

The London Borough of Havering

The London Borough of Havering was created in 1965 by the London Government Act. It is one of 32 Boroughs that provide local government. in London.

The Council is a corporate body and as such, has a legal existence separate from that of its members. It can own land, enter into contracts and be subject to court proceedings and is responsible for its actions as a legal entity. The Council has “powers” which are contained in legislation, including the power to raise money by taxation. It also has “duties” which are legal obligations to act.

As a local authority, the Council has a duty to deliver many public services that affect each and every citizen, ranging from waste collection to education, housing, planning, transport, environmental health and social services.

The democratic work of the Council is carried out by 55 elected Members, known as Councillors, who are elected to serve for four-year terms. The Borough is divided into 20 Wards.

The Council has a turnover of £0.6billion and as at 30 March 2020, employed approximately 2,461 staff (excluding school staff) to deliver the policies that have been determined by elected Councillors.

More detailed information about the Council is available from the website at: www.havering.gov.uk

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Introduction from the Chief Executive

Congratulations on your election to the London Borough of Havering and welcome.

On the following pages you will see a snapshot of useful information to help you through the first weeks and months of your term of office. This is, of course, just a snippet of the information that is available to you through our website and the internal intranet.

Whether you are new to the Council or an experienced elected Member, do take advantage of the Members' Induction days arranged for you and the various briefings and development days aimed at equipping you with the skills and knowledge you will need to fulfil the function for which you were elected.

Some of this is now compulsory if your group wishes you to sit on or be able to substitute for others on certain committees. There is a huge amount of information to absorb, so rather than inundate you, this time we will try to spread it over the coming weeks and months.

The Council is changing. We are on a journey to preserve those front-line services that the community need and expect us to deliver whilst balancing an ever-decreasing budget, whilst demand for services, particularly social services on the back of the pandemic, continues to rise sharply. To do this we are positioning ourselves to enable those who can help themselves to do so through self-service and by working with partners to make more efficient use of what we have, and for all the challenges of the pandemic it has helped to support this change with our residents. Difficult decisions are going to have to be made over the coming years about how the Council operates, and the level of service to be provided. This is an exciting time to become a Councillor and help shape the future of Local Government.

On behalf of the Senior Leadership Team may I welcome you on that journey and look forward to working with you in the coming months.



Andrew Blake-Herbert

Chief Executive



Section 1 – Essential Information

2. The Town Hall

The Town Hall is open from 7am to 7pm, Monday to Friday. The building will stay open later when there are Council meetings.

Town Hall keepers are on duty at all times when the building is open. Please inform main reception if you are in the building after 6.30pm.

As the Town Hall is a part public and part administrative building, access is controlled in some areas. All Councillors will be issued with an ID badge which permits unrestricted access to the building. Please ensure that you have your ID badge with you at all times. If you lose your card or have any other difficulties, please speak to your Member Support Officer. There is a charge levied for replacement ID badges.

Facilities for Councillors

Members' Resource Room and Political Group Rooms

The Members' Resource Room is available for use by all Councillors on the ground floor, and there are MFD's, confidential waste bins and a recycling area for cardboard and paper. There is also a selection of reference books, local government magazines and a notice board displaying local information. Please ask Member Support staff for help if you have any difficulty in using the office machinery.

The Leader of the Council has an office and the Mayor has a Parlour for both office and civic use.

Please note that support and facilities are provided on a non-political basis and staff cannot assist Councillors with party political work

Toilets

There are Gents, Ladies and Easy-Access facilities on the first-floor corridor next to the Committee rooms.

Fire and Emergency Procedures

The Town Hall fire alarm is tested at 11.30am every Tuesday. This is a regular test for the system and staff awareness.

If the alarm rings continuously at any time, you must assume that it is a real emergency and that it is necessary to evacuate the building. It is important that you stop what you are doing immediately and leave the building by the nearest exit. The emergency muster point is situated in the Market area outside of the Town Hall. Fire Wardens will inform you when it is safe to return to the building. You must not re-enter the building until directed to do so.

There are separate instructions for disabled Councillors or visitors. Please ask Member Support staff for help and advice.

3. Car Parking

Please be advised that permits are priced at a set fee regardless of when the application is made and will expire in April each year. Please ensure you observe the Terms and Conditions of the permit before making your application.

Cabinet Members:

Cabinet Member virtual permits are valid borough wide and can be used in:

- Residents permit bays
- On-street P&D bays
- Shared use bays
- All council owned car parks (see below regarding Town Hall Car Park).

<https://secure.mipermit.com/havering/Application/ProductForeword.aspx?PermitType=MEMBER>

Ward Members:

Ward Member virtual permits are valid only for the Ward to which you are elected for and can be used in:

- Residents permit bays in your Ward only
- On-street P&D bays in your Ward only
- Shared use bays in your Ward only
- All council owned car parks (see below regarding Town Hall Car Park).

<https://secure.mipermit.com/havering/Application/ProductForeword.aspx?PermitType=OTHER>

Before making your permit application, you will need:

- A MiPermit Account (you will be asked to create an account before completing your application)
- Debit / Credit card to make payment

Attending Town Hall for meetings/business

During the day the front car park at the Town Hall is reserved for the exclusive use of SLT, Visitors and Councillors, with a valid permit.

When attending the Town Hall for Councillor advertised meetings, Cabinet and Ward Members can use their Council ID pass to gain access to the front visitor car park, via the barrier.

Before 5pm: Members who need to attend the Town Hall must pre-book a parking space for the front of the Town Hall via finadmin@havering.gov.uk. A valid permit is required.

After 5pm: Members who need to attend a meeting at the Town Hall can park for free. Access is via the barrier with Council ID pass, permits are not required.

4. Support for Members

Member Support Team

Shortly after the election, you will be advised of the Support Officers who will be able to assist you in your role as a Councillor. The Member Support Officers are experienced staff who can offer advice and support all Councillors. The following is a brief summary of the support they are able to offer:

- Assistance with confidential and general correspondence.
- Diary management.
- Contact point between Members and the public.
- Assistance with casework.
- Arrangements for booking meetings.
- Give apologies for meetings.
- Organisation of bookings and travel arrangements for external conferences.
- Arrange business cards.
- Update and review key member information, including intranet content
- Arrange member briefings

Please note that Member Support Officers cannot undertake work of a personal or political nature and can only assist with Council business.

