, are shown in Blue. RAG ratings for 2024/25 are as follows:

- **Red** = Below target and below the 'variable tolerance' off the target
- **Amber** = Below target but within the 'variable tolerance' of the target
- **Green** = Above annual target

Also included in the Power-BI report are Direction of Travel (long-term and short-term), which compares:

- Short-term performance – with the previous quarter (Quarter 3 2024/25)
- Long-term performance – with the same time the previous year (Quarter 4 2023/24, where available)

Please note the green arrow shows if (↑) higher performance is better or (↓) lower performance is better.

The Corporate Performance Report will be brought to Cabinet at the end of each quarter.

**Cabinet:**

**Noted** all indicators (especially the red indicators highlighted within the body of this report) and **noted** the levels of performance set out in the power-bi report, subject to amendments to the comments on pages 169 and 174

98 **2024-25 REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT**

**Report Title:** Council Revenue and Capital Outturn Report 2024/25

**Presented by:** Councillor Chris Wilkins (Cabinet Member for Finance)

**Summary:**

The report provides detail of the outturn position on Capital and Revenue for 2024/25 including the funding of the outturn and impact on reserves and balances.

This report includes:

- 2024/25 Revenue Outturn Position
- Analysis of Service overspends and mitigating corporate items
- Update on savings delivery
- Financing and impact on reserves and balances
- Capital Outturn position for 2024/25

**1.1** This Report sets out the revenue outturn position for the Council and includes commentary on the variances to budget by service. The report also includes explanation of mitigating corporate items and explains how the outturn position will be financed.

**1.2.** The report also sets out the Capital outturn for 2024/25 compared to revised budget and explains the variances and slippage on the budget.

**1.3.** The table below sets out the final revenue outturn position of the Council which is a £30.4m overspend against the original budget without exceptional financial support. This table also provides a comparison to the Period 9 forecast which was submitted to cabinet in March

<b>Table 1: Revenue Outturn 2024/25</b>	<b>Revised Budget (m)</b>	<b>Final Actual (m)</b>	<b>Variance to Budget (m)</b>	<b>Period 9 Forecast Outturn (m)</b>
<b>Directorate</b>				
Resources	26.5	25.9	(0.6)	0.0
People	159.4	180.0	20.6	22.3
Place	14.8	16.4	1.6	2.5
Corporate	10.8	5.6	(5.2)	(4.7)
Worst Case	18.5	0.0	(18.5)	(18.5)
contingent budget				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>230.0</b>	<b>227.9</b>	<b>(2.1)</b>	<b>1.6</b>
	(32.5)	0.0	32.5	32.5
Capitalisation requirement				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>197.5</b>	<b>227.9</b>	<b>30.4</b>	<b>34.1</b>
<b>OVERSPEND</b>				
Settlement	(39.5)	(39.5)	0.0	0.0
Funding				
Assessment				
Council Tax	(158.0)	(158.0)	0.0	0.0
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>(197.5)</b>	<b>(197.5)</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

**1.4** Further details of the reported departmental variances are set out in Section 4 of this report. There are then sections setting out the Corporate position, including Treasury management, HRA and Capital Outturn.

**Cabinet;**

**2.1 Noted** the revenue outturn position for the Council and the financing of the overspend (section 7 of the report)

**2.2 Approved** the Capital Outturn position for 24/25 as set out in section 9 of this report

**2.3 Noted** the outturn position for the Council's earmarked reserves and General balances as set out in section 6 of this report

**2.4 Noted** the write off of debt approved by the Strategic Director of Resources as set out in paragraph 5.4

---

**Chairman**



## CABINET

**Subject Heading:**

Approval to award contracts for Frozen Foods and Groceries

**Cabinet Member:**

Councillor Oscar Ford, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

**ELT Lead:**

Barbara Nicholls, Strategic Director of People

**Report Author and contact details:**

Beverley Allen, Interim Commercial and Contracts Manager – 01708 431930  
[beverley.allen@Havering.gov.uk](mailto:beverley.allen@Havering.gov.uk)

**Policy context:**

Supports the 'People' theme of the Havering Vision:

'Our children, young people thrive and are inspired to reach their full potential

**Financial summary:**

The current PAL framework expires on 31st August 2025. The Council's current call-off contract expires on the same date.

The estimated value of the new call-off contract across PAL members is c. £8.36m in year 1. The total framework value over the 4-year term of the contract (3 years + 1-year extension) is £36.04m across all PAL members. This includes an estimated 5% annual inflationary increase.

Havering's estimated annual contract value is £2.49m in year 1 (£10.73m total contract value).

**The estimated cost is based on actual expenditure in 24/25 uplifted by annual inflation, however as this is a call off arrangement, there is no minimum financial commitment. The actual cost will vary depending on demand, and can be controlled. This will be funded from Havering Catering Service revenue budgets. As catering is a Traded Service, there is no base budget provision, but expenditure is offset against income that is**

**generated from catering contracts with schools**

**Is this a Key Decision?**

Yes - Expenditure or saving (including anticipated income) of £500,000 or more

**When should this matter be reviewed?**

28th July 2025

**Reviewing OSC:**

People OSSC

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

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well X

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

**SUMMARY**

The current Frozen Foods and Groceries Single-supplier framework expires on 31 August 2025. The Council's current call-off contract expires on the same date.

HES Catering Service has reviewed the requirements and seeks to establish a new three year (plus 12-month extension) multi-supplier framework for this provision as soon as possible. The framework will be owned and managed by HES Catering Services and can be accessed by the members of the Procurement Across London (PAL) group. Each participating member is responsible for their respective call-off agreements and will enter into separate call-off contracts.

The Councils who form the PAL group are:

- London Borough of Havering,
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets,
- London Borough of Waltham Forest,
- Thurrock Council

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Approval is requested for the award of;

- A. a Pan London multi-supplier framework agreement for the supply of Frozen Foods and Groceries with an estimated value of c. £8.36m in year 1, c.£36.04m total

contract value over 3 plus 1-year term, commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2029.

- B. A Havering call-off to the estimated value of c. £2.49m in year 1 (£10.73m total estimated value over 3 plus 1-year term), commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2029.

The current PAL framework expires on 31st August 2025. The Council's current call-off contract expires on the same date.

The indicative value of the new call-off contract across PAL members is c. £8.36m in year 1. The total framework value over the 4-year term of the contract (3 years + 1-year extension) is £36.04m across all PAL members. This includes an estimated 5% annual inflationary increase.

Havering's estimated annual contract value is £2.49m in year 1 (£10.73m total contract value).

### **REPORT DETAIL**

An open procurement process was undertaken in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and advertised on the Government's Find a Tender portal ref 2025/S000-005430 on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

Two bidders expressed an interest in the tender and two bids were received from;

Thomas Ridley (00148692)  
JJ Food Service Ltd (02330996)

Both JJ Food Service Ltd and Thomas Ridley passed the Stage 1 compliance checks, including confirmation of economic and financial standing, mandatory declarations, insurance requirements, and relevant policies (e.g., modern slavery, equality, and data protection).

The evaluation of tenders was carried out in accordance with the published evaluation criteria as outlined in the Invitation to Tender (ITT). The award criterion was the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT), based on a combined quality (70%) and price (30%) evaluation. The evaluation was conducted in two stages:

- Stage 1 – Compliance Checks (Selection Questionnaire and Mandatory Requirements)
- Stage 2 – Evaluation of Quality and Price.

The quality assessment was based on five method statement questions, with a maximum score of 30% available. Each response was scored against the published criteria using a 0–5 scale, with weightings applied as per the ITT. Both suppliers put forward strong quality proposals.

The financial assessment was based on the total submitted basket prices. Price scores were calculated using the published formula in the ITT. The results are summarised below:

<b>Bidder</b>	<b>Total Price</b>	<b>Price Score</b>
---------------	--------------------	--------------------

JJ Food Service	£10,502,760.75	43.41%
Thomas Ridley	£9,019,498.45	49.80%

Both suppliers put forward strong quality proposals and the overall quality scores were:

<b>Bidder</b>	<b>Quality score</b>
JJ Food Service	26
Thomas Ridley	21.20

Following completion of the quality and financial evaluation, the final combined MEAT scores are as follows:

1. Thomas Ridley Ltd – Total: 71.00%
2. JJ Food Service Ltd – Total: 69.41%

Based on the MEAT scores, Thomas Ridley Ltd ranked highest overall, with JJ Food Service Ltd placing second. Both suppliers met the minimum quality threshold and are recommended for appointment to the framework.

Based on the evaluation of the scores, the service recommends that approval is given to appoint both bidders on to the framework given that the intention was to establish a multi-supplier framework.

The contract will not include any commitment from HES Catering Service or the collaborative PAL group to volume or value of orders. PAL group members will be individually responsible for calling-off the framework via their own internal corporate governance arrangements.

Each bidder has been fairly scored using the evaluation criteria specified within the Invitation to Tender.

## **REASONS AND OPTIONS**

### **Reasons for the decision:**

The current Frozen Food and Grocery Single-supplier framework expires on 31 August 2025. The Council's current call-off contract expires on the same date.

HES Catering Service has reviewed the requirements and seeks to establish a new three year (plus 12-month extension) multi-supplier framework for this provision as soon as possible. The framework will be owned and managed by HES Catering Services and can be accessed by the members of the Procurement Across London (PAL) group. Each participating member is responsible for their respective call-off agreements and will enter into separate call-off contracts.

The Councils who form the PAL group are:

- London Borough of Havering,
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets,

- London Borough of Waltham Forest,
- Thurrock Council

## **Procurement Process**

An open procurement process was undertaken in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and advertised on the Government's Find a Tender portal ref 2025/S 000-005430 on 17th February 2025.

Two bidders expressed an interest in the tender and two bids were received from;

- Thomas Ridley (Company number 00148692)
- JJ Food Service Ltd (Company number 02330996)

The weightings applied to this procurement were:  
Commercial Assessment 70% of the overall assessment  
Quality Assessment 30% of the overall assessment

Both suppliers met the tender eligibility requirements and provided the necessary certification & reassurances. Both are credit-worthy and have adequate turnover and insurance cover. This was confirmed from the SQ and method statements received from the bidders.

Based on the evaluation of the scores, the service recommends that approval is given to appoint both bidders on to the framework given that the intention was to establish a multi-supplier framework.

It is recommended that The Council awards a call-off contract to both companies. The reason for awarding a call off to both companies is that the call off procedure will be direct award, based on the lowest price for each individual line item required.

The appointment to the Framework will not include any commitment from HES Catering Service or the collaborative PAL group to volume or value of orders. PAL group members will be individually responsible for calling-off the framework via their own internal corporate governance arrangements.

## **Other options considered:**

### **Not to re-tender for this requirement but purchase ad-hoc from the market**

This option has been discounted as it will not be compliant with the Council's procurement rules and policies due to the cumulative value of spend over time. Also there has been uncertainties and significant spikes in pricing of goods and raw materials experienced across the market over recent years. This would undermine the financial viability of the service. In addition, this option will not allow for the prerequisite due diligence which is an essential part of the full competitive process to be carried out, resulting in reputational risk to the Council.

## **2. Carrying out an open tender just for HES Catering Services**

This option was considered, however it has been rejected as the PAL arrangement delivers greater efficiencies through combined purchasing power and economies of scale. This option would result in an estimated loss of income to HES Catering which results from managing the framework for the PAL group. The management fee which HES Catering earns is 0.75% of the total sales across the framework over its lifetime.

### **3. Call- off from an existing national framework**

Framework owners such as Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) charge 1% management fee for any call-off made from their frameworks. This could potentially result in a cost to Havering of £107,000 over the duration of the contract. Established frameworks generally do not allow for the setting up of a framework-within-a-framework, so each member of PAL would have to have their own call-off, and has therefore been rejected.

### **4. To split the framework into different lots**

This option was considered, however it has been rejected due to the operational complexity of delivering to 220+ sites across PAL members on multi delivery days per week, individual site restrictions, health and safety implications and impact on the environment and climate change implications.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Financial implications and risks:**

The current PAL framework expires on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025. The contract was tendered as described above with a 70% weighting given for price in line with the Council's policy. The price evaluation followed the methodology set out in the ITT which was a non-standard methodology designed specifically for this procurement. Only two bids were received and both met minimum standards so will both be invited onto the framework. Expenditure will be incurred on a call off basis enabling services to select the lower of the two prices for a specific item.

The indicative value of the new call-off contract is c. £8.36m in year 1. The total framework value over a 3-year (plus 1-year extension) is £36.04m across PAL members. This includes an estimated 5% annual inflationary increase. Havering's estimated annual contract value is £2.49m in year 1, which equates to £10.73m total contract value over the lifetime of the framework. The estimated annual spend is shown below.

	Year				
	2025/26 (1)	2026/27 (2)	2027/28 (3)	2028/29 (4)	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Total framework	£8.36	£8.78	£9.22	£9.68	£36.04
Havering	£2.49	£2.61	£2.75	£2.88	£10.73m

The estimated cost is based on current expenditure, however as this is a call off arrangement, there is no minimum financial commitment, and the actual cost will vary depending upon demand. This allows the expenditure to be controlled. The costs related to this procurement will be funded from HES Catering Services revenue budgets. As Catering is a Traded Service, there is no base budget provision, but expenditure is offset against income that is generated from Catering contracts with schools. In 2024/25 the Service generated a budget surplus of £-188,000. This was partly due to Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) funding, which is currently confirmed to July 2026

Currently any surplus or deficit is managed through the council's general fund. Traded services are required to cover their costs and make a contribution to the management services provided to them by the Council. If the catering traded service is unable to do that going forward, then it is a financial risk to the Council's General Fund position. This risk would increase if UFSM is not extended beyond July 2026.

The overall trading position is regularly monitored as part of our normal business arrangements. The costs of the new contract will need to be closely monitored to determine the actual impact of the new pricing schedules, and how this compares with the 5% inflation assumed in this report. Options for mitigating the risk of making losses or loss of customers would include reducing expenditure on food and other supplies which we would be able to do as this is a call off contract.

The contract will be managed by the HES Catering Service. This will be funded from a 0.75% management fee received from the participating authorities within the PAL Framework. The contributions will vary according to the level of contract spend, but based on the indicative contract values shown above, this would generate income for the Council of around £190,000 over the life of the contract.

Being a wholly traded service, the expectation is for the contract to deliver effective value for money, allowing the service to continue operating as a viable catering provision to its clients.

### **Legal implications and risks:**

The Council has a general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything an individual can do, subject to any statutory constraints on the Council's powers. None of the constraints on the Council's Section 1 power are engaged by this decision.

The Education Act 1996 enables the Council to provide school meals for children at school and the proposals in this report support that provision.

The total estimated value of the framework agreement is £36.04m. The aggregate sum of the proposed procurement is above the applicable Public Procurement threshold for contracts for services and supplies of £214,904 stipulated in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 as amended ("PCR").

Procurement of the framework is therefore caught by the full rigors of the PCR and a Contract Notice must therefore be published on the UK e-notification service 'Find a Tender' as well as on Contracts Finder. Additionally, the procurement must comply with Regulation 33 of the PCR for framework agreements. The call-off contracts will be procured via the rules of the framework.

The Local Government Act 1999, requires the Council to make arrangements to achieve best value in the exercise of its functions. While conducting the procurement and evaluating the bids, officers must satisfy themselves that the procurement process is in accordance with this principle.

The total estimated expenditure for the Council is £10.73m. Therefore, the decision to award the Framework Agreement will need to be made by Cabinet. Ravi Mudundi in Legal has been consulted on this matter.

### **Human Resources implications and risks:**

The recommendations made in this report do not give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.

### **Equalities 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.

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.

The procurement process will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Contract Procurement Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015. The proposed contractor will be expected to comply with the Council's policies with regards to the promotion of equality and diversity in service delivery and employment practice.

### **Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks**

Havering Council is committed to protecting and improving the health and wellbeing of its residents.

There are no direct health and wellbeing implications associated with the recommended contract award and call off for the supply of frozen food and grocery. It is the expectation that selected providers will meet the minimum requirements around food hygiene and

safety, produce quality, provenance and sustainability. The proposed social value measures within the tender have the potential to deliver health and wellbeing benefits (e.g. through provision of employment of local residents), and it should be ensured that providers commitment to deliver against these are realised across the lifetime of the contract.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

HES Catering Service recognises it has a role to play in contributing towards the realization of the council's Social Value strategic objectives which are set out in its new vision for the borough.

To underpin this, the tender has a 10% sub-weighting attributed to Social Value within the overall 30% quality assessment section of the tender evaluation. This is to demonstrate to bidders that the Council wishes to award contracts to suppliers who align with its Social Value objectives, and who provide the necessary quality, provenance and sustainability certifications.

Through the tender process, bidders will be asked to submit evidence of:

- How they will create employment opportunities for local people/ and/or disadvantaged people as part of the contract.
- The approach to reducing the company's carbon emissions and how they are working towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions, including reporting on their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions released in the delivery of this contract.
- Management of other environmental impacts relating the service e.g. reduced water use, reduced packaging, use of low energy equipment etc.
- How they ensure materials and products relevant to the provision of the service are sustainably sourced, produced and deployed
- Percentage of the company's fleet used for the contract that are zero emissions vehicles.
- Their company's measures to identify, mitigate and manage modern slavery risks relating to the contract and supply chain.

Once suppliers are awarded a place on the framework, this area will continue to be reviewed via the contract management process. The service will continue to ask for evidence both qualitative and quantitative of any initiatives undertaken. Ongoing work will take place with suppliers to encourage and support in this area.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None



## CABINET

### Subject Heading:

Starting Well Improvement Plan Year Two  
May 2025 - May 2026

### Cabinet Member:

Councillor Oscar Ford, Cabinet Member  
for Children

### ELT Lead:

Tara Geere, Director of Starting Well

### Report Author and contact details:

Sophie Ambler, Project Manager, Starting  
Well

### Policy context:

Havering Children's Social Care is subject  
to a Department for Education ((DfE)  
statutory improvement notice served in  
March 2024. This report summarises the  
updated year two Starting Well  
Improvement Plan, and delivery  
timescales.

### Financial summary:

The additional costs of the year two  
improvement plan is £0.395m. A funding  
request was submitted to the DfE who  
have agreed £0.2m leaving a cost of  
£0.1935m to the Council's general fund.

### Is this a Key Decision?

Yes

Significant effect on two or more Wards

### When should this matter be reviewed?

Within six months

### Reviewing OSC:

Children and Learning

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

**X People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well**

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

## **SUMMARY**

Following Ofsted's inspection in December 2023 and the Statutory Improvement Notice in March 2024, the Starting Well directorate developed and implemented an improvement plan, which was submitted to Ofsted and the Department for Education (DfE) in May 2024.

One year on, the plan has been updated to reflect progress and sharpen priorities, informed by internal quality assurance activity and feedback from Ofsted and the DfE. Two Ofsted monitoring visits (October 2024 and March 2025) and two DfE reviews (November 2024 and June 2025) have acknowledged progress, while highlighting the need for accelerated pace of improvement. The revised plan focuses on strengthening management oversight, supervision, and quality assurance. The DfE welcomed the plan's clearer focus on outcomes.

Key developments include collaboration with the DfE Improvement Advisor, Sector-Led Improvement Partners (LB Islington and Centre for Systemic Social Work) to improve our case management system (LiquidLogic) and relaunch our systemic practice model with staff, as well as with partners. This work began in late 2024/25, with impact expected this financial year.

Workforce development remains central to the plan. The second phase of the Starting Well reorganisation concludes this autumn, with continued focus on recruitment, retention, training, and accredited systemic development. We are also advancing the use of Artificial Intelligence and technology to reduce administrative tasks and increase time spent undertaking direct work with families.

Progress continues to be overseen by the independently chaired Practice Improvement Board (meeting every eight weeks) and the quarterly Practice Improvement Oversight Board, chaired by the Chief Executive and attended by senior leaders, elected members, partners and DfE representatives.

The next Ofsted monitoring visit is expected in autumn 2025, followed by a third DfE review in late 2025.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Cabinet note, endorse and adopt the content of the Starting Well Improvement Plan 2025/26.

<b>REPORT DETAIL</b>
----------------------

1. Following Ofsted's full inspection in December 2023 and the Statutory Improvement Notice issued in March 2024, the Starting Well directorate has been actively delivering the actions outlined in our inaugural improvement plan, submitted to Ofsted and the DfE in May 2024.
- 1.1 One year on, we've refreshed the plan to reflect progress and sharpen our focus, informed by internal quality assurance processes and feedback from Ofsted and the DfE.
- 1.2 Since the inspection, Ofsted has conducted two monitoring visits (October 2024 and March 2025), and the DfE has undertaken two bi-annual reviews (November 2024 and June 2025). While progress has been acknowledged, we recognise the need to accelerate the pace of improvement.
- 1.3 Our revised plan prioritises areas where we can make the most impact, particularly in strengthening management oversight, supervision, and quality assurance. The DfE has reviewed the updated plan and welcomed its improved focus on outcomes and impact.
- 1.4 To reflect the significance of our improvement work in relation to supervision and management oversight, the impact of managers and leaders has moved to theme one within the new iteration of the improvement plan.
- 1.5 Over the past year, we've worked closely with our DfE Improvement Advisor (appointed September 2024) to progress our improvement plan and monitor and scrutinise the impact of activity on outcomes for children and families.
- 1.6 We have worked collaboratively with our sector-led improvement partners (LB Islington and the Centre for Systemic Social Work), to enhance our case management system and relaunch our systemic practice model. Much of this work began in late 2024/25, with impact expected this financial year.
- 1.7 We continue to invest in our workforce, with the second phase of the Starting Well reorganisation set to conclude this autumn, which is closely linked to the transformative Families First Partnership Programme set out by DfE in March 2025.
- 1.8 Within the revised plan we have retained our focus on delivering a 'stable and able workforce' as well 'removing barriers' to ensure that good social work practice can thrive. This includes improving how we recruit and retain staff, offering improved support and career development, and renewing our commitment to accredited systemic training for permanent staff and managers.

1.9 Alongside this we remain committed to developing our use of artificial intelligence (AI) and technology to reduce time spent undertaking administrative tasks, so our teams can spend more time with children and families.

1.10 Oversight of progress against our plan will continue to be undertaken by the Practice Improvement Board (PIB), which meets every eight weeks and is independently chaired. Our Practice Improvement Oversight Board (PIOB) also meets quarterly and is chaired by our Chief Executive Officer. This is attended by senior leaders in the Council, as well as elected members and representatives from the DfE.

1.11 We anticipate that the third Ofsted monitoring visit will be undertaken in autumn 2025, followed by a third DfE review in late 2025.

1.12 The below table details the additional costs of the year two improvement plan, and outlines where funding from the DfE will be used and what additional costs will be covered by the Council

<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Funding request from DfE</b>	<b>DfE request will support</b>	<b>Havering Council contribution</b>
Yr2a	<b>Retain x3 Improvement leads</b>	Added capacity and support to the practice improvement work including mentoring / coaching and training for managers to drive focused improvements	£0.18m	£0.1m	x 2 FTE Improvement Leads	£0.08m (x1 FTE)
Yr2b	<b>Establish x1 Commissioner &amp; Project Manager</b>	Added capacity to take forward key streams of our sufficiency strategy, with the aim of improving outcomes for children and reducing placement spend to support financial sustainability	£0.117m	£0.057m	x 1 FTE Commissioner and Project Manager	£0.06m
Yr2c	<b>Establish x1 System Developer (Liquid logic)</b>	Improvements to the case recording system to better support workers in their day-to-day work, freeing up time spent on administrative processes for more direct work with children and families.	£0.0465m	£0.04m	x 1 FTE additional System Developer	£0.0065m

Yr2d	<b>Establish x1 additional Project Manager</b>	Additional capacity to support development and delivery of the corporate parenting strategy and related activity across the wider Council	£0.05m	£0.003m	x 1FTE Project Manager	£0.047m
Yr2e	<b>Sector Led Improvement Partner work with the Centre for Systemic Practice</b>	Following the November 2024 launch, on-going embedding of the systemic model of practice across all staff, with a particular focus on managers	Costings to come from the SLIP partners to DfE			
<b>Total</b>				<b>£0.2m</b>		<b>£0.1935m</b>

### **REASONS AND OPTIONS**

**Reason for the decision:** To ensure that Cabinet are kept informed and appraised of the Starting Well Ofsted Improvement Plan

**Other options considered:** None; it is a statutory requirement for us to submit an improvement plan as per our improvement notice

### **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

#### **Financial Implications and Risks:**

Over the last two years the Council has significantly increased its investment in Children's Services. There was a net £9m included in the 24/25 MTFS budget setting and a further £2.1m added in year and another net £14.8m in the 25/26 MTFS budget. This has supported an increased social care workforce through two major reorganisations which has brought about a reduction in caseloads, stronger management structures and further development of family support. The additional costs of the year two improvement plan are summarised above and are estimated to be in the region of £0.4m of which £0.2m is expected to be funded by grant from the DfE. The remaining £0.2m cost will be met from the 2025/26 Starting Well budget and has already been built into our forecast expenditure.

### **Legal Implications and Risks:**

Should the Council fail to comply with the Improvement Notice or should ministers not be satisfied with the Council's progress at any stage, ministers may choose to invoke their statutory powers of intervention (under s497A Education Act 1996 as applied to children's social care by section 50 of the Children Act 2004) to direct the Council to enter into an appropriate arrangement to secure the improvements required in children's services.

### **Human Resources Implications and Risks:**

We are aware that some actions within the Starting Well Improvement Plan will have a direct impact on staff. However, any such actions that require support from HR colleagues are outlined in the plan and any work undertaken (i.e. service redesigns) will be done following the necessary processes and procedures.

### **Equalities 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.

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.

Any of the specific projects and programmes of work within the Ofsted Improvement Plan will have an Equality and Health Impact Assessment undertaken as needed, and any subsequently identified issues responded to.

### **Health and Wellbeing Implications and Risks**

The Starting Well Improvement Plan contains specific actions related to physical and mental health and addresses wider determinants of health (such as education and employment), which are expected to impact positively on health and wellbeing. As specific projects and programmes of work progress, health and wellbeing implications and risks will be reviewed, and identified issues responded to.

**ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

There are no Environment and Climate change implications or risks for this decision

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**Appendix 1; Starting Well Improvement Plan May 2025-May 2026**

This page is intentionally left blank

London Borough of Havering  
Starting Well Department  
Children's Services Improvement Plan  
Year Two  
May 2025 – May 2026

## Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Governance and Oversight of the Plan .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Financing Improvements .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Monitoring Impact .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Our Plan on a Page .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Theme One; Impact of Leaders and Managers .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>A) Quality and Consistency of Supervision and Management Oversight .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>B) Consistency and Impact of Quality Assurance Process .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>C) Governance and Impact of Leaders including Securing Financial Support .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Theme Two; Stable and Able Workforce .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>A) Strengthening communication, recruitment, service delivery, and professional development to drive improvements and engagement. ....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Theme Three; Improving Practice .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>A) Children, Young People and Families have their needs Accurately Assessed in Timely Way, and Appropriately Responded to .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>B) Plans, Processes and Reviews are Purposeful and Child Focused .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>C) The Voices and Lived Experiences of Children, Families and Young People are Heard and Used to Drive Improvement.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Theme 4; Removing Barriers .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>A) Ensuring that systems, tools, and strategies are in place which enable practice to thrive .....</b>	<b>21</b>

## Introduction

As we start year two of our improvement plan, we have reflected on the progress we have achieved to date and the areas for further improvement supported by the feedback from the Ofsted Monitoring visit letters, Department for Education review and our quality assurance activity and improvement boards. Our focus within year one of our improvement journey, and the first iteration of our improvement plan, was on laying the foundations for high quality social work practice to thrive. We used staff and Ofsted feedback to overhaul the service structure of our statutory social work teams, introducing a corporate parenting service and separate safeguarding service. We also refocused the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer by creating a separate Child Protection Chair role, led by a separate Service Manager. This is part of our future proofing of services to set us in good stead for the Multi-Agency Child Protection Teams being introduced as part of the Families First Partnership Programme.

Alongside the restructure of the service, we also focused on stabilising our workforce with a view to creating consistency for children and families, and an environment where staff feel supported and encouraged. As with any major restructuring, this did take some time which slowed initial progress. However, it was important we invested this time to have the right building blocks. Over the first year of the improvement plan, our use of agency staff has reduced significantly, and our caseloads are now at more manageable levels across all service areas. This remains closely monitored through our Power BI dashboards and monthly performance reporting. We have also focused on ensuring there is a high level of scrutiny on the quality of practice across all service areas, through our revised quality assurance (QA) activity which has included practice oversight meetings, reflective action meetings and lunch and learn sessions in response to identified training needs. Going forward in year two we are focused on making our quality assurance processes more collaborative, both with staff and with families and young people, to ensure a holistic overview of the impact our practice is having and to learn from feedback. We acknowledge that the implementation and progress during our first year were influenced by various factors. However, our pace has significantly increased since the appointment of a new DfE advisor in September 2024, along with the implementation of new structures and the appointment of a permanent senior leadership team in October and November 2024. The majority of improvements have taken place over the past six months as we integrated practice developments within the newly established teams with the additional capacity. We are dedicated to accelerating this pace as we move into the second year of our improvement plan.

We are grateful for the ongoing support from colleagues in the Department for Education (DfE), and our funded work with Sector Led Improvement Partners (Centre for Systemic Social Work (CfSSW) and LB Islington) which commenced in year one; we anticipate seeing the impact of this work strengthen within 2025/26. Our workforce is our greatest asset, and we remain committed to providing the required training and support needed for our workforce to deliver their best practice. We are extremely proud that Ofsted during their latest monitoring visit noted how well our social workers know their children, as well as highlighting their dedication, passion and creativity being evident in the work they undertake. Throughout year two we will continue to build on these positives through our relational model of practice, our ongoing CfSSW programme of systemic training and through embedding support from our in-house team of systemic family therapists.

In year one we developed and launched several key strategies to help provide a framework for our practice, and our priority areas. These have included our Integrated Starting Well Plan (Happy Healthy Lives), our SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy, Sufficiency Strategy and our Quality Assurance Framework. In the coming year we will deliver our refreshed Corporate Parenting Strategy (co-produced with care experienced children and young people) and our updated Early Help Strategy.

## Governance and Oversight of the Plan

Key to the success of our plan is strong oversight by leaders, managers, Child Protection Chairs and Independent Reviewing Officers as well as having effective Quality Assurance processes, so that we can quickly identify areas for further development, escalating practice where necessary. As such the 'Impact of Leaders and Managers' has been moved as 'Theme one' of our plan.

Our Practice Improvement Board (PIB), with an independent chair, and our Practice Improvement Oversight Board (POIB) chaired by LB Havering Chief Executive were established in early 2024. These boards provide the mechanism for thematic oversight of practice and progress against the plan. Since autumn 2024, the PIB has moved to bi-

monthly meetings to enable time for improvements to embed and for impact to be evidenced. The quality and timeliness of reports to PIB have improved over the last year, with progress and challenges being identified and acted on. Our statutory safeguarding partners are well engaged in the governance and oversight of our improvement journey, alongside elected members and senior Council leaders. As part of our year two improvement plan, we are committed to enhancing the impact of scrutiny and challenge provided by our political and corporate leaders.

## Financing Improvements

The delivery of improvements undertaken in 2024/25 was financed through increased investment by the Local Authority (c. £5m) and a DfE Improvement Grant (£352k). This primarily funded the service reorganisations and increase in capacity for practitioners and managers, as well as increasing capacity in our quality assurance service. There has also been work undertaken with Sector Led Improvement Partners (SLIP), funded by the DfE, which has focused on revitalising our model of practice with the Centre for Systemic Social Work and improving our LiquidLogic case management system with LB Islington.

In 2025/26 the DfE has allocated the borough a further £200k improvement grant and a further £3.8m has been specified for improvement work in the growth allocation for Starting Well. £2.4m of this fully funds the service structure enhancements across Children's social care implemented last year (phase one). £1.1m is for the further enhancements (phase two), the consultation for which concluded in May 2025 and is due to be fully implemented by September 2025. In addition there has been significant budget increase (£11.9m) for Children's Services (i.e. funding for care and placements and other support).

## Monitoring Impact

As we progress into year two of our improvement plan, it is vital that we become more consistent in evaluating the impact of the actions we undertake. This is to enable understanding of what is working well to cascade good practice, and to further develop our approach in areas that are not evidencing positive impact. Throughout this coming year each section of the plan will be updated monthly (or quarterly if this is more appropriate) and a RAG rating will be recorded against each of the actions. We will also look to RAG rate the impact on practice and will monitor via the practice improvement board and give updates to the practice improvement oversight board.

