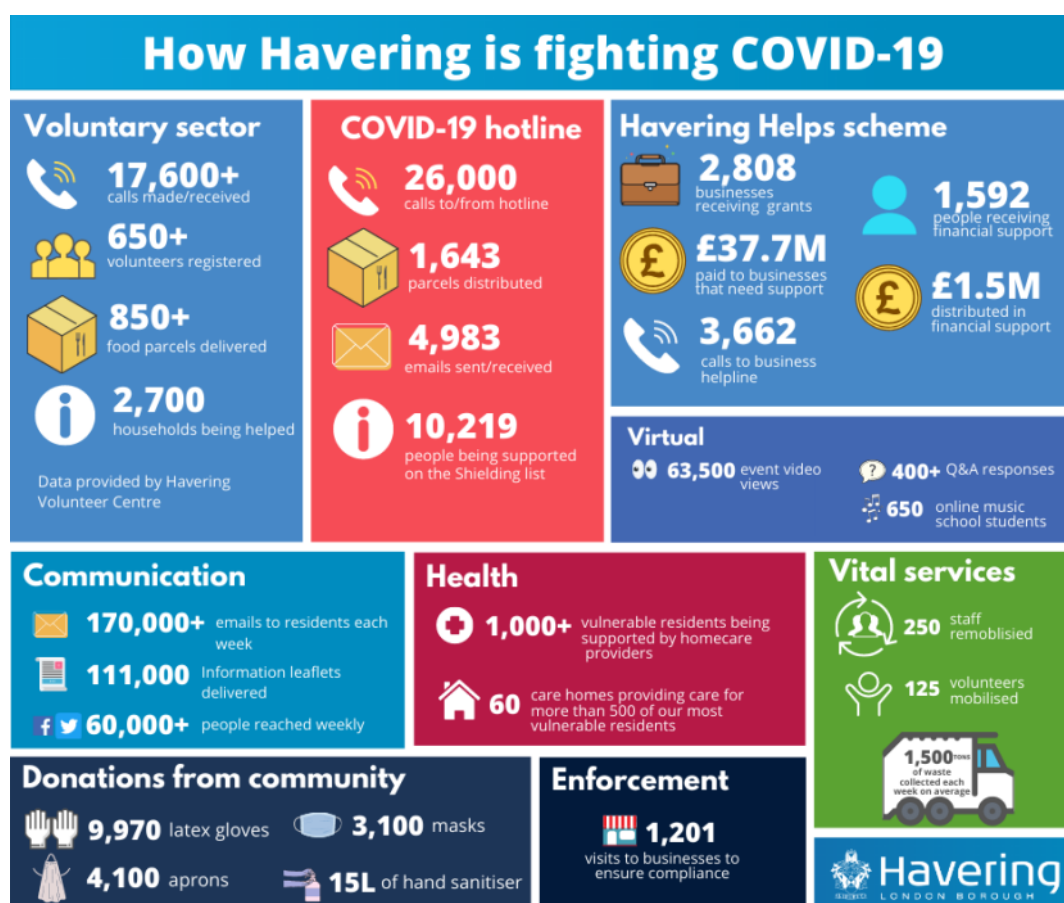


Havering Budget Consultation Paper 2020

The COVID pandemic has resulted in additional demand on local government which could not have been imagined when the 2020/21 budget was set in February 2020. The Council has acted swiftly and robustly to a series of new challenges to shield and support our most vulnerable citizens.

As part of this, working with the voluntary sector, we supported many residents and businesses. We contacted over 10,000 residents with over 17,000 phone calls with 2,700 residents receiving food deliveries pharmacy items and doing odd jobs as necessary. In addition the Council provided more than 850 food parcels and managed the distribution of PPE across care homes, funeral directors and the Council itself.

Here is a snapshot of this support:



Demand for Council services has also changed dramatically. Most services restarted following the lockdown, but reduced capacity due to social distancing rules, has meant demand has gone down while costs have increased due to the need for PPE and physical changes to protect staff and residents.

We know that some impacts from the crisis have yet to be felt in full. We have now seen a second spike in cases and it is likely that there will be further waves of COVID. This means we will continue to support our most vulnerable residents, thinking about the recovery of our economy, our communities and our public services.

As the second wave of the pandemic gathers pace, we are also seeing a move in Government to devolve responsibilities to local government to deal with introducing measures to reduce infection rates, such as track and trace, and the responsibility to provide support for the most vulnerable people in our community, such as the provision of food supplies and well-being support.