Support from Democratic Services

Democratic Services is a team of staff whose job it is to support Members, individually and collectively at meetings and to manage the decision-making processes in the Council (more details of which can be found in Section 2 of this handbook). They are available to:

- Advise on constitutional matters, governance and meeting procedure
- Arrange, issue agendas and record minutes of all formal meetings, including Council, Cabinet, committees and Panels.
- Advise on the membership of Committees, panels and Outside Bodies
- Advise on declarations of interests at meetings, questions to Council, public participation in meetings and the handling of petitions
- Administer and publish Executive Decisions
- Advise on the Overview & Scrutiny process
- Support scrutiny reviews
- Update and review key member information, including web content
- Assist with research and collation of information

Arranging Meetings

If you need to arrange a meeting with the Chief Executive, a Group Director or a Head of Service, this can be done directly through their office or, through the Member Support Officer. The primary contact with officers should be through Heads of Service and meetings with other tiers of staff should be agreed with the Head of Service beforehand. The Member Support Officer can arrange for room bookings if necessary. If you require a meeting room to meet with constituents, please ask the Member Support Officer to organise and please provide as much advance notice as possible. Rooms may only be used for legitimate Council business.

Councillor Allowances

The Council is obliged to make a Members' Allowances scheme annually, before the 1st of April each year, which forms [Part 6 of the Council Constitution](#).

Councillor allowances are set in conjunction with reports from an independent body that reviews allowances across London. The current levels have been set with regard to the January 2022 report of the Independent Remuneration Panel of London Councils and have been unchanged since 2007/08.

All members receive the basic allowance of £10,412.00 to assist with expenses incurred through carrying out your role as a Councillor.

Members that hold a special responsibility, such as Cabinet Member (full list available in Schedule 1 of the Council's Constitution) will be paid a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) as listed within the Schedule.

Protocols surrounding the claim of multiple, or other allowances, are explained within the Scheme.

Councillors may elect to forego any part of their allowance; this must be done by written notice to the Head of Democratic Services.

Allowances are paid into Members' nominated bank accounts by BACS on the last working day of each month. You will be given a form for completion with the bank details which should be returned as soon as possible.

5. Member Development

All Members have a right to access training and development relevant to their role and the Council is keen to support this. Members often identify external courses, conferences etc. that they feel would be useful to attend and there is a limited budget available to cover course and conference fees. Before confirming any bookings, you should complete a form detailing why you wish to attend the training. The form can be found in the Members' section of the [intranet](#) and should be returned to Ian Goldsborough in Members' Services (ian.goldsborough@onesource.co.uk).

Additional training and development input can be found on Fusion. This can be found by typing Fusion in the search bar. On the dashboard page is a button marked learning. Clicking this will open the available training and development catalogue. The [Members' Area intranet](#) page will be regularly updated with useful training materials and recorded training sessions for Members' to use at their own pace.

6. Councillors' Mail

Councillors' mail boxes are situated at the rear of the post room in the Town Hall. Each Councillor is given a key to their mail box and mail can be collected in person at any time during normal opening hours. Mail can be scanned and emailed to Members upon request. Any mail that has not been collected by 4pm on a Thursday will be removed from the mail box and placed in a blue waterproof wallet with the Councillor's home address, to be collected. Each Councillor has 4 wallets for this purpose and once emptied, the wallets must be returned to the Town Hall. This can be done by returning wallets in person to the Reception desk or the Post Room at the Town Hall.

The general budget provision for Councillors' mail is for use for correspondence arising from **ward and casework issues only**. In all cases mail must relate to genuine enquiries from constituents and not be sent out to generate responses for party political advantage. In all instances correspondence should not be used, or be perceived as being used, as a means of party political campaigning. In the interests of clarity, the following activities are permissible as Ward and casework:

- a. Use of business cards to introduce yourself as Ward Councillor.
- b. **Informing and advocating** on behalf of residents. It is inevitable that there will be a need to inform local people of events or specific changes that are taking place and that are relevant to residents on a particular street or in a particular area of the Ward. As part of such correspondence, it is legitimate to express a personal position or action in response to such events or issues.
- c. **Seeking Views and Reporting Back** – a part of the community leadership role involves understanding the issues that are important to local residents. It is for this reason that surveys and questionnaires are permissible providing that the language used is neutral and is relevant to the Ward represented. Similarly reporting back on action taken is also legitimate within this context.
- d. **Ward Surgeries** – where Councillors choose to advertise their surgeries, it is appropriate for this information to be included in correspondence.

Please note that in the period prior to Elections, known as "pre election periods" there are particular rules regarding publicity and Councillors should be aware of the legal context during this time.

7. ICT Support

Information on ICT Support is available in a separate document.

8. Information Security

The London Borough of Havering has an Information Security Policy and is required by law to safeguard the personal information it holds by taking all appropriate technical and practical precautions to do so.

As a Councillor you are covered by both the Policy and the legislation contained in the General Data Protection Regulations effective from May 2018. More information is available in Section 3.

9. Gifts and Hospitality

If you receive a gift or hospitality that is of a value of £25 or over you must record this in the Register of Interests. The Register is held by the Monitoring Officer/Democratic Services. Please contact Jacqui Barr for further assistance.

10. Health and Safety

If you have an accident or need first aid, the Council has trained first aiders throughout the building. Please ask a member of staff to call a first aider, or speak to Member Support staff. You will be asked to complete a form under the Health & Safety at Work Act. The incident will be investigated and if possible the probability of recurrence will be minimised.

Outside normal working hours, first aid required at the Town Hall is available from the Town Hall keepers on ext. 2412

Councillors with a disability or those who have special requirements for support and equipment should discuss their needs with Ian Goldsborough, Manager of Members' Services.

Section 2 – How the Council Works

Our Values

We will work together with a common sense of purpose. We will:

- **Be positive**

- **Respect others**
- **Work together**

Havering Vision

Since February 2019, our vision has been to create a cleaner, safer and prouder borough, together. This vision protects what we love about Havering while making the borough an even better place to live, work and do business.

Our vision is focused around four cross-cutting priorities: communities, places, opportunities and connections.

Opportunities

We will provide first-class business opportunities by supporting the commercial development of companies within the borough, as well as being a hub for start-ups and expanding businesses. We will ensure sustainable economic growth that generates local wealth and opportunities, as well as securing investment in high-quality skills and careers including through our joint venture partnerships.

Communities

We want to help our residents to make positive lifestyle choices and ensure a good start for every child to reach their full potential. We will support families and communities to look after themselves and each other, with a particular emphasis on our most vulnerable residents.