### Actions

Colour	Definition
Grey	Action not yet started, no risk to delivery identified
Red	Action not on track, risk to implementation
Amber	Action progressing; issues / delays encountered but resolutions identified and sufficient oversight is in place
Green	Action progressing; on track to completed by next review date, or action complete but ongoing monitoring required
Blue	Action completed, monitoring undertaken as service BAU including routine quality assurance

## Our Plan on a Page

Page 41

Theme One	Theme Two	Theme Three	Theme Four
<p><i>Impact of Managers and Leaders</i></p> <p>Lead; Tara Geere Director of Starting Well</p>	<p><i>Stable and Able Workforce</i></p> <p>Lead; Charmaine Malcolm, Assistant Director; Principal Social Worker</p>	<p><i>Improving Practice</i></p> <p>Leads; Alex Kaitell, Assistant Director; Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting; Daniel Silva, Assistant Director; Early Help and Partnerships; Trevor Cook, Assistant Director Education Services</p>	<p><i>Removing Barriers</i></p> <p>Lead; Lucy Goodfellow, Head of Innovation and Improvement</p>
<p><b>Supervision and Management Oversight</b> is consistently high quality and directly impacts positive outcomes</p>	<p>There is effective, meaningful and transparent <b>Two-Way Communication between leaders and staff with improved engagement</b></p>	<p>Children, Young People and Families have their <b>Needs Accurately Assessed in a Timely Way</b>, and appropriately responded to</p>	<p><b>AI tools</b> and effective <b>IT Equipment</b> are deployed so all Staff are supported to enhance their <b>Digital Skills</b> and confidence</p>
<p>Our <b>Quality Assurance</b> processes are consistent and impactful</p>	<p>An ongoing <b>Active Recruitment and Retention Programme</b> is focused on permanence and stability</p>	<p><b>Plans, Processes and Reviews</b> are purposeful, and child focused to improve outcomes</p>	<p>Our <b>Case Management System</b> is efficient and supports <b>High Quality Case Recording</b></p>
<p>Starting Well <b>Governance, Scrutiny and Oversight</b> is reviewed to ensure it is purposeful and meaningful</p>	<p>Delivery of the <b>Families First Partnership Programme</b>, including implementation of the Phase Two Service Reorganisation</p>	<p>The <b>Voices and Lived Experiences of Children, Families and Young People</b> are heard, responded to and used to drive improvement</p>	<p>Children and Young People are able to live in a range of <b>Safe, Stable, and Loving Homes</b> through having <b>sufficient placements and appropriate accommodation</b>.</p>
<p>Services have <b>Sufficient Financial Support</b> to deliver necessary Service Improvements, including application and use of external grants</p>	<p><b>Training and Development</b> programmes are delivered based on identified areas of improvement and focused on embedding our <b>Systemic Model of Practice</b></p>	<p><b>Equality, Diversity and The Social Graces</b> are understood and evidenced in all aspects of practice</p>	<p><b>Review of Tri.X</b> and its content, to ensure it's up to date, relevant and includes <b>all statutory policies and strategies</b></p>

### Theme One; Impact of Leaders and Managers

## A) Quality and Consistency of Supervision and Management Oversight

<b>Section Lead</b>	Charmaine Malcolm, Assistant Director; Principal Social Worker (PSW)
<b>What Ofsted told us</b> (During last inspection and most recently)	<p><b>March 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social workers do not receive regular, consistent supervision and direction. This lack of supervision means that care plans are not progressing as they should, and staff are not supported to understand technical and complex care-planning pathways. This is causing delays in some children achieving permanent care.</li> <li>Due to inconsistent management oversight, social workers struggle to prioritise workloads and perform effective risk assessments. This affects their ability to make timely decisions and provide stable care for children.</li> <li>Social workers spoke of managers being supportive and feeling loyal to their teams.</li> <li>IRO oversight, while improving, is not consistently identifying or escalating drift or delay experienced by children.</li> </ul> <p><b>December 2023</b></p> <p>Poor management oversight and supervision across social work teams, coupled with a weak reviewing service, have led to widespread drift and delay for too many children.</p>
<b>National Framework outcome or enabler</b>	- Leaders drive conditions for effective practice

Page 22

Ref	Action	Completion Date	Action Rating	Action Owner	Next Review Date
SM01	Roll out an ongoing <b>programme of thematic training for managers and supervisors</b> , focusing on team managers and the quality and impact of supervision and management oversight.	April 2026	April 2025	Principal Social Worker Practice Improvement Lead	July 2025
SMO2	Embed shared practices with regards to <b>protecting time for supervision</b> , and enable sufficient space for high quality support and challenge	September 2025	May 2025	Principal Social Worker	July 2025
SMO3	Embed use of <b>Group Supervision and Systemic Clinical Surgery</b> for thematic reflections and to address broader issues	December 2025	May 2025	Service Manager Principal Family Therapist	September 2025
SMO4		December 2025	May 2025		June 2025

	Focused <b>Independent Reviewing Officers and Child Protection Chairs training and development</b> ensures effective and meaningful oversight of social work practice.			Independent Reviewing Officer Service Manager	
--	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--	-----------------------------------------------	--

<p>How we will assess if we have improved in this area</p> <p>Page 43</p>	<p>The pace and impact of changes will be evaluated through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervision completed within required timescales for all service areas</li> <li>Targeted dip sampling</li> <li>Feedback from social workers / managers during audits with regards to the quality and impact of supervision</li> <li>The number and timeliness of Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) and Child Protection Chair (CPC) escalations where plans are not progressing or outcomes are not improving</li> <li>Audits with effective IRO / CPC oversight and footprint</li> <li>Audits with an overall rating of Requires Improvement or Good</li> </ul>	<p>What we will see when improvements have been made in this area</p>	<p><b>Supervision and Management Oversight</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most practice audits show supervision is rated Good or Requires Improvement</li> <li>Supervision is consistently timely across all service areas</li> <li>Actions from supervision, audits, and Practice Overview Meetings are tracked and lead to improved outcomes</li> <li>Management oversight is timely, robust, and includes clear rationale and contingency planning</li> <li>Oversight is evident at key points: case transfers, 10-day reviews, and significant events</li> <li>Managers authorise high-quality assessments and plans in a timely manner</li> </ul> <p><b>Planning and Escalation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case files consistently show parallel and contingency planning</li> <li>IRO and CPC involvement is clearly recorded</li> <li>Timely, well-documented escalations by IROs and CPCs help address delays in children's plans</li> <li>Children, young people, families, and IROs report positive experiences with plans progressing on time</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff Experience</b></p> <p>Social workers and practitioners feel supported and receive clear, time-bound direction from managers</p>

## B) Consistency and Impact of Quality Assurance Process

<b>Section Lead</b>	Charmaine Malcolm, Principal Social Worker
<b>What Ofsted told us</b> (During last inspection and most recently)	<p><b>March 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The quality assurance framework includes collaborative auditing with practitioners, children, families, and carers, but this is not consistently implemented.</li> <li>Leaders rely heavily on moderation to identify and address shortfalls due to over-optimistic auditors.</li> </ul> <p><b>December 2023</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The independent reviewing officer (IRO) service does not offer an effective quality assurance role and does not sufficiently escalate concerns</li> <li>Strengthened performance information through the recently redeveloped quality assurance programme in Havering is translated into learning, which is used to target areas for service improvement and learning for individual social workers</li> </ul>
<b>What our children and families tell us</b>	From July 2025 we will include a summary of feedback from families who have been contacted as part of our quality assurance processes
<b>National Framework outcome or enabler</b>	- <b>Leaders drive conditions for effective practice</b>

Page 44

Ref	Action	Completion Date	Action Rating	Action Owner	Next Review Date
QA01	Ongoing programme of <b>training and development for auditors</b>	September 2025	May 2025	Head of Quality Assurance	July 2025
QA02	Ensure there is an effective <b>quality assurance loop</b> to ensure consistency of practice.	April 2025	May 2025	Head of Quality Assurance	July 2025
QA03	Development of a <b>Thematic Multi-Agency audit schedule</b> with partners, including refining audit tools and embedding lessons learnt across the partnership	September 2025	May 2025	Head of Quality Assurance HSCP Partnership and Learning Manager	August 2025
QA04	Ensure ' <b>Closing the loop</b> ' learning is shared between <b>Education and Social Care</b>	December 2025	May 2025	Assistant Director of Education	September 2025

<p><b>How we will assess if we have improved in this area</b></p>	<p>The pace and impact of changes will be evaluated through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit compliance and findings with regards to quality and impact of practice</li> <li>• Evidence of 'closing the loop' learning across Starting Well supporting identification of training needs, delivery of necessary support and then evidence of improving practice in Audit activity.</li> <li>• Tracking the number of repeat Inadequate audits</li> </ul>	<p><b>What we will see when improvements have been made in this area</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in the number of audit grades changing after moderation</li> <li>• Increase in the number of audits Good or Requires Improvement audits completed within required timescales with contributions from social workers or practitioners, families, and young people</li> <li>• Practitioners and managers regularly discuss and share their learning from quality assurance mechanisms, and this supports improvements for children and families</li> <li>• Increase of well targeted time bound actions from audits</li> <li>• Improved closing the loop to staff in relation to learning from compliments and complaints</li> <li>• Reduction in actions from audits and Practice Overview Meetings</li> <li>• Increased attendance at Lunch and Learn sessions and Stop, Pause and Reflect sessions</li> <li>• Children and young people will meet their full education potential</li> </ul>
-------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## C) Governance and Impact of Leaders including Securing Financial Support

Section Lead	Tara Geere, Director of Starting Well
<b>What Ofsted told us</b> (During last inspection and most recently)  Page 46	<p><b>March 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Director of Children's Services has, together with corporate and political leaders, secured substantial financial investment to address practice shortfalls</li> <li>The council has appreciated the need to establish sufficiency in children's social work services to meet the demand for services</li> <li>The recently appointed permanent senior leadership team is beginning to show positive impact on the significant areas for improvement identified at the inspection.</li> <li>Leaders recognise that communication and relationships are maintained through a culture that prioritises regular and consistent review processes.</li> <li>There remains much to do as, for many children, social work practice is not yet responding to their care needs at sufficient pace.</li> <li>Most social workers in the service have reasonable caseloads.</li> </ul> <p><b>December 2023</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate and political leaders have worked together to understand the needs of children and have begun to invest in children's services. However, significant further financial investment is needed to deliver core statutory services.</li> <li>Leaders recognise the scale of improvement needed, which now requires whole system change through comprehensive plans for restructuring and improvement.</li> </ul>
<b>National Framework outcome or enabler</b>	- <b>Leaders drive conditions for effective practice</b>

Ref	Action	Completion Date	Action Rating	Action Owner	Review Date
GL01	Service wide <b>governance review</b>	September 2025	May 2025	Head of Innovation and Improvement	June 2025
GL02	Ensuring that political and corporate leaders continue to play a key role in <b>challenging and supporting our progress</b> , alongside our safeguarding partners	June 2025	May 2025	Director of Starting Well	June 2025
GL03	Developing <b>collective ownership of Corporate Parenting</b> across Council and wider partnership	September 2025	May 2025	Assistant Director Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting	July 2025

<b>GL04</b>	<b>Develop and implement social value clauses</b> in contracts to support our corporate parenting offer	April 2026	<b>May 2025</b>	Assistant Director Education	June 2025
<b>GL05</b>	Ensuring <b>sufficient financial investment</b> is secured to enable necessary improvements to be made	April 2026	<b>May 2025</b>	Director of Starting Well	June 2025
<b>GL06</b>	<b>Health services are commissioned</b> based on the identified needs of children and young people, especially those who are care experienced or have additional needs	April 2026	<b>May 2025</b>	Director of Starting Well Assistant Director, Start Well, Integrated Team at Havering Place	September 2025

<b>How we will assess if we have improved in this area</b> <small>Page 47</small>	The pace and impact of changes will be evaluated through; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of young people accessing apprenticeships</li> <li>• Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) benchmarking of children's costs</li> <li>• Evidence of political and corporate support and challenge in governance arrangements, including financial investment.</li> <li>• Tracking of the Corporate Parenting data set</li> <li>• Monitoring complaint volumes and timescales</li> <li>• Monitoring compliments</li> </ul>	<b>What we will see when improvements have been made in this area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient resources to meet needs</li> <li>• Caseloads allow staff to work effectively with children and families to deliver sustained changes and improved outcomes to children</li> <li>• The Corporate Parenting data set and action log will reflect improving performance and feedback to children/young people</li> <li>• children and young people will feedback positively with regards to their access to opportunities and services that they have access to</li> </ul>

## Theme Two; Stable and Able Workforce

### A) Strengthening communication, recruitment, service delivery, and professional development to drive improvements and engagement.

Theme Lead	Charmaine Malcolm, Principal Social Worker
<b>What Ofsted told us</b> (During last inspection and most recently) Page 48	<b>March 2025</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The quality of practice, and pace of improvement, is impeded by frequent changes in workforce (particularly managers)</li> <li>Social workers recognise the authority's commitment to improving services for children and express loyalty to the borough</li> <li>Most social workers in the service have reasonable caseloads</li> <li>Some practitioners require training to improve their confidence and technical knowledge in detailed care planning, contingency planning, and understanding legal orders and statutory processes.</li> </ul> <b>December 2023</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social workers in Havering have complex and high caseloads, which affects their ability to manage effectively.</li> <li>There has been a high turnover of social workers, leading to inconsistencies in service delivery.</li> <li>Most social workers feel supported and guided through their work complexities</li> <li>Learning and development opportunities are encouraged and well-advertised. Workers know how to access learning and development and regularly do so, however, this is hampered by workers' capacity issues. This investment in them develops their skills and helps to keep them working for Havering.</li> </ul>
National Framework outcome or enabler	- <b>The workforce is equipped and effective</b>

Ref	Action	Completion Date	Action Rating	Action Owner	Review Date
<b>WF01</b>	Routine <b>monitoring of caseloads</b> as part of monthly performance report, service level Power BI dashboards and PIB reports.	April 2025	<b>May 2025</b>	Principal Social Worker	July 2025
<b>WF02</b>	Ongoing programme of two-way <b>communication / engagement with all staff groups</b> , including staff conference, managers forum, director's drop-ins, to promote staff retention	April 2025	<b>May 2025</b>	Principal Social Worker Director of Starting Well	July 2025

<b>WF03</b>	Refresh of the <b>workforce strategy</b> and <b>career pathway</b> documents	December 2025	<b>May 2025</b>	Principal Social Worker	September 2025
<b>WF04</b>	Ensure an ongoing <b>active recruitment and retention programme</b> to promote the Havering offer and attract high calibre permanent staff to our borough	Ongoing	<b>May 2025</b>	Talent Manager (HR) Principal Social Worker	July 2025
<b>WF05</b>	Delivery of the <b>Families First Partnership Programme</b> through implementation of phase two service re-organisation, focused on Early Help and MASH, scoping of phase three and development of a delivery plan.	April 2026	<b>May 2025</b>	Assistant Director Early Help and Partnerships Head of Innovation and Improvement	July 2025
<b>WF06</b>	Training programme with clear priorities for specific roles and service areas in <b>core areas of training and development</b> e.g. assessments, analysis, risk management, permanency, child protection processes, chairing meetings, case recording and pathways for accessing specialist advice / training	Ongoing	<b>May 2025</b>	Head of Quality Assurance / Practice Improvement Team	September 2025
<b>WF07</b>	Delivery of <b>systemic training to relevant Education staff</b>	December 2025	<b>May 2025</b>	Assistant Director of Education	September 2025
<b>WF08</b>	Develop and roll out programme of training and activity that promotes and embeds Face to Face <b>model of practice</b>	May 2026	<b>May 2025</b>	Service Manager Principal Family Therapist	July 2025
<b>WF09</b>	Contribute to the development and delivery of the <b>Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES)</b> action plan.	May 2026	<b>May 2025</b>	Principal Social Worker	September 2025

<b>How we will assess if we have improved in this area</b>	<p>The pace and impact of changes will be evaluated through;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback on induction / data from exit interviews</li> <li>• Training feedback from staff via managers forum, staff conferences and Havering Social Care Academy</li> <li>• Average caseloads</li> <li>• Proportion of children in care with two or more changes of social worker within 12 months</li> <li>• Proportion of all children with three or more changes of social worker within 12 months</li> <li>• Rate of agency social workers / managers</li> </ul>	<b>What we will see when improvements have been made in this area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased ratios of permanent social workers and practitioners across the service who have been appropriately inducted</li> <li>• Children and young people build good relationships with staff who remain their workers with minimal changes</li> </ul>
------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## Theme Three; Improving Practice

### A) Children, Young People and Families have their needs Accurately Assessed in Timely Way, and Appropriately Responded to

<b>Section Lead</b>	<p>Alex Kaitell, Assistant Director; Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting;  Daniel Silva, Assistant Director; Early Help and Partnerships;  Trevor Cook, Assistant Director Education Services</p>
<div> <div>Page 50</div> <div> <b>What Ofsted told us</b>  (During last inspection and most recently) </div> </div>	<p><b>March 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of social workers has increased, reducing caseloads and is allowing more time for visits and assessments. This has led to better understanding and support for children's needs</li> <li>• There has been an improvement in the timeliness of visits to children and the holding of children in care reviews, although further progress is needed</li> <li>• Disabled children receive short breaks and respite provision, but support for parents is not always timely, affecting the overall risk reduction</li> <li>• Social work assessments identify children's mental health needs and local arrangements are effectively sought to support children's well-being and manage trauma experiences.</li> <li>• Children are supported with effective therapeutic interventions, although delays in them starting mean that some children's needs are not met at the earliest opportunity</li> </ul> <p><b>December 2023</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some children wait too long for assessments and support, leaving them at risk or experiencing harm for extended periods.</li> <li>• Some assessments are not updated when children's circumstances change, hindering effective planning and safeguarding</li> <li>• While early help services are effective, a small number of children wait too long for support, leading to unnecessary statutory interventions.</li> <li>• The MASH is responsive and effective in identifying and addressing risks to children, but delays in strategy meetings for children already in statutory services are noted.</li> <li>• The operation of early help services is a good example of strategic partnerships enabling effective multi-agency help to vulnerable families.</li> </ul>
<b>National Framework outcome or enabler</b>	<p><b>- Children and Young People are safe in and outside of their home</b></p>

Ref	Action	Completion Date	Action Rating	Action Owner	Review Date
IP01	<b>Decision making</b> at the front door is timely, recognises risk and reflects appropriate application of threshold	July 2025	May 2025	Assistant Director Early Help and Partnerships	July 2025
IP02	Public Law Outline (PLO) decision making ( <b>pre-proceedings and court proceedings</b> ) is improved, to ensure decision making is timely and drift and delay is minimised.	September 2025	May 2025	Assistant Director Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting	August 2025
IP03	Ensuring <b>assessments robustly identify individual child and family needs</b> and outline an appropriate response, including to; <b>-neglect</b> <b>-child sexual abuse</b> <b>-contextual safeguarding (missing / exploitation)</b> <b>-private fostering</b> <b>-domestic abuse</b> <b>-16/17-year-old homeless children</b>	September 2025	May 2025	Assistant Director Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting  Assistant Director Education Services  Assistant Director Early Help and Partnerships	July 2025
IP04	Children at risk will have <b>timely assessments and safety plans in place</b>  Our approach to harm outside the home will be developed.	September 2025	May 2025	Assistant Director Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting	June 2025
IP05	Review of <b>transfer pathways</b> across all service areas considering new service structures, ensuring that transitions are effective and well managed	October 2025	May 2025	Assistant Director Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting  Principal Social Worker	July 2025
IP06	Delivery of the <b>Children with Disabilities</b> Service Improvement Plan alongside the SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy, particularly focusing on the purpose and impact of the Designated Social Care Officer	April 2025	May 2025	Assistant Director Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting  Head of SEND and Alternative Provision	July 2025
IP07	<b>Strengthen the education offer</b> to children open to a worker	December 2025	May 2025	Assistant Director Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting  Assistant Director Education	September 2025

<p><b>How we will assess if we have improved in this area</b></p> <p>Page 52</p>	<p>The pace and impact of changes will be evaluated through;</p> <p><u>Health</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of Initial and Review Health Assessments completed within required timescales</li> <li>• Percentage of children in care with a current medical assessment</li> </ul> <p><u>Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) rated Requires Improvement or Good (based on audit)</li> <li>• Percentage of school-age children in care with a current PEP</li> <li>• Percentage of Key Stage 4 care-experienced pupils achieving at least one GCSE</li> <li>• Average attendance of care-experienced pupils (primary and secondary)</li> <li>• Suspension rates for care-experienced pupils</li> <li>• Number of care-experienced pupils on reduced timetables or in alternative provision</li> <li>• Percentage of care-experienced pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan</li> </ul> <p><u>Post-16 Outcomes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of care-experienced young people aged 17–18 in education, employment or training</li> </ul>	<p><b>What we will see when improvements have been made in this area</b></p>	<p>Our quality assurance process will provide evidence of;</p> <p>An increased number of audits reporting that the quality of plans and reviews is rated as Requires Improvement or better</p> <p>An increase in children, young people and families accessing services which support identified needs in a timely way, particularly those who are care experienced or have additional needs.</p> <p>An increase in the number of care experienced children and young people accessing education, employment or training</p> <p>Decision making in all areas of the service is effective and enables children and young people to thrive in a safe environment</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## B) Plans, Processes and Reviews are Purposeful and Child Focused

<b>Section Lead</b>	Alex Kaitell, Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting
<b>What Ofsted told us</b> (During last inspection and most recently)	<p><b>March 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In examples of better practice, social workers analyse children's diversity needs, to inform their risk assessments and create effective safety plans.</li> <li>- Information in placement plans is significantly underdeveloped, so carers are not always well informed about children's needs at the beginning of their placements.</li> <li>- Care planning for some children is not of sufficient quality to meet their timescales for permanence</li> <li>- The independent reviewing officer service is starting to add value for some children's reviews.</li> </ul> <p><b>December 2023</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The quality of social work assessments and plans is highly variable.</li> <li>- High caseloads and changes in social workers negatively impact the quality of assessments, planning, and interventions.</li> <li>- The quality of care planning and reviews for children in care is poor. Plans often lack clarity and timely implementation, leading to delays in establishing permanency for children.</li> <li>- Personal education plans (PEPs) have effective targets, which are reviewed appropriately. There is variability in the timeliness of completion of PEPs.</li> </ul>
<b>National Framework outcome or enabler</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Children, young people and families stay together and get the help they need</b></li> <li>- <b>The workforce is equipped and effective</b></li> </ul>

Ref	Action	Completion Date	Action Rating	Action Owner	Review Date
PR01	Delivery of <b>core training to all staff on how to create and deliver high quality, SMART, well targeted plans</b> for children that are purposeful and focused, in line with the practice model including;  Child Protection Planning, Care Planning, Placement Planning, Pathway Planning, Safety Planning, Contingency / Concurrent Planning and Personal Education Plans	September 2025	May 2025	Havering Social Care Academy  Practice Improvement Team	June 2025

<b>PR02</b>	Improve the <b>effectiveness of Child Protection Chairs</b> in delivering and progressing plans for children	August 2025	<b>May 2025</b>	Child Protection Chair Service Manager	June 2025
<b>PR03</b>	<b>Independent Reviewing Officers</b> to confidently oversee all child in care plans and understand how to support and oversee purposeful and effective permanency plans.	October 2025	<b>May 2025</b>	Independent Reviewing Officer Service Manager	August 2025
<b>PR04</b>	Embedding consistent practice with regards to <b>early permanence and permanence planning</b> alongside effective tracking and monitoring systems	December 2025	<b>May 2025</b>	Assistant Director Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting	July 2025

<b>Page 54</b>  <b>How we will assess if we have improved in this area</b>	<p>Evidence from quality assurance activity with regards to the quality, effectiveness of plans for children and young people;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proportion of audits rating quality of plans as Requires Improvement or Good</li> <li>• Feedback from families and young people, via conferences, reviews, and audits with regards to how meaningful their plan is and what change it has affected.</li> <li>• Plans (all types) reviewed in specified timescales</li> <li>• Proportion of our children in care achieving permanence through special guardianship or adoption</li> </ul>	<b>What we will see when improvements have been made in this area</b>	<p>Evidence of IRO and CPC footprint on case files, and impact of escalations on ensuring plans progress in a timely way.</p> <p>Evidence of children achieving permanence is a timely manner</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

### C) The Voices and Lived Experiences of Children, Families and Young People are Heard and Used to Drive Improvement

Section Lead	Daniel Silva, Assistant Director for Early Help and Partnerships
<b>What Ofsted told us</b> (During last inspection and most recently)	<p><b>March 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social workers record children's wishes and feelings, ensuring their voices are heard and recorded sensitively.</li> <li>• Social workers are committed advocates for children, understanding their care experiences and ensuring their voices are heard, including children who are non-verbal.</li> <li>• Children who do not regularly attend their reviews are unable to build meaningful relationships with their independent reviewing officers (IROs) and do not understand their advocacy role.</li> <li>• Children do not consistently receive written information along with the support of an advocate, to understand their rights and entitlements</li> <li>• Children said that they would like more timely feedback from the Corporate Parenting Panel when they provide their views to influence documents and strategies.</li> </ul> <p><b>December 2023</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent visitors are used to assist children in sharing their views and wishes about their living arrangements</li> <li>• Care leavers are consulted by the corporate parenting board, but there is a need for more involvement in shaping and improving services.</li> <li>• The virtual school ensures that education plans incorporate the views of children in care.</li> <li>• While there is a participation group for children in care, it is noted that children are not being effectively supported to help shape services.</li> </ul>
<b>National Framework outcome or enabler</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Children, young people and families stay together and get the help they need</b></li> <li>- <b>Leaders drive conditions for effective practice</b></li> <li>- <b>The workforce is equipped and effective</b></li> </ul>

Ref	Action	Completion Date	Action Rating	Action Owner	Next Review Date
VC01	Children and young people are supported to attend their reviews and conferences, along with relevant partner agencies, with care experienced young people are empowered to chair their own reviews wherever possible	July 2025	May 2025	Independent Reviewing Officer Service Manager	June 2025

<b>VC02</b>	All children and young people understand how an <b>advocate</b> could help and support them, and their entitlement to one.	September 2025	<b>May 2025</b>	Independent Reviewing Officer Service Manager Participation Service Manager	July 2025
<b>VC03</b>	Effectiveness and Impact of <b>Direct Work and Life Story Work</b>	December 2025	<b>May 2025</b>	Head of Service Corporate Parenting Head of Service Safeguarding	July 2025
<b>VC04</b>	Increase use and impact of <b>Mind of My Own</b> within statutory social care services, building on success in Early Help	December 2025	<b>May 2025</b>	Service Manager for Participation and Youth Influence	July 2025
<b>VC05</b>	Increase the <b>participation and influence of care experienced children and young people</b> in service design and improvements, including UASC	September 2025	<b>May 2025</b>	Head of Service Corporate Parenting Head of the Virtual School	July 2025

<b>How we will assess if we have improved in this area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly analysis of consultation forms completed prior to child in care reviews and annual foster carer reviews</li> <li>Proportion of audits with evidence of voice of the child rated as requires improvement or good</li> <li>Increasing evidence of Mind of My Own being used by children and young people to express their wishes and feelings measured by number of Mind of My Own statements received</li> <li>Evidence of children in care contributing their views to a statutory review</li> </ul>	<b>What we will see when improvements have been made in this area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in number of children in care participating in their reviews, as well as those chairing their own reviews</li> <li>Proportion of children in care matched with an Independent Visitor</li> <li>Increase use of Mind of My Own in statutory social work teams</li> <li>Quality assurance evidencing increased effectiveness and quality of direct work / life story work</li> </ul>
------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## Theme 4; Removing Barriers

### A) Ensuring that systems, tools, and strategies are in place which enable practice to thrive

<b>Theme Lead</b>	Lucy Goodfellow, Head of Innovation and Improvement
<b>What Ofsted told us</b> (During last inspection and most recently)	<p><b>March 2025</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most children's records are sensitively and compassionately written, reflecting an understanding of their early trauma experiences. However, for a small number of children, their personal circumstances are not sensitively written.</li> <li>Information about children's culture, religion and heritage is not always recorded well</li> </ul> <p><b>December 2023</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The quality of children's and care leavers' case records is highly variable.</li> <li>Children's records are often sparse and difficult to follow.</li> <li>Children returning to read their records would not understand the reasons why they came into care or why decisions were made for them.</li> </ul>
<b>What our workforce tells us</b>	Some staff lack confidence using tools like Co-Pilot and Magic Notes, highlighting a need for further training and guidance. Others demonstrate effective use and report clear benefits from AI tools.
<b>National Framework outcome or enabler</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Leaders drive conditions for effective practice</b></li> <li><b>The workforce is equipped and effective</b></li> </ul>

Ref	Action	Completion Date	Action Rating	Action Owner	Next Review Date
RB01	Roll out of <b>AI tools</b> and <b>improving digital literacy</b> to support administrative tasks, ensuring practitioners and managers are provided with <b>effective equipment</b> to undertake their roles.	March 2026	June 2025	Head of Innovation and Improvement	July 2025
RB02	Improving the <b>efficiency of our case management system</b> and the <b>quality of case recording</b>	May 2027 (based on one system developer)	June 2025	Head of Innovation and Improvement	July 2025
RB03	<b>Review of Tri.X</b> and its content, to ensure it is up to date and relevant including all <b>statutory policies and strategies</b>	September 2025	June 2025	Principal Social Worker	August 2025

<b>RB04</b>	<b>Children and young people live in safe, stable, and loving homes</b> through sufficient placements and appropriate accommodation, supported by effective panels and a review of sufficiency	May 2026	<b>June 2025</b>	Assistant Director Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting	July 2025
<b>RB05</b>	Delivery of action plan associated with <b>sufficiency strategy</b> ,	April 2027	<b>June 2025</b>	Assistant Director Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting  Assistant Director Start Well, Integrated Team at Havering Place	September 2025
<b>RB06</b>	Implement a second <b>Mockingbird Constellation to support placement stability</b>	May 2026	<b>June 2025</b>	Head of Service Corporate Parenting	July 2025
<b>RB07</b>	<b>Review our rates and benefits for foster carers</b> to ensure they are competitive and balanced	September 2025	<b>May 2025</b>	Head of Service Corporate Parenting	July 2025

<b>How we will assess if we have improved in this area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback from staff with regards to efficacy of tools in place to support practice</li> <li>Data on the use of Magic Notes</li> <li>Evidence from quality assurance activity with regards to quality of case recording</li> <li>Placement stability performance indicators</li> </ul>	<b>What we will see when improvements have been made in this area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved stability for children and young people in care and leaving care</li> <li>Improved quality and consistency in case recording</li> <li>Sufficiency of in-house foster carers to meet needs</li> <li>Foster carers feeding back positively on the support and training they receive</li> </ul>
------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<b>CABINET</b>	
<b>Subject Heading:</b>	Permission to enter into an Memorandum of Understanding and subsequent Inter-Authority Agreement with the City of London Corporation to participate in the re-procurement process and subsequent contract for pan-London online services for sexual and reproductive health
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Gillian Ford, Cabinet Member for and Wellbeing
<b>ELT Lead:</b>	Kathy Freeman, Strategic Director Resources
<b>Report Author and contact details:</b>	Faith Nare, Commissioner Live Well <a href="mailto:faith.nare@haverling.gov.uk">faith.nare@haverling.gov.uk</a>
<b>Policy context:</b>	Local Authorities (LAs) are mandated under the terms of the Health and Social Care Act (2012) to commission open access sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services on behalf of residents.
<b>Financial summary:</b>	<p>Estimated total spend for all participating boroughs is at £235 million over nine years, rising from £22 million to £29 million per annum over the lifetime of the contract.</p> <p>Haverling's estimated spend over the full nine-year term is estimated at between £2.7 - 3.1 million, depending on service activity levels, and whether any optional treatment modules are activated. This is in addition to annual management cost fees, and one-off re-procurement contribution, estimated at £86k over the lifetime of the contract.</p>
<b>Is this a Key Decision?</b>	<p>Yes</p> <p>(a) Expenditure or saving (including anticipated income) of £500,000 or more</p>

**When should this matter be reviewed?** 13 August 2025

**Reviewing OSC:** People’s Overview and Scrutiny Sub Committee

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

- People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well X
- Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy
- Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

## SUMMARY

This paper seeks permission from Cabinet to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding and subsequent Inter-Authority Agreement with the City of London Corporation to participate in the re-procurement process and subsequent contract for the provision of online services for sexual and reproductive health. The Council intends to enter into a new five-year agreement via the London Sexual Health Programme led by the City of London Corporation, with an option to extend for up to four additional years (5+2+2). Havering's spend over the full nine-year term is estimated at £2.7 - £3.1 million, dependant on activity volumes and the optional service modules that the Council chooses to activate (if any).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet to approve:

- 1) Entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the form attached at Appendix 1 to participate in a multi-Borough procurement process for online services for sexual and reproductive health (e-service).
- 2) In principle approve entry into the subsequent contract for online services for sexual and reproductive health (e-service); and
- 3) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Resources to:
  - i) finalise and enter into all associated documentation including the MOU and an Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) regulating use of the awarded contract.
  - ii) agree any extension permitted under the terms of the IAA and contract
- 4) Note the decision as to activation of the optional service modules for contraceptive and PrEP care during the term of the contract will be taken by the Director of Public Health acting within their existing financial delegations and authorities.

## REPORT DETAIL

### 1. Background:

- 1.1 Under the Health and Social Care Act 2021, local authorities are mandated to provide open access sexual health services, including free STI testing and treatment, notification of sexual partners of infected persons, advice on a broad range of contraception and advice on preventing unplanned pregnancy.

- 1.2 The inception of the London online services for sexual and reproductive health (e-service) arose from the need to address growing demands on sexual health services, which were becoming increasingly financially unsustainable. The e-service was part of a wider Pan-London sexual health transformation programme, which sought to improve equity, efficiency, reduce duplication and improve consistency of these services across London, in a way that could meet future clinical and population needs.
- 1.3 The current e-service contract was entered into by City of London Corporation (CoL) in 2018, acting as a 'lead authority' on behalf of 30 participating local authorities, who signed an Inter-authority agreement (IAA) to secure access to the services provided by the current supplier, Preventx. The current contract will end on 14th August 2026.
- 1.4 The main objective at the outset of the e- service was to channel-shift 30% of lower-risk and asymptomatic users from in-person sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services to the online service by 2021. This target was quickly exceeded, in large part due to the impact of COVID-19 and the restrictions which limited access to in-person services.
- 1.5 Continuing to offer an e-service forms a vital part of the Council's commitment to providing a range of accessible, high-quality sexual health services that can effectively meet the needs and preferences of a diverse range of local residents, and which support wider efforts to deliver improved sexual and reproductive health outcomes for the borough.

## **2. Current service**

- 2.1 At present, the e-service service is provided by Preventx, with the service being promoted to the public as 'SHL.UK'. The service is available to sexually active individuals aged 16 years and older, residing in one of the 30 London authorities that participate in the current contract, and includes several key components:
- A digital 'front door', offering centralised access to remote STI testing, alongside access/signposting to other sexual health advice and support;
  - User registration and sexual history risk assessment, to ensure that individual users are offered appropriate testing according to their sexual history and practices;
  - STI kit provision and home delivery;
  - Laboratory services and results notification;
  - Remote telephone support and referral to local services as required;
  - Remote treatment for uncomplicated Chlamydia infection;
  - An optional module for prescribing and dispensing emergency hormonal contraception and routine contraceptives – note, Havering does not currently utilise this module.
  - Results and patient record system, to enable improved repeat use, as well as reporting on service user demographics, kit return rates, positivity rates, repeat usage etc.
- 2.2 Users can also collect SHL.UK testing kits from local SRH services, which are then returned by post for processing, offering a direct route to divert simple STI testing from in-person services, where this is appropriate.

- 2.3 Performance of the current contract is monitored by the CoL, with participating local authority commissioners updated through quarterly management board meetings.
- 2.4 Key benefits of the existing contract arrangement includes:
1. **Financial efficiency:** Online STI testing has a lower 'cost-per-test' than equivalent tests conducted in clinical settings, and can reduce charges for out-of-borough care that arise when Havering residents access STI testing via sexual and reproductive health services commissioned by other local authorities.
  2. **Improved access:** The e-service offers residents access to testing in the comfort of their own home, at a time that is convenient for them. It also enhances access by offering greater anonymity, which helps overcome barriers to testing, such as cultural sensitivities or the stigma often associated with STIs.
  3. **Equity:** The service has been instrumental in improving access to STI testing for Black African and Black Caribbean communities, women, and younger individuals.
  4. **Acceptable and well-regarded service:** High levels of user satisfaction and strong usage data reflect the value residents place on the flexibility and ease of service use.
  5. **Optimised clinical resources:** By shifting routine STI screening to the e-service pathway, clinical capacity in face to face sexual health services is preserved for patients with more complex or urgent needs.
- 2.5 The e-service is one of a number of sexual health services commissioned by the Council. Other services include the local specialist sexual health service (provided by Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust), and contraceptive care provided in local GPs and pharmacies.

### 3. Service use and acceptability

- 3.1 SRH clinics across London provide vital care to residents, but are expensive to run and not all residents need, or want to access them. In most cases of 'simple' STI infections (i.e. when a patient is asymptomatic, or with only mild symptoms), an online STI screening and treatment pathway is both clinically appropriate and preferable to the patient.
- 3.2 All eligible users are offered a full sexual health screen (chlamydia, gonorrhoea, HIV and syphilis), with some users offered additional tests depending on their sexual history (e.g. hepatitis B and C). Those with symptoms of more severe or complex infections are referred back to local specialist sexual health services for assessment and treatment.
- 3.3 It should be noted that the availability of the e-service does not preclude residents from accessing face to face services for STI testing, if this is deemed more appropriate and/or acceptable, or if residents face barriers around digital access.
- 3.4 The e-service is an incredibly popular resource across London, with continued usage in growth over the lifetime of the contract. A 2024 survey of 1,420 London residents found that over a third of respondents had used the e-service.
- 3.5 In the London region, the e-service is widely used by younger people, with high usage rates amongst women aged 15–34 years. Young people are disproportionately affected by STIs, so evidence of acceptability amongst this cohort is positive.
- 3.6 Amongst Havering residents, utilisation of the service has continued to grow, with 10,453 test kits orders in 2024/25 – approximately 76% of these test kits were

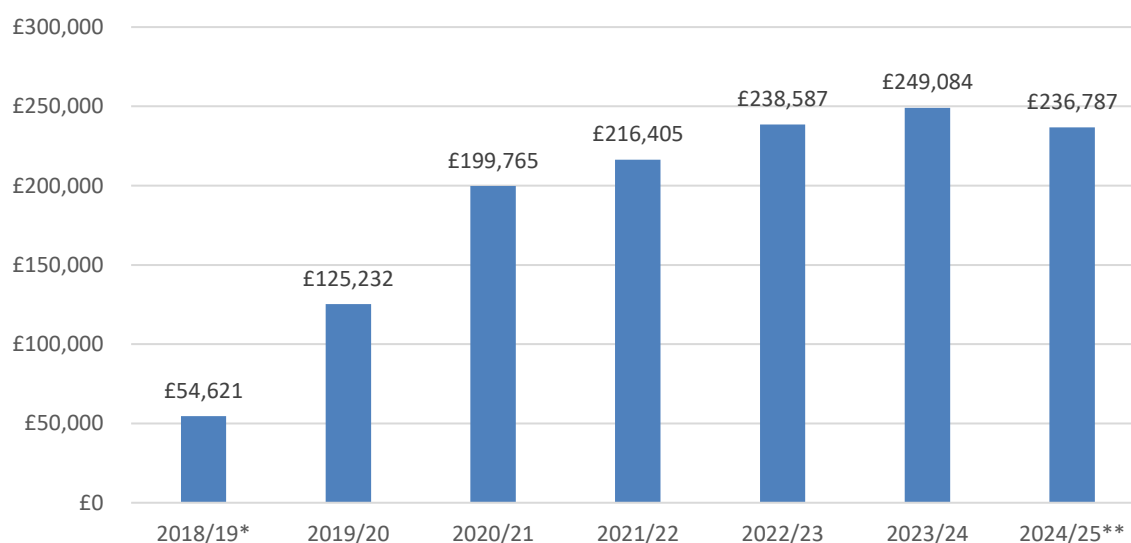
completed and returned for analysis. There is a significant rate of repeat access, with 76% of Havering users in 2024/25 having used the service in the past, indicating a good level of user satisfaction. This is also reflected in excellent service user feedback, with 98.6% of Havering users surveyed saying they would recommend the service to friends or family (based on 477 responses).

