



COUNCIL MEETING

**7.30 pm Wednesday, 23 July 2025
At Council Chamber - Town Hall**

Members of the Council of the London Borough of Havering are advised that a meeting of the Council is scheduled to take place on the date and time shown above. An indication of the business to be dealt with is given below.

**Gavin Milnthorpe
Monitoring Officer**

**For information about the meeting please contact:
Anthony Clements tel: 01708 433065
anthony.clements@oneSource.co.uk**

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.



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.**

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:-

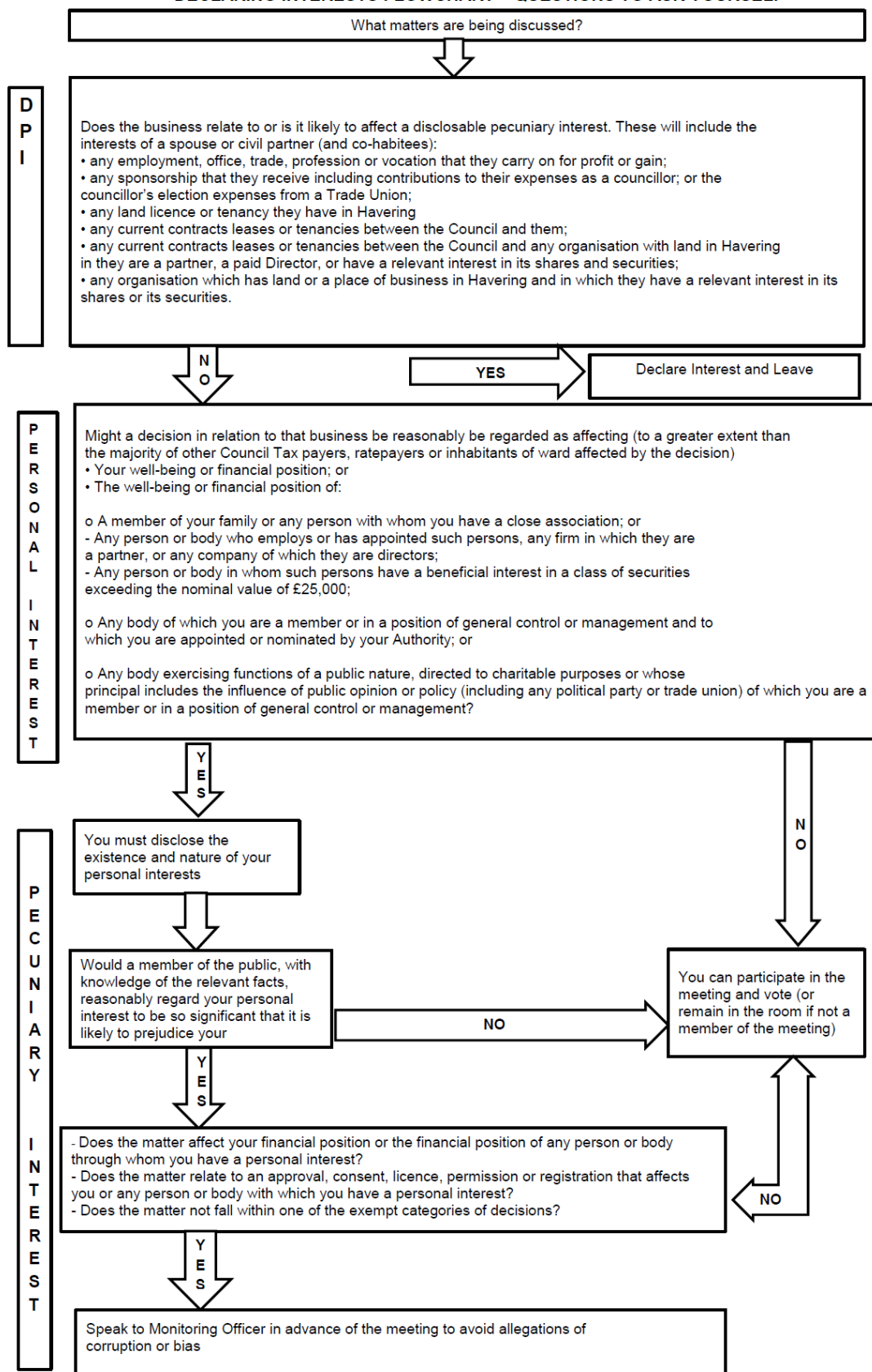
- filming, photographing or making an audio recording of the proceedings of the meeting;
- using any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later; or
- reporting or providing commentary on proceedings at a meeting, orally or in writing,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

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



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 PRAYERS

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Received from Councillors Mandy Anderson, James Glass, Tim Ryan and Katharine Tumilty.

To note any other apologies for absence.

3 MINUTES (Pages 7 - 22)

To sign as a true record the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 21 May 2025 (attached).

4 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

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

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

5 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR, BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL OR BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

To receive announcements (if any).

6 PETITIONS

Notice of intention to present a petition has been received from Councillors Viddy Persaud, Paul McGeary, Nisha Patel (two petitions) and David Taylor (two petitions).

To receive any other petition presented pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS (Pages 23 - 26)

- A. To consider a report of the Chief Executive on Exceptions to the Call-in (Requisition) Procedure (attached).

NOTE: The deadline for amendments is midnight, Monday 21 July 2025.

To consider any other report or motion presented pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 2(g).

8 ANNUAL REPORTS OF COMMITTEES (Pages 27 - 108)

To receive the Annual Reports of Committees (attached).

9 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS (Pages 109 - 112)

Attached.

10 MOTIONS FOR DEBATE (Pages 113 - 116)

Attached.



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING
Council Chamber - Town Hall
21 May 2025 (7.30 - 8.43 pm)**

Present: The Mayor (Councillor Gerry O'Sullivan at start of meeting, Councillor Sue Ospreay thereafter) in the Chair

Councillors Councillors Robert Benham, Ray Best, Patricia Brown, Joshua Chapman, John Crowder, Philippa Crowder, Keith Darvill, Osman Dervish, Brian Eagling, Sarah Edwards, Gillian Ford, Oscar Ford, Jason Frost, Laurance Garrard, James Glass, David Godwin, Martin Goode, Judith Holt, Jane Keane, Paul McGeary, Trevor McKeever, Paul Middleton, Robby Misir, Ray Morgon, Barry Mugglestone, Stephanie Nunn, Sue Ospreay, Dilip Patel, Nisha Patel, Viddy Persaud, Keith Prince, Philip Ruck, Timothy Ryan, Carol Smith, Christine Smith, Matthew Stanton, Natasha Summers, David Taylor, John Tyler, Christine Vickery, Bryan Vincent, Frankie Walker, Michael White, Reg Whitney, Julie Wilkes, Christopher Wilkins, Graham Williamson, Jacqueline Williams, Darren Wise and John Wood

Approximately Members' guests and members of the public were also present.

The Mayor advised Members and the public of action to be taken in the event of emergency evacuation of the Town Hall becoming necessary.

The Mayor's Official Chaplain – Canon Ken Wylie of St Andrew's Church, Hornchurch opened the meeting with prayers.

The meeting closed with the singing of the National Anthem.

80 PRAYERS (agenda item 1)

The Mayor presented Canon Ken Wylie of St Andrew's Church, Hornchurch with a badge to mark his year as the Mayor's Official Chaplain.

81 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (agenda item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mandy Anderson, Jacqui McArdle and Kathy Tumilty.

82 **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (agenda item 3)**

There were no disclosures of interest.

83 **RESOLUTION TO EXTEND SIX MONTH ATTENDANCE RULE (agenda item 4)**

A report of the Chief Executive asked Council to consider the granting of an exemption to section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 for Councillor Mandy Anderson who had been unable to attend recent Council meetings due to ongoing medical treatment. This would allow Councillor Anderson to continue as a Member of the Council.

The report was agreed without division and it was **RESOLVED**:

That Councillor Mandy Anderson be exempted from the requirements of Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 and, accordingly, shall continue to be a Member of the Council.

84 **ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR, BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL OR BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (agenda item 5)**

The outgoing Mayor thanked Members for allowing him the opportunity to be Mayor. He also recorded his thanks to the Mayoress – Susan O’Sullivan and his Official Chaplain – Ken Wylie.

85 **MAYORALTY 2025/26 (agenda item 6)**

Motion on behalf of the Havering Residents Association Group

That Councillor Sue Ospreay be elected to the office of Mayor for the municipal year 2025 – 2026.

Motion on behalf of the Labour Group

That Councillor Pat Brown be elected to the office of Mayor for the municipal year 2025 – 2026.

Following proposing speeches by the respective Group Leaders, Councillor Sue Ospreay was **ELECTED** as Mayor for the 2025/26 municipal year by 25 votes to 10 for Councillor Brown with 16 abstentions (see division 1).

Councillor Sue Ospreay, having made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Mayor, as required by the Local Government Act 1972, then took the Chair and thanked the Council for the honour bestowed upon them.

The Leader of the Council expressed the thanks of the Council to the outgoing Mayor – Councillor Gerry O’Sullivan for his service during 2024/25. Councillor O’Sullivan suitably replied.

The Mayor indicated that the Mayoral Consort for the year would be Ms Sharon Sutton.

86 **DEPUTY MAYOR**

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, the Mayor signified in writing the appointment of Councillor Barry Mugglestone as Deputy Mayor for the coming year and to carry out the duties of the Mayor in case of the Mayor's illness or absence.

Councillor Mugglestone made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office accordingly. The Mayor indicated that the Deputy Mayor's consort for the year would be Councillor Stephanie Nunn.

87 **MINUTES (agenda item 7)**

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 26 March 2025 were **AGREED** as a correct record, without division.

88 **ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE INCOMING MAYOR (agenda item 8)**

The Mayor advised that her charity for the year would be the MCA Trust which supported local children with cancer and their families.

89 **ESTABLISHING THE COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL AND CONFIRMING THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION (agenda item 9)**

Deemed motion by the Administration

That the report be adopted and its recommendations carried into effect.

Amendment on behalf of the Labour Group

That the proposed seat allocation as shown in the appendix of the report be amended in line with the attached spreadsheet.

Note: For clarity a supplementary table is also appended showing the existing allocation of seats on Committees together with, in brackets, the allocations proposed under the amendment. Any figure without a bracketed number next to it is unchanged under the amendment.

Following debate, the amendment by the Labour Group was **NOT AGREED** by 25 votes to 7 with 19 abstentions (see division 2). The deemed motion by the Administration was **AGREED**, without division and it was **RESOLVED**:

That the report be adopted and its recommendations carried into effect.

90 **APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES (agenda item 10)**

Motion on behalf of the Havering Residents Association Group

Committee	Chairman Councillor	Vice-Chairman Councillor
Audit	Julie Wilkes	Jacqueline Williams
Governance	Ray Morgon	Gillian Ford
Licensing (3 Vice-Chairmen)	Philippa Crowder	1. Christine Smith 2. 3.
Pensions	John Crowder	Stephanie Nunn
Planning	Bryan Vincent	Robby Misir
Strategic Planning	Reg Whitney	Robby Misir
Overview and Scrutiny Board	Laurance Garrard	Julie Wilkes
People Overview and Scrutiny Sub- Committee		
Places Overview and Scrutiny Sub- Committee		

Sub-Committee of the Governance Committee:

Appointments	Ray Morgon	Gillian Ford
--------------	------------	--------------

Motion on behalf of the Labour Group

Committee	Chairman Councillor	Vice-Chairman Councillor
Audit		
Governance		
Licensing (3 Vice-Chairmen)		1. 2. Jane Keane 3.
Pensions	Mandy Anderson	
Planning		
Strategic Planning		
Overview and Scrutiny Board		
People Overview and Scrutiny Sub- Committee		Frankie Walker
Places Overview and Scrutiny Sub- Committee		Matthew Stanton

Sub-Committee of the Governance Committee:

Appointments		
--------------	--	--

Motion on behalf of the Residents' Association Independent Group

Committee	Chairman Councillor	Vice-Chairman Councillor
Audit	Philip Ruck	
Governance		
Licensing (3 Vice-Chairmen)		1. 2. 3.
Pensions		
Planning		
Strategic Planning		
Overview and Scrutiny Board		
People Overview and Scrutiny Sub- Committee		
Places Overview and Scrutiny Sub- Committee		

Sub-Committee of the Governance Committee:

Appointments		
--------------	--	--

Motion on behalf of the Conservative Group

Committee	Chairman Councillor	Vice-Chairman Councillor
Audit		
Governance		
Licensing (3 Vice-Chairmen)		1. 2. 3. Christine Vickery
Pensions		
Planning		
Strategic Planning		
Overview and Scrutiny Board		
People Overview and Scrutiny Sub- Committee	Jason Frost	
Places Overview and Scrutiny Sub- Committee	David Taylor	

Sub-Committee of the Governance Committee:

Appointments		
--------------	--	--

A Procedural motion on behalf of the Labour Group that the nomination of Councillor Mandy Anderson for the position of Chairman of Pensions Committee be withdrawn was **AGREED** without division.

Members were appointed by Council to positions as follows:

Committee	Chairman Councillor	Vice-Chairman Councillor
Audit	<i>See below.</i>	Jacqueline Williams
Governance	Ray Morgon	Gillian Ford
Licensing (3 Vice-Chairmen)	Philippa Crowder	1. Christine Smith 2. Jane Keane 3. Christine Vickery
Pensions	John Crowder	Stephanie Nunn
Planning	Bryan Vincent	Robby Misir
Strategic Planning	Reg Whitney	Robby Misir
Overview and Scrutiny Board	Laurance Garrard	Julie Wilkes
People Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee	Jason Frost	Frankie Walker
Places Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee	David Taylor	Matthew Stanton

Sub-Committee of the Governance Committee:

Appointments	Ray Morgon	Gillian Ford
--------------	------------	--------------

Councillor Julie Wilkes was **ELECTED** as Chairman of Audit Committee by 26 votes to 25 for Councillor Phil Ruck with 1 abstention (casting vote of Mayor, see division 3).

91 **APPOINTMENT OF THE MEMBER CHAMPIONS (agenda item 11)**

Motion on behalf of the Havering Residents Association Group

That the following be appointed Champions as indicated:

For the Armed Forces – Barry Mugglestone

For Equality and Diversity – Robby Misir

For the Historic Environment – Bryan Vincent

For the Over 50's –

For the Voluntary Sector Compact –

For Young People –

Motion on behalf of the Labour Group

That the following be appointed Champions as indicated:

For the Armed Forces –

For Equality and Diversity – Jane Keane

For the Historic Environment –

For the Over 50's –

For the Voluntary Sector Compact –

For Young People – Frankie Walker

Members were appointed by Council to positions as follows:

Member Champion	Nominee - Councillor
For the Armed Forces	Barry Mugglestone
For Equality & Diversity	<i>See below.</i>
For the Historic Environment	Bryan Vincent
For the Over 50's	<i>No nomination received.</i>
For the Voluntary Sector Compact	<i>No nomination received.</i>
For Young People	Frankie Walker

Councillor Robby Misir was **ELECTED** as Member Champion for Equality and Diversity by 25 votes to 9 for Councillor Jane Keane with 17 abstentions (see division 4).

92 **STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (agenda item 12)**

The Leader emphasised the lack of funding received from Central Government, particularly given the rising costs in areas such as temporary accommodation and services for children with special educational needs and disabilities. A budget petition had also been launched.

Planned improvements in transport infrastructure included a new Superloop route serving the borough and improvements to the Gallows Corner flyover.

Housing had developments had progressed in areas such as Rise Park and Harold Hill where the Family Welcome Centre has been opened.

Five village greens had been delivered in Havering and a £66m investment in school expansion was planned. The Where We Live campaign had been introduced recently to keep the borough clean, green and safe. A Keep It Local campaign sought to boost the Havering economy.

The Leader also emphasised how the Council was supporting businesses and looking to attract new businesses to come to Havering.

Initiatives to tackle crime & disorder included a new CCTV control room and the continued success of the Council funded section 92 police officers. The Leader also met on a bi-monthly basis with faith leaders to ensure the borough remained as cohesive and safe as possible.

93 **VOTING RECORD**

The record of voting decisions is attached as appendix 1 to these minutes.

Mayor

		CONSERVATIVE		RESIDENTS		LAB		EAST HAV		RA IND		Entitlement check		Checksum	Con RA Lab RWRA		
55	55	17	25	8	3	2											
Percentage		30.91%	45.45%	14.55%	5.45%	3.64%							100.00%	100.00%			
														0.00%			
Size of body	Seat:	Entitlement	Allocation	Entitlement	Allocation	Entitlement	Allocation	Entitlement	Allocation	Entitlement	Allocation						
3	3	0.93	1	1.36	1	0.44	1	0.16	0	0.11	0	3	0				
4	4	1.24	1	1.82	2	0.58	1	0.22	0	0.15	0	4	0				
5	5	1.55	2	2.27	2	0.73	1	0.27	0	0.18	0	5	0				
6	6	1.85	2	2.73	3	0.87	1	0.33	0	0.22	0	6	0				
7	7	2.16	3	3.18	3	1.02	1	0.38	0	0.25	0	7	0				
8	8	2.47	3	3.64	3	1.16	1	0.44	1	0.29	0	8	0				
9	9	2.78	3	4.09	4	1.31	1	0.49	1	0.33	0	9	0				
10	10	3.09	4	4.55	4	1.45	2	0.55	0	0.36	0	10	0				
11	11	3.40	4	5.00	4	1.60	2	0.60	1	0.40	0	11	0				
12	12	3.71	4	5.45	5	1.75	2	0.65	1	0.44	0	12	0				
13	13	4.02	5	5.91	5	1.89	2	0.71	1	0.47	0	13	0				
14	14	4.33	5	6.36	6	2.04	2	0.76	1	0.51	1	14	0				
15	15	4.64	5	6.82	6	2.18	3	0.82	1	0.55	1	15	0				
16	16	4.95	6	7.27	6	2.33	3	0.87	1	0.58	1	16	0				
55		17.00	17	25.00	25	8.00	8	3.00	3	2.00	2						
	Governance	10	3.09	3	4.55	4	1.45	1	0.55	1	0.36	1	10	0			
	Licensing	6	1.85	2	2.73	3	0.87	1	0.33	0	0.22	0	6	0			
	Planning	6	1.85	2	2.73	3	0.87	1	0.33	0	0.22	0	6	0			
	Strat. Planning	6	1.85	2	2.73	3	0.87	1	0.33	0	0.22	0	6	0			
	Pensions	8	2.47	2	3.64	4	1.16	1	0.44	1	0.29	0	8	0			
	Audit	10	3.09	3	4.55	4	1.45	1	0.55	1	0.36	1	10	0			
	People	8	2.47	3	3.64	4	1.16	1	0.44	0	0.29	0	8	0			
	Places	8	2.47	3	3.64	4	1.16	1	0.44	0	0.29	0	8	0			
	Board	11	3.40	3	5.00	4	1.60	2	0.60	1	0.40	1	11	0			
	Seats allocated	73.00	23.00	33.00	10.00	4.00	3.00	73.00	0								
	Seats entitled to	22.56	33.18	10.62	3.98	2.65											
		22.56	23	33.18	33	10.62	10	3.98	4	2.65	3						
		0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0						
	Adjustment needed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0						
	Appointments S/C	5	1.55	2	2.27	2	0.73	1	0.27	0	0.18	0					

This page is intentionally left blank

Annual Council 21 May 2025 – Agenda item 9 – Amendment by Labour Group

RECOMMENDED SEAT ALLOCATION

Shown below is the current allocation of seats across the Committees of the Council together with, in brackets, the revised allocations proposed under the amendment by the Labour Group. Any allocations without a figure in brackets are unchanged by the proposed amendment.