Places

We will work to achieve a clean, safe environment for all. This will be secured through working with residents to improve our award-winning parks and continuing to invest in our housing stock through our regeneration programmes, ensuring decent, safe and high quality properties. Our residents will have access to vibrant culture and leisure facilities, as well as thriving town centres.

Connections

We want to capitalise on our location with fast and accessible transport links both to central London and within the borough. We will also deliver a comprehensive roads and pavement improvement programme and ensure parking within the borough further meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors. Likewise, we will continue to make Havering a digitally-enabled borough that is connected to residents and businesses.

Role Profile for a Ward Councillor

- To participate constructively in the good governance of the Borough.
- To contribute actively to the formation and scrutiny of the authority's policies, budget, strategies and service delivery
- To represent effectively the interests of the Ward for which the Councillor was elected, and deal with constituents' enquiries and representations
- To champion the improvement of the quality of life of the whole community in terms of equity, economy and environment
- To represent the council effectively, when appointed to an outside body, such as a charitable trust or association, etc.
- To act at all times with probity and propriety in the best interest of the Council

It is expected that all Councillors will:

1. Fulfil the statutory and locally determined requirements of an elected member of a local authority and the authority itself, including compliance with all relevant codes of conduct, and participation in those decisions and activities reserved to the full Council (e.g. setting budget, overall priorities and strategy)
2. Participate effectively as a member of any committee or Panel to which the councillor is appointed, including related responsibilities for the services falling within the committee's (or Panel's) terms of reference, and its liaison with other public bodies to promote better understanding and partnership working
3. Participate in the activities of an outside body to which the Councillor is appointed, providing two-way communication between the organisations. Also, for this purpose, to develop and maintain a working knowledge of the authority's policies and practices in relation to that body and of the community's needs and aspirations in respect of that body's role and functions
4. Participate in the scrutiny or performance review of the services of the authority including, where the authority so decides, the scrutiny of policies and budget, and their effectiveness in achieving the strategic objectives of the Council
5. Participate, as appointed, in consultative processes with the community and with other organisations
6. Provide a link between the authority to the community, and communicate with local people about decisions that affect them

7. Develop and maintain a working knowledge of the authority's services, management arrangements, powers/duties, and constraints, and to develop good working relationships with relevant officers of the authority
8. Develop and maintain a working knowledge of the other organisations and services which serve the local Borough
9. Contribute constructively to open government and democratic renewal through active encouragement to the community to participate generally in the democratic process
10. Participate in the activities of any political group of which the councillor is a member
11. Conduct the business of the Council within the Council and not through the written or broadcast media
12. Maintain confidentiality in all relevant Council business

Decision Making

As a Councillor, you share responsibility with your elected colleagues for the governance of the Borough and setting policies for the Council.

1. Council

Council meetings are meetings of the full Council. All Councillors are members and are expected to attend.

Council is the ultimate decision making body, responsible for setting the policy and financial frameworks within which the Executive Cabinet must work. It also confers the Freedom of the Borough and the office of Alderman upon eligible people

- **The Annual Meeting** of Council is normally held in late May, when the Mayor is elected and the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees are appointed for the forthcoming municipal year.
- **Ordinary Meetings** of the Council are held five times a year, in July, October, December, early February and late March or early March.
- **The Budget and Council Tax** are set annually at a meeting in late February or early March.
- **Extraordinary meetings** are occasionally necessary to deal with urgent business.

The rules for Council meetings are contained in the standing orders, which include rules of procedure laid down in legislation and additional regulations chosen by Havering Council. A third of the councillors must be present for the meeting to go ahead; this is known as the “quorum”. Standing orders will also determine such things as the order of business, the duration of speaking time, voting requirements and procedures for public participation. Information and training on committee protocols will be provided as part of the induction process for new Members.

All meetings are held in the Council Chamber and are presided over by the Mayor of Havering. Council generally begins at 7.30pm and finishes at 10.30pm, but can continue later with agreement.

Council meetings are attended by the public and the Press. They are also webcast live over the internet. For further details and to view past papers, please see www.havering.gov.uk

2. Cabinet

The Executive is accountable for most day-to-day decisions. The Executive is made up of the Leader and the Cabinet. When major decisions are to be discussed or made, these are published in the Leader’s Forward Plan. If these major decisions are to be taken at a meeting of the Executive, the meeting will be open for the public to attend except where personal or confidential matters are being discussed. The Executive has to make decisions which are in line with the Council’s overall policies and budget. If it wishes to make a decision which is outside the budget or policy framework, this must be referred to the Council as a whole to decide.

Most routine decisions are taken by individual Cabinet Members acting under delegated powers. These are known as “executive decisions” and are published weekly on the website.

The Leader is the Chairman of the Cabinet and can appoint up to nine other members. Each Cabinet Member has a “portfolio” of services for which he or she is responsible as Lead Member.

3. Mayor

The Mayor is the borough’s First Citizen, elected from among the 55 Councillors. The role of the Mayor is to take the Chair at meetings of full Council and to act a “Civic Ambassador” for the borough. The Mayor has no executive authority.

4. Leader

The Leader of the Council heads the Council’s Executive, which is responsible for most operational decisions about service delivery. The Leader is a Councillor and holds office for a four year term until the Annual Meeting of the Council following the next election in May 2026.

5. The Joint Committee

The Joint Committee’s role is to oversee the management of oneSource, the shared back offices support service for the London Boroughs of Havering and Newham. The committee ensures effective delivery of such services and provides strategic direction.

6. Other Council Committees

The Council has a number of other committees, each concerned with a specific area of activity. The “quasi-judicial” committees exercise judgement over matters that affect individuals’ rights, while “administrative” committees are concerned with the internal organisation of the Council.

Full details of all Council committees can be found on the website at www.havering.gov.uk

Council selects the chairman and vice-chairman of each committee. Group Leaders then appoint members to the remaining places. The number of places available to each group is determined by a politically balanced formula agreed by Council.

Giving Apologies

If you are unable to attend any of the committees to which you have been appointed, please let the relevant Democratic Services Officer know and they will ensure that your apologies are formally recorded in the Minutes. Contact details can be found on the front of the meeting's agenda. If you are on a committee and need a substitute you should arrange this yourself within your Group.

The Agenda

Formal notice of any meeting is given in the agenda, which is published approximately a week before the meeting is due to take place. The agenda will indicate where a meeting is to be held and what business will be dealt with. Agendas can be viewed on the Council’s website www.havering.gov.uk.