- 3.7 The e-service also delivers important clinical benefits for local residents – in 2024/25, e-service testing amongst Havering residents enabled the identification of 348 cases of chlamydia, 86 cases of gonorrhoea and numerous other STIs, who could then be referred on to receive appropriate treatment. The e-service also reported 37 reactive HIV tests amongst those Havering residents tested, which may have included previously undiagnosed cases.

#### 4. Financial Commitment

- 4.1 The e-service offers a financially efficient model for STI testing, while helping to alleviate pressure on clinical time within face to face SRH services.
- 4.2 Funding for the e-service comes from the Council's ring-fenced Public Health grant allocation. This grant is agreed on an annual basis, with Havering's 2025/26 Public Health grant allocation being £13,263,994.
- 4.3 Havering's financial contributions to the e-service to date have included:
- An initial one-off payment of **£1,499.84 (2018)**;
  - An average **monthly spend on service activity (on a fee-per-service basis) of approximately £21,500 for 2024/25, rising from an average of £10,436 in 2019/20**;
  - Annual pre-paid contributions toward shared management and programme delivery costs, **averaging around £8,900 per annum**.
- 4.4 In participating in the proposed re-procurement, Havering will also be liable for a one-off contribution towards the shared procurement costs of £6,587, alongside on-going fee-per-service costs and contract management costs.
- 4.5 The graph below provides a summary of the financial spend by the council on the current e-service contract:

***Graph 1: Havering annual expenditure on e-service activity (not including management contributions) by LBH, 2018/19 – 2024/25.***



\* Figures for 2018/19 do not reflect a full year of activity-based payments

\*\* Figures for 24/25 are up until the end of month 11 (Feb 24). Final expenditure for 24/25 is likely to match or slightly exceed 2023/24 figures.

- 4.6 After a dramatic rise in service costs in 2020/21 in light of the Covid-19 pandemic – just under 60% growth from 2019/20 – growth in spend on the e-service has slowed, with only 4% growth seen in 2023/24, with growth for 2024/25 anticipated to be at a similar or slightly lower levels (based on outturn data up to month 11).
- 4.7 As part of their commissioning business case for the new contract, CoL has provided indicative modelling of future STI testing costs for each participating borough, presented for Havering in table 1. These projections included an annual 2% growth in total fee-per-service costs across all service lines (based on the 2023/24 outturn), to account for population growth and accompanying increase in demand.
- 4.8 While Havering does not currently utilise the contraceptive care module, and the HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) care module is not part of the existing contract provision, projections for potential spend for each borough have also been provided. These estimates are based on a range of assumptions.
- 4.9 Contraceptive module projections are based on a proportion (8.7%) of total estimated STI care costs, reflecting the existing patterns of usage in participating local authorities. Estimated emergency contraception usage has been forecasted down, to reflect widened pharmacy-based access commissioned by NHS England, expected to be rolled out from October 2025.
- 4.10 PrEP care activity has been modelled on the basis of current in-person clinic activity and best clinical practice, and the assumption that there will a phased channel-shift of users from face to face to digital PrEP services.
- 4.11 Management costs paid to the CoL have remained relatively static over the course of the existing contract term, and while fees are reviewed on an annual basis, significant growth or variance in these costs are not anticipated.

**Table 1: Estimated fee per service costs over the maximum nine-year contract term (2026 – 2035)**

ONLINE COSTS	Y1 26-27	Y2 27-28	Y3 28-29	Y4 29-30	Y5 30-31	Y6 31-32	Y7 32-33	Y8 33-34	Y9 34-35	Total
STI care only	£272,799	£278,255	£283,820	£289,497	£295,287	£301,193	£307,216	£313,361	£319,628	£2,661,056
PrEP care	£8,401	£17,132	£21,827	£22,264	£22,709	£23,163	£23,626	£24,099	£24,581	£187,801
Contraception care	£21,726	£22,160	£22,603	£23,055	£23,517	£23,987	£24,467	£24,956	£25,455	£211,926
<b>Total</b>	<b>£302,926</b>	<b>£317,548</b>	<b>£328,251</b>	<b>£334,816</b>	<b>£341,512</b>	<b>£348,342</b>	<b>£355,309</b>	<b>£362,415</b>	<b>£369,664</b>	<b>£3,060,783</b>

Note: contraceptive care cost modelling does not include potential condom distribution, costs of which are considered marginal

- 4.12 As outlined in Table 1, the estimate for Havering's expenditure over the permissible 9-year contract term is £2.66M if only the STI care module is activated, rising to £3.1M if both optional contraceptive and PrEP modalities were to be activated from the outset of the contract.
- 4.13 CoL have also modelled the clinical costs avoided by delivering this activity online, as opposed to in face to face in specialist sexual health services paid on the London Sexual Health Tariff. Over the full 5+2+2 lifetime of the contract, clinical costs avoided are estimated at £5.3M for STI care, or £5.6M including PrEP and contraceptive modules. Note that the local specialist sexual health service is paid on a modified block contract arrangement, so this does not represent a like-for-like saving, but does give an indication of the likely scale of additional resource that would be required were online provision to cease and the same volume of testing activity be redirected into the local service. In this scenario, any testing activity displaced into other London specialist sexual health services would be paid on the London Sexual Health Tariff fee-per-service, and would therefore be charged at a significantly higher unit cost than achieved via the e-service.
- 4.14 It is not necessary for Havering to indicate its intention to participate in either of the optional contraceptive or PrEP care modules at this time, with participating authorities reserving the right to activate these at any point during the contract term. A decision as to whether Havering wishes to participate in these optional modules will be informed by a number of factors, including the North East London digital PrEP pilot, and emerging evidence about enhanced pharmacy provision for emergency contraceptives. Any decision to activate one or more optional modules will be taken through appropriate internal governance processes.
- 4.15 As outlined, the vast majority of expenditure related to this contract arises from fee-per-service provision, meaning that the total annual expenditure is almost entirely dependent on levels of service use. It is possible for local authorities to apply at utilisation cap (i.e. a maximum number of tests that can be provided to residents in a given period). While this is not desirable, given that it will limit service access for residents, it does offer a route to mitigate against unexpected growth in service use and costs that may otherwise pose a risk to financial sustainability.
- 4.16 It should also be noted that these estimates are based on existing fee-per-service charges paid under the current contract. There may be opportunity to reduce these charges through the proposed competitive tender route (see section 5), which will have implications for total contract costs.

## 5. Procurement approach and market testing

- 5.1 CoL have indicated that the initial contractual term will be 5 years (August 2026 – August 2031), with an extension option built in of two 2-year terms (5+2+2), potentially extending the agreement to August 2035. Authorities reserve the right to cease their use of the contract following the first two years of the contract term.
- 5.2 A competitive procurement process was being recommended by the LSHP Strategic Board in October 2024, with support for this approach from the majority of participating local authorities. This approach is preferred over available PSR direct awards or “most suitable provider” routes, due to the extent of development within the field of remote testing and care since the existing contract was awarded and given the number of potential providers in the market. It is anticipated that a competitive process will offer the best opportunity to secure a reduction in fee-per-service pricing compared to the existing contract.
- 5.3 As outlined, this competitive process will be led by CoL, acting as a lead authority on behalf of participating local authorities. In participating, Havering will be liable for a one-off financial contribution towards this procurement exercise of £6,587.
- 5.4 The tender evaluation panel will include nominated sexual health leads from each sub-region. Tender assessment will be weighted on the basis of 60% quality 40% price.
- 5.5 Soft market testing conducted by CoL suggests that there are a good number of providers in the market that would be interested in tendering for the contract, with a number of providers indicating that they would be in a position to deliver all elements of the service offer that had been outlined.

## **6. Contract governance**

- 6.1 To participate as a named authority in the e-service procurement process, authorities must sign an MOU, which describes the nature of the relationship between the CoL and authorities, including process oversight, governance and roles and responsibilities (see Appendix 1).
- 6.2 When CoL enters into the contract with the appointed supplier, the authorities who wish to participate in the contract will be required to enter into an Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA).
- 6.3 To enable the effective oversight and assurance around the contract, there are dedicated governance arrangements administered by CoL on behalf of participating authorities

To continue participating in the LSHP, Havering must:

- Sign the new Programme Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the CoL formalising its role as a named authority in the procurement process and as part of the relevant governance structure
- Participate in the e-Service Management Board, ensuring local representation in decision-making
- Pay annual financial contributions, which support the shared infrastructure and service oversight
- Indemnify the CoL Corporation, protecting it from Legal or financial liabilities arising from the programme

## REASONS AND OPTIONS

### **Reasons for the decision:**

The reasons are set out in the main report

### **Other options considered:**

#### **Option1: Do Nothing**

There is the option to do nothing and stop the e-Service when the contract ends on 17 August 2026. This option is not advised as it could compromise accessibility and the efficient use of resources, ultimately affecting the quality of sexual and reproductive health services delivered. While Local Authorities can meet their statutory minimum requirements without the e-Service, the recommendation to maintain it is focused on ensuring accessibility for residents, efficient use of financial resources, and optimal utilization of clinical expertise.

#### **Option 2: Independently procure an e-service for Havering:**

This option is not advised. One of the key benefits of the pan-London approach is the delivery of economies of scale that would not otherwise be realised at a local level. Jointly procuring this service enables the total London activity volumes to be reflected in provider's pricing strategy, which will offer significant advantage in terms of fee-per-service costs that can be secured. Any independent procurement exercise by LBH would inevitably result in a higher unit cost and an increased pressure on the Council's Public Health grant. Equally, the Council would have to bear the costs of an independent procurement, contract monitoring etc.

#### **Option 3: Combine the E-Service with the Integrated Sexual Health Service:**

This option was considered and has been rejected - as with Option 2, any route that involves commissioning at a smaller geographical footprint will not yield the economies of scale delivered at a London level and therefore will not represent good value for money for the Council. Commissioners are keen to ensure that the focus of our integrated sexual health service contract provider remains on enhancing our local face-to-face clinical offer, to support improved outcomes for Havering residents.

## IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

### **Financial implications and risks:**

This report is seeking Cabinet approval to enter into a memorandum of Understanding and subsequent Inter-Authority Agreement with the City of London Corporate to participate in the re-procurement process and subsequent contract for online services for sexual and reproductive health (e-service). The contract is expected to be a 5+2+2 with any decisions on on-going participation in the contract to be delegated to the Director of Resources and options to activate contraceptive and PrEP modules delegated to the Director of Public Health.

Estimates based on 23/24 spend uplifted by 2% per year over the duration of the entire contract suggest the contract cost will be in the region of £2.6m. Spend is based on take-up numbers and so is subject to variation up or down. If the optional contraceptive and PrEP

modules are activated the cost would rise to £3m with estimates being based on London-wide experience. These figures exclude the cost paid to the City of London Corporation for the procurement and management of the contract; these costs are an initial one-off amount of £6,587 and then annual contributions of approximately £8,900 per year.

Table to summarise costs:

ONLINE COSTS	Y1 26-27	Y2 27-28	Y3 28-29	Y4 29-30	Y5 30-31	Y6 31-32	Y7 32-33	Y8 33-34	Y9 34-35	Total
STI care only	£272,799	£278,255	£283,820	£289,497	£295,287	£301,193	£307,216	£313,361	£319,628	£2,661,056
PrEP care	£8,401	£17,132	£21,827	£22,264	£22,709	£23,163	£23,626	£24,099	£24,581	£187,802
Contraception care	£21,726	£22,160	£22,603	£23,055	£23,517	£23,987	£24,467	£24,956	£25,455	£211,926
<b>Total</b>	<b>£302,926</b>	<b>£317,547</b>	<b>£328,250</b>	<b>£334,816</b>	<b>£341,513</b>	<b>£348,343</b>	<b>£355,309</b>	<b>£362,416</b>	<b>£369,664</b>	<b>£3,060,784</b>

Contract administration	Y1 26-27	Y2 27-28	Y3 28-29	Y4 29-30	Y5 30-31	Y6 31-32	Y7 32-33	Y8 33-34	Y9 34-35	Total
Initial Procurement	£6,587									£6,587
Annual Management	£8,900	£8,900	£8,900	£8,900	£8,900	£8,900	£8,900	£8,900	£8,900	£80,100
<b>Total Payable to CofL</b>	<b>£15,487</b>	<b>£8,900</b>	<b>£8,900</b>	<b>£8,900</b>	<b>£8,900</b>	<b>£8,900</b>	<b>£8,900</b>	<b>£8,900</b>	<b>£8,900</b>	<b>£86,687</b>

<b>Total</b>	<b>£318,413</b>	<b>£326,447</b>	<b>£337,150</b>	<b>£343,716</b>	<b>£350,413</b>	<b>£357,243</b>	<b>£364,209</b>	<b>£371,316</b>	<b>£378,564</b>	<b>£3,147,471</b>
--------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------	-------------------

Since the contract was last tendered, there have been developments in the technology and availability of STI testing kits and the market is strong therefore the competitive procurement process could return a lower cost per unit than is currently being paid.

The cost of the contract will be met from the Council's Public Health grant. Havering will receive £13,263,994m in 2025/26; this contract has been budgeted for within overall funding availability. There is a risk that the amount of Public Health funding might decrease over the term of the contract – if this is the case the service will have to review spend which is not mandated or contractually obliged in order to continue to meet the commitments of this contract and/or consider use of Public Health reserves.

The Council could opt to procure its own online testing service, however, it is unlikely to be afforded the economies of scale which will be gained by this pan London collaboration. The Council could decide not to offer an online service, however, this will result in higher numbers visiting face to face settings for routine testing which would reduce capacity within those settings to deal with more complex needs. It is likely that some of those visits would be out of area and would therefore be charged at a significantly higher unit cost than online testing. Channel shifting low risk cases from face to face services to online services delivers value for money and provides flexibility and convenience for residents.

**Legal implications and risks:**

The Council can rely on various legal powers in support of the decisions recommended in this report. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 allows the Council to do anything an individual can do subject to any statutory restrictions which may apply. None of the constraints on the Council's Section 1 power are engaged by this decision. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 permits the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions.

Paragraph 9 of the MOU requires participating Councils to contribute to procurement costs. It includes a mechanism whereby procurement costs may increase above those stated. The decision as to whether and by how much costs may rise is decided by the Procurement Oversight Board (POB), whose membership consists of a n officer from each participating Council. POB decisions are by consensus rather than vote. Thus the risk is somewhat mitigated.

Likewise, the extent of the indemnity for costs and claims (including legal costs) associated with the procurement given under the MOU to City of London Corporation as lead authority by each Council (MOU Paragraph 8.8) is determined by the POB. This may be viewed as somewhat mitigating the extensive nature of the indemnity.

Entry into the MOU does not bind the Council to enter into the proposed IAA. The Council's legal team will provide advice on the terms of the IAA following the procurement process and as required.

**Human Resources implications and risks:**

There are no identified Human Resources implications or risks

**Equalities implications and risks:**

Havering has a diverse community made up of many different groups and individuals. The Council values diversity and believes it essential to understand and include the different contributions, perspectives and experience that people from different backgrounds bring. 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, gender, race and disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council demonstrates its commitment to the Equality Act in its decision-making processes, the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and employment practices concerning its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing of all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

## **Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks**

Havering Council are committed to protecting and improving the health of our residents. Sexual and reproductive health is a vital component of population health and wellbeing, having implications for residents across the life course.

Under the 2012 Health and Social Care Act, local authorities are mandated to commission comprehensive open access sexual health services, including free STI testing and treatment.

The timely detection and treatment of STIs is vital to protect affected individuals from the short and longer term clinical outcomes that can be associated with these infections if left untreated (e.g. infertility, chronic pain), and their sexual contacts from the risk of further onward infection.

Participating in the new London e-service contract will mean Havering residents can continue to benefit from this efficient, acceptable and well-regarded route for accessing STI testing, the use of which releases resource in face to face clinical services for the management of more complex sexual health needs. The opportunity to switch on contraceptive and PrEP modules also offers the potential to continue to widen access to these services, both of which contribute to improved public health outcomes.

Not continuing to participate in the London e-service may have a number of negative consequences, including increased pressure on locally commissioned sexual health services, increased expenditure incurred through residents accessing out of borough sexual health provision, reduced STI testing rates and increasing population burden of STIs and associated complications.

<h3><b>ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS</b></h3>
<p>Reduces unnecessary travel to face to face clinics for those patients who are appropriate for remote service access</p>

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

### **Appendix 1: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**





**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**relating to the collaborative procurement to be undertaken**  
**by the Local Authorities participating in the London Sexual**  
**Health Programme**

---

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BARKING AND DAGENHAM**

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BEXLEY**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN**

And

**CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HARINGEY**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF HOUNSLOW**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON**

And

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON & CHELSEA**

And

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF LAMBETH**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM**

And

**LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE**  
**And**  
**LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES**  
**And**  
**LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK**  
**And**  
**LONDON BOROUGH OF SUTTON**  
**And**  
**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**  
**And**  
**LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST**  
**And**  
**LONDON BOROUGH OF WANDSWORTH**  
**And**  
**CITY OF WESTMINSTER**

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

### PARTIES

The Mayor and Burgesses of the London Borough of .....

AND

**All other Parties from time to time as defined below**

Original Partners: as identified on the front cover of this Agreement.

Additional Partners may join as indicated below

Both of these categories are both “Parties” and “Partners”

### DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

#### Definitions

Commissioner	means a commissioner of sexual health services engaged by a Partner to commission and manage the provision of sexual health services for its residents, and “Commissioners” shall mean the Commissioners for all the Partners
--------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Confidential Information	means all confidential information (however recorded or preserved) disclosed by a Party or its Representatives (as defined below) to the other Party and that Party's Representatives whether before or after the date of this agreement in connection with the pan-London Sexual Health Procurement, including but not limited to:
--------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

- (a) the existence and terms of this MoU or any agreement entered into in connection with this MoU;
- (b) any information that would be regarded as confidential by a reasonable business person relating to:
  - (i) the business, assets, affairs, customers, clients, suppliers, or plans, intentions, or market opportunities of the disclosing Party; and
  - (ii) the operations, processes, product information, or software of the disclosing Party; and

- (c) any information developed by the Parties in the course of carrying out this MoU.

Director of Public Health or DPH	means a director of public health services engaged by a Partner to have overall responsibility for public health services for its residents, and “Directors of Public Health” shall mean the DPHs for all the Partners
LSHP	means the London Sexual Health Programme
Procurement MOU	means this collaboration agreement (including its schedules);
Procurement	means the renewal of the pan-London procurement of a portal and self-care for sexually transmitted infections and contraception
Procurement Oversight Group	means the body of that name further details of which are set out below
Representatives	means, in relation to a Party, its employees, officers, representatives, contractors, subcontractors and advisers.
Strategic Board	means the Board set up in accordance with the provisions of a separate MoU between the Partners which has senior level support, overseeing the full range of sexual health services across London with an oversight of the services and associated cost and activity.

## **1. HOW THIS MOU WORKS**

### **1.1 COMMENCEMENT AND DURATION**

1.1.1 The start date for this MOU in relation to the Original Partners will be represented by the date the last Original Partner signs the Procurement MoU as communicated by the City of London Corporation to all the Partners. The date of the Agreement shall be the date of signature of the first Party to do so. This provision is legally binding.

1.1.2 Other local authorities may become an Additional Partner to this MOU once they have signed a counterpart of it, and the Partners as at that point consent to such Partner joining as a “Partner” within the meaning of this MOU.

1.1.3 This MOU will be executed by all Parties electronically using “DocuSign®”. Each Party will retain a copy of the executed part.

1.1.4 By using DocuSign® the Parties accept that each signed original shall constitute an original of this MOU, but all the counterparts shall together constitute the same instrument. This provision is legally binding.

## **1.2 EXIT ARRANGEMENTS**

1.2.1 This MOU will run until its replacement by any other agreement covering how joint working will be achieved in relation to any contract awarded under this Procurement. Where such later agreements only partially replace this MOU, then this MOU shall continue in force for the part not replaced.

1.2.2 All the Partners contribute to the costs of running the Procurement as set out in Schedule 2. At the end of the Procurement, if there are any Procurement funds left as held by the Partner nominated for this purpose, they shall be distributed to the Partners based on the percentage contribution paid in as the Procurement Oversight Group determines.

1.2.3 Any Partner shall be entitled to withdraw from this MOU on giving written notice, having first informed the Procurement Oversight Group of their decision at the earliest opportunity. On such withdrawal, the provisions in clause 9 below about contributing to costs on withdrawal apply. Notice to be served on the City of London at the following email address: [ccs.contact@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:ccs.contact@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

## **2. VISION AND PRINCIPLES**

### **Vision**

2.1 The London Sexual Health Programme (LSHSP) involving 31 London boroughs and the City of London has facilitated a collaborative commissioning model for sexual health services since 2017. While flexible in its approach and recognising local conditions differ, it aims to deliver measurably improved and cost-effective public health outcomes. Councils in London currently spend in excess of £150m per annum on Sexual and Reproductive Health services. The ongoing increases in the size of the population, London's demographic profile and the trend of increasing rates of sexually transmitted diseases (STIs) has meant that expenditure on these services has increased year on year. This programme will lead the ongoing development of the service model to meet demand and deliver better value.

2.2 The LSHP seeks to develop improved service models, through the use of technology and contract specifications, to better address current and future service demands and reduce the incidence of STIs, HIV and unplanned pregnancies.

### **Purpose of this MOU**

2.3 This MOU does not cover the general work being undertaken by 31 London Boroughs and the City of London to agree a common strategy for sexual and reproductive health.

2.4 The Partners have expressed a wish to be part of the Procurement as set out in Schedule 1. This will in due course result in bids being submitted to the City of London Corporation as lead authority and a decision being required by each participating authority (Partner) at the LSHP Strategic Board as to whether they wish the lead authority to contract with the bidder(s) recommended by the relevant evaluation panel.

Where indicated, some provisions of this MOU are legally binding.

### **Principles of Collaboration**

2.5 Recognising that the decision as to level of participation rests with the Partner authorities as well as through the Partners' membership of the Procurement Oversight Group and Strategic Board, the Partners in the LSHP nonetheless:

2.5.1 Agree that the system of sexual health services commissioning and delivery requires a coordinated approach to maintaining resilient and sustainable sexual and reproductive health services for the benefit of all residents and while there are risks from collaborating there are equally risks from not collaborating for services which are open to all.

2.5.2 Agree to continue to work together in adopting a 'whole system' approach to transforming sexual health services in London for the benefit of all residents and service users through a single programme approach albeit while not impacting adversely upon the overall project or other Authorities' interests particular to local circumstances.

2.5.3 May choose to participate in the re-tendering of the pan-London procurement of a web-based system to include a 'front-end' portal, joined up partner notification (if appropriate), medical treatments and home/self-sampling and implement it together to avoid demand and costs being shunted to from one part of London to another subject always to a final decision as to contractual participation.

2.5.4 Ensure that governance, accountability and performance measures are agreed with all relevant Partners.

2.5.5 Seek and have due regard to common legal and or procurement advice in the development of this MOU.

2.5.6 Recognise that prices tendered by bidders as part of this procurement by the lead authority while unpredictable are the most likely way for the Partners to achieve and prove the obtaining of best value.

2.5.7 The Partners shall act at all times in a way that promotes effective partnership working. All the Partners agree to act in good faith and reasonably to:

2.5.7.1 resolve any difficulties openly, quickly and honestly, before any such issues have a negative impact on the operation of this MOU or the LSHP;

2.5.7.2 provide information requested of it promptly, especially where it will (or could) impact upon the obligations, rights and liabilities of any other Partner to this MOU; and

2.5.7.3 mitigate any losses, costs or expenses incurred as a result of the application or breach of this MOU, whether or not the application or breach concerned relates to a legally enforceable obligation.

2.5.8 The Partners shall assist the progress of the LSHP by:

2.5.8.1 Ensuring that when decisions are required to be taken by that Partner, such decisions are made and communicated as soon as practicable, especially the decision on whether to enter into an Inter-Authority Agreement relating to the contract awarded to the recommended provider at the end of the Procurement

2.5.8.2 Providing support to the Director of for the LSHP and to those Partners having a lead role;

2.5.8.3 Making available officers to advise and/or attend meetings as necessary where the knowledge and/or expertise of such officers is required or has been agreed to be provided in order to contribute to the effectiveness of the Procurement.

2.5.8.4 Having decided to enter into a contract for online services, accepting the recommendation of evaluation panels as to the provider to be awarded a contract.

2.5.8.5 Keeping confidential all Confidential Information of all the other Partners or their Representatives, and any tenderers for the Procurement, and not disclosing this without the written consent of the Partner or tenderer which provided it;

2.5.8.6 Applying the same degree of security and care to the Confidential Information of others as they do their own.

## **. PROCUREMENT OVERSIGHT GROUP, SUB-GROUPS, DECISION-MAKING**

3.1 The aim of these governance arrangements is to secure:-

3.1.1 Prompt decision-making

3.1.2 Participation by Partners to the extent they are able to commit resources

3.1.3 Recognition by Partners that decision-makers will take decisions in good faith on the basis of the evidence provided as to the best interests of the LSHP as a whole.

#### **4. THE PROCUREMENT OVERSIGHT GROUP AND SUB-GROUPS**

4.1 The governance and overall management of the procurement is the responsibility of the Procurement Oversight Group, and it decides on the structure of sub-groups and the tasks to be assigned to the Procurement Oversight Group and each sub-group.

4.2 The Partners accept decisions of the Procurement Oversight Group on how the procurement is to be governed and managed.

4.3 Each sub-group authorised by the Procurement Oversight Group will manage its work and membership, work within the tasks assigned to them and report back to the Procurement Oversight Group.

4.4 Where a vacancy arises in a sub-group or on the Procurement Oversight Group, then the relevant Partner shall nominate a suitable replacement. Where it is unable to nominate such a replacement, the Procurement Oversight Group or subgroup shall decide how the vacancy is to be filled.

#### **5. DECISION MAKING**

5.1 Actions and recommendations of the Procurement Oversight Board and its sub-groups will be reached by consensus as mediated by the chair and (other than by way of guidance to assist in informing a further discussion) there shall be no voting.

5.2 Each DPH delegates to the Procurement Oversight Group the ability to take decisions on all matters that are necessary to progress the LSHP. However, where the Procurement Oversight Group takes a decision that is required by the constitution of any Partner to be taken by its Executive, Cabinet, Leader or a single Member or which is otherwise outside the authority of its DHP, it shall not be binding on that Partner, and that Partner shall immediately take steps to submit the relevant matter to the appropriate decision-maker for a decision.

5.3 The Procurement Oversight Group can delegate its decision-making ability to its sub-groups.

5.4 Where a decision is required to be taken by the Procurement Oversight Group or a sub-group and such decision must be made before the next meeting, then a decision may be taken by securing consensus on the basis of email circulation of relevant papers to the members of the Programme Board and each confirming the recommendation or expressing an opinion.

5.5 Where appropriate the Procurement Oversight Group or sub-groups shall consult with all the relevant Directors of Public Health or (where the responsibility for sexual health commissioning is not managed by a DPH) the relevant Commissioners.

#### **6. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT**

The Procurement Oversight Group and its sub-groups shall decide on the Programme Management arrangements (defined as the management of the procurement journey from its inception to successful contract award including any challenges to the procurement by interested parties). The Partners accept the Programme Board/sub-groups' decision on this.

## **7. PARTICIPATION IN AND COMMITMENT TO THE PROCUREMENTS**

7.1 The Schedule shows the intentions of the Partners and future Partners as at the date of this MOU on their commitment to the Procurement. Future Partners may opt to become full Partners by notifying [Mona.Hayat@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Mona.Hayat@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

7.2 Each Partner joining the Procurement agrees to its identity, contract scope and contract value being included in the contract notice.

## **8. LEAD AUTHORITIES – THIS IS LEGALLY BINDING**

8.1 The City of London Corporation is the lead authority for running the Procurement and as such will conduct the procurement in its own name on behalf of itself and the other Partners.

8.2 The Partners do not intend that any partnership relationship, or any relationship based upon the laws of trust shall come into effect by virtue of one authority being a lead authority.

8.3 City of London Corporation, and any other Partner appointed as an alternative lead authority for running the Procurement, undertakes to conduct the procurement on the basis of:

8.3.1 The decisions of the Procurement Oversight Group and Sub-groups;

8.3.2 Its Contract Standing Orders or that of the authority entering into the contract for the Procurement;

8.3.3 Applicable procurement law and good practice;

8.3.4 Commissioning and taking account of appropriate professional advice;

8.3.5 Recognising the rights of other Partners to decide at the end of the relevant process not to join the award process.

8.4 Provided that any lead authority shall have complied with the requirements of sub-clauses 8.3.1 to 8.3.5, and has not committed any negligent act or omission, the other Partners will indemnify that lead authority for costs and claims made against that lead authority (including legal costs) PROVIDED THAT that such indemnifying Partner was participating in the procurement concerned and as determined by the Procurement Oversight Board. Neither shall any of the other Partners who are not lead authority claim against any lead authority for its own losses as a result of the lead authority not acting in compliance with this sub-clause (8.4) above, nor if the LSHP does not achieve one or more of its objectives.

8.5 The City of London Corporation is the lead authority for the contract awarded at the conclusion of the Procurement and will enter into that contract on behalf of the Partners choosing to participate. A separate Contract Management IAA will set out the relationship between that lead authority and the Partners choosing to participate.

## **9. PAYMENT OF LSHP AND PROCUREMENT COSTS – THIS IS LEGALLY BINDING**

9.1 Partners will contribute to the Procurement costs for the period up to August 15<sup>th</sup> 2026 as set out in Schedule 2 (Contribution to Procurement Costs as at January 2025). Any further contributions, including from Additional Partners, will be determined by the Procurement Oversight Group. It is not anticipated that further contributions will be required beyond August 2026.

9.1.1 The City of London Corporation shall be responsible for:

9.1.1.1 monitoring the budget for such costs,

9.1.1.2 invoicing for and collecting contributions, and

9.1.1.3 making payment of such costs.

9.2 Any Partner withdrawing from this MOU will still have to contribute to the due proportion of costs incurred up to the point of its withdrawal and will not be entitled to a refund of contribution except in exceptional circumstances.

9.3 at the time of signing this MoU, the Partners are also required to indicate, by ticking the relevant boxes in Schedule 3 (List of E-Service Modules), which of the three additional E-Service Modules they wish to procure in addition to the core service, as well as indicating the groups of residents eligible for free condom distribution. This selection will help inform the procurement procedure and better serve the needs of the Partners.

## **10. GENERAL AND SIGNATURE**

### **10.1 OWNERSHIP OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

10.1.1 The intellectual property rights in any documents prepared by any of the Partners or their advisers as part of the Procurement shall be owned jointly by all the local authority Partners who were Partners at the time of creation of the relevant document.

### **11. ASSIGNMENT**

11.1 This MOU is personal to the Partners and the rights and/or obligations under this MOU shall not be assigned, novated or otherwise transferred to any person other than to a successor body following a reorganisation within government or to a body which substantially performs any of the functions that previously had been performed by the affected Partner. The Partners shall enter into such agreement and/or deed as may reasonably be required to give effect to such assignment, novation or transfer.

11.2 Any Partner having the role of lead authority in relation to either of the Procurements shall be entitled to assign its role to another Partner where this is agreed by the Programme Board.

### **12. RIGHTS OF THIRD PARTIES**

The Partners agree that those parts of this MOU that are legally binding shall not be enforceable by any third party pursuant to the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 and any rights contained therein are excluded.

**Signed by** ..... [insert authority's full name]

**By its Director of Public Health**

Name:

Signature:

Date of Signature:

## **SCHEDULE 1**

### Participation of the 30 Original Partners in the Procurement

Barking and Dagenham  
Barnet  
Bexley  
Bromley  
Brent  
Camden  
City of London  
Ealing  
Enfield  
Hammersmith & Fulham,  
Hackney  
Haringey  
Harrow  
Havering  
Hounslow  
Kingston  
Islington  
Kensington & Chelsea  
Lambeth  
Lewisham  
Merton  
Newham  
Richmond  
Redbridge  
Southwark  
Sutton  
Tower Hamlets  
Waltham Forest  
Wandsworth  
Westminster

---

## SCHEDULE 2

### CONTRIBUTION TO PROCUREMENT COSTS as at January 2025

Local Authority	Procurement contribution
	£
LONDON BOROUGH OF BARKING AND DAGENHAM	£10,056
LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET	£10,308
LONDON BOROUGH OF BEXLEY	£5,839
LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT	£12,995
LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY	£8,790
LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	£16,033
CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION	£955
LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING	£14,698
LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD	£10,201
LONDON BOROUGH OF HACKNEY	£20,288
LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM	£13,113
LONDON BOROUGH OF HARINGEY	£12,183
LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW	£6,588
LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING	£6,587
LONDON BOROUGH OF HOUNSLOW	£9,510
LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON	£15,990
ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON & CHELSEA	£12,514
ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES	£6,114
LONDON BOROUGH OF LAMBETH	£19,444
LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM	£14,773
LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON	£6,277
LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM	£18,350
LONDON BOROUGH OF REDBRIDGE	£8,261
LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES	£5,605
LONDON BOROUGH OF SOUTHWARK	£16,686
LONDON BOROUGH OF SUTTON	£5,907
LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS	£21,028
LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST	£9,572
LONDON BOROUGH OF WANDSWORTH	£16,706
CITY OF WESTMINSTER	£18,830
<b>Total for all parties</b>	<b>£345,200</b>



### Schedule 3

#### List of E-Service Modules

E-Service module	Procurement Decision	
STI testing and management (including treatment for uncomplicated chlamydia and TV and DoxyPEP in the future)	CORE SERVICE	
Routine and emergency hormonal contraception	Yes	No
Digital HIV PrEP	Yes	No
Condom distribution scheme where only select groups are eligible (e.g. GBMSM, young people etc)	Yes	No
If yes, to the above state which groups of your residents will be eligible for the condom service		
All persons	Yes	No
Black and other Ethnic Minority people	Yes	No
LGBTQIA* people	Yes	No
Sex workers	Yes	No
To Be Confirmed or Other	Yes	No

This page is intentionally left blank



**Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH

## CABINET

**Subject Heading:**

***Refreshed Corporate Workforce Strategy  
2025-2027 and Beyond***

**Cabinet Member:**

Ray Morgon – Leader of Council

**ELT Lead:**

Andrew Blake-Herbert

**Report Author and contact details:**

***Joanne Budden – Assistant Director of  
Human Resources and Organisational  
Development***

***Joanne Budden@havering.gov.uk***

**Policy context:**

The refreshed Corporate Workforce Strategy 2025–2027: \*Choose Havering – Building the Future Together\*. The strategy sets out a clear and ambitious roadmap to develop, attract, and retain a skilled, inclusive, and future-ready workforce that can meet the evolving needs of our residents and communities.

**Financial summary:**

***Strategy – No direct financial implications  
required to date.***

**Is this a Key Decision?**

No

**When should this matter be reviewed?**

April 2028

**Reviewing OSC:**

NA

**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

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

## **SUMMARY**

This refreshed strategy builds on the foundations of the 2022–2025 Workforce Strategy and reflects Havering Council's continued commitment to becoming a modern, inclusive, and high-performing organisation. It is shaped by workforce feedback, legislative developments, and the Council's strategic priorities, and is designed to respond to the challenges and opportunities of the next three years.

The strategy is structured around five strategic people themes:

1. Organisational Design, Culture, Values and Behaviours
2. Leading Our Workforce
3. Developing Our Workforce
4. Treating Our Workforce Fairly with Kindness and Respect
5. Supporting Our Workforce

Each theme is underpinned by a detailed action plan, with clear milestones across three implementation phases:

- Year 3 (2025/26): Foundation and Initial Implementation
- Year 4 (2026/27): Implementation, Monitoring, and Continuous Improvement
- Year 5 (2027): Consolidation and Planning for the 2027–2030 Strategy

The refreshed strategy introduces a more dynamic and inclusive tone, celebrating the Council's 60th anniversary and reinforcing our ICARE values—Integrity, Care, Ambition, Respect, and Everyone. It encourages a culture of accountability, ownership, and continuous improvement, while recognising the importance of wellbeing, equity, and innovation.