As we move towards setting the budget for 2021/22, we are very keen to understand the views of our residents and key stakeholders. We are launching this budget consultation paper to give as many people as possible the opportunity to say how the pandemic has affected them. We are interested in pressures and hardships you may be experiencing and how you believe the Council can help and support you in the next year.

We will take into account all views in the budget setting process with the aim of setting a budget for 2021/22 that truly understands and supports the needs of our residents. The outcomes from this will also feed into the longer term plans and strategies for the Council over the next few years

The COVID outbreak has had huge impact on the country, day to day lives and the economy. We want to know what you believe are the biggest challenges the Council faces and how we should prioritise our resources to meet those challenges.

Section 1: About you

1. Please tell us the first part of your postcode (this will be 3 or 4 characters):

[Open ended textbox]

2. How did you find out about this consultation?

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Havering Council's website
- Newspaper
- From friend or relative
- Councillor
- Voluntary or community sector organisation
- Other

3. Please tell us in what capacity you are completing this questionnaire:

- Havering Resident
- Representative of an organisation or community group
- As a Havering Council Employee (resident)
- As a Havering Council Employee (non-resident)
- An employer or business owner in the borough
- Other (please specify)

Section 2: Council services and priorities

4. What would you say are the three most important issues the borough is likely to face in the next year?

- Coronavirus/ pandemic diseases
- Economy/economic situation
- Education/Schools
- EU/Brexit
- Crime/Community safety
- National Health Service/Healthcare
- Morality & individual behaviours
- Social Care provision
- Housing
- Race relations
- Aging population
- Poverty/inequality
- Low pay/ wages
- Environment/climate change
- Inflation/prices
- Unemployment
- Personal finances
- Population levels/over-population
- Other (please specify)

5. What three things that most concern you going forward?

- My physical health and fitness
- My mental health and wellbeing
- Being lonely
- Climate change
- Keeping a roof over my head
- Housing affordability
- Staying in work / employment stability
- Future job prospects
- Paying bills
- Educational provision
- Raising children
- Being a victim of crime
- Anti-social behaviour in my community
- The local environment/ pollution
- Cleanliness of street and local area
- Community relations
- Public transport

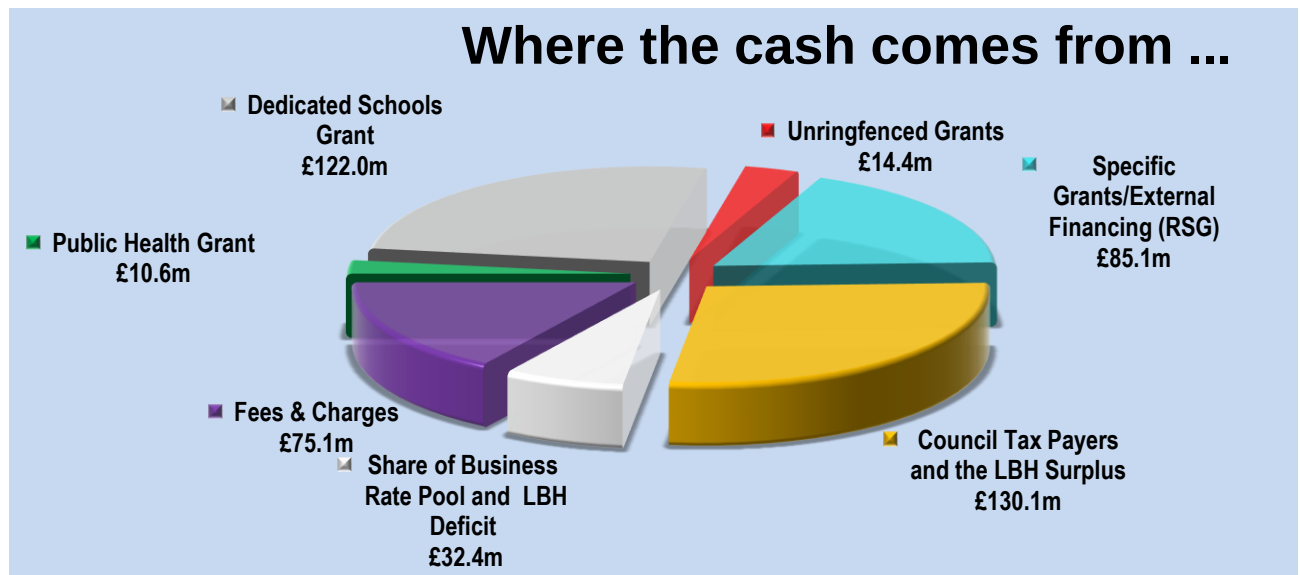
- None of these
- Other (please specify)