Apart from the agenda paper itself which will include the order of business, you will receive Minutes of previous meetings and reports. Some of these reports may be designated as “exempt”. Exempt items are available to all councillors, but for legal reasons, should **never** be divulged to the public or the Press.

Reports provide the policy, technical, legal and financial information necessary to ensure that any decision is made on an informed basis and complies with all relevant requirements. Reports include a recommendation. In most cases, this will be to follow a particular course of action, but sometimes the meeting is asked to decide between several options. It is important to remember that Councillors are not obliged to accept any recommendation – they are free to decide upon a different course of action if they so wish, providing that it is in accordance with relevant legal and financial obligations

Conduct

The Chairman of a meeting is in overall charge of its proceedings. He or she ensures that the agenda is followed, that all Members have a fair opportunity to discuss the issues and that proper order is maintained. The Chairman has the power to adjourn the meeting if it is disrupted by misconduct, whether by Councillors or by the public in attendance.

All meetings are open to the public, though there is no automatic right for the public to speak or ask questions.

7. Overview & Scrutiny

Every day the Council makes decisions that impact upon the lives of residents of Havering. These decisions determine how public money is spent and how public services are to be delivered.

Many decisions are taken by the Cabinet, whilst a number are taken by Council officers under delegated authority.

To ensure that the decisions taken are fair, inclusive and represent the best interests of all Havering residents, Councillors sit on overview and scrutiny committees. The Leader and Cabinet Members are not eligible for membership of scrutiny committees, since they are the Executive.

These committees have statutory powers to report and make recommendations which advise the Executive and the Council as a whole on its policies, budget and service delivery. Overview and scrutiny committees also monitor the Key decisions of the Executive.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board can “call-in” a key decision which has been made by the Executive but has not yet been implemented to consider whether the decision is appropriate. A key decision is a decision which results in expenditure or saving of over £0.5 million or affects 2 or more wards. The Board may recommend that the Executive reconsider the decision. The Overview and Scrutiny Board and Sub-Committees may also be consulted by the Executive or the Council on forthcoming decisions and the development of policy.

The Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committees also deal with “Councillor Calls for Action” and have power to scrutinise a number of partner agencies in relation to matters concerning the National Health Service, crime and disorder and the Local Area Agreement.

8. Outside Bodies

Havering Council is often invited to nominate a Councillor to attend meetings of various trusts, charities, partner organisations, companies and statutory bodies. These are referred to as ‘Outside Body Appointments’.

The Council has representatives on various organisations, a complete list of which is available on the website.

Appointments are either made by the Leader of the Council following consultation with the Group Leaders, or by the Governance Committee.

Membership of Outside Bodies can represent a considerable time commitment. In view of the demands on you as a Councillor, it is prudent to check what is expected of you before accepting a nomination to an Outside Body. Advice and guidance is available from Jacqui Barr in Democratic Services. A full list of Outside Bodies can be viewed on the Council’s website www.havering.gov.uk

9. The Constitution

The London Borough of Havering has a constitution which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that decisions are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.

Some of these processes are required by the law, while others have been decided by the Council itself.

The constitution is divided into 12 articles which set out the basic rules governing the Council’s business. More detailed procedures and codes of practice are provided in

separate rules and protocols at the end of the Constitution. The full version is available at <http://democracy.havering.gov.uk> and follow the links to the Constitution

Council Structure

Each member of the Council's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has key areas of responsibility, but together are jointly responsible (under the Chief Executive) for turning the strategic direction of the Council - set by its elected Councillors - into operational policy.

SLT is also responsible for the forward-looking approach to delivering services and its transformation programme - ensuring the Council is best placed to meet the future needs of the community within the funding available. This involves working in partnership with other local authorities, the private, public and voluntary sectors and ensuring service delivery changes to meet the demands of new legislation.

All SLT post holders are non-political and cannot participate in party political activity. They give advice and assistance to all Councillors irrespective of their political party.

Andrew Blake Herbert - Chief Executive



The Chief Executive is the principal advisor to the Council and Head of the Paid Service. The Council's Senior Leadership Team includes the Chief Executive, Chief Operating officer and six directors. Between them they manage all of the Council's activities and deliver over 300 services every day.

The Chief Executive reports to Full Council and is responsible for:

- Developing the vision and plans to secure a high performing and well managed authority
- Working towards the provision of excellent services by personal example, inspirational leadership and empowerment in partnerships
- Leading and managing the Council's staff to ensure a corporate and co-ordinated approach is adopted for the provision of services
- Challenging the status quo and current assumptions to break down barriers for future service provision
- Representing the Council professionally as its ambassador, negotiator and advocate
- Acting as Head of the Paid Service and Returning Officer for elections

OneSource

OneSource provides shared back office support services for local government and other public services. You can find details of their directors on the OneSource website <http://onesourceintranet/Pages/Category/OneSourceHome.aspx>

Chief Operating Officer

Responsible for:

- Strategy, Policy and Performance
- Community Safety & Development
- Equality & Diversity
- Customer Access
- Transformation
- Communications, Corporate Events and Campaigns
- Libraries, Arts & Leisure Centres
- Social Care Systems and Development
- Joint Commissioning
- Employment & Skills

Barry Francis - Director of Neighbourhoods

Responsible for:

- Planning Development Control
- Building Control
- Transport Planning
- Bereavement & Registration
- Business Services
- Waste & Public Realm
- Highways, Parking & Traffic
- Enforcement & Safety
- Public Protection & Licensing

Barbara Nicholls - Director of Adults and Health



Responsible for:

- Older People
- Learning Difficulties
- Mental Health
- Physical and Learning Disability
- Personalisation of Adult Social Care
- Prevention and Reablement
- Safeguarding Adults

Robert South - Director of Children's Services

Responsible for:

- Child Protection
- Fostering & Adoption
- Youth Offending Team
- Education Provision & Specialist Commissioning
- Early Help & Children's Centres
- Education Inclusion and Support
- Education Quality & Effectiveness
- Education Traded Services
- Looked after Children
- Youth Services

Patrick Odling-Smee - Director of Housing

Responsible for:

- Housing Management
- Housing Property Services
- Housing demand including Homelessness
- Supported Housing
- Housing Strategy, Policy and IT

Neil Stubbings - Director of Regeneration

Responsible for:

- Regeneration
- Business Retention and Growth
- Inward Investment
- 3 Joint Venture Partnership
- Mercury Land Holdings

Mark Ansell - Director of Public Health

Responsible for:

- Health Protection, Disease Prevention & Health Promotion
- Reduction of Health Inequalities
- Population Health Intelligence
- Advice to NHS on Clinical Commissioning
- Sexual Health • Drugs & Alcohol
- Public Mental Health
- Children's Public Health Services

Quasi-Judicial Committees

Planning

The Council is the Local Planning Authority for Havering. As the planning authority, the Council is responsible for setting planning policies for the borough and determining applications for planning permission within the context of those policies.