Key enhancements include:

- Expansion of the ICARE ambassador programme and annual recognition awards
- A strengthened 'Choose Havering' pledge, setting clear expectations for staff and leaders
- A refreshed PDR framework and mentoring programme
- New career pathways, succession planning, and apprenticeship opportunities
- A comprehensive EDI workforce plan and Total Reward Strategy
- Enhanced wellbeing support and HR transformation initiatives

Directorates and programme teams will be accountable for aligning their workforce plans with the strategy. Progress will be monitored through regular reporting, PDR alignment, and annual reviews. The strategy is a live document, designed to evolve in response to changing needs, financial pressures, and legislative developments.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is recommended to:

Note and Support the following;

- The implementation of all elements of the refreshed Corporate Workforce Strategy 2025–2027.
- The continued alignment of directorate and programme workforce plans with the strategic themes and action plans outlined in the strategy.
- The annual review and evolution of the strategy to ensure it remains responsive to organisational priorities, workforce feedback, and external developments.

## **REPORT DETAIL**

The original People Strategy, adopted in November 2019, laid the foundation for a more agile and future-ready workforce. Despite the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council successfully transitioned to the Workforce Strategy 2022–2025, which supported transformation efforts and strengthened workforce capability.

The refreshed Corporate Workforce Strategy 2025–2027 builds on this progress and introduces a more structured, forward-looking implementation plan. It reflects the Council’s 60-year legacy of embracing change and positions the workforce to meet future challenges through innovation, inclusivity, and accountability.

Key developments in the refreshed strategy include:

- A clear three-phase implementation roadmap (Foundation, Implementation, Consolidation).
- A stronger emphasis on values-led culture through the ICARE framework and the ‘Choose Havering’ pledge.
- Enhanced leadership development, career progression, and digital capability.
- A renewed focus on equity, diversity, inclusion, and staff wellbeing.
- A commitment to continuous improvement, with annual reviews and directorate-level accountability.

The strategy is supported by detailed themed action plans and a refreshed tone that is inclusive, motivational, and aligned with the Council’s ambition to be a “Great Place to Work.”

## **REASONS AND OPTIONS**

### **Reasons for the decision:**

The refreshed strategy ensures the Council remains responsive to workforce challenges, emerging technologies, and evolving service demands. It reinforces a culture of accountability, collaboration, and continuous development, while maintaining a strong focus on inclusivity and staff wellbeing.

### **Other options considered:**

Not applicable. The strategy refresh is a continuation of the Council's long-term workforce development approach

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Financial implications and risks:**

This report is seeking asking Cabinet to note and support:

- The implementation of all elements of the refreshed Corporate Workforce Strategy 2025–2027.
- The continued alignment of directorate and programme workforce plans with the strategic themes and action plans outlined in the strategy.
- The annual review and evolution of the strategy to ensure it remains responsive to organisational priorities, workforce feedback, and external developments.

Much of the work required to implement the strategy will be undertaken by existing resources which have already been budgeted for including staffing, ICT systems and contracts such occupational health.

There may be a need for some targeted investment in leadership development, developing digital infrastructure, career pathways, and wellbeing initiatives. Use of reserve funding and/or integration into the annual budget cycle to ensure alignment with the Council's strategic priorities. Finance Business Partners will support modelling and risk assessment.

There is a risk that without a refreshed Corporate Workforce Strategy, the Council could experience difficulties recruiting and retaining staff leading to an adverse impact on service delivery and spend in the form of reliance on agency.

**Legal implications and risks:**

The strategy aligns with current employment legislation, including the forthcoming Employment Rights Bill (2025/26). Legal advice will be sought to ensure compliance with all statutory obligations.

**Human Resources implications and risks:**

The strategy will be delivered through a collaborative approach involving HR, directorates, and programme teams. HR will act as a strategic partner, supporting implementation, monitoring progress, and embedding best practice across the organisation. All Leaders/Managers are accountable for the delivery of this strategy through their workforce plans.

**Equalities implications and risks:**

An Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EHIA) will be completed annually to ensure the strategy promotes fairness, eliminates discrimination, and advances equality of opportunity. The strategy includes specific actions to address diversity pay gaps, inclusive leadership, and equitable access to development opportunities.

**Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks**

The strategy includes a renewed focus on staff wellbeing, including the implementation of a new Occupational Health and EAP provider, and the development of workplace wellbeing solutions. These initiatives aim to improve mental and physical health, reduce absenteeism, and enhance staff engagement.

**Environmental and climate change implications and risks:**

The strategy supports the Council's sustainability agenda through flexible working, digital transformation, and reduced reliance on physical office space. These actions contribute to lowering the Council's carbon footprint and promoting environmentally responsible practices.

**ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

*Guidance on completing this section can be found on this link:*

<https://onesourceict.sharepoint.com/sites/SustIntranet/SitePages/Committee-Guidance.aspx>

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Cabinet Report - Workforce Strategy Refresh - Appendix A – Final
- ICARE Values and Behaviours Framework
- Choose Havering Pledge

# **Choose Havering: Our Corporate Workforce Strategy – Refresh 2025-2027 and Beyond**



## Contents

3	Introduction from Andrew Blake-Herbert, Chief Executive
4	About our workforce
5	About our Corporate Workforce Strategy – Building the Future Together
6	Our values and behaviours - ICARE
7	The Choose Havering Pledge
8	Why we need to change
9	Our ambition for the future
10	How we will get there
10	Ownership, monitoring and review
11	Our Corporate Workforce Strategy on a page
13-26	Appendix A: Themed Strategic Action Plans
13	Theme 1 – Our organisational design, culture, values and behaviours
16	Theme 2 – Leading our workforce
19	Theme 3 – Developing our workforce
22	Theme 4 – Treating our workforce fairly with kindness and respect
24	Theme 5 – Supporting our workforce

## Introduction from Andrew Blake-Herbert, Chief Executive

In 2025, Havering Council celebrated its 60th birthday. From day one, change has been at the heart of what we do. Whether through economic ups and downs, evolving resident needs, new legislation, climate change, or technological advancements, we have always continued to embrace change. We must continue to build on these changes to create a modern, future-ready Council.

While financial constraints often drive change, our commitment to improvement stems from a desire to better serve our residents. Questions like "Why isn't this working as it should?" and "Can we do this differently?" push us to innovate and enhance our services. Financial pressures add urgency, but our focus remains on delivering quality within these constraints.

To navigate future challenges, we need the right people with the right skills working together as one Council. Being a public servant in 2025 and beyond means being curious, experimenting, and recognising that solutions may come from outside of your team. It means leveraging data and technology to benefit our residents and involving them in designing, delivering, and evaluating services through various communication channels. Leading with empathy, honesty, fairness, and fostering inclusive cultures where everyone feels a sense of ownership and belonging, is crucial. An isolated approach, known as siloed working, won't solve the complex challenges we face.

Our ICARE values—Integrity, Care, Ambition, Respect, and Everyone—are central to becoming a 'Great Place to Work'. These values guide our actions and decisions, ensuring we remain committed to our mission and vision. We aim to retain, develop, attract, and recruit top talent to improve our borough and enhance residents' life chances.

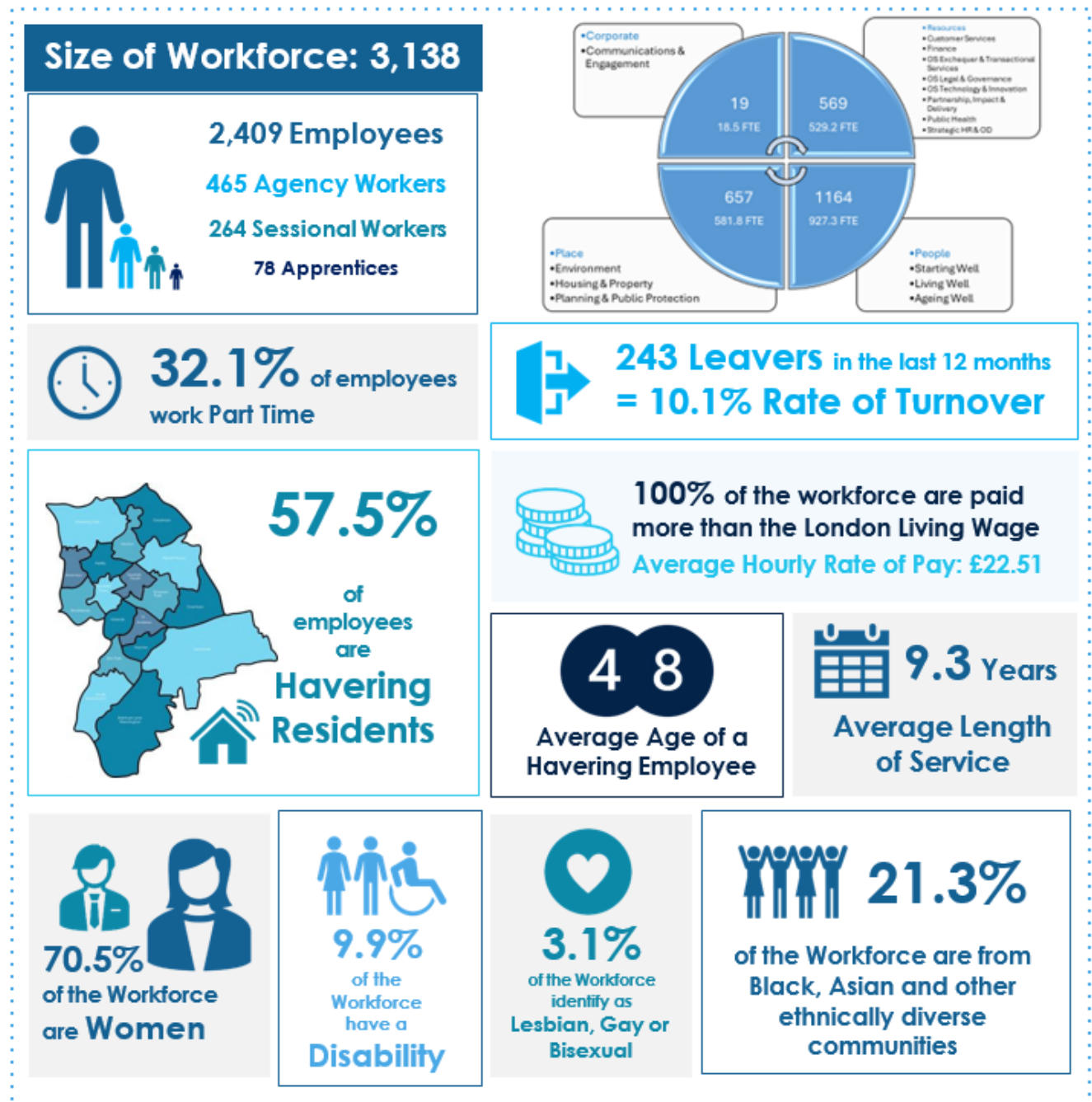
Our Choose Havering pledge reinforces our dedication to being a diverse, progressive, and inclusive organisation. This Corporate Workforce Strategy outlines how we will all achieve this. If you don't see and feel a change by the end of this strategy period, we haven't met our goals.

Change starts with all of us! Take ownership of your development, be honest about your strengths and areas for growth, and make the most of your Performance Development Review (PDR) and career development processes. The Council pledges to continue to offer 10 days of learning to support your development needs. Consider if an Apprenticeship is right for your career growth. If you manage people, be accountable and support their growth.

Read this strategy and join the conversation about your role in our progress.

## About our workforce

Havering Council is proud of its diverse, flexible and dynamic workforce – we value each other's differences and the contribution everyone makes towards making the Council what it is today. We directly employ 2,409 staff, with some 465 agency workers and 264 casual/sessional staff supporting the essential services we provide.



## **Our Corporate Workforce Strategy – Building the Future Together**

At the heart of our Corporate Workforce Strategy lies the Council's vision: 'The Havering you want to be part of'.

This strategy outlines our commitment to developing the capability, skills, and culture needed for our future workforce. To thrive as a high-performing council amidst ongoing financial pressures, we are cultivating a diverse, modern, agile, innovative, creative, and business-efficient workforce and culture.

Our Council is on an ambitious journey of significant organisational and cultural transformation. We envisage a leaner organisation, more commercially focused, and with a reshaped service delivery model. Collaboration across organisational boundaries, networks, and partnerships will be crucial. By learning from others and building on our experiences, we aim to create sustainable public services.

This transformation will necessitate changes in our workforce, affecting the number of posts, the types of people we employ, our working practices, the skills and competencies required, and the systems and tools that enable us to be both efficient and effective.

### **Continue to Adapt to Change: Continuous improvement from Lessons learnt**

Our workforce continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience and flexibility, acquiring new skills and forming new networks in the process. Our experiences of change allow us to continuously learn and grow. We will continue to look at opportunities for flexible working across different locations, including refreshing and developing our 'Ways of Working' across the Council and the borough. This also contributes to the Council sustainability agenda and further reducing the Council's carbon footprint.

### **Key Themes for Action**

Our Corporate Workforce Strategy will continue to focus on five key themes over the next two years to further support and develop our workforce, strengthen our organisational capabilities, and modernise our operations:

**Modern, Progressive, and Inclusive Organisation:** We aim to be a forward-thinking, diverse, and inclusive organisation dedicated to achieving the best outcomes for our communities and enhancing the quality of life for all residents.

**Community-Centric Services:** Bringing the Council's work closer to the communities we serve by designing and delivering inclusive, fair, and accessible initiatives/services tailored to residents' needs and user journeys.

**Skill Development:** Ensuring all our people possess the right skills at every level to help Havering residents overcome current and future challenges.

**Civic Pride and Local Identity:** Empowering our workforce to champion a sense of civic pride and shared local identity that unites our rapidly diversifying population.

**Compassion, Fairness, and Respect:** Fostering a culture where we treat each other with compassion, fairness, respect, and accountability.

Together, we will build a workforce that is ready to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow, ensuring Havering remains a place we are all proud to be part of.

## A Dynamic and Evolving Strategy

Our commitment is to continuously listen and evolve this strategy in response to changing contexts and pressures, including financial constraints and increased service demands. While our Corporate Workforce Strategy addresses current knowledge, it is a 'live' and dynamic plan, reviewed annually and adapted to align with Council priorities, emerging trends, employment legislation, and best practices.

## Our values and behaviours - ICARE

Having a clear set of values helps everyone understand what we stand for as a Council, enabling us to become the organisation we need to be. Our ICARE values—Integrity, Creativity, Ambition, Respect, and Everyone—were written by our workforce and supported by staff and our Trade Unions. These values must be at the heart of all we do, guiding our actions and decisions.

Our values are not just for show; they are for living. We want everyone to adopt them in their work, demonstrating to colleagues, residents, and partners that these are not just good intentions but good actions. Accountability is key—each of us must take responsibility for embodying these values in everything we do, ensuring that our commitment to Integrity, Creativity, Ambition, Respect, and Everyone is evident in our daily actions and interactions.

### Integrity – Care – Ambition – Respect - Everyone

#### CHOOSE integrity

- We are honest, trustworthy
- We communicate openly and transparently
- We take accountability for our actions and behaviors
- We role model and set the standard for other colleagues

#### CHOOSE care

- We are curious and find ways to solve problems and make things better
- We look for new ideas and opportunities to innovate
- We are flexible and open to change
- We are proud to work in public services

#### CHOOSE ambition

- We focus on making Havering the best place anyone can live, work and do business
- We take pride in our work and the work of our team
- We are committed to improving and developing ourselves with 10 days of learning in mind

#### CHOOSE respect

- We treat people with kindness and compassion
- We listen to other people's ideas and perspectives
- We stand up to discrimination, bullying and harassment
- We appreciate and celebrate diverse cultures, ensuring everyone is treated with the respect they deserve
- We prioritise residents, local businesses, and community groups, striving to provide the best services, actively engaging whenever possible

#### CHOOSE everyone

- We collaborate to deliver results
- We support each other and give constructive feedback
- We celebrate success and recognize everyone's contribution
- We will make sure we are commercially minded. We look at best value and help support the Council's finances

#### CHOOSE employer pledge

- We will support your growth and learning by providing a more professional development offer and recognition to help you thrive
- We will always offer the best possible work/life blend with working practices, putting your health and wellbeing first by making sure we have the right support in place
- We will create the right culture for staff to help you thrive, make sure we listen and two-way communications remains constant
- We will give you the tools and tech you need while trying to be forward-thinking and creative to help you in your roles

## The Choose Havering Pledge

### Choose Havering: Our Commitment to Excellence

Choose Havering is the Council's pledge to create an organisation that is the best it can be. We ask our people to make positive choices every day to achieve our shared ambitions. This commitment applies to everyone, regardless of role, and is about fostering a workplace that is eager for change. We are a Council curious to see what we can do better, a Council that stands against discrimination, and a workplace where we all hold each other accountable for upholding our ICARE values.

### The Council's Pledge to You

**Rapid Progress:** We want all our staff to be eager for growth and motivated in their roles. We commit to providing unrestricted learning, clear objectives, and a range of career development opportunities.

**Work Matters:** We want all our staff to find purpose in their work at Havering Council. We will invest in ensuring everyone has access to a corporate learning offer tailored to their needs.

**Bright Future:** We see the potential in our workforce and their ability to thrive. We will create more professional development opportunities for everyone who wants to progress their career at Havering Council.

**Work/Life Balance:** We understand the importance of staff wellbeing and how it can be supported through flexible working. Our management policies and frameworks will be fit for the future, accessible to all, and will prioritise your health and wellbeing.

**Active Listening:** We know that consistent quality communication is essential to a well-functioning modern organisation. We will keep the lines of communication open and ensure there is a two-way dialogue between the organisation and staff.

**Embrace Cultures:** We believe every member of staff should be a team player and be treated as equals by all. We will ensure all staff, regardless of status, role, or level, have their voices heard.

**Modern Workplace:** We understand that a place of work is not just where you go each day. We will support a flexible mindset and provide cutting-edge equipment and new technology to help you do your job.

**Radical Thinking:** We want to help staff make bold moves and achieve new levels of innovation and creativity. A new and supportive refreshed Corporate Workforce Strategy, developed with input from Trade Unions, will help you feel empowered to think differently.

### Your Pledge to Havering Council

Choose to invest in yourself and your career, be ambitious, step out of your comfort zone, and never stop learning.

Choose to be curious and creative in your thinking to help the Council become bolder and more innovative.

Choose to be accountable every day and hold others to account if they're not acting with integrity.

Choose to make your voice heard and communicate tactfully and respectfully so that we can move forward together.

Choose to be a team player and be someone your colleagues can rely on, whether they've worked with you for 10 years or 10 minutes.

Choose to treat all people equally, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or any other characteristic that defines a group.

Choose to put yourself forward, be a role model, and set high standards for your colleagues.

Choose to work with technology and software that helps you do your job well.

Choose to put residents first and actively involve them in how our services are designed and run.

Choose to believe that great things can happen if we all work together.

## **Why we need to change**

Our Corporate Workforce Strategy defines the Council's ambition for its people—an inclusive, talented, and engaged workforce where the right people with the right skills deliver positive outcomes for Havering and its communities.

### **Digital Agenda**

We are embracing innovation and will continue to leverage advances in digital, data, and smart technologies to shape the digital future of our borough. By harnessing the benefits of innovative digital and technological solutions, we will continue to embrace new ways of working.

### **Workforce Feedback**

We are committed to listening to our people through various forums, including colleague forums, change networks, and surveys such as our wellbeing, engagement, and inclusion survey, and our skills survey. We must act on the feedback from our workforce and work closely with Trade Union colleagues to make necessary improvements.

### **Workforce Profile**

The average age of our directly employed workforce is 48 years and has been within 47.4 & 48.2 years in each of the past four years. With 18.9% of our workforce aged 60 or older and only 9.9% aged 30 or younger, we face the challenge of not having a talent pipeline in place. We must actively develop workforce and succession plans to address this. Currently, 14.8% of our workforce is agency/locum, and we need to employ and retain a skilled permanent workforce to reduce reliance on temporary workers.

### **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion**

We recognise the importance of having a diverse workforce and inclusive cultures to enhance our creativity and foster innovation.

## **Our ambition for the future**

### **The Organisation**

Our working environment will be inclusive, agile, and efficient, fostering innovation, creativity, and high levels of performance. We will have strong, inspirational leadership and an engaged workforce. Everyone will understand the contribution they can make to upholding and demonstrating the Council's ICARE values and behaviours in everything they do. We will reward teams and individuals who 'go above and beyond' within their role, while holding those who underperform and whose attitudes and behaviours are inconsistent with our ICARE values accountable. Everyone will be empowered to be innovative and creative, work collaboratively across and beyond organisational boundaries, and embrace and celebrate their diversity with zero tolerance for discrimination in any form. We will become a Great Place to Work, where people choose to work and develop their careers.

### **Our People**

#### **Havering Employees**

Our workforce will reflect the diversity of the community we serve and be highly motivated, skilled, engaged, and encouraged to demonstrate creativity and innovation. They will take ownership of their personal development and 'live' our ICARE values and behaviours. They will work collaboratively and inclusively with their peers, sharing the common aim of delivering positive outcomes for Havering residents and taking personal responsibility for working towards becoming a carbon-neutral organisation.

#### **Havering Managers**

All levels of management will reflect the diversity of the community we serve. They will demonstrate inspirational leadership by listening to their teams, leading with compassion, empowering our people to achieve their full potential, and working with their peers as one team, sharing our ICARE values and vision to achieve positive outcomes for Havering residents. They will hold regular one-on-one performance development and career discussions with their team members.

#### **Havering Senior Leaders**

Our senior leaders will set the strategic direction for the Council, translate strategy into actions, and hold themselves and others accountable. They will be visible, capable, positive, confident, and highly motivated. They will operate collaboratively, breaking down all organisational silos and removing barriers to greater partnership working. They will be inspirational, inclusive, and authentic, show compassion, motivate and develop others, make decisions based on evidence, and behave consistently in line with our ICARE values and commit to the Choose Havering Pledge.

### **Organisational Enablers**

The Human Resources and Organisational Development team will operate as a strategic business partner, proactively advising, coaching, mentoring and empowering managers to be great people leaders. Employment policies, procedures, and interventions will be simple, clear, and business-focused to enable the organisation to attract, retain, and develop high-performing employees.

## **The Way We Work**

We will identify, adapt to, and use technology and digital solutions, reduce reliance on paper, and rationalise our use of office accommodation. Innovative solutions will transform the experience of our residents, customers, and workforce alike. The way we work will also support an improved work-life balance.

## **Operating Model**

Our operating model will make the best use of our people, enable the organisational vision, reduce costs, ensure there is clarity of roles and responsibilities, support innovation, and improve flexibility. We will enable the delivery of services through a flexible, streamlined, and place-based approach, which will be closer and more responsive to our communities, businesses, and partners.

## **How we will get there**

To provide a clear framework for prioritising our actions, we have developed five strategic people themes that are future-focused and underpinned by a strategic action plan. Each theme board, programme, project, or directorate team will develop their own workforce action plans to deliver the Corporate Workforce Strategy.

Year 1 & 2 of the Workforce Strategy focused on Strengthen and Build, as we move forward each theme will now outline strategic actions across two further time horizons:

Year 3: Continue to Strengthen our workforce and core processes (getting the basics brilliant) by focusing on Foundation and Initial Implementation

Year 4: Continue to Build on that foundation (building the workforce of the future) by focusing on Implementation, Monitoring, and Continuous Improvement

In Year 5, we will focus on consolidating and reviewing the actions from Years 3 and 4, and planning for future Corporate Workforce Strategies in collaboration with the Corporate Plan.

## **Our five strategic people themes are:**

Organisational design, culture, values, and behaviours

Leading our workforce

Developing our workforce

Treating our workforce fairly with kindness and respect

Supporting our workforce

A summary of our Corporate Workforce Strategy is on pages 12 & 13, providing a high-level overview of the themes, our overall ambition, and the main areas of focus.

## **Ownership, Monitoring, and Review**

The Council operates in a matrix structure, with work being undertaken within themes, programmes, projects, and directorate teams. Each theme, programme, project, or directorate team needs to consider its own people requirements for the coming two years. Where necessary, teams need to develop tailored workforce action plans based on the five strategic people themes. Progress against these plans will be monitored regularly, and feedback will be provided to teams through normal communication and engagement channels, such as theme, programme, project, and directorate team meetings, catch-ups, or 'away-days'. Individual PDR objectives should be aligned with relevant theme, programme, project, and directorate workforce action plans.

This strategy will be reviewed annually or sooner if the organisational direction and priorities significantly change, and it is deemed no longer fit for purpose.

Workforce

## Our Corporate Workforce Strategy on a page

This is a very high-level overview of the themes, our overall ambition and the main areas of focus:

Theme	Our ambition	Areas of focus
Our organisational design, culture, values and behaviours	<p><b>Our people Choose Havering and carry out their roles in line with the organisation's values and behaviours.</b></p> <p>Everyone is confident to give feedback on both positive and negative behaviours.</p> <p>Our culture is one of inclusion, collaboration, innovation and creativity, where our people are curious and take personal responsibility to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>To become a learning organisation with innovation at its heart.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch and fully embed the organisational ICARE values and behaviours</li> <li>• Refresh our 'Ways of Working'</li> <li>• Review of our 'Organisation Change' design principles</li> <li>• Design a Talent Management Strategy</li> </ul>
Leading our workforce	<p><b>We have forward thinking, inspirational, capable and effective leaders and managers at all levels.</b></p> <p>Decisions are made as close to the service user as possible.</p> <p>High performing teams have the authority they need to make the right decisions, quickly.</p> <p>We plan for the future, and we do it well.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully embed Mentoring Programme</li> <li>• Launch and fully embed PDR framework 2025/2026</li> <li>• Launch and fully embed Corporate Mandatory Training</li> <li>• Design Corporate Workforce Strategy 2027-2030</li> <li>• Develop our information systems and workforce data through the design and implementation of the 'Digital Strategy'</li> </ul>
Developing our workforce	<p><b>Our people have the skills and capabilities needed to perform their roles and build on their potential.</b></p> <p>Everyone takes ownership of their personal development.</p> <p>We have career and development pathways for everyone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design, develop and launch Career Pathways</li> <li>• Launch Workforce/Succession Planning Framework</li> <li>• Increase apprenticeship opportunities (Including Care Leaver Apprenticeships)</li> <li>• Improve digital inclusion through the design and implementation of the 'Digital Strategy'</li> </ul>
Treating our workforce fairly with kindness and respect	<p><b>We celebrate diversity and our workforce is representative of Havering's communities.</b></p> <p>We lead an anti-discrimination, anti-racist organisation, committed to stand together to tackle harassment and abuse in the workplace.</p> <p>Our people feel free to speak up and are comfortable bringing their 'whole self' to work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design, develop and embed the EDI workforce plan. including reporting requirements on Diversity Pay Gap</li> <li>• Design, develop and embed the Total Reward Strategy (including remuneration, benefits, job evaluation,</li> </ul>

	Everyone has equality of access to opportunities, progression and development.	contracts and collective agreement review) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with employee relations legal and risk management framework</li> </ul>
Supporting our workforce	<p><b>Our people are safe, healthy and well in their mental and physical wellbeing.</b></p> <p><b>We value our people, provide appropriate support and recognise their contribution.</b></p> <p><b>We listen to our people and treat them well and equitably, whatever their role or where they work.</b></p> <p><b>Our people are proud to work here.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop HR Policies and Processes in-line with Employment Rights Bill and significant changes to legislation 2025/26 and beyond</li> <li>• Implementation of new Occupational Health and EAP provider and ongoing workplace Wellbeing solutions</li> <li>• HR&amp;OD transformation</li> </ul>

## Themed Strategic Action Plans

The following provides more detail about the actions and planned delivery under each theme and should be used as a basis for designing local plans.

Note:

There will be dependencies upon additional budget/resources being made available to deliver the actions below, there is no current Corporate Workforce Strategy budget investment for 2025/26.

Theme 1 Our organisational design, culture, values and behaviours	
We will	
<p><b>Year 3: Foundation and Initial Implementation</b></p> <p><b>Launch and fully embed the Organisational ICARE Values and Behaviours</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an internal communication strategy to launch the values, including email campaigns, and intranet resources.</li> <li>• Create an ICARE ambassador program to identify and train champions within each service area.</li> <li>• Incorporate ICARE values into On-boarding processes.</li> <li>• Update performance review frameworks to align with ICARE behaviours.</li> <li>• Introduce recognition programs to reward employees demonstrating ICARE values.</li> </ul> <p><b>Refresh our 'Ways of Working'</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refresh current policy and guidance against industry best practices for hybrid, remote, and in-office working models.</li> <li>• Launch refreshed 'Ways of Working' policy and guidance.</li> <li>• Refresh staff working style profiling</li> </ul> <p><b>Review of our 'Organisation Change' Design Principles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review our current Organisational Change Design Principles and identify gaps or outdated practices.</li> <li>• Draft updated Organisational Change Design Principles.</li> <li>• Test these principles on small-scale, on-going change initiatives to evaluate effectiveness.</li> </ul> <p><b>Design a Talent Management Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a Talent audit to identify key skills, competencies, and gaps within the workforce.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Year 4: Implementation, Monitoring, and Continuous Improvement</b></p> <p><b>ICARE Values and Behaviours Culture:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to embed ICARE values into all organisational processes, including recruitment, promotions, and decision-making.</li> <li>• Extend ICARE ambassador program to additional service areas to ensure full coverage.</li> <li>• Regularly assess the impact of ICARE values on employee engagement and organisational culture (via pulse surveys and focus groups).</li> <li>• Introduce an annual ICARE awards program to celebrate employees who exemplify the values.</li> </ul> <p><b>Embed our 'Ways of Working'</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to provide training and resources to help employees adapt to the changes.</li> <li>• Adjust policies as needed to respond to evolving needs (e.g., technology upgrades or changes in work trends).</li> </ul> <p><b>Launch of our 'Organisation Change' Design Principles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide change management training for leaders and project managers.</li> <li>• Monitor the application of the principles in organisational programmes and projects.</li> <li>• Establish a feedback loop with managers and staff to refine the principles on an ongoing basis.</li> </ul> <p><b>Embed a Talent Management Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refresh the Talent Management Strategy based on feedback from Year 3.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmark against industry talent management strategies.</li> <li>• Develop the framework for the Talent Management strategy, covering recruitment, development, retention, and succession.</li> <li>• Present the draft to leadership for feedback and revisions.</li> <li>• Launch the Council Talent Management Strategy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate the strategy.</li> <li>• Regularly review the effectiveness of the strategy through metrics like retention rates, internal promotions, and employee feedback.</li> <li>• Adjust the strategy as necessary to align with evolving organisational needs.</li> </ul>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p><b>Key Success Factors</b></p> <p><b>Leadership Buy-In:</b> Senior leaders are actively accountable in all initiatives to drive alignment and accountability.</p> <p><b>Clear Communication:</b> Maintain consistent and transparent communication with employees throughout the process to build ongoing engagement.</p> <p><b>Feedback and Flexibility:</b> Regularly collect feedback and adapt plans based on the needs of employees and the organisation.</p>	<p><b>Measures of Impact</b></p> <p><b>ICARE Values and Behaviours:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Launch Values:</b> Communicate and train ambassadors.</li> <li>• <b>Onboarding:</b> Include ICARE values in onboarding.</li> <li>• <b>Performance Reviews:</b> Align reviews with ICARE behaviours.</li> <li>• <b>Recognition:</b> Reward employees who demonstrate ICARE values.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ways of Working:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Refresh Policies:</b> Update policies for different working models.</li> <li>• <b>Launch Guidance:</b> Implement new 'Ways of Working' policy.</li> <li>• <b>Profile Staff:</b> Update staff working style profiles.</li> </ul> <p><b>Organisation Change Design Principles:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review Principles:</b> Identify gaps in current principles.</li> <li>• <b>Update Principles:</b> Draft and test new principles.</li> </ul> <p><b>Talent Management Strategy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Talent Audit:</b> Identify key skills and gaps.</li> <li>• <b>Benchmark:</b> Compare with industry strategies.</li> <li>• <b>Develop Framework:</b> Create a talent strategy.</li> <li>• <b>Launch Strategy:</b> Present and implement the strategy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Implementation and Monitoring:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Embed ICARE Values:</b> Continue embedding values and assess impact.</li> </ul>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

- **Ways of Working:** Provide training and adjust policies.
- **Organisation Change:** Train leaders and refine principles.
- **Talent Management:** Refresh and communicate the strategy, review effectiveness, and adjust as needed.

<b>We will</b>	
<p><b>Year 3: Foundation and Initial Implementation</b></p> <p><b>Embed our Mentoring Programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify organisational goals for the mentoring program (e.g., leadership development, knowledge sharing, diversity and inclusion).</li> <li>Provide training for mentors on effective mentoring practices.</li> <li>Collect feedback from the pilot participants.</li> <li>Use lessons learned to refine the program design.</li> <li>Develop a communication plan to encourage broader participation in Year 4.</li> </ul> <p><b>Launch and fully embed PDR Framework 2025/2026</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the existing PDR (Performance Development and Review) framework to identify gaps and areas for improvement.</li> <li>Align the new framework with organisational goals, values, and behaviours.</li> <li>Provide training for managers and staff on how to use the framework effectively.</li> </ul> <p><b>Launch and fully embed Corporate Mandatory Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess existing corporate training programs and identify gaps.</li> <li>Partner with internal subject matter experts or external providers to create engaging and impactful training content.</li> <li>Launch corporate mandatory training organisation-wide, ensuring all employees are enrolled in the relevant modules.</li> <li>Set compliance deadlines for completion.</li> </ul> <p><b>Draft/design a new Corporate Workforce Strategy 2027-2030</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a comprehensive workforce audit (CIPD) to understand current skills, gaps, and future needs.</li> <li>Analyse and research industry trends and projections to inform long-term workforce requirements.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Year 4: Implementation, Monitoring, and Continuous Improvement</b></p> <p><b>Continuously improve our Mentoring Programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the mentoring program organisation-wide.</li> <li>Actively promote the program and provide resources for mentors and mentees.</li> <li>Gather feedback and make adjustments as needed for continuous improvement.</li> <li>Introduce a recognition program for successful mentoring relationships.</li> </ul> <p><b>Launch and fully embed PDR Framework 2026/2027</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully implement any revisions to the PDR framework across all teams.</li> <li>Provide ongoing training for managers and staff on using the framework effectively.</li> <li>Make iterative improvements to ensure alignment with organisational needs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Continuously improve our Corporate Mandatory Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track completion rates for mandatory training and follow up with employees who have not completed their modules.</li> <li>Address any technical or accessibility issues to improve participation.</li> <li>Regularly assess the effectiveness of the training (e.g., through quizzes, feedback forms).</li> <li>Update training content to reflect changes in regulations or organisational priorities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Design a new Corporate Workforce Strategy 2027-2030</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise the strategy design based on feedback from Year 3.</li> <li>Engage key stakeholders to define priorities for the strategy (e.g., reskilling, diversity, technology adoption).</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start to develop a new strategy with clear goals, timelines, and accountability mechanisms.</li> </ul> <p><b>Evolution of HR Information Systems and Workforce Data through the Digital Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a HR audit of existing information systems and workforce data processes.</li> <li>Identify HR gaps, inefficiencies, and opportunities for improvement.</li> <li>Design the HR Digital Roadmap, outlining phases of implementation.</li> <li>Prioritise quick wins (e.g., automation of manual processes, data visualisation tools).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Continuous Improvement of HR Information Systems and Workforce Data through the Digital Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roll out initial improvements to information systems, focusing on quick wins identified in Year 3.</li> <li>Evaluate the impact of implemented changes on data accuracy, accessibility, and decision-making.</li> <li>Begin planning for the next phase of the HR Digital Journey (e.g., advanced analytics, AI integration).</li> </ul>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p><b>Key Success Factors</b></p> <p><b>Engagement and Communication:</b> Regularly update employees on progress and ensure they understand the value of these initiatives.</p> <p><b>Leadership Involvement:</b> Buy-in and active participation from leadership to drive adoption.</p> <p><b>Data-Driven Decision-Making:</b> Use metrics and feedback to measure success and guide adjustments.</p> <p><b>Flexibility:</b> Be prepared to adapt plans based on changing organisational needs or external factors.</p>	<p><b>Measures of Impact</b></p> <p><b>Mentoring Programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Goals:</b> Set goals for the mentoring program.</li> <li><b>Training:</b> Train mentors on effective practices.</li> <li><b>Feedback:</b> Collect feedback from pilot participants.</li> <li><b>Refine:</b> Use feedback to improve the program.</li> <li><b>Communication:</b> Develop a plan to encourage participation.</li> </ul> <p><b>PDR Framework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Review:</b> Identify gaps in the existing PDR framework.</li> <li><b>Align:</b> Ensure the new framework aligns with organisational goals.</li> <li><b>Training:</b> Train managers and staff on the new framework.</li> </ul> <p><b>Corporate Mandatory Training:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Assess:</b> Identify gaps in existing training programs.</li> <li><b>Create Content:</b> Partner with experts to develop training content.</li> <li><b>Launch:</b> Implement mandatory training organisation-wide.</li> <li><b>Compliance:</b> Set deadlines for training completion.</li> </ul> <p><b>Corporate Workforce Strategy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Audit:</b> Conduct a workforce audit to identify skills and gaps.</li> </ul>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

- **Research:** Analyse industry trends to inform long-term needs.
- **Draft Strategy:** Develop a draft workforce strategy with clear goals.