		CONS	HRA	LAB	EHRG	RAIG
Governance	12 (10)	3	5 (4)	2 (1)	1	1
Licensing	6	2	3	1	0	0
Planning	6	2	3	1	0	0
Strat. Planning	6	2	3	1	0	0
Pensions	6 (8)	2	3 (4)	1	0 (1)	0
Audit	6 (10)	2 (3)	3 (4)	0 (1)	0 (1)	1
People OSSC	9 (8)	3	4	1	1 (0)	0
Places OSSC	9 (8)	3	4	1	1 (0)	0
O & S Board	12 (11)	3	5 (4)	2	1	1
Total seats allocated	72 (73)	22 (23)	33	10	4	3
Appointments S-C	5	2	2	1	0	0

Minute Item 93

Annual Council 21st May 2025

Voting record

Appendix 1

<i>DIVISION NUMBER:</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
The Mayor (Councillor Gerry O'Sullivan - Vote 1, Councillor Sue Ospreay - Votes 2-4)	✓	×	✓	✓
The Deputy Mayor [Cllr Sue Ospreay - Vote 1, Cllr Barry Mugglestone - Votes 2-4]	O	×	✓	✓
Mayor casting vote			✓	
<u>CONSERVATIVE GROUP (16)</u>				
Cllr Robert Benham	O	O	×	O
Cllr Ray Best	O	O	×	O
Cllr Joshua Chapman	O	O	×	O
Cllr Osman Dervish	O	O	×	O
Cllr Jason Frost	O	O	×	O
Cllr Judith Holt	O	O	×	O
Cllr Jackie McArdle	A	A	A	A
Cllr Dilip Patel	O	O	×	O
Cllr Nisha Patel	O	O	×	O
Cllr Viddy Persaud	O	O	×	O
Cllr Keith Prince	O	O	×	O
Cllr Timothy Ryan	O	O	×	O
Cllr Carol Smith	O	O	×	O
Cllr David Taylor	O	O	×	O
Cllr Christine Vickery	O	O	×	O
Cllr Damian White	A	A	A	A
Cllr Michael White	O	O	×	O
<u>HAVERING RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION GROUP (23 + 2)</u>				
Cllr John Crowder	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Philippa Crowder	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Sarah Edwards	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Gillian Ford	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Oscar Ford	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Laurance Garrard	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr James Glass	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr David Godwin	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Paul McGeary	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Paul Middleton	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Robby Misir	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Raymond Morgon	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Barry Mugglestone	✓			
Cllr Stephanie Nunn	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Sue Ospreay				
Cllr Gerry O'Sullivan		×	✓	✓
Cllr Christine Smith	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Natasha Summers	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Bryan Vincent	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Reg Whitney	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Julie Wilkes	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Christopher Wilkins	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Jacqueline Williams	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr Graham Williamson	✓	×	✓	✓
Cllr John Wood	✓	×	✓	✓
<u>LABOUR GROUP (8)</u>				
Cllr Mandy Anderson	A	A	A	A
Cllr Pat Brown	×	✓	×	×
Cllr Keith Darvill	×	✓	×	×
Cllr Jane Keane	×	✓	×	×
Cllr Trevor McKeever	×	✓	×	×
Cllr Matthew Stanton	×	✓	×	×
Cllr Katharine Tumilty	A	A	A	A
Cllr Frankie Walker	×	✓	×	×
<u>EAST HAVERING RESIDENTS' GROUP (3)</u>				
Cllr Brian Eagling	×	O	O	O
Cllr Martin Goode	×	O	×	×
Cllr Darren Wise	×	O	×	×
<u>RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION INDEPENDENT GROUP (2)</u>				
Councillor Philip Ruck	×	✓	×	×
Councillor John Tyler	✓	O	×	O
TOTALS				
✓ = YES	25	7	26	25
× = NO	10	25	25	9
O = ABSTAIN/NO VOTE	16	19	1	17
ID = INTEREST DISCLOSED/NO VOTE	0	0	0	0
A = ABSENT FROM MEETING	4	4	4	4
	55	55	55	55

* Vote 3 includes casting vote of Mayor in favour of Councillor Wilkes.

This page is intentionally left blank

COUNCIL, 23 JULY 2025

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**SUBJECT: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RULES – EXCEPTION TO THE
CALL-IN (REQUISITION) PROCEDURE**

SUMMARY

Under paragraph 18e of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Leader of the Council is required to submit reports to Council on decisions taken by himself, Cabinet or individual Cabinet members, or key decisions made by a member of staff in the circumstances set out in Rule 18 (exemption to the call-in (requisition) procedure) within the previous 3 months.

This report details Key Decisions that have been taken in the circumstances set out in Rule 18 (exemption to the call-in (requisition) procedure) for the six month period covering **1st January 2025 to 30th June 2025**.

- 1) Arts Council - Acceptance of Grant
(Decision made on 18 March 2025)
- 2) Acceptance of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) –
Havering Allocation for 2025/2026
(Decision made on 27 March 2025)

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the report be noted.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Rule 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules provides that:

(b) The call-in procedure shall not apply where a decision being taken by Cabinet or an individual Cabinet member, or a key decision made by a member of staff is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public interests. The record of the decision and notice by which it is made shall state whether in the opinion of the decision making person or body, the decision is an urgent one, and therefore not subject to call-in.

(c) The decision making person or body can only take an urgent decision under (a) above and avoid the call-in procedures after obtaining agreement from the Chairman of the Board that the decision be treated as urgent.

Arts Council - Acceptance of Grants

2. On behalf of Cabinet, the Strategic Director of People, sought agreement from the Chairman of the Board to exempt from call-in a key decision concerning an application for grant funding from the Arts Council.
- 2.1 The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Board, Councillor Laurance Garrard, gave his agreement to the exemption from call-in for the following reason:
- 2.2 Officers were advised on 10th February that a bid to Arts Council England to deliver elements of the Council's Cultural Strategy "A Good Life" had been successful. It was a condition of the offer that funding had to be accepted within 28 days', otherwise the Council risked losing the £500,000 grant. In order not to prejudice the Council's interests, call-in was waived to allow for the money to be awarded within the timescales set by the Arts Council.

Acceptance of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) – Havering Allocation for 2025/2026

3. On behalf of Cabinet, the Strategic Director of Place, sought agreement from the Chairman of the Board to exempt from call-in a key decision concerning the Council's allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

- 3.1 The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Board, Councillor Laurance Garrard, gave his agreement to the exemption from call-in for the following reason:
- 3.2 The Greater London Authority (GLA) notified the Council on 18th March that £800,000 had been awarded to Havering for community projects. Since accepting the funding was in the Council's best interests, call-in was waived so that the delivery plan and agreement could be submitted on time and meet the GLA's deadline of 31st March.

Financial Implications and Risks:

While there were financial implications around the decisions described in this report, there are none directly associated with this report.

Legal Implications and Risks:

There are no immediate legal implications directly associated with this report.

Human Resource Implications and Risks:

There are none directly associated with this report.

Equalities and Social Inclusion Implications and Risks:

There are none directly associated with this report.

Staff Contact:	Gavin Milnthorpe
Designation	Monitoring Officer
Email:	Gavin.milnthorpe@haverling.gov.uk

Background paper List

None

This page is intentionally left blank

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE 2024/25 FINANCIAL YEAR

1. Introduction

This reports covers the period July 2024 to May 2025 and outlines:-

- Information relating to the Audit Committee;
- The coverage of work undertaken by the Audit Committee;
- Actions taking during the year, including training, to ensure the effectiveness of the Audit Committee; and
- Future planned work and challenges.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Audit Committee has been in place for a number of years. The Committee's terms of reference list the responsibilities and authorities delegated in the Council's Constitution, which comprise:

Internal control

- To consider and monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the authority's risk management and internal control environment and to make recommendations to full Council where necessary.

External audit

- To monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the External Audit Service and respond to its findings.

Internal audit

- To support the Officers with their delegated responsibility of ensuring arrangements for the provision of an adequate and effective internal audit.
- To monitor the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal audit service and to receive and monitor an annual internal audit plan from the audit manager.
- To approve the Annual Statement of Accounts, including the Annual Governance Statement, and to recommend as necessary to the Governance Committee regarding the committee's responsibilities to monitor corporate governance matters generally.
- To monitor proactive fraud and corruption arrangements.

The Audit Structure (April 2024 – May 2025):

Audit Committee: Councillor Julie Wilkes (Chairman)
Councillor Jacqueline Williams (Vice Chairman)
Councillor John Crowder
Councillor David Taylor
Councillor Keith Prince
Councillor Philip Ruck

Internal Auditors: LB Havering
External Auditors: Ernst & Young

During the year under review, the Committee met on four occasions and dealt with the following issues:

3. Audit Committee coverage

3.1 The Audit Committee has received the reports as set out in Appendix A. The coverage can broadly be categorised as regular and specific. More information on both is set out below.

3.2 Regular work

The Committee has regularly reviewed:

- Progress against the audit plan and performance;
- Key findings/issues arising from each audit undertaken;
- Progress against implementation of the recommendations;
- Anti-fraud and corruption activity, including frauds investigated and outcomes;
- Treasury Management activity; and
- The Accounts closedown timetable and progress reports.

3.3 Specific Reviews / Reports

There were several during the year including a review and approval of:

- the Statement of Accounts;
- the Annual Governance Statement; and
- the Annual Audit Plan.

The Committee also received assurances via:

- Annual Report from Internal Audit that includes the Annual Assurance Statement; and
- The work of the Council's External Auditors (Ernst & Young).

Priorities and work plan for the forthcoming year

- 3.1 The Audit Committee is currently scheduled to meet on four occasions over the next municipal year. There are specific reports planned throughout the year, running through a mix of progress reports and annual reviews of specific strategies and policies within the remit of the Committee, together with progress reports from the Council's External Auditor.
- 3.2 Officers will continue to ensure all members on the Committee, and their nominated substitutes, are adequately trained.
- 3.3 The Committee will continue to oversee the effectiveness of the audit team and wider fraud resources in accordance with the Public Sector Audit Standards Audit and Accounts Regulations 2015.
- 3.4 The Committee will continue to receive updates on the Corporate Risk Register and specific input from risk owners where required.
- 3.5 Fraud prevention and detection will continue to be high on the Audit Committee's agenda going forward.
- 3.6 The Committee will continue to focus on ensuring Value for Money and challenging control issues and high risk areas that have been highlighted by the work of Internal Audit.

AUDIT COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEMS – FROM JULY 2024 TO MAY 2025

July 2024

- External Audit Plans 2023/24
Heather Salmon, Head of Finance introduced the Council's external auditor, Ernst and Young (EY), who presented its 2023/24 audit plans for both the Council and the Pension Fund to the Committee.

Each year the council's external auditor presented their audit plan for the financial accounts to the Audit Committee. The audit plan outlined the scope of the audit, any significant risks inherent in the audit, materiality and value for money arrangements.

In summary at its meeting on Wednesday 22 March 2022 the Council approved the decision of Audit Committee to procure an external audit contract through Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) for both the London Borough of Havering and the Havering Pension Fund.

At the time it was anticipated that audit scale fees for 2023/24 would likely increase by 150% compared to the previous year. Under the Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations, the 2023/24 fee scale must be published before 1 December 2023. Following a period of consultation, the PSAA published the scale fees for 2023/24 for each audited body in November 2023. The scale fees for 2023/24 accounts were: LB Havering Council - £421,745 and Pension Fund - £ 85,945.

Any subsequent changes that may affect audit fees, such as in national requirements or local circumstances, would be the subject of fee variations.

EY provided the key highlights and expanded on specific areas of the report and in particular highlighted the risks.

Members asked questions around level three investments and why one would invest in them. It was explained that level three investments were not investments that were held or valued on a sort of standard Stock Exchange and therefore was a hard to value stock. The reason for investing in these type of investments was to ensure diversification in funds. The Council received both independent and professional advice to support their decision making and the pension funds fast and foremost objective and responsibility was to ensure a financial return.

- Annual Treasury Management Report 2023/24
Kathy Freeman, Strategic Director presented the report that outlined the performance of the treasury management function that was approved by Full Council on 1 March 2024. The report covered the delivery of the TMSS in

2023/24, activity on treasury managed investments and borrowings and the associated monitoring and control.

The CIPFA TM Code required that authorities report on the performance of the treasury management function to Full Council at least twice per year (mid-year and at year-end). The Authority's Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) 2024/25 was approved by Full Council on the 1 March 2024.

It was explained that the Authority had borrowed and invested sums of money as part of activities through its treasury management activities and would be exposed to changes to interest rates on its investments which would also impact on the cost of borrowing to fund its capital programme.

The Council provided an annual report and a Treasury Management Strategy every year as part of the budget setting process. A mid-year report was also provided to look at the formants against that strategy, in terms of how the Council was doing in that year. The final of the three reports was a backward look of the performance of the prior year and to demonstrate that the Authority had acted in accordance with the policy that they set out for themselves. In terms of the key highlights section on page 115, there were a number of indicators, the debt position, what the yield was, what the investment income was and also the interest payable.

The report broadly set out a number of key sections including the economic outlook and looking backwards for the last financial year, notably the increase in the Bank of England base rate and the PWB rate and how that increased in line with the base rates, which could be seen on graph one of the report on page 117. It was also noted that the report set out how the Council's borrowing strategy was adhered to and section three of the report further set out the detail of the debts and the amount of interest paid. Page 119 set out details of the compliance with the Council investment strategy. Appendix A displayed how the Council set out the maturity of the borrowing profile and the terms of the investment and the security rating of who the money was invested with. Lastly, the report illustrated that the Council operated within the operational and authorized limits in terms of borrowing which was vital that there was no breach in the operational or the authorized limits in borrowing terms.

Members asked various questions around the Lender Option Borrower Option (LOBO) and Kathy explained that assessment was made as and when offered a buyout option to determine whether or not it was cheaper to keep the LOBO or whether to buy out of it, consideration was relative to the interest rate and if the Council would be able to borrow for that equivalent sum.

It was also explained that the Council budgets as if all of the capital program was going to be fully spent. They then had to budget for interest costs and debt repayment costs on the assumption that they were going to fully spend the capital program and what's contributed towards the reduction and overspend last year was because they haven't fully spent the capital program.

The budget was then brought down by the overspend quite significantly because of the slippage in the capital program and thereby it had reduced the capital financing costs and the cost that had been set aside for the repayment of the debt which had helped to contribute to the overspending. It was not great for the delivery of the capital programming perspective; however, from a financial perspective, it had supported the Council's overall situation.

- Risk Management Update

Jeremy Welburn, Head of Assurance provided an update on the Strategic Risk Register, the updated and revised Risk Management Toolkit and Strategy.

It was to be noted that the Strategic Risk Register was subject to regular review and risks were discussed at Governance and Assurance Board meetings, chaired by the Section 151 officer during the first half of 2023/24 and subsequently at the Executive Leadership Group since December 2023.

As part of the ongoing review, new risks may be added and existing risks amended or removed at any time as changes were identified. A summary version of the current Strategic Risk Register was provided in Appendix 1. It included the current likelihood and impact scoring of the risks based on assessment by the risk owner (using the risk matrix from the Council's Risk Management Strategy and Toolkit). The Risk Management Strategy and Toolkit provided a comprehensive framework and process designed to support managers in ensuring that the Council was able to discharge its risk management responsibilities fully. The strategy outlined the objectives and benefits of managing risk, described the responsibilities for risk management, and provided an overview of the process that was in place to manage risk successfully.

Haverling used a 5 x 5 scoring matrix to assess the likelihood of a risk event occurring and the potential impact on the Council if it were to happen. The green shaded area on the matrix contained in the report showed the risks where there was good control and the Council was comfortable with the level of risk. Risks in the amber and red zones were those over which closer control and further management action may be required.

Work continued by the Internal Audit & Risk Team to further embed the risk management strategy at a Directorate level, including risk workshops and further training where required. This phase of work would ensure Directorate level risks were aligned to the strategic risks to ensure mitigating actions were managed consistently. There would also be a wider rollout of access to JCAD, the Risk Management system, to make the process more efficient and effective; providing links to strategic objectives; easier monitoring and reporting, and demonstration of compliance with good risk management practices.

Members asked various questions and queried various risks to which Officers provided responses.

- Assurance Progress Report
Jeremy Welburn, Head of Assurance introduced the report that provided a summary of the outcomes of the Internal Audit and Counter Fraud work that was completed during Quarter 1 of 2024/25.

The report brought together all aspects of audit, assurance and counter fraud work undertaken in Quarter 1 of the 2024/25 financial year, including actions taken by management in response to audit and counter fraud activity, which supported the governance framework of the authority. Limited assurance reports issued since the last Audit Committee were included in Appendix 1.

Member asked questions around the risks in relation to the IT transition and contract procedure rules. Officers explained that procurement was underway for various software packages etc. and an up-to-date contract procedure rules document was being worked on.

December 2024

- Statements Of Accounts 2021/22 & 2022/23 And External Audit Reports To Those Charged With Governance
The Head of Financial Control introduced the report and then invited the representative of Ernst and Young (EY), the external auditors, to present the report the Audit Completion Report from Ernst and Young LLP on the 2021/22 and 2022/23 Statement of Accounts, together with the 2021/22 and 2022/23 Financial Statements for approval.

The Council was required to prepare annual financial accounts covering the period from 1 April to 31 March. These accounts were required to comply with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code). The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 required that the authority prepared and published its unaudited accounts by 31 May, however; the Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 revised the statutory publication date for 2021/22 to 31 July 2022. This reverted back to 31 May for 2022/23. Regulation 9(2) required Members to approve the Statement of Accounts that was to be published, either by meeting as a whole or through a committee.

Once Members had approved the Statement of Accounts, regulation 10 set out the requirements for publication of an authority's accountability statements. These comprise of the Statement of Accounts together with the opinion and any certificate, the Annual Governance Statement approved by Members and the Narrative Statement. Over recent years Havering, like many local authorities, had experienced significant delays with the audit of its accounts.

To address the backlog, and following a period of consultation, the system leaders developed a solution involving 'backstop dates'. As a result, a large number of financial statements would be published with modified opinions. To mitigate any potential reputational risk and so that local bodies were not unfairly judged due to disclaimed or modified opinions, auditors would be expected to provide clear reasons for the issuing of such opinions. Havering's draft

accounts were published on the Council's website. The 2021/22 accounts were published on the 29th of July 2022, and the 2022/23 accounts were published on the 31st of May 2023.

The local audit backstop arrangements had been established to set dates by which an authority must publish a final version of its statement of accounts for a particular year, irrespective of the progress that had been made by the auditor. It was to be noted that the first of these dates was the 13th of December 2024, by which time the 2022/23 should be published. The 2021/22 and 2022/23 statement of accounts that the Committee were asked to approve were unchanged from the draft versions which were previously published on the Council's website. The auditor had done a value of money for both years and the pension fund accounts for both years were also audited.

A number of procedures were performed to ensure understanding of the entity and fraud risks through letters to management, the Audit chair, internal audit and the Monitoring Officer. Limited comparative and casting cheques that made recommendations were made to ensure consistency. Page 8 of the report gave the reason for the disclaimer and the background of why the audit of 2021/22 and 2022/23 was unable to be performed. The 2023/24 audit was underway and would be reported in January and February to the Committee.

In discussion, it was explained that it is the auditor's responsibility to look at the arrangements any local authority had in place, primarily around governance, economy, efficiency and effectiveness, and financial sustainability. Under governance it would be the committee structure and whether it was appropriate to discharge the Council's business, but not whether that structure provided the best value that a policy decision that the management would want to make. If recommendations and follow up to queries were not done in a timely matter that would be an issue for internal audit and then in turn for the auditor. It was also agreed that a deep dive could be done on any specific issues where concerns were raised. In addition, EY would come and speak to the Committee once a year independently as well. Therefore, should Members wish to raise specific concerns they could do so.

In regard to a question asked about Mercury Land Holdings and it being a significant borrower of Council finance, the business plan was scrutinised yearly and it was explained that if it's a wholly owned subsidiary, auditors don't necessarily have the capacity or policy mechanisms to scrutinise how business plans were run properly. However, that would be a worthwhile discussion and could be taken offline to see if an internal audit review could come back to the Committee.

- Head of Assurance Progress Report 2024/25
The Head of Assurance introduced the report that summarised the cumulative outcomes of audit and counter fraud work from 1st April to 31st October 2024, including actions taken by management in response to audit and counter fraud activity, which supports the governance framework of the authority.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations required the Council to undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account the Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards (PSIAS) and other guidance.

Internal audit was a key component of corporate governance within the Council. The three lines of defence model, as detailed in the report, provided a framework for understanding the role of internal audit in the overall risk management and internal control processes of an organisation. The Council's third line of defence included internal audit, which should provide independent assurance to senior management and the Audit Committee on how effectively the first and second lines of defence had been operating.