The Mayor of London is the planning authority for London as a whole and sets out planning policies in the London Plan. All London Boroughs have to operate within those policies.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, on behalf of the Government, are responsible for planning across England. Their policies are set out within the National Planning Policy Framework and all planning authorities in England have to operate within that. Guidance on the operation of the planning system is given in Planning Practice Guidance.

When discharging planning functions, we take:

- A spatial view, by deciding what should go where;
- An aesthetic view, regarding how things should look; and
- A community view, concerning the relevant needs and desires of local communities and stakeholders, especially future communities, from an environmental, economic and social perspective.

The biggest challenge for planning authorities in London is accommodating the growth that the south-east region is experiencing and providing the homes necessary to support that. The London Plan seeks the delivery of 1,285 new homes per year within Havering. Within our newly adopted Local Plan, Havering has progressed a stepped housing trajectory which seeks to provide a minimum of 700 new homes per year between 2016-17 to 2020-21; a minimum of 1,801 new homes per year between 2021-22 and 2025-26 and a minimum of 1,285 new homes per year between 2026-27 and 2030-31. The Government has indicated a new approach to assessing housing requirements nationally, which could see a further increase to our housing target.

The planning function of a local Council is one of the most important tasks that a Council undertakes. Get it right, and the future Havering that you will create through good planning and decision making will make everyone's lives more prosperous, the communities they live in more sustainable and successful and the places they live more beautiful.

¹ https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20034/planning/183/planning_policy

¹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan>

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

Licensing

The licensing team sits within Public Protection and we licence a range of premises under a variety of legislation. There are 4 main work areas:

Licensing Act 2003

This legislation covers the sale of alcohol, late night refreshment and regulated entertainment. The Council is required to have a Statement of Licensing Policy which must be reviewed at least every 5 years. The policy can be found at https://www.havering.gov.uk/downloads/download/484/statement_of_licencing_policy_in_haverin_g

In Havering there are just over 600 premises licenced under this legislation. These are made up of late-night refreshment premises, off-licences, pubs and clubs.

There are 3 cumulative impact areas where new applications are minded not to be granted unless the applicant can prove that they will not impact negatively on the area. The areas are:

Romford Town Centre within the ring road and Hornchurch Town Centre

Applications for new premises licences, club premises certificates, or variation applications that are likely to add to the existing cumulative impact will normally be refused, unless the applicant can demonstrate why the operation of the premises involved will not add to the cumulative impact or otherwise impact adversely on the promotion of the licensing objectives. The exception to this policy will be for applications for restaurants where alcohol is sold ancillary to a table meal and the terminal licensing hour is in line with the Policy.

Harold Hill around the Hildene Avenue Shopping Parade

Applications for new premises licences, club premises certificates, or variation applications specifically for off sales only that are likely to add to the existing cumulative impact will normally be refused, unless the applicant can demonstrate why the operation of the premises involved will not add to the cumulative impact or otherwise impact adversely on the promotion of the licensing objectives.

Gambling Act 2005

There are 44 premises licenced under the Gambling Act 2005 which include betting shops, adult entertainment centres, bingo halls and Romford Dog Track. The Council is required to have a Statement of Gambling Policy which is reviewed every 3 years and the current policy is next due for review during 2023.

Special Treatment Premises Licences

Premises which carry out massage, manicure, acupuncture, tattooing, cosmetic piercing, chiropody, light, electric or other special treatment of a like kind or vapour, sauna or other baths require a licence or exemption. In Havering we have over

200 licensed premises for special treatments.

Animal Licensing

The licensing team licence various activities including animal boarders, breeders, pet shops and riding establishments.

Other Licences

In addition to the licence types mentioned above we also licence scrap metal activities which includes the licensing of sites and collectors. We also licence wedding venues, which covers licenses for non-religious ceremonies as well as pavement licences, street trading licences and firework licences.

The Housing Act 2004

The Housing Act 2004, enables Local Authority's to designate whole or parts of the borough under a property licensing scheme. This is in addition to the national requirement for owners/managers of Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO's) occupied by more than 5 persons, to apply for a license.

London Borough of Havering currently operate 3 schemes:

Mandatory - Nationwide, HMO's occupied by 5 or more individuals.

Additional - For HMO's occupied by 3-4 individuals. Covers all wards, but has been split into 2 separate schemes.

Scheme 1 Designation Area in effect from 1 March 2018 until 28 February 2023

Scheme 2 Designation Area in effect from 25 January 2021 until 24 January 2026

Selective – Designation Area of Brooklands and Romford Town Wards only, in effect from 25 January 2021 until 24 January 2026; applies to all single household rental properties.

The schemes enable the Local Authority to keep a register of rental properties, and the associated conditions help regulate the management, use or occupation of them. Landlords failing to license or comply with the conditions can be prosecuted or fined as a result.

Inspections are carried out over the term of the license, to ensure compliance.

Finance

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires every authority in England and Wales to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and to designate one of their officers as having responsibility for the administration of those affairs. Finance has a key role in supporting the Council's Section 151 officer fulfil their responsibilities as set out in the Local Government Act.

Finance must follow internal financial reporting standards, the CIPFA Code of Practice and Guidance's as well as following the Council's internal financial strategies and policies.

The key partners for the service include: trading companies owned by the Council, the London collective investment vehicle for pensions, the councils external treasury and pension fund advisors, external auditors, actuaries as well as Members.

The Finance service sits within the oneSource shared service which is a joint arrangement between Havering, and Newham councils. It supports Section 151 officers in Newham as well as Havering.

The service aims to be the leading financial services shared service within the public sector, offering services to a number of local government and other public sector organisations. Its aspiration is to have the service underpinned by robust financial streamlined financial processes and systems which promote strong financial governance and financial ownership. Service delivery needs to be led by an effective workforce who have the skills and experience that are business critical to the organisations in making financial decisions.

There are a number of discrete teams that make up the Finance service.