#### **HR Information Systems:**

- **Audit:** Review existing HR information systems.
- **Identify Gaps:** Find inefficiencies and opportunities for improvement.
- **Design Roadmap:** Create a digital roadmap with phases of implementation.
- **Quick Wins:** Prioritise quick improvements like automation.

#### **Implementation and Monitoring:**

- **Mentoring Programme:** Expand and promote the mentoring program.
- **PDR Framework:** Fully implement the PDR framework and provide ongoing training.
- **Corporate Training:** Track completion rates and update training content.
- **Workforce Strategy:** Finalise the strategy and engage stakeholders.
- **HR Systems:** Roll out improvements and plan for advanced analytics.

<b>We will</b>	
<p><b>Year 3: Foundation and Initial Implementation</b></p> <p><b>Design and develop Career Pathways</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct focus groups and surveys to understand employees' career aspirations and current challenges.</li> <li>• Benchmark career pathway frameworks from similar organisations or industries.</li> <li>• Collaborate with leadership to identify key roles, progression opportunities, and critical competencies.</li> <li>• Map out career pathways for each service or job family, defining progression routes, required skills, and training opportunities.</li> <li>• Align career pathways with organisational goals and values.</li> <li>• Develop resources such as career maps, self-assessment tools, and guides for employees and managers.</li> <li>• Pilot the framework with a select group of employees and gather feedback to refine the approach.</li> </ul> <p><b>Design and develop Workforce/Succession Planning Framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify critical roles, skills gaps, and areas with high turnover or retirement risk.</li> <li>• Collaborate with leadership to define a framework for workforce and succession planning, including criteria for identifying high-potential employees.</li> <li>• Outline processes for talent reviews, development plans, and succession pipelines.</li> <li>• Pilot the framework with a focus on critical roles and leadership positions.</li> <li>• Provide training for managers on how to use the framework effectively.</li> </ul> <p><b>Increase apprenticeship opportunities (Including Care Leaver Apprenticeships)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review existing apprenticeship programs and identify gaps or areas for expansion.</li> <li>• Engage with external providers, educational institutions, and government initiatives to explore partnership opportunities.</li> <li>• Set goals for apprenticeship placements, focusing on areas with skill shortages or high growth potential.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Year 4: Implementation, Monitoring, and Continuous Improvement</b></p> <p><b>Launch Career Pathways</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch the Career Pathways Framework across the organisation.</li> <li>• Provide training for managers on how to use career pathways to support employee development.</li> <li>• Gather feedback from employees and managers on the usability and effectiveness of the framework.</li> <li>• Adjust pathways as needed to reflect changes in organisational priorities or roles.</li> <li>• Highlight success stories to encourage participation and engagement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Launch Workforce/Succession Planning Framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully implement the framework.</li> <li>• Track metrics such as internal promotions, retention rates, and leadership pipeline strength.</li> <li>• Expand the framework to include emerging roles and skills as needed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Continue to increase and promote apprenticeship opportunities (Including Care Leaver Apprenticeships)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on the success of Year 3 by increasing the number of apprenticeship placements.</li> <li>• Track the progress and satisfaction of current apprentices, using their feedback to improve program design.</li> <li>• Promote the success of the apprenticeship programs internally and externally to attract more candidates.</li> <li>• Work with managers to create pathways for apprentices to transition into permanent roles.</li> </ul> <p><b>Improve Digital Inclusion through the implementation of the Digital Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll out digital skills training programs to all employees, starting with teams or individuals identified as needing the most support.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the apprenticeship opportunities through job fairs, community events, and partnerships with schools/colleges.</li> </ul> <p><b>Support the improvement of Digital Inclusion through the design and implementation of the Digital Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify barriers to digital inclusion (e.g., lack of training, outdated tools, accessibility issues).</li> <li>Develop partnerships with IT and external providers to support digital inclusion initiatives.</li> <li>Create programs to improve digital skills, such as workshops, e-learning modules, or mentoring.</li> <li>Develop policies to ensure equitable access to digital tools and resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuously update training content to reflect new tools or systems introduced through the digital strategy.</li> <li>Address any remaining barriers to digital inclusion, such as accessibility for employees with disabilities.</li> </ul>
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<p><b>Key Success Factors</b></p> <p><b>Stakeholder Engagement:</b> Involve employees, managers, and leadership in the design and implementation of these initiatives to ensure alignment and buy-in.</p> <p><b>Measurable Goals:</b> Establish clear, measurable objectives for each focus area, and track progress regularly.</p> <p><b>Continuous Feedback:</b> Create feedback loops to ensure initiatives remain relevant and effective.</p> <p><b>Communication:</b> Regularly communicate progress, celebrate successes, and share updates to maintain momentum.</p>	<p><b>Measures of Impact</b></p> <p><b>Career Pathways:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Understand aspirations:</b> Conduct focus groups and surveys to learn about employees' career goals and challenges.</li> <li><b>Benchmark:</b> Compare career pathways with similar organizations.</li> <li><b>Identify key roles:</b> Work with leadership to map out key roles and progression opportunities.</li> <li><b>Create resources:</b> Develop career maps and guides for employees and managers.</li> <li><b>Pilot and refine:</b> Test the framework with a small group and gather feedback.</li> </ul> <p><b>Workforce/Succession Planning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Identify critical roles:</b> Find roles with high turnover or retirement risk.</li> <li><b>Define framework:</b> Collaborate with leadership to create a Workforce/Succession Planning Framework.</li> <li><b>Pilot and train:</b> Test the framework and provide training for managers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Increase apprenticeship opportunities (Including Care Leaver Apprenticeships):</b></p>
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

- **Review Programs:** Assess current apprenticeship programs and identify gaps.
- **Engage partners:** Work with external providers and educational institutions.
- **Set goals:** Establish targets for apprenticeship placements.
- **Promote opportunities:** Advertise apprenticeships through job fairs and community events.

**Digital Inclusion:**

- **Identify barriers:** Find obstacles to digital inclusion.
- **Develop partnerships:** Collaborate with IT and external providers.
- **Create programs:** Offer digital skills training and ensure equitable access to tools.

**Implementation and monitoring:**

- **Launch Career Pathways:** Roll out the Career Pathways Framework and gather feedback.
- **Implement Succession Planning:** Fully implement the Workforce/Succession Planning Framework and track metrics.
- **Increase apprenticeships:** Expand apprenticeship placements and track progress.
- **Improve Digital Inclusion:** Roll out digital skills training and address remaining barriers.

<b>We will</b>	
<p><b>Year 3: Foundation and Initial Implementation</b></p> <p><b>Design and develop the EDI Workforce Plan (including Reporting Requirements on Diversity Pay Gap)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct an organisational audit to assess the current state of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in the workforce.</li> <li>• Identify gaps in representation, pay equity, and inclusion practices.</li> <li>• Define measurable goals for the EDI Workforce Plan, including specific targets for diversity pay gap reporting</li> <li>• Establish a framework for collecting and analysing diversity pay gap data.</li> <li>• Pilot EDI initiatives.</li> <li>• Develop training programs for managers and employees to promote inclusive practices.</li> <li>• Collect feedback and refine the plan based on pilot results.</li> </ul> <p><b>Design and develop the Total Reward Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a comprehensive review of current remuneration, benefits, job evaluation, and contracts.</li> <li>• Benchmark against industry standards to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement.</li> <li>• Collaborate with leadership to define the objectives of the strategy,</li> <li>• Include considerations for collective agreement reviews and alignment with organisational values.</li> <li>• Design the strategy, incorporating feedback.</li> </ul> <p><b>Design and develop an Employee Relations Legal Compliance and Risk Management Framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review current employee relations policies and practices to identify gaps in legal compliance and risk management.</li> <li>• Collaborate with legal to design a framework for managing employee relations risks.</li> <li>• Include processes for identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks, as well as mechanisms for monitoring compliance.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Year 4: Implementation, Monitoring, and Continuous Improvement</b></p> <p><b>Embed the EDI Workforce Plan (including Reporting Requirements on Diversity Pay Gap)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch the EDI workforce plan organisation-wide.</li> <li>• Use metrics and feedback to assess the impact of the EDI initiatives on workforce diversity and inclusion.</li> <li>• Adjust the plan as needed to address emerging challenges or opportunities.</li> <li>• Publish annual diversity pay gap reports to demonstrate transparency and progress.</li> </ul> <p><b>Embed the Total Reward Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully implement the strategy.</li> <li>• Use feedback from employees and managers to make iterative improvements.</li> <li>• Conduct periodic reviews to ensure the strategy remains competitive and aligned with organisational priorities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Embed Employee Relations Legal Compliance and Risk Management Framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish clear processes for reporting and addressing employee relations issues.</li> <li>• Update policies and training programs to reflect changes in regulations or organisational needs.</li> <li>• Conduct annual compliance audits to ensure the framework remains effective and up-to-date.</li> </ul>

- Provide training for managers and HR staff on legal compliance and risk management best practices.

### Key Success Factors

**Stakeholder Engagement:** Involve employees, managers, and leadership in the design and implementation of these initiatives to ensure alignment and buy-in.

**Data-Driven Decision-Making:** Use metrics and analytics to measure progress and guide adjustments.

**Clear Communication:** Maintain transparency by regularly updating employees on progress and celebrating successes.

**Continuous Improvement:** Be prepared to adapt plans based on feedback, changing regulations, or evolving organisational needs.

### Measures of Impact

#### EDI Workforce Plan:

- **Audit:** Assess the current state of EDI.
- **Identify Gaps:** Find gaps in representation and pay equity.
- **Set Goals:** Define measurable goals and create a framework for diversity pay gap data.
- **Pilot Initiatives:** Test EDI initiatives and provide training.
- **Refine Plan:** Collect feedback and make improvements.

#### Total Reward Strategy:

- **Review:** Examine current pay, benefits, and contracts.
- **Benchmark:** Compare with industry standards.
- **Set Objectives:** Define goals and design the strategy with leadership.
- **Incorporate Feedback:** Use feedback to refine the strategy.

#### Employee Relations Compliance:

- **Review Policies:** Check current policies for legal compliance.
- **Design Framework:** Create a risk management framework with legal input.
- **Training:** Train staff on compliance and risk management.

#### Implementation and Monitoring:

- **Launch EDI Plan:** Implement the EDI plan and measure its impact.
- **Implement Total Reward Strategy:** Roll out the strategy and use feedback for improvements.
- **Compliance Framework:** Set up processes for reporting issues and conduct annual audits.

<b>We will</b>	
<p><b>Year 3: Foundation and Initial Implementation</b></p> <p><b>Policy and Process development in line with Employment Rights Bill and significant changes to legislation (2025/26 and beyond)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a comprehensive review of the Employment Rights Bill and other significant legislative changes expected in 2025/26.</li> <li>• Identify gaps in current policies and processes that need to be addressed to ensure compliance.</li> <li>• Prioritise areas such as employee rights, working conditions, and dispute resolution mechanisms.</li> <li>• Engage leadership and managers on the updated policies</li> <li>• Develop and deliver training programs</li> </ul> <p><b>Occupational Health and EAP Provider Change/Implementation and ongoing Workplace Wellbeing Solutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct employee surveys to identify gaps in workplace wellbeing solutions.</li> <li>• Transition to the new Occupational Health &amp; EAP provider, ensuring minimal disruption to staff.</li> <li>• Communicate the changes to staff and provide resources to help them access the new services.</li> </ul> <p><b>HR &amp; OD Transformation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a comprehensive review of current HR &amp; OD practices (CIPD).</li> <li>• Prioritise initiatives such as process automation, leadership development, and culture change.</li> <li>• Pilot key initiatives, such as new HR technologies or leadership development programs.</li> <li>• Gather feedback and refine the initiatives based on pilot results.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Year 4: Implementation, Monitoring, and Continuous Improvement</b></p> <p><b>Policy and Process development in line with Employment Rights Bill and significant changes to legislation (2025/26 and beyond)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll out updated policies and processes council-wide.</li> <li>• Ensure all staff are informed of the changes through clear communication and training sessions.</li> <li>• Establish mechanisms to monitor compliance with the new policies and processes.</li> <li>• Stay updated on any additional legislative changes and adjust policies as needed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Occupational Health and EAP Provider Change/Implementation and ongoing Workplace Wellbeing Solutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly review the performance of the new Occupational Health and EAP provider.</li> <li>• Collect employee feedback to assess satisfaction and identify areas for improvement.</li> <li>• Introduce additional workplace wellbeing initiatives.</li> <li>• Track the impact of these initiatives on staff engagement and productivity.</li> </ul> <p><b>HR &amp; OD Transformation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully implement the HR &amp; OD transformation initiatives across the Council.</li> <li>• Provide training and resources to help staff and managers adapt to the changes.</li> <li>• Continuously refine initiatives based on feedback and changing organisational needs.</li> <li>• Highlight success stories to build momentum and encourage buy-in from employees.</li> </ul>

### Key Success Factors

**Stakeholder Engagement:** Involve employees, managers, and leadership in the design and implementation of these initiatives to ensure alignment and buy-in.

**Clear Communication:** Maintain transparency by regularly updating employees on progress and celebrating successes.

**Data-Driven Decision-Making:** Use metrics and analytics to measure progress and guide adjustments.

**Continuous Improvement:** Be prepared to adapt plans based on feedback, changing regulations, or evolving organisational needs.

### Measures of Impact

#### Policy and Process Development:

- Compliance: Track the percentage of updated policies and processes.
- Training: Measure the number of employees trained on new policies.

Occupational Health and EAP Provider

#### Change:

- Satisfaction: Survey employee satisfaction with the new provider.
- Usage: Monitor how often employees use the new services.

#### HR & OD Transformation:

- Efficiency: Measure time and resource savings from improved processes.
- Leadership: Track participation in leadership development programs.

#### Workplace Wellbeing Solutions:

- Impact: Assess the effect of wellbeing initiatives on engagement and productivity.
- Provider Performance: Review the new provider's performance regularly.

#### Continuous Improvement:

- Feedback: Track the number of implemented suggestions and their impact.
- Success Stories: Share positive outcomes to encourage employee buy-in.



CABINET	<i>13<sup>th</sup> August 2025</i>
<b>Subject Heading:</b>	Corporate Plan Annual Performance Report 2024/25
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Ray Morgon
<b>ELT Lead:</b>	Kathy Freeman, Strategic Director, Resources
<b>Report Author and contact details:</b>	<a href="mailto:Jodie.Gutteridge@havering.gov.uk">Jodie.Gutteridge@havering.gov.uk</a>
<b>Policy context:</b>	The annual performance report outlines the key activities that have been undertaken throughout the financial year 2024/25.
<b>Financial summary:</b>	There are no specific financial issues arising from the approval of the Annual report. Financial implications of specific projects identified within the annual report have been assessed on an individual basis as part of the relevant decision-making process.
<b>Is this a Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>When should this matter be reviewed?</b>	
<b>Reviewing OSC:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Board
<b>The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives</b>	
Supporting our residents to stay safe and well	x
A great place to live, work and enjoy	x
Enabling a resident-focused and resilient council	x

## **SUMMARY**

This is the Council's third Annual Performance Report that enables a transparent review and scrutiny of the Council's overall performance for its residents. It provides an overview of the outcomes of priorities and projects outlined in the corporate plan. It is essential that the Council monitors its performance regularly to ensure that it is meeting its strategic objectives and providing value for money.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is asked to:

1. Note the 2024/25 annual performance report
2. Agree that the report will be published on the council's website

## **REPORT DETAIL**

- 1.1 This annual report is based on the version of the corporate plan that we were working towards throughout 2024/25, which was approved at Cabinet on the 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024. This version has now been reviewed and updated with new performance metrics which was seen and approved on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025. This review looked at the metrics that had been completed and identified new metrics to achieve the aims and objectives of the corporate plan, whilst also ensuring the Council's Financial Position was taken into account.
- 1.2 The annual report has been written on behalf of the Leader of the council and the Chief Executive.
- 1.3 The annual report has highlighted 'a year in figures' which are a selection of key indicators, some are not specifically included in the Corporate Plan, but are indicators that we thought residents and members would take an interest in.
- 1.4 The main body of the annual report is once again split into three areas, in line with the corporate plan, 'People – Things that are important to us', 'Place – A great place to live, work and enjoy' and 'Resources – A well run council that delivers for people and place'.
- 1.5 Within each section we have highlighted the end of year performance for each of the numerical indicators outlined in the corporate plan performance report. As outlined in the Q4 Corporate Plan Performance Report at the end of 2024/25 22

### **Cabinet, 13<sup>th</sup> August 2025**

(53.7%) of the indicators had a RAG status of Green, 4 (9.7%) had a RAG status of Amber and the final 15 (36.6%) had a RAG Status of Red. To see the full breakdown of the most recent Power BI report, please visit the council's [data intelligence hub](#).

1.6 Alongside the quantitative data outlined above, we have also included a number of narrative updates in the annual report. These draw out some of the work which is mentioned in the corporate plan but also some other areas which officers across the council have undertaken. For the full end of year outline for all the narrative only indicators in the corporate plan, please visit the 'Narrative only' section of the power BI report on the council's [data intelligence hub](#).

1.7 Finally each section of the annual report also includes the key challenges we are looking to face in the 2025/26 financial year.

## **REASONS AND OPTIONS**

### **Reasons for the decision:**

In line with being transparent, we should report against our corporate plan to ensure that services are: 'responsive to the needs of citizens, of high quality and cost-effective, and fair and accessible to all who need them'.

There is also statutory guidance on the Council's 'best value duty' (May 2024 which sets out that local authorities when carry out their functions in compliance with the Best Value Duty, should adhere to the guiding principles of local accountability and continuous improvement, along with being open to challenge and support.

### **Other options considered:**

If we did not report against our corporate plan we cannot tell positive progress from problematic progress. By highlighting positive progress we can reward it and build on it: and problematic progress can be corrected and learnt from.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Financial implications and risks:**

This report is asking cabinet to note the 2024/25 annual performance report and agree that the report will be published on the Council's website. As such there are no immediate financial implications arising directly from this report. It is expected that the work identified within the report would have been delivered in so far as possible within approved budgets with any under/over spends associated with delivering monitoring processes throughout the course of the financial year.

**Legal implications and risks:**

There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report. The council has a “best value duty” under section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 (as amended), to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness”. Reporting on the council’s performance should promote efficiency and contribute to the way in which the best value duty can be fulfilled.

**Human Resources implications and risks:**

There are no major direct HR implications or risks from this report.

**Equalities 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.

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.

Equality impact assessments are systematically carried out for any services, projects or other schemes that have the potential to impact on communities and / or staff on the grounds of particular protected characteristics or socio-economic disadvantage.

Equalities assessment is normally required for significant impacts upon ANY of the “protected characteristics”. As this is a report that pulls together the work that has already being completed, it is assumed that any assessment needed for each of the projects would have already been undertaken.

**Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks**

There are no major direct Health and wellbeing implications or risks arising from this report.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

The Council has committed to taking action towards the organisation and the borough becoming carbon neutral by 2040.

According to figures from Google, one internet search produces 0.2g of CO<sub>2</sub>. The average website produces as much as 1.76g of CO<sub>2</sub> per page view. An average website with 10,000 page views per month could generate 211kg of CO<sub>2</sub> per year, which is the same as would be absorbed by 105 trees in a year. It is not envisioned that the Annual report on the council's website will reach 10,000 views per year, so by approving and publishing the annual report it is unlikely to make a significant impact on the climate.

No detrimental climate change implications or risks are expected as a direct outcome of this plan.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1: Havering Corporate Plan Annual report 2024/25

This page is intentionally left blank

# Havering

## Annual Corporate Plan Performance Report 2024

Page 129

Photo credit: Ross Marshall



**Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH



## Introduction from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Ray Morgon

This is our third annual report as an administration and in it we are looking back and reporting on the outturn of our corporate plan and showcasing some of the great work the council has done throughout the year in order to achieve our vision of **'The Havering you want to be part of'**.

Officers across the council have worked hard to ensure that services continue to run effectively, despite the increased costs from delivering social care and homeless services.

Although we continue to seek further savings and efficiencies over the year, and whilst we are receiving a slight increase from the Government through the finance settlement, the Council is still seeing a gap in its budget. This includes £34 million from last year. For the second year running we have had to apply for an additional £88million capitalisation order to help us cover the worst-case scenarios, including the rise in costs for social care and homelessness in the borough.

Havering continues to be the forgotten borough, with its core grant remaining as one of the lowest in London, and funding for our most valued services continually being cut, despite the borough's fast changing population. We have been lobbying for a fairer deal on government funding. The formula means that Havering Council taxpayers are having to pay more, and we opened a petition in November to ask our residents to help the council fight for its fair share of funding. As at the end of March 2025, we had received 4,158 responses on the petition. There is still time to show your support as the closing date for the petition has now been extended. Once closed I will then be presenting this to Downing Street myself.



Despite all the lobbying and fighting to get a better deal, Havering Council's Cabinet passed the Council's budget proposals in February 2025, which included a proposed increase of 4.99 per cent in council tax. This followed a consultation with residents, where 600 responses were received. We also asked children's views on a number of other topics including an Active Travel Consultation (220 responses), Library closures (1,214 responses) and we are working with Havering Youth Council to coproduce a children's version of the Happy, Healthy lives which will be available for sharing in September 2025.

As part of the budget consultation, we once again asked residents about their concerns. Clean and safe streets were two of the key issues that came out of this. Therefore, we launched our "Where We Live" campaign in October 2024, which has so far been a resounding success, working with our fantastic community and volunteer partners to help keep the borough clean, tidy and safe. We have also launched the "Keep it Local" campaign to help boost our local economy, and we once again honoured our local entrepreneurs at our annual Small Business Awards.

We have made significant strides in our climate action plan, with 30 per cent of actions completed and 48 per cent on track. Our commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2040 remains steadfast.

The new CCTV infrastructure has also been installed, and our section 92 officers are still punching above their weight. We also have one of the best waste enforcement rates in London too. Earlier this year we held a crime summit so we can reassure residents and hear from them about their concerns. Ultimately, we want to put pride back in our neighbourhoods working with our volunteers and wider community to make the borough a better place.

## We are listening to our residents

We know residents want to see many more events happening in the borough. This is why we have also worked hard in making sure that our residents can benefit from more community, and other events, in our parks and green spaces. We are also working more closely with our faith leaders and meet with the faith forum every few months.

We have had some things to celebrate as well, the Council was awarded £99,000 from the fifth phase of the Low Carbon Skills Fund, to develop a comprehensive heat decarbonisation strategy for our schools. The money will go towards assessing each school site to scope out thermal and energy improvements which in turn will reduce the carbon footprint of our schools, enhance energy efficiency all of which goes towards our commitment to reduce our boroughs emissions and meet our target of being Carbon Neutral by 2040.

We also secured £23.985 million from the Greater London Authority (GLA)'s Council Homes Acquisition Programme funding to purchase additional council homes, this goes towards addressing the need for family sized housing for our residents. The programme, designed to provide safe, secure and affordable homes within the borough will allow us to purchase 160 family sized homes by March 2026.

As part of our corporate plan and 'a great place to live, work and enjoy', we ran the 'Havering in Bloom' Competition again, where we received 60 entries, ranging from hanging baskets to communal gardens and we even received an entry for the tallest sunflower, at 142.8 inches. The six winners were awarded B&Q gift vouchers, kindly donated by K&T Heating, Mears, Equans and Marsh Services, at a ceremony in September 2024. It was lovely to see so many locals step up and do their bit to brighten the borough.

Performance monitoring is about having the information we need to help us to quickly take action if service delivery or outcomes against the **Corporate Plan** are not as expected, which is why we monitor performance on a quarterly basis and for all to see. We then summarise our performance over the year in this annual report, setting out a high-level evaluation of the key achievements of the council over the year and the contribution we have made towards our priorities, as set out in our Corporate Plan, for the financial period ending March 2025.



## Foreword from the Chief Executive Andrew Blake-Herbert

I enjoy looking back over the last year to see what we have achieved, despite our financial challenges, and see how we have continued to provide services to all our residents. We celebrated our 60th anniversary in April, formally becoming part of London in 1965 following the local Government Act. Central Library was the home of an exhibition celebrating the anniversary showcasing photos of major events the borough has witnessed over the years from the opening of the ring road in 1970 to the visit from Queen Elizabeth II in 2003 and the Olympic

torch passing through Havering as part of the 2012 Olympic games. It was a great exhibition and a lovely way to look back at the borough's history.

In the Corporate Plan, which we signed off in April 2024, we identified some key metrics with a view to report back on over the year to ensure that the key projects and measures are still relevant, important and we are continuing to achieve the outcomes we set ourselves. Some of these have now changed to ensure that they are more meaningful metrics for measuring performance and provide more alignment with our key objectives and strategic priorities. The updated corporate plan was approved by cabinet on 9th April 2025 and available on the council website. These will be monitored as part of the **corporate plan performance report** over the next year.

Looking to the year ahead, we will continue to face the battle of delivering the services that matter most to our residents, within the limited budget we have, through lobbying activities. We will build upon the good work achieved throughout the last year by supporting our residents to stay safe and well, enabling a resident-focused and resilient council and ensuring Havering continues to be a great place to live, work and enjoy.

## A year in numbers



**7,331** Births



**3,113** Deaths



**Over 1,000** Residents became British citizens



**680** Marriage ceremonies and **32** civil partnership ceremonies took place



**6,869** Visits to the appointment centre



**8,649 (20%)** Free School meals provided



**465** Children in Need



**268** Children in Care



**71** Children in care living with Havering in house foster carers



**56** Children in care living with their own family and friends carers

## A year in numbers



**1,972** Households were prevented from becoming homeless against a total of **2,734** application outcomes



**95.8%** Council Tax collected



**98.8%** Business rates collected



**608** Budget Consultations received



**4,158** People have signed the Government Funding Petition



**500** Residents visited a pop up event on the Government Funding Petition



**841** Warm coats provided to the community



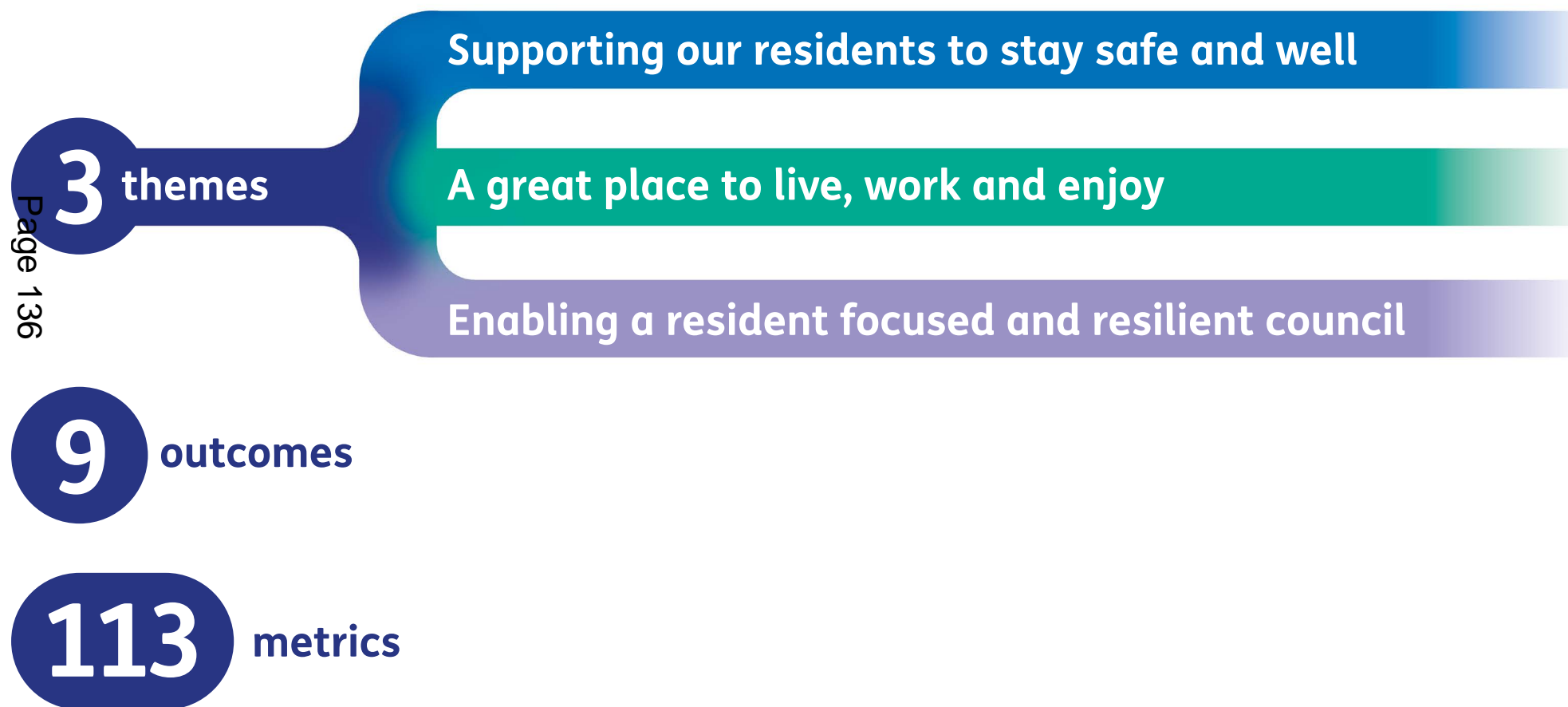
Gave out **1,600** items of pre-loved school uniforms in summer 2024

# Annual Corporate Plan Performance Report 2024/25

Our Corporate plan sets out the vision ‘**The Havering you want to be part of**’ for the organisation and the borough using strategic objectives. It details the outcomes we wish to achieve and the actions we will take to deliver them.

The Corporate Plan helps residents to hold the council to account for its performance and challenge it to improve.

## The Corporate Plan includes:



This report provides performance against each of the themes set out in the Corporate Plan and includes key activity and performance indicators.

# Performance outturn

As at the end of Q4 (31st March 2025) **113** metrics were measured. **50** of these are narrative updates, with a further **22** not having a target set. Of the remaining **40** metrics monitored within the Corporate Plan Performance Report we can see that:

- **53.7% (22)** of them have a RAG status of **Green** (above the annual target),
- **9.7% (4)** have a RAG status of **Amber** (below target, but within the variable tolerance)
- with the remaining **15 (36.6%)** below target and outside of the variable tolerance ( **Red** RAG Rated).

## Overall Scorecard – Key performance indicators by theme



A full breakdown of the outcomes of each of the metrics can be found within the body of this report as well as other activities that have occurred over the course of the last financial year.

# Supporting our residents to stay safe and well

Theme: To support residents of all ages to live socially connected, independent and healthy lives

Objective	Metric	RAG		Outcome
We will develop and deliver our integrated Starting Well Plan: <b>Happy, Healthy Lives.</b>	Percentage of children receiving a 2-2.5 year development check.		75.1%	During Q3 of 2024/25, the council identified a reduction in the coverage of children receiving a 2-2½ year review in Havering, reported by NELFT, due to a mistake by North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) in how the indicator was calculated. NELFT have made the necessary corrections to the affected data retrospectively and confirmed that the performance data for this indicator at Q4 is now accurate.  Fortnightly local Health Visiting Performance Review meetings will continue to focus on data quality, process changes, and national guidelines. NELFT has assured that they have processes to follow up with parents to increase uptake, though further work is required. We will continue to work with them to produce an action plan involving relevant local partners to improve the uptake.
	Percentage of Havering residents receiving an offer of their first preference school (Primary).		90.9%	The percentage of children receiving an offer on their first preferred primary school has slowly increased over time from 88.1% in 2019 to 90.9% for 2024 (2024-25). Whilst below our target of 92% and the England percentage, we remain slightly above the Outer London average (89.7%).  Percentage rates in London can be lower than England rates due to denser populations of schools within boroughs, whereas rural and coastal areas may have fewer schools within each catchment area, reducing the choices available to parents.
	Percentage of Havering residents receiving an offer of their first preference school (Secondary).		76.5%	The percentage of children receiving an offer on their first preferred secondary school had increased over time from 76.7% in 2019/20 to 82.2% in 2021/22 before returning to previous pre-pandemic levels of 76% for 2024/25. This remains above the Outer London average (71.1%).  As with primary school applications, percentages in London can be lower due to denser populations of schools within boroughs, whereas some rural and coastal areas can have fewer schools within each catchment area.
We will maximise the health benefits of leisure and culture for our whole community, and work with partners to improve support for residents with complex needs.	Percentage of adults with learning disabilities in paid employment.		3.9%	At the end of year outturn, performance against this indicator was positive and the target was met. The percentage of adults with learning disabilities in paid employment is 3.9%, which is better than target (3.5%). A factor in enabling us to improve performance in this area was the employment of a dedicated Supported Employment Advisor (funded by UKSPF). During the financial year there were 23 Service users in paid employment compared to 20 on the previous financial year.
We will continue to deliver "Making Safeguarding Personal" by working with individuals and those who support them to build upon strengths in their lives (Better Living and Curious Conversations).	Percentage of households prevented and relieved from becoming homeless compared to the total number of outcomes.		70%	This indicator measures the percentage of Homeless applications which have been prevented and relieved without the need for emergency accommodation.  From April 2024 to March 2025, a total of 1,972 households were prevented / relieved from becoming homeless through prevention (697) and relief (1,275) this is against a total of 2,734 application outcomes.
	Rate of Carers receiving needs assessment or review (per 100,000 of the adult population).		536.2	At the end of the financial year were above target. We assessed 1,109 carers in 2024, which is 167 more than at the same time last year (942). We continue to focus work in the teams to ensure that we are identifying carers and offering assessments. The carer's board is proving to be positive and strong, working in ways we can get carers to understand their carer's responsibilities and offer appropriate assessments and support.