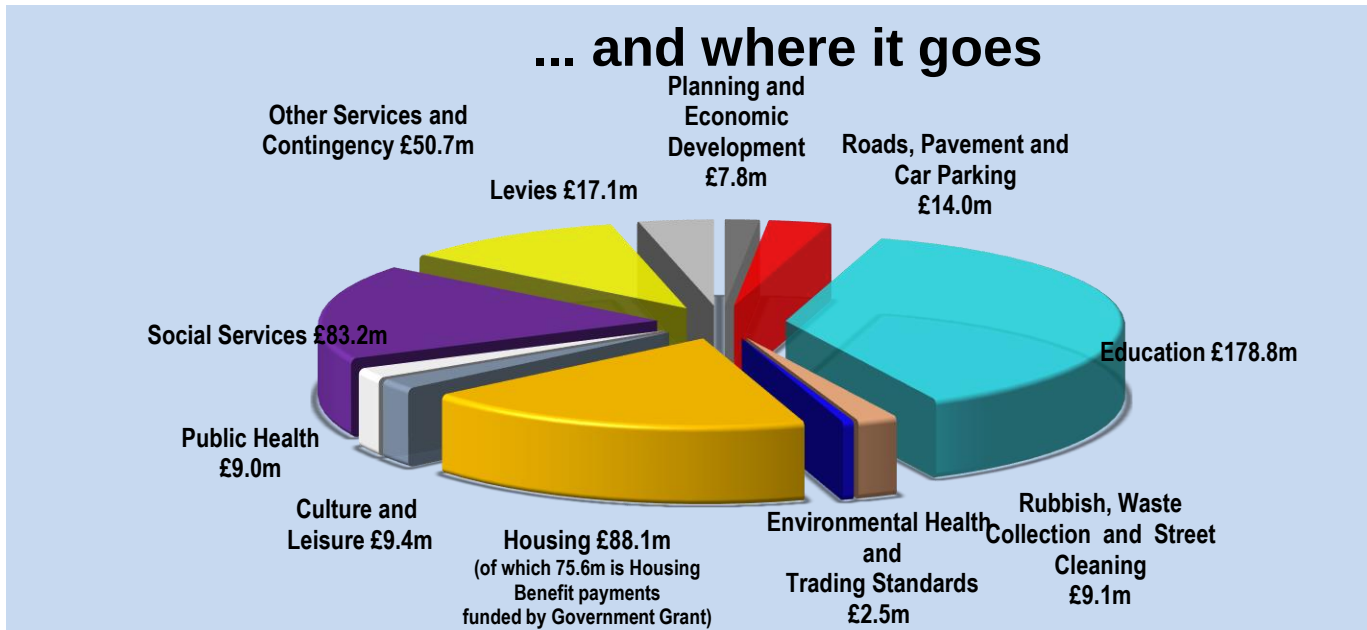
6. Thinking about your answers to the last question, how do you think the Council could support you?

[Open-ended text box]

Section 3: The Councils Budget position looking forward to 2021/22

The Council spends its money across various key services for our public. The Council however will have to make difficult choices about our spending plans in order to meet the increasing demand for our citizens. The graph below set out how Havering spends its money to give you an idea of how it allocates resources.





The COVID outbreak will place even greater pressure on our resources. Some of this pressure has been funded by the Government, but not all of it. Next year we know we will face further costs as it is clear that things will not be back to normal and many of our residents will require continued extra support through the hardship they may be facing. The Council's income from different areas will continue to be affected and collection of this income will be down on previous years. We are aware that increasing unemployment will reduce residents' ability to pay council tax and many businesses are facing hardship or even failure.

7. Overall, how well informed do you feel about the financial challenges facing the Council?

- Not very well informed
- Not well informed at all
- Don't know
- Fairly well informed
- Very well informed

We have proposed a number of savings that will help offset our budgetary pressures and we are deciding on how to bridge that gap [DETAILS ON THE DIFFERENT PROPOSALS TO BE PROVIDED].

8. For the following savings proposals, do you agree or disagree that the proposal is an appropriate way of balancing our budgets?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Proposal 1					
Proposal 2					
Proposal 20					

9. Are there any other areas that you think we should be considering?

[Open-ended textbox]

Section 4: Reserves and Council tax

“Just as residents often keep some money back to deal with problems that arise, councils keep reserves to pay for crises or unexpected events. In February 2020 we set a balanced budget for 2020/21 and was did not plan to use general reserves to fund expenditure. Dealing with the impact of Covid-19 has meant we have had to spend more money to support our residents. The Government has provided some financial support but the extreme pressure the Council has faced means that to keep budgets balanced in the current year we will potentially need to use £10m of our reserves. Our budget consultation this year proposes that we add more money into our reserves to protect residents against unforeseen events that may happen in future years.”