An independent internal audit function would, through its risk-based approach to work, provided assurance to the Council's Audit Committee and senior management on the higher risk and more complex areas of the Council's business, allowing management to focus on providing coverage of routine operations. The work of internal audit was critical to the evaluation of the Council's overall assessment of its governance, risk management and internal control systems, and formed the basis of the annual opinion provided by the Head of Assurance which contributed to the Annual Governance Statement. It could also perform a consultancy role to assist in identifying improvements to the organisation's practices.

The limited assurance reports issued since the last Audit Committee were included in Appendix 1 and it was confirmed that the authority had operated within the Treasury and prudential indicators set out in the TMSS; all Treasury management operations had been conducted in full compliance with the authority's treasury management practises.

Key indicators would be produced for the next quarter and it was explained that schools were reviewed every 3 years. However, the Towers requested the review was brought forward due to some concerns and there was work on-going to resolve those issues and the progress would be checked on in the next 6 months to ensure any risk was mitigated. In regard to the first recommendation, the control process to ensure all procurements were subject to appropriate governance etc. It was explained that implementation was due in February 2025 and Officers would go through and look at the detail of the average balance over the course of the year and processes were in place and provide clarification.

A debt board was created and the first meeting was being held in January which looked at assurance issues and ensured a process was in place to pursue and recover payments from non-payers.

- Mid-Year Trasury Management Report 2024/25
The Capital Strategy Manager provided a report that covered activity on treasury managed investments and borrowings and the associated monitoring and control.

The CIPFA TM Code required that authorities report on the performance of the treasury management function to Full Council at least twice per year (mid-year and at year-end), and the report covered the period from 1st April 2024 to 30th September 2024.

The Authority's Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) 2024/25 was approved by Full Council on the 1 March 2024. The TMSS aimed to bring together the Council's capital programme and its budget to ensure borrowing decisions were affordable and sustainable in line with regulation.

It was explained that the average cash balance was about 90 million and the average of the authorities' performance was 5.36% for the full year.

January 2025

- Statement of Accounts 2023/24 and External Audit Reports To Those Charged With Governance

The Committee received the Statement of Accounts and External Audit Report for 2023/24.

Members noted the draft accounts had been published by 31st May 2024 and the audits had followed with the Pensions Fund audit commencing in June 2025.

Members then received a presentation from Havering's external auditors, Ernst & Young (EY).

EY officers explained they were on track to sign an unqualified opinion. The materiality had been set to £9.7million with a minimum £500k limit set to report to the Committee. EY then explained the areas of risk which included fraud. Members questioned the audit and disclosure differences to which EY responded that collection fund was at £800k and not material and there had been changes in the cash flow settlement due to its nature but it was not significant.

- Head of Assurance Progress Report 2024/25

The Committee received the Head of Assurance progress report for 2024/25.

Members noted that the items on the future reports list were not in any particular order and some should not have been shown as they had not been started. It was noted that complaints would be reported at a future meeting.

- Risk Management Update

The Committee received a risk management update.

Members noted the summary was reported twice a year. Members questioned how the likelihood matrix was scored to which officers explained a

comprehensive risk strategy and toolkit sat behind the register which showed how the scoring is applied.

Members then discussed Risk 7 – Climate Change. Officers explained some risks have a subjective nature, of which this was one of them. The risk was set at medium to reach the 2040 ambition.

Members appreciated the report was clearer to read and follow.

- Accounting Policies 2024/25
The Committee received the Accounting Policies for 2024/25.

The Section 151 officer was responsible for setting the policies. The main change for 24/25 was with respect to leases as CIPFA had adopted the IFRS 16. Members noted the private sector had adopted the IFRS 16 in 2019 and the public sector were due to adopt it earlier but it was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This meant the new standard was for all leases will move onto the balance sheets. Members were assured there would be limited impact on the Council and it should not cause any additional pressure.

- Treasury Update – Quarter 3 2024/25
The Committee received the Quarter 3 2024/25 Treasury Update.

Members were given a brief overview up until the end of December 2024 given the financial position of the Council. There had been an additional £50million of borrowing as the liquidation buffer of £40million had been reached. Interest on investments was £3.1million and Year to Date was £1.8million above the budget. Members noted the debt was below the original estimate due to large amounts of internal borrowing.

- Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Annual Investment Strategy 2025/26
The Committee received the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Annual Investment Strategy for 2025/26.

Members noted this was presented to fulfil legal obligations. It had been presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Board on 29th January 2025 and was due to be presented to Cabinet in February and then to Full Council following that.

The 2027/28 capitalisation direction costs would be 12.7% of revenue. Members questioned the affordability of the costs to which officers explained that if the capitalisation direction surpassed the 16% it would be unreasonable and further action would need to be taken.

April 2025

- Draft Internal Audit Plan
The Committee received the Draft Internal Audit Plan Report for 2025/26, presented by Jeremy Welburn.

- **Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy**

The Committee received the Anti-fraud & Corruption Strategy Report, presented by Jeremy Welburn.

Members noted the contents of the report and were given the chance to raise any issues of concern and ask specific questions of officers where required.

Members asked how the delivery of the strategy will be monitored. Members noted that a progress report is made public quarterly.

Members then asked for confirmation that the report was achievable given the financial situation of the council. Members appreciated that a proactive approach to Tenancy Fraud was ongoing. They were also reminded of the rapid increase in Right to Buy applicants over recent months, due to changes to discounts. An overall proactive not reactive approach was emphasised. This proactive approach continually aims to become embedded in the organisation's culture.

Flexibility and internal adjustment of resources across the entire Anti-fraud & Corruption Strategy plan is supported.

Members noted that there were no significant changes at this 4-year review of the strategy.

- **Draft Annual Governance Statement**

The Committee received the Draft Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 Report, presented by Jeremy Welburn.

Members noted and discussed the report.

Members were informed that Newham is slightly behind Havering in the OneSource split, with Havering on track to separate by 31 December. Any delays will be reported. If Havering meets the deadline, Newham will bear costs for remaining in the shared tenancy.

Members noted that Newham is currently slightly behind Havering's timeline in the OneSource shared split. Members were informed that Havering is on track for a 31 December separation. An update will be given if a delay is expected. If Havering's end-of-December separation is successful, Newham will pick up any costs associated with keeping their service if they haven't left the shared service arrangement.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

None – narrative report only.

Legal implications and risks:

None – narrative report only.

Human Resources implications and risks:

None – narrative report only.

Equalities implications and risks:

While the work of the Committee can impact on all members of the community, there are no implications arising from this specific report which is a narrative of the Committee's work over the past year.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Minutes of meetings of Audit Committee

This page is intentionally left blank



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

HAVERING PENSION FUND

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE PENSIONS COMMITTEE DURING 2024/25 & 2025/28 BUSINESS PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This is the Business Plan for the London Borough of Havering Pension Fund (the 'Fund'). Havering Council is an Administering Authority under Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations and as such has delegated authority for this to the Pensions Committee.

The Business Plan sets out the work undertaken by the Committee during 2024/25 and the plan of work for the forthcoming three years. The Business Plan is reviewed and updated annually.

The Business Plan, in line with CIPFA guidance "Principles for Investment Decision Making & Disclosure in the LGPS" outlines:

- Key Targets and Methods of Measurement
- Review level of internal & external resources
- Financial Estimates
- Major milestones and issues considered and to be considered
- Appropriate provision for Training
- Any recommendations actions to put right any deficiencies.

The Fund provides benefits to Council employees (except teachers). The performance of the Fund impacts on the cost of Council services through the cost of employer contributions. It is therefore beneficial to issue a Business Plan/Annual report to all Council Members covering the work of the Pensions Committee.

KEY TARGETS & METHODS OF MEASUREMENT

The Fund invests employee and employer contributions into a Fund in order to pay pension benefits to scheme members. The Fund is financed by contributions from employees, employers and from profit, interest and dividends from investments.

The Pension Fund consists of 65 employers with active members, of which the London Borough of Havering is the largest. The other employers in the Fund are made up of 48 Scheduled bodies (Academies) and 14 Admitted bodies (14 outsourced contracts).

Pension Fund – Funding

The Fund's Actuary (Hymans Robertson) carried out a triennial valuation during 2022/23 based on data as at 31 March 2022. The main purpose of the valuation is to calculate the funding position within the Fund and set employer contribution rates for the following three years with the results of the 2022 valuation effecting employer contribution rates from 1 April 2023 until 31 March 2026.

The valuation is a planning exercise for the Fund, to assess the monies needed to meet the benefits owed to its members as they fall due. As part of the valuation process, the Fund reviews its funding and investment strategies to ensure that an appropriate contribution plan is in place.

The Fund also monitors the funding position at the midway point between triennial valuations, which is the 30 September 2023. The purpose of the funding update was to assess whether the funding plan is on track and take any actions where necessary. No actions are required to change the current funding plan. The updated funding position provides an illustrative funding position and not designed to meet regulatory requirements for. A comparison of funding levels can be seen below:

Table 1 - Comparison of funding levels:

Ongoing funding basis	31 March 2019	31 March 2022	30 September 2023
	£m	£m	£m
Assets	733	920	891
Liabilities	1,054	1,149	842
Surplus/(deficit)	(321)	(229)	49
Funding level	70.0%	80.0%	106%

Increased funding level has been driven by a fall in the liabilities. The fall in liabilities is a consequence of higher than expected real discount rate used to value the current cost of future pension obligations (accrued liabilities).

Investment Strategy Development & Performance Monitoring:

The Investment Strategy Statement (ISS) is subject to review at least every three years and it is timely to undertake a review as part of the triennial valuation process and future investment return expectations are set out within the Funding Strategy Statement (FSS).

During the valuation process and discussion of the valuation results it was acknowledged that there was a need to shift the investment strategy towards investments that will provide increased income for the Fund. This was reflected in an Investment Strategy Considerations paper that was presented and agreed at the Pensions Committee meeting on the 21 March 2023 and subsequently incorporated within the ISS agreed at the 12 September 2023 meeting.

Agreement at the 21 March 2023 Pensions committee meeting was to proceed with a two-step approach, which consisted of:

- An initial 'Interim' investment strategy – with an allocation to investment-grade credit assets of 5% and an increase in allocation to infrastructure assets from 10% to 12.5%,
- A 'Long Term' investment strategy – with a migration away from investment grade credit assets and move towards the more income orientated mandates of Multi Asset Credit (MAC) and private debt over time.

The ISS set outs the target asset allocations. The following table shows the actual asset allocation position as at 31 March 2024 compared against the long- term target and includes individual Fund Manager benchmarks:

Table 2 – Asset Allocations

Asset Class		Target Allocation	Actual Allocation 31 March 2025	Relative	Benchmark and Target
		%	%	%	
GROWTH		52.5	53.4	0.9	
Global Equity- Legal & General Investment Management (LGIM) - Passive	LCIV aligned	5.0	4.4	-0.6	FTSE All World Equity Index
Emerging Market Equity - LGIM Emerging Markets - Passive	LCIV aligned	5.0	4.1	-0.9	FTSE World Emerging Markets
Multi- Factor Equity - LGIM Future World Fund	LCIV aligned	12.5	13.3	0.8	FTSE AW ex CW Climate Balanced Factor Index
Passive Equity Progressive Paris Aligned Fund (PEPPA) - State Street	LCIV	5.0	5.8	0.8	S&P Developed Ex-Korea Large Mid Cap Net Zero 20250 Paris Aligned ESG Index
Global Alpha Paris Aligned Fund - Baillie Gifford	LCIV	12.5	13.3	0.8	MSCI ACWI by 2- 3 % p.a. over a rolling 5 five year period Plus have a weighted average greenhouse gas

Asset Class		Target Allocation	Actual Allocation 31 March 2025	Relative	Benchmark and Target
		%	%	%	
					intensity that is lower than MSCI ACWI EU Paris Aligned Requirement index
Absolute Return - Ruffer	LCIV	12.5	12.5	0.0	Preserve and grow capital (LIBOR +4% p.a.)
INCOME		42.5	38.5	-4.0	
UK Property - UBS	Non LCIV	6.0	5.1	-0.9	Match MSCI All Balanced Funds Weighted Average Index
Global Property - CBRE	LCIV	4.0	3.1	-0.9	CPI +5%% p.a. (net of fees)
Global Infrastructure - Stafford II & IV	Non LCIV	3.5	4.3	0.8	CPI +5%% p.a. (net of fees)
Infrastructure - JP Morgan	Nov LCIV	5.5	4.9	-0.6	CPI +5%% p.a. (net of fees)
Renewable Energy Infrastructure	LCIV	3.5	1.8	-1.7	CPI +5%% p.a. (net of fees)
Multi Asset Credit - Royal London	Non LCIV	7.5	7.0	-0.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% ICE BAML, BB-B Index • 50% Credit Suisse US Leveraged Loan Index GBP Hedged
Investment Grade Credit Global Bond Fund	LCIV	5.0	4.8	-0.2	Barclays Aggregate – Credit Index Hedged (GBP) Index
Private Debt - Churchill II & IV	Non LCIV	3.0	2.8	-0.2	Outperform cash + 4% p.a
Private Debt Permira - PCS4 & PCS5	Non LCIV	4.5	4.7	0.2	Outperform cash + 4% p.a
PROTECTION		5.0	8.1	3.1	
Index Linked Bonds - Royal London	Non LCIV	5.0	4.7	-0.3	40% FTSE Index Linked over 5 Year index.
Currency Hedging	Russell	0.0	0.4	0.4	Hedge 100% of EUR, USD and AUD currency (non-equity)
Cash	n/a	0.0	3.0	3.0	n/a
TOTAL		100.0	100.0	0.0	

Set out below is the implementation/progression of the agreed investment strategy during 2024/25:

- 1 October 24 – Restructure of the Royal London (Bond Manager) benchmark – Disaggregated the consolidated benchmark for the Multi Asset Credit Fund and Index Linked Gilts (ILG) so that each is managed to their separate benchmarks. Also updated the ILG benchmark to the FTSE Actuaries UK Index-Linked Gilts All Stocks Index (from the FTSE Actuaries UK Index-Linked Gilts over 5 years Index).
- 12 December 2024 – Underweight positions were rebalanced to bring the funds' assets allocation in line with targets, using cash withdrawn from Havering Treasury (£10m) and Northern Trust General Cash (£30m). £13m increase to the London CIV Absolute Return Fund 9 was 1/3% underweight) and £27m increase to Royal London ILG (was 2.7% underweight).
- 1 January 2025 – Oversight of the CBRE Global Alpha Fund transferred to LCIV under an engagement agreement. This resulted in a reduction in fees for the Fund and LCIV will add the Global Alpha Fund to their manager monitoring programme.
- 20 January 2025 – on the 10 December 2024, the Committee agreed to reduce the target allocation of the LCIV Global Alpha Growth Paris Aligned (GAGPA) fund from 15% to 12.5% and increase the Legal and General Future World Fund allocation from 10% to 12.5%. The 2.5% adjustment equated to £25m and the transfer of cash was completed on 20 January 2025

Following on from the agreement of the ISS in September 2023, the ISS will be presented to the Committee for ongoing implementation updates during 2025 and beyond.

Overweight allocations to cash or asset allocations will be considered for reinvestment or settlement of capital calls.

Short-term performance of asset class and managers will result in a deviation from benchmarks from time to time.

The underweight position in the LCIV Renewable Infrastructure Fund relates to the commitment not yet fully called.

In line with the ISS, when the Fund allocation deviates by 5 percentage points or more from the strategic allocation, the assets will be rebalanced back to within 2.5 percentage points of the strategic asset allocation.

As at 31 March 2025 the total value of assets with the London CIV is £416m which represents 38% of assets under direct management (2023/24 41%). The London CIV has a business arrangement with LGIM and CBRE to deliver the passive global mandate; this can be classified as being held within the London CIV for pooling purposes so the allocation increases to £635m. Overall allocation to LCIV is 63% (2023/24 60%).

The Fund will continue to have ongoing discussions with the London CIV to progress the transition of assets onto the London CIV platform in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) timelines.

The Fund has continued to fund capital calls for the Private Debt and Infrastructure mandates during the year to 31 March 2024. Amounts paid and waiting to be called are as follows:

Table 3 – Capital Calls paid and outstanding

Investment Manager	Mandate	Amount Paid £000	Commitments outstanding* £000
Stafford II	Infrastructure	0,074	1,658
Stafford IV	Infrastructure	0,729	2,334
LCIV Renewables	Infrastructure	4,415	8,661
Churchill II	Private Debt	nil	0,901
Churchill IV	Private Debt	1,712	3,959
Permira PCS4	Private Debt	nil	4,751
Permira PCS5	Private Debt	8,548	14,366
Total		15,478	36,630

*Includes recallable income

Investment Strategy - Climate Considerations:

The Committee recognises the long-term financial risks and opportunities presented by climate change and during 2021/22 had already taken steps to address climate risk in a number of ways, mainly moving some of its equity investments to low carbon aligned portfolios and commenced investing in renewable energy infrastructure. The Committee will continue to include climate considerations as part of investment decision making.

The Committee's journey to meet its climate ambitions remains ongoing and the progress made to date is outline below:

- a. 26 July 2022 Pensions Committee meeting - the Committee received a presentation setting out the possible next steps in developing the Fund's plans for addressing climate risk within its portfolio. This plan will be used to establish a baseline position enabling the Fund to frame objectives and targets for change.
- b. 20 September 2022 Pension Committee meeting - the Committee was presented with a baseline assessment of several carbon metrics, which identified gaps in data and set out those asset types where data is harder to collect and measure. Assessing the Fund's current position against a series of standard metrics will address ongoing reporting requirements.
- c. 13 December 2022 Pensions Committee considered the indicative plans/actions and timescales in developing the Fund's plans for embedding climate risk management into the Fund.
- d. 6 March 2023 - An education session on climate metrics was delivered to the Committee, in preparation for the discussions on setting objectives and goals for inclusion in the climate risk policy.
- e. 21 March 2023 Pensions Committee discussed and agreed the draft outline of the Climate Risk Policy content and agreed to fully develop the policy. The Policy will set out the Committee's approach to addressing climate related risks, its goals and any associated actions for delivery. The Committee will then monitor exposure to climate related risks within its portfolios on an annual basis.
- f. 25 July 2023 Pensions Committee agreed the Climate Policy and Action Plan, which includes the objectives set, targets to be assessed and actions that the Committee will take.
- g. 27 March 2024 Climate workshop held to discuss the climate journey so far and next steps on how to measure the progress against an ambition to reduce financial emissions to net zero by 2050.
- h. 10 Dec 2024 - Annual collection and collation of climate metrics in line with Fund's Climate Action Plan/Risk Policy and Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures ("TCFD") framework. TCFD report presented and agreed at Pensions Committee meeting on the 10 December 2024.

Fund Performance

The performance of the Fund is measured against a tactical and a strategic benchmark.

Strategic Benchmark - A strategic benchmark has been adopted for the overall Fund of Index Linked Gilts + 1.8% per annum. This is the expected return in excess of the fund's liabilities over the longer term. The strategic benchmark measures the extent to which the fund is meeting its longer term objective of reducing the funds deficit.

Tactical Benchmark - Each manager has been set a specific (tactical) benchmark as well as an outperformance target against which their performance will be measured. This benchmark is determined according to the type of investments being managed. This is not directly comparable to the strategic benchmark as the majority of the mandate benchmarks are different but contributes to the overall performance.

The Fund uses the performance measurement services from Northern Trust, to provide comparative statistics on the performance of the Fund for its quarterly monitoring.

The overall net performance of the Fund as at 31 March 2025 against both benchmarks is shown below:

Table 4 – Fund Performance

	<u>1 year</u> <u>to</u> <u>31.03.25</u> %	<u>3 Years to</u> <u>31.03.25</u> %	<u>5 years to</u> <u>31.03.25</u> %
Fund Return	3.64	2.38	6.99
Tactical Benchmark	5.84	6.00	8.54
Performance	(2.20)	(3.62)	(1.55)
Fund Return	3.64	2.38	6.99
Strategic Benchmark	(6.25)	(11.98)	(5.39)
Performance	9.90	14.36	12.38

Source: Northern Trust

Totals may not sum due to geometric basis of calculation and rounding

Comments on Fund performance from the Fund's Investment Advisors:

The overriding investment objective for the Fund is to deliver consistent year-on-year returns to support an affordable and stable level of contributions for the longer term.

The current funding approach implies a target investment return of 3.5% p.a. (as stated in the latest actuarial valuation date as at 31 March 2022). This target investment return is a slight increase from the 3.3% p.a. stated in the previous actuarial valuation (as at 31 March 2019).