Commercial & Investment

- An in-house capability and capacity to provide support to all the councils strategic commercial opportunities with internal capacity to provide all modelling and business case development.

Financial Strategy

- Provides a skilled, knowledgeable and entrepreneurial strategic finance function that adds value and works in partnership with the Section 151 officer to financially plan for the short term through the annual budget process, the medium term through the planning and implementation of self-sufficiency and the longer term beyond 2020 to maintain financial resilience and sustainability as the role and responsibilities of Local Government evolve.

Financial Control & Corporate Business Systems

- Aims to be recognised across London as a highly effective finance function, leading with innovation in financial management services and use of technology. This team produces the Council's annual accounts and manages the audit to a tight deadline set by government.

Finance Business Partnering

- The Finance Business Partnering function aims to be at the forefront of working with services to ensure they the financial management of their services is robust. Finance Business Partnering aims to be both embedded within the service and be part of the relevant management teams but also be the critical friend adding insight and analysis in terms of ensuring the S151 Officers are able to fully carry out their responsibilities. The Finance Business Partnering Team will be fully aware of all savings proposals for

services and work with/challenge service managers/directors to ensure delivery of each Councils MTFs and avoid any surprises. Finance Business Partnering advocates self-service and ensures that appropriate training and support is provided for this to be properly embedded at each of the partner councils.

Pensions & Treasury

- Manages risk and return across the Council’s Pensions Strategy and Treasury Strategy.

Havering’s Budget

The Council produces a 4 year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) that shows the Council’s spending plans for the upcoming year.

By statute, the Council has to set a balanced budget for the following financial year, and set the Council Tax for that year. The budget setting process is reported to Cabinet as it is developed through the summer and autumn, culminating in the budget setting report to Cabinet in February, following which it is fully approved and the council tax is set by Council also in February.

The amount that the council tax can be increased is capped. In the last budget announcement the government announced the amount that the council tax could be increased without holding a referendum would be up to 1.99%.

The Social Care precept is an additional sum that could be raised and must only be spent on delivery of social care. This freedom to increase council tax for Adult Social Care has been announced as 1% for 2022/23.

Havering Council Tax 2022/23	Band D Council Tax £	% Increase/ (Decrease)
General Requirement	1384.66	1.99%
Adult Social Care Precept	190.72	1.00%
Total Havering Precept	1,575.38	2.99%
GLA Precept	395.59	8.78%
Total	1,970.97	4.10%

The budget report that went to the Cabinet in February 2022 can be found here: [Cabinet Meeting 16th February 2022](#)

The Medium Term Financial position is set out in the table below:

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	4 Year Plan
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Corporate Pressures	4.657	8.995	5.192	4.026	22.870
Demographic Pressures	14.322	4.996	3.500	3.500	26.318
Inflationary Pressures	5.346	2.234	2.724	2.724	13.028
Impact of Financial Settlement	-7.227	3.200	0.000	0.000	-4.027
Savings Proposals	-13.028	-11.535	-1.600	-1.600	-27.763
ASC Precept Increase	-1.360	0.000	0.000	0.000	-1.360
1.99% Council Tax increase	-2.710	0.000	0.000	0.000	-2.710
UPDATED POSITION	0.000	7.890	9.816	8.650	26.356

Other Financial Statements

Income and Expenditure (I&E) statement

This summarises what the Council spends on its running costs and represents the revenue costs of the Council.

- What we spend Council funds on.
 - o Service expenditure – the costs of the Children’s, Adults and Public Health, Neighbourhoods, Housing including Homelessness and corporate overheads
 - o Corporate contingency budgets
 - o Capital financing costs that fund prudential borrowing
 - o Levies – including the largest for East London Waste Authority (ELWA)

As a Council we do not directly finance Police, Ambulance and Fire Services nor GPs surgeries.

- Where does our funding and income come from?
 - o Council tax
 - o Business rates
 - o Income from sales and fees and charges
 - o Grants
 - o Investments

The Balance Sheet

This statement shows the assets and liabilities of the council. The balance sheet in local authorities is very similar to other public sector or private sector balance sheets. The balance sheet presents an authority’s financial position, i.e. its net resources at the financial year end. The balance sheet is composed of two main balancing parts: its net assets and its total reserves.

Revenue expenditure

This is shown in the I&E statement and represents the day to day and ongoing running costs of the Council.

Capital expenditure

Capital expenditure is defined as that spend which results in the acquisition, or the construction of, or the addition to the value of the Council’s assets. The Council has an approved capital programme which is summarised in the table below, including the funding sources for the planned spend.

The expenditure includes such items and the schools’ expansion programme, the capital costs of the Council’s investments in the regeneration joint ventures, the

highways capital maintenance programme and capital repairs and maintenance for the Council's assets.

The prudential borrowing incurs borrowing costs for the Council, which are charged into the revenue account. Just like funding a mortgage, the costs reflect an element for principle, called the minimum revenue provision (MRP) and interest on the borrowing.

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adults Services						
Adults - DFG	4.945	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.945
Adults - Other	0.899	1.618	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.517
Adults Services Total	5.844	1.618	0.000	0.000	0.000	7.462
Customer, Communication & Culture						
Leisure - Other	5.535	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	5.535
Leisure - SLM	0.100	0.838	3.724	0.000	0.000	4.662
Libraries	0.039	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.039
Customer, Communication & Culture Total	5.674	0.838	3.724	0.000	0.000	10.236
Transformation	6.199	6.462	3.280	1.980	1.180	19.101
Childrens Services	0.944	0.891	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.835
Environment						
Environment - Highways	25.239	2.970	0.750	0.000	0.000	28.959
Environment - TFL	1.957	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.957
Environment - Parks	0.724	0.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.224
Environment Total	27.921	3.470	0.750	0.000	0.000	32.141
Registration & Bereavement	0.410	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.410
Asset Management						
Corporate Buildings	0.659	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.659
Health & Safety	0.100	0.024	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.124

Schools Conditions Programme	4.744	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.000	4.844
Schools Expansions	0.490	7.500	21.730	0.000	0.000	29.720
Vehicle Replacement	2.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.000
Asset Management Total	7.993	7.624	21.730	0.000	0.000	37.347
ICT Infrastructure	5.075	3.980	1.720	1.650	1.650	14.075
Regeneration	167.993	198.106	23.626	2.656	14.395	406.776
Total GF Capital Expenditure	228.053	222.989	54.830	6.286	17.225	529.384
HRA Capital Expenditure	170.642	180.971	195.315	180.575	176.513	904.017
Total Capital Expenditure	398.695	403.961	250.145	186.861	193.738	1,433.401

Capital receipts are funds received from the sale of the Council's assets. The receipts can only be used to fund capital expenditure, apart from where specific flexibilities are granted by the government. There is currently a flexibility agreed to use capital receipts to fund transformation programmes that generate significant savings to the general fund, which will continue for 2022/23

S106 contributions are receipts from planning developments across the borough. Capital grants are given specifically for capital funding purposes. The council can use revenue funding or reserves to fund capital expenditure. However the pressure on the revenue budget often precludes that option.

The different financial elements of the Council's budget

General Fund

This fund covers most of the Council's costs. The General Fund is the main revenue fund from which the Cost of Services is met. The accumulated credit balance on the general fund is called the General Fund Balance. It is the excess of income over expenditure in the revenue account after adjusting for movements to and from reserves and other non-cash items. This balance is needed as a cushion against unforeseen events and there is a minimum level required for this balance in setting a prudent budget. The General Fund must also underwrite the other council funds.

Housing Revenue Account

The HRA specifically accounts for spending and income relating to the management and maintenance of the council-owned housing stock. By law it must be kept separate from other Council accounts. It is therefore termed a "ring-fenced". The HRA receives no income and incurs no expenditure through the Council Tax.

Dedicated Schools Grant and Schools Funding

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is a ring-fenced grant that is allocated to local authorities to meet their responsibilities for early years' education, the funding of schools and for provision and support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and for pupils requiring alternative provision.

The grant is allocated in four "blocks"

- Schools funding
- High needs funding
- Early years funding
- Central school services funding

Role of the s151 Chief Finance Officer

Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires local authorities to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and appoint a Chief Finance Officer to have responsibility for those arrangements. The Council's designated CFO is the Chief Operating Officer.

The governance arrangements of the Council are established to support the CFO in carrying out their role, which includes amongst other requirements

- Supporting the effective governance of the authority through development of corporate governance arrangements, risk management and reporting framework
- Establish a medium-term business and financial planning process to deliver the authority's strategic objectives, including:
 - o a medium-term financial strategy to ensure sustainable finances
 - o a robust annual budget process that ensures financial balance
 - o a monitoring process that enables this to be delivered.
- Ensure that systems and processes for financial administration, financial control and protection of the authority's resources and assets are designed in conformity with appropriate ethical standards and monitor their continuing effectiveness in practice.
- Publish annual accounts on a timely basis to communicate the authority's activities and achievements, its financial position and performance.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee is a key component of the Council's corporate governance arrangements. The Committee provides a high-level focus on assurance and the organisation's arrangements for governance, specifically by:

- Monitoring the risk management and internal control environment;
- Monitoring the External Audit Service and responding to its findings;
- Supporting the Section 151 Officer in ensuring arrangements for the provision of an adequate and effective internal audit service;
- Monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal audit service and the annual internal audit plan;
- Approving the Annual Statement of Accounts; and,
- Monitoring fraud and corruption arrangements.

The Audit Committee meets four times a year.

Internal Audit and the links with External Audit

The Council faces ever increasing pressures on its resources. In order to assure Management and the Audit Committee that audit resources are being applied efficiently and represent value for money, external and internal audit will, where appropriate, work together. This includes:

- Holding regular meetings involving both external and internal audit management;
- Co-operating, where appropriate, in planning and conducting the respective audit work;
- Promoting, where appropriate, effective joint working within the bounds of the respective roles; and
- Helping the Audit Committee to fulfil its responsibilities for overseeing effective liaison between External and Internal Audit.

Risk

Risk management is a process of identifying, rating, prioritising, controlling, reviewing, and escalating risk at all levels within the organisation with a view to safeguarding the Council from potential threats and exploiting opportunities. In order to ensure that risks are identified and managed thoroughly and to a high standard, the corporate risk management team has developed a risk management framework, which should be used throughout the Council.

The risk management framework outlines:

- Where and how a formal approach to risk management should be undertaken,
- A range of tools and guidance that are aimed at helping officers manage risks and develop service continuity plans, and
- Various training courses that officers can attend to effectively manage risks.

The risk management framework is derived from the risk management policy and strategy, which explains the Council's long term risk management objectives and how they will be achieved. The Audit Committee is provided with regular updates on the risk management strategy and the corporate risk register, including any significant new risks identified.

Insurance

The Insurance Service is a fundamental component in Havering Council's aim to practise sound financial management and manage risk. Insurance treats risks by protecting assets, identifying potential legal liabilities and minimising interruptions to services where possible and appropriate. By fair and prudent management of any claims against the Council and a proactive programme of loss control activity, the cost of unexpected losses can be controlled.

The main activities of the insurance service are:

- Risk financing decisions (self-funding and insurance cover);
- Procurement of insurance;
- Maintenance of insurance portfolio;
- Claims handling; and,
- Loss control programme.

Treasury Management and Capital Strategy

The objectives of the Authority's treasury management function are to manage effectively the Authority's investments, borrowing and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions. It also includes the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.

'Investments' in the definition above covers all the financial assets of the organisation, as well as other non-financial assets which the organisation holds primarily for financial returns, such as investment property portfolios. All investments require an appropriate investment management and risk management framework

The Authority is subject to the Local Government Act 2003, and the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 which require the Authority to have regard to the Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). The Capital Strategy forms a key part of the Authority's overall Corporate Planning Framework. It provides a mechanism by which the Authority's capital investment and financing decisions can be aligned over a medium term (five year) planning horizon.

The Capital Strategy would set out the framework for all aspects of the Authority's capital and investment expenditure; including planning, outcomes, prioritisation, management, funding and repayment. The Strategy has direct links to the other Management Plans of the Authority such as the Asset Management Plan, and forms a key part of the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

The Prudential Code, Borrowing and Investments

The Authority determines its own programme for capital investment in non-current assets that are central to the delivery of quality local public services. The Prudential Code is a professional code of practice that supports the Authority in taking these decisions. The Authority is required by regulation to have regard to the Prudential Code when carrying out its duties in England and Wales under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003.

The framework established by the Prudential Code supports local strategic planning, local asset management planning and proper option appraisal. The Prudential Code ensures that within a clear framework the capital expenditure plans of local authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable, and that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice and in full understanding of the risks involved and how these risks will be managed to levels that are acceptable to the Authority.

Pension Fund

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is a statutory defined benefit, funded public service pension scheme; the schemes benefits and terms are set nationally and fixed by statute. The Havering Pension Fund (the Fund) provides benefits to all those who work in providing local authority functions except teachers – who have separate pension arrangements. The fund is financed by contributions from employees, employers and from profit, interest and dividends from investments. There is an impact on the cost of Council services through the cost of employer contributions.

The Council is responsible for the proper administration of the Fund under the LGPS Regulations.

Day to day management of the Fund is delegated to the authority's Section 151 officer and delivered via the Finance shared service arrangement between Havering and Newham. Since November 2017, the Local Pensions Partnership Administration (LPPA) has delivered Administration of the Pension Scheme. The Local Pension Board also assists the scheme to ensure compliance with all LGPS regulations.

The Investment strategy and performance monitoring of the Fund is a matter for the Pensions Committee.

The Fund currently holds investments to the value of c£920m investing in a diverse number of different assets including shares, bonds, infrastructure, private debt and property units. The Fund had adopted an Investment Strategy of which its primary investment objective is to ensure that the assets are invested to secure the benefits of the Fund's members.

London Collective Investment Vehicle (LCIV)

This vehicle was established in 2015 to allow London Local Government Pensions Schemes to pool investments. This is in line with Central Government's vision to reduce investment costs but maintain performance levels and it has been a mandatory requirement to pool assets since 2016. To date the Havering Pension Fund has c65% of assets under management with the LCIV and will continue to assess the products

available on the LCIV platform for their suitability to meet the fund's investment strategy objectives.

Section 3 – Codes of Conduct

As part of the Council's constitution, there are a number of protocols and codes essential to Members.

[Link to: Members' Code of Conduct](#)

Members of the Council have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with Council staff and partner organisations. The authority has a Code of Conduct which outlines principles of conduct in public office. Full details can be found in Part 5 of the Constitution or on the website.

[Link to: Officers' Code of Conduct and the Officer/Member Protocol](#)

There is a distinct role for Members in the setting of policy direction and that of staff who manage Council services. This protocol helps to define these relations and provide guidance on confidentiality, familiarity, criticism, personal and pecuniary interests, party political purposes and access to information

This protocol is not prescriptive and if you are unsure about any matter, then you should consult the Monitoring Officer, Deputy Director of Legal and Governance Alison McKane for appropriate advice and assistance. Full details can be found in Part 5 of the Constitution or on the website, which also gives guidance on distinguishing political criticism from personal or service criticism.

[Expenses, Hospitality, Gifts and Declarations of Interest](#)

All expenses should be claimed through your secure account within oneSource. If you require assistance, your Member Support officer will offer you guidance.

Members must act in an ethical manner at all times. Conduct needs to be of the highest standards in order to ensure that public confidence is maintained. Any offer of hospitality, favours or gifts should be approached with caution in order to avoid any impression of impropriety. Except for minor promotional gifts such as pens, pencils, calendars, Members should refuse all offers. Hospitality or gifts accepted above a value of £25, must be declared within a period of 28 days and you should contact the Monitoring Officer for the relevant form. Full details may be found in Part 5 of the Constitution or on the website. You can access the 'Gifts and Hospitality' form [here](#).

It is the responsibility of all Members to declare any possible conflicts of interest. You must make a declaration in the fullest terms and appropriate declarations should be made at all formal meetings if a decision is being taken on a matter which might impact on your interests. Failure to declare an interest could lead to a breach in the Code of Conduct.

Corporate Parenting

Children who are "looked after" are in the care of the Council, and Councillors therefore have a very important responsibility to act as corporate parents.

The Corporate Parenting Panel meets privately, given the confidential nature of the issues considered and undertakes the duties of the Council with respect to children in care. The Panel oversees all services and activity for looked after children to ensure that they are safe, able to achieve and be happy.

Equalities and Diversity

The Council is resolute in its commitment of zero tolerance to racism and discrimination of any kind.

In 2021, the Council commissioned an independent review of its Race, Equality, Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion, (READI), policies and procedures, that underpin this. This was a “holding the mirror up”, terms of reference, to ensure we are not complacent in our commitment and our statutory responsibilities under and arising from the Equalities Act 2010 and Public Sector Equalities Duties (PSED). Both Members and Officers are subject to the requirements of the Act and PSED. There are mandatory on-line training sessions that both are expected to undertake, to ensure they are aware and prepared for this

The general duty says public bodies must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- Foster good relations between different groups

The Council has the duty to act and is committed to all the above in the provision and procurement of its services. The specific duties are statutory regulations designed to help public bodies meet the general duty. The regulations require public bodies to:

- Publish equality information relating both to their workforce and to the services they provide
- Publish equality objectives informed by the evidence and data they publish.

Currently, there are two Corporate Equality Policies covering [Equality in Employment](#) and [Equality in Service Provision](#), these are being revised as part of the Council's READI Programme and will be covered at future Member Briefing and Training sessions.

Privacy, Data Protection and Freedom of Information

As a member of the Council you may have access to information that has been designated as confidential or exempt which should never be divulged to the public or the press. Information is designated as confidential if it is given to the Council by a Government department on terms forbidding its public disclosure or if it is subject to a court order preventing disclosure.

Information can be designated as exempt for a number of reasons that are outlined in [Part 4 of The Council Constitution](#).

The Council holds personal information about its customers, clients and residents. The information that the Council holds is protected under the Data Protection Act 2018. As a Councillor you must be aware of and act within the requirements of the Act when receiving and using personal information that may be supplied by residents.

Examples of the personal information held by the Council include Electoral Registration; registers for Council Tax, Business Rates, Births Deaths and Marriages; social services information and housing files.

Residents have many rights relating to personal information that the Council holds. Residents may ask what information the Council holds about them, to be given a copy of the information and to be given details about the purposes for which the Council and/or other parties may use the information amongst other things. Further information about the Council's obligations relating to the Data Protection Act are available at: <http://www.havering.gov.uk/Pages/Services/Data-Protection.aspx>

Members of the public are also able to request information from the Council via the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which gives anyone the right to know about the work, activities, and decisions of all public bodies in the UK.

The Council will respond to the request within 20 days of the request receipt and confirm whether the information being requested is held, provide advice & assistance and advise residents to their right of appeal.

Advice on how residents may make a Freedom of Information request is available at:
<https://www.havering.gov.uk/Pages/ServiceChild/Making-and-FOI-request.aspx>