10. In future years, we may seek to rebuild and increase our reserves to handle any crises. If we did this, would you agree or disagree with this proposed course of action?

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neutral
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly agree

Our proposals do not include particular assumptions on a Council Tax increase as there is still too much uncertainty about the impact of Covid-19 and the funding we are likely to receive next year.

But for illustration, each 1% increase in Council Tax adds 28p per week (£14.64 per year) to a typical band D property and increases our income by approximately £1.3 million. Any increase in Council Tax will mean fewer reductions would need to be made across services.

11. If we were to increase our council tax, which one of the following options for Council tax would you support:

- a. I support an increase of up to 2%
- b. I support an increase above 2%
- c. I do not support an increase
- d. Don't know / no opinion

The financial challenge we face in 2021-22 is significant and means we will need to make some difficult decisions in February 2021 if we do not get sufficient Government funding. It is important to understand what you would do in our situation, so we are asking you to consider what your priorities are in terms of the services we fund.

12. If you had to remove £1 from one of the services areas, please tell us where you would remove your £1 from?

Adult Social Care
Bereavement & Registration
Building Control
Children's Social Care
Community Services
Corporate Services
Early Help
Education Services
Enforcement & Safety
Environment Services
Highways, Parking & Traffic
Housing
Libraries, Arts & Music School
Leisure Centres & Sport
Public Health
Public Protection & Licensing
Regeneration and Economic Development
Social Support
Support Services (Finance, ICT, Legal, HR)
Transport Services
Waste Services

13. Please let us know of anything else you would want us to consider as we set the budget for 2021/22

[Open-ended textbox]

Section 5: Demographics

We want to reach as many people as possible with this consultation and that all groups in our community have had the opportunity to give us ideas. We would therefore like to gather some information about you so we can measure the profile of respondents to the consultation.

What is your age?

- Under 16
- 16 - 20
- 21 - 30
- 31 - 40
- 41 - 50
- 51 - 60
- 61 - 70
- 71 - 80
- 81 - 90
- 91 or over
- Prefer not to say

To which gender identity do you most identify?

- Man
- Woman
- Gender Neutral / Agender
- Trans Woman
- Trans Man
- Non-Binary
- Other
- Prefer not to say

What is your marital status?

- Married
- Single
- Widowed
- Prefer not to say
- Other, please state:

What is your religion/faith?

- Christian
- Muslim
- Hindu
- Buddhist
- Sikh
- Jewish
- None
- Not sure
- Prefer not to say
- Other, please state

What is your ethnic origin? Please tick (✓) one option only

Asian / Asian British		Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups	
Bangladeshi		White & Asian	
Chinese		White & Black African	
Indian		White & Black Caribbean	
Pakistani		Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background (✓ AND WRITE BELOW)	
Any other Asian background			

(✓ AND WRITE BELOW)			
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British		Other ethnic group	
African		Arab	
British		Any other ethnic group (✓ AND WRITE BELOW)	
Caribbean			
Any other Black / African / Caribbean background (✓ AND WRITE BELOW)			
White			
British			
Greek / Greek Cypriot			
Gypsy or Irish Traveller			
Irish			
Turkish / Turkish Cypriot			
Any other White background (✓ AND WRITE BELOW)			
Prefer not to say			

Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as 'a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

In this definition, long-term means more than 12 months and would cover long-term illness such as cancer and HIV or mental health problems.

Do you consider that you have a disability as outlined above? Please tick (✓) one option only

Yes ☐

No ☐ (Please go to Q)

If you have answered 'yes', please select the definition(s) from the list below that best describes your disability/disabilities:

Hearing (such as deaf, partially deaf or hard of hearing)	☐	Reduced Physical Capacity (such as inability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects, debilitating pain and lack of strength, breath energy or stamina, asthma, angina or diabetes)	☐
Vision (such as blind or fractional/partial sight. Does not include people whose visual problems can be corrected by glasses/contact lenses)	☐	Severe Disfigurement	☐
		Learning Difficulties (such as dyslexia)	☐
Speech (such as impairments that can cause communication problems)	☐	Mental Illness (substantial and lasting more than a year, such as severe depression or psychoses)	☐
Mobility (such as wheelchair user, artificial lower limb(s), walking aids, rheumatism or arthritis)	☐	Physical Co-ordination (such as manual dexterity, muscular control, cerebral palsy)	☐
Other disability, please specify			
Prefer not to say ☐			