Over the 12-month period to 31 March 2025, the Fund delivered a positive return of 3.6% which was ahead of the strategic benchmark, albeit behind the Fund's tactical benchmark. Over periods of 3 years and 5 years to 31 March 2025, the Fund experienced positive asset growth, with investment returns of 2.4% p.a. and 7.0% p.a. respectively. These returns remain ahead of the Fund's strategic benchmark, with the Fund therefore demonstrating long-term performance which remains sufficient to support affordable and stable levels of contributions.

The positive investment performance (in absolute terms) over the 12-month period was primarily driven by the Fund's passive equity allocation, as well as positive contributions from credit allocations. Over the year global equity markets performed well, driven by strong returns of US technology stocks. Credit markets were buoyed by resilient corporate earnings and the prospect of interest rate cuts improved the outlook for corporate balance sheets.

The Fund's active equity allocation, infrastructure and global property allocations were the main sources of underperformance relative to the tactical benchmark over the 12-month period.

Implementation of agreed changes in the investment strategy continued over the year. The allocation to the LCIV Global Alpha Growth Paris Aligned Fund was reduced from 15% to 12.5%, with the proceeds invested in the LGIM Future World Fund (thereby increasing the allocation from 10% to 12.5%). This was undertaken to provide a greater balance across the equity mandate target allocations, whilst retaining a well-diversified aggregate equity allocation. In addition, steps were taken to reduce potential return volatility in the RLAM mandate through reducing the benchmark duration of the index linked gilts portfolio.

Finally, during the year, the Committee took further steps to progress against objectives set out in the Fund's Climate Risk Policy and Action Plan. This included the Committee reviewing the ESG-related exclusions and restrictions applicable to the Fund's existing investments, completing an assessment of climate metrics for the Fund's existing investments as at 31 March 2024, and becoming a signatory of the 2024 Global Investor Statement to Governments on the Climate Crisis. The Committee also produced

their fourth annual report setting out their approach to managing climate-related risks in line with the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) framework.

Due to a change in guidance, the Committee reviewed the reporting arrangements back in June 2017 and agreed that only one fund manager will attend each Committee meeting, unless performance concerns override this. Managers in the London CIV sub funds are now monitored by them and the London CIV produce quarterly monitoring reports, which are distributed to the Committee.

Cyclical coverage of manager monitoring is set out in **Annex B.**

INTERNAL & EXTERNAL RESOURCES

Investment strategy and performance monitoring of the Fund is a matter for the Committee which obtains and considers advice from the Authority and oneSource officers, and as necessary from the Fund's appointed professional adviser, actuary and performance measurers who attend meetings as and when required.

The structure of the Committee, which reflects the political balance of the Council, and who were responsible for decision making during the year to 31 March 2025, follows:

Labour Group

Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair)

Conservative Group:

Cllr Viddy Persaud

Cllr Joshua chapman

Havering Residents' Group

Cllr Stephanie Nunn (Vice- Chair)

Cllr Jacqueline Williams

Cllr James Glass

Other

Union Members (Non-voting) x 2 - Derek Scott (Unison) and Vacant (GMB)

Admitted/Scheduled Body Representative (voting) (currently vacant)

Day to day management of the Fund is delegated to the authority's statutory section 151 Officer/Strategic Director of Resources and the Director of Exchequer & Transactional Services, delivered via oneSource (shared service arrangement between London Borough of Havering and Newham).

The Investment and Financial management of the Fund is delivered by the London Borough of Havering's Pensions and Treasury Team and Pensions Administration is delivered via the oneSource arrangement.

The Pensions Committee is also supported by Committee Services.

Administrative costs are reimbursed to the Administrating Authority by the Fund.

From 1 November 2017, the London Borough of Havering delegated the pension administration service to Lancashire County Council (LCC) who has engaged the Local Pension Partnership Administration (LPPA) to undertake their pension's administration.

Estimated costs for the forthcoming three years for Administration, Investment Management expenses and Governance & Oversight follow in this report.

Pensions Administration - The LPPA is responsible for all aspects of the Fund administration including calculating benefits, processing joiners and leavers, record amendments, end of year returns, monitoring and administration of the Authority's Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC) scheme. LPPA engagement team is responsible for communications and training for Scheme employers and pension scheme members.

At a Pensions Committee meeting held on the 25 June 2024, members reviewed and agreed the £648k 2024/25 budget for the LPPA Pensions Administration contract. The 2025/26 budget will be presented to the Pensions committee at the 24 June 2025 meeting.

The oneSource Pensions Administration section consists of 3 full time equivalent posts, which includes a post for the Projects and Contracts Manager who monitors the LPPA pension's administration contract and ad hoc projects.

The financial information can be seen in Financial Estimates section.

Accountancy and Investment support - The Pensions Finance team consists of 2.4 full time equivalent posts (3 officers). They ensure that members of the committee receive advice on investment strategy and monitoring of the fund managers. The team also maintains compliance with the Pension Fund statutory obligations, as well as accounting for the activities of the Fund.

FINANCIAL ESTIMATES

The financial accounts of the Havering Pension Fund for 2024/25 is included in the formal Annual Report of the Fund itself and not included here. The Annual Report is prepared later in the year when the pension fund accounts have been finalised.

In line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) LGPS Management Costs guidance, Management costs are shown split between three cost categories as follows:

1. Administrative Expenses

Includes all staff costs associated with Pensions Administration, including Payroll.

	2023/24 Actual £000	2024/25 Estimate £000	2024/25 Actual £000	2025/26 Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000	2027/28 Estimate £000
Administration & Processing	806	908	996	1,030	1,030	1,030
Other Fees (Levies)	15	16	8	15	15	15
Other Costs (Interest)	125	75	2	0	0	0
TOTAL	946	999	1,006	1,045	1,045	1,045

Please note the following regarding the above figures:

- Administration & processing costs include the Pension Administration Contract LPPA, Project & Contract manager, payroll & legal charges and ad hoc project costs. Increase in 2024/25 costs relates to an additional backdated 2022/23 Fusion Licensing costs (£68k). Increase in 2025/26 estimate relate to increase in Pensions Administration Contract (£97k).
- Interest payments accounted for in Leavers out expenditure and will no longer an increase in interest rates
- Assumed inflation at 3% where applicable or average over three years - No further allowance for inflation after 2025/26

2. Investment Management expenses

These costs will include any expenses incurred in relation to the management of Fund assets.

Fees are calculated based on market values under management and therefore increase or reduce as the value of investments change.

	2023/24 Actual £000	2024/25 Estimate £000	2024/25 Actual £000	2025/26 Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000	2027/28 Estimate £000
Fund Manager Fees	3,995	4,000	3,606	3,900	3,900	3,900
Performance Related Fees	200	160	32	50	50	50
Transaction costs	361	335	597	490	490	490
Custodian Fees	28	35	29	30	30	30
TOTAL	4,584	4,530	4,264	4,470	4,470	4,470

Please note the following regarding the above figures:

- Lower Fund Manager fees relate to lower fee rates being applied. Return of capital results in lower asset values and therefore lower fees
- Movement between Performance Related Fees & Transaction costs relate to better understanding of cost classifications
- Fund Manager/Performance Fees & Transaction costs are charged according to the fund value; therefore, an average figure from the last three years has been applied for estimates 2025/26 onwards and adjusted for mis-postings as appropriate.

3. Governance and Oversight

This category captures all costs that fall outside the above two categories and include legal, advisory, actuarial and training costs. Staff costs associated with the financial reporting and support services to the Committee is included here.

	2023/24 Actual £000	2024/25 Estimate £000	2024/25 Actual £000	2025/26 Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000	2027/28 Estimate £000
Financial Services	229	240	194	200	200	200
Actuarial Fees	125	60	35	100	40	40
Audit Fees	90	90	114	100	100	100
Performance Measurement Fees	38	45	54	55	55	55
Member Training (inc. LPB)	2	10	15	15	15	15
Advisor Fees	80	80	110	90	90	90
London CIV	101	100	97	100	100	100
Local Pension Board	7	10	9	10	10	10
Pensions Committee	38	40	27	30	30	30
Other Fees	15	16	17	20	20	20
TOTAL	725	691	672	720	720	720

Please note the following regarding the above figures:

- Financial Services reduction relate to the outcome of management changes following exit from oneSource
- Actuarial Fees shown are shown net of recharges from 2024/25 onwards.
- LCIV reflects lower fee Development Fund charges
- Incompletion of prior year audits costs causing delays for accurately predicating audit fees. Estimates for audit fees are based on 24/25 agreed fees and uplifted for 3% inflation. Audit fees subject to approval by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA).
- Assumed inflation at 3% where applicable or average over 3 years - No further allowance for inflation after 2025/26

	2023/24 Actual £000	2024/25 Estimate £000	2024/25 Actual £000	2025/26 Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000	2027/28 Estimate £000
OVERALL MANAGEMENT TOTAL	6,255	6,220	5,942	6,235	6,235	6,235

MAJOR MILESTONES & ISSUES CONSIDERED/TO BE CONSIDERED

Pension Committee meetings 2024/25

The Committee met a number of times during 2024/25 and **Annex A** sets out the coverage of matters considered and members in attendance.

Timetables are indicative and some reports may be rescheduled to an alternative date to avoid overloading content at meetings.

Annex A has been compared against the indicative work plan set for 2024/25 to demonstrate what was achieved and is set out below:

Cyclical Planned Work	Achieved	Comments
25 June 2024		
Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of Mar 24 - Royal London – Bonds manager to attend	Yes	
Business Plan/Report on the work of the Pensions Committee 2023/24	Yes	
Pension fund Accounts 2023/24	Yes	
Pensions Administration Budget 2024/25	Yes	
Non-Cyclical Planned Work	Achieved	Comments
Review of Pensions Fund Admissions Policy	Yes	Included in the work plan but with no specified date
Agreed Admission to the fund: CleanTEC Services (catering – Elm Park School) and Aspens Services (Catering Empower Learning Trust)	Yes	Not possible to predict when new employers will join so won't be scheduled as part of the business plan
1 October 2024		
Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of Jun 24- LGIM Passive Equities Manager to attend	Yes	
Pension Fund Annual Report 2023/24	Yes	Presented at 5 November 2024 meeting
The Pensions Regulator Code of Practice – compliance/action Plan	No	Still under review
Government Actuary Department - Section 13 results	Yes	
5 November 2024		

Annual review of Custodian + contract renewal options	Yes	Presented at 10 December 2024 meeting
Annual review of Adviser + contract renewal options	Yes	
Cyclical Planned Work	Achieved	Comments
5 November 2024 (cont'd)		
Annual review of Actuary +contract renewal options	Yes	
Review of Governance Policy	Yes	
Whistleblowing Annual Assessment/Breaching of Law Policy	Yes	
Risk Register Review	Yes	
Overpayment policy following Death	Yes	
Communications Strategy 2024-27	Yes	
Pension Fund Charging Review	Yes	Presented at 10 December 2024 meeting (included with administration Strategy Review)
Pensions Administration Strategy Review	Yes	Presented at 10 December 2024 meeting
10 December 24		
Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of Sep 24 - UBS – UK Property Manager to attend	Yes	
TCFD Report 2023/24	Yes	
Local Pension Board Annual Report 31 March 2024	No	Issues with timings of AGM /sickness. Meeting dates reviewed
Non-Cyclical Planned Work	Achieved	Comments
Investment Strategy Update – Equity portfolio		Included in the work plan but with no specified date
18 March 25		
Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of Dec 24 - Stafford – Infrastructure manager to attend	Yes	
Annual review of Fund Managers Voting & Engagement	Yes	
Pensions Administration Budget 2025/26	No	Anticipated for June 2025 meeting
Non-Cyclical Planned Work	Achieved	Comments
New Employer Admissions Process Review		

PENSION COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2024/25

ANNEX A

Date	Good Governance Framework category		Topic	Attended By	Duration of meeting
25 Jun 24	Investment	Monitoring of Investments	Noted the Pension Fund Performance Monitoring Report for quarter ending March 2024: received presentations from the Fund's bonds manager : Royal London	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair) Cllr Viddy Persaud Cllr Joshua Chapman Cllr Jacqueline Williams Cllr Stephanie Nunn (Vice-Chair)	2 hours 10 minutes
	Governance	Annual Report & Accounts	Noted Pension Fund Accounts 2023/24		
	Governance	Budget Setting	Agreed the Pensions Administration Budget 2024/25		
	Governance	Policies/Strategies	Agreed review of the Funds Admission policy		
	Funding	New Employer	Agreed Admission to the fund: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CleanTEC Services Limited – cleaning services to Elm Park School Aspens Services Limited – catering services to Empower Learning Academy Trust 		
	Governance	Business Planning/Service Delivery	Agreed the rolling 2024/25 – 2026/27 Business Plan/ Annual Report on the work of the Pensions Committee for 2023/24		
1 Oct 24	Investment	Monitoring of Investments	Noted the Pension Fund Performance Monitoring Report for quarter ending 30 June 2024: received presentations from the Fund's Passive Equity Manager: Legal & General	Cllr Stephanie Nunn (Chair) Cllr Viddy Persaud Cllr Jacqueline Williams	1 hour 30 minutes
	Funding	Actuarial Valuations	Noted the results of Public Services Pensions Act 2013 – Section 13 report		

PENSION COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2024/25

ANNEX A

Date	Good Governance Framework category		Topic	Attended By	Duration of meeting
5 Nov 24	Governance	Review of Effectiveness	Noted Annual review of Actuary for the year ending 30 Sept 2024 and agreed contract extension to June 2026 and agreed to commence tendering for new contract via the National Framework	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair) Cllr Viddy Persaud Cllr Jacqueline Williams Cllr James Glass Cllr Robby Misir (sub for Cllr Nunn)	1 hour 30 minutes
	Governance	Review of Effectiveness	Noted Annual review of Investment Consultant & agreed to commence tendering for new contract via the National Framework		
	Governance	Governance Compliance Statement	Agreed Governance Policy & Compliance Statement following review		
	Governance	Annual Report & Accounts	Agreed the Pension Fund Annual Report 31 March 2024 and noted compliance against checklist		
	Governance	Breaches	Agreed the policy for reporting breaches of law and noted there were no breaches		
	Pension Administration	Communication Strategy	Agreed the Communications Policy 2024 to 2027		
	Governance	Risk Management	Approved the updated Pension Fund Risk Register – updated as of Nov 2024		
	Pension Administration	Processes	Agreed the continuation of the overpayment policy following death of a pensioner		
10 Dec 24	Investment	Monitoring of Investments	Noted the Pension Fund Performance Monitoring Report for quarter ending 30 September 2024: received presentations from the Fund's UK Property Manager: UBS	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair) Cllr Viddy Persaud Cllr Joshua Chapman Cllr Jacqueline Williams	2 hours 20 minutes

PENSION COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2024/25

ANNEX A

Date	Good Governance Framework category		Topic	Attended By	Duration of meeting
	Governance	Review of Effectiveness	Noted Service review of the Pension Fund Custodian for the year to September 2024 & agreed to commence tendering for new contract via the National Framework		
	Investment	Performance	Agreed the Taskforce on Climate Related Financial Disclosure report for the year ending 31 March 2024		
	Pension Administration	Administration Strategy	Agreed the Pensions Administration Strategy Charging Policy for 3 years to 2027		
18 Mar 25	Investment	Monitoring of Investments	Noted the Pension Fund Performance Monitoring Report for quarter ending 31 December 2024: received presentations from the Fund's Infrastructure Manager: Stafford	Cllr Stephanie Nunn (Chair) Cllr Stanton (sub for Cllr Anderson) Cllr Jacqueline Williams Cllr Dilip Patel (sub for Cllr Persaud)	1 hour 45 minutes
	Pension Administration Investment	New Employer Responsible Investment	Agreed the change to the admissions process for new employers Noted the Review of Voting & Engagement Activity for the year to June 24		

- Three members constitute a quorum.
- Target dates for issuing agendas were met.

Pension Committee meetings 2025/26 and onwards

To assist members to make effective decisions, the Business Plan sets out an indicative timetable for reports to be submitted to the committee which will cover cyclical reports, as shown in **Annex B**.

In addition to the annual cyclical work programme there are a number of key issues that are likely to be considered by the Pensions Committee in the coming year and beyond and will be added to the meeting cycle as appropriate and are set out below:

- Restate investment beliefs [Q3, 2025]
- Continued development/monitoring and implementation of Climate Risk Policy
- Develop and implement approach for climate related engagement, in conjunction with LCIV
- Task Force on Climate Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) reporting compliance/gap analysis (subject to regulatory publications)
- Implementation of the long-term Investment strategy
- Consider Local investment agenda (ongoing considerations at present)
- Potential consideration of Private Equity investment (consider alongside local investment)
- London CIV Pooling progression/Continued consideration of transfer of assets to the London CIV (particularly Multi Asset Credit, Index linked assets)
- Consideration of reallocating into Private Debt/Infrastructure close ended funds and review Phase 2 implementation of property strategy within LCIV
- Governance review of London CIV
- Planning for SAB Good Governance guidance compliance - once guidance is issued
- TPR New Code of Practice compliance check – develop action plan
- New training policy to reflect Good Governance and TPR compliance
- New contract – Actuary (current contract expires 30 June 2026)
- New contract – Investment Advisor (current contract expires 31 March 2026)
- New contract – Custodial Services (current contract expires 30 September 2026)
- Administration issues i.e. ongoing work associated with the McCloud ruling – readiness for Pensions Dashboard
- Covenant Risk Review
- SAB developments
- Consideration of LGPS Regulation changes and consequential policy, as applicable
- Topical issues discussed as appropriate
- Continued training and development (include training programme following Local Elections May 2026)

• KEY REPORTING DATES / INDICATIVE WORK PLAN 2025/26

ANNEX B

	JUNE 2025	SEPTEMBER 2025	NOVEMBER 2025	DECEMBER 2025	MARCH 2026
Formal Committees with Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of March 25: Russell (FX hedging) Business Plan/Report on the work of the Pensions Committee 2024/25 Pension Fund Accounts 2024/25 Pensions Administration Budget 25/26 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of June 25 – JP Morgan (Infrastructure) Pension Fund Annual Report for 2024/25 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual review of Custodian Annual review of Actuary Annual review of Adviser Review of Governance Policy Risk Register Review FSS Statement Summary of new employer admissions report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of Sep 25: Churchill (Private Debt) TCFD report 2024/25 Local Pension Board Annual Report 31 March 25 2025 Valuation results Investment Review ISS Statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of Dec 25: LCIV (Pooling) Annual review of Fund Managers Voting & Engagement Business Plan/Report on the work of the Pensions Committee 2025/26
Training	Associated Training	Associated Training	Associated Training	Associated Training	Associated Training

KEY REPORTING DATES / WORK PLAN 2026/27

	JUNE 2026	SEPTEMBER 2026	NOVEMBER 2026	DECEMBER 2026	MARCH 2027
Formal Committees with Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of March 26: CBRE (Property) Pension Fund Accounts 2025/26 Summary of new employer admissions report 2026/27 Pensions Administration Budget 26/27 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of June 26 – Royal London (Bonds) Pension Fund Annual Report for 2025/26 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual review of Custodian Annual review of Actuary Annual review of Adviser Review of Governance Policy Risk Register Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of September 26 Permira (Private Debt) Annual review of Fund Managers Voting & Engagement TCFD report 2025/26 Local Pension Board Annual Report 31 March 26 Triennial mid-point valuation (as at Sep 26) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of December 26: Stafford (Infrastructure)
Training	Associated Training	Associated Training	Associated Training	Associated Training	Associated Training

KEY REPORTING DATES / WORK PLAN 2027/28

	JUNE 2027	SEPTEMBER 2027	NOVEMBER 2027	DECEMBER 2027	MARCH 2028
Formal Committees with Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of March 27: LGIM (Passive equity) Business Plan/Report on the work of the Pensions Committee 2026/27 Pension Fund Accounts 2026/27 Pensions Administration Budget 27/28 Summary of new employer admissions report 2026/27 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of June 27 – UBS (UK Property) (Bonds) Pension Fund Annual Report for 2026/27 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual review of Custodian Annual review of Adviser Annual review of Actuary Review of Governance Policy Risk Register Review Cash Policy Review Overpayment policy following Death Pensions Administration Strategy Charging Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of September 27 JP Morgan (Infrastructure) GAD Section 13 Results Annual review of Fund Managers Voting & Engagement TCFD report 2026/27 Local Pension Board Annual Report 31 March 27 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Monitoring Report on Pension Fund to end of December 26: Churchill (Private Debt) Pensions Administration Budget 28/29
Training	Associated Training	Associated Training	Associated Training	Associated Training	Associated Training

PROVISION OF TRAINING

The Pensions Regulator new single Code of Practice came into force on 28 March 2024 and includes a requirement for members of the Pension Committee (PC)/Local Pension Board (LPB) to demonstrate that they have an appropriate degree of knowledge and understanding to enable them to properly exercise their functions as a member of the Committee/LPB.

A joint training strategy for the PC/LPB was last agreed by the Pensions Committee on the 24 November 2015 and presented to the Local Pension Board at its meeting on the 6 January 2016. A Training Strategy review had been deferred pending issuance of guidance/regulations for the anticipated Good Governance Review and TPR New Code of Practice. The Code of Practice has now been issued and officers are in the process of reviewing compliance against the new code and will commence with a Training Strategy review during 2025/26.

The PC of the London Borough of Havering Pension Fund fully supports the intentions behind CIPFA's Knowledge and Skills Code of Practice and has agreed to formally adopt its principles. The updated June 2021 Knowledge and Skills framework for committee members was adopted as part of the training programme following the Local Borough elections in May 2022.

As set out in the Council's constitution committee procedure rules, a member appointed to the PC shall have received, or shall within six months of appointment receive, training appropriate to its membership. If a member does not undertake the required training within six months of appointment, then that member shall not partake in the decision making of the Committee until their training has been completed. The completion of the LOLA v1 modules was deemed to meet these criteria. Long membership of the committee is also encouraged in order to ensure that expertise is developed and maintained within. The Council recommend that the membership of the Pension Committee remain static for the life of the term in Council, unless exceptional circumstances require a change.

Maintaining expertise, experience and knowledge is a key focus for the committee in order to meet the "qualitative test" under Markets in Financial Instrument Directive (MiFID 11). Firms will undertake an assessment of the expertise, experience and knowledge of the local authority and its pension fund committee in order to be reasonably assured that they are capable of making their own investment decisions and have an understanding of the risks involved before a firm will permit election to professional status. All requests for election have been granted for existing investment service providers.

A training budget has been agreed for the provision of training for £10,000 but this will be re-evaluated as appropriate. Training costs will be met from the Pension Fund.

The majority of training and development is cyclical in nature, spanning the four-year membership of the PC. Associated training and development will be given when required and linked to the Pension Fund meeting cyclical coverage as shown in **Annex B**.

In addition to the cyclical training and development that the PC will have over the lifetime of their membership, training will be provided in the areas where it has been specifically requested or has been identified as required. Special PC meetings will be arranged from time to time to discuss matters as appropriate

Members receive briefings and advice from the Fund's Investment adviser at each Committee meeting.

Members and Officers also attend seminars arranged by Fund Managers or other third parties who specialise in public sector pensions.

The Fund is a member of the CIPFA Pensions network, which gives access to an extensive programme of events, training/workshops, newsletters and documentation, including briefing notes on the latest topical issues.

The Head of Pensions and Treasury, Projects and Contracts Manager, Pension Fund Manager (Finance) and /or Accountant also attends regular forum meetings with peers from other London Boroughs; this gives access to extensive opportunities of knowledge sharing and benchmarking data.

Officers within oneSource Pensions teams also benefited from sharing of best practice

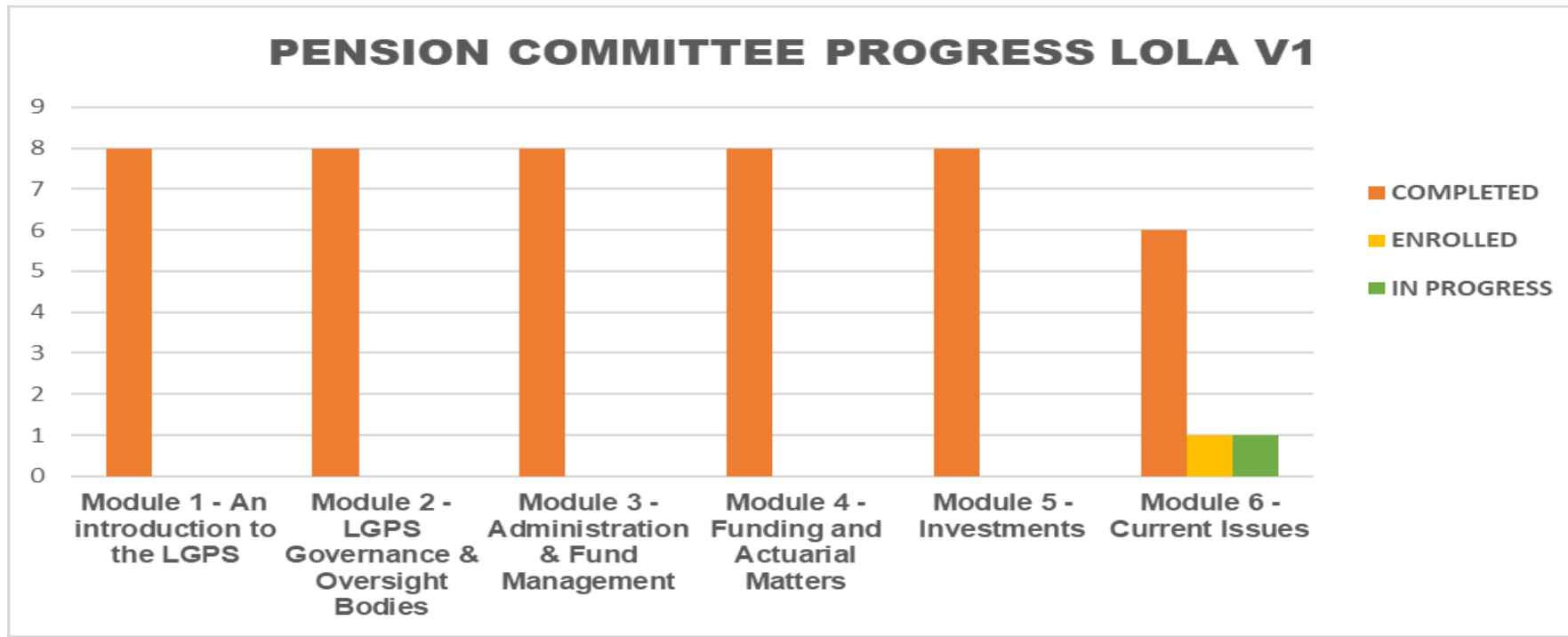
The London CIV runs periodic seminars to aid Officer and Committee member development.

The Pensions Regulator has launched an e-learning programme and this is available for members of the PC and LPB to use.

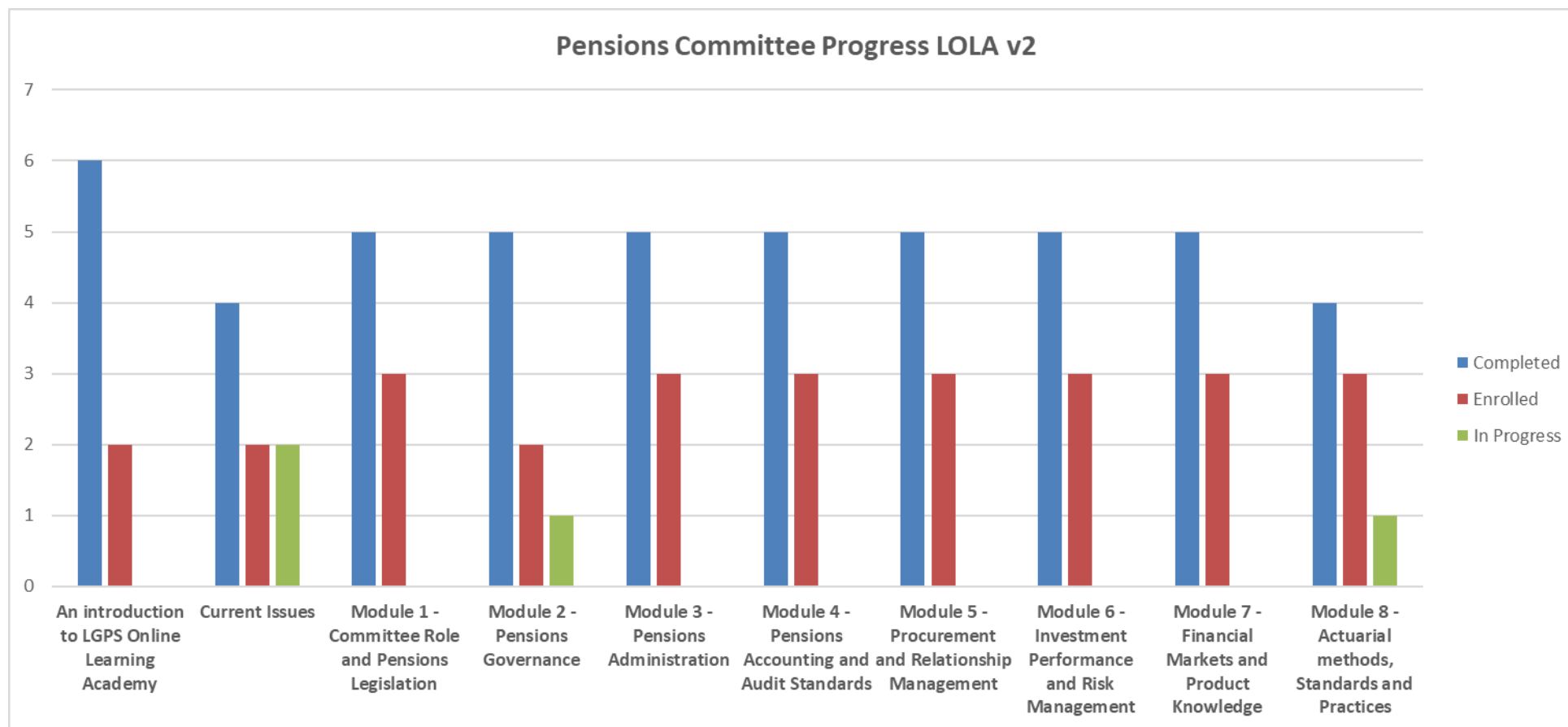
The Fund has also subscribed to the LGPS Online Learning Academy (LOLA) launched by our Actuaries (Hymans). There were issuances of learning modules under version 1 (v1) and version 2 (v2). This is an online platform designed to support the training needs of PC, LPB and Officers. The training is split into a number of modules covering the CIPFA Knowledge & Skills Framework and TPR's Code of Practices. Each module contains short 'videos on demand' presentations of 20 minutes or less with supplemental learning materials and quizzes. PC members were requested to complete LOLA v1 modules to meet the Council's constitution committee procedure rules.

The Fund receives regular progress reports, allowing it to easily evidence member's development and progress as at 31 March 2025 can be seen in the tables that follows:

:



The fund transitioned to the LOLA v2 module in October 2023 and the PC are encouraged to refresh their learning by completing the modules under version 2. Progress made as at **31 March 2025** can be seen in the following table:



Training and development took place during 2024/25 to ensure that Members of the Committee were fully briefed in the decisions they were taking. Training logs are maintained and attendance and coverage can be found in **Annex C below**. Training will be recorded following the May 2022 elections to demonstrate continuous development and training during their full term of elected office on the PC. This is in addition to the LOLA modules.

PENSION COMMITTEE TRAINING (May 2022 Election - 31 March 2025)					
			Annex C		
Date	Good Governance/CIPFA Framework category		Topic	Attended By	Duration
23 Jun 2022	ALL	ALL	Introduction to Pensions	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair)	1 hour
11 Jul 2022	ALL	Financial/ Investment Strategy, pooling & Financial Mkts & products	LCIV Induction for new Pension Committee Chairs	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair)	1 hour
19 Jul 2022	ALL	ALL	New Pension Committee induction	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair) Cllr Dilip Patel Cllr Viddy Persaud Cllr Julie Wilkes Cllr Philip Ruck Cllr Matthew Stanton	1 hour 30 minutes
5/6 Sept 2022	Investment	Strategy Implementation – Asset pooling	LCIV Annual Strategy Conference	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair) Derek Scott (Union Rep)	12 hours
20 Oct 2022	Governance	Governance	LGA Fundamentals Day 1	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair)	7 hours
10 Nov 2022	Governance	Strategy Implementation – Asset pooling	LGA Fundamentals Day 2	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair)	7 Hours
5 Dec 2022	Funding	Funding Strategy &	2022 Valuation results	Cllr Julie Wilkes Cllr Viddy Persaud	2 hours

PENSION COMMITTEE TRAINING (May 2022 Election - 31 March 2025)					
					Annex C
Date	Good Governance/CIPFA Framework category		Topic	Attended By	Duration
		Actuarial Methods		Derek Scott (Union Rep)	
15 Dec 2022	ALL	ALL	New member induction	Cllr James Glass	1 hour
19/20 Jan 2023	Governance	ALL	Local Government Conference 2023	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair) Derek Scott (Union Rep)	12 hours
6 Mar 2023	Investment	Strategy Implementation, Risk management	Education session on Climate Metrics	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair) Cllr Philip Ruck Cllr Viddy Persaud Cllr Stephanie Nunn Derek Scott (Union Rep)	1 hour
17 Jul 2023	ALL	ALL	New member induction	Cllr Joshua Chapman	1 hour
18 Jul 2023	Governance	Investment Strategy, Pooling	LCIV AGM	Cllr Mandy Anderson Cllr Viddy Persaud	2 hours
25 Jul 23	Governance	Management accounting	Havering Pension Fund Accounts 2022/23	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair) Cllr Philip Ruck Cllr Viddy Persaud Cllr Dilip Patel Cllr James Glass Cllr Joshua Chapman Derek Scott (Union Rep)	30 minutes
4/5 Sep 23	Governance / Investment	Strategy Implementation – Asset pooling	LCIV Conference	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair) Cllr James Glass	12 hours
12 Sep 23	Investment	Financial markets and Products	Corporate Bonds/LCIV Global Bond Fund	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair) Cllr Viddy Persaud Cllr James Glass	50 minutes

PENSION COMMITTEE TRAINING (May 2022 Election - 31 March 2025)					
					Annex C
Date	Good Governance/CIPFA Framework category		Topic	Attended By	Duration
17 Oct 2023	ALL	ALL	New member induction	Cllr Jacqueline Williams	1 hour
27 Mar 24	Investment	Strategy Implementation, Risk management	Climate Policy workshop	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair) Cllr Jacqueline Williams	2 hours 45 minutes
2023/24 Committee dates	ALL	ALL	Various – refer to Annex A	Pensions Committee	9 hours 15 minutes
25 Jun 24	Governance	Management accounting	Havering Pension Fund Accounts 2023/24	Cllr Mandy Anderson (Chair) Cllr Stephanie Nunn Cllr Jacqueline Williams Cllr Joshua Chapman	30 minutes
31 Oct 24	ALL	ALL	New member induction	Cllr Robby Misir	1 hour
Annex A 2024/25 Committee dates	ALL	ALL	Various – refer to Annex A	Pensions Committee	9 hours 15 minutes



Overview and Scrutiny Board Annual Report 2024/2025

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to give this short introduction to the summary of the Board's work during the 2024-2025 municipal year. Details are given below of elements of the Board's work this year including call-ins and budget scrutiny.

I would like to place on record my thanks to the other members of the Board and all the Council officers who have supported the Board's work this year. I would also particularly like to record my appreciation to the Statutory Scrutiny Officer for her invaluable support and guidance to the Board during the year.

The annual reports of the respective Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committees are attached to this report for information.

I commend this annual report and am pleased to submit it to full Council.

REMIT AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

The Board has responsibility for hearing all requisitions ('call-ins') of Council decisions. The Board also leads on the pre-decision scrutiny of forthcoming Council plans and decisions.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is also responsible for scrutiny of the following areas:

- Strategy and commissioning
- Partnerships with Business
- Customer access
- E-government and ICT
- Finance
- Human resources
- Asset Management
- Property resources
- Facilities Management
- Communications
- Democratic Services

- Social inclusion
- Councillor Call for Action

The Members who served on the Overview and Scrutiny Board during the year were:

Councillor Laurance Garrard (Chairman)

Councillor Julie Wilkes (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Mandy Anderson

Councillor Philippa Crowder

Councillor David Godwin

Councillor Martin Goode

Councillor Dilip Patel

Councillor Keith Prince

Councillor Philip Ruck

Councillor Matt Stanton

Councillor David Taylor

Councillor Bryan Vincent

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD – REVIEW OF ACTIVITY, 2024/25 MUNICIPAL YEAR

1. Council Budget

Given the financial challenges facing the Council, the Board has prioritised scrutiny of the Council budget and related issues. The Board scrutinised in December the approach to consultation on the budget although options were limited as the consultation process under way by this point. The Board asked for next year's consultation to be brought before it at an earlier stage in order that suggestions for improvement could be made.

Formal scrutiny of the budget proposals took place in January when officers presented full budget papers including those covering regeneration joint ventures etc. Recommendations and comments made by the Board to Cabinet included for more detail on the social value aspects of Joint Venture work, the use of Mercury Land Holding homes for temporary accommodation and the importance of seeking to ensure further external grant funding for the Council.

2. Savings Delivery

In addition to the budget proposals, the Board has also sought to monitor the achievement of savings planned in the current year. Updates were given to the Board in October covering areas such as the review of parking charges and the likelihood of achieving all planned savings. Further reports and changes to format were requested and the area of scrutiny will continue in the new municipal year.

3. Performance Issues

The Board has also scrutinised the key performance indicators (KPIs) available to monitor performance. The Board requested further detail on the position with red-rated KPIs and next year's set of indicators should be brought before it for pre-decision scrutiny.

4. Improvement and Transformation Plan/Productivity Plan

In July the Board received the Improvement and Transformation Plan which was submitted to central government as part of the Capitalisation Direction process. The Productivity Plan was also reviewed which was required to be produced by all Councils.

The Board discussed areas such as the level of interest on the Capitalisation loan and the impact of the Council's Target Operating Model. The impact on the plans of the lack of affordable housing in the borough was also scrutinised.

5. Customer Services Strategy

Scrutiny of the Council's Customer Services Strategy covered included plans to embed a customer-centric culture, modernise service delivery and improve the customer experience. This included plans to establish a new resident panel and increase on-line take-up of Council services. The Board scrutinised how learning from poor customer service could be improved and suggested that external benchmarking should be included in any updates on this issue.

6. Target Operating Model

The Board received an update in July on progress with implementing the Target Operating Model. This has included a review of the senior

management structure and the realignment of a number of a number of services. Staff turnover levels had also been reduced.

7. HR Issues

Throughout the year the Board has scrutinised a number of issues relating to the Council's human resources. Particular emphasis was placed on the use of agency and on sickness levels and Strategic Directors explained how they were addressing each of these areas. The Board scrutinised how levels of sickness were monitored in each area and if expenditure on agency staff could be reduced.

Further updates on HR issues will be given to the Board during the coming year.

8. Organisation receiving Council grants

The Board has scrutinised in detail the services provided by the two organisations to receive Council grant funding – the Citizens Advice Service (CAS) and the Havering Volunteer Centre (HVC).

The Board scrutinised areas of the CAS operations that grant funding was used for including advice on benefits, debt and housing. CAS was the only organisation in Havering providing specific services such as advocacy. Members recommended that, if possible, section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy funding be used to support the CAS.

The work of the HVC was explained to the Board and the cost saving to the borough was noted. The Board made a number of recommendations to Cabinet around assisting the HVC to find suitable new premises and establishing HVC's place in the Council's voluntary sector strategy.

9. Requisitions

In January, the Board heard a call-in of a Cabinet decision to convert offices to residential accommodation to accommodate homeless families at Chesham House. The requisition was upheld unanimously and a number of recommendations were made by the Board requiring further details of the scheme, developers and security arrangements etc.

A similar scheme at Eastgate House in Basildon was also requisitioned and heard by the Board in February. On this occasion the requisition was not upheld by 7 votes to 4 and the Board again made a number of comments to Cabinet covering areas such as flat size, the number of units and information to be provided to tenants on moving in.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

None – narrative report only.

Legal implications and risks:

None – narrative report only.

Human Resources implications and risks:

None – narrative report only.

Equalities implications and risks:

While the work of the Board can impact on all members of the community, there are no implications arising from this specific report which is a narrative of the Board's work over the past year.

Environmental and Climate Change Implications and Risks

None – narrative report only.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

This page is intentionally left blank

Places Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee Annual Report 2024/2025

INTRODUCTION

This report is the annual report of the Sub-Committee, summarising the Sub-Committee's activities during its year of operation ended May 2025.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable Members and others to have a record of the Committee's activities and performance.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The areas scrutinised by the Committee are:

- Housing & Accommodation Services
- Land & Property Services
- Planning
- Building Control
- Business Services
- Inward Investment
- Asset Management
- Property Services
- Facilities Management
- Sports
- Leisure
- Arts
- Music
- Libraries
- Heritage
- Parks & Open Space
- Highways
- Parking & Traffic
- Waste & Recycling
- Climate Change
- Transport & Infrastructure
- Public Protection & Licensing
- Emergency Planning
- Technical Services

SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Councillor David Taylor (Chairman)
Councillor Matt Stanton (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Osman Dervish
Councillor Ray Best
Councillor Phililppa Crowder
Councillor Laurance Garrard
Councillor Robby Misir
Councillor John Wood
Vacant

REVIEW OF ACTIVITY

During the year under review, the Sub-Committee met on seven occasions and dealt with the following issues:

VERBAL UPDATE - BANK HOLIDAY REFUSE COLLECTION

The Sub-Committee received a verbal presentation from the Director of Environment regarding the waste collection issues on the 6th of May Bank holiday. Apologies were extended for the disruption caused to the service and inconvenience to residents.

The Sub-Committee was informed that Urbaser, the waste management company, had been taken over by FCC. It was stated while some changes were anticipated, many of the senior staff from Urbaser remained in place.

The Director of Environment informed Members that discussions with FCC regarding contractual adjustments, such as parent company guarantees, were ongoing. Officers assured the sub-committee of its continued partnership with FCC.

It was mentioned that previously, under Serco, a catch-up service operated, with collections delayed by a day after bank holidays but under the current contract, collections occur on bank holiday Mondays (except during Christmas/New Year) to simplify the process for residents. Communications were consistently issued to inform residents of this arrangement.

The Sub-Committee was informed that a misalignment in terms and conditions for waste collection staff on certain bank holidays led to the disruption. During the transition from Serco to Urbaser (now FCC), due diligence regarding the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE) was conducted by the contractor. However, the terms for bank holiday collections had not been finalised.

It was stated that previous bank holiday collections were completed successfully, ongoing consultations about contractual changes during the Easter period were not fully resolved by the May Bank holiday. This led to some staff, with union support, opposing the new terms, which resulted in insufficient resources on 6th May 2024.

The Director of Environment stated that the Council was informed of the issue at short notice, with efforts been made to minimise resident inconvenience by updating communications through the call centre, website and other channels. The information that was sent to residents informed that collections would be delayed by one day due to the shortage of resources for the 6th May rounds.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the Service worked proactively with its communications team to address the situation and ensure residents were informed about the adjusted schedule. The situation underscored the importance of finalising contractual agreements during contractor transitions to prevent similar issues in the future.

In response to a Member enquiry, on resident communication and disruption. It was stated that messages were sent through the call centre and other channels to inform residents of the disruption to waste collection services. It was acknowledged that the disruption was unexpected and caused inconvenience, especially as the service was relatively new.

With regards performance management and monitoring, Members were informed that a comprehensive performance and client management system was in place to monitor service delivery. Issues during the disruption period were escalated to the UK Operations Director for Urbaser (now FCC) and discussed in regular client management meetings.

It was stated that these meetings addressed service failures, mitigation strategies, and contractual provisions for rectifying issues, including performance deductions and monetary penalties. Since the May incident, no further issues were reported. Regular checks with the Urbaser management team confirmed the resolution of previous issues.

Members noted backup plans, including agency staff and additional resources, were in place to address any future challenges, such as staff sickness.

Waste collection service performance was measured by missed collections per 100,000. The service reported a figure of 38 per 100,000, equating to a success rate of over 99%.

It was noted that this performance was significantly better than that of the previous contractor, Serco, which had a missed collection rate more than double the current figure during its latter stages. Despite the improvements, it was noted that missed collections were still being reported by residents. Efforts were ongoing with Urbaser to reduce these incidents.

The Sub-Committee was reassured that performance indicators across all services under the integrated contract, including waste collection, street cleansing, litter removal, and bin emptying, were being actively monitored and discussed.

A question was raised regarding the performance rate of 99% achieved by Urbaser compared to the earlier performance of Serco during their active contract period (prior to extensions). Officers did not have the exact data on Serco's performance during that time but agreed to forward the information to the committee for comparison.

It was noted that Urbaser was still in the early stages of the contract, with a period of mobilisation during which performance indicators were being developed. Officers offered to provide performance data for Serco's last two years alongside Urbaser's current performance for a more detailed comparison.

A request was made for data on graffiti removal, including how much graffiti was being removed across the borough and the responsiveness of the service. Officers offered to return at a later date with comprehensive key performance indicator (KPI) data once the reporting suite had been fully developed.

A Member requested for statistics on missed collections, such as by bin type (e.g. recycling bins, green bins at specific locations like New Green and Park Rise). Officers confirmed that it would be possible to provide this breakdown and agreed to supply the committee with the latest information.

Officers assured the Sub-Committee of their willingness to return with detailed performance reports on various aspects of the integrated contract, including waste collection, graffiti removal, and other services.

HOUSING RESIDENT SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Sub-Committee received an update report on the position of Housing Services Resident Safety and Compliance programmes against its statutory and regulatory duties under the Building Safety Act 2022 from the Assistant Director of Housing Property Services.

The report provided an update on the Services current activities on the approximately 9,400 homes and 2,500 leasehold properties, including around 15 tower blocks and over 1,000 medium- and low-rise blocks. housing programs that the Council owns and manages.

The Assistant Director of Housing Property Services explained that as a landlord, LBH fulfilled its statutory duty to ensure that each of the properties was safe and met all relevant statutory requirements. This included regular testing and servicing of equipment, adhering to consumer standards set by the regulator for social housing, and compliance with the Building Safety Act as mandated by the building safety regulator.

Members noted that appendix one of the report detailed the compliance features, both old and new. The first heading related to Fire Safety. It was noted that there were no "switch on" notices applications received, which was positive, and there were also no outstanding logs. The Services remained in regular contact regarding the overall safety of everything.

The report also noted that fire risk assessments were conducted on a risk-based cycle, typically between one to three years, and at present, 100% of the properties had an updated assessment. The report also highlighted that dry riser testing was up to date, with 100% of the necessary certifications in place.

In terms of fire alarm testing, as of last month, 95.45% of alarms were tested in July. The only block outstanding at that time was the recently completed New Green and Path Rise, which had since been added to the schedule, and the fire alarms were tested there on the 6th of August, bringing the figure back up to 100%. This update confirmed that all was in good order.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the Service needed to register some of its buildings with the Building and Safety Regulator due to their high-risk status. Fifteen buildings, defined as being over seven stories or at least 18 meters high, were registered with the building safety regulator. Additionally, in May the Building and Safety Regulator building safety regulator requested building safety case files for five of these buildings. The Council successfully submitted these files to the Building and Safety Regulator and were awaiting the outcome of these submissions.

Communal door checks had been undertaken in 13 out of the 15 high-rise buildings. The two remaining buildings, Park Rise and another unnamed building, were not yet occupied, and door checks were scheduled to commence once they were occupied.

For flat entrance doors and general needs, door checks were completed in 244 properties, but 298 properties encountered multiple no-access issues, indicating that access had been attempted three times or more. This issue was now being addressed as part of the KMT contract, which was also part of the Landlord's gas safety record and inspections. The KMT contract allowed for simultaneous door and gas safety inspections, which was intended to improve access rates.

Members noted that the new contract began this month, and 467 properties were booked for checks in August. It was hoped that the remaining checks would be completed by the end of this financial year.

In terms of fire safety inspections for shelters and hostel schemes, the Service achieved 100% compliance. In response to new legislation introduced following the Greenfield inquiry, specifically the Fire Safety Regulations 2022, it was stated that the service implemented visual monitoring regimes. These included quarterly inspections of communal doors and manual checks of flat entrance doors.

The service also adopted a new tool that enabled us to create 3D models of each high-rise building, allowing us to identify and document service isolation points and other critical information effectively. The tool was shared with the building safety regulator as part of the building safety case files. Additionally, the Service regularly shared information concerning any mandatory occurrences as part of our engagement strategy, which extended access across relevant sectors and to residents. The tool functioned similarly to Google Maps, allowing users to navigate around the building in a 3D environment, which was beneficial.

The report detailed that the Service was ahead in terms of gas compliance and safety. All gas compliance must undergo annual inspections, resulting in the issuance of a landlord gas safety certificate. As of July, the service had conducted 8,573 gas safety checks. Only one of the 8,574 properties remained unchecked due to the resident being hospitalised. The remaining inspection was carried out on the 6th of August, bringing the total compliance in gas safety to 100%.

Gas carburising, which involves properties without individual boilers, also achieved 100% compliance. This included tests on parts of the work within the property and a visual check on appliances such as cookers and other gas supplies. In terms of communal gas servicing, compliance was also at 100%, which was positive.

On electrical components and safety, social rented properties require an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) every 10 years, the Service adopted the practice of every 5 years for its social rented properties to align with best practices. It was stated that 9,309 were completed out of 9,321 EICR inspections, which equates to 99.87% compliance. The 12 remaining inspections were due to access issues, with one excess injunction being granted by the courts.

The service completed 835 inspections, including 135 emergency lighting tests. These tests also achieved 100% compliance, with 800 of the 835 inspections completed this month.

The report indicated that with regards Protection planning and portable appliance testing (PAT), 100% compliance was maintained.

Members were informed on the Lift compliance and safety, monthly inspections that were conducted along with planned maintenance regimes. New certificates were provided by the council's Insurers to ensure compliance with Lift maintenance. It was stated monthly maintenance inspections, annual servicing, and annual insurance certification inspections all achieved 100% compliance.

Legionella compliance, achieved 100% compliance in both monthly and bi-annual monitoring with all required risk assessments and monitoring carried out.

The report indicated that the Service dedicated a section in the compliance report for properties rented from private landlords and occupied by Havering residents. Officers explained that the service maintained a duty of care to residents and adopted a more rigorous approach to monitoring and addressing instances where landlords failed to provide requested information.

The Assistant Director stated that significant progress had been made in aligning systems to efficiently collect and monitor data. The figures presented in the report allowed the service to track ongoing improvements whilst also reflecting compliance.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the service was in the process of reviewing relevant key documents to ensure that all compliance areas were supported by contracts that delivered high performance and accommodated emerging technological advancements.

The Sub-Committee was informed that following recently completed the renewal of the painting maintenance contract, the focus would now shift to renewing the electrical services contract, along with other compliance-related contracts such as asbestos surveying, removal, fire risk assessments, fire safety works, all types of general services, and lift maintenance.

In response to a Member question, on the split between MEARS and K&T regarding the ease of access and the conjunction with gas safety measures. The query was raised about why K&T was not assigned to handle all inspections, especially

considering the significant split and the mixed tenure of developments involving some Leasehold and some general needs. It was suggested that the decision might relate to capacity and the desire to reflect different tenure mixes. There was also mention of a trial with painting to try and improve the figures, and the need to compare two different rooms to see how each contractor was performing, which would be evaluated in the future.

In terms of door checks within communal areas, questions were raised about the compliance rate of doors following inspections and the timescales to bring those not in compliance up to standard. It was stated that if a door, particularly a leasehold door, was found non-compliant, the cost of replacement was being covered by the council rather than charging the leaseholder, to ensure safety. This approach was explained as part of maintaining a secure environment.

In response to a question on timescale for bringing non-compliant doors, such as a front door in a block, into compliance. Officers responded that whether noted during a fire assessment check, reported by Housing or Estate staff, or brought to attention by a resident, the aim was to address all such issues by the end of the financial year.

In addition, it was stated that Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) inspections were being conducted, with around four thousand of these inspections planned. These inspections were designed to pick up any issues like non-compliant doors, which would then be referred to the maintenance team and prioritized accordingly.

A question was raised regarding the response times for priority one repairs, particularly concerning the replacement of doors. It was stated that the target was to replace such doors within a week, although this was dependent on gaining access to the premises.

Further discussion revolved around the completion of compliance rates following inspections. It was suggested that it would be useful to know how many of these repairs met the target of one-week post-inspection. This information was deemed essential for future planning and adjustments.

Concerning the testing of emergency lighting, it was explained that the main test involved ensuring the lighting was operational and that the backup batteries functioned correctly during power outages.

In response to a question about wayfinding signage and its compliance, especially in relation to fire risk assessments. It was noted that signs, particularly those indicating fire exits, were sometimes vandalized or removed. The importance of maintaining compliance with wayfinding signage was emphasised, and it was confirmed that this was part of the Building Safety case file, with a program in place to address any deficiencies.

Members discussed the issue how residents were informed about building safety, including evacuation strategies and how to make complaints. Officers mentioned that a specific software, Twin Edit, was trialled which allowed residents to access information about their specific building. Additionally, booklets had been distributed to residents in high-risk buildings, providing key information and directing them to further resources online and from the London Fire Brigade. Roadshows had also been

conducted to engage directly with residents, allowing them to ask questions and express concerns about fire safety.

Further deliberation on Lift compliance. It was clarified that not all lifts go into what is known as firefighting mode when the fire alarm is activated. This mode involves the lifts descending to the ground floor and then being operable by the Fire Service. A lift replacement programme was underway, partly to ensure that more lifts could support this functionality, including ensuring a separate electrical supply for such lifts. It was noted that the testing regime for lifts with firefighting capabilities differed from others, and further technical details could be provided separately if needed.

Members discussed fire risk assessments, particularly regarding fire paths and removable bollards used for access in some developments. The frequency of the testing and compliance rates, such as whether they could be unlocked or securely placed into the ground, were questioned. It was acknowledged that specific statistics and compliance rates needed to be clarified and would be addressed in the future.

In reply to a question regarding the 15 high-risk buildings that had completed all necessary case filings, which was positive news. Inquiries were made about whether these buildings would meet current standards if they underwent 3DWS certification and what remediation work was still required. It was explained that while the buildings were generally safe according to the building safety case files, some areas needed improvement through a planned action programme. Officers stated the programme was designed to bring the buildings up to current standards, considering that building regulations might have been different at the time of their construction. Temporary evacuation measures were also in place as part of these safety efforts.

The Sub-Committee noted the update report with assurances that efforts were ongoing to actively engage with residents, especially those in high-risk buildings, to enhance their safety and compliance awareness.

WATERLOO AND QUEEN STREET, PHASE , BLOCK 1 AND 2 UPDATE

The Director Housing & Property and the Senior Regeneration Manager provided the Sub-committee an update on the evolving changes to the Part B (Fire Safety) of the Building Regulations and the implications for the Waterloo and Queens Street regeneration sites.

It was noted that the Bridge Close development scheme had recently been amended to include a dual-staircase design, which required substantial redesign. The planning approval process would likely need to restart which would cause further delays.

The complexity of the Bridge Close site, including the potential need for a Planning Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) was highlighted as a contributing factor to the delays.

The Sub-committee was informed that despite losing some units in the redesign, the scheme remained viable from a regeneration perspective, aligning with anticipated regulatory changes.

The evolving building regulations and lack of detailed guidance under BS 9991 were discussed as challenges. The Service had proactively redesigned schemes like Bridge Close to include dual staircases in anticipation of these changes.

The Senior Regeneration Manager explained that while Bridge Close was in a good position due to early adjustments, other schemes with existing single-staircase designs might face more significant delays and redesign requirements.

The Sub-Committee agreed to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting due to the nature of the business and the potential disclosure of exempt information under Paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

It was reported that the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 introduced new consumer standards, enabling the council to inspect Housing Associations and require Performance Improvement Plans.

It was stated that Housing Associations account for a third of social housing in the borough. For low cost rentals, the general needs stock consisted of 8153 LARP units and 4243 PRP units. The average weekly net rent for LARP units in Havering was £112.78. For PRP units, it was £133.39.

It was reported that the council has nomination arrangements with all Housing Associations in the borough. There was a large degree of cooperation between the council and Housing Associations. Some of the larger Housing Associations load their properties onto LBH's LC system, to be advertised online. Other Housing Associations send property details to LBH, to be advertised online. There have been meetings between Housing Association nomination staff and LBH staff to make sure the system operates effectively.

It was reported that there is significant cooperation regarding housing development, especially concerning section 106 agreements. When a private developer or Housing Association is developing housing, they have to provide a certain proportion as affordable housing. A recent problem is the inability of developers to find a suitable housing association to purchase the social housing on new developments. It was stated that the council has some regeneration arrangements with Housing Associations, for example with Notting Hill Genesis in Rainham and Beam Park, which was an effective joint venture.

It was reported that there is significant cooperation regarding housing management, and particularly cooperation in the maintenance of properties. The council's Housing Strategy and Partnership Service leads the development of this working relationship. Regular meetings and forms have been held to discuss nominations and letting arrangements. Nonetheless, Havering's relationship with Housing Associations is less developed than those of other boroughs (which have joint repair services, for example).

It was stated that every Housing Association has their own structure for resident engagement, which helps them to manage their stock well. Some have tenants on their board.

It was reported that there are a lot of arrangements between the council and Housing Associations regarding anti-social behaviour. The council can issue Community Behaviour Orders and Noise Abatement Notices. The larger Housing Associations in the borough have attended forums with the council, to discuss common approaches to anti-social behaviour and tenancy management.

Attention was drawn to appendix 1, which contains detailed figures on the numbers of Housing Association Stock. Anchor Hanover Group operated in 245 other local authorities, London and Quadrant Housing trust operated in 139 other local authorities, and The Guinness Partnership Limited operated in 133 other local authorities. The number of other local authorities Housing Associations operate in has changed their relationship with each local authority in the last 15 years. In Havering, there was now no local Housing Association based here.

In response to a question about how and why Havering's relationship with Housing Associations is different to other boroughs, it was stated that local authorities used to have Housing Association Liaison Officers to manage the relationship through HALO meetings. In boroughs where that was effective, there was usually a core of Housing Associations active in the borough (that core could be as few as 20 Housing Associations). As associations have amalgamated, the connections they have with local authorities has diminished, their head office has become more distant, and their ability to send someone to a meeting with the local authority has changed. Whereas Housing Associations used to have a statutory duty to cooperate with local authorities to help homeless households, that incentive for cooperation no longer exists. Local authorities have also become less involved in the regulation of housing associations.

A question was asked regarding the 4000 Housing Association properties that the council uses, and how many of them are occupied by Havering residents or residents from out of the borough. The response was that all of these are let through the council's allocation scheme, and 95 to 100% of tenants in these properties were local.

In response to a question about the council's nomination rights on new lets and re-lets, and the possibility of residents from outside the borough moving in, it was stated that in practice, most housing associations don't have a list. If you're a Housing Association tenant and want to move, you have nowhere to put your name on a list, so you put your name on the council's list. It was suggested that this is cheaper for Housing Associations, because maintaining a list is expensive. Some boroughs subsequently charge Housing Associations for nominations.

In response to a question about Swan Housing Association Limited's 290 general needs bed spaces (compared to zero for all other housing associations in Havering), it was suspected that this is simply a data issue, and only Swan submitted data for this column of the table.

A question was asked about potential other arrangements to manage housing, given the difficulty of finding suitable Housing Associations to purchase social housing. It

was responded that Housing Associations have shifted their focus from new builds to maintenance of their stock. This has meant Housing Associations are more cautious about where they invest in new stock, focussing on building themselves rather than purchasing from private developers. Some associations have been stuck with stock bought from private developers that turned out to be lower quality than they expected. So they are being more cautious in the market, and in which developers they work with. There has also been a size issue: in Havering, there are lots of medium size developments which produce 5-10 affordable units. These are not attractive to associations, due to issues of management and price. This presents challenges for the council. The council has tried to bring Housing Associations and private developers together so that affordable housing comes through. One challenge of the management model is that section 106 agreements require developers to deliver affordable housing in perpetuity, and it can be difficult to show housing will continue to be affordable if it's on a fixed-term management agreement.

A question was asked regarding the possibility of Housing Associations being reluctant to take up large numbers of social homes built by developers, and the possibility that the council will end up receiving small section 106 payments instead. It was responded that commuted sums are often asked for by developers. Big developers want to reduce affordable housing, and local authorities want to increase it, so there are complex negotiations. It was observed that section 106 needs reviewing.

In response to a question about what the council needs to get Housing Associations to develop social housing, instead of the council receiving commuted sums, it was responded that the council can influence the type of social housing built when the council has had some control and influence over the design (eg. at Quarles, where the quality of stock turned out well).

A question was asked regarding the council's degree of quality control over the property advertisements on its website, given that internal photos and room sizes are often omitted, and potential residents are sometimes denied the opportunity to view the property in person. The response was that the council does lots of work with Housing Associations on their adverts, but our current allocations policy doesn't help Housing Associations to sell their properties: people aren't shown enough information about the property online, and there are insufficient opportunities to view the property in person. It was reported that the council is moving to a system where people can bid for as many properties as they like, and go to see them. It was hoped that this will expose the hard-to-lets, and landlords will have to work harder to let properties (by including better information on adverts, and showing off their flats when people see them).

A question was asked regarding how communication and collaboration can be measured. The response was that this isn't measured scientifically, and is more of a feeling. The council didn't have a single officer responsible for managing the relationship with Housing Associations. Lots of officers do their bit.

In response to a question about the council's ability to acquire an association's properties if that association got into financial difficulty, it was stated that the council can, in theory, acquire properties from a variety of sources, but only if it is affordable

within the HRA business plan. There are reasons to be cautious about buying stock that another landlord is selling.

In response to a question about the legislative levers the council has to make Housing Associations help to improve the quality of life of residents in Housing Association stock, it was stated that the council has very few levers to pull. Section 106 agreements relate to who can live in a property, so the council has some influence here. There were some other arrangements for stock transfer agreements. The council has some control on the planning side, to influence what Housing Associations can do with properties and the sale of properties. Some Housing Associations ask the council to lift restrictions so they can sell properties. It was reported that the council has some influence with the Housing Ombudsman, but this is very limited. The council has no influence on the regulator.

A question was asked about whether the council needs the resources to appoint an officer to be responsible for managing the relationship with Housing Associations. It was responded that this may be useful, but the proposal could be financially difficult because it would be a general fund position. In particular, the council doesn't have the capacity in the Strategic Performance Service to negotiate effectively on section 106 agreements. It was stated that the council would benefit from negotiating effectively and early enough.

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration was asked whether the council is bringing larger Housing Associations into conversations around the local plan refresh, including in Beam Park. The Cabinet Member responded that most of the new developments will be owned and controlled by the council. He added that the local plan is not yet advanced enough to discuss Housing Associations. He would prefer for the council to have greater control because, for example, Housing Associations don't put enough money into managing anti-social behaviour.

It was stated that councillors should be respectful of Housing Association colleagues, given some shortcomings in the council's Housing department in the past.

A question was asked about why the council might prefer to receive commuted sums. In response, it was stated that the council would always prefer to get the property, and a commuted sum would be a reluctant compromise. The council only has a small number of commuted sums.

It was agreed that the Planning Team will find out how many commuted sums were received in the last few years, and the reasons for them.

Regarding the possible need for a specific resource to manage relationships with Housing Associations, it was responded that the level of development in the borough is low. This business is not currently sufficient to justify a resource for managing the relationship with Housing Associations.

UPDATE ON CURRENT POSITION IN RELATION TO EMERGENCY TEMPORARY ACCOMODATION IN HAVERING AND THE LACK OF SUPPLY

It was stated that Havering Council's use of hotel and nightly charged

accommodation has created enormous pressure on the Council's housing general fund budget. The average cost of emergency temporary accommodation had risen since 2021/22, from £73 per night to £81 per night. The increase in the average cost is not because of the use of hotels, but because of the use of a nightly charged property. This is an ordinary home in Havering or another part of London.

It was shown that the council has 230 households in hotel and nightly charged accommodation. The council successfully navigated exiting families out of chain hotels where a maximum stay is 2 weeks. The council has reduced the numbers of families with children in bed and breakfast hotels over 6 weeks (a statutory obligation) from 76 households to 15.

Attention was drawn to table 1, showing the number of households directly placed into temporary accommodation over the last four years (between 2020/21 and 2023/24). The number of households in hotels has risen from 123 to 485. The number in private sector leases has fallen from 23 to 2. The number in short-life accommodation has fallen from 23 to 1. The number in hostels has fallen from 147 to 15.

It was stated that London boroughs now spend more than £90 million per month on TA, up nearly 40% from a year earlier. It was said that increases in TA costs are being driven by four broad factors: increased demand, reduced supply, increased costs and insufficient funding.

It was shown that the number of properties on private sector lease contracts over the last four years has fallen from 840 in 2019/20 to 484 in 2024/25. This is partly due to landlords asking for their properties back. It was reported that the council is currently working through 71 outstanding handbacks.

It was stated that the three main reasons for homelessness are family and friends eviction, private rented eviction, and domestic abuse. Attention was drawn to the figures in table 6, showing the numbers of homeless approaches. Domestic abuse was increasing as a reason for homelessness, up to a total of 319 domestic abuse approaches in 2023/24.

It was shown that the performance of the Find Your Own (rent deposit) Scheme has been decreasing since 2020/21.

It was reported that the cost of temporary accommodation is being affected by the lack of supply.

Without creating a pipeline to exit residents out of the current 230 hotel and nightly charged accommodation places, it was predicted that the number of emergency forms of accommodation required will rise from 293 in 2024/25 to 940 in 2026/27. With a pipeline, it would rise from 251 in 2024/24 to 253 in 2026/27.

It was reported that the council is currently in the process of securing a supply of 562 units and it is anticipated that the council will need another 700 properties to avoid facing the high profile risks identified in the report. These plans may include the following initiatives: private equity finance, office to residential conversions, pension

fund property investments and new development opportunities for temporary accommodation.

Attention was drawn to table 13, showing the temporary accommodation pipelines planned, including the property Purchasing Scheme at Chalkhill (150 units), the Mother and Baby Unit, an open and fully occupied Royal Jubilee Court, a Family Welcome Centre, Notting Hill Genesis Joint Venture, and modular units.

A question was asked regarding the levers available to cooperate with other boroughs to make sure their placing of residents in Havering's temporary accommodation doesn't drive up the council's costs. It was replied that IBAA arrangements regulate the rates boroughs should be paying when placing residents in another borough's temporary accommodation. The IBAA framework has some flaws (eg. landlords playing boroughs off against each other). Collaborative conversations with other boroughs has led to the agreement of rates. Section 208 allows boroughs to communicate regarding the placement of residents. Havering has also participated in conversations at London Council meetings, at a pan-London level.

A question was asked regarding the impact of illegal migration, and whether the council or central government foots the bill for accommodating illegal immigrants. It was replied that the Home Office has a substantial estate across London. The issue doesn't impact Havering directly, but it does indirectly, for example when support is provided to immigrants for health and education.

In response to a question about requirements for hotels to apply for a HMO licence if they have provided a certain amount of emergency temporary accommodation, it was stated that boroughs including Havering have tried and failed to make a hotel into a HMO. The law is complex on this issue. Chain hotels don't want HMO status and don't provide emergency temporary accommodation for more than two weeks. It was stated that Havering is a member of Setting the Standard, a London-wide inspection regime which inspects hotels to make sure they meet standards, and where they don't, the council has the ability to coordinate activity to jointly not place in those hotels.

It was observed that as well as increasing and diversifying temporary accommodation, the council also needs to increase housing stock.

In response to a question about the support in place for residents in unsuitable accommodation, it was observed that Havering offers a trauma-informed service and has received funding to create psychologically-informed environments.

A question was asked regarding the number of households who are under-occupying their property, and what is being done about it. It was stated that about 110 households are registered as under-occupying their properties. One challenge is moving them into new properties further from their support networks. That 110 includes only those who've expressed an interest in moving, which is very small percentage of under-occupiers. The true number is probably over 1000, but the council doesn't hold exact numbers on this. It was stated that every year, the council phone tenants over 70 and ask if they've considered downsizing. The council provide incentives and support to enable downsizing. The new allocation policy provides them with additional priority.

Residents' aversion to change can be an obstacle. It was observed that the council needs more 2/4/6 bed properties.

A question was asked regarding the development of accommodation for over-55s. It was replied that one such project has recently been finished, but there isn't currently another in the pipeline. The council's main demand is for family units (3 or 4 beds).

In response to a question about properties given back to owners where living standards have fallen short of letting standards, it was replied that the council does carry out work on such properties unless it is prohibited by cost.

A question was asked regarding the difficulty some residents have in finding a guarantor when seeking a property in the private sector, and whether the council can assist with this. It was replied that guarantors are generally with more established agents, who have their own vetting processes. But many agents and landlords accept residents without a guarantor. It was stated that the council also offers other incentives to landlords.

A question was asked about the reasons for seeking temporary accommodation, other than the main three included in the report. It was replied that other reasons include release from prison, hospitals, relationship breakdown, or undisclosed reasons.

The Director of Living Well agreed that these figures will be supplied to Councillor Stanton at a later date.

It was agreed that the sub-committee would arrange another opportunity for Darren Alexander to respond to any further questions.

The sub-committee made no recommendations on this first report under agenda item 6.

The second report under agenda item 6 concerns Temporary Modular Homes on Waterloo and Queen Street, and was delivered by Mark Butler.

It was stated that the modular housing proposal presents an opportunity to provide up to 18 families with stable homes, reducing the need for temporary hotel accommodation. This report set out the outline of the scheme, projected costs and delivery programme.

It was reported that the Council is proposing to introduce a scheme of 18 modular homes on part of the cleared site at Waterloo and Queen Street, on land scheduled for permanent development in approximately 5 to 7 years.

It was stated that the proposed development will consist of 14 two-bedroom homes and 4 three-bedroom homes, all fully equipped to accommodate families. The scheme will include some landscaping that enhances the development and improves the visual appeal of the area. There will also be five standard car-parking spaces.

It was reported that these modular homes are designed with a lifespan of up to 60 years and can be relocated up to five times if necessary, whilst retaining the supplier warranty.

It was stated that each unit is supplied at a cost of £200,000. Additional expenditure is required to provide the necessary site infrastructure, in addition to which it is proposed to apply cladding. It was said that faster construction reduces interim housing costs, and off-site manufacturing lowers per-unit expenses.

It was reported that the modular homes will provide modern, well-equipped spaces that are energy efficient and well insulated. Each unit can be relocated to smaller sites as required, and stacked up to three storeys, although it was only proposed to stack up to two storeys, and only on part of the site.

It was reported that positive feedback was received following meetings with planning officers during pre-application discussions. A specialist company, Better Delivery, was appointed by the Joint Venture to conduct extensive market testing.

It was reported that modular homes offer sustainability in the construction phase, by minimising waste and reducing carbon emissions. It was also said that they offer sustainability in use, including green technologies such as air source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels. It was reported that there will also be built-in sprinkler systems.

It was envisaged that the modular units will be available for occupation in Autumn 2025.

A question was asked as to why this is being proposed when the cost of each home, including the additional costs, is similar to those on the open market. It was replied that some of that expenditure will be recovered through the avoidance of spending money on hotels, and some will be recovered in the remaining life of the unit.

In response to a question about whether an assessment exists to justify spending this money on modular homes because those on the open market are unaffordable, it was replied that these modular homes will be supplementary to, not instead of homes on the open market. It was described as an opportunity to use an under-utilised site.

TEMPORARY MODULAR HOMES - WATERLOO ROAD AND QUEEN STREET

At its meeting on 28 November 2024, the Sub-Committee received a presentation from officers setting out the key details of the Temporary Modular Homes proposal due to be considered by Cabinet at its January meeting.

It was stated that the modular housing proposal presents an opportunity to provide up to 18 families with stable homes, reducing the need for temporary hotel accommodation. The report set out the outline of the scheme, projected costs and delivery programme.

It was reported that the Council is proposing to introduce a scheme of 18 modular homes on part of the cleared site at Waterloo and Queen Street, on land scheduled for permanent development in approximately 5 to 7 years.

It was stated that the proposed development will consist of 14 two-bedroom homes and 4 three-bedroom homes, all fully equipped to accommodate families. The scheme will include some landscaping that enhances the development and improves the visual appeal of the area. There will also be five standard car-parking spaces.

It was reported that these modular homes are designed with a lifespan of up to 60 years and can be relocated up to five times if necessary, whilst retaining the supplier warranty.

It was stated that each unit is supplied at a cost of £200,000. Additional expenditure is required to provide the necessary site infrastructure, in addition to which it is proposed to apply cladding. It was said that faster construction reduces interim housing costs, and off-site manufacturing lowers per-unit expenses.

It was reported that the modular homes will provide modern, well-equipped spaces that are energy efficient and well insulated. Each unit can be relocated to smaller sites as required, and stacked up to three storeys, although it was only proposed to stack up to two storeys, and only on part of the site.

It was reported that positive feedback was received following meetings with planning officers during pre-application discussions. A specialist company, Better Delivery, was appointed by the Joint Venture to conduct extensive market testing.

It was reported that modular homes offer sustainability in the construction phase, by minimising waste and reducing carbon emissions. It was also said that they offer sustainability in use, including green technologies such as air source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels. It was reported that there will also be built-in sprinkler systems.

It was envisaged that the modular units will be available for occupation in Autumn 2025.

A question was asked as to why this is being proposed when the cost of each home, including the additional costs, is similar to those on the open market. It was replied that some of that expenditure will be recovered through the avoidance of spending money on hotels, and some will be recovered in the remaining life of the unit.

In response to a question about whether an assessment exists to justify spending this money on modular homes because those on the open market are unaffordable, it was replied that these modular homes will be supplementary to, not instead of homes on the open market. It was described as an opportunity to use an under-utilised site.

It was agreed that the meeting should now go into exempt session.

Members sought information on how officers arrived at the price, provider, and design.

Members received a cost benefit analysis, including reason why the purchase of temporary homes offers value against the option to purchase further homes on the open market.

Following resumption of the open session, the Sub-Committee stated that based on the information presented to the Members, they were satisfied and supportive of the proposal that is going before Cabinet and therefore recommend that Cabinet adopt the decision to deliver 18 Modular homes.

LIBRARY CONSULTATION

At the request of the Sub-Committee, a pre decision scrutiny was undertaken to review the Council's budget setting exercise for 2023-24 that included proposals to reduce the revenue budget of the Council's library service by £300,000 over two years.

This prompted the production of a Library Strategy that would set out how the library service would function in the next few years. The Council's current statutory library provision consists of ten library sites, together with the Home Library service, the local studies library and a digital and online library.

It was noted in the report that amongst other things, the Library Strategy provided for the potential closure of 4 out of 5 branch libraries.

The report considered the outcome of the consultation on the draft Library Strategy that sought views of stakeholders on the Strategy and on the option for the Council to close up to four branch libraries.

It was explained that following careful analysis of all the responses received during the consultation including the public survey, stakeholder feedback, petitions and correspondence received, the condition of the libraries, the Council's ability to invest capital, and the Council funding gap it was considered that Council funding for three branch libraries should cease. It was noted that the result in the consequential loss of service of three branch libraries that were recommended to close on 31 March 2025 and achieve an annual saving of £288k.

It was stated that against a backdrop of continuing significant financial pressures for the Council, which included the need to request exceptional financial support from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in order to set a balanced budget for the financial year 2024/25, the budget included proposals to reduce the revenue budget of the Council's library service by £300,000 over two years. The library service accordingly developed a draft library strategy which included a set of proposals to close a number of libraries in order to deliver that saving.

The evidence of need to apply for a capitalisation direction from the Government includes a thorough scrutiny of budget making decisions. The Council must demonstrate to the Government it is doing everything in its control to reduce costs and to deliver savings. Without making these difficult decisions, a request for a capitalisation direction may not be successful which could put further services at risk.

The draft strategy comprised:

- Proposals to reduce the revenue budget of the service by means to closing up to four of the five "branch" libraries (Collier Row, Elm Park, Gidea Park, Harold Wood, South Hornchurch);

- Proposals to reduce the service's book stock budget by 61% (£161,000) in 2024/25 and £30,000 (from the 2023/24 base) in both 2025/26 and 2026/27;
- A detailed needs and usage assessment which was used to develop the proposals;
- A refreshed vision and strategic priorities to underpin the statutory service in coming years;
- Proposals to develop an investment business case seeking capital funding to improve the quality of the library estate;
- Proposals seeking views on whether a purpose-designed children's library – either at a fixed site or as a mobile provision – could better meet library need in the future.

It was noted that an extensive twelve-week consultation on the draft library strategy began on 10 May 2024 and ended on 2 August 2024.

The Sub-Committee noted that whilst the proposal to determine which branches to close, the report detailed the rationale with the likely impacts of the decision to close the three branch libraries recommended. A full needs assessment that considered all the libraries in Havering was included within the draft Havering Library Strategy 2024-2029. The decision making criteria adopted by the Council seeks an objective basis by reference to the available data, as informed by the needs assessment.

The report recommended the following three branches to close:

- Gidea Park
- Harold Wood
- South Hornchurch

The executives of Unison attended the meeting and gave a representation on behalf of libraries staff.

In response to Members questions, the Sub-Committee was informed that the decision on which branches to put forward was based on multiple factors, including cost savings and the distance to alternative branches. It was stated that all relevant factors were considered and weighted appropriately in the decision-making process. It was emphasized that the difficulty of the decision, fell into a category of decisions that no one wants to make. It was explained that budget pressures were the driving force behind the proposal, although it was acknowledged that the current year's budget is not directly affected. A key point of context was the £300,000 saving that was agreed upon in Cabinet and Full Council meetings around February of the previous year.

Questions were raised on the potential lease and the status of preparations of the Friends Group who were considering formation with the intention takeover the library from the Council, it was stated that the Group was undertaking a cost-benefit analysis though the full details are currently unclear. The Sub-Committee's attention was drawn to the upcoming Cabinet meeting, where a legal decision relating to this matter would need to be made.

The Sub-Committee and Members in attendance received satisfactory responses to all questions raised.

The Sub-Committee submitted the following comments and recommendation to Cabinet and requested that Cabinet responds to these at its meeting on 5 February 2025.

The Sub-Committee sought assurance that the report EQHIA was correct. This followed a Member query about discrepancies between the EQHIA and Action plan.

Members agreed the following recommendations:

1. That Cabinet delay the decision until a second consultation has been carried out, presenting the proposal to close three libraries to the public, as has taken place in other parts of the country. And that the Officer benchmark what is best practice.
2. That, following the formation of the Friends Group of Harold Wood Library, who are seeking funding, the Cabinet delay the decision to close Harold Wood Library in order that the group might have time to secure funding
3. That the Cabinet seek the opinion of the 151 Officer on whether savings made elsewhere could be used to offset the overspend generated by keeping the libraries open, and whether that would satisfy the CIPFA report and MHCLG with regards to the Capitalisation Directive
4. That the Cabinet explore and outline what work needs to be undertaken to ensure that the remaining libraries do not fall into disrepair and be threatened with closure
5. Cost Breakdown – that Cabinet defer decision until further information is provided on both revenue and capital costs.

FCC WASTE CONTRACT REVIEW

At the request of Members, the sub-committee received a performance update on the FCC Waste Contract. The report provided an overview of the procurement, award and first year of the contract's operation.

The integrated waste, recycling and street cleansing contract was awarded in January 2022, and commenced in October 2023.

The award of the integrated contract for Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing was agreed by Cabinet in January 2022, with the successful bidder being Urbaser Ltd (now absorbed into FCC Environment).

The Sub-Committee reviewed the following contract monitoring process that is carried out in a number of different ways:

- Monthly report from FCC: The raw data is accessible by Council officers to enable it to be verified.
- Street Cleansing Monitoring: The contract monitoring officer aims for 50 inspections per month at present, to check that roads are being cleansed to standard. Where they fall below standard, a rectification notice is raised via the management system. The grading system utilised is nationally recognised, with examples shown in the Members' Handbook. Spot checks are also carried out on service requests such as fly-tipping reports to check that clearance has taken place.
- Supervisor monitoring: This includes checking on work reported as completed by crews, as well as checking that roads are within the standards set out, and directing crews accordingly if roads fall below standard.
- Joint monitoring: Havering's Monitoring Officer and FCC's supervisors regular carry out joint inspections together to look at cleansing standards, as well as crew behaviours and safe working practices. This helps to ensure that both parties are working and monitoring to the same standards.
- Complaints monitoring: Carried out by Havering officers to identify and address any recurring issues.

The contract team also deals with the general running of the contract, and administration of items such as container distribution. For example, the team manages the siting and replacement of street litter bins, but works with the contractor, the council's Enforcement team and ward councillors, as well as using littering data to understand hotspot areas before deciding on the locations. Bins are removed if abused, for example where they have previously been set on fire.

It was stated that there are three key groups that meet to review the contract:

- Contract Partnership Board: To meet quarterly, or less frequently if agreed, and act as a strategic forum for contract improvement and development. Comprises of senior management from Havering and FCC.
- Contract Management Group: Meets monthly, and comprises Havering's Waste and External Contracts Manager or Head of Service, Assistant Director, FCC's Regional Manager and Senior Contract Manager. Discusses monthly performance management report, service improvements, and any escalated issues.
- Contract Operations Group: This consists of Havering's contract monitoring team and FCC's operational managers. It focuses on the day-to-day running of the contract, and any key matters arising.

In response to the Social Value of the contract. It was stated that FCC has various values as part of their commitment to Havering, both in terms of the day-to-day running of the contract, and specific commitments around provision of support and funding. This includes an annual £10,000 Environment Fund to support tree planting and other initiatives, and a £30,000 Community Engagement Fund. Havering officers are working with FCC to allocate these funds accordingly.

An example of one of the social value commitments was to provide 100 litter pick packs per year to the council to help with keeping the borough clean. These are utilised

in various volunteering initiatives. Members welcomed this initiative and asked that this be operated across the borough.

FCC have also engaged with a lot of volunteer and community groups as part of the commitment to volunteer hours and assist in the local borough. Apprenticeships are also currently in progress for HGV drivers and an administrator. The company are recruiting more people from the local area and utilising local businesses such as electricians, plumbers and builders which helps to support the local economy.

The Sub-Committee was informed of anticipated service changes and future contract developments. The main anticipated change within the current contract is the introduction of separate weekly household food waste collections; a requirement of the Environment Act 2021.

Members noted that FCC have modelled for their expected service delivery, based on the number and spread of households, as well as expected volumes of waste to be collected. The service is currently in its planning stages, with the rollout to commence from October 2025.

There are further opportunities for continued service developments throughout the life of the contract, with an optional 8-year extension from 2031. An annual contract review will help to identify opportunities for shared efficiency savings as well as technological innovation and improved performance.

The Sub-Committee received satisfactory responses to its questions. Members noted that the current cost of the integrated waste, recycling and street cleansing contract with FCC was detailed in the report. Officers are working with FCC to establish the expected uplift for the coming year, taking into account inflation, national average earnings, and the increase in properties. It was stated that this process will be reviewed annually via an agreed metric, and checked by officers.

ROMFORD MASTERPLAN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING PRE DECISION SCRUTINY

As part of the Sub-Committee's oversight, Members received a briefing on the development of the Romford Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document, for the final stage of seeking approval to adopt the Romford Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) as planning policy by Cabinet at its next meeting. It was stated that the Masterplan has been drafted and consulted on in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

The Havering Local Plan sets out the detailed policy for Romford and commits to the delivery of a Supplementary Planning Document for the area, recognising the significant opportunities that Romford offers. The Masterplan develops and supplements the Havering Local Plan and sets out a framework to shape and guide development in Romford over the next 15-20 years.

It was stated that the purpose of the Masterplan will be instrumental in guiding Romford's ongoing evolution over the next 15-20 years. Its aim is to draw on Romford's unique character and to continue to evolve it into a place which respects and reveals its history whilst looking forward to deliver growth and opportunities that will benefit the entire community.

The report highlighted that Romford offers exciting regeneration and development opportunities and is expected to accommodate significant levels of housing and economic growth in the coming years. It is identified as an Opportunity Area in the London Plan and designated as a Strategic Development Area (SDA) in the Havering Local Plan. The Masterplan is needed to guide these opportunities in a way that respects Romford's qualities and history, strengthens pride in the town, and makes it a distinct and attractive place to live, work, and visit.

The Masterplan proposes a series of key spatial moves that establish the physical structure and interventions to achieve the long-term vision for Romford town centre:

- Opening up the River Rom - The River Rom will be deculverted and partially renaturalised through the town centre to create an ecological linear park.
- Recharacterising the ring road – creating an active travel corridor with at-grade crossings, planting and an urban boulevard character, better integrating the town centre with the surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Celebrating Romford Market - Reinforcing the importance of the market place as a key civic space by upgrading the public realm improving frontages and introducing spaces that can support a variety of events and gatherings.
- Reinstating the historic urban grain - Introducing new streets and spaces that reflect the finer historic urban grain of the town centre with smaller, more walkable blocks with varied and engaging building frontages.
- Wider green links - Introducing new green links that can act as walking and cycling corridors both through the town centre and connecting to wider key public green spaces and parks.
- New and improved station entrances - Creating a new station entrance that acts as a gateway to the town centre and improving the existing station entrance with public realm enhancements, seating and wayfinding.

The Sub-Committee noted the following key themes and objectives to guide the delivery of the Masterplan.

- Space and landscape - The Masterplan promotes a wide range of safe, public spaces including high quality streets, pocket parks, squares and roof gardens. Blue and green networks through the town centre will be strengthened. The River Rom will be the centre piece of these networks as a new linear riverside park.
- Movement and Connectivity - The Masterplan improves access, connectivity and permeability across Romford. Public transport and active travel choices, such as walking and cycling, are promoted to encourage healthy lifestyles and

considered equitably with other modes of travel. Reconfigured streets and public realm will create a more attractive, safe and inclusive Romford.

- Sustainability - ensuring growth is built on a platform of sustainable infrastructure with environmental and wellbeing benefits. Environmental, social and economic sustainability is a golden thread that runs through the Masterplan.

- Inclusivity, Health and Wellbeing - all developments, public realm, transport and projects will have inclusive design at their heart. The Masterplan provides guidance to promote social cohesion and to create opportunities to diversify and to also improve health and wellbeing through better accessibility, infrastructure and resources.

- Character and Townscape - The Masterplan draws on the existing qualities and unique assets of Romford. The setting of Romford's historic places and buildings will be enhanced. New developments will contribute by positively supporting existing or evolving character areas through new and enhanced buildings, streets and spaces.

- Uses and Mix - The Masterplan promotes a diverse Romford that is active throughout all times of the day. In the central area smaller shops and a more varied food and drink offer will support the vibrancy of the centre and an enhanced early evening economy. Employment and business space will be enhanced. Key locations and public spaces will be anchored by cultural and leisure uses to drive footfall. New residential within the town centre will support existing and new businesses but will also require corresponding social infrastructure including schools, public spaces, health facilities and transport.

- The Economy - The Masterplan capitalises on Romford's unique position at the interface between Essex and London to promote Romford as a destination, to support existing businesses and attract new occupiers. The Masterplan seeks to broaden the early evening and night-time economies, revitalise Market Place and enhancing retail, business and residential offers. This diversification will create new jobs and support the vitality and long-term viability of Romford.

Members received satisfactory responses to all questions raised. The Sub-Committee welcomed the Master Plan and commended the report to Cabinet for its approval.

The Sub-Committees asked that Cabinet consider and respond to the following recommendations:

Members provided the following comments & suggestions to support the delivery of the Master Plan Supplementary Report:

- The Sub-Committee (S/C) support the need for an Inward Investment in Romford Strategy, related launch events and would like to see further details when available.
- The Sub-Committee asked for all the referred to associated documents such as the IDP & Local Plan to be updated accordingly and advised when that has happened and to have sight of them.
- The S/C are interested in the growth of small retail businesses in Romford and are keen to encourage this.
- The S/C are interested in what the plan will encourage and deliver in regards to economic growth, and how the requisite skills and employment will be achieved.
- The S/C hope that the new jobs will increase residents' employability and household incomes.
- The S/C are interested in how the Master Plan will be funded and also the provision of more schools/school places in support of the Plan.
- The S/C are interested in Romford developing as a place of learning taking the Queens Hospital University as a key driver for this.
- The S/C are interested in the future demand on health facilities, in particular the adequacy of the development of additional medical hubs to support the Queens Hospital.
- The S/C asked if the plan or related plans could consider attracting wider further education facilities, e.g. a university, college or skills academy.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

None – narrative report only.

Legal implications and risks:

None – narrative report only.

Human Resources implications and risks:

None – narrative report only.

Equalities implications and risks:

While the work of the Sub-Committee can impact on all members of the community, there are no implications arising from this specific report which is a narrative of the Sub-Committee's work over the past year.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Minutes of meetings of Places Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee

This page is intentionally left blank

**People Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Annual Report 2024/2025**

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to give this short introduction to the summary of the Sub-Committee's work during the 2024-2025 municipal year. Details are given below of elements of the Sub-Committee's activity during the past twelve months.

Before I do so, I would like to place on record my thanks to the other members of the Sub-Committee and all the Council officers who have supported work of the Sub-Committee during the course of this municipal year.

I commend this Annual Report and am pleased to submit it to Full Council.

REMIT AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

The Sub-Committee is charged with providing scrutiny for a total of nineteen policy and service areas which sit within the responsibility of the local authority. Among this expansive range of policy and service areas includes Social Care (Adults and Children), Public Health and the Public Protection Service.

Detailed below is a complete list of the policy and service areas for which the People Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee has the primary responsibility for scrutiny and oversight:

- Drug, Alcohol & sexual Services.
- Health & Wellbeing.
- Health Overview & Scrutiny.
- Adult Care.
- Learning and Physical Disabilities.
- Employment & Skills.
- Education.
- Child Protection.
- Youth Services.
- Fostering & Adoption Services.
- Education Traded Services.
- Early Years Services.
- Looked after Children.
- Media & Communications.
- Advertising.

- Corporate Events.
- Bereavement & Registration Services.
- Crime & Disorder.

The Members who served on the People Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee during the year were:

Councillor Jason Frost (Chairman).	Councillor Jackie McArdle.
Councillor Frankie Walker (Vice-Chairman).	Councillor Julie Wilkes.
Councillor Christine Smith.	Councillor Judith Holt.
Councillor Sarah Edwards.	
Councillor Robbie Misir.	

Co-optees:

Mr Ian Rusha (NEU).

Mr Jack How (Roman Catholic Church).

Mrs Julie Lamb (Special Schools).

There is a vacancy for a Church of England representative.

REVIEW OF ACTIVITY 2024/25 MUNICIPAL YEAR

Adult and Children Services Complaints and Compliments –

The Sub-Committee scrutinised the complaints lodged against, and the compliments received by Adults and Children's Social Care Services.

Members questioned officers over the number of and nature of the complaints and how they could be reduced in the next quarter and next year. This included a review of any requisite action plan to address any apparent failures of policy and/or procedure on the part of the Council or other related organisation.

Traded Services for Schools and Early Years -

The Sub-Committee scrutinised the traded services used within schools and early year provisions and were pleased to note the breadth and range of services bought-in by local education providers as well the strength and longevity of the relationships between these providers and Havering's Education Traded Services.

Crime, ASB and CCTV -

The Sub-Committee requested updates on local crime, ASB and on the new CCTV centre. Members were concerned that some wards within Havering were ranked as being among the worst for crime and ASB in London. This was despite the fact that, overall, Havering's was ranked above our neighbouring borough in terms of safety and security for the first time in five years.

Members received an updated timeline for the new CCTV cameras and were pleased that the forecast was showing the project would cost less than first estimated.

Healthwatch Havering -

The Sub-Committee was pleased to receive summary reports on the activities undertaken by Healthwatch partners during the course of the municipal year specifically long COVID.

Send & AP Strategy -

The Committee received the strategy for the SEND & AP strategy and noted that Havering had seen an increase in the number of pupils needing those services.

Members took special interest in the collaborative work being undertaken between Education Services and the Parks Team to ensure the provision of more accessible play equipment across the borough's parks and open spaces.

VAWG Strategy -

The Sub-Committee continued to prioritise scrutiny of VAWG and requested that the recently updated Strategy be brought before them. They noted the good work being done within the Council and police to tackle VAWG but noted there was more work to be done to ensure victims are heard and supported.

Havering Safeguarding Partnership -

The Sub-Committee were presented with the annual report for the safeguarding partnership. The members noted specifically the work being carried out around the promotion of free school meals and the 'Pantosaurus' campaign that focused on key areas of sexual abuse.

Member Champion for Young People Annual Report –

The Sub-Committee received the annual report from the Member Champion for Young People which had been presented to Full Council. The report gave details of the work they had undertaken in the previous year and gave information on their findings of areas for improvement within the service. The report provided various recommendations, including the retention of the Children and Young People's budget consultation and to include Children in Care as a protected characteristic, along with various other recommendations. All suggested recommendations were approved by the Sub-Committee and were passed onto Cabinet for consideration.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

None – narrative report only.

Legal implications and risks:

None – narrative report only.

Human Resources implications and risks:

None – narrative report only.

Equalities implications and risks:

While the work of the Sub-Committee can impact on all members of the community, there are no implications arising from this specific report which is a narrative of the Board's work over the past year.

Environmental and Climate Change Implications and Risks

None – narrative report only.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.



Havering

LONDON BOROUGH

FULL COUNCIL, Wednesday 23 July 2025

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Subways on Romford Ring Road

- 1) **To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Mugglestone)**
From Councillor David Taylor

Could the Cabinet Member confirm if there is an agreed start date, or expected start window, for the Liveable Streets scheme on Romford Ring Road i.e. the in-filling of the subways

Use of Bed & Breakfast Accommodation

- 2) **To the Leader of the Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Housing Need (Councillor Natasha Summers)**
From Councillor Keith Darvill

Will the Cabinet Member for Housing Need provide details of the Council's Bed & Breakfast Elimination Plan and the progress made in implementing it?

Licensing conditions, as set out for the 'The Array' Bar and Restaurant, Shepherd's Hill, Harold Wood.

- 3) **To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Mugglestone)**
From Councillor Brian Eagling

Can the Cabinet Member please confirm, what oversight and follow up action is taking place for adherence to the licencing conditions that were set out for 'The Array' Bar and Restaurant, following its licence review.

Cabinet Members and Scrutiny

- 4) **To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Ray Morgon)**
From Councillor Phil Ruck

Scrutiny represents a clear way, apart from the ballot box, of holding the Administration of a Council to account. Does the Leader of the Council agree with this and if so, can the Leader explain the absence of Cabinet portfolio holders or their deputies at scrutiny meetings and what will he do to correct this oversight?

Gypsy & Traveller Groups Entering Parks

**5) To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Mugglestone)
From Councillor Viddy Persaud**

What plans does the Council have to renew the legal restrictions which had been in place to stop Gypsy and Traveller groups from entering the Borough's parks and open spaces illegally?

Support for Residents on Low Incomes

**6) To the Cabinet Member for Finance (Councillor Chris Wilkins)
From Councillor Jane Keane**

What plans does the Cabinet Member for Finance have in place to support residents with low incomes to support the uptake of Pensions Credit, Attendance Allowance and Emergency Household Funds, through in person support sessions in community places?

Highway Tree Maintenance in Harold Wood

**7) To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Mugglestone)
From Councillor Martin Goode**

Can the Cabinet member please confirm when this Council will be attending to the overgrown trees within the Harold Wood Ward, which are now in desperate need of a prune and cut back, including the trimming of the feathering for a number of trees, which are causing obstructions to the public walkways

Collection of Council Tax

**8) To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Ray Morgon)
From Councillor Nisha Patel**

Would the Leader of the Council please provide a detailed explanation as to why the Council collected the Council Tax (due on 1st April) earlier than its scheduled payment date?

Abandoned Shopping Trolleys

**9) To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Mugglestone)
From Councillor Matthew Stanton**

Following the motion adopted by Council on 15th January 2025 relating to abandoned shopping trolleys, what consideration and/or progress has the Administration made in implementing measures to deal with abandoned trolleys given the powers provided by the Environment Protection Act 1990?

Tree Cutting in the Borough

**10) To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Mugglestone)
From Councillor David Taylor**

Would the Cabinet Member for Environment explain why the activity of cutting back 'feathering' is not proactively attended to ahead of the late spring-summer season?

Commercial Activities Unit

**11) To the Cabinet Member for Finance (Councillor Chris Wilkins)
From Councillor Trevor McKeever**

How much revenue has the Commercial Activities Unit generated and what proposals are being developed to increase the revenue received by the Council?

Potholes

**12) To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Mugglestone)
From Councillor Viddy Persaud**

Since the Council received additional funding from the Government to repair potholes, could the Cabinet Member for Environment confirm how many additional potholes were filled compared to the last two years?

School Budgets

**13) To the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People (Councillor Oscar Ford)
From Councillor Dilip Patel**

Could the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People please explain the impact of the recent National Insurance rise on schools' budgets?

Gidea Park Library Consultation

**14) To the Cabinet Member for Adults & Wellbeing (Councillor Gillian Ford)
From Councillor Christine Vickery**

Can the Administration please explain why the Squirrels Heath Ward members were excluded from the ongoing discussions on the immediate and future use of the now-closed Gidea Park Library?

Gallows Corner

**15) To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Mugglestone)
From Councillor Judith Holt**

In light of the ongoing works at Gallows Corner roundabout, can the Administration confirm whether they are pausing enforcement at the yellow box junction restrictions within the area designated for traffic diversions i.e. Ardleigh Green, Gidea Park and Collier Row?

Council, 23 July 2025 – Motions

A. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Motion on behalf of the Conservative Group

This Council commits to taking back control of development in Havering, through the creation and implementation of Neighbourhood Plans and Social Value shopping lists within the next six months, putting residents and local communities at the heart of planning.

(Received 30/06/25, 2007)

Amendment on behalf of the Labour Group

This Council commits to the refresh and implementation of the Local Plan, and recognizes the need for an up to date Social Value Strategy, putting residents and local communities at the heart of planning.

(Received 14/7/25, 2035)

Amendment on behalf of the Havering Residents Association Group

This Council commits to continuing to maintain control of development in Havering through the refresh of our Local Plan within the delivery plan timeframe.

(Received 14/7/25, 2111)

B. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY/CCTV

Motion on behalf of the Conservative Group

This Council commits to dedicating £1m of CIL money to the expansion of the CCTV network across Havering.

(Received 30/06/25, 2007)

Amendment on behalf of the Labour Group

This Council calls for a progress report on the expansion of the CCTV network across Havering to be brought back to an urgent meeting of the People Overview & Scrutiny Subcommittee.

(Received 14/7/25, 2035)

Amendment on behalf of the Havering Residents Association Group

Having already invested £750,000 in phase one of the CCTV network upgrade, This Council commits to undertake a review of the expansion of the CCTV network once the first phrase is completed.

(Received 14/7/25, 2111)

C. LAUNDERS LANE

Motion on behalf of the Residents Association Independent Group

Given the significance and impact on residents who live near Launders lane, together with the impact on the general environment and the outcome of the recent judicial review, this Council calls for a report to be presented to the Full Council meeting in September 2025, of how the administration plans to rectify the situation in Launders Lane.

Such a report should include amongst other items, an issue log, risk analysis, costings, communication plan, key stakeholder analysis, key milestones and a detailed action plan with associated timescales. This report to be in line with good project management practice.

(Received 4/7/25, 1724)

Motion on behalf of the Havering Residents Association Group

Given the significance and impact on residents who live near Launderers lane, together with the impact on the general environment and the outcome of the recent judicial review, this Council calls for a report to be presented to Cabinet at its meeting in September 2025, of how the administration plans to rectify the situation in Launderers Lane.

Such a report should include amongst other items, an issue log, risk analysis, costings, communication plan, key stakeholder analysis, key milestones and a detailed action plan with associated timescales. This report to be in line with good project management practice.

(Received 14/7/25, 2111)

D. VEHICLE ENGINE IDLING

Motion on behalf of the Labour Group

This Council recognises the shared concern among residents regarding the impact of vehicle engine idling outside schools on the health of young children and those with respiratory conditions, and calls on the Administration to work with relevant stakeholders to develop and deliver a targeted public health campaign ahead of the September school intake, aimed at reducing engine idling around our schools.

(Received 8/7/25, 1041)

(No amendments received).

This page is intentionally left blank