# Supporting our residents to stay safe and well

Theme: We engage with individuals, families and our partners to help residents reach their full potential

Objective	Metric	RAG		Outcome
We will work with schools and partners to deliver a consistent approach to inclusion and behaviour management, through targeted interventions.	Percentage of Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments completed within 20 weeks, including exceptions.		23%	<p>Despite having experienced far greater growth in requests for assessments over a sustained period than our comparators, last year the LA was able to complete 38% of Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNAs) within the statutory timescales, getting closer to the national average of 50%. While performance improved slightly in Q1 last year, in Q2 the LA reached a point at which it no longer had sufficient Education Psychologist (EP) capacity to complete as many pieces of advice as it was agreeing new assessments each week, despite its use of locums in addition to permanent staff (thereby doubling the number of assessments the team is delivering compared to the same period in 2023). This negatively impacted the LA's ability to meet its statutory timescales across Q2 and Q3, without easy or immediate solutions, given the national shortage of EPs.</p> <p>However, work has been undertaken to establish links with new agencies providing EP assessments, enabled by additional investment in the Council's EP team, the effects of which can be seen into Q4, during which there has also been a new process introduced to ensure that for the most vulnerable pupils meeting 20 week timescales is prioritised while balancing this with no children or young people waiting an unacceptable period of time. On this latter point, the steps taken have also reduced the numbers waiting more than 30 weeks.</p>
	Rate of children excluded.		0.05	<p>This is an annual indicator with the most recent data release being the 'Suspensions and permanent exclusions in England: 2022 to 2023' published on 18 July 2024. You can view this publication <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Havering has remained lower than National and Outer London permanent exclusion rates since 2018-19, and in 2021 during the pandemic, the rate fell to 0. Since schools have resumed their normal functions, nationally we've seen numbers increase to similar levels seen before the pandemic.</p> <p>The permanent exclusion rate is calculated as the number of permanent exclusions divided by the number of pupils (x100). A rate of 0.01 would therefore be equivalent to 1 permanent exclusion for every 10,000 pupils.</p>
	Percentage of Havering schools rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted (Combined).		96%	<p>The Education Secretary announced in September that Ofsted's four single-word "headline" school ratings ('outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate') were to be scrapped with immediate effect. Instead, Ofsted has moved to grading schools on their quality of education, behaviour, personal development and leadership, with new school report cards to be introduced from September 2025. Locally, we continue to monitor schools using our own quality assurance framework and with oversight of Ofsted reports, and have agreed a revised method of reporting on the quality of settings as an alternative to this KPI, from April 2025.</p>
	Percentage of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan educated in borough.		80%	<p>As at the end of Quarter 4, 80% of children with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) who are attending a setting were educated in borough.</p> <p>There are ongoing difficulties with specialist capacity with high proportions of children and young people with EHCPs educated in mainstream settings in Havering, at a time of rapid population growth. Our plan to build a new 300-place special school at Balgore Lane and ongoing growth in the number of SEND Units attached to mainstream schools is intended to increase capacity in borough.</p>

# Supporting our residents to stay safe and well

Theme: We respond fairly to changes in our growing population with a focus on both meeting and reducing need

Objective	Metric	RAG		Outcome
We will offer inclusive services that raise aspirations and meet the needs of our growing population of children, families and young adults, including those in our care.	Average score for Attainment 8 (GCSE Attainment).		48.8	The Average Attainment 8 score for all pupils in Havering has remained above national figures since 2017. Scores peaked locally (52.2) and nationally (50.9) in 2022 due to the pandemic and results being teacher assessed. Since examinations resumed, attainment has returned to pre-Covid levels for Havering (47.4) and Nationally (46.3). Results for 2020 and 2021 are not comparable with earlier years due to the cancellation of exams and changes to way GCSE grades were awarded in those years. Latest data for 2023/24 shows an improvement since 2022/23 and is now at 48.8%, which is over 2 percentage points higher than the England average.
	Percentage of 16 - 17 year olds not in education, employment or training.		2.8%	<p>Our performance of 2.8% in 2025 is the same as this time last year. This figure is reported annually, however performance is monitored locally throughout the year. The figure combines those Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) &amp; the Not Known cohort.</p> <p>The breakdown of the cohort identifies a small increase in the percentage of NEET learners 2.1% in 2025 compared to 2.0% in 2024 with the percentage on Not Known remaining the same at 0.8%</p> <p>Contributing factors to the small increase in NEET have been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lack of flexible entry points into the local Further Education Colleges.</li> <li>• An increase in the number of Post-16 learners without a GCSE grade 4 or above in Maths and English.</li> <li>• An increase in the number of learners self-declaring that they are suffering with their mental health. Anxiety being one of the main reasons.</li> </ul> <p>The commissioned Targeted IAG services are delivering a re-engagement programme this year, which include the offer of functional skills in maths &amp; english, Construction Skill Certification Scheme (CSCS) card, financial support applications for personal identity documentations.</p>
	Percentage of adults with a level 3 or above qualification.		63.7%	<p>This indicator shows the percentage of the population aged 16 – 64 with National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3+ for January 2023 to December 2023, which was published on 18th July 2024.</p> <p>The trend data for Havering has seen some big year on year changes, which is down to the way the measurement is done as it is based on a weighted Annual Population Survey and Labour Force Survey. This is an annual indicator to allow for optimal capturing or existing and completing level 3 qualifications. The next time this indicator can be reviewed will be in July 2025.</p> <p>The latest data confirms that Adults with a Level 3 qualification or higher stands at 100,500 according to the survey, which is a percentage rate of 63.7% which is lower against the Great Britain average of 67.8%.</p>

# Supporting our residents to stay safe and well

Theme: We respond fairly to changes in our growing population with a focus on both meeting and reducing need (cont.)

Objective	Metric	RAG		Outcome
We will work with homeless individuals and families to improve their housing outcomes.	Number of properties acquired through Property Purchasing Scheme.		2	At the end of Q4 Chalkhill (Urban Impact) has handed over two properties to Havering with an additional 12 properties sitting in the conveyancing process. Urban Impact have advised that there have been a delay in acquisition which has caused the delivery to slow, but they will look to achieve the 150 units by the end of March 2026.
	Number of children in emergency accommodation.		1336	<p>This is a snapshot count at the end of the reporting period on the total number in temporary accommodation, which includes Shortlife lettings, Hostels, Private Sector Housing and TA General Needs, who are dependants and under 18 years' old.</p> <p>At the end of Q4 we have seen a reduction in the number of children in emergency accommodation when compared to last quarter (1,441) and when compared to the same time the previous year (1,429).</p>
We will implement "Population Health Management" better targeting support to improve health and minimise admissions to hospital and care homes.	Percentage of older people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services.		90.5%	<p>The percentage of older people over the age of 65 who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement or rehabilitation services (90.5%) was above target (90%) at the end of Q4 2024/25, and better than at the end of Q4 2023/24 (90.2%). We can see that 277 people are still at home out of 306 who were discharged into Reablement services during this timeframe.</p> <p>When looking at benchmarking data, it shows that we are performing better than London (85.1%) and England (81.8%).</p>
	Rate of Permanent admissions for older people (Aged 65 and over) to residential and nursing care home (per 100,000 of the older people population).		541.4	There continues to be a decline in permanent admissions in residential and nursing care admissions for people aged over 65 which is positive. Staff continue to explore alternatives to residential care and staff in the hospital are starting to go back on the wards, which will be ramped up from April 2025. As such the discharge offer will be home first, aiming to keep more residents out of long term placement. At the end of Q4, there were 255 new admissions in 2024/25 compared to 261 in 2023-24, meaning we met our target (568.2).



### **Libraries consultation**

Following a full 12-week consultation where we had over 4,600 responses (over 1,200 from school age children) Harold Wood, South Hornchurch and Gidea Park libraries closed their doors on the 31st March. The closures will save £288,000 annually which is crucial in the Council's financial climate. The three sites were identified as having the lowest footfall of all the 10 libraries in the borough and also required the most investment into bringing the buildings up to a standard where they could deliver a suitable service. As part of the consultation, we also wrote to the Minister for the Creative Industries, Arts and Tourism, and although we received a response, they could not provide any commitment to providing funding that could prevent library closures at this time. Closing libraries was a tough decision for us to make, and one we were not happy about making, but due to year-on-year cuts in Government funding and increasing pressures and costs from social care and homelessness we needed to find a solution. We are bidding to Arts Council England for capital funding to refurbish Romford Central Library and increase community participation.

### **Excellence and innovation at Harrow Lodge Leisure Centre**

Harrow Lodge Leisure Centre in Hornchurch, run by leading operator Everyone Active on behalf of Havering Council, was one of the five finalists of a prestigious national honour for regional club/centre of the year London in the ukactive Awards 2024. Although Harrow Lodge didn't win their category, Everyone Active was the overall winner of the Outstanding Organisation award. The ukactive Awards celebrate the best of the physical activity sector and are designed to recognise excellence and innovation across health, wellbeing and fitness. We have also opened a new padel tennis facility at Central Park Leisure Centre so local people can take part in this popular and growing new sport.

## New Health and Wellbeing Hub

The new St George's Health and Wellbeing Hub opened its doors in the autumn 2024, to provide care and support for around 250,000 people living in Havering and the surrounding areas. The hub operates seven days a week and provides easy access to a range of health, social care and community services all under one roof. The centre host a range of activities to support people's wider health and wellbeing such as a community centre and a sensory, dementia-friendly garden, all of which would not be possible without the help and support of local voluntary and community groups.

## Children's plan

Following our Ofsted inspection in 2023, the Council has written its first children's plan for a number of years. Co-developed with a range of stakeholders across the council, partners and most importantly children and young people. The Integrated Starting well plan (2024-2027) – Happy, Healthy Lives, sets out the council's Starting Well Services' vision for enabling all our children and families to lead happy and healthy lives, as well as stating how we plan to improve practice and outcomes for those children and families we are working with. The plan is available on the [Council's website](#) and a children's version, co-produced with the Havering Youth Council, is being produced and will be available in schools by the start of the 2025-2026 academic year.



### **Our Healthy Weight Strategy**

Our Co-produced Healthy Weight Strategy, formally approved at Cabinet in May 2024, implements a whole system approach to healthy weight. The strategy is structured around key action areas, which plays a distinct yet interconnected role in driving this strategy.

The People network focuses on individual and community behaviours to help people achieve or maintain a healthy weight, whilst the Place network addresses the environmental factors that shape these behaviours, including restricting the opening of new fast food outlets and the redevelopment of Harold Hill area where obesity is highest in the borough. The Resources network considers how we further integrate healthy weight into existing budgets and work streams, maximise the impact of staffing and assets, ensure financial decisions align with long-term health and wellbeing goals. Together, they create a cohesive framework to deliver the Healthy Weight Strategy effectively. The system networks are where overall progress across all themes can be shared. Throughout the last year, we have held quarterly meetings discussing progress under each action. A steering group will be convened to review the whole strategy in Year 1 and start to plan for the forthcoming year.

### **Havering's new Cultural Strategy - 'A good life'**

We secured £1.6 million of investment to bring to life Havering's new Cultural Strategy 'A good life'. It is a partnership strategy, designed to act as a three-year catalyst for nurturing and growing the cultural life of a rapidly changing place. The strategy is designed to be used by anyone developing, making and building cultural activity in Havering. The 30 projects within the programme will focus on four themes; Unearthed, Common Ground, Empowered and thriving. You can read the full strategy on [Havering London website](#).

### **Live Well Havering**

Live Well Havering, launched in October 2024, is a long term vision of preventative health and wellbeing transformation for the borough. The programme aims to shift the borough's focus to prevention rather than cure, with the mission of driving better health outcomes for all, as well as less demand on statutory services. The strategy prioritises working hand in hand with community services and the voluntary sector to co-produce local solutions with local people. 2024 was seen as the 'setting up' phase of the programme and in that time lots was achieved including 590 services now available on the Joy app, 2,180 recipients receiving the Live Well Havering Newsletter, we launched the Menopause support group, hired five health trainers for community engagement events, have approximately 100 health champion volunteers and received £450k worth of bids into the community chest.

**Live Well  
HAVERING**

A woman with dark curly hair and a young boy with light brown hair are both smiling and looking towards the right. The woman is in the foreground, and the boy is slightly behind her. They appear to be in a bright, indoor setting.

## Key Challenges for 2025/26

### **Social care services increases**

Page 145  
Havering has experienced large increases in demand for its social care services in recent years driven by a rapidly increasing children and young people population and the second highest proportion of older people in London.

### **Children in care**

Havering is under increasing financial pressure to meet the cost of providing placements for children in care. We are reliant on others, largely those in the private sector, to provide placements in order to fulfil our statutory duties, unfortunately some private providers have increased their costs for placement, making unreasonable levels of profit, which Havering is forced to pay in order to comply with our statutory duties for children in our care.

### **Children with disabilities**

The Council has experienced continued increased costs of Children with Disabilities due to the rise of both the number of children presenting with a disability and the increasing level of complexity. There was a particularly big increase in placement costs in 2024-25 and if this trend were to continue this would place further pressure on the Council's budget.

### **SEND needs**

Last year Havering experienced the second fastest increase in new statutory special needs assessments (known as Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments, or EHCNAs) in London, and has experienced the second highest growth in new EHC Plans in London over the last five years. Costs of an EHCP varies depending on need (from £10k for additional support to £50k or more for a special school place). 'Galliford Try's Building Southern Business' has been commissioned by the council to create a new special educational needs and disabilities school for 300 students aged 4 to 19, addressing the critical SEND needs within the borough. Building works on the SEND

School, at Balgores Lane, is expected to start in October 2025 and will represent a significant investment in the future of our community.

### **EHCP increase**

The increase in Children with Education Healthcare Plans (EHCP) has not only had an impact on demand for home to school transport support, where we have seen a 15 per cent increase in the number of applications for transport assistance, but also the rising costs associated with supporting students with high needs are driving up the funding pressures on the high needs deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

### **Delivering our 'Happy, Healthy Lives' starting well plan**

Following the Ofsted inspection of Children's Services in December 2023, we allocated a substantial amount of financial investment which has been used to address the shortfalls in practice. Further investment has been made this year, as we acknowledge there is still more to do to deliver our 'Happy, Healthy Lives' Starting well plan and improve the offer we deliver to our children, young people and families.

### **A new approach to inspecting and reporting on education providers**

Ofsted launched a major consultation, seeking the views of parents, carers, professionals and learners, on a new approach to inspecting and reporting on education providers. Almost all Havering schools were graded Good or Outstanding when Ofsted made the decision to move away from single word judgements in 2024. The new proposal is that from autumn 2025, Ofsted will no longer carry out ungraded inspections of state-funded schools, meaning every school in Havering will require a full, graded inspection, and any school with an identified need for improvement will receive monitoring calls and visits, to check that timely action is being taken to raise standards.

### **Adult social care**

The Council also continues to face significant demographic and unit cost pressures across Adult Social Care and Housing Demand. The Council has put significant growth into these areas over the last two years but demand and complexity alongside increases in cost of accommodation and care, is still rising requiring additional funding to be built into the budgets to cover projected demand for 2025/26.

### **Temporary accommodation**

The Council is also facing pressures from the cost of providing temporary accommodation to meet increased homelessness demand. The numbers of people presenting as homeless continues to rise and whilst the Council has identified new units to help mitigate this demand, the numbers in, and costs of, temporary accommodation continue to rise. These pressures are being experienced by many boroughs, but the changes in Havering's demographic profile is proportionally higher than most other London Boroughs.

# A great Place to love work and enjoy

Theme: We are a clean, green, sustainable borough, where it is safe and easy to get around

Objective	Metric	RAG		Outcome
We will continue to deliver a green borough.	Percentage of household waste recycled.		34.3%	Performance data is generally 6-8 weeks behind in receiving the data.  There is an annual pattern in data with performance declining over the year. At the end of Q3, which is typically the lowest performance of the year, is as it was expected, this is due to more stringent Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) regulations around contamination and is likely to be an ongoing issue.
	The number of parks retaining Green Flag Status.		16	The prestigious Green Flag awards (Keep Britain Tidy award of excellence) can be applied for annually, with the awards being presented in July. In July 2024, we continued to achieve 16 awards for our parks.
We will improve infrastructure in the borough and lobby for the investment needed to deliver it.	Install new publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points.		61	The infrastructure for 61 EV Charging Points have been installed across 10 Council operated car parks. The next stage is for these charging points to receive electrical connections.  Public consultation also took place on delivering up to 74 Charging Points across 15 residential streets in the borough. Following this consultation, it was agreed to progress 11 of these sites (48 charging points) with installation beginning in April 2025. Alternative locations are now being explored with Charge Point Operator Connected Kerb Ltd to ensure that at least 74 charging points are delivered in residential streets.  The target for the two programmes (car park EV Charging Points (68) and on street Charging point (80)) has a target of 148, all of which are expected to be fully operational by September 2025.
We will continue to improve the safety of our borough.	S92 Police Officers - Arrests.		47	Section 92 council funded police officers form a joint task force. This consists of one sergeant and 5constables. The team have seen great success, tasked weekly by the council and working across the borough. The council has set priority concerns for the borough including burglary, vehicle theft and drug supply.  We can see a reduction in Quarter 4 (47) in terms of arrests compared to Quarter 3(64). Arrests made this quarter have consisted of charges for robbery, theft, assault, dangerous driving and drink driving. The return is still however impressive considering extractions for aid, annual leave, sickness and borough initiatives.
	S92 Police Officers - Stop & Search.		39	At the end of Q4 we have seen a decrease in stop and searches conducted by the team, compared to Q3 (49). Stop and Search is intelligence led, targeting those believed to be actively involved in criminal behaviour within the borough.  Monthly reports are received from the Council funded police team, but these figures will be amalgamated together and reported quarterly.
	S92 Police Officers - Stop & Search Positive Result.		12	At the end of Q4 we have seen a decrease in positive outcomes following Stop and Search, when compared to Q3 (18). In Q4, 12 of 39 (31%) Stop & Searches resulted in positive action, whereas in Q3, 21 of 49 Stop & Search resulted in positive action (43%). Stop and Search is intelligence led, targeting those believed to be actively involved in criminal behaviour within the borough.

# A great Place to love work and enjoy

Theme: We will provide excellent customer service and engage effectively with our communities (Cont.)

Objective	Metric	RAG		Outcome
We will continue to improve the safety of our borough.	S92 Police Officers - Process / Traffic OR report (TOR).		12	The team conducted 12 stops of vehicles across the borough in Q4 a slight decrease on the previous quarter where they stopped 18 vehicles. All the stops resulted in some sort of process or Traffic Offence Report. The team use intelligence led policing to target regular offenders and criminals who use vehicles to conduct criminal activity.
	S92 Police Officers - PNDs.		6	The team regularly issue Penalty Notices for Disorder (PND) when suspects are found in possession of cannabis and are eligible for this type of disposal. The issuing of a PND is the equivalent of an Offence bought to justice (remove OBTJ) and counts as a sanctioned detection, which allows the offender to pay a £90 fine within 28 days. In Q4 the team issued 6 PNDs showing an increase compared to Q3 where the team issued 4. This quarters PND would amount to £540 being issued in fines.
	S92 Police Officers - Merlin Report.		7	Q4 has seen the team submit 7 Merlin reports the highest amount they have issued across the year. Reports are recorded on Merlin to enable safeguarding teams to assess any risks or harm to children or vulnerable adults based on the report and any further relevant information. These reports are often shared with partner agencies to ensure a multi-agency approach can be taken to safeguarding.
	S92 Police Officers - CRIMINTs.		51	CRIMINT is a police system which is used to capture intelligence, such as information about properties which may be used for cultivating drugs. Intel shared via partners through the bi-monthly Joint Enforcement Taskforce (JET) meeting also often results in CRIMINT creation. In Q4, the team created 51 CRIMINT reports. This is a reduction on Quarter 3 where 65 were issued.
	S92 Police Officers - Stolen Vehicles.		43	In Q4 the team recovered 43 stolen vehicles which is a very slight decrease from Q3 where the team recovered 46 stolen vehicles. In terms of breakdown 18 of the car thefts were from Havering 4 from Essex, 3 from Barking and Dagenham and 2 from Redbridge. The remainder were cars stolen from across London and Kent. No particular car was highlighted as being particularly targeted. Car Theft remains a priority for Havering, and in an attempt to address this, the team organise regular cross-border operations to stop individuals coming into Havering to steal vehicles.
	S92 Police Officers - Vehicle Seizures.		7	In Q4, the team seized 7 vehicles, which is a decrease from the previous quarter, where 20 vehicles were seized.
	S92 Police Officers - Case Files.		3	In Q4 the team completed 3 case files which is a drop compared to Q3 where 14 were completed. The purpose of these is to pass evidence and information to the courts.

# A great Place to love work and enjoy

Theme: We will provide excellent customer service and engage effectively with our communities (Cont.)

Objective	Metric	RAG		Outcome
We will continue to improve the safety of our borough.	S92 Police Officers - CRIS Report.		15	The Crime Reporting Information System (CRIS) is the Metropolitan Police database which captures all allegations of crime. In Q4 the team recorded 15 crime reports compared to Q3 where the team recorded 27 crime reports across Havering, showing a decrease in this quarter. All crimes reported by the Joint Task Force are for the purpose of investigation of crimes that have been specifically identified by the team.
	S92 Police Officers - Ink Pad.		13	The Metropolitan Police Mobile fingerprint system (Ink Pad) is used to support on-street identification of individuals who fall into the Identity Not Known (INK) category. In Q4 the team used it 13 times showing an increase from Q3 where it was used 9 times.
	S92 Police Officers - Tweets.		3	In Q4, the team uploaded 3 tweets, sharing good news stories with followers compared to 12 for the previous quarter. This is a decrease in terms of the team's own tweets. The Council communications team also put out a monthly report on Havering Joint Task Force (HJTF)'s achievements via Living in Havering email newsletter and on social media. The Havering Daily also actively report on the work undertaken by HJTF.
	S92 Police Officers - Total Shifts worked (6 officers).		309	In Q4 the team worked 309 shifts which is slightly lower than the previous quarter (Q3) where, the team worked a total of 311 shifts between 6 officers. The team have all had to attend mandatory training around the New Met, sickness, annual leave and any aid the team have had to be involved in would account for the small decrease in shifts worked.
	The number of under-age sales operations.		8	Although we had set a target of undertaking 10 under-age sales operations, which should equal to 60 visits across the borough, we only completed 8 operations between April 2024 and March 2025. We didn't meet our target due to capacity within the team; however, we did exceed the number of visits (67) within the 8 operations.

# A great Place to love work and enjoy

Theme: We deliver safe and affordable housing and community assets

Objective	Metric	RAG		Outcome
We will provide new homes, including affordable homes, for local people.	Percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation.		96%	<p>Ensuring that our care-experienced young adults live in accommodation that meets their needs is a top priority for the Council in our role as corporate parents. We adhere to clear statutory guidance that defines which types of accommodation are considered suitable. At the end of Q4, 96% of our young adults were living in suitable accommodation, maintaining the same position as the previous quarter and exceeding our target.</p> <p>In addition to providing suitable living conditions, the Council is committed to offering comprehensive support to care leavers. This includes personalised guidance, access to education and employment opportunities, and assistance in addressing the unique challenges faced by those transitioning from care. We are working closely with our housing colleagues in supporting young people moving through our dedicated care leavers supported accommodation. This includes ensuring that young people can evidence their readiness for independent living.</p> <p>A small cohort of care leavers are unfortunately in custody, which of course is classed as unsuitable accommodation. The Council is dedicated to supporting these individuals by providing tailored assistance aimed at their rehabilitation and reintegration into society. This support includes regular contact with their workers, access to educational and vocational training programs, and planning for their accommodation and support needs upon release. Our commitment is to ensure that all care leavers, regardless of their circumstances, receive the necessary support to build a positive future.</p>
We will ensure Council housing and community assets meet all regulatory standards.	Compliance with building safety standards for public (non-residential) buildings.		96%	<p>Compliance is monitored on a range of different performance indicators to ensure statutory compliance. This is undertaken on a monthly basis by the corporate landlord section within the Capital Delivery and Corporate Estates team.</p> <p>The performance at the end of the year (96%) dipped when compared to last quarter (98%) and is slightly below target (97%), this was mainly due to the fact that we were waiting for the 5 Yearly Electrical Inspection Condition Reports to come back. We are chasing the Contractor to complete but going forward we will provide the contractors more notice to carry these reports out.</p>
We will promote good private sector housing for local people.	Number of enforcement actions taken in relation to poor quality HMOs (Houses of Multiple Occupation).		198	<p>There has been an increase in the number of HMO intelligence visits, HMO licensing inspections, and informal warning letters to landlord of suspected HMO's, when compared to last quarter (174) and when compared to the previous year (137).</p>

# A great Place to love work and enjoy

Theme: We attract and deliver investment and regeneration opportunities whilst protecting the character of the borough

Objective	Metric	RAG		Outcome
We will maximise the value of regeneration in the borough for the benefit of residents and business.	Total Value of developers financial contributions received through the planning process (S106).		£3,139,026.99	Developer financial contributions received through the planning process (Section 106 agreements) are used to mitigate the impacts of development on the local community and infrastructure. The 2024/25 financial year saw a significant increase in S106 receipts compared to the previous year (£1,260,168.16). This increase was largely due to proactive monitoring and S106 triggers, such as commencement, occupation and/or completion, being met.
	Total Value of developers financial contributions received through the planning process (HCIL).		£190,815.56	As from 1 September 2019 the Council charges a local Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on all applicable development located in Havering. The CIL allows local authorities to help fund infrastructure by imposing a financial charge on new developments in their area where these are liable for CIL. The money generated through CIL can be used to support growth by helping to pay for a wide range of infrastructure needed to support and enable growth including parks, schools, community facilities, health facilities and leisure centres.  Forecast for CIL receipts this year are not strong based on the strategic development pipeline. The slight reduction of receipts in Q3 is a reflection of fewer number of CIL commencements in the Borough. CIL receipts may be larger in the next quarter if major developments commence.
	The Percentage of developers financial contributions received through the planning process which has been allocated to projects (S106).		82%	Section 106 agreements are legally binding agreements that the Council makes with developers in connection with planning permissions. Agreements contain obligations, either financial or non-financial, which are necessary to offset or mitigate the impacts caused by development to make the development acceptable in planning terms.  We continue to see a positive trend for increased allocation of money. Allocation of the Council's S106 monies are published in the annual Infrastructure Funding Statement.
	The Percentage of developers financial contributions received through the planning process which has been allocated to projects (HCIL).		74%	As from 1 September 2019 the Council charges a local Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on all applicable development located in Havering. The CIL allows local authorities to help fund infrastructure by imposing a financial charge on new developments in their area where these are liable for CIL. The money generated through CIL can be used to support growth by helping to pay for a wide range of infrastructure needed to support and enable growth including parks, schools, community facilities, health facilities and leisure centres.  The figures provided are a percentage of the total CIL received to date some of which has been spent. The percentage of the current CIL balance allocated for spend in Q4 24/25 was at 74%. This is an improved position when compared to last quarter (67% and the same time last year (56%).



### **A new Riverside park**

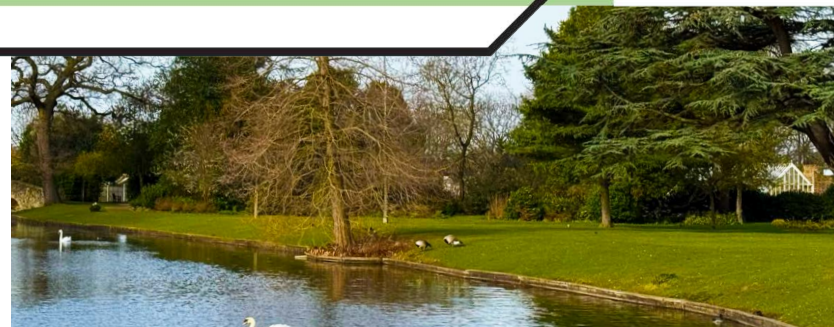
'Central Park' is a new 2.5-hectare riverside park in Rainham which officially opened in May 2024. The park sits either side of the River Roding and offers a range of facilities for children and families including a river-themed play trail, encompassing wooden structures and a play area comprising a swing set, jungle gym and climbing structures. The opening of the park was part of the Beam Park Regeneration scheme, which has added incredible changes to the once derelict site of the former Ford manufacturing plant but now offers 1,063 homes along with extensive community facilities including a new nursery, retail spaces and primary school.

### A new medical centre

Another part of the Beam Park Regeneration Scheme was a new Medical Centre which opened in October 2024. **The Medical Centre**, which has 22 consulting rooms, three interview rooms, an enhanced treatment room and a brand-new GP surgery gives thousands of residents access to local healthcare services.



# Where we Live



### 'Where we Live' campaign

In October 2024, the council launched a 'Where We Live' campaign, to encourage residents and community groups to work with the Council to help make the borough a cleaner and safer place to be. The objective of the campaign was to empower communities to take pride in their neighbourhoods and love where they live, by encouraging community clean-ups, litter picks and report fly-tipping and grotspots which could be made into more pleasant community spaces.

### Five new green spaces

Havering Council formally agreed to adopt five new green spaces which had previously been identified as much-loved sites across the borough. The sites, Gooshays Green, Fleet close, Wennington village green, Hitchin close and Dovers Farm will all remain undeveloped and protected, safeguarding the areas for all future generations.

### Cost effective grass-cutting revolution

The Council has invested in a piece of machinery called the Spider Cross Liner mower to assist in grass cutting in our parks, schools and streets across the borough. The versatile, practical and cost-effective remote-control gizmo



can cut vegetation to a height of up to 10 centimetres and at angle of 55 degrees, helping staff to cut difficult-to-reach spaces. The machine was paid for by the parks improvement fund and is proving to be more cost-effective than traditional methods.



### Tithe Barn restoration

Work officially started on the major restoration of Tithe Barn in Upminster. The full re-thatching was undertaken in early 2025 by 'Simple Thatch' who have included their traditional boxing hares (Willow and Hunter as named by Year 5 children at Branfield primary School). The Barn will stay closed throughout 2025 as structural timber and brickwork repairs to the building, plus works to help reduce water damage are still to be completed. None of the work could happen without the shared partnership and £650,000 funding from National Highways via the Lower Thames Crossing Scheme and a grant awarded by Historic England in 2024. You can find out more about Tithe Barn and their future event dates [online](#).

### Local heritage list update

Our local heritage list, identifying local heritage assets that are a distinctive part of our local historic environment, was updated with an additional 33 assets in September 2024. The historic list identifies local heritage assets that are a distinctive part of our local historic environment, which are important to protect and consider in the planning process. A further 105 nominations were received as part of the public consultation process but was unsuccessful at this time.

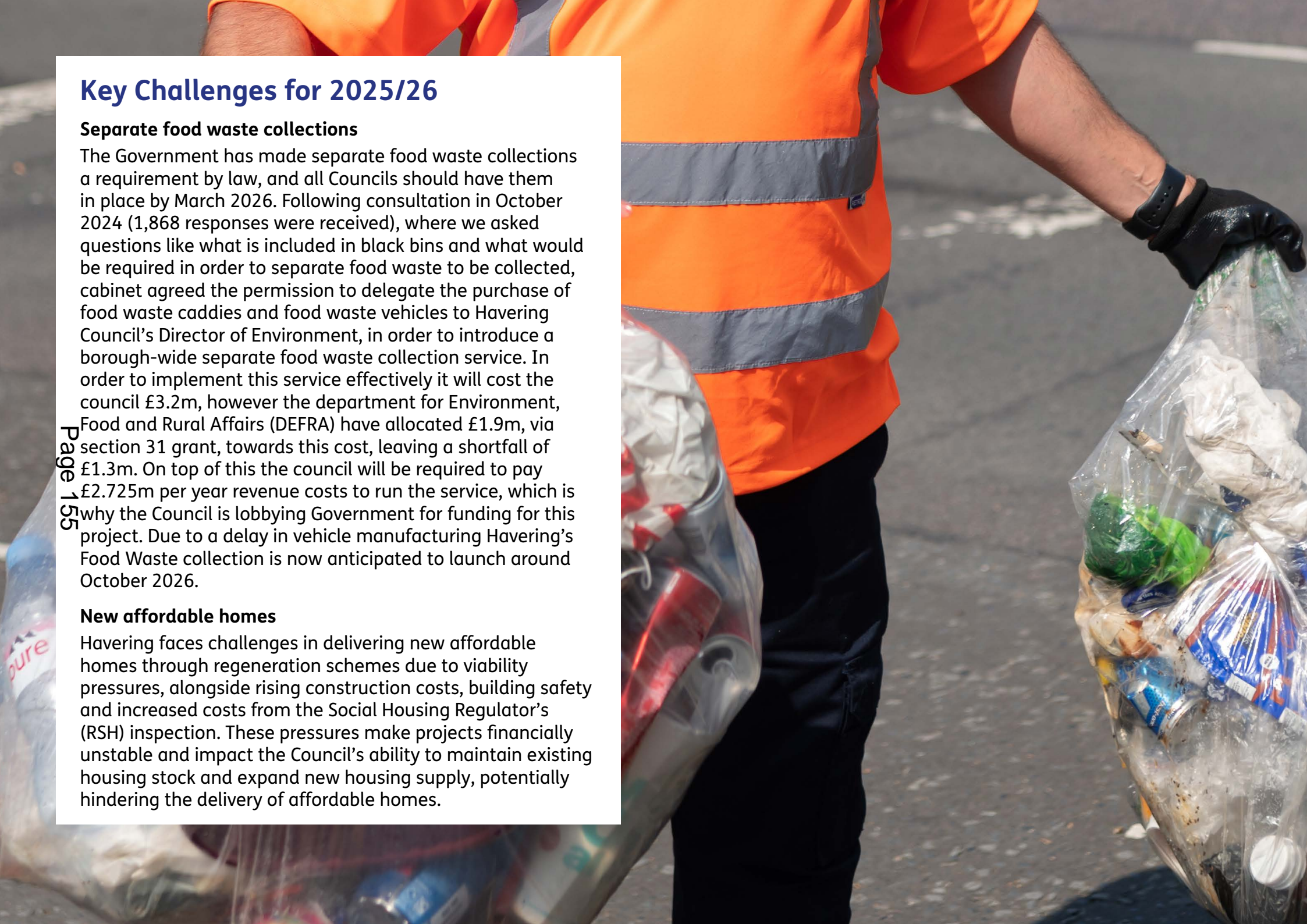
## Key Challenges for 2025/26

### Separate food waste collections

The Government has made separate food waste collections a requirement by law, and all Councils should have them in place by March 2026. Following consultation in October 2024 (1,868 responses were received), where we asked questions like what is included in black bins and what would be required in order to separate food waste to be collected, cabinet agreed the permission to delegate the purchase of food waste caddies and food waste vehicles to Havering Council's Director of Environment, in order to introduce a borough-wide separate food waste collection service. In order to implement this service effectively it will cost the council £3.2m, however the department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) have allocated £1.9m, via section 31 grant, towards this cost, leaving a shortfall of £1.3m. On top of this the council will be required to pay £2.725m per year revenue costs to run the service, which is why the Council is lobbying Government for funding for this project. Due to a delay in vehicle manufacturing Havering's Food Waste collection is now anticipated to launch around October 2026.

### New affordable homes

Havering faces challenges in delivering new affordable homes through regeneration schemes due to viability pressures, alongside rising construction costs, building safety and increased costs from the Social Housing Regulator's (RSH) inspection. These pressures make projects financially unstable and impact the Council's ability to maintain existing housing stock and expand new housing supply, potentially hindering the delivery of affordable homes.



# Enabling a resident focused and resilient council

Theme: We manage our resources well

Objective	Metric	RAG		Outcome
We will manage our money well to set a balanced budget and get maximum value from all our activity.	The cumulative value of our underfunding.		£10m	The annual loss of Social Care Grant is estimated at £10m per year. The recent Government settlement increased Havering's Social Care grant by £3.2m for 2025/26 but continued to use allocation data from over a decade ago. The Government is in the process of reviewing the funding allocation formula and exemplifications are expected in the summer. It is hoped that the revised formula uses up to date relative needs formulae which would potentially result in Havering receiving extra grant of up to £10m for 2026/27.
	Progress on delivering the Climate Change Action Plan.		52%	The action plan provides a framework for the Council to tackle climate change and deliver on its target of becoming carbon neutral by 2040 or sooner. We are 52% of the way to completing all actions by the current plan deadline of 2027, which is a 7% increase since last quarter. 30% of actions were completed in 2024-25. They are: <b>12</b> in Built Environment (2 completed actions); <b>4</b> in Business Continuity; <b>26</b> in Energy (5 completed actions); <b>17</b> in People (10 completed actions); <b>13</b> in Procurement (5 completed actions); <b>7</b> in Public Protection (4 completed actions); <b>27</b> in Stakeholder & Community (9 completed actions); <b>23</b> in Transport (3 completed actions); <b>16</b> in Waste (6 completed actions). Due to the council's financial constraints and the huge cost of implementing the changes to transition to carbon neutral, there is a risk that we will not meet the 2040 target unless more grants/private investment becomes available.
	Reduce CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from Council activity (Natural Gas).		941.63 tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub>	In 2024-25, 942 tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub> were emitted from the Council's use of natural Gas. Gas consumption, used for heating the corporate estate, decreased by 988,563 kWh between 2023-24 and 2024-25 and consequently reduced emissions by 81 t CO <sub>2</sub> e. Reducing the consumption also helped to reduce the annual cost for gas by £204,414.
	Reducing CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from Council activity (Electricity - Building).		614.9 tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub>	In 2024-25, 615 tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub> were emitted from the use of electricity in Council buildings. Electricity consumption in the corporate estate has remained relatively constant for the past five years, (3.10m kWh in 2022-23, 3.06m kWh in 2023-24 and 2.97m kWh in 2024-25), however emissions continue to decrease as the National Grid secures an increasing proportion of energy from renewable sources. The cost decreased from £1.15million in 2023-24 to £872,512 in 2024-25.
	Reduce CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from Council activity (Electricity - Street lighting).		758.0 tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub>	In 2024-25, 758 tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub> were emitted from the use of electricity in street lighting across Havering. The dimming project is expected to reduce consumption by an estimated 10% in 2025-26.
	Reduce CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from Council activity (Fleet).		831.61 Tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub>	In 2023-24, 832 tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub> were emitted from fuel used by the Council's fleet. CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from the corporate fleet have decreased between 2023-24 and 2024-25. The reasons for this are: (i) GTL fuel is more efficient than diesel. (ii) Larger fleet vehicles are all Euro 6 compliant and operate at peak fuel efficiency. (iii) Drivers are reminded not to leave vehicles idling. (iv) Route mapping / sat navs optimise the most fuel-efficient routes for all vehicles. (v) Not counting private work (i.e. fuel used during non-LBH work e.g. journeys commissioned by other boroughs).

# Enabling a resident focused and resilient council

Theme: We will be an employer of choice, with a workforce that reflects our communities

Objective	Metric	RAG		Outcome
We will attract and retain a workforce that is more representative of the community we serve.	Gender Pay Gap (MEAN).		7.5%	<p>The Pay Gap measures the difference between the overall average earnings between two groups of staff within an organisation, regardless of their role or seniority. That difference in the average earnings is the "Pay Gap".</p> <p>Our Gender Pay Gap is the difference between the average earnings of all women and all men within the workforce. We have a mean Gender pay gap of 7.5%, and a median Gender Pay gap of 6.9% at the end of March 2024.</p> <p>Between 2016/17 and 2018/19 the gender pay gap remained steady around 4.5%, before narrowing to just 2.6% at the end of 2019/20. Following an increase in 2020/21 (to 5.9%) and again in 2021/22 (to 6.4%) the pay gap narrowed slightly to 6.1% in 2022/23 but has increased in 2023/24 to 7.5%.</p> <p>The increase in the pay gap data in 2023/24 is partially due to the transfer out of the street cleansing service October 2023 – this sees around 100 of the lowest paid men removed from the overall data.</p> <p>London Councils provide comparative data, and it should be noted that comparison across councils vary due to the differing of inhouse services.</p>
	Ethnicity Pay Gap (MEAN).		-4.80%	<p>The Pay Gap measures the difference between the overall average earnings between two groups of staff within an organisation, regardless of their role or seniority. That difference in the average earnings is the "Pay Gap".</p> <p>Our Ethnicity Pay Gap is the difference between the earnings of all White staff and all Ethnically Diverse staff. We have a mean Ethnicity pay gap of Minus 4.8%, and a median Ethnicity pay gap of Minus 11.6%. This means when comparing mean (average) hourly pay, the mean hourly pay of White staff is minus 4.8% compared to Ethnically Diverse staff. Or to put this another way, on average White staff earn slightly over £0.95 for every £1 that Ethnically Diverse staff earn when comparing mean hourly pay.</p> <p>When comparing the median pay point, White staff earn minus 11.6% compared to Ethnically Diverse staff, or to put this another way, White staff earn nearly £0.88 for every £1 that Ethnically Diverse staff earn when comparing the median hourly pay point.</p> <p>This does not mean that Ethnically Diverse staff earn more for doing the same job, or work of a similar value, but simply that Ethnically Diverse staff occupy more of the higher paid positions overall compared to White staff.</p> <p>Benchmarking data has been provided by gov.uk and contains ethnicity pay gap figures for all employees in London for 2022 as at July 2024. The calculation is [median pay for White group - median pay for all combined Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups/median pay from White group].</p>
We will identify and focus on the resources and skills needed for the future, including by "growing our own".	The amount of Apprenticeship Levy spent (£).		£557,433	As at the end of Q4, from a total levy fund of £1,548,937, we have spent £57,433 since April 2024. In addition, we have pledged £500,000 of our levy fund to organisation in the borough to use to support apprentices where they don't pay into the levy. We have confirmed spend to the amount of £285,000 so far for Havering based businesses and apprentices, with a further £60,058 of expired levy funding in the current financial year 24/25. However, with no corporate budget allocated for New Hire Apprentices, as part of organisational cost savings, this has hindered our ability to utilise the levy funding as we would have been able to in previous years.
	The number of Apprenticeships supported (% of the workforce).		102	As at the end Q4 we have 79 corporate learners on programme with a further 23 from our schools (4.4% of the workforce) which is above the 69 target we set at the beginning of the year. We continue to have additional learners schedule to start their apprenticeships moving into the next reporting year, and we have three Care Leaver apprentices now on programme.
We will recognise and reward staff providing excellent customer service (external or internal), driving a continuous improvement culture.	The percentage of staff achieving 'Performing Well' or better in their annual Performance Review.		94.3%	<p>The data available for completion rates of 2023/24 PDR cycle. The outcome is based on (of all eligible staff who should have completed their PDR), those who receive performing well (774) or Excelling (223) as a result out of the number of PDRs completed in year (1,057).</p> <p>We currently only have data for completion rates at the 31st December (50.8%), which is an increase on previous years, but the full years data will be available in early 2025/26.</p>

# Enabling a resident focused and resilient council

Theme: We will provide excellent customer service and engage effectively with our communities

Objective	Metric	RAG		Outcome
We will improve customer satisfaction levels by modernising the way we work.	The percentage of customers who are satisfied with their interaction with the Council.		76%	<p>The percentage of customers who are satisfied with their interaction with the Council was last captured in 2017/18. In the absence of any recent data, we have treated this as a new indicator and not set a target for 24/25. It is worth noting that currently the results have been taken from the Customer Services' Telephony Contact Centre, and do not capture data from other service areas, that carry out similar satisfaction surveys on their interaction with customers, be it by telephone, online or face to face.</p> <p>It is also worth noting that over 94% of customers (3,498 respondents) feel our advisors are "polite and helpful" though for total satisfaction the score is 76% (2,859 respondents) demonstrating that although the customers are receiving a very professional and helpful experience from the advisors the overall satisfaction level is influenced by a number of factors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the speed in which a job is completed.</li> <li>• having to report something in the first place.</li> <li>• the decision/outcome.</li> <li>• chasing for a response etc.</li> </ul>
	The number of complaints received by the Council.		898	<p>During Quarter 4 we received 898 Complaints, which is an increase in comparison to Quarter 3 (846 complaints) Breakdown by Service Area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate: 830 Stage One Complaints, 55 Stage Two Complaints (93% closed within target).</li> <li>• Children's Services: 50 Stage One Complaints, 7 Stage Two Complaints (85% closed within target).</li> <li>• Adults Services: 26 Stage One Complaints (81% closed on time; no Stage Two process).</li> </ul>
	The percentage of enquiries closed within target.		91.5%	<p>As at the end of Quarter 4, we received 1,149 enquiries which is 139 more than last quarter. Of these we closed 1,052 (91.5%) within target.</p> <p>The new Corporate Complaints system for logging members' enquiries is complete. A soft launch will take place in April 2025, which we anticipate 10 Councillors will begin using the new Platform. Throughout May, we will be closely monitor progress and gather feedback to ensure the system meets user needs and expectations and assist in the plan to begin a phased rollout to additional Councillors from June 2025. A soft launch started in April 2025, where councillor's have begun using the platform.</p>
	The percentage of information requests closed within target - FOI / EIR.		73%	<p>While there have been notable efforts to manage 'Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests, the current performance levels indicate a need for improvements. Going forward, by addressing the key areas of underperformance, we can enhance our compliance rates and ensure a more efficient and transparent process for handling information requests. Conducting regular reviews of performance metrics will help identify bottlenecks and areas for improvement, coupled with actionable plans to address any identified issues, as well as staff training where needed.</p>
	The percentage of information requests closed within target - SAR's.		81%	<p>To improve the performance of Subject Access Requests (SARs) and achieve the Information Commissioners Offices (ICO)'s expectation of 100% compliance within the legislative period, we will conduct regular audits of SARs. These audits will help identify any discrepancies and areas for improvement. The findings from these audits will be used to make necessary adjustments to the process, ensuring that we meet our compliance goals efficiently and effectively.</p>

# Enabling a resident focused and resilient council

Theme: We will provide excellent customer service and engage effectively with our communities (Cont.)

Objective	Metric	RAG		Outcome
We will improve customer satisfaction levels by modernising the way we work.	The average call waiting time for our Customer Contact Centre (seconds).		214 seconds	<p>Since April 2024, the Call Centre has experienced month on month improvement in terms of its average call wait times.</p> <p>Q4, as predicted, proved challenging (particularly March) due to an increase in demand compared with March 2024. With less resource to meet the increased demand resulted in us just above out 24/25 target of 210 seconds (3 mins 30 seconds) with our final outturn figure of 214 seconds (3 mins 34 seconds). Although we are slightly above target, this is still the best performance since 2019/20.</p>
	The average call abandoned rate for our Customer Contact Centre.		8.71%	<p>Since April 2024, as reflected by the average call wait times, the Call Centre has experienced month on month improvement in terms of its average call abandon rates.</p> <p>Despite Q4 proving to be challenging, particularly March experiencing an increased demand compared with March 2024, and with less resource, our final outturn figure of 8.71% ensured we achieved our target of 10% and recorded our best outturn since 2017.</p>
We will engage transparently with our community, including under-represented groups, and promote community trust and belonging.	Levels of satisfaction and trust in the Council.		61%	<p>This has usually been measured by using IPSOS MORI Survey, which is currently prohibitive because of costs. We are currently exploring other ways of measuring satisfaction and trust. As this survey only takes place when there is budget allocated, the 61% is from 2022/23.</p>
We will expand and enhance our online capability.	The percentage of interactions completed online.		78.8%	<p>This captures the percentage of online transactions within the new D365 CRM solution. The direction of travel has been a positive one over the years, with an appetite for customers to go online, increasing year on year and following enhancements to D365 processes, making it easier to report online, including optional log in to the 'My Havering' Portal. Although this KPI only captures the service enquiries built within D365 it still provides a snapshot of the resident's online activity / interaction with the Council.</p> <p>The final outturn figure of 78.8% exceeded the target of 70% continuing to demonstrate the channel shift that has occurred over the years for those services utilising D365. Refinements to D365 and the customer online experience generally has led to greater confidence in our online offering, ensuring customers want to use it again, with a 10% increase on the outturn achieved in 23/24.</p>



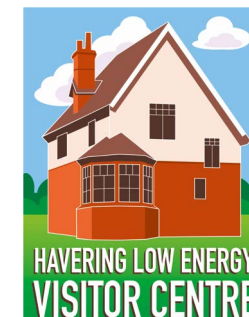
### Improving air quality

In order to help us reach our target to be carbon neutral by 2040, the Council's Transport Team transferred 172 vehicles to alternative biofuels to reduce carbon emissions, save money and keep services on the move. The fleet uses approximately 400,000 litres of fuel every year, so by opting for a 50/50 blend of HVO (Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil) and GTL (Gas - to Liquid reduces the total cost of fuel and cuts CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 45 per cent. The switch from B7 diesel to a Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) and Gas-To-Liquid (GTL) biofuel mix will also significantly reduce particulate matter output, improving our air quality.



### Low Energy Visitor Centre

One of the actions within our Climate Change Action Plan was the development of the free-to-visit Havering Low Energy Visitor Centre. The Centre showcases various energy saving home improvements to help make it easier for residents and local businesses to learn about the energy saving products and how they will make homes and offices become more efficient, reduce energy bills and help contribute to a greener environment. The Centre, which was shortlisted for two Retrofit Academy CIC Awards (Retrofit Social Value Award and Best Local Authority-Led retrofit programme), has transformed and improved the historic Raphael Park Lodge. It demonstrates a variety of retrofit technologies such as an air source heat pump, mechanical heat recovery and ventilation, vacuum glazing, internal wall insulation and other ways to reduce your carbon footprint.



### **An anti-discrimination organisation**

In 2019, Havering Council asked for personal experiences of staff, on a strictly confidential basis, to help identify the equality, diversity and inclusion challenges that needed to be addressed on the journey to becoming an anti-discrimination organisation and improving the Council for everyone. This information was drawn up into a self-evaluation and provided as part of the Local Government Association's (LGA) Race, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (READI) Review. The shared understanding with staff was that the information provided was for the LGA team only, however after a lengthy legal challenge and a lot of weighing up the costs of appeals and protecting our staff confidence, the Council took the decision to publish its historic **self-assessment peer review document**.

### **Anti-Slavery week**

The Council marked Anti-Slavery week for the first time in October, raising awareness of modern slavery, human trafficking and exploitation. Officers from across the Council and the local police joined other local authorities and organisations across the country to mark Anti-Slavery Day by helping people spot the signs and report modern slavery practices, as well as offering general advice on how to keep themselves safe.



## Ensuring excellent customer service

A main objective of the corporate plan is to ensure “we will provide excellent customer service and engage effectively with our communities”. Customer, Registration & Bereavement Services are key in providing essential frontline services to a wide range of our customers who are not only residents, but many of whom live outside of the Borough.

## A busy year for the Registration Service

2024/25 was a particularly busy year for the Registration Service, who are based at Langtons House in Hornchurch, dealing with highly sensitive appointments at the happiest of times, but also the saddest in people’s lives. We saw that more than double the amount of birth registrations were carried out by the service compared to average across the rest of London, whilst also seeing the highest demand for death registration compared to the rest of London. Demand for extra services like British Citizenship ceremonies continue to grow year on year, and the service is lucky to have such a stunning venue in which almost 700 wedding ceremonies were held in 24/25. Our Bereavement Services continued to offer sensitive services for those requiring a funeral, either cremation at the South Essex Crematorium or burial in one of our Cemeteries. A wide range of memorial choices were on offer, extended recently in our newly extended cemetery at Upminster and our expanse of memorial grounds continued to be maintained to high standards, providing a tranquil place for bereaved families to visit. In 2024/25 we also saw the refurbishment of our chapels at the South Essex Crematorium and the installation of a visual tribute system in our East Chapel, enhancing the experience for our bereaved families.

## Customer Service team excellence

Our Customer Services team continue to provide excellent frontline services to residents via not only the Contact/ Call Centre, but the Appointment Centre based at the Town Hall and also now support the main Town Hall reception area for visitors who require support without an appointment. It’s also responsible for providing an excellent online experience too for our customers, demonstrated with the launch of the new website, in June 2024.

## New Customer Service Strategy

Whilst we continued to see a rise in the demand for our services, we took a look at our ambitions for our customer services team. Setting out our ambition within the new **Customer Service Strategy**, approved by Cabinet in July 2024, allowed us to build on existing good practice, bringing the customer voice into the centre of how we design services in the future, whilst thinking about the limited resources we have. The new strategy sets out our Customer Service Standards, which residents can expect from us regardless of service or method of contact through a One Council approach. We aspire to deliver excellent customer service in every interaction we have with our residents, businesses and other stakeholders. We want our customers to be satisfied with the services they receive from us, so by providing excellent customer service through getting this right first time will help us both reduce our costs, through reducing failure demand whilst also improving the customer experience for our residents.

## Key Challenges for 2025/26

### **Proposed financial reforms**

The new Government have proposed a reform of the funding system and multi-year financial settlements but the work on this is only just commencing for implementation in 2026/27. For 2025/26 the Government has provided extra grant funding but has not updated its formulae resulting in a poor financial settlement for Havering. The Council also did not receive any of the £600m Recovery grant which has instead been allocated to high deprivation, low taxbase authorities.

### **Higher employer National Insurance (NI) costs**

The Local Government finance settlement has therefore failed to address Havering's financial situation in any meaningful way. The autumn budget also introduced higher employer NI costs and whilst the Council is likely to receive a grant to mitigate its own costs, this will not apply to providers. The Council will negotiate the best rates possible with providers, but it is inevitable that a proportion of the NI increase will be reflected in future rates. The expectation will be for providers to fund the NI increases directly as this is a tax change introduced by the government.



Page 164



**Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH



This Report is part exempt and **Appendix 3** 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 information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

<b>CABINET</b>	<b>13 August 2025</b>
<b>Subject Heading:</b>	<b><i>First Quarter of Financial Year 2025/26 Revenue and Capital Monitoring Report</i></b>
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Chris Wilkins (Cabinet Member for Finance.)
<b>SLT Lead:</b>	Kathy Freeman, Strategic Director of Resources and Sec 151 Officer.
<b>Report Author and contact details:</b>	<b><i>Katherine Heffernan, Philippa Farrell, Heads of Finance Business Partnering</i></b> <b>01708 432406</b> <b><a href="mailto:Katherine.heffernan@haverling.gov.uk">Katherine.heffernan@haverling.gov.uk</a>, <a href="mailto:philippa.farrell@haverling.gov.uk">philippa.farrell@haverling.gov.uk</a></b>
<b>Policy context:</b>	<b><i>This report provides a summary of the Council's forecast financial position for 2025/26 as at the end of June 2025.</i></b>
<b>Financial summary:</b>	At the end of quarter one of the Financial Year the Council is forecasting an underspend of £1.0m against its budget of £292m. This includes use of Exceptional Financial Support.
<b>Is this a Key Decision?</b>	No – the report is for noting

**When should this matter be reviewed?**

**Reviewing OSC:**

**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

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council - **X**

<b>SUMMARY</b>
----------------

- 1.1.1. This report gives an overview of the Council's financial position setting out the forecast revenue expenditure as at the end of June 2025 with an explanation of the significant variances. It also provides an update on progress towards savings targets and an overview of the capital programme at the end of quarter one.

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>
------------------------

- 2.1 Councillors are asked to note the revenue monitoring position of the Council as at the end of June 2025 (quarter one of the financial year.) This includes the position on the Council's General Fund (sections 4, 5 and 6), HRA (Section 8) and DSG budgets (section 9). The consequent impact on the Council's reserves is set out in section 10.
- 2.2 Councillors are asked to note that £11.3m of funding being held centrally will be transferred to Ageing Well (£7.6m) and Living Well (£3.7m) to meet the ongoing demographic pressures in these areas; Councillors are also asked to note that overallocated growth funding of £0.6m in Starting Well and £1.25m in Environment will be transferred to the corporate budget to reduce the Council's exceptional financial support requirement. These changes will have no impact on the overall budget variance.
- 2.3 Councillors are asked to note the progress toward the delivery of savings as set out in the Council's MTFs as at the end of June 2025 (quarter one of the financial year) as set out in section 7

- 2.4 Councillors are asked to note the capital monitoring position of the Council as at the end of June 2025 (quarter one of the financial year) as set out in section 11
- 2.5 Councillors are asked to note the write off of uncollectable NNDR debt approved by the Strategic Director of Resources as set out in paragraph as set out in section 12.

<b>REPORT DETAIL</b>
----------------------

### **3. THE COUNCIL'S REVENUE BUDGET FOR 2025/26**

- 3.1 The Council is currently in a period of intense financial pressure as a result of long-standing government underfunding at a time of rapid demographic change and growth. Although Havering is an efficient council with low unit costs in comparison with its neighbours it was unable to set a balanced budget for 2024/25 and was required to make use of Exceptional Financial Support and capitalise £30.4m of expenditure.
- 3.2 With no substantial change to funding arrangements for 2025-26 while the population continues to grow this unsatisfactory situation has persisted. The budget has been set on the basis that at least £71.2m of Exceptional Financial Support will be required with the worst-case potential of £89.0m. The total budget requirement in the realistic "mid" case scenario is £274.6m against available funding from Council tax and Settlement Funding Assessment of £204.6m. A contingency of £17.8m has been also added for the worst-case scenario taking the total budget to £292.4m.
- 3.3 The Exceptional Financial Support allows the Council to use capitalisation for its revenue pressures, funding them with either capital receipts or borrowing. It is subject to stringent conditions and strict government oversight but has allowed the Council to set a balanced budget for this financial year. However, in making use of capitalisation the Council will incur financing costs in the form of MRP and interest on any borrowing.

### **4. The Revenue Monitoring Position as at the end of Quarter One**

- 4.1 As at the end of quarter one, the Council is forecasting a relatively small underspend of £1.0m against the worst-case budget of £292.4m as shown in the table below. This however, assumes that the whole of the £17.8m worst case contingency will be required. If this is not the case, then the position will be improved.

Table One – The Council's Revenue Position at the end of Quarter one.

	Revised Budget 2025-26 £m	Actuals YTD as Period 3 £m	Outturn Forecast at end of June £m	Forecast Outturn Variance £m	As % of Budget %
PEOPLE	188.25	46.74	193.30	5.06	3%
PLACE	20.43	3.22	16.68	(3.74)	-18%
RESOURCES	24.64	6.58	26.17	1.53	6%
<b>TOTAL SERVICE DIRECTORATES</b>	<b>233.32</b>	<b>56.54</b>	<b>236.15</b>	<b>2.85</b>	<b>1%</b>
Corporate Budgets	61.43	(0.21)	57.60	(3.83)	-6%
HRA/DSG - Contribution to Corporate Overheads	(2.37)	0.00	(2.37)	0.00	0%
<b>TOTAL COUNCIL REVENUE</b>	<b>292.39</b>	<b>56.33</b>	<b>291.38</b>	<b>(1.0)</b>	<b>0%</b>
Budget Financing	(292.39)	(4.57)	(292.39)	0.00	0%
<b>TOTAL NET</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>51.76</b>	<b>(1.0)</b>	<b>(1.0)</b>	<b>0%</b>

- 4.2 This is the first budget monitoring report of this financial year. As it is still early in the year, forecasts have been prepared on a prudent basis with reasonable assumptions made about in year continuing increases in activity based on recent trends. These assumptions will be monitored and updated throughout the year.
- 4.3 Where services have forecast potential overspends, managers will be asked to identify and implement further mitigation actions to offset or reduce these pressures.
- 4.4 Conversely there are a number of risks that could impact the position adversely. The top risks are listed in the table below.

Table two: The top risks to the Council's Revenue Position

Risk	Directorate	Description	Value £m
Income Achievement	Ageing Well	Period 3 income run rate would drive a forecast £800k lower than the forecast currently included	0.8
Placement Growth	Ageing Well and Living Well Social Care	There has been the addition of £5.8m in the forecast to account for a likely increase in clients. The increase in Period 3 has shown a change in trend that might mean this assumption is too prudent.	TBC
Savings achievement	Living Well Social Care	Targeted Reviews and Better living savings have become increasingly	0.5

		harder to deliver. The transition saving is also unlikely to be achieved	
Decanting from Regen Estates	Housing Demand	23 Families at risk of having to move out of properties and into nightly charged from Sep	0.5
Home to School Transport	Starting Well	The forecast is based on an assumption of reduced average vehicle rates this year and conservative increases in average staff cost rates. If these were to increase, it would have a significant impact on the budget. Driver rate: £30 ph (24/25: £29), PA rate: £29 per hour (24/25: £28), Vehicle rate: £25 per hour (24/25: £29)	0.6
Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) - EHDC	Place/PPP	The authority has committed expenditure to the project at risk, as the current PPA requires variation to be agreed, to cover the higher costs of the project.	0.85m
<b>TOTALQUANTIFIABLE RISKS</b>			<b>£3.25m +</b>

## **5. Key Service Variances**

- 5.1 As table one above shows there is a forecast overspend of £2.85m across service budgets. This is made up of £5.1m relating to People services where the current intense demographic pressures are felt most strongly, partly offset by forecast underspends of £3.75m within Place mostly relating to an improved income position. There is also £1.5m of forecast overspend in Resources - £1m of which relates to issues with Housing Benefit Subsidy.
- 5.2 Once budget adjustments for overallocated growth are made the overspend across service budgets will rise to £4.2m. However, this will be offset by greater underspends on Corporate Budgets so the net position will not change.
- 5.2 A detailed budget monitoring pack is provided as an appendix, but a summary of the main issues is given below.

## **5.3 People – Ageing Well**

- 5.3.1 Ageing Well is forecasting a **£1.1m overspend** against budget driven primarily by an increase in the number of clients coming into the service. The first quarter of 25/26 has seen a net increase of 8 residential care packages with the average commissioned cost being £53k per client. Direct payments are also adding a monthly pressure with increases for period 2

and period 3 amounting to 80k for 8 clients. £2.9m has been included in the forecast for additional client numbers in year.

- 5.3.2 The predicted variance assumes that £7.6m centrally held growth budget will be allocated to Ageing Well. This had been held centrally pending confirmation of the cost centres to which it should be allocated which has now been agreed by Finance and the Strategic Director.

#### **5.4 Living Well**

- 5.4.1 There is a forecast **overspend of £3.8m** of which £1.8m relates to Housing Demand and £2.3m relates to Adult Social Care.
- 5.4.2 As for Ageing Well the Social Care pressures mostly arise from the number of new clients. For example, there were a net nine new residential placements in period 3. There are also savings targets in this area including ones specifically targeting pressure on care planning for transitions from Children's to Adults services. This position assumes the allocation of £3.7m growth currently being held centrally.
- 5.4.3 Pressures on housing demand are continuing from last year. Although the number of new presentations is not currently increasing, the length of time for which households require support is lengthening resulting in greater costs overall. There is also a reduced forecast for Housing Benefit.
- 5.4.4 These overspend pressures are partly offset by Culture and Leisure which is forecasting an underspend of £0.3m from the renegotiated SLM contract for Leisure services.

#### **5.5 Starting Well**

- 5.5.1 There is a net **overspend of £0.2m** across the whole of Starting Well made up of an underspend on Home to School transport offset by pressures in Education Attendance and continuing pressures in the cost of care for Looked After Children. This will rise to £0.8m once the budget is adjusted for overallocated growth.
- 5.5.2 Following the introduction of the new Home to School transport policy this area has shown a small shift towards less expensive forms of transport. In addition, following changes to vehicles, the cost of bus routes is lower. Together this is resulting in a forecast underspend of £0.6m. Effectively this means that growth funding has been overallocated to Home to School Transport. This will be adjusted for in the next month.
- 5.5.3 However recent changes to statutory duties regarding Attendance means that the service has had to expand the staff team and can no longer rely as heavily on income. This is resulting in a pressure of around £0.25m.

- 5.5.4 Following the provision of significant new funding, Children's Social Care is forecasting to be broadly on budget or slightly underspent in its staffing budgets even allowing for the implementation of second phase of restructuring and further recruitment in the second half of the year. However, there continues to be an upwards pressure on the cost of homes for Children in Care which is resulting in an overall overspend. As a result there is a overspend of £0.6m across Safeguarding, Early Help and Principal Social Worker.

## **5.6 Place**

- 5.6.1 There is an **underspend in Place of £3.7m** which is driven by improved and additional income. This will reduce to £2.5m once over allocated growth is removed. In March London Councils agreed to raise the penalty charge notice amount by £15/£30 which is forecast to bring in around £1.5m additional income, along with more enforcement action being taken due to new cameras. There was also £0.350m income received from TfL after the budget was set.

## **5.7 Resources**

- 5.7.1 There is an **overspend of £1.5m** across Resources most of which (£1.0m) relates to the subsidy on Housing Benefit payable for households in exempt and supported accommodation. The Council are paying out non-HRA housing benefit more than the amount they are able to recover in subsidy owing to the number of residents placed in accommodation supplied by unregistered providers. Known/current subsidy loss equates to approx.£0.750m with another £0.200m included for the risk of unfavourable Rent Officer determinations and in year rent increases. There is a cross directorate drive to try and mitigate as much of this pressure as possible and the forecast will be updated throughout the year accordingly.
- 5.7.2 There are additional overspends in Partnerships due to an unachieved historic saving. This area is undergoing restructuring as the partnership arrangements with the NHS are coming to an end in response to NHS budgetary pressures and cuts. Other funding options are being considered including use of the BCF. There is also an overspend of £0.2m in Customer Services and IT most of which relates to Registration and Bereavement.

## **6. Corporate Items**

- 6.1 The Council holds a number of Corporate budgets for central costs including capital financing costs, levies and treasury management. At period 3 these budgets are forecast to underspend against budget by £3.8m.
- 6.2 The amount the Council contributes to the Pension Fund is determined every three years by an actuarial review of the pension fund. The next review is due

to conclude in April 2026 but in advance of the review the actuary has indicated that the Council can reduce its past fund contribution in 2025/26 by £2.0m. This contribution reduction will be split between the HRA and the general fund with a reduction to the General Fund of approximately £1.8m

- 6.3 The Council sets its Capital financing budgets each February based on the latest forecast of capital expenditure at that time. The MRP for 2025/26 is calculated using the Capital Financing Requirement as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. As there was capital slippage between budget setting and outturn there is an underspend of £1.1m on the MRP budget for 2025/26
- 6.4 Within the Capital financing budgets there is a planned contribution to reserves of £0.3m. The adequacy of capital reserves was reviewed at year end for 2024/25 and it was concluded that the reserves were sufficient that this contribution was not needed in 2025/26. These budgets will be further reviewed as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process to ascertain future requirements
- 6.5 The Council budgets for income due on known loans from MLH. The Council is expected to receive £0.5m of income above that budgeted due to interest due on the working capital loan to MLH
- 6.6 The source of the budget to be transferred to Ageing and Living Well is the service growth held corporately shown above as assumed to be fully used. The transfer will not result in any change to the overall Council position.
- 6.7 It should be noted at this stage in line with the prudent approach being taken it is assumed that all contingency budgets will be required including the £18m worst case scenario contingency. If this is not required, then there is considerable scope for the position to improve.

## **7. Progress Towards Delivery of Savings**

- 7.1 There are £10.2m of MTFS savings required to be delivered in this financial year. At this stage (end of June) £0.6m has been entirely delivered most of which relates to restructuring in the Resources department that took place during the last financial year. A further £0.7m of savings are rated green with high confidence of full delivery. These include the Home to School transport policy change, a small group of Highways savings and Communications procurement.
- 7.2 The implementation of a £0.2m Starting Well saving related to providing more family support using internal staff has been delayed and is rated red. Currently all other savings are rated as Amber and will be closely monitored throughout the year.

## **8. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

- 8.1 The HRA is forecasting a small underspend of £0.2m. This is predominantly being driven by increased income from Hostel Service charge income, and licences and reduced costs in grounds maintenance and staffing underspends in General Management. This offsets pressures with higher than expected utility costs for Brunswick Court and the additional costs for the new Mother and Baby Unit, security costs for Royal Jubilee Court and six months of waking watch costs at Highfield Towers.

Table Three: Housing Revenue Account

<b>HRA Income and Expenditure - £m</b>	<b>2025-26 Budget</b>	<b>Period 3 Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>
Dwelling Rents	-62.44	-62.43	0.01
Charges for Services and Facilities - Tenants	-8.25	-8.81	-0.56
Charges for Services and Facilities - Leaseholders	-3.48	-3.48	0
Other Income	-0.71	-0.75	-0.04
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-74.88</b>	<b>-75.47</b>	<b>-0.59</b>
Repairs and Maintenance	14.88	15.08	0.2
General Management	22.42	22.31	-0.11
Special Services, Grounds Maint. & Tree Works	6.75	6.91	0.16
Utilities and other expenditure	2.25	2.4	0.15
Depreciation	10.88	10.88	0
Bad debt	0.67	0.67	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>57.85</b>	<b>58.25</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<b>Net Cost of HRA Services</b>	<b>-17.03</b>	<b>-17.22</b>	<b>-0.19</b>
Interest Payable	17.03	17.03	0
<b>HRA Period 3 Surplus</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-0.19</b>	<b>-0.19</b>

## **9. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)**

- 9.1 There is a forecast overspend of £28.5m on the High Needs Block which is available to fund the costs of support for pupils with Special Educational Needs. This block has been overspending for a number of years now and by

the end of the year the cumulative deficit is expected to be £65m although the statutory override has been extended for another two years.

- 9.2 The pressure on this budget is driven entirely by demand for additional support which has been increasing very sharply over recent years and is outstripping the increase in grant funding. The Council already has a very inclusive approach to high needs and most spend is in the form of additional support in mainstream schools and special units which is both the preferred setting for many students and the lowest cost.

## 10. **Earmarked and General Reserves**

- 10.1 The Council's levels of Earmarked and General Reserves are monitored closely and will be reported on throughout the financial year. The Council currently has £15.2m of General Balances and has budgeted to increase this value to £20.2m in 2025/26.
- 10.2 The Council is committed to building General Reserves to approximately 10% of the net spend in the medium term to safeguard against future risks and uncertainties. The current net spend is £275m and therefore approximately 10% would require a General Balance of £27m.
- 10.3 The Council held £40.0m of General Fund Earmarked reserves at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. These reserves are split into three main areas being Risk, Contractual and Service projects as displayed in the table below.

**Table 4: Earmarked Reserves**

<b>Reserve Type Summary 2024-25</b>	<b>Opening Balance (£m)</b>	<b>Closing Balance (£m)</b>	<b>Movement (£m)</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Risk Mitigation Reserves	(13.5)	(16.8)	(3.3)	Creation of a new IT Reserve
Contractual Reserves	(12.2)	(9.8)	2.4	Planned usage
Internally Earmarked Projects	(9.4)	(13.4)	(4.0)	Creation of reserves for road adoption work and Homes for Ukraine
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(35.1)</b>	<b>(40.0)</b>	<b>(4.9)</b>	

- 10.4 These reserves are kept under constant review and the Council fully recognises the need to maintain Risk and Contractual reserves to offset

future risk. In provisionally agreeing the exceptional financial support for recent years the Government fully recognised and agreed with the need to maintain reserves and balances at a level to safeguard the Council in the future The Council's Capital Position

## **11. Capital Programme**

- 11.1 The current position on the Council's capital programme is set out in Appendix 2. The total in year budget is £378m of which £155m is General Fund and £224m is HRA. This incorporates budget slippage from 24/26
- 11.2 Spend to date on the programme is £24.15m including £7.7m on new housing acquisitions.
- 11.3 Forecast expenditure this year is £250m with £128m slipping into the next financial year, of which £51m relates to the HRA.

## **12. Debt Write Offs for NNDR**

- 12.1 The Council collects income throughout the year for Council tax and Business Rates. The Council has a good track record of debt collection but inevitably given the scale of income raised a small proportion will need to be written off. Under Part 3.3 of the Constitution the Strategic Director of Resources has specific powers to write off irrecoverable sums provided that all write offs are reported to Cabinet.
- 12.2 The total value of the Business Rates debt is £520,925.70. This amount will be written off against the bad debt provision already made in the Council's financial accounts. This means that there will be no further impact on the Council's financial position.
- 12.3 These accounts have been through the recovery process and have all received a bill, reminder notice/s, final notice/s and summonses have been issued against the debtor. Liability Orders have been passed to oneSource enforcement agents for collection who have sent letters, text messages and made visits to the property. The Enforcement Agent has been unable to make contact with the debtor and all other appropriate methods of recovery action has been considered and exhausted.
- 12.4 Business Rates debt is only submitted for write off where all appropriate attempts have been made to collect the debt and failed. Circumstances giving rise to the request for write off will be one of the following:
  - The debtor is Insolvent, Liquidation or in Administration
  - Recovery action has been exhausted.

- 12.5 A list of the amounts written off are provided as an appendix which is exempt from publication as being commercially sensitive.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Financial implications and risks:**

This report sets out the Council's financial position at the end of quarter one and the main risks to that position. The position and these risks will be carefully monitored throughout the year with updates being brought regularly to Cabinet. Pressures that go beyond the boundary of the financial year will be addressed as part of the Medium-Term Financial Planning process.

### **Legal implications and risks:**

There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

### **Human Resources implications and risks:**

There are no HR implications arising directly from this monitoring report. Where changes to the workforce are required in response to financial issues then these will be managed in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.

### **Equalities implications and risks:**

There are no Equalities implications arising directly from this monitoring report. All future changes to Council services made in response to financial pressures will have had an EQIA and consultation carried out as part of their implementation.

### **Health and Wellbeing implications and Risks**

There are no Health and Wellbeing implications arising directly from this monitoring report.

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>
--------------------------

**1 [The Council's 2025/26 Budget and 2025-2029 Medium Term Financial Strategy](#)**



**Havering**  
L O N D O N   B O R O U G H

# Service Revenue Budget Monitoring Period 3 – June 2024

1. [Overall Position](#)
2. [High Level Risk and Opportunities](#)
3. [Savings summary](#)
4. Pillar Detail
- [People](#)
- Ageing Well
  - Living Well
  - Starting Well
- [Place](#)
- Environment
  - PPP
  - Housing Operations, Assets and Property
- [Resources](#)
- Resources Non-Shared
  - One Source
- [5.Dedicated Schools Grant \(DSG\)](#)
- [6.HRA](#)

# High Level Summary - £1m UNDERSPEND

TOTAL NET	Revised Budget 2025- 26	Actuals YTD as Period 3	Outturn Forecast at end of June	Forecast Outturn Variance	As % of Budget
<b>TOTAL NET</b>	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
PEOPLE	188.25	46.74	193.30	5.06	3%
PLACE	20.43	3.22	16.68	-3.74	-18%
RESOURCES	24.64	6.58	26.17	1.53	6%
<b>TOTAL SERVICE DIRECTORATES</b>	<b>233.32</b>	<b>56.54</b>	<b>236.15</b>	<b>2.85</b>	<b>1%</b>
Corporate Budgets	61.43	-0.21	57.60	-3.83	-6%
HR&C Contribution to Corporate Overheads	-1.69	0.00	-1.69	0.00	0%
DS&C Contribution to Corporate Overheads	-0.68	0.00	-0.68	0.00	0%
<b>TOTAL COUNCIL REVENUE</b>	<b>292.39</b>	<b>56.33</b>	<b>291.38</b>	<b>-0.98</b>	<b>0%</b>
Budget Financing	-292.39	-4.57	-292.39	0.00	0%
<b>TOTAL NET</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>51.76</b>	<b>-1.00</b>	<b>-0.98</b>	<b>0%</b>

The Council's services are forecasting a £2.9m overspend as at Period 3. Council wide Havering is reporting a c£1m underspend. This underspend reduces the demand on the £18m contingency capitalisation directive exceptional support being held centrally. Further details are on the following slides.

The Council's services are forecasting a £2.9m overspend as at Period 3, this is driven by a £5m overspend in People, a £1.5m overspend in Resources, c£1m of this is driven by Housing Benefit, and a forecasted £3.7m underspend within Place. The Council continues to see a trend of Social Care, and demand led front line services facing financial pressure. This is being offset by underspends within Environment, where Parking income is over performing.

The corporate budgets are forecasting an underspend of £3.8m driven by reduced contributions to the Pension Fund of £1.8m, reduced borrowing in prior years leading to a lower required minimum revenue provision totalling £1.1m, increased loan income for MLH of £0.5m and an underspend against concessionary fares of £0.15m.

The Council is reporting risks of £4.91m and opportunities of £5.00m. This provides a range within which the forecast could move in either direction. Material risks and opportunities are identified on the following slides.

Following the review to the position there will be some adjustments to the budget. £11.3m will be transferred from Centrally Held budgets to Ageing Well and Living Well to meet Social Care demand growth while £0.6m will be returned to contingency budget for Home to School Transport and £1.25m from Environment. These virements will NOT impact the overall forecast position.

# High Level Risks–Material Level Above £500k

Risk	Directorate	Description	Value	RAG
Income Achievement	Ageing Well	Period 3 income run rate would drive a forecast £800k lower than the forecast currently included	£0.80m	
Placement Growth	Ageing and Living Well Social Care	There has been the addition of £5.8m in the forecast to account for a likely increase in clients. The increase in Period 3 has shown a change in trend that might mean this assumption is too prudent.	TBC	
Savings achievement	Living Well Social Care	Targeted Reviews and Better living savings have become increasingly harder to deliver. The transition saving is also unlikely to be achieved	£0.50m	
Decanting from Regen Estates	Housing Demand	23 Families at risk of having to move out of properties and into nightly charged from Sep	£0.50m	
Home to School Transport	Starting Well	The forecast is based on an assumption of reduced average vehicle rates this year and conservative increases in average staff cost rates. If these were to increase, it would have a significant impact on the budget.	£0.60m	
Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) - EHDC	Place/PPP	The authority has committed expenditure to the project at risk, as the current PPA requires variation to be agreed, to cover the higher costs of the project.	£0.85m	

# High Level Opportunities –Material Level Above £500k

Opportunity	Directorate	Description	Value	RAG
Income Achievement	Ageing Well	The expectation is that as placements numbers and costs increase, income will also increase. An estimate has been made on what the likely impact of this is.	£1.0m	
Savings Achievement	Ageing Well	There could be potential for additional delivery of the MTFS savings	£0.50m	
Cost of the Capitalisation Directive	Corporate	The budget assumes that the Council will need to borrow to fund the capitalisation directive. However through careful management of its cashflow it may be possible to delay this and reduce the level of interest payable.	Up to £3.4m	
Extended Producer Responsibility	Corporate/ Environment	Following the introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility the Council will receive additional contribution income	Up to £0.5m	
Contract Inflation Contingency	Corporate	As part of budget setting a contingency was set aside for contract inflation. However through robust negotiation it may be possible to reduce the costs.	Up to £1m	

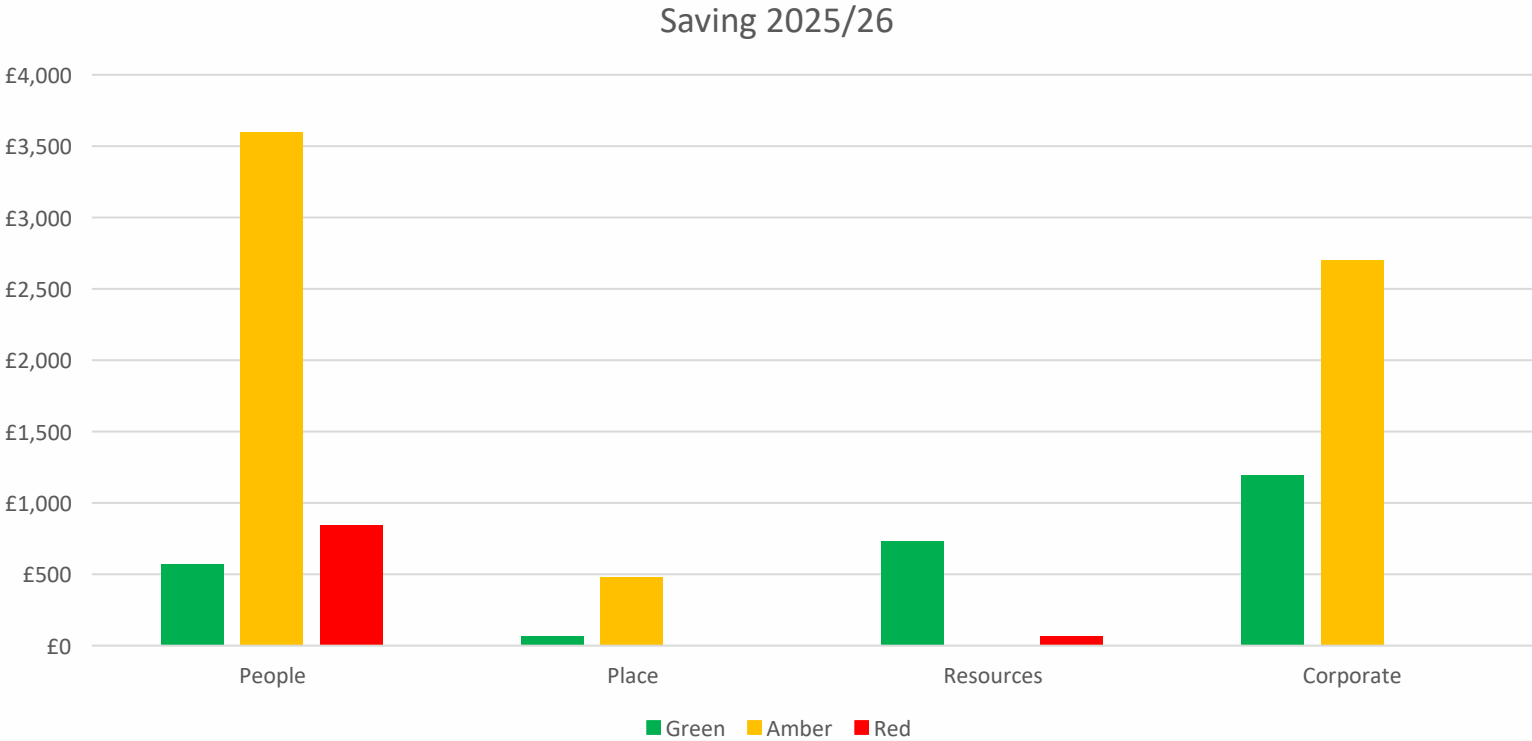
**The Havering you want to be part of**

# Saving Summary

It is early in the year for savings implementation. To date £0.6m of the total £10.25m have been delivered. The remainder of the savings total is currently RAG rated amber and will continue to be monitored throughout the year.

If a savings is RAG rated red an alternative saving must be identified to make up the short fall. Any non delivery of savings will create a financial pressure in 2025/26.

Page 183



# PEOPLE Summary **£5.06m OVERSPEND**, 3% of budget.

PEOPLE	Revised Budget 2025- 26	Actuals YTD as Period 3	Outturn Forecast at end of June	Forecast Outturn Variance	As % of Budget
<b>PEOPLE</b>	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
People - Starting Well	83.02	16.46	83.17	0.16	0%
People - Ageing Well	53.51	18.76	54.61	1.10	2%
People - Living Well	51.72	11.52	55.52	3.80	7%
<b>TOTAL PEOPLE</b>	188.25	46.74	193.30	5.06	3%

The People Pillar continues to see financial pressure. The most significant pressures are being driven by Ageing Well and Living Well, with Children's forecasting a small overspend.

Whilst Ageing Well's pressure has previously driven by market costs we are now seeing increases in activity driving the financial pressures. This is a different trend and the service are exploring the root cause. We are seeing more placements from hospital to residential rather than nursing placements, meaning a reduced Continuing Healthcare Contribution but more complex residential placements. This is being raised with health.

Living Well's overspend is being driven by care costs increases in both Residential placements and Supported Living, and through the costs of Nightly lets and Hotels being used for accommodation in Temporary Accommodation. Although the numbers of households is stabilising the length of stay is increasing, which suggests a lack of suitable move on accommodation available.

**The Havering you want to be part of**

# PLACE Summary **£3.74m underspend** of 24% of Budget

PLACE	Revised Budget 2025- 26	Actuals YTD as Period 3	Outturn Forecast at end of June	Forecast Outturn Variance	As % of Budget
<b>PLACE</b>	£m	£m	£m	£m	
Place - Planning & Public Protection	4.67	1.64	4.49	(0.18)	-4%
Place - Environment	14.12	(1.24)	10.40	(3.72)	-26%
Place - Housing & Property	1.64	2.82	1.79	0.16	10%
<b>TOTAL PLACE</b>	20.43	3.22	16.68	(3.74)	-18%

Place's underspend is driven by the **Environment** Directorate underspend of **(£3.720m)**. This is largely increased income in the form of TfL grant, Parking fines (PCNs) and Parks and Waste income.

- The Environment service have offered to return **(£1.250m)** relating to returning growth budget due mainly to an improved 2024/25 Outturn with potentially another adjustment to budget to recognise the PCN fee rate increase agreed by London Councils that came into force 7th April 2025.

**Planning & Public Protection (£0.180m)** is forecast for fees relating to a variation of a Planning Performance Agreement, however, this is still being negotiated, and a key risk is identified within its section of the slides. The Council continues to incur costs at risk.

**Housing and Property £0.160m** overspend is mainly due to void commercial properties with some impacted by the regeneration of Hildene and Farnham.

**The Havering you want to be part of**

# RESOURCES and oneSource Summary **£1.5m overspend 6%** of budget

RESOURCES	Revised Budget 2025-26	Actuals YTD as Period 3	Outturn Forecast at end of June	Forecast Outturn Variance	As % of Budget
RESOURCES	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Resources - Public Health	-2.27	-2.37	-2.27	0.00	0%
Resources Non-Shared LBH	1.36	2.20	2.32	0.96	71%
Resources - HR & OD	2.54	0.71	2.54	0.00	0%
Customer Services Transformation & IT	0.61	1.26	0.91	0.30	49%
Resources - Finance	6.09	1.80	5.84	-0.25	-4%
Resources - Communication	0.79	0.48	0.92	0.13	16%
Resources - Partnerships	0.51	0.58	0.90	0.39	76%
oneSource Cost Share LBH Adjustment	12.17	1.03	12.17	0.00	0%
Resources - Public Health - Non Grant	2.84	0.89	2.84	0.00	0%
<b>TOTAL RESOURCES</b>	<b>24.64</b>	<b>6.58</b>	<b>26.17</b>	<b>1.53</b>	<b>6%</b>

**£0.960m Housing Benefit Subsidy loss:** The Council is paying out more non-HRA housing benefit than we are able to recover in subsidy due to the number of residents placed in accommodation supplied by unregistered providers. Known/current subsidy loss equates to approx.£0.750m with another £0.2m for the risk of unfavourable Rent Officer determinations and in year rent increases.

**£0.390m Partnerships:** £0.250m relates to a prior years undelivered savings target and the remainder is made up of shortfalls in expected income and recharges.

CORPORATE	Revised Budget 2025-26	Outturn Forecast at end of June	Forecast Outturn Variance
<b>CORPORATE</b>	£m	£m	£m
Treasury Management and Capital Financing	18.2	16.3	-1.9
Pension Fund Contributions	8.5	6.7	-1.8
Concessionary Fares	7.3	7.2	-0.1
Levies	18.8	18.8	0.0
Service Growth held Corporately	17.9	17.9	0.0
Grant Income held Corporately	-49.9	-49.9	0.0
Contingency and contribution to general reserves	6.0	6.0	6.0
Provision for pay and price inflation	7.6	7.6	0.0
Other Corporate Budgets	11.5	11.5	0.0
Worst Case Contingent budget held centrally	17.8	17.8	0.0
<b>TOTAL CORPORATE</b>	<b>63.7</b>	<b>59.9</b>	<b>-3.8</b>

## Minimum Revenue Provision (GF Underspend £1.1m)

The Council sets its Capital financing budgets each February based on the latest forecast of capital expenditure at that time. The MRP for 2025/26 is calculated using the Capital Financing Requirement as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. As there was capital slippage between budget setting and outturn there is an underspend of £1.1m on the MRP budget for 2025/26

## **Budgeted contribution to reserves not required in 2025/26 (GF Underspend £0.28m)**

Within the Capital financing budgets there is a planned contribution to reserves of £0.28m. The adequacy of capital reserves was reviewed at year end for 2024/25 and it was concluded that the reserves were sufficient that this contribution was not needed in 2025/26.

## **Regeneration Income on MLH Loans (Forecast Underspend £0.5m)**

The Council budgets for income due on known loans from MLH. The Council is expected to receive £0.5m of income above that budgeted due to interest due on the working capital loan to MLH

## **Concessionary Fares (GF Underspend £0.15m)**

Concessionary fares are set each December at a meeting of London Council's technical committee. In March after the Council had set its budget it was announced the Councils would receive a rebate of concessionary fares of £0.15m for 2025/26

## **Contributions to the pension fund: (GF underspend £1.8m)**

In advance of the next actuarial review the actuary has indicated that the Council can reduce its past fund contribution in 2025/26 by £2.0m. This contribution reduction will be split between the HRA and the general fund with a reduction to the General Fund of approximately £1.8m

**Opportunities:** There is the additional opportunity that further funding for pERP will be received in the next quarter. This could improve the position by c.£400k.

# Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Summary **£28.5m Overspend 14.8%** of Budget

DSG Block	Budget (Post Recoupment) £m	Forecasted Expenditure	Forecast Outturn Variance	% of budget	Notes
Schools Block	98.73	98.7	0	0.0%	£1.291 transfer from Schools Block to High Needs Block
Central Schools Services Block	1.91	1.91	0	0.0%	Expected to be nil or small underspend
High Needs Block	43.72	72.20	28.48	65.2%	Projected expenditure based on current demand
Early Years Block	47.82	47.82	0	0.0%	Expected to be nil or small underspend
<b>DSG overall</b>	<b>192,813</b>	<b>220,662</b>	<b>-28,479</b>	<b>-14.8%</b>	

The material variance within the DSG is in the High Needs Block. The forecasted overspend is reflective of the increasing demand for support, that the current central government formula of distribution does not cover for Havering and other LAs across England.

**The cumulative overall DSG deficit forecasted to be carried forward to 2026-27 is expected to be £64.9m.**

The DSG High Needs Block is a part of the funding provided by the central government to local authorities to support education for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) regulations has extended the **Statutory Override for DSG until the end of financial year 2027-28**, The government have committed £760 million from the Transformation Fund over three years for the SEND reform, which will be a systemic reform to SEND and is due to be outlined in an autumn 2025 Schools White Paper.

# High Level Risks and Mitigations - DSG

Risk	Pillar/Directorate	Description	Value	RAG
Schools in Deficit	Starting Well - DSG	This is the first year that maintained schools' cumulative balances is in a net deficit. There is risk that more schools may fall into deficit in year and existing deficits may increase.	£2 - 4m	
Increased Demand	High Needs Block	The HNB forecast assumes an increase in the number of children requiring support – however there is always a risk this could be underestimated.		

Page 190

\*Key: Opportunities should be RAG rated - Red means opportunity is unlikely to materialise– Anything under 34% chance of probability should be red. Amber is significant chance of materialising - 35 – 79% probability. Green the opportunity is likely to matieralise – 80% + Finance would recommend green opportunities are included in the forecast.

# Housing Revenue Account - £0.20m Underspend

The HRA is forecasting a small underspend of c£200k. This is predominantly being driven by increased income from Hostel Service charge income, and licences and reduced costs in ground maintenance and staffing underspends in General Management.

This offsets pressures with higher than expected utility costs for Brunswick Court and the addition costs for the new Mother and Baby Unit, security costs for Royal Jubilee Court and six months of waking watch costs at Highfield Towers.

Page 191

	2025-26 Budget £'m	Period 3 Forecast £'m	Variance £'m
Dwelling Rents	-62.44	-62.43	0.01
Service Charges	-11.73	-12.29	-0.56
Other Income	-0.71	-0.74	-0.03
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-74.88</b>	<b>-75.46</b>	<b>-0.58</b>
Repairs and Maintenance	14.88	15.08	0.2
General Management	22.42	22.31	-0.11
Special Services, Utilities and Other	9.00	9.31	0.31
Depreciation	10.88	10.88	0
Bad debt	0.67	0.67	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>57.85</b>	<b>58.25</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<b>Net Cost of HRA Services</b>	<b>-17.03</b>	<b>-17.21</b>	<b>-0.18</b>
Interest Payable	17.03	17.03	0
<b>HRA Period 3 Surplus</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-0.19</b>	<b>-0.19</b>

# High Level Risks and Opportunities – HRA

Risk	Pillar/Directorate	Description	Value	RAG
Waking Watch	Place - Housing & Property (HRA)	Waking watch at Highfield Towers for 6 months could be extended for a further 6 months.	200k	

Page 192

Opportunity	Pillar/Directorate	Description	Value	RAG
Interest payable	Place – Housing & Property (HRA)	Significant capital budget, we have a history of slipping capital programmes and not requiring the full budgeted capital borrowing.	TBC	

## APPENDIX 2 – CAPITAL MONITORING UPDATE Quarter 1

### 1. CAPITAL MONITORING

- 1.1. The Capital programme for 2025/26 through to 2029/30 was agreed at Council in February 2025. Since then slippage from 2024/25 has been added as per the capital outturn report and there have been some additions to the programme resulting in a summary programme as set out in the table below.

Summary of Existing Approved Capital Programme	Previous Years Budget £m	2025-26 Budget £m	2026-27 Budget £m	2027-28 + Budget £m	Total Budget £m
Ageing Well	6.159	5.836	0.000	0.000	11.996
Living Well	27.981	3.285	0.815	3.353	35.435
Starting Well	6.006	3.438	0.000	0.000	9.444
<b>People</b>	<b>40.147</b>	<b>12.559</b>	<b>0.815</b>	<b>3.353</b>	<b>56.874</b>
Environment	32.477	20.118	7.000	21.000	80.595
Housing & Property (GF)	64.470	109.583	130.014	41.688	345.756
Housing & Property (HRA)	439.213	223.449	168.735	441.502	1272.898
Planning & Public Protection	0.703	0.997	0.000	0.000	1.700
<b>Place</b>	<b>536.863</b>	<b>354.147</b>	<b>305.749</b>	<b>504.190</b>	<b>1700.949</b>
Customer Services	7.185	0.875	0.000	0.000	8.059
Finance	0.065	2.461	0.000	0.000	2.526
IT Digital and Customer	3.450	8.161	0.300	0.000	11.911
Resources - Public Health	0.305	0.032	0.000	0.000	0.337
<b>Resources</b>	<b>11.004</b>	<b>11.530</b>	<b>0.300</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>22.834</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>588.014</b>	<b>378.236</b>	<b>306.864</b>	<b>507.543</b>	<b>1780.657</b>

GF / HRA Split	Previous Years Budget £m	2025-26 Budget £m	2026-27 Budget £m	2027-28 + Budget £m	Total Budget £m
General Fund	148.801	154.787	138.129	66.041	507.758
Housing Revenue Account	439.213	223.449	168.735	441.502	1272.898
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>588.014</b>	<b>378.236</b>	<b>306.864</b>	<b>507.543</b>	<b>1780.657</b>

- 1.2. Financing - The Council finances its capital expenditure through a combination of resources both internal and externally generated. Each funding stream is considered in terms of risk and affordability in the short and long term. The current and future climates have a significant influence on capital funding decisions. As a result, the planned disposals and borrowing costs are kept under regular review to ensure timing maximises any potential receipts or reduces borrowing costs.

- 1.3. Excluding previous years spend of £588.014m (shown for information in the table above), the total capital programme for 2025/26 and beyond is £1,192.642m split between the GF (£358.957m) and HRA (£833.686m). Funding for the planned capital expenditure for both the GF and HRA is set out in the 2 tables below.

<b>General Fund Financing</b>	<b>2025/26 Financing Budget £m</b>	<b>2026/27 Financing Budget £m</b>	<b>2028/29+ Financing Budget £m</b>	<b>Total Financing Budget £m</b>
Capital Receipts	15.007	2.550	0.000	<b>17.557</b>
Revenue & Reserves	2.316	0.000	0.000	<b>2.316</b>
Grants & Other Contributions	68.960	31.185	0.000	<b>100.145</b>
Borrowing	68.503	104.395	66.041	<b>238.939</b>
<b>Total GF Financing</b>	<b>154.787</b>	<b>138.129</b>	<b>66.041</b>	<b>358.957</b>

<b>HRA Financing</b>	<b>2025/26 Financing Budget £m</b>	<b>2026/27 Financing Budget £m</b>	<b>2028/29+ Financing Budget £m</b>	<b>Total Financing Budget £m</b>
Capital Receipts	42.894	40.104	120.039	<b>203.036</b>
Revenue & Reserves	10.877	12.955	38.380	<b>62.212</b>
Grants & Other Contributions	17.483	0.000	0.000	<b>17.483</b>
Borrowing	152.196	115.675	283.083	<b>550.954</b>
<b>Total HRA Financing</b>	<b>223.449</b>	<b>168.735</b>	<b>441.502</b>	<b>833.686</b>

## **2. Capital Achievements as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

- 2.1. Capital expenditure as at the 30<sup>th</sup> June is £24.150m to date. Notable achievements so far for 2025/26 are as follows.

- Spend of £7.675m on the Council Housing Acquisitions Programme, £2.629m on building of a new hostel and over £7m on improving the housing stock across the borough.
- £1.1m on improving the quality of our roads and infrastructure.
- £1.495m on enhancing our schools and educational facilities.
- £0.981m on the 12 Estates project to improve housing across borough.
- £0.770m on the regeneration of Bridge Close.
- £392k the purchase of Public Realm (Parks) & (Bereavement Services) vehicles.
- £395k spent on home adaptations to allow residents to continue living in their own homes

## **3. 2025/26 Capital Programme**

3.1. The report below sets out the Period 3 position for the Council's capital programme for the 2025/26 financial year.

	Budget 2025/26 £m	2025/26 Forecast Period 3 £m	2025/26 Variance £m
Starting Well	3.438	1.206	(2.232)
Living Well	3.285	2.857	(0.428)
Ageing Well	5.836	4.364	(1.472)
<b>People</b>	<b>12.559</b>	<b>8.428</b>	<b>(4.132)</b>
Housing & Property (GF)	109.758	48.742	(61.016)
Housing & Property (HRA)	223.274	171.656	(51.618)
Planning & Public Protection	0.997	0.997	0.000
Environment	20.118	12.975	(7.143)
<b>Place</b>	<b>354.147</b>	<b>234.370</b>	<b>(119.777)</b>
Resources - IT Digital and Customer	8.161	6.678	(1.483)
Customer Services	0.875	0.640	(0.235)
Finance	2.461	0.000	(2.461)
Public Health	0.032	0.032	0.000
<b>Resources</b>	<b>11.530</b>	<b>7.350</b>	<b>(4.179)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>378.236</b>	<b>250.148</b>	<b>-(128.088)</b>

	Budget 2025/26 £m	2025/26 Forecast Period 3 £m	2025/26 Variance £m
General Fund	154.962	78.492	(76.469)
Housing Revenue Account	223.274	171.656	(51.618)
<b>Total</b>	<b>378.236</b>	<b>250.148</b>	<b>(128.088)</b>

3.2. The forecast expenditure for 2025/26 is £250.148m with actual expenditure at the end of Period 3 of £24.150m. Whilst most project budgets are on track to be spent over the full MTFS period there are a number of projects where expenditure has slipped back into future years, the explanations for the main programmes that contribute towards the slippage provided below:

### 3.3. PEOPLE

#### 3.3.1. Starting Well

Programme Area /Service/ Directorate	Budget 2025/26 £m	2025/26 Forecast Period 3 £m	2025/26 Variance £m
Childrens Social Care Programme	1.565	0.234	(1.331)

Education - Other	0.011	0.000	(0.011)
Schools	1.863	0.972	(0.890)
<b>Education</b>	<b>3.438</b>	<b>1.206</b>	<b>(2.232)</b>
<b>Starting Well</b>	<b>3.438</b>	<b>1.206</b>	<b>(2.232)</b>

### Children Social Care Programme – Slippage of £1.331m

The slippage relates to children with special educational needs to provide residential and respite at Aldwych site. Currently awaiting a decision on future of this site as may now be surplus to requirements.

### Schools – Slippage of £0.890m

Schools slippage comprises of a number of schemes, which have been deferred or are no longer required. Any underspends within Schools will be moved back to the unallocated pot and subsequently used to fund additional projects.

### 3.3.2 Living Well

Programme Area /Service/ Directorate	Budget 2025/26 £m	2025/26 Forecast Period 3 £m	2025/26 Variance £m
Leisure Other	2.464	2.064	(0.400)
Leisure SLM	0.820	0.792	(0.028)
<b>Housing Demand (GF)</b>	<b>3.285</b>	<b>2.857</b>	<b>(0.428)</b>
<b>Living Well</b>	<b>3.285</b>	<b>2.857</b>	<b>(0.428)</b>

There is no significant slippage forecast at this stage for living well.

### 3.3.3 Ageing Well

Programme Area /Service/ Directorate	Budget 2025/26 £m	2025/26 Forecast Period 3 £m	2025/26 Variance £m
Adults Social Care - DFG	4.524	3.052	(1.472)
Adults Social Care - Other	1.312	1.312	0.000
<b>Adults Social Care</b>	<b>5.836</b>	<b>4.364</b>	<b>(1.472)</b>

Ageing Well	5.836	4.364	(1.472)
-------------	-------	-------	---------

### Adults Social Care - DFG – Slippage of £1.472m

The slippage of £1.472m is based on current activity levels of disabled facilities grant applications.

## 3.4. PLACE

### 3.4.1. Housing and Property – General Fund

Programme Area /Service/ Directorate	Budget 2025/26 £m	2025/26 Forecast Period 3 £m	2025/26 Variance £m
Mercury Land Holdings	54.307	23.572	(30.734)
Rainham & Beam Park	8.835	1.761	(7.074)
Regeneration - Other	9.802	8.463	(1.339)
Regeneration - TfL	1.583	0.000	(1.583)
<b>Regeneration &amp; Place Shaping</b>	<b>74.527</b>	<b>33.796</b>	<b>(40.731)</b>
Corporate Buildings	8.344	4.362	(3.982)
Health & Safety	0.051	0.051	0.000
Pre Sale Expenses	0.322	0.078	(0.244)
Schools Building Maintenance	4.074	4.074	0.000
Schools Expansions	20.317	4.258	(16.059)
Vehicle Replacement	2.124	2.124	0.000
<b>Housing, Property and Assets</b>	<b>35.231</b>	<b>14.946</b>	<b>(20.285)</b>
<b>Housing &amp; Property (GF)</b>	<b>109.758</b>	<b>48.742</b>	<b>(61.016)</b>

### MLH – Slippage of £30.734m

Forecasts are based on latest information received from MLH Finance Director.

### Rainham & Beam Park – Slippage of £7.074m

£5.000m of the slippage relates to Rainham & Beam Park Housing Zone – CPO's and Grant budget. This scheme has experienced delays.

£2.000m slippage relates to Rainham and Beam Park Housing Zone – Equity. The forecast includes all expected costs through the Rainham and Beam Park Regen LLP for the year including architects fees, consultancy and Council DSSA payments. £7k underspend funds the overspend on Rainham Commercial Properties.

### Regeneration Other – Slippage of £1.339m

The slippage relates to the Rainham Gateway - Active Travel. Forecast updated at Period 3 reflects current project progress.

### Regeneration - TfL – Slippage of £1.583m

The slippage is as a result of delays to the Beam Parkway major scheme and is based on the latest information from the project manager.

### **Corporate Buildings – Slippage of £3.982m**

Slippage is as a result of delays in procurement, planning and the tender process for the project corporate buildings initiative (£2.500m) and corporate landlord building pressure (£0.945m). The works on Town Hall Re-Roofing Project and restoration, courtyard improvements will not fully commence until September this year.

### **Schools Expansions – Slippage of £16.059m**

Slippage relates to Balgores New special school scheme. Slightly delayed planning programme, which has shifted the anticipated start of the contract later into the next financial year.

### **3.4.2. Housing & Property (HRA)**

<b>Programme Area /Service/ Directorate</b>	<b>Budget 2025/26 £m</b>	<b>2025/26 Forecast Period 3 £m</b>	<b>2025/26 Variance £m</b>
12 Estates	6.455	6.455	0.000
Bridge Close Acquisitions	32.992	18.219	(14.773)
Bridge Close Regeneration	0.929	0.434	(0.495)
HRA Regeneration	104.905	74.676	(30.229)
<b>Regeneration &amp; Place Shaping</b>	<b>145.280</b>	<b>99.784</b>	<b>(45.496)</b>
HRA	50.000	44.378	(5.622)
HRA Stock Adjustments	2.618	2.118	(0.500)
Housing HRA	25.375	25.375	0.000
<b>Housing, Property and Assets</b>	<b>77.993</b>	<b>71.872</b>	<b>(6.122)</b>
<b>Housing &amp; Property (HRA)</b>	<b>223.274</b>	<b>171.656</b>	<b>(51.618)</b>

### **Bridge Close Acquisitions – Slippage of £14.773m**

Most of the slippage is related to the Acquisitions budget. Current year forecast based on expected consultancy/planning fees plus £14.8m in acquisitions for site assembly, assuming that the HICC replacement property materialises during 2025/26. Negotiations with land owners ongoing via private treaty.

### **HRA Regeneration – Slippage of £30.229m**

The main elements of the slippage are discussed below –

- £15.067m of slippage relates to 12 Sites Phase 1 Forward Funding. Forecasts based on current 12 sites programme including: £10.3m for Chippenham Rd demolition/PCSA/ Construction start, £4.9m for Farnham and Hildene scheme including demolition start, £1.6m Waterloo estate to progress first phase through planning. £748k total consultancy and staff costs. £19.000m budgeted for 75 unsold units to be acquired at a 33% discount at Park Rise assuming sales are stalled.
- £16.191m of slippage relates to acquisitions within the HRA regeneration programme. The forecast is based on the remaining properties to be bought back at Oldchurch gardens, Chippenham, Farnham and Maygreen. The majority of these purchases are now expected to complete in 2025/26.

### HRA – Slippage of £5.622m

£4.500m of the slippage relates to Residents Safety Related budget, as the works are not expected on site until April 26 these budgets will be slipped into 2026/27. The remaining £0.700m of the slippage relates to High-rise flats lifts works, delays have resulted from building safety regulator.

#### 3.4.3. Planning & Public Protection

Programme Area /Service/ Directorate	Budget 2025/26 £m	2025/26 Forecast Period 3 £m	2025/26 Variance £m
Enforcement	0.970	0.970	0.000
Planning - TfL	0.027	0.027	0.000
<b>Planning &amp; Public Protection</b>	<b>0.997</b>	<b>0.997</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Planning &amp; Public Protection</b>	<b>0.997</b>	<b>0.997</b>	<b>0.000</b>

There is no significant slippage forecast at this stage within Planning & Public Protection.

#### 3.4.4. Environment

Programme Area /Service/ Directorate	Budget 2025/26 £m	2025/26 Forecast Period 3 £m	2025/26 Variance £m
Environment - TfL	2.353	2.274	(0.079)
Highways & Street Lighting	10.394	9.635	(0.759)
Public Realm - Grounds Maintenance	0.014	0.014	0.000
Public Realm - Parks	1.191	0.827	(0.364)

Public Realm - Waste	6.057	0.116	(5.941)
Environment - Parking	0.109	0.109	0.000
<b>Environment</b>	<b>20.118</b>	<b>12.975</b>	<b>(7.143)</b>
<b>Environment</b>	<b>20.118</b>	<b>12.975</b>	<b>(7.143)</b>

### Highways & Street Lighting – Slippage of £0.759m

The slippage relates to a number of small schemes with the largest scheme Highways (Roads & Pavements) with a slippage of £0.511m.

### Public Realm - Waste – Slippage of £5.941m

The slippage relates to the Food Waste collection scheme. This scheme has experienced some delays.

## 3.5. RESOURCES

### 3.5.1. IT Digital and Customer

Programme Area /Service/ Directorate	Budget 2025/26 £m	2025/26 Forecast Period 3 £m	2025/26 Variance £m
ICT Cloud Migration	1.644	1.644	0.000
ICT Modern Device Management	2.101	2.101	0.000
Transformation	4.416	2.933	(1.483)
<b>IT, Digital &amp; Transformation</b>	<b>8.161</b>	<b>6.678</b>	<b>(1.483)</b>
<b>Resources - IT Digital and Customer</b>	<b>8.161</b>	<b>6.678</b>	<b>(1.483)</b>

### Transformation – Slippage of £1.483m

The slippage of £1.483m relates to Transformation reserve. This amount is being held for any IT related activity coming from the STAR Chamber process that is not funded.

### 3.5.2 Customer Services

Programme Area /Service/ Directorate	Budget 2025/26 £m	2025/26 Forecast Period 3 £m	2025/26 Variance £m
Libraries	0.786	0.640	(0.146)
<b>Customer Services</b>	<b>0.786</b>	<b>0.640</b>	<b>(0.146)</b>
Cemeteries and Crematorium	0.088	0.000	(0.088)
<b>Bereavement &amp; Registration Services</b>	<b>0.088</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>(0.088)</b>

<b>Resources - Customer Services</b>	<b>0.875</b>	<b>0.640</b>	<b>(0.235)</b>
--------------------------------------	--------------	--------------	----------------

There is no significant slippage forecast within Customer Services.

### 3.5.3 Finance

<b>Programme Area /Service/ Directorate</b>	<b>Budget 2025/26 £m</b>	<b>2025/26 Forecast Period 3 £m</b>	<b>2025/26 Variance £m</b>
Finance People & Place Programme	0.032	0.000	(0.032)
Contingency	2.429	0.000	(2.429)
<b>Corporate Finance</b>	<b>2.461</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>(2.461)</b>
<b>Resources - Finance</b>	<b>2.461</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>(2.461)</b>

#### Contingency – Slippage of £2.429m

The contingency budget is delegated to the S151 officer for approval to either new or existing capital schemes. As such the forecast for contingency is zero as there will be no spend allocated directly to the project.

### 3.5.4 Public Health

<b>Programme Area /Service/ Directorate</b>	<b>Budget 2025/26 £m</b>	<b>2025/26 Forecast Period 3 £m</b>	<b>2025/26 Variance £m</b>
Insight, Policy & Strategy	0.032	0.032	0.000
<b>Insight, Policy &amp; Strategy</b>	<b>0.032</b>	<b>0.032</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Resources - Public Health</b>	<b>0.032</b>	<b>0.032</b>	<b>0.000</b>

There is no significant capital slippage forecast at this stage in Public Health.

This page is intentionally left blank

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

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank