

Notice of Meeting of the

ASSEMBLY

**to be held on Wednesday, 25 January 2023
commencing at 7:00 pm in the
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Barking**



To all Members of the Council of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Date of publication: 17th January 2023

Fiona Taylor
Acting Chief Executive

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Please note that this meeting will be webcast via the Council's website. Members of the public wishing to attend the meeting in person can sit in the public gallery on the second floor of the Town Hall, which is not covered by the webcast cameras. To view the webcast online, click [here](#) and select the relevant meeting (the weblink will be available at least 24-hours before the meeting).

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declaration of Members' Interests

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Members are asked to declare any interest they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting.

3. Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2022 (Pages 5 - 10)

4. Death of Rita Giles MBE and Freewoman of the Borough (Pages 11 - 12)

5. Death of Councillor Olawale Martins (Pages 13 - 14)

6. Leader's Statement

The Leader will present his statement.

7. Appointments

The Labour Group Secretary will announce any nominations to fill vacant positions on Council committees or other bodies.

8. BAD Youth Forum Annual Report 2022 (Pages 15 - 42)

9. Senior Leadership Appointment - Strategic Director, My Place (to follow)

10. Local Safeguarding Adults' Board Annual Report 2021/22 (Pages 43 - 87)

11. Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24 (Pages 89 - 154)

12. Motions

13. Questions With Notice

14. Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent

15. To consider whether it would be appropriate to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting due to the nature of the business to be transacted.

Private Business

The public and press have a legal right to attend Council meetings such as the Assembly, except where business is confidential or certain other sensitive information is to be discussed. The list below shows why items are in the private part of the agenda, with reference to the relevant legislation (the relevant paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended). ***There are no such items at the time of preparing this agenda.***

- 16. Any confidential or exempt items which the Chair decides are urgent**

Our Vision for Barking and Dagenham

ONE BOROUGH; ONE COMMUNITY; NO-ONE LEFT BEHIND

Our Priorities

Participation and Engagement

- To collaboratively build the foundations, platforms and networks that enable greater participation by:
 - Building capacity in and with the social sector to improve cross-sector collaboration
 - Developing opportunities to meaningfully participate across the Borough to improve individual agency and social networks
 - Facilitating democratic participation to create a more engaged, trusted and responsive democracy
- To design relational practices into the Council's activity and to focus that activity on the root causes of poverty and deprivation by:
 - Embedding our participatory principles across the Council's activity
 - Focusing our participatory activity on some of the root causes of poverty

Prevention, Independence and Resilience

- Working together with partners to deliver improved outcomes for children, families and adults
- Providing safe, innovative, strength-based and sustainable practice in all preventative and statutory services
- Every child gets the best start in life
- All children can attend and achieve in inclusive, good quality local schools
- More young people are supported to achieve success in adulthood through higher, further education and access to employment
- More children and young people in care find permanent, safe and stable homes
- All care leavers can access a good, enhanced local offer that meets their health, education, housing and employment needs
- Young people and vulnerable adults are safeguarded in the context of their families, peers, schools and communities

- Our children, young people, and their communities' benefit from a whole systems approach to tackling the impact of knife crime
- Zero tolerance to domestic abuse drives local action that tackles underlying causes, challenges perpetrators and empowers survivors
- All residents with a disability can access from birth, transition to, and in adulthood support that is seamless, personalised and enables them to thrive and contribute to their communities. Families with children who have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) can access a good local offer in their communities that enables them independence and to live their lives to the full
- Children, young people and adults can better access social, emotional and mental wellbeing support - including loneliness reduction - in their communities
- All vulnerable adults are supported to access good quality, sustainable care that enables safety, independence, choice and control
- All vulnerable older people can access timely, purposeful integrated care in their communities that helps keep them safe and independent for longer, and in their own homes
- Effective use of public health interventions to reduce health inequalities

Inclusive Growth

- Homes: For local people and other working Londoners
- Jobs: A thriving and inclusive local economy
- Places: Aspirational and resilient places
- Environment: Becoming the green capital of the capital

Well Run Organisation

- Delivers value for money for the taxpayer
- Employs capable and values-driven staff, demonstrating excellent people management
- Enables democratic participation, works relationally and is transparent
- Puts the customer at the heart of what it does
- Is equipped and has the capability to deliver its vision

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MINUTES OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 23 November 2022
(7:00 - 8:35 pm)

PRESENT

Cllr Irma Freeborn (Chair)
Cllr Tony Ramsay (Deputy Chair)

Cllr Andrew Achilleos	Cllr Dorothy Akwaboah	Cllr Saima Ashraf
Cllr Princess Bright	Cllr Sade Bright	Cllr Josie Channer
Cllr Faruk Choudhury	Cllr Nashitha Choudhury	Cllr Muhib Chowdhury
Cllr Alison Cormack	Cllr John Dulwich	Cllr Syed Ghani
Cllr Rocky Gill	Cllr Kashif Haroon	Cllr Manzoor Hussain
Cllr Jane Jones	Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe	Cllr Mohammed Khan
Cllr Donna Lumsden	Cllr Giasuddin Miah	Cllr Margaret Mullane
Cllr Adegboyega Oluwole	Cllr Glenda Paddle	Cllr Simon Perry
Cllr Michel Pongo	Cllr Moin Quadri	Cllr Regina Rahman
Cllr Hardial Singh Rai	Cllr Chris Rice	Cllr Lynda Rice
Cllr Ingrid Robinson	Cllr Paul Robinson	Cllr Darren Rodwell
Cllr Muhammad Saleem	Cllr Muazzam Sandhu	Cllr Faraaz Shaukat
Cllr Jack Shaw	Cllr Dominic Twomey	Cllr Maureen Worby
Cllr Mukhtar Yusuf	Cllr Sabbir Zamee	

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Edna Fergus	Cllr Cameron Geddes	Cllr Victoria Hornby
Cllr Olawale Martins	Cllr Fatuma Nalule	Cllr Emily Rodwell
Cllr Lee Waker	Cllr Phil Waker	

33. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

34. Minutes (28 September 2022)

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2022 were confirmed as correct.

35. Minutes of Sub-Committees - JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Panel (8 November 2022)

The Assembly received and noted the minutes of the JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Panel held on 8 November 2022.

36. Leader's Statement

The Leader of the Council presented a verbal statement updating the Assembly on a range of matters since the last meeting including:

Rita Giles MBE: The Leader advised Members of the sad news that Rita Giles, MBE and Freewoman of the Borough had passed away at the weekend. He paid tribute to her tireless community work across the Borough, particularly in the Dagenham Village. Members stood for a minute's silence as a mark of respect and it was noted that a full report would be presented at the next meeting, at which point Members would have the opportunity to present personal tributes.

Government's Mismanagement of the Economy: The Leader focussed on the Government's mismanagement of the economy which had led to the current cost-of-living crisis. He highlighted the billions wasted by the Government during Covid, the gamble of the mini-budget and the Autumn Budget Statement announcement about tax rises and public sector cuts, all of which had implications for local authorities, particularly in relation to funding additional adult social care costs, estimated in this Borough to be of the order of £10m.

The Leader commented that despite those challenges, Barking and Dagenham had led in a number of areas and he referred to a model for community safety adopted by the Government and Opportunity for London, a major campaign promoting long-term, sustainable investment into London Boroughs and communities, which the Leader was also involved in through his role on London Councils. He also referenced the fact that despite being the most deprived Borough in the country, Barking and Dagenham provided more support to residents in need when compared to most other local authorities, including the neighbouring Borough of Havering. He also highlighted a number of key projects and initiatives led by the Borough which would benefit local residents including the creation of many new jobs as a result of the relocation of the three historical London Markets to the Borough, the construction of more than 1,600 new affordable homes below market rent at Dagenham Green together with more affordable units in future phases of development at Beam Park on and around the former Ford Motor Company site. It was also noted that those new developments would recognise the heritage of the Borough and the legacy of the Ford's women strikers through the naming of roads and buildings.

Local Authority Upstander Award: The Leader congratulated Councillor Ashraf, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Leadership and Engagement, on receiving a Local Authority Upstander Award for promoting cohesion and tackling hate crime in the Borough. Members gave her a round of applause.

37. Appointments

The Labour Group Secretary announced that Councillor Mullane had been appointed to the vacancy on the Audit and Standards Committee.

38. Babies, Children, Young People and Families (0-25) Partnership - Best Chance Strategy

The Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Disabilities presented a report outlining a 3-year Strategy for babies, children and young families entitled the Best Chance 0-25 Partnership Strategy which had been developed by the Council and its partners with the aim of giving young people every opportunity to live their best lives and reach their full potential. This against the backdrop of living in the most

deprived borough in London, exacerbated by a general lack of investment, widening inequalities following Covid and now the cost-of-living crisis.

As part of the process key stakeholders were spoken to which allowed for the Partnership to describe its collective strengths, address key challenges, identify opportunities, and capture quick wins along the way. This collective vision led to the Partnership agreeing a set of strategic outcomes of 'We want our babies, children and young people to:

- get the best start, be healthy, be happy and achieve;
- thrive in inclusive schools and settings, in inclusive communities;
- be safe and secure, free from neglect, harm and exploitation; and
- grow up to be successful young adults.

The presentation set out five Partnership pledges which the Cabinet Member outlined explaining the meaning of each.

A governance structure had also been drawn up to allow the Partnership to work together as a system, streamlining governance arrangements and holding partners to account. This would be coordinated by the 'Best Chance 0-25 Partnership' a newly created group reporting to the Borough Partnership, and which would own the strategic vision for babies, children and young people in the borough, shaping action plans to deliver the strategy and monitor progress against the outcomes framework.

The Cabinet Member set out a summary of the next steps and concluded that the strategy represented a statement of intent and a step forward in a journey to make Barking & Dagenham a great place to grow up. She concluded the presentation that it was the Council's collective mission to realise the brightest future for our babies, children and young people, and to give them the best chance in life.

In response to the presentation Members welcomed the report, its ambitions and collaborative and holistic approach to doing the best for our young people. A point was raised about partnership resources and funding to which the Cabinet Member responded that the approach was developed on the basis of all partners working together, understanding each other's plans around resources and ensuring any funding gaps are filled, rather than leaving it to the Council to address and fund. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration added that the strategy represented a new way of working which did not necessarily mean the need for more resources and funding.

Accordingly, the Assembly **resolved** to endorse the Barking & Dagenham Best Chance Strategy 2022-25 as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, including the proposed governance arrangements.

39. Treasury Management 2022/23 Mid-Year Review

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core Services presented a report on the Treasury Management 2022/23 Mid-Year Review.

The review report provided details of the mid-year position for treasury activities and highlighted compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by the

Assembly on 3 March 2022 as part of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2022/23.

The Cabinet Member commented that the focus of the report was on the challenging economic situation for the Borough with increasing inflationary pressures and higher borrowing costs, creating the current cost-of-living crisis which was influenced by not only global factors but also because of the mismanagement of the economy by the government driven by the disastrous mini budget. He referenced the effects this had on the Borough's housing programme, which to date had delivered the most affordable housing provision in London, but where many schemes were now becoming unviable due in part to the steep rise in construction costs.

The report set out the Council's current investment arrangements and rates of return which remained in the top quartile when compared to its peer group, as well as details of current and future borrowing arrangements, the reduction in cash balances which was due in part to the significant cash receipts secured on a number of commercial sites, the strategy of which supported the objective of maintaining Council services for the benefit of the residents.

The Assembly therefore **resolved** to note:

- (i) The Treasury Management Strategy Statement Mid-Year Review 2022/23,
- (ii) The economic update covering the increase in inflation and the potential for an increase in the Bank of England Base Rate,
- (iii) That the value of the treasury investments and cash as at 30 September 2022 totalled £109.2m, and that the Treasury Investment Strategy outperformed its peer group, with a return of 1.27% against an average of 0.95% for London Local Authorities (as at 30 June 2022),
- (iv) That the value of the commercial and residential loans lent by the Council as at 31 March 2021 totalled £168.1m at an average rate of 3.3%,
- (v) That the total borrowing position as at 30 September 2022 totalled £1,086b with £295.9m relating to the Housing Revenue Account and £791.1m to the General Fund,
- (vi) That interest payable was forecast to be £15.8m against a budget of £15.7m,
- (vii) That interest receivable was forecast to be £7.2m against a budget of £7.5m, representing a deficit of £0.3m,
- (viii) That capitalised interest was forecast to be £9.0m,
- (ix) That Investment and Acquisition Strategy (IAS) income was forecast to be £6.7m against a budget of £7.0m, representing a deficit of £0.3m,
- (x) That the IAS surplus, held in a reserve, was currently £29.3m and was forecast to increase to £37.6m by the end of the year, of which £11.0m was

ringfenced for lease and leaseback properties,

- (xi) The post Gateway 4 cashflows, including the impact of Gascoigne East 3B and the pressures on the current pipeline schemes, as outlined in paragraph 9.2 of the report, and
- (xii) That in the first half of the 2021/22 financial year the Council complied with all 2021/22 treasury management indicators.

40. Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Health Scrutiny Committee Annual Reports 2021/22

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) in 2021/22 presented an Annual Report highlighting the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in that period.

Given the number of new Members to the Council the former Chair opened her presentation with a brief overview about the structure and function of the Committee explaining the purpose of scrutiny and its importance to the operation of the Council by helping to improve services for the benefit of the local community. She explained that OSC had a wide remit and was able to look into internal Council services, as well as those of our external partners such as the Police, BDSIP and Be First, holding decision makers to account, including the Cabinet, whilst reviewing policy and in so doing, making recommendations for improvement.

She advised that the year had again begun by meeting with Cabinet Members, Directors and officers to learn more about their thoughts around key issues, which also helped to guide the Committee in developing a meaningful work programme. She recognised the support given by Cabinet Members who were committed to the scrutiny process and had always attended OSC meetings wherever possible, listening to the Committee's feedback and responding to any questions.

OSC covered a wide range of items during 2021/22, of which the former Chair highlighted a few of the achievements including the impact of change to the Reside affordability threshold in line with the Housing Allocations Policy, a review of Targeted Early Help services, and acting as a forum for Borough representatives to talk to the Police on response times and community engagement, and specifically greater engagement with the LGBTQ+ community.

Throughout the year the Committee also provided further suggestions for consideration, such as generating more income by the Council utilising space on the sides of waste trucks for local business and private advertising and officers approaching ward councillors to ask whether they would be willing to use part of their allocated ward budget for pollution-busting plants close to school buildings, to reduce pupils' exposure to carbon emissions.

Councillor Glenda Paddle took over the role of Chair at the beginning of this municipal year and the Committee was set for another busy year with a wide-ranging work programme on key topics such as the review of the first Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) programme and engagement on the second phase,

Employment Support and the Housing Offer for Vulnerable Groups.

In conclusion the former Chair thanked Masuma Ahmed, Claudia Wakefield, Fiona Taylor and Alison Stuart for their support to her and the Committee.

The Leader commended the work of both the former and current Chair, who he meets with monthly. He recognised the value of the overview and scrutiny process in the checks and balances it provided to ensure open and transparent decision making through collective leadership.

The Chair of the Health Scrutiny Committee (HSC) then presented an annual report highlighting the work of the Committee in 2021/22, similarly explaining the role and function of the Committee for the benefit of new Members.

Over the last year it was no surprise that a key topic of the work programme continued to be the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, due to the profound impact that it was having on health services since its onset. To that end the Chair expressed the Committee's continued thanks to all frontline staff and partners, for their dedication in supporting residents affected by Covid-19, as well as to key colleagues for their ongoing support in the scrutiny response.

The Committee had addressed a broad range of topics this year, from smoking cessation through to engagement on the new St George's Hospital Development, which would be able to be used by Barking and Dagenham residents in the future. Despite a busy work programme, the Committee also addressed other areas of key importance such as NELFT's Care Quality Commission Inspection.

Moving forward HSC would continue to oversee the Council's and health partners' response to Covid-19 as well as fulfilling a demanding and broad work programme for 2021/22, which amongst other things included exploring key topics such as how to manage the waiting lists for urgent and non-urgent health conditions, and priorities for the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

He paid thanks to Masuma Ahmed, Yusuf Olow, Claudia Wakefield and Matthew Cole for their support to himself and the Committee as well as to Councillor Worby as the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration and partners, for their continued support, honesty and willingness to take on board the Committee's feedback.

The Assembly **resolved** to note both the Overview and Scrutiny and Health Scrutiny Committee Annual Reports 2021/22 set out in Appendix A and B to the report respectively.

41. Motions

There were none.

42. Questions With Notice

There were none.

ASSEMBLY**25 January 2023**

Title: Death of Rita Giles MBE and Freewoman of the Borough	
Report of the Acting Chief Executive	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: None	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Alan Dawson, Head of Governance & Electoral Services	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 2348 E-mail: alan.dawson@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Alison Stuart, Chief Legal Officer	
Accountable Strategic Leadership Director: Fiona Taylor, Acting Chief Executive	
<p>Summary</p> <p>As was verbally reported at the last meeting of the Assembly, Rita Giles MBE sadly passed away on Friday 18 November aged 87.</p> <p>Rita moved to Dagenham at the age of five and was an active member of the scouting movement in the Borough for over 40 years, starting as a member of the 7th Dagenham Scouts at the age of 14 and rising to the position of secretary of Dagenham Scouts. Rita was also a member of the Barking & Dagenham Youth Organisation and secretary of the Witten Twinning Committee.</p> <p>In 1982, Rita was invited to become a Justice of the Peace, a position she held for over 20 years until her retirement in 2005 aged 70. Many at the Council also remember Rita's tireless commitment to the Ibscott Close Tenants' and Residents' Association and the wider Community Housing Partnership and Dagenham Housing Forum.</p> <p>Rita was conferred the title of Honorary Freewoman of the Borough by the Council in February 2011 in recognition of her outstanding voluntary service to the local community. Those efforts were also recognised by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II with the award of an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2012.</p> <p>Rita's funeral took place on Tuesday 13 December at South Essex Crematorium. The funeral cortege passed in front of the former Council offices at the Civic Centre, Dagenham, where the Mayor, Councillor Faruk Choudhury, the Leader, Councillor Darren Rodwell, and other Members and officers had gathered to pay their respects and present flowers. The Borough flag at the Town Hall, Barking was flown at half-mast throughout the day.</p>	
Recommendation(s)	
The Assembly is asked to note the report.	

ASSEMBLY

25 January 2023

Title: Death of Councillor Olawale Martins	
Report of the Acting Chief Executive	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: None	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Alan Dawson, Head of Governance & Electoral Services	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 2348 E-mail: alan.dawson@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Alison Stuart, Chief Legal Officer	
Accountable Strategic Leadership Director: Fiona Taylor, Acting Chief Executive	
<p>Summary</p> <p>The Assembly is asked to note with deep regret that serving Councillor, Mr Olawale Olubunmi Idowu Martins, passed away following a period of illness on Monday 28 November 2022, aged 63.</p> <p>Councillor Martins was first elected to the Council in 2018 to represent Heath Ward and was re-elected in May 2022. He served on a number of Council committees throughout his time on the Council and was the Deputy Chair of the Pensions Committee at the time of his passing.</p> <p>Councillor Ingrid Robinson, who was also newly-elected to represent Heath ward in 2018, was a close friend and colleague and has shared this message:</p> <p>“Councillor Martins thoroughly enjoyed his role as a public servant and genuinely cared for the community he served. He was a big personality, filling every room with his bubbly energy, laughter and big smile. As well as being a dedicated Socialist and family man, Councillor Martins was a ‘people’s champion’. His selflessness and passion for helping people impacted many lives and is testament to the man that he was. Outside of his Council activities, Councillor Martins was a Senior Apostle within his Church and an active member of the congregation. The high regard that he was held in was clearly evident at the service held in his memory and at his funeral.”</p> <p>Councillor Martins’ funeral took place on Thursday 5 January at Forest Park Cemetery. The funeral cortege passed in front of the Town Hall, Barking, where the Mayor, Councillor Faruk Choudhury, the Leader, Councillor Darren Rodwell, and other Members and officers had gathered to pay their respects and present flowers. The Leader also read aloud “The Borough’s Farewell”. The Borough flag at the Town Hall was flown at half-mast throughout the day.</p>	

Councillor Martins leaves behind his wife, Omowunmi, daughters Omolara and Ololade, son Olukayode, and grandson Nathaniel.

Recommendation(s)

The Assembly is asked to mark the passing of Councillor Martins with a minute's silence in his memory.

ASSEMBLY

25 January 2023

Title: BAD Youth Forum Annual Report 2022	
Report of the Jane Hargreaves, Commissioning Director, Education	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: None	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Sally Allen-Clarke, Senior Youth Worker	Contact Details: Tel: 07971 111 532 E-mail: sally.allen-clarke@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Jane Hargreaves, Commissioning Director, Education	
Accountable Strategic Leadership Director: Elaine Allegretti, Director for People and Resilience	
<p>Summary</p> <p>This report highlights the achievements and outcomes of the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum in 2022. Outlining the work of each of the sub-groups, their aims and the impact of the work completed.</p> <p>At the beginning of 2022, we welcomed 17 new members to the Forum from schools across the borough. We had been unable to visit schools to speak to students and encourage them to nominate themselves at the end of 2021, so we had to rely solely on schools to promote the opportunity to join the Forum. As in previous years, our most committed members were invited to remain Forum members for another year, meaning we had a total of 36 members in 2022.</p> <p>The Forum split into 2 sub-groups in 2022, instead of the usual 3 sub-groups. The 2 groups were the Community Action sub-group and the Young Mayor sub-group. Due to lower than usual membership, we decided to continue with the Young Inspectors programme but offer this as an 'add-on' opportunity to members. All young people were offered the opportunity to participate in inspections and did so independently with support from youth workers in sub-group sessions to write reports.</p> <p>The Community Action sub-group were tasked with addressing topical issues affecting young people. In 2022 they opted to focus on environmental issues, health (which included vaping and obesity) and tackling child exploitation. During weekly sessions the young people worked with a range of partners to develop their knowledge.</p> <p>The Young Mayor sub-group conducted a survey amongst young people to decide the charity to support in 2022. Following this process young people worked hard to raise awareness of the charity and raise money, this was done through a range of events throughout the year and in collaboration with the Young Mayor's school, Jo Richardson Community School.</p>	

Please see full report for further information about the work of both sub-groups.
<p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>The Assembly is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note the work and achievements of the BAD Youth Forum in 2022 (ii) Provide direction to the Forum to ensure that it continues to inform and shape Council policy and delivery going forward.
<p>Reason(s)</p> <p>The BAD Youth Forum was created in 2001 to give young people a formal and recognised platform to express their views and make a positive impact in their community. It serves as the borough's Youth Parliament.</p> <p>The Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum support the Council's vision to empower people and to encourage citizenship and participation, specifically encouraging civic pride and social responsibility. The Forum supports young people to be pro-active, empathetic, resilient residents with a good skill set transferrable to everyday life. Through consultation and campaign work, young people regularly meet with local decision makers. By doing this young people ensure policies and strategies that most affect the lives of young people are reflective of their needs. Young people gain an understanding and appreciation for participation, recognising they have the right to express their views and be listened to, and that their voices count.</p>

5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Kofi Adu - Finance Manager

5.1 BAD Youth Forum is managed and funded by the council's Integrated Youth Service from cost centre F17400, the service is funded by a combination of general fund and external funding from Public Health. The service is not reporting any adverse budget variance for this financial year and the forecast for next year is an estimated break even position.

6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Daniel Longe, Principal Solicitor, Children Adult and Education

6.1 Section 1 to 6 of the Localism Act 2011 provides the local authority with a wide range of powers which includes the power to embark on projects for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area.

6.2 The Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum plays a very important role in giving young people a platform and voice to participate and engage in very important issues that affect young people in the borough. This has had an overwhelmingly

positive impact on all young people involved. It is therefore an important project that contributes to the overall benefit of the council.

- 6.3 The report commends the Assembly to note the achievements made by the Youth Forum and invites comments on future direction of the Youth Forum.

7. Other Implications

7.1 Corporate Policy and Equality Impact –

7.1.1 The Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum support the Council's vision to empower people and to encourage citizenship and participation, specifically encouraging civic pride and social responsibility. The Forum supports young people to be pro-active, empathetic, resilient residents with a good skill set transferrable to everyday life. Through consultation and campaign work, young people regularly meet with local decision makers. By doing this young people ensure policies and strategies that most affect the lives of young people are reflective of their needs. Young people gain an understanding and appreciation for participation, recognising they have the right to express their views and be listened to, and that their voices count.

7.1.2 Young people have seen change as a result of their participation, and where this was not possible, they understand why. This work aims to ensure that as young people grow into adulthood, they are active citizens who contribute to the local community. Please refer to full report, in particular the Additional Forum events section which details the range of consultations the Forum has been involved in and the impact of their involvement.

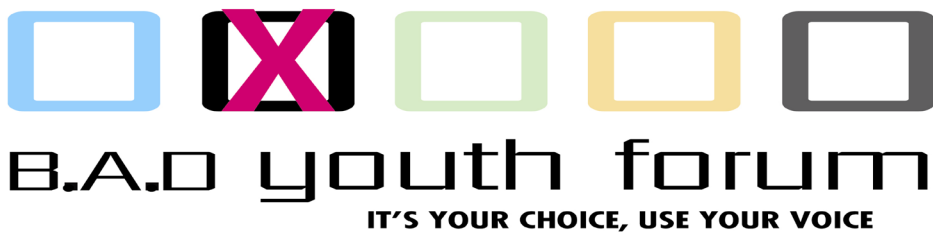
Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices:

Appendix 1: BAD Youth Forum Annual Report 2022

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Overview 2022



Introduction and background

The BAD Youth Forum was created in 2001 to give young people a formal and recognised platform to express their views and make a positive impact in their community.

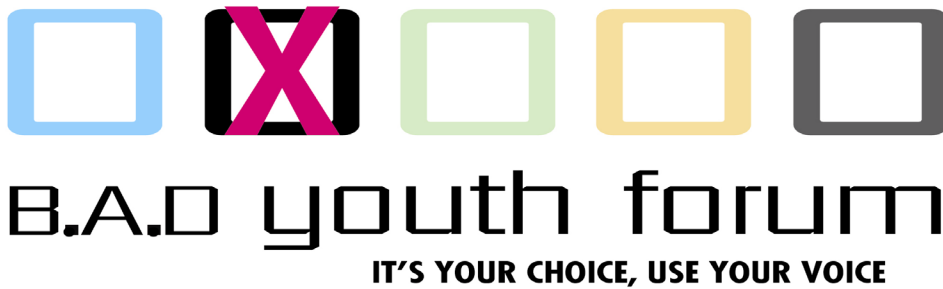
In 2022, nominations were captured online as we were still unable to visit schools. The election process also took place online with rising numbers of Covid at the beginning of the year. The elections were hosted on One Borough Voice with 17 new members joining the Forum. Our existing active members began a new term, keen to continue participating in Forum activities. We held our first full forum online in February 2022 and then ran our team building sessions with individual sub-groups, rather than the whole Forum together. This approach worked well, and young people enjoyed getting to know each other.



During the meeting young people had the opportunity to talk about issues affecting them and their peers the most. Some of the issues raised were racism, lack of diversity in the curriculum, litter in parks, knife crime, teenage pregnancy, domestic abuse, mental health, children and young people vaping and eating disorders. These ideas were taken forward into the Community Action sub-group for them to discuss further and action.

An additional full forum session was held to elect a Chair, Deputy Chair and Young Mayor- *see Young Mayor section.*

Community Action Sub-group achievements 2022



Introduction and background

This group met weekly and focussed on topics that affect young people the most. They aim to work on projects and campaigns that target the biggest issues for young people in the borough. At the beginning of the Forum year, members of this sub-group spoke with their peers across the borough to ask for their views. This process helps Forum members to ensure their work is reflective of the borough's youth population views, not just their own. Young people expressed concerns about health issues for young people, post-pandemic issues (mostly related to mental health), education catch-up and crime and safety.

Having considered their own list of priority areas, information from other young people in the borough and the work that was completed in the previous Forum year, the group decided to focus on:

- **Litter pick**- the group participated in a litter pick in Abbey Green as part of the Council's Cleaner, Greener Barking and Dagenham campaign.
- **Health**- specifically vaping. The group felt there was too much tolerance for children and young people vaping around the borough, including close to schools.
- **Trading standards test purchasing**- as part of their work around vaping, the group working in partnership with Trading Standards to carry out test purchases of age restricted products.
- **Obesity**- participated in a discussion regarding the National Child Measurement Programme and presented our feedback to Primary Head Teachers and Senior Health Leads at a conference.

Other opportunities were offered to the group throughout the year which added to their planned list of work.

Litter pick



As part of the borough's cleaner, greener campaign the Community Action sub-group participated in a litter pick in April 2022. The group were keen to be involved and do their part to smarten up the borough. The group met at Abbey Green and worked for 90 minutes collecting several bags of rubbish. They were pleased with their efforts!

Health

The group were feeling increasingly concerned about the number of young people vaping in the borough. Sub-group members had witnessed other young people vaping on buses and on school premises without being challenged. The group were interested to find out about the potential harm of vaping and what schools are doing to tackle the issue. To start with, the group invited Jenny Houlihan (Relationship Manager, Community Solutions, and former Smoking Cessation Lead) to a session to educate them about the dangers of smoking and specifically vaping. The group learnt that whilst vaping is believed to be significantly less damaging to your health than smoking, it is still too early for experts to know what the long term effects of vaping will be.

Following this workshop, the group wrote a letter to all secondary schools in the borough informing them the Youth Forum are concerned about the rapid increase in vaping and asking what each school are doing to tackle the issue. They received one response from All Saints School who also share the Forum's concerns. They have been delivering lessons about the potential dangers of vaping. Sadly, all other schools did not to respond.

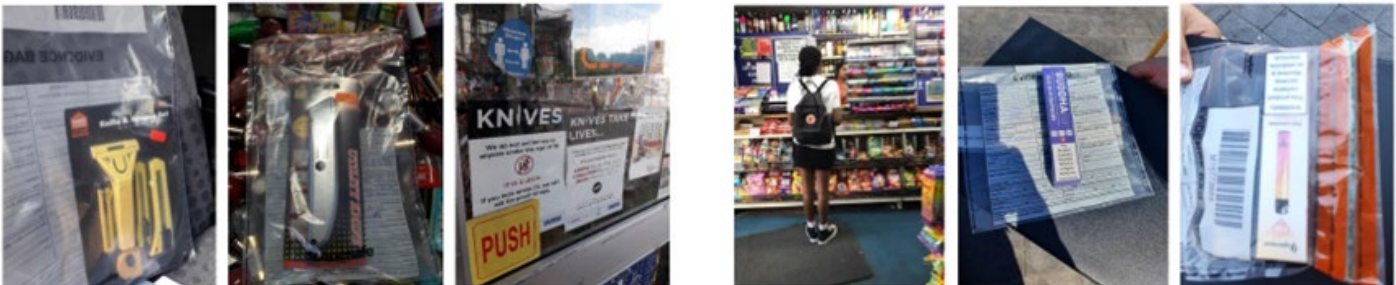


Trading Standards test purchasing

The next phase of this project focussed on Trading Standard test purchases. The group were aware of many young people being able to buy their own vapes. Youth workers approached Trading Standards to enquire about partnership working. Test purchases were conducted during the summer holidays. A total of **58** premises were visited and **10** times age restricted products were sold to young people. The young people involved in the inspections enjoyed this new opportunity and being able to work with a different team within the council.

This table shows all inspections by Trading Standards across the summer- the BAD Youth Forum Community Action sub-group completed 70% of the visits and were present for all 10 failures.

Product	Legislation contravened	Age limit	Number of test purchase	Number of failed test purchase	% of failure
Alcohol	Licensing Act 2003	18	37	3	8%
Vapes	The Nicotine Inhaling Products (Age of Sale and Proxy Purchasing) Regulations 2015	18	13	2	15%
Knives	Criminal Justice Act 1988	18	18	2	11%
Tobacco	Children and Young Persons Act 1933	18	15	3	20%



Obesity

Members of the BAD Youth Forum were invited to speak at a Barking and Dagenham National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) conference hosted jointly by Public Health and Education. The conference was aimed at Primary Head Teachers and Senior Health Leads to support them to look at what helps and hinders obesity levels in children locally and to ensure the right support is in place following the results of the NCMP.

In order to have a varied and balanced view, youth workers conducted a consultation with all Forum members asking them:

- What does being a healthy weight mean?

- Why do you think a higher than average amount of children and young people are obese in Barking and Dagenham (thinking specifically about our borough)?
- Is there anything (thinking about the current climate) that hinders children and young people to be a healthy weight?
- What or who influences your food and drink choices?
- What or who influences the amount of physical activity you do on a weekly basis?
- For children, young people and families who are struggling to make healthy decisions about food, drink and physical activity, can you think of anything that would help them?

Responses from this consultation were collated and 3 young people from the Community Action sub-group presented to the conference. Young people spoke about the current economic crisis and how this is already starting to restrict the options families have for mealtimes, they spoke of the rapid increase in prices and how much cheaper unhealthy food is. The young people mentioned parents and carers fears about allowing children to play outside unsupervised and utilise borough parks, they are concerned about the children's safety and so the children



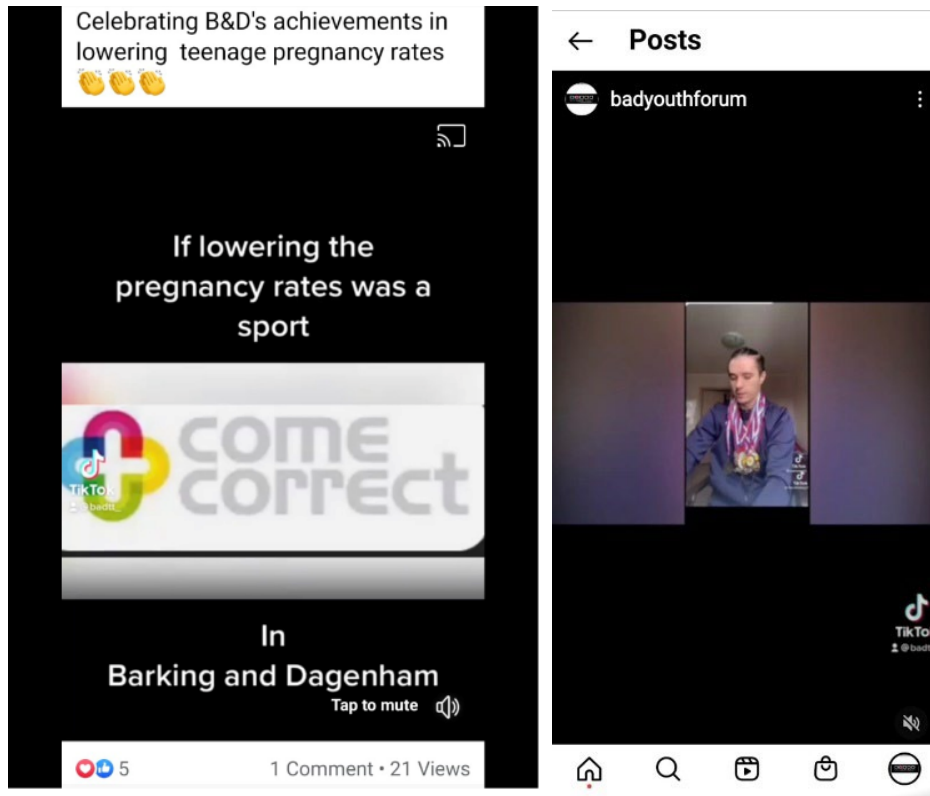
are encouraged to stay home. Some shocking feedback mentioned the reaction parents, carers and teachers had to the results of the NCMP and how this had caused disordered eating for some young people resulting in long-lasting unhealthy relationships with food. Therefore, further consultation sessions with Public Health were planned to discuss this in detail.

Young people developed their skills as part of this piece of work; they grew in confidence with public speaking, stepped out of their comfort zone which boosted their resilience and learnt how to present important messages in a clear and concise way.

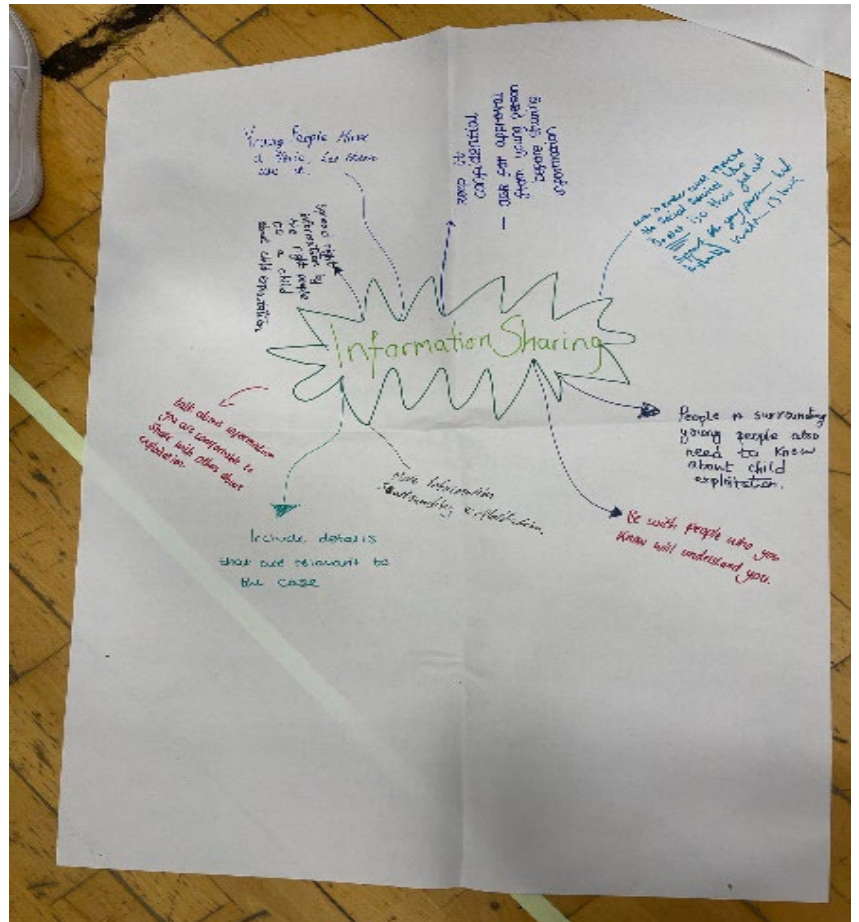
In a follow up meeting, young people from both sub-groups met with Mike Brannan, Consultant in Public Health, Primary Care and Transitions and Fola Akinmutande, Operational Lead for NELFT to discuss the issues raised by young people in more detail. Young people shared the detrimental impact of the way schools locally had dealt with the NCMP visit to primary schools in Year 6. Explaining how the school and NELFT's handling of the interaction has caused long-lasting effects for some people. The group gave clear and concise feedback about how to make this a more positive experience for children in the future, which Mike and Fola agreed to take away with them so the process can be adapted.

Tik Tok

The group felt there were many important messages to share with young people via social media. The group wanted to share messages about street safety, c-card, smoking, body dysmorphia, colourism and promoting the BAD Youth Forum. Young people made videos independently on Tik Tok which we shared on our Instagram page. When the Council's Instagram page is set up, we will also post content on there.



Tackling Child Exploitation



University of Bedfordshire research in practice

The Children's Society

Tackling Child Exploitation

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Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) Support Programme

The Tackling Child Exploitation (TCE) Support Programme is a consortium funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and led by Research in Practice with The Children's Society and the University of Bedfordshire. Since 2019, TCE has worked with local areas across England to improve strategic responses to child exploitation and extra-familial harm.

We are delighted to announce that TCE will be continuing for a further 12 months, until March

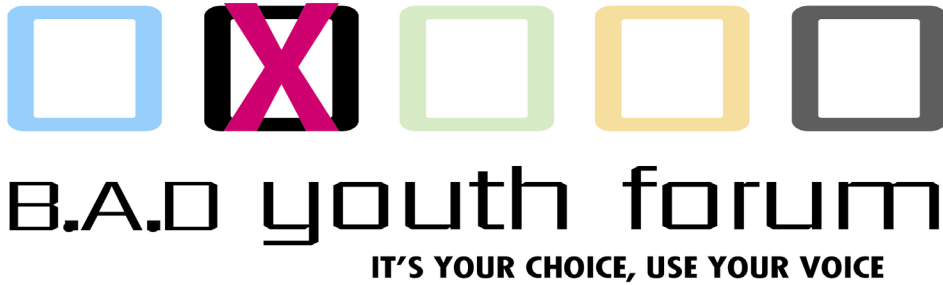
The BAD Youth Forum were asked by University of Bedfordshire if they would like to be a part of the consultation for The Children's Society 'Tackling Child Exploitation programme'.

The aim of the consultation is to develop a set of practice principles for multi-agency responses to child exploitation and extra-familial harm and to explore what is important for

children and young people. The feedback will drive Department for Education policy development with potential to be embedded into future legislation

They met with Hannah Millar from The University of Bedfordshire and discussed their views on information sharing between agencies, parents/carers as partners in the process as well as the language that is used.

Young Mayor Sub-group achievements 2022



Introduction and background

The Barking and Dagenham Young Mayor is supported by a sub-group of the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum. The group work alongside the Young Mayor, supporting their fundraising efforts throughout the year.

In 2022 Zubin Burley was elected to be the borough's 8th Young Mayor. Zubin had been an active Forum member for 2 years when he was elected to his position. He spoke with passion and determination in his election speech, inspiring the majority of young people to vote for him. Zubin has proved to be a motivated, enthusiastic and committed Young Mayor.

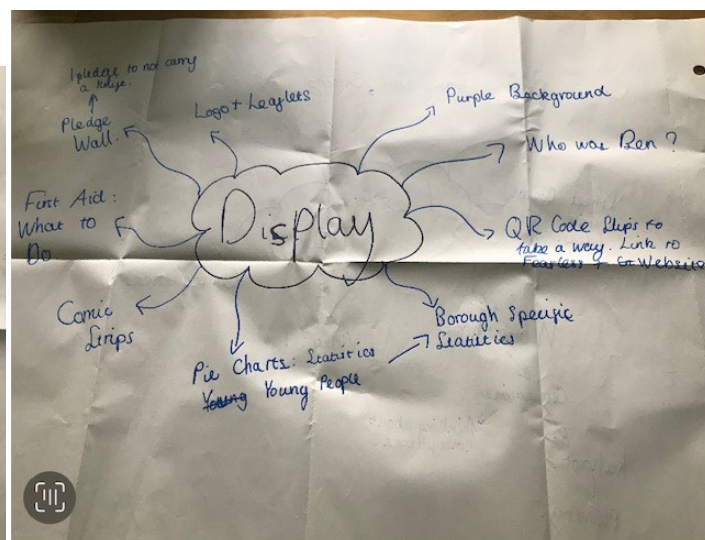
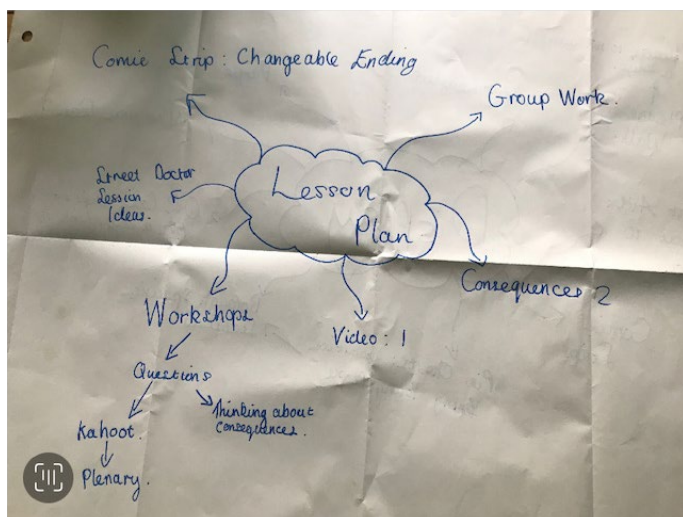


Choosing the Young Mayor's charity

As part of young people's induction into the Youth Forum in 2022, both sub-groups visited the Ben Kinsella Trust workshop. Young people were incredibly moved by the powerful message that came from the workshop, which stayed with them for a long time. Shortly after attending the workshop, we heard the sad news that a young person had tragically been murdered in a knife attack on a bus home from school. As the Young Mayor sub-group started to think about which charity they would like to support, knife crime was a key topic for many of them. As always, the group created a list of charities they thought were a good idea to fundraise for and then took them out to speak to their peers in and out of school. The votes came back and were overwhelmingly in support of the Ben Kinsella Trust.

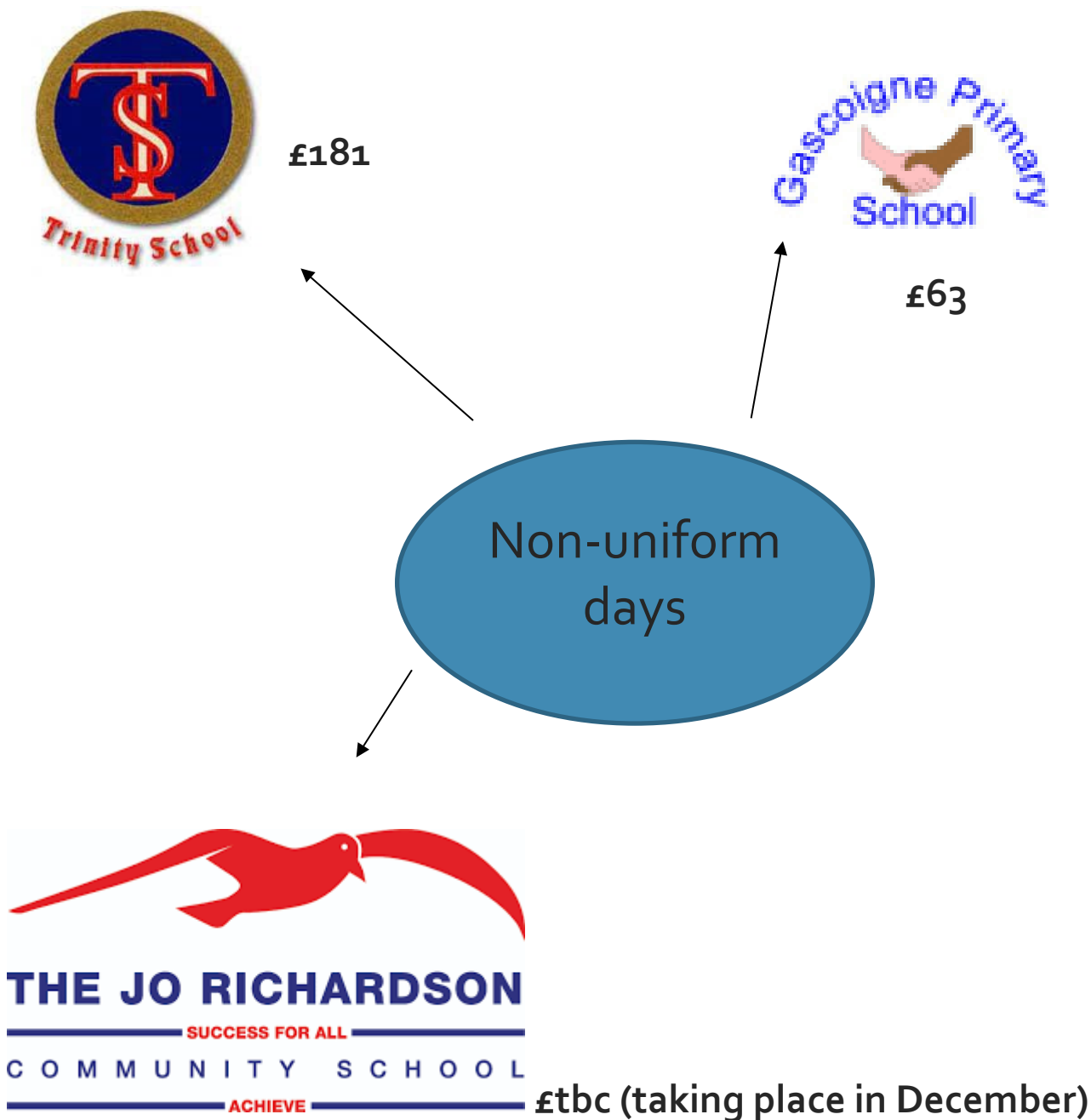


In 2022 the group were keen to fundraise for the Ben Kinsella Trust and also wanted to work towards raising awareness of knife crime amongst young people. The group invited Tom Jewkes, Ben Kinsella Trust Regional Manager, to one of our sessions to talk about how they share the message about knife crime outside of their workshops. The group discussed fundraising ideas with Tom too. The group learnt about the importance of the use of appropriate images to ensure they do not provoke distress or appear to be promoting the use of knives. As the year went on the group decided to create a lesson plan, a display for schools and youth groups and a powerpoint presentation. They would like all schools and youth groups to use these resources to support young people to understand the dangers of knife crime and make informed decisions.



Fundraising

This year has been difficult with regards to fundraising due to the cost of living crisis. It was difficult to ask people for money when so many are struggling. However, we organised a range of events to raise as much money as possible. These events included:



Dagenham and Redbridge Football Club bucket shake- £181



Jo Richardson Summer Fete - £961.19



Quiz night in partnership with the Mayor - £200



Barking MAD About Christmas event- Young Mayors challenge with the Leader - £1bc plus £90 donation on the day from bucket shaking



Young Mayor events

During his term, Zubin was privileged to attend a large number of events. During these events he was able to meet residents, Councillors, officers from various departments and representatives from external organisations. Zubin enjoyed this part of his role and feels he learnt a lot from these experiences.

These are some the events that Zubin attended in 2022/23:



Mayor Making



Civic Parade



Lost Hours launch event

Citizenship Ceremony at Woodlands House





Youth Parade

Colin Pond Scholarship Awards



World Children's Day at Grafton Primary School

- Leaders reception at the Cockney Night and Beacon Lighting
- Memorial service for the Queen
- White Ribbon Day and We Rise Hub first anniversary event
- Youth Zone visit

Zubin also attended monthly Teams meetings with the Leader and met with him in person at Barking Town Hall for one of their meetings. The monthly meetings gave Zubin the opportunity to discuss his plans with the Leader, agree and plan their annual challenge and current issues

facing young people in the borough. Through these meetings, Zubin developed his confidence further and enjoyed the interaction with a senior leader who could support him to make decisions and understand the local context further.

Reflecting on his time as Young Mayor, Zubin said "It has been a pleasure to be Young Mayor first and foremost because of the support and welcome I have received entering the world of politics. From spending hours after school planning fundraisers, to daunting minutes speaking in front of crowds, each second has been exhilarating and unforgettable. Of course, at the heart of this has been raising money and awareness around knife crime in Barking and Dagenham. After visiting the Ben Kinsella trust exhibition, I found it necessarily emotional and hard hitting-in search for a better present. This rekindled our awareness that such crimes were still thriving, stealing and taking. As part of raising awareness, I also helped relaunch the lost hours campaign providing young people with not only the essential knowledge but opportunities to keep themselves busy and safe. It is refreshing to see a more contextual way of safeguarding our young people being adopted - it truly takes a village to raise a child.

Along the way, the number of events I have attended have truly developed my character and opened my mind to the strengths of our community. We celebrated new citizens from fourteen different countries in June and came together to reflect upon our late queen's reign in an inspirational multi-faith ceremony. Throughout the year, I have been fortunate to have the backing of local Councillors, my school and of course the Youth Forum Team. Truly, I have been plunged into a world I hope one day to return to."

The total amount Zubin raised during his time as Young Mayor is: £2042 to date

(Some funds were donated during the Big Give week, doubling some of the donations received).

Young Inspectors 2022



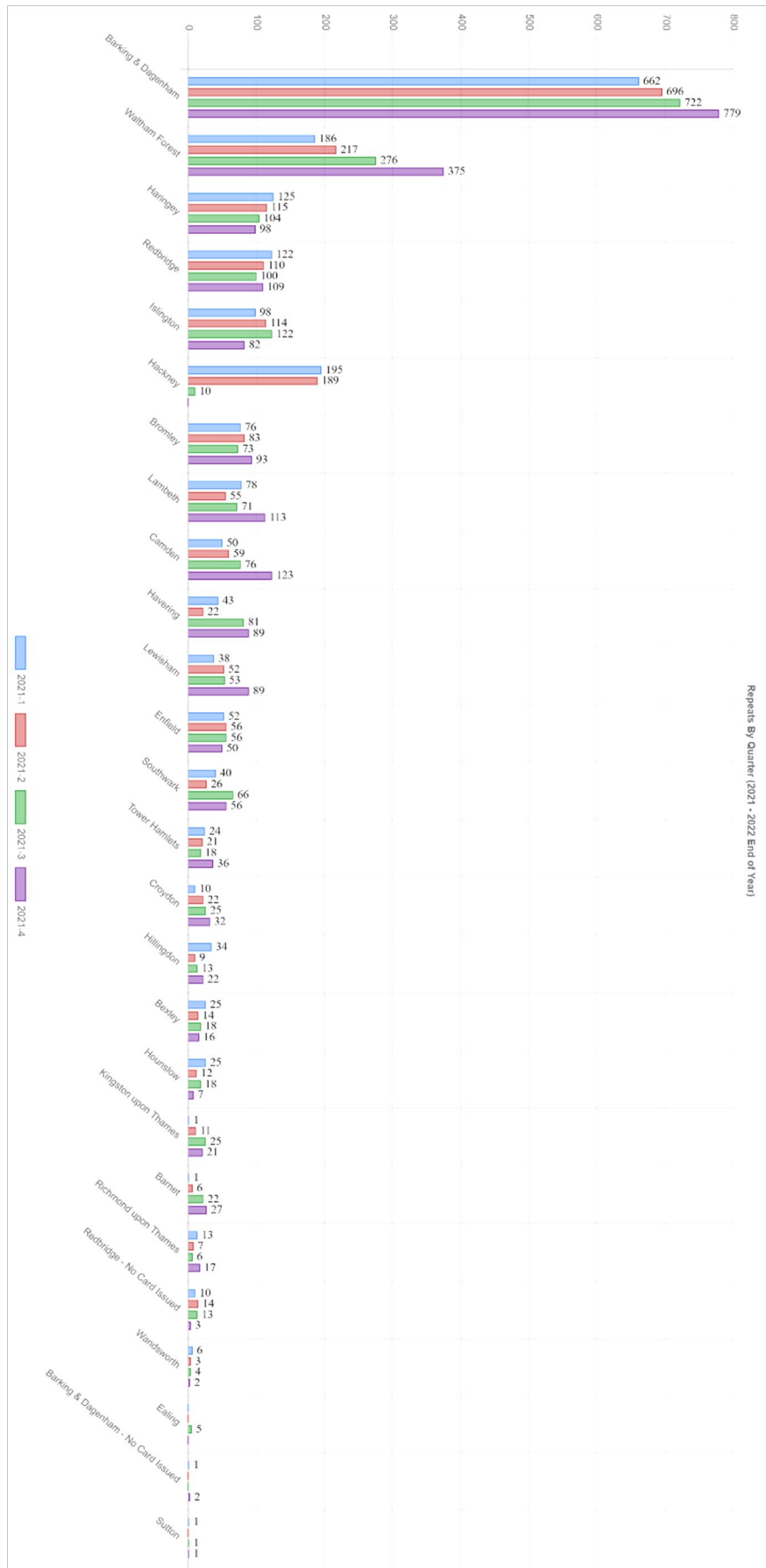
B.A.D youth forum
IT'S YOUR CHOICE, USE YOUR VOICE

The Young Inspectors group inspect local pharmacies that offer the free condom distribution scheme in Barking Dagenham- Come Correct. Young Inspectors are usually part of a separate sub-group of the Forum, but with smaller numbers in the Forum in 2022 we decided to offer young people the chance to complete inspections as an 'add-on' to attending their usual sub-group. Young people were keen to be involved, with a total of 10 young people carrying out regular inspections. Young people were trained by youth workers and conducted practice inspections before completing them independently. For the first time, we extended this opportunity to young people in our Skittlz project, which is the boroughs young people in care and care leavers council. It was a good opportunity to encourage collaborative working across the groups and offer Skittlz members a new experience. Five young people from Skittlz have conducted regular inspections throughout 2022.

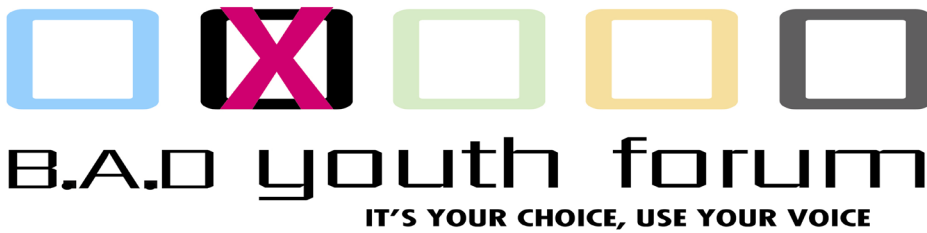


In 2022, a total of **63** inspections were conducted across 27 pharmacies. From these inspections, valuable information about the quality of the service being delivered to young people was shared with the Youth Health Programmes Co-ordinator. Feedback helped to ascertain which pharmacies needed more training and those that are functioning well. By quality assuring the

service Barking and Dagenham has continued to see the highest numbers of repeat encounters across London. The difference between Barking and Dagenham and all other London boroughs is huge! Knowing the service is fit for purpose and issues are continually addressed with pharmacies is ensuring young people get the best possible service. Because of this young people are choosing to return to the service and maintain access to high quality barrier method contraception. The graph below shows quarterly repeat encounters for all boroughs in London.



Additional Forum activities 2022



Engagement and Participation

Each year the Forum members get involved in so much more than just activities and campaigns within their sub-group. We are often invited to participate in other opportunities, including consultations. 2022 was no exception! The young people had a variety of additional opportunities, including:


- Visiting the Ben Kinsella Trust workshop
- Youth Independent Advisory Group meetings
- Helping to shape a disordered eating digital resource
- A trip to Houses of Parliament
- Creating a promotional BAD Youth Forum video
- Trip to Stubbers
- Six consultations
- Being part of the London Youth Assembly

Consultations

- **Digital Mental Health offer** - Colleagues from NELFT visited the Forum to speak to young people about information they feel would be essential to include in a digital mental health resource for young people. The resource would aim to equip young people with skills to cope with low level mental health concerns. Young people spoke about the issues they think young people are currently facing, including post-pandemic related issues. The views of young people will be collated with others throughout the year to help when constructing the resource.
- **Disordered eating** - 4 young people met with colleagues from NSPCC to contribute ideas to a Disordered Eating digital resource. Young people shared their opinions about the information that would be needed, age-appropriate language, how to navigate the site, the overall look and activities on the site. This site will be the first resource created for young people struggling with disordered eating. Views of the young people were shared with commissioners who will now contract the work to a digital agency. Young people worked with other young people from across North-East London.
- **Mental Health Support Team practitioners** - Young people were asked their views about the pilot in schools and had the opportunity to share ideas about how to shape the service going forward as it expands. We hope this will be a continuous conversation so young people are able to offer insight into how to provide the best mental health support in schools.
- **Community Music Service (CMS)** - A consultant visited the group to discuss setting up a Forum for the CMS and creating a video to promote the service and engage young people locally. The consultant took many good ideas away with him, many of which challenged with his original ideas, so he was grateful for the young people's honesty and insight.
- **Holiday Activities and Food programme** - The programme co-ordinator met with the group to discuss how to engage more 12-16 year olds in the HAF programme in the future. This has directly informed the way the programme is commissioning provision for 12-16 year olds going forward.
- **Borough substance misuse strategy** – 2 Forum members along with representatives from two other youth groups (Peers Support Group and Skittlz) met with a consultant to give their views about substance misuse amongst young people in Barking and Dagenham. Young people were asked about barriers to treatment, gangs, exploitation, grooming, drug dealing, county lines and what types of substances young people are typically using. Young people's insight will help to steer the needs assessment and the 5 year substance misuse strategy for Barking and Dagenham.
- **Safe Haven** – Studio 3 Arts visited the Forum to discuss the training workshops ahead of the scheme going live. They spoke about how the scheme will work and gave young people the chance to ask questions about how well the scheme will meet the needs of young people. The consultation covered skills and training needed to be on the scheme.

Youth Independent Advisory Group (YIAG) meeting

The purpose of the YIAG is to provide a regular forum for young people to meet, discuss and question the Police. In 2022 there were 3 YIAG meetings. There was a different theme for each meeting.

- 1) **Knife crime**- following the fatal stabbing in Chadwell Heath earlier in the year, the Youth Engagement Officer requested we meet urgently to discuss concerns and reassure young people. In preparation for the meeting, young people put together some questions they wanted to ask and also gave some thought to information they thought the police should know about young people's fears. The session was attended by 32 young people. there was a lively debate and young people challenged the police about preventative measures as well as the lack of continued support for people who have been affected by knife crime in our borough. Young people questioned the role of schools' officers and shared concerns about lack of action.
- 
- 2) **Criminal exploitation**- young people were becoming increasingly concerned that children and young people were becoming more at risk of criminal exploitation. With the drastic economic changes young people wanted to explore issues around the potential rise in crime, ensuring young people are kept safe and that preventative measures were in place. Young people explored the issues with the Youth Engagement Officer and Sammy Odoi, Independent Scrutineer and Chair of the Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
 - 3) **Question and answer session**- young people really enjoy the opportunity to be able to speak to Police about current issues that are affecting young people. We have a diverse membership of the Forum so we have many different perspectives on crime and safety in the borough. Young people created a list of questions focussing on a range of topics including, knife crime, police bias, racial profiling, stop and search, safety in school, relationships between police and young people and crime on public transport. Young people found the session useful.

Ben Kinsella Trust workshops



Before committing to fundraise for the Ben Kinsella Trust within the Young Mayor's sub-group, the young people attended a workshop in the two different sub-groups. Young people were able to experience the full 2 hour workshop. It was

a very emotional experience for many of the young people but they enjoyed learning about consequences, how to help someone who has been stabbed, the importance of making the right decision at the right time and what the true impact of knife crime is. Young people got a clear sense of how devastating it is to lose someone as a result of a knife attack. The workshop had a lasting impact on the young people.



Promotional video

During the Summer holidays several young people contributed to a BAD Youth Forum promotional video to encourage new members to join in 2023. We are really proud of the video, it shows what an impact the Forum is having on young people, the difference we are making locally and in particular to young people who are members. If you would like to view the video, please click this link: <https://youtu.be/ivw2dXSkSyM>

Trips

Stubbers trip

Each year Forum members have the opportunity to attend a trip to Stubbers. The trip is a great way to enhance relationships, encourage young people to learn a new skill and have fun together. In 2022 young people participated in banana boating, laser tag, axe throwing and raft building!



Houses of Parliament



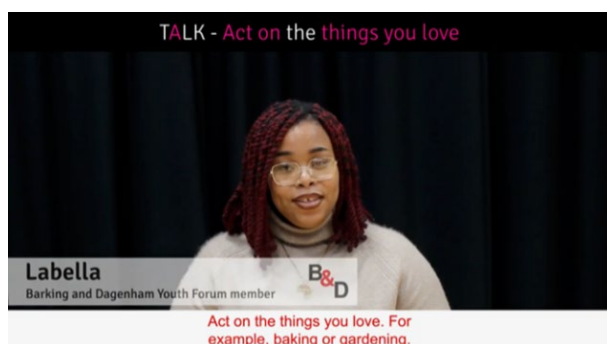
experience, especially having the chance to question the MP.

Forum members were invited to visit the Houses of Parliament in October half term. The young people participated in a tour and then a meeting with MP Jon Cruddas. During the meeting young people had the opportunity to ask questions and challenge the MP on issues affecting them locally. Young people chose to ask about supporting residents during the cost of living crisis, support for young people in education, crime and safety (with a specific focus on knife crime), leisure centres in the borough and providing opportunities for young people. The young people enjoyed the

Cost of living crisis film and information

In response to concerns about the effects of the cost of living crisis on young people, the BAD Youth Forum were asked by Elaine Allegretti, the Director of People and Resilience, to create a resource to share with young people.

Two members from the Forum worked collaboratively with 2 representatives from the Young Carers project. The overwhelming concern was about the detrimental effect on young people's mental health, so the film focussed on encouraging young people to talk and signposted them to Young Minds. During the planning for this piece of work, it was agreed that information should be created about various different services that young people might benefit from accessing.



Whilst all of this information is already on various websites (including LBBD website), it is not collated in one place. We know that young people won't always search for services they need and may not note down information for use in the future. So, with this in mind, a document was created detailing all the different support services available to young people. This included information about disability services and groups, care

leaver information, education, employment and training support, financial services, mental health support services, free and accessible activities (including HAF), young carers and sexual health information. This was distributed to all members of the Youth Forum, Skittlz (our Children in Care Council), youth work colleagues, partner organisations working with young people, all schools in the borough, Social Workers and Leaving Care Advisors.

ASSEMBLY

25 JANUARY 2023

Title: The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report 2021/22	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Chris Bush, Commissioning Director, Children's and Adults' Care & Support	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 3188 Email: Christopher.bush@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Elaine Allegretti, Strategic Director for People and Resilience	
Accountable Strategic Leadership Director: Elaine Allegretti, Strategic Director for People and Resilience	
<p>Summary</p> <p>Under Schedule 2 of the Care Act 2014, Safeguarding Adult Boards (SABs) are required to publish an Annual Report, detailing their work over the preceding year. The attached Annual Report (Appendix 1) describes the work and priorities of the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) from April 2021 to March 2022. It sets out the key achievements, work of the partners, information around the priorities and how the SAB has worked to improve the protection of adults across Barking and Dagenham.</p> <p>The SAB Annual Report contains contributions from a range of organisations who are involved in safeguarding vulnerable adults in Barking and Dagenham. Joint working has been effective over the past year, and the membership of the Board and its Committees have strengthened. The statutory partners have provided financial resources to support the SAB a to fulfil their functions.</p> <p>The SAB Annual Report was agreed by the Safeguarding Adults Board at its meeting on the 12th October 2022 and was presented and discussed at the Health and Wellbeing Board on the 18th January 2023.</p> <p>The Assembly is invited to note the report and draw out any issues that Members would like the Safeguarding Adults Board to consider as part of its routine business or the Strategic Plan.</p>	
<p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Assembly is recommended to:</p> <p>(i) Note the contents of Annual Report of the Safeguarding Adults Board for 2021/22;</p>	

- (ii) Add further comments to shape the work of the Board and the priorities of the SAB through its Strategic Plan.

Reason(s)

Safeguarding vulnerable adults from abuse is one of the most important statutory duties that falls upon the Council. Collaborating with partners in the health sector and the Police is mandated by the Care Act, and together with other important partners, the Safeguarding Adults Board is the mechanism for discharging that duty. It is important that all Members of the Council are aware of the work of the Council in improving the systems to safeguard adults and have the opportunity to shape that work.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Care Act 2014 requires that local partners must co-operate around the protection of vulnerable adults at risk of abuse or neglect.
- 1.2 The Care Act 2014 identifies six key principles that should underpin all safeguarding work. These are accountability, empowerment, protection, prevention, proportionality and partnership.
- 1.3 The Safeguarding Adults Boards is made up of three statutory partners who are the Local Authority, the Police and the NHS Integrated Care Board. The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adults Board also includes representation from other key local partner organisations and these are Barking Havering Redbridge University Trust (BHRUT), North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT), the London Fire Brigade, the Probation Service, the chairs of the SAB's committees and other key officer advisors.
- 1.4 The objectives of the SAB are to:
- Ensure that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care Act 2014.
 - Embed good safeguarding practices, that puts people at the centre of its duties.
 - Work in partnership with other agencies to prevent abuse and neglect where possible.
 - Ensure that services and individuals respond quickly and responsibly when abuse or neglect has occurred.
 - Continually improve safeguarding practices and enhance the quality of life of adults in the local area.
- 1.5 All Safeguarding Adult Boards are required to produce an Annual Report. The Barking and Dagenham SAB have produced the Annual Report attached with contributions from all partners of the Board.

2. Proposal and Issues

- 2.1 The Annual Report includes a foreword by the Independent Chair of the Board, information about the Board structure and its committees, safeguarding data, the activity of the Board and of its partner agencies, quality assurance information, and comment on how the Board will review and set its priorities going forward in light of system wide safeguarding issues.
- 2.2. Key achievements of the Board in 2021/22 include the work of the three committees. The Performance and Assurance Committee, which is chaired by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, has worked to improve the engagement from all partners and is presenting meaningful data and analysis to the Board on a quarterly basis. The Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) Committee, which is chaired by the NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB), published one Safeguarding Adult Review in 2021. Towards the end of 2021/22 two new SARs were commissioned. The Committee has reviewed several cases against the SAR criteria and looked at wider learning from local and national cases.
- 2.3 The Adult Safeguarding Adult Complex Cases Group is chaired by the Council's Principal Social Worker for Adults Social Care and Strategic Lead for Safeguarding Adults and there is representation from all partners across the partnership as well as front line staff who are supporting service users. The group discusses complex cases where there are safeguarding risks that need to be managed across more than one agency. Professionals from any partner agency can refer a case into the meeting.
- 2.4 The Board has continued to have excellent engagement and commitment from all partners.
- 2.5 Brian Parrott, the Independent Chair, took the decision to step down from the role towards the end of 2021. The Board undertook a recruitment process for a new Independent Chair and Anju Ahluwalia was appointed to the role.
- 2.6 The three statutory partners (LBBD, NHS ICB and Police) all made financial contributions to support the work of the Board. The Police contributed £5,000, the NHS ICB £30,000 and the Council covered staffing costs of the Independent Chair, support staff and any other work such as SARs and learning events.

3. Financial Implications

Implications completed by Isaac Mogaji, Finance Business Partner:

- 3.1 This report is largely for information and seeks the Health and Wellbeing Board to consider the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Annual Report 2021/22. As such, there is no obvious financial implications of the report.

However, it is noted that the three statutory partners (LBBD, NHS ICB and Police) all made their respective financial contributions to support the work of the Board in 2021/22.

4. Legal Implications

Implications completed by Daniel Longe, Principal Solicitor for Education, Children and Adults:

- 4.1 Section 43 of the Care Act 2014 imposes a specific duty on local authorities to establish a Safeguarding Adults Board for its area to help and protect adults in its area who has needs for care and support or has experienced or is at risk of abuse or neglect and is unable to protect themselves from such risk or abuse.

Furthermore, Schedule 2, paragraph 4 of the Care Act 2014 also imposes a specific obligation on SABs to publish a report at the end of each financial year and must send that report to among others, the chief executive and the leader of the council.

Accordingly, the said annual report is in line with legislative obligations.

5. Other Implications

5.1 Risk Management

- 5.1.1 The SAB manages risks by having a Three Year Strategic Plan in place that sets out its priorities and how partners will work together to achieve these. This Strategic Plan is reviewed annually.

5.2 Corporate Policy and Equality Impact

- 5.2.1 The SAB is a statutory function under the Care Act 2014 which requires that local partners must co-operate around the protection of vulnerable adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

5.3 Safeguarding Adults

- 5.3.1 The SAB has responsibility for safeguarding across the borough and this includes how the Board has worked together to protect adults who may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

5.4 Health Issues

- 5.4.1 This report was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board on the 9th November 2021 for discussion and comment.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

Care Act 2014 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1: The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2021/22

**Barking
and
Dagenham**



Safeguarding Adults Board



Barking & Dagenham

**Safeguarding
Adults
Board**

**Annual Report
2021-22**



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1. Independent Chair's Foreword and Overview



This is my first foreword for the Annual Report, as Independent Chair of Barking and Dagenham's Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB). I started in this role in April 2022 after the last chair had completed his three years in the role. My aim is to ensure the voice of the service users and community is heard within the work of the SAB. I will be going out into the community and meeting community groups, service users and individuals as well as professionals who work across safeguarding in the borough.

I also have the role of the Independent Chair of the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Group that I started in June this year. I feel that both roles will complement each other and some of the work will cross-over.

This report will be made up of information and views from the last chair as well as myself. As I have only been in the role for 6 months it is important to capture the progress the board has made before I started in the role.

For me, it is important to look at contributions to the SAB work including who can bring wider expertise and the voice of the community to the work of the board. I also want to support the board to address any themes in relation to multi agency learning, training and development so that all professionals have the tools required to ensure our community is supported and kept safe.

I have been and will continue to work closely with the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Children's Board on cross-cutting themes around supporting young people moving into adulthood and through the system.

From what I have seen so far I am really encouraged and appreciative of the way the partnership works together, particularly around the challenges and demands services are facing following Covid.

During my time as the SAB Independent Chair, an independent Safeguarding Peer Review was undertaken and the learning from this will be embedded to improve safeguarding outcomes across the whole partnership system.

I have had the pleasure of attending a learning and development workshop based on a Safeguarding Adult Review. This provided an opportunity for all practitioners from across the partnership, including health, adult social care, GP's etc to learn and reflect on safeguarding work. It was such a valuable experience for all involved and I would like to see more of these to take place as the discussions and connections that are made are invaluable.

There are a number of areas that the board will need to focus on in the coming year:

- Assuring 'sight' of the risks of harm, abuse and exploitation in communities.
- Robust processes for receiving feedback from people with lived experiences of safeguarding interventions in the context of health, social care and support services generally, and in the context of the diverse cultural backgrounds of Barking and Dagenham's changing community.
- Continued use of safeguarding adult performance and quality assurance information, including case audit by all partner organisations, and of those cases involving more than one organisation or service intervention.
- Joined up of knowledge, thinking, planning, practice and assurance across all ages of children and adults and in all circumstances, especially through better ways of working preventatively and earlier with our residents.
- Continued commitment to the SAB, its committees, communication and relationships from all partner organisations.

There are several aspects that the SAB have looked at this year and are continuing to work on in the coming year that including the following:

- Multi agency learning and development to support professionals in safeguarding across the partnership.
- A Hoarding Policy and work programme in response to themes arising across the partnership in Barking and Dagenham.
- Focussing on outcomes from the Safeguarding Peer Review to direct SAB priorities going forward.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone across the partnership for welcoming me into the role of SAB Independent Chair and supporting me to understand the community

and services in Barking and Dagenham that keep our residents safe. It is important that I work with all the local community so that we are hearing the voice of people in Barking and Dagenham within the work of the SAB.

I hope after reading this SAB Annual Report that you are assured that the SAB partnership is committed to keeping all individuals in Barking and Dagenham safe from harm and abuse and that all professionals continue to work hard to support our community and provide services that keep people well and safe.

Anju Harmit Ahluwalia BEM

Independent Chair

Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adults Board

2. What is Safeguarding Adults?

The Care Act 2014 statutory guidance defines adult safeguarding as:

‘Protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.’

The Care Act 2014 came into force on 1st April 2015. The Act introduced new requirements for safeguarding adults and the arrangements that each locality must have in place to ensure that vulnerable people are protected from risk, abuse or neglect. The Local Authority, NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Police are all statutory partners of the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) and other important local partners are also key players in the work of the partnership.

The Care Act identifies six key principles that should underpin all safeguarding work. These are accountability, empowerment, protection, prevention, proportionality and partnership.



3. The SAB's Vision

Every adult living in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham has the right to live in safety, free from fear of abuse or neglect. The Safeguarding Adults Board exists to make sure that organisations, people and local communities work together to prevent and stop the risk of abuse or neglect.

In the London Borough Barking and Dagenham we want to embed a stronger and safer culture that supports adults who are at risk of harm. We know that to achieve this we have to work in partnership with the people who use local services and with the wider local community. All agencies working with adults at risk have an essential role in recognising when these people may be in need of protection. Agencies also have a responsibility to work in partnership with adults at risk, their families, their carer(s) and each other. The introduction of the Care Act 2014 has brought in many changes in Adult Social Care Services. The Safeguarding Adults Board has a statutory duty to ensure it uses its powers to develop responsibility within the community for adults who need care and protection.

The prime focus of the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board is to ensure that safeguarding is consistently understood by anyone engaging with adults who may be at risk of or experiencing abuse or neglect, and that there is a common commitment to improving outcomes for them. This means ensuring the community has an understanding of how to support, protect and empower people at risk of harm. We want to develop and facilitate practice which puts individuals in control and generates a more person-centred approach and outcomes.

The Safeguarding Adults Board developed a strategic plan which sets out how we will work together to safeguard adults at risk. The strategic plan was initially for 2019-22 but was updated at the end of 2020/21 going into 2021/22 for the remainder of 2021/22 and beyond. It can be viewed here <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/barking-and-dagenham-safeguarding-adults-board#tabs-3> and is referred to again in section 10.

The Safeguarding Adults Board has a responsibility to:

Protect adults at risk

**Prevent abuse
occurring**

Respond to concerns

It may be suspected that someone is at risk of harm because:

- there is a general concern about someone's **well being**
- a person sees or hears something which could put **someone at risk**
- a person tells you or someone else that something has happened or is happening to them which could put **themselves or others at risk.**

4. The Board and Committees

The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adults Board is made up of the following core statutory partners:

- The Local Authority
- The Borough Police
- The NHS Integrated Care System.

Other members of the board include:

- the Council Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration
- the three Chairs of the committees
- a representative from North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT)
- a representative from Barking, Havering, Redbridge University Hospitals (BHRUT)
- a representative from the London Fire Service
- a representative from the London Probation Service
- a representative from the Council's Community Solutions Service
- a representative from Barking and Dagenham Healthwatch

The SAB has three committees, which are chaired by different partner organisations:

- The Performance and Assurance Committee (chaired by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham)
- The Safeguarding Adult Review Committee (chaired by NHS Integrated Care System)
- The Safeguarding Adults Complex Cases Group (chaired by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham)

In addition, the SAB is able to invite other organisations or individuals to attend and speak at the meetings where they have contributions to make.

The Chair of each of the three committees is responsible for:

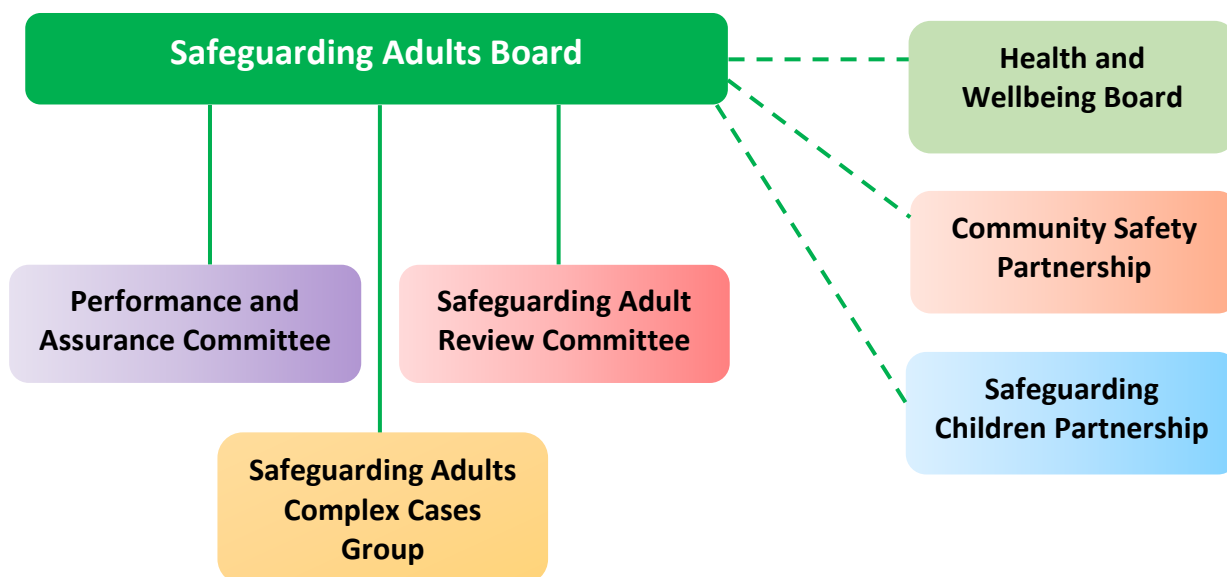
- Developing a work programme which is incorporated into the SAB strategic plan and monitored by the SAB
- Resourcing the meetings of the committee
- Reporting on the progress of the committee's work to the SAB and ensuring that the membership of the committee draws in the required experience.

During 2021/22 the Independent Chair met with the Independent Scrutineer of the Safeguarding Children’s Board. This allowed for opportunities to consider safeguarding adults and children at risk, and the issues affecting both areas.

The Independent Chair attended the Health and Wellbeing Board to allow for further consideration and debate regarding the issues of safeguarding within the agenda. The Independent Chair also attended quarterly the Council Corporate Safeguarding Meeting with the Leader of the Council, the Lead Member for Social Care and Health Integration, the Chief Executive of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and the Strategic Director for Service Development and Integration, to review performance data for adult social care, including workforce data and associated risks and mitigation. This allows for open debate, discussion, challenge and demonstrates a climate of openness and transparency.

The Independent Chair also met regularly with LBBDCouncil’s Director of People and Resilience and Adult Social Care Operations Director and other partners as well as with committee chairs and other key SAB partners.

The board is supported by the Council Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration as a participant observer. This enables Councillor colleagues to be kept up to date with safeguarding adult matters. In addition, the committee chairs and officer advisors also attend board meetings.



The SAB's Statutory Responsibilities

The SAB must publish an Annual Report each year as well as having strategic plan. This Annual Report of the Barking and Dagenham SAB looks back on the work undertaken by the SAB and its committees, throughout 2021/22 and provides an account of the work of the partnership including achievements, challenges and priorities for the coming year.

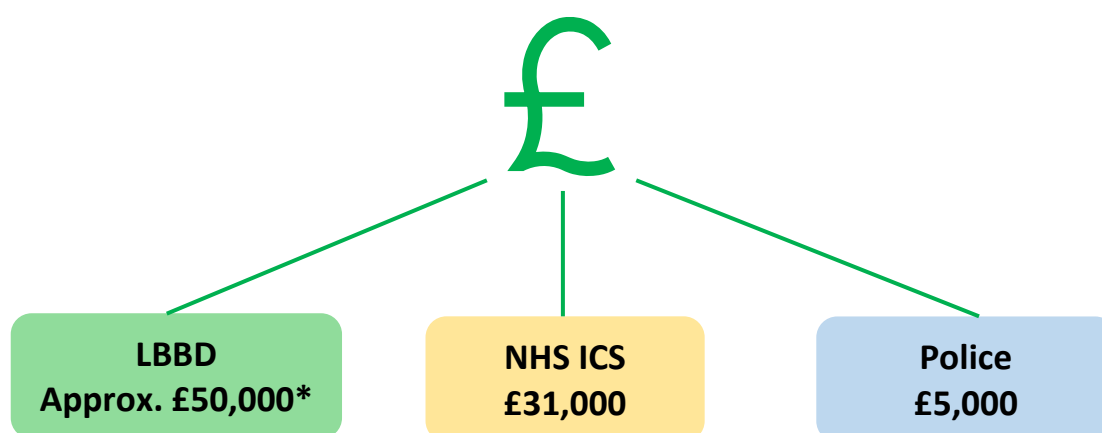
In addition, the SAB has a statutory duty to carry out Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) where an adult in the Local Authority area:

- has died as a result of abuse or risk (either known or suspected) and there are concerns that partner organisations could have worked together more effectively to protect that adult.
- has not died but the SAB knows or suspects that an adult has experienced serious abuse or neglect.

The implementation of recommendations and action plans from a SAR must be reported in the Annual Report, including any decision not to implement any recommendation. One SAR was published in 2021/22. More information on this SAR can be found in chapter 6. Two SARs were also commissioned and continue into 2022/23.

Financial Contributions and Expenditure

Statutory partners make financial contributions to the Safeguarding Adults Board. This supports the running of the SAB including the cost of the Independent Chair, Safeguarding Adult Reviews and any multi agency learning and development activity undertaken across the partnership.



*The Council makes up any shortfall in costs covering service support, staffing etc.

5. Safeguarding Data

The Safeguarding Adults Collection (SAC) data is collected and published by NHS Digital. It reports on the statutory duties of local authorities under the Care Act, to safeguard adults at risk of abuse or neglect. The data is published annually and provides local and national data tables and comparative data on safeguarding activity.

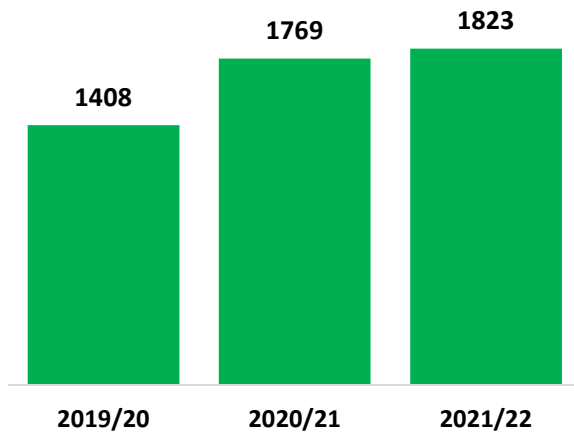
The data for Barking and Dagenham presented in this report covers period from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. The latest comparative data covers the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. At the time of writing, national comparative data for 2020-21 has not been published.

Concerns raised by year

There were 1,823 safeguarding concerns raised during 2021/22, an increase of 3% on the previous year.

Overall, the data shows an increase in reports of abuse, which started in 2020/21 and has continued to date. This shows more people are reporting abuse and neglect.

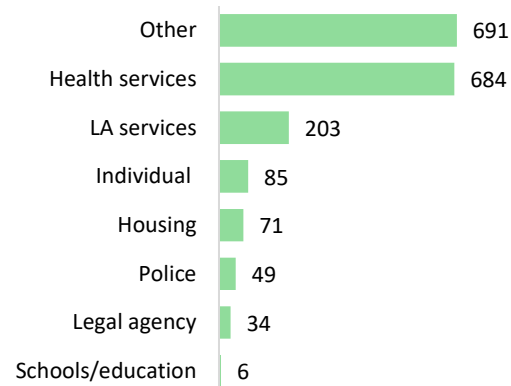
Concerns Raised by Year



Source of concerns

684 of the 1,823 safeguarding concerns raised during 2021/22 were raised by health services, which include London Ambulance Service and primary health care providers. This is equivalent to 38%. 691 concerns were raised by other sources which may include social care providers.

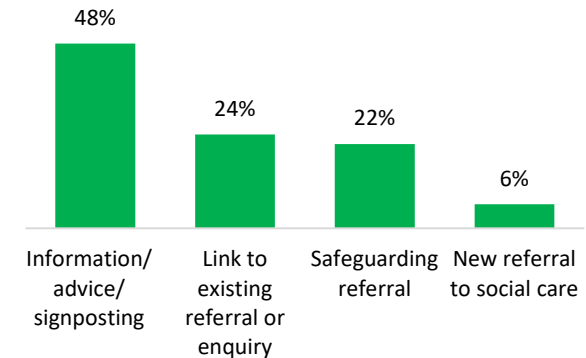
Local authority services, either in the council or in other councils raised 203 concerns during the year.



Concern outcomes

When further enquiry is not required, other forms of support, advice, information or other services may be provided, dependent upon the nature of the risks, specific concerns and the individual's needs.

Of the 1,823 concerns received during the year, 48% resulted in information and advice. 24% of people had an existing case or enquiry with social care that the concern was linked to, and 22% resulted in a safeguarding referral that was progressed for further enquiry.



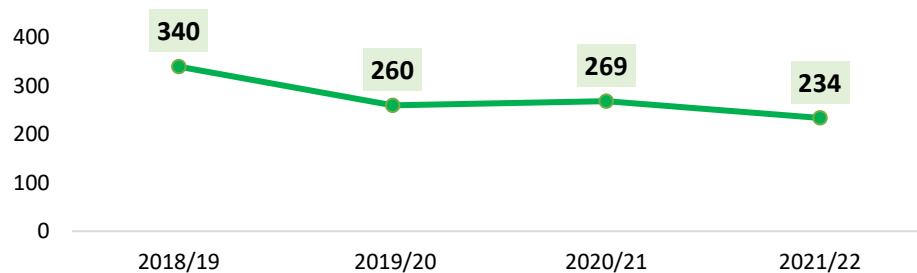
What is a Section 42 Enquiry?

Section 42 of the Care Act 2014 requires that each local authority must make enquiries if it believes an adult is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect. When an allegation about abuse or neglect has been made, an enquiry is undertaken to find out what has happened.

An enquiry should establish whether any action needs to be taken to prevent or stop abuse or neglect, and if so, by whom.

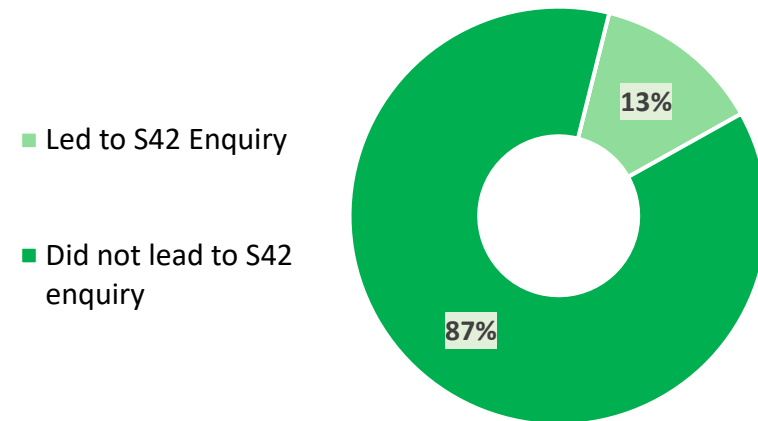
Section 42 Enquiries started in year

There were 234 Section 42 enquiries during 2021/22. This is lower than in 2020/21, when there were 269 enquiries in response to increased reporting and greater frequency of risk and neglect at the height of COVID-19 pandemic. However, overall, the number of Section 42 enquiries appears to be on a downward trend over the past few years.



Concerns leading to further enquiry

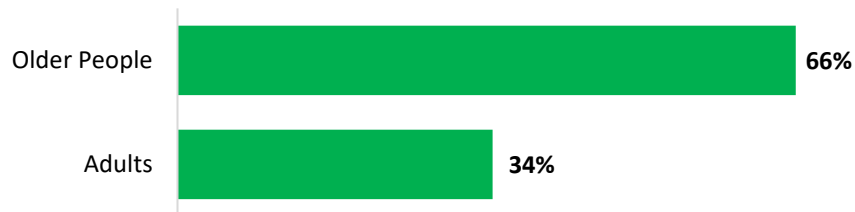
The council received 1,823 concerns about an adult believed to be at risk of abuse or neglect. After further consideration, 234 led to a Section 42 enquiry, to ascertain if abuse or neglect occurred. This is equivalent to a rate of 13% and is down from 15% in 2020/21.



People involved in Section 42 enquiries

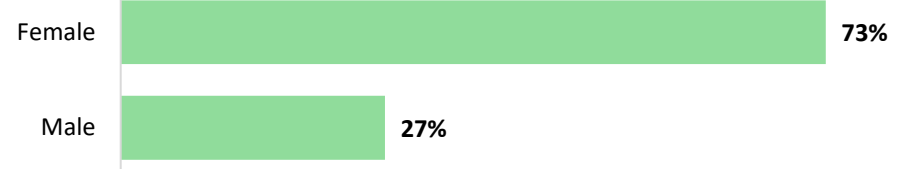
Age

39% of section 42 enquiries concerned adults aged 18 to 64, while 61% were for those aged 65 and over.



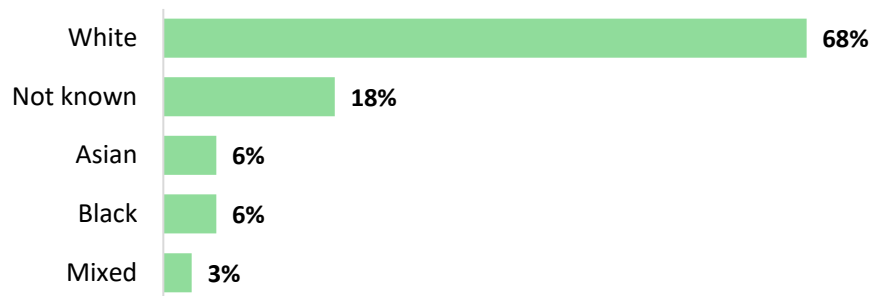
Gender

There were more Section 42 enquiries concerning women than men, with 73% involving women compared with 27% for men.



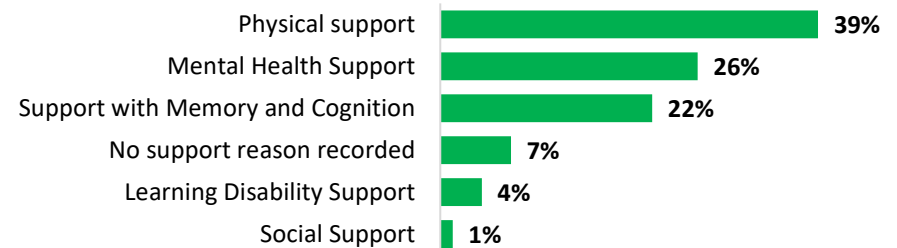
Ethnic group

Over two-thirds of Section 42 enquiries concerned White adults (68%). 6% of people were Asian and further 6% were Black African or Caribbean. The ethnicity of 18% of people was unknown.



Primary Support Reason

39% of Section 42 enquiries concerned an adult with physical support needs. 26% needed mental health support, while 22% needed support with memory and cognition. In 7% of cases support needs were not recorded, either because it was not known or the adult at risk had no identified needs.



Type and Location of Risk in Section 42 Enquiries

Common Risk Types in Barking and Dagenham

Neglect and Acts of Omission: Includes failure to act or ignoring medical, emotional, or physical care needs.

Physical Abuse: Includes hitting, slapping, pushing, and use of unnecessary restraints.

Financial abuse: Includes theft, fraud, and coercion with regards to financial affairs.

Self-neglect: Neglect of own health, hygiene, or home surroundings. This can include hoarding.

Psychological: Includes emotional abuse, threats of harm, attempts to control, coercion, verbal abuse, and bullying.

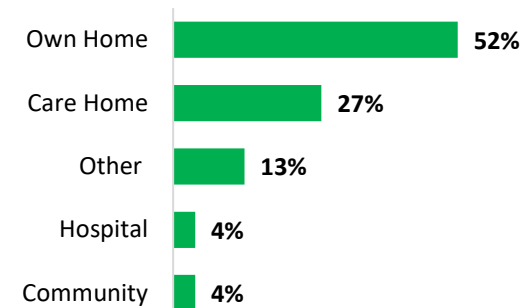
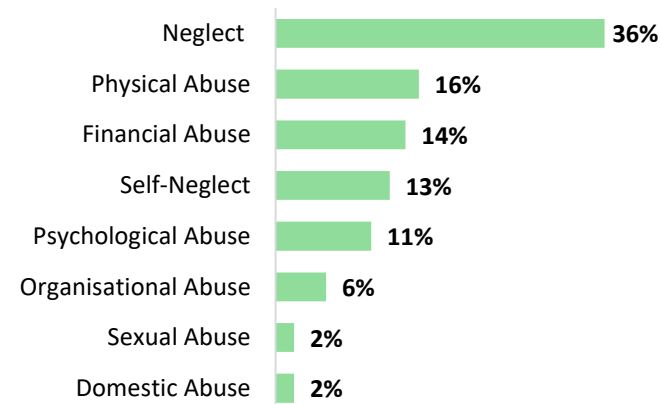
Type of risk

As with previous years, neglect and acts of omission remains the most common category of abuse (36%). Physical abuse was present in 16% of enquiries; this is a slight increase compared with 2020/21. Financial abuse remained the same as the previous year, at 14% as did self-neglect at 13%.

This data is reported regularly to the SAB in order identify patterns in types of risk.

Location of risk

Over half of the alleged abuse took place in the adult’s own home (52%). 27% occurred in care homes, while 4% of abuse or neglect was in hospital and another 4% in other locations in the community. In the remaining 13% of cases the alleged risk was in an unspecified location.



Making Safeguarding Personal

Making Safeguarding Personal is an approach that ensures the adult at risk and/or their advocate in the safeguarding enquiry, are consulted and can participate in the process and that their views are central to the final outcomes, as far as is possible. The Safeguarding Adults Board is committed to this person-centred approach.

Identifying risk

Was risk identified?

Risk was identified in 80% of concluded enquiries. In a further 9% risk assessment was inconclusive. There was no risk identified in 6% of enquiries and 4% ceased as the individual did not want the enquiry to continue.



Reducing or removing risk

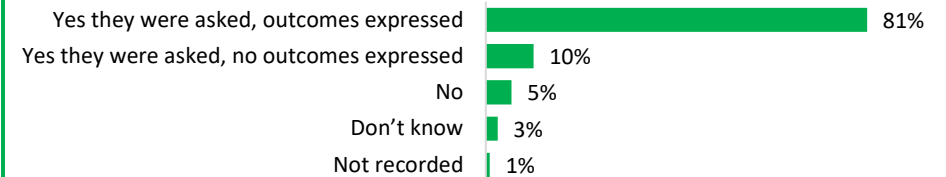
Where risk was identified, it was removed or reduced in a 91% of cases. This remains unchanged from 2020/21. Risk remained in 9% of enquiries.



What does the individual at risk want?

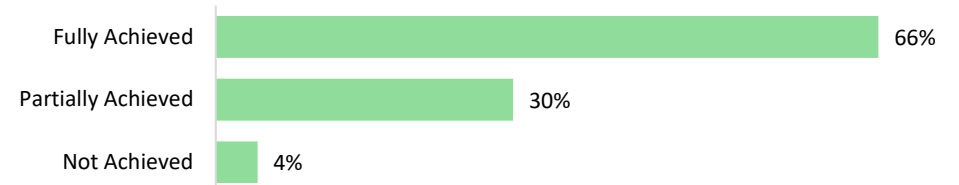
Expressing safeguarding outcomes

In a total of 81% of concluded enquiries, the individual at risk was asked their desired outcome of the enquiry and expressed outcomes, 10% were asked but did not express outcomes. The remaining 8% of people were either not asked, or this was not recorded.



Achieving desired outcomes

In total, 96% of people who expressed outcomes achieved those outcomes, fully or partially (66% fully achieved, 30% partly achieved). Overall, this was the same percentage as in 2020/21.



6. Safeguarding Adult Reviews

In 2021/22 the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adult Board (SARs) published the SAR JA the full report, findings and recommendations which are available at this link [Safeguarding Adult Reviews \(SARs\) | London Borough of Barking and Dagenham \(lbbd.gov.uk\)](https://lbbd.gov.uk/safeguarding-adult-reviews-sars/). Learning has been undertaken in relation to this SAR in the form of a multi agency training and collaboration event. A number of actions are being taken forward to address the recommendations in this SAR around hoarding, self-neglect and making safeguarding personal. The full SAR report can be read at the link above.

Towards the end of 2021/22 two Safeguarding Adult Reviews were commissioned to be undertaken by Independent Reviewers and are still in progress.

7. The SAB's Partners

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Adult Social Care

Developments and Improvements in Safeguarding Adults Practice

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham are continuing to see high levels of safeguarding concerns. Referrals are being carefully monitored to ensure that trends and new developments are identified.

Work is being conducted with Community Solutions Intake Service to improve the classification and responsiveness to safeguarding alerts being submitted from partner agencies. We have enhanced the performance management of referral data with the outcome of clearer focus on referrals that meet safeguarding thresholds. Work is also being undertaken to review the referral processes and oversight of training and practice within the workforce.

A Peer Review was conducted May 2022 that focused on 'the persons journey and experience' within the context of safeguarding. The findings evidenced areas where practice could be enhanced. An action plan is in development to benefit experience and practice.

The peer review identified areas which they believed demonstrated excellent practice:

- Operational response to safeguarding on an individual level is good and safeguarding principles are reflected in practice
- High-risk cases are dealt with rapidly and responsively
- Excellent joint work with carers and carer providers on co-produced support
- Strong community knowledge and signposting within Community Solutions
- Excellent policies and procedures
- Strong quality assurance process between commissioners and providers
- Trusting relationship between providers and the Council, and some positive feedback on links to safeguarding
- The Safeguarding Adults Complex Cases Group works well and is an example of good practice
- Strong, committed, engaged leadership and relationships
- Good co-production in places and a commitment to strengthen this further
- Stable and committed workforce
- Good management supervision and support
- The role of the Principal Social Worker is embedded and valued by staff
- Excellent support to the Independent Chair of the SAB.

The action plan will focus on the following areas to enhance practice:

- Personalisation, support and the voice of the resident
- Quality assurance and implementing a structured and regular quality assurance process
- Co-production.

Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) are partnerships of organisations that come together to plan and deliver joined up health and care services and to improve the lives of people who live and work in their area. Forty-two Integrated Care Systems were established across England on a statutory basis on 1 July 2022. We are part of the North East London (NEL) ICS. As part of this wider consortium of organisations, safeguarding must be paramount and we are ensuring that it remains so throughout the integration process.

Contribution to Multi-agency Safeguarding Practice and Partnership Working Arrangements

Following the completion of a Safeguarding Adult Review the Safeguarding Adult Board commissioned the production of a multi-agency protocol to support staff when responding to safeguarding issues related to pressure ulcers.

A multi-agency learning and development event was held which gave professionals from across the partnership an opportunity to discuss safeguarding outcomes and improvements with an emphasis on improving practice.

The process for oversight and support for practitioners in their management of complex situations is strengthened through the Complex Cases Group which is a committee of the SAB. At the Complex Cases Group, multi agency cases and safeguarding risks are presented and discussed and the risks are managed through the monitoring and review process. The process was recently reviewed and now ensures better management oversight and enhances the timeliness of the outcomes for adults and the management of multi agency risks across the partnership.

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Community Solutions

Developments and Improvements in Safeguarding Adults Practice

Community Solutions works closely with Adults Social Care and meets regularly to discuss practice, operational issues and performance and quality. We are in the process of recruiting a duty manager to the Adult Intake Team to provide further capacity to managing

safeguarding referrals. We are establishing a pathway for Care Technology as a prevention approach and in partnership with the transformation programme.

We continue to strengthen community and partner links, including co-locating the Adult Intake Team with partners in physical hubs at Barking Learning Centre and Dagenham Library, the benefits of which were recognised in peer review. By strengthening partnerships and links across the community, faith and voluntary organisations we are able to improve pathways to support.

Targeted hardship funding has been distributed as part of the support for vulnerable groups. Wellness calls and checks introduced during Covid have been embedded to ensure that residents seeking help are fully engaged with, listened to and offered alternative community support. This includes offering interventions for safeguarding concerns that do not meet the threshold for a Section 42 enquiry.

Contribution to Multi-agency Safeguarding Practice and Partnership Working Arrangements

Re-alignment of Mental Health Vocational Support with the Adult Intake function will strengthen pathways and relationships for the team to access community support. A newly appointed Social Isolation and Loneliness Support Worker has further strengthened connection opportunities and community partnerships for people at risk of isolation.

Community Solutions are represented on various meetings that support the wellbeing of vulnerable adults including the Complex Cases Group, Substance Misuse meetings, the Channel Panel and MARAC.

There has been borough-wide support for the Ukraine refugee schemes supporting and enabling over 100 sponsoring households and guests. Work continues supporting the Council's response to the cost of living crisis including pathways to access support such as the warm spaces network and food clubs.

Funding has been secured to tackle health inequalities in respect of marginalised groups such as residents with immigration restrictions. Alongside colleagues from the voluntary and community sector, we have appointed a voluntary organisation to lead the support and co-ordination of work in this area.

Work with the domestic abuse programme lead will help to develop and contribute to the strengthening of domestic abuse pathways and service provision in the borough.

The Metropolitan Police

Developments and Improvements in Safeguarding Adults Practice

Recognising the challenges faced by Police Constables in identifying and responding to mental health vulnerabilities, our mental health Detective Sergeant is rolling out training to Emergency Response Policing Teams. This will include training around the Mental Capacity Act and identifying risk indicators of suicide.

We have worked to support frontline officers with the migration from paper sectioning forms under Section 136, to a digital form which will streamline the process and make it more auditable.

We have worked closely with health partners to divert mental health users away from A&E into the Crisis Care Unit based at Goodmayes Hospital to reduce demand and improve the experience of users in a health based place of safety.

The capacity of our missing persons unit has been increased to allow investigations of high risk missing persons, many of whom are vulnerable adults, requiring complex safeguarding interventions.

Contribution to Multi-agency Safeguarding Practice and Partnership Working Arrangements

The Police currently Chair the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) fortnightly meeting, which supports vulnerable victims of domestic abuse. We engage with partners in supporting suicide prevention, including training for staff. We are also a critical partner for the implementation of Safeguarding Adult Reviews and attend the SAB's Complex Cases Group meeting to discuss high risk cases and support the management of risks, where relevant.

NHS North East London Integrated Care System (formerly Barking and Dagenham NHS Clinical Commissioning Group)

Developments and Improvements in Safeguarding Adults Practice

The Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adults has continued to engage with the wider safeguarding agenda in Barking and Dagenham as well as across London by attending London-wide safeguarding forums. Any best practice and updates from these forums continue to be shared with services across Barking and Dagenham. The Integrated Care

System (ICS) continues to plan for upcoming Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) and there is a LPS Manager who now in post. This is a system-wide role working with health and social care providers across Barking and Dagenham to help prepare for the implementation of the new framework.

Contribution to Multi-agency Safeguarding Practice and Partnership Working Arrangements

The Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adults has continued to chair the Local Quality Surveillance Group which supports assurance and safeguarding work in relation to care homes, supported living schemes, and domiciliary care providers. Representatives from the Local Authority Quality Assurance Teams and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) regularly attend this forum to provide updates where concerns are raised. The Director for Nursing from NHS NEL has continued chairing the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) Committee. The Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adults attends the Community Safety Partnership in Barking and Dagenham as well as the Domestic Abuse Operational Group. NHS NEL's Liberty Protection Safeguards Manager continues to be involved in the LPS Task and Finish Group which oversees the preparations for the implementation of the new framework across Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge. NHS NEL are responsible for seeking assurance that providers are fulfilling their legislative duties in relation to safeguarding adults in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and Care Act 2014. The Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adults continues to engage with providers in Barking and Dagenham and attends assurance meetings held by providers.

Barking Havering and Redbridge University Hospital Trust (BHRUT)

Developments and Improvements in Safeguarding Adults Practice

Safeguarding training has been strengthened in relation to Domestic Abuse with signposting online learning programmes. An audit has been completed to review 'Staff Knowledge and Evaluation of Staff Training using the Safeguarding Adult Framework'. Participation in the Trusts Ward Accreditation Scheme during 2021/22 enabled the Safeguarding Team to identify any deficits in staff knowledge and address them immediately and this included learning around the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS).

Safeguarding activity is included in a quarterly safeguarding dashboard and progress report which is presented at the Trust's Safeguarding Operational and Safeguarding Strategic and Assurance Groups, Quality Governance Steering Group and at the Quality Assurance Committee (sub-group of the Trust Board).

The Trust's new Safeguarding Strategy was launched on the 22nd April 2021. The work undertaken to achieve the Priorities within the Safeguarding Strategy is aligned to the Safeguarding Annual Workplan and the Safeguarding Audit Schedule.

Training staff at all safeguarding levels has remained a key driver throughout the reporting period, with a focus on adapting our training methods to ensure that key areas receive the support they require during a time of significant clinical pressure. Training at end of year Year-end compliance with Safeguarding Adults Levels 1 and 2 training achieved both the CCG's year-end KPI of 90% and the Trust's own internal target of 95%, with compliance levels on 31 March 2022 achieving 100% for Level 1 and 97% for Level 2. Level 3 year-end training compliance achieved 93%.

Safeguarding cases are discussed at the Trust's Patient Safety Summits and at the Trust's Safeguarding Case Discussion meetings, which are advertised Trust-wide and attended by all disciplines. The Safeguarding Adults Team remained visible in clinical areas during the reporting period.

Contribution to Multi-agency Safeguarding Practice and Partnership Working Arrangements

North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT)

Developments and Improvements in Safeguarding Adults Practice

Significant work continues across the safeguarding and operational teams to constantly improve patient safety and standards of care. The Safeguarding Advice Service continues to be a well-used resource. Safeguarding governance has been strengthened through this reporting period. The Safeguarding Strategy is being refreshed in partnership with staff and service users. The strategy will inform the Trust, service users and partner agencies of the key safeguarding objectives and our plans going forward are underpinned by and aligned to the Trust values, objectives and outcomes.

Following an allegation of serious sexual assault reported in the Acute and Rehabilitation Directorate inpatient hospital, four workstreams were identified to support the service users affected by this incident, work with safeguarding and police partners in the statutory process and to support the Trust to improve sexual safety on the inpatient mental health wards. This work built on the sexual safety collaborative workstream that had been led by the clinical effectiveness team.

Online interactive safeguarding training has also been commissioned to further support staff including safeguarding children supervision skills training, exploitation (including criminal and sexual exploitation across the age ranges), gangs training and domestic abuse. All training sessions have been well received by staff.

Mandatory Safeguarding adult training has been reviewed to ensure compliance with the adult safeguarding guidance. This has been agreed and the mapping of eligibility for each level of training has been completed. The mandatory training matrix was updated in April 2021 to reflect the updated training offer. A bespoke safeguarding training package was delivered to the Trust Board in December 2021. To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding training, the Safeguarding Team will be working with the Quality Improvement and Clinical Effectiveness team to assess how learning outcomes will be measured.

There has been an increase in Prevent information requests being received by NELFT. The Trust Prevent Lead has identified the need to improve the information sharing agreements. Specific justification is required for each request in order to be compliant with data protection legislation. The Trust requires assurances that the service user has consented for NELFT to share their information or the requester must provide a legitimate justification for why consent has not been sought. The Trust Prevent Lead has been working with the Regional Serious Violence and Contextual Safeguarding Lead (London) and Serious Violence Coordinator Safeguarding Lead NHS England to resolve this issue and to embed a more robust information sharing pathway.

NELFT have recently reviewed their governance structure. The review of governance was an opportunity to strengthen safeguarding governance within the Trust. As such a Safeguarding Assurance Group had been established. This group supersedes the previous Senior Safeguarding Meeting and has a wider membership reflecting the ethos of safeguarding being everybody's business.

To strengthen leadership within the Safeguarding Team an interim post of Head of Safeguarding and Serious Incidents has been recruited to. It is planned to review this role within the current Quality Governance/Safeguarding structure with the aim of a substantive post being created.

A new Mental Health Legislation Team has been set up with responsibility for both the Mental Health Act and Mental Capacity Act/DoLS. The aim is to provide a single integrated approach to mental health legislation across the Trust. This post will support preparation for Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS).

Contribution to Multi-agency Safeguarding Practice and Partnership Working Arrangements

During 2021/22 NELFT have continue to prioritise safeguarding partnership working, attendance and participation at partnership meetings at both a strategic and operational level.

SAB members continue to work as a partnership and progress the development of partnership strategies. Following the pandemic, partners have embraced and continued to utilise technology and online meeting platforms, such as MS Teams. This has enabled them to continue its function to oversee and lead adult safeguarding in Barking and Dagenham, including delivering awareness, training and attendance at all Barking and Dagenham multi-agency meetings, including Section 42 enquiries and Safeguarding Adult Reviews.

The SAB is attended by the Integrated Care Director for Barking and Dagenham. NELFT continue to be represented and contribute at all safeguarding meetings.

The Fire Service

Developments and Improvements in Safeguarding Adults Practice

During 2021/22 the London Fire Brigade have made the following developments and improvements in our Safeguarding Adults Practice:

- Introduction of the new London Fire Brigade electronic person at risk safeguarding referral form
- Delivering bespoke safeguarding training to 150 Senior Officers
- Revising and updating our the Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Revision of the safeguarding online training for all staff (regardless of rank or role)
- Publication of our new Fire Brigade Carers Fire Safety video
- Working towards the new National Fire Chiefs Council Safeguarding Fire Standards.

Contribution to Multi-agency Safeguarding Practice and Partnership Working Arrangements

During 2021/22 the London Fire Brigade continues to be a key multi-agency safeguarding partner and make safeguarding referrals to Social Services. The London Fire Brigade Central Safeguarding Team remain an actively engaged in pan London meetings and work.

The Barking and Dagenham Fire Service supports the work of the Complex Cases Group where high risk cases are discussed. We are able to address the fire risk, provide direct support to service users and advise on hoarding in the community. We also support Safeguarding Adult Reviews where relevant.

The National Probation Service

Developments and Improvements in Safeguarding Adults Practice

2021/2022 continues to present challenges for the Probation Service. In June 2021 the new unified service was launched combining the previous National Service and 21 privately run Community Rehabilitation Companies. During this period, we have continued to move to blended caseloads and roll out mandatory training for all staff (including safeguarding training) to ensure everyone is equipped to effectively deliver services and protect the public.

We have continued to improve data quality including the recording of protective characteristics allowing for the better identification of needs for specific cohorts. The service launched Catch 22 which is a contract to deliver wellbeing services to those subject to probation supervision. This includes a suite of interventions focused on mental health and wellbeing including mentoring and low-level mental health intervention. In July 2022, we launched the local learning and development plan across Barking, Dagenham and Havering and this is thematically led to continue the professional development of all staff.

Contribution to Multi-agency Safeguarding Practice and Partnership Working Arrangements

Partnership working continues to remain a priority for the Probation Service. At a strategic level we prioritise participation in the local safeguarding boards, Community Safety Partnership and Reducing Reoffending Boards.

Operationally, we have a dedicated SPOC for the Integrated MASH and MARAC. We have good engagement from partnerships in the MAPPA and continue to drive better usage to manage risks posed to individual and the wider community.

8. Statement from the Principal Social Worker (PSW)

Introduction

This year was a significant year as social workers and other practitioners from Adult Social Care (ASC) participated in an ADASS Safeguarding Adults Peer Review. As part of this, the review team completed a case file audit to consider our Safeguarding Adults practice in more detail. The outcome was that our practice was good, but further trends are highlighted below.

During the pandemic Adult Social Work and Care Standards were developed and this year we have focussed on further embedding them into our practice. As the International Social Work theme suggests, ASC are working on building new ecosystems to support the needs of adults where they require safeguarding services, as we continue with new relationships and more robust processes with the Safeguarding Adults Complex Cases Group which now not only identifies risks, but monitors and reviews them to manage the risks with the multi-agency practitioners involved.

With many changes in our community and in Adult Social Care, we sustain investment in the workforce development of social workers and care practitioners, to cultivate and enhance the necessary skills, knowledge and values to do their work. Practitioners work alongside very vulnerable adults in the borough to support them where they have experienced neglect or abuse and to improve their health and wellbeing.

Social Work Practice in Safeguarding Adults

Social workers and care practitioners managed significant workloads of safeguarding adults practice, as there was a further increase of safeguarding concerns of 3% compared to the year before. This increase has not been reflected in our workforce and further investment in adult social care would need to occur as a consequence if this is to be sustained. Community Solutions and Adult Social Care considered 1823 safeguarding concerns overall. In the majority community safety actions were taken such as providing adults with relevant information and advice to support their safety decisions where they have the mental capacity to make their own decisions. Adults are often unaware that they had been referred to Adult Social Care for support and in keeping with Making Safeguarding Personal, they are in the driving seat to decide the outcomes they want. Many may decide that they do not want further input. 234 adults had a more in-depth Safeguarding Adults Enquiry as a social worker considered their safety and supported them with a safety plan of how to stop or

reduce the abuse or neglect. A very encouraging part of our safeguarding practice is that in 91% of cases, the risk of abuse reduced thus having a positive impact on their health and wellbeing.

Adult Social Care has continued to partake and consider the findings of the Local Government Association Safeguarding Adults Data Insight Project. This was a voluntary submission of safeguarding data, to look at trends in safeguarding across London and the country. This enabled us to identify concerns and types of abuse and use this information to shape our services and adapt our responses to better support people.

Safeguarding Adults Peer Review Case File Audit

As part of the Safeguarding Adults ADASS Peer Review a case file audit was conducted of thirty cases. Reviewers included six professionals, of which four, were Adults Principal Social Workers (PSW) from other London Boroughs. They found our practice was good and highlighted our strengths that included good use of Making Safeguarding Personal that enabled adults to make safety decisions themselves. They found that friends, family members and advocates part-took in safety arrangements and responses were timely with robust multi-agency input and safety plans were well-coordinated. ASC safeguarding practice and risk management was proportionate and there was good support offered to adults with hoarding behaviours. Social workers regularly evidenced mental capacity assessments where there was a concern that the adult may not be able to decide about their health, wellbeing and safety.

The review highlighted areas for ASC to consider in order to enhance best practice. This included that more timely risk assessments could be completed for concerns of fire and hoarding. Where the thresholds for safeguarding were not met, the recording of the next steps and actions taken to mitigate the risks, could be improved. The review noted that professional curiosity and assertiveness to explore risks and skills of cultural competence, required some attention. They added that the management oversight and systematic supervision recording could improve and that feedback to referrers could be more consistent, so that they know the outcomes of the safeguarding concerns made. We will of course endeavour to work on our practice in future and incorporate these themes within the future practice development opportunities for social workers and other practitioners.

Strength-based Social Work Forum

The Strength-based Social Work Forum continues to meet monthly and social workers have explored many topics of across social care practice with a connection to safeguarding adults. This year we explored: outcome focussed approaches to work with adults about what their priorities and aspirations are; community engagement with the third sector; coercion and

control with the Police. We have discussed the risks to adults with care and support needs who date and meet off-line, especially in light of the local murders by Steven Port, where the failings of the police and discrimination towards the LGBTQ+ community was of particular concern. The Forum used the Workforce Race Equalities Scheme (WRES) to discuss with the Standing Together Against Racism local staff network, how we best support adults in our community, especially those who are from Black, Asian or from other ethnic groups. We reflected together on some of the training delivered by BASW's Wayne Reid, around 'culturally competent practice' and where anti-discriminatory and anti-racist practice must be used to safeguard all adults in our community equally well.

Workforce Development

The PSW continues to work with Higher Educational Institutes through the North East London Teaching Partnership to ensure good quality training in safeguarding and risk management for social workers and other practitioners in Adult Social Care. This year a number of individuals completed their Continuous Professional Development in this way. Safeguarding adults managing concerns training, continues as the standard offer to social workers who carry out Section 42 Enquiries. Twenty-three Best Interest Assessors also refreshed their training to support those individuals who require a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard as part of their care or treatment.

This year a Consultant Social Worker (CSW) worked within Commissioning Services to help tailor the Direct Payments training for practitioners. We have upskilled social workers to be more professionally curious in checking whether the care needs of the adults and the money they receive, are being used appropriately to support their health and wellbeing outcomes.

A number of social workers and other practitioners participated learning and development workshops as part of the Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) for JA. This allowed closure for many who were involved in the case and have continued working with her son, to achieve his best health and wellbeing outcomes following his mother's passing.

The local authority continues to subscribe to resources such as Research in Practice (RIP) to support their learning on many safeguarding resources such as the research undertaken with survivors on domestic abuse, that featured adults from Barking and Dagenham. The resources can be found here: [The survivor voice in tackling domestic abuse | Research in Practice](#). Two Consultant Social Workers completed the Supervisors of London Course provided by RIP, as commissioned through the London ADASS PSW Network. ASC is committed to good quality supervision of social workers and practitioners to support them to risk manage cases appropriately and to ensure good management oversight on decisions made, regarding the safety of adults.

Working with People with Lived Experience (PWLE)

The Re-Imagining Adult Social Care Group has continued to meet with the Operational Director of Adults Care and Support, the Adults PSW and Consultant Social Workers. Conversations continue between stakeholders including private and voluntary organisations and groups which represent the voices of people with lived experience, to ensure their stories are considered in local service provision to keep adults safe. The Independent Living Agency, Lifeline, Age UK, Healthwatch and other organisations form part of the meetings and have played a vital role in providing perspective to the Safeguarding Adults Peer Reviewers about the need of the local community. The PSW undertook a visit to Thames Ward Community Project this year. This project supports people to be active and engaged as citizens and supports vulnerable people and adult safety.

The Consultant Social Worker group worked closely with the carers services this year, including Carers of Barking and Dagenham and the Carers Commissioner to develop the Barking and Dagenham Carers Charter. All CSW's operate as Carers Champions in ASC, as we support people who may care for adults who may require safeguarding at some point. We are now continuing to link all social workers and practitioners to a third sector engagement through the Community Engagement Project. These local relationships are critical to work with organisations and groups that support the prevention of safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding Adults Complex Cases Group

The Safeguarding Adult Complex Cases Group (SACCG) is chaired by the PSW and continues to meet monthly, as a committee of the SAB. Here safeguarding concerns are discussed relating to individuals who are at high risk of abuse or neglect and where their health and wellbeing may be compromised. The meeting is attended by statutory safeguarding adults partners, other agencies and front line professionals from across the partnership. The group work together to identify, monitor, review and manage the safeguarding risks experienced by individuals. In many cases, serious further ill health and potential loss of life have been prevented due to proactive multi agency working.

Policy Development

This year the SAB was supported by the PSW to develop the Person in Position of Trust (PIPOT) Protocol, which was ratified by the SAB in February 2022. This process now describes the responsibilities of all SAB partner agencies to refer people that may be putting an adult at risk and to manage the related risks. The policy is also in place to support people who may have caused harm, to get support.

Following on from a recent SAR it was necessary to update practitioner knowledge of how best to safeguard someone with pressure ulcers. The SAB was supported by the PSW who worked closely with the Integrated Care System, NELFT and BHRUT, Tissue Viability Services, Community Solutions, Care Home Provider Forum and Commissioning colleagues, to develop a local Pressure Ulcer Protocol.

Mental Capacity Assessment Audit

In November 2021 Adult Social Care undertook an audit of the use of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) practice, which included elements of keeping adults safe and considered some adults who need care or treatment with a Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard (DoLS) in place. The outcome was that in most cases mental capacity assessments are completed and recorded where the circumstances of the adult necessitated it. No least restrictive alternatives were found and risk management for the adults were found to be proportionate and appropriate.

Case recording was generally of good quality and timescales for episodes of intervention, for example, with care reviews were followed. There were some recommendations for improved practice which included: practitioners should ensure that all basic details are documented and reviewed; practitioners could elaborate more about how adults are supported in terms of their diversity and comment on anti-discriminatory practice; better recording and description of how an adult that has mental capacity is making unwise decisions.

Where a DoLS was in place it offered proportionate safeguards for the adults and enabled a second and independent view on their mental capacity about their care and support decisions. The report also focused on ways in which practice had to adapt during the Covid-19 pandemic included practitioners taking extra precautions when visiting care homes and people's homes. An action plan is in place to support our MCA related practice in future.

Conclusion

Social workers and practitioners work hard to protect the most vulnerable adults with care and support in the community from abuse and neglect. This statutory service continues to play a pivotal role in our society to keep the stories of adults alive and enable good health and wellbeing outcomes for people living in Barking and Dagenham.

9. Quality of Care

Overview from the Council - Adult Social Care Provider Market

The pandemic tested the resilience of our social care workforce, both within the local authority and in the provider market. However, partners from across the health and social care system have worked closely and collaboratively. Nearly all providers across residential care, and many of our supported living and extra care schemes, experienced a Covid-19 outbreak in 2021/22 and we worked closely with these providers to manage the outbreaks swiftly and safely. We did this using coordinated outbreak management teams (with input from a range of health and care professionals), infection and prevention control specialist advice, distribution of PPE and support around vaccination take-up. Our Public Health, Commissioning and Provider Quality and Improvement teams provided a seven-day support service to providers throughout most of 2021/22. This comprised of advice, information and guidance and moral support. To maintain provider capacity and workforce stability, teams sourced additional bank and agency staff for providers to draw on.

Our providers were also supported throughout 2021/22 with COVID grants from the Department of Health and Social Care which was focussed around three distinct areas: infection control, vaccinations and workforce. The fund was crucial in supporting our provider market over the course of the pandemic and came to over £3 million which was divided up through prescribed per bed/user values or as part of a wider bid process.

Most importantly the Provider Quality and Improvement team established a virtual inspection regime using Microsoft Teams which kept up monitoring activities during lockdowns. 80 provider inspections were completed between May 2021 and the end of 2022 in this virtual format, with physical visits still undertaken for providers who were high-risk on our provider risk register. In 2022 the team recommenced their physical inspection regime.

As an example of providing support to Registered Managers, the Provider Quality and Improvement Team organised psychosocial group sessions, delivered by British Red Cross practitioners, to recognise and discuss the impacts and trauma the pandemic was having on providers. The sessions were important for morale as they became a space for celebration and recognition of the work that was being done in the most difficult circumstances. They brought colleagues together through sharing feelings and experiences. Although outside of their usual remit, the team recognised the value and impact of psychosocial group therapy, knowing the biggest risk to maintaining quality and standards is provider workforces becoming burnt out and suffering mental and physical ill health. Following the sessions, the feedback from participants was very positive and we are looking to continue this support.

We continue to meet regularly with providers through our Home Care and Care Home Forums, and we will be hosting our first all provider forum for any provider registered in Barking and Dagenham since before the pandemic. This will ensure that any social care provider in Barking and Dagenham is well informed and supported by the Council. Providers are also working closely with Care Provider Voice Northeast London, who are a care provider run organisation seeking to support the social care sector. They provide support with recruitment and access to a peer support network. Recruitment and retention remains an issue across health and social care providers due to ongoing Covid-19 and Brexit issues, as well as the impact of inflation, the rise in living costs and the increase in National Living Wage. The situation is being closely monitored, particularly on the impact of placements and packages within the market. The Council is working with Havering and Redbridge to look at a sector response. An uplift has been applied for older adult homecare and care home providers and this will be reviewed again as part of the Fair Cost of Care exercises that will be undertaken over the coming months.

We continue to work in partnership to develop and commission innovative services to support discharge and reduce re-admission to hospital. We are working with Havering, Redbridge, the Hospital Trust and NELFT to continue to develop the Barking, Havering and Redbridge Integrated Discharge Hub to support the discharge of residents from hospital to the community. We have worked across all discharge pathways to improve the experience and outcomes for our residents and also to support the local acute hospital system with the demand increases for their bed base. Internally within the health system, we have worked with Havering, Redbridge, NELFT and the Hospital Trust to support the creation of community-based discharge which has driven care decisions into the community rather than keeping them based in a hospital setting. Developing a single point of access SPA (now called the Integrated Discharge Hub – IDH) for discharges across BHR has been successful and we are continuing to streamline discharge processes as the Hub progresses. Key to the success of the IDH is the trusted assessor model which situates trusted assessors of care needs on the hospital wards to increase the efficiency of assessments for placements across care settings.

We have also launched two new jointly commissioned services with the Clinical Commissioning Group (now ICB) to support discharge. The first of which was eight 'discharge to assess' beds in a nursing home in Barking and Dagenham with wrap-around therapy support designed to increase the numbers of residents going back home after a nursing home stay. The second is a Home First project in which therapists meet residents at home when they are discharged from hospital to assess their needs and to ensure that residents have access to a range of support to help their recovery and to reduce re-admission to hospital. Both of these services are being evaluated and monitored to determine the longer-term plan to benefit residents in Barking and Dagenham.

Two new Strategies have been adopted in 2021/22 to improve support to vulnerable residents in Barking and Dagenham. The Carers Charter has been adopted by all system partners within health and social care and was formally approved by Cabinet in February 2022. This acts as a framework for the delivery and development of services, working practices, identification and support of unpaid or informal carers in the borough, through a partnership approach. The Carers Charter comprises a series of “I” statements that have been co-produced with over 100 carers in the borough alongside key stakeholders from health, social care and the community and voluntary sector. Building on existing partnerships with health and the community and voluntary sector, the Charter will work towards developing effective pathways with partners to identify ‘hidden carers’. Hidden carers are those who do not recognise themselves as a carer or are not known to services as providing an informal, unpaid, caring role.

In addition to this, the Council’s Cabinet approved a new Aids and Adaptations Policy which sets out how private homeowners, housing association tenants and private tenants with disabilities will be helped through aids and adaptations to live as independently as possible in good quality homes that meet their needs. The publication of this Policy allowed Barking and Dagenham to enact six new additional grants to the current mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant usage. This includes a non means test for anything under £15,000 and some innovative Grants tailored for individuals with more specific needs. We are of the understanding that the Sensory Needs Grant is the first of its kind in the country. The Policy also enables us to designate funding towards four specific social care projects aimed at private residents, including spend towards care and care technology, minor adaptations, handypersons and an occupational therapy assessment project. The Policy enables more residents with disabilities to stay in their own home, in an environment that is better adapted to meet their needs and improve their health and wellbeing.

Finally, 2021/22 saw a tender carried out for an Innovation Partner for the management and delivery of an all-age Care Technology solution for our residents. This service moves away from the traditional reactive models of assistive technology centred around a conventional monitoring and response alert-based service, to digitally transformed health and social care systems and services centred around technology to achieve better outcomes for residents, fully harnessing the role of the wider community and support networks. This will mean embracing the full suite of technological advancement available ranging from artificial intelligence and machine learning to augmented and virtual realities to offer a truly personalised experience for our residents. The move to digital represents a huge expansion in the range and depth of available devices and data. Backed up by increased stability and reliability leading to enhanced accuracy and visibility that delivers informed choices for care recipients, their families, caregivers and the wider health and care system. Barking and Dagenham’s new Care Technology service represents a significant step for the system’s wider digital transformation journey however, there is significant scope to expand the offer,

both in terms of the user groups who can access the service and the types of technology available to support them. A Digital Transformation Strategy for Care and Support is currently being developed which will set out our wider ambitions around innovation, our use of data-insights and our commitment to a technology-first culture with service provision and in support of the wider integration agenda. We will look forward to providing an update in the next SAB Annual Report as to the impact of the new service on residents and their families.

During 2022/23, we will be monitoring and analysing the new initiatives, technology, packages and placements set out above to determine further areas for commissioning and operations and the way that we work with health partners. We will also be crucially preparing for the Adult Social Care Charging Reforms and undertaking our Fair Cost of Care market exercises with over 18 residential care and homecare provision in Barking and Dagenham. We will also be undertaking the re-tendering of extra care services in which the successful organisation will be required to provide 24-hour care and support to the residents of four schemes, including a range of personal care and support tasks which will enable residents to live independently for as long as possible.

Barking and Dagenham Primary Care Providers

Out of thirty-four GP practices in the borough twenty-nine have been rated as 'good'. This means the quality of GP services across Barking and Dagenham have improved and maintained greatly with support from NHS England, NHS NEL and the CQC.

Four practices have been rated as 'requires improvement'. Practices rated as requires improvement are supported to improve by NHS NEL primary care support staff. Common areas of development include safeguarding, education and training, practice policy updates and communication.

One practice is rated as 'inadequate'. NHS NEL continue to engage with the practice management team and have a robust support plan in place which is reviewed regularly to ensure the quality of service from this GP practice improves. NHS NEL are working closely alongside the CQC and the GP Federation to ensure that whilst changes are made, patients continue to receive good quality, safe care.

Partnership Priorities

The board regularly considers the work of the SAB in light of the changing contexts of:

- (i) health, social care and public protection nationally and locally
- (ii) objectives, views, emerging risks and financial pressures of partner organisations.

The board recognises that it needs to have oversight of safeguarding practice and performance in the borough to ensure that quality of care is not compromised or that there is avoidable harm and abuse. The SAB has a role to play in supporting the workforce across the partnership, ensuring that they have the skills and competencies to fulfill their roles.

The board agreed a Three-Year Strategic Plan in 2019/22. Specific priority areas for attention in 2021/22 were identified as:

- Safeguarding in relation to people who present challenging behaviour to their carers.
- Reviewing commissioning approaches to restrictive practices and restraint.
- Avoidable deaths and harm in hospitals.
- 'Transitional care', particularly of children and young adults with disabilities.
- Homelessness and people with no recourse to public funds, including identification in hospitals.
- Exploitation of vulnerable adults, improving practice in relation to financial and sexual abuse and modern slavery.
- Domestic abuse.
- Mental capacity and advocacy in relation to new approaches to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) and the forthcoming implementation of new law around Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS).
- Mental well-being in the community.
- Poverty, neglect and self-neglect in relations to safeguarding concerns.

With regard to the SAB’s priorities for 2022/23 and beyond we have updated our thinking and published some revised priorities in line with current developments and learning across the partnership. Below sets out our revised priorities in tabulated form.

Priorities	How will we work to implement these?	Assurance	Learning & Development	Delivery
1. Support for Hoarding and Self Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a hoarding and self neglect policy and guidance document. • Deliver a pathway and programme of support for service users experiencing hoarding and self neglect. • Develop practice around self-neglect, mental capacity, people’s exercise of their ‘rights to choose’. 	✓	✓	✓
2. Implement a Learning and Development Committee to deliver joint multi agency learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a multi-agency audit programme. • Provide assurance around learning from SARs and LeDeR reports undertaken in Barking and Dagenham and across London. 	✓	✓	
3. Preparing for CQC regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement learning from the Adult Safeguarding Peer Review. • Support the development of a Safeguarding MASH, (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) in Adult Social Care, to enable safe and effective triage of all safeguarding being managed in one place. • Assurance from Community Solutions and the ‘front door’ around safeguarding referrals. 	✓		✓

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being alert to abuse and harm which is not visible and identify indicators and communicate with others to ensure a good practice response. 			
4. Joining up with children’s social care on key cross cutting themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitional safeguarding. • ‘Think Family’ approach. • Domestic abuse. 	✓	✓	✓
5. Develop governances, safeguarding and quality interfaces with North East London Integrated Care Board (NEL ICS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnership structures to support safeguarding. • Support joint working across NEL in cross cutting issues. 	✓	✓	
6. Develop a community safeguarding offer and preventative offer for adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop plans for a stronger community-based and community-led offer for prevention of the escalation of social care needs. • Stronger community-focused support around safeguarding intervention and reporting. • Develop an effective process to engage with the personal experiences and hearing the voices, of people with lived experience of safeguarding. • Strengthen training and awareness of generalist staff, including for example enforcement, caretakers and protectors of the public realm. • Build better community awareness of mental wellbeing through campaigns and other mental health preventive initiatives. 	✓	✓	✓

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen and reinforce awareness of exploitation in all its possible forms and clarity of appropriate responses to cases which become known or suspected.			
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Safeguarding Information

For further information about safeguarding and information about the Safeguarding Adults Board please use the following link

[Safeguarding adults at risk of abuse or neglect | London Borough of Barking and Dagenham \(lbbd.gov.uk\)](https://lbbd.gov.uk)

To report a safeguarding concern:

Adult Triage, Community Solutions

020 8227 2915

intaketeam@lbbd.gov.uk

safeguardingAdults@lbbd.gov.uk



**In an emergency:
Call 999 and ask for the Police**

Call 101 if you are worried but it is not an emergency.

Out of Hours Emergency Social Work Duty Team

020 8594 8356

adult.edt@nhs.net



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ASSEMBLY**25 January 2023**

Title: Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24 and Council Tax Support Fund	
Report of the Cabinet Members for Finance, Growth and Core Services and Community Leadership and Engagement	
Open Report	For Decision
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: Yes
Report Authors: James Johnston, Welfare Relationship Manager & Donna Radley, Head of Welfare	Contact Details: james.johnston@lbbd.gov.uk donna.radley@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Stephen McGinnes, Director of Support & Collections	
Accountable Strategic Leadership Director: Fiona Taylor, Acting Chief Executive	
Summary	
<p>The Council has a statutory duty to consider annually whether to revise its Local Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme for working age recipients, replace it with another scheme or retain the current scheme. This excludes the scheme that exists for pension age recipients which is a nationally prescribed scheme and cannot be varied locally.</p> <p>At its meeting on 12 July 2022 (Minute 16 refers), the Cabinet supported a revised CTS scheme for 2023/24 which would reduce the minimum payment applied within the CTS scheme from 25% to 15% of the individual Council Tax bill, as a way of supporting low-income residents during the cost-of-living crisis.</p> <p>Due to the changes proposed to the CTS scheme, it was necessary for a public consultation to be undertaken in advance, which was carried out between 5 September and 5 October 2022.</p> <p>A detailed analysis of the responses to the CTS consultation is set out at Appendix 1. This reflects support for the proposal to reduce the minimum payment applied within the CTS scheme from 25% to 15%.</p> <p>The Assembly has a legal duty to approve the CTS scheme by 31 January each year.</p> <p>This report also refers to proposals relating to the notification received from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on 23 December 2022 of a £405,573 grant to provide additional support to low income households in receipt of CTS with their Council Tax payments. The grant, which is to be administered through the Council's discretionary powers, is intended to provide a further rebate of up to £25 per household and is expected to benefit approx. 15,000 low-income households in receipt of Council Tax Support. The additional support will be provided as a reduction on the bill and will not require an application to be made.</p>	

The Cabinet is due to consider this report at its meeting on 17 January 2023 (the date of publication of this Assembly agenda) and it has been assumed, for the purposes of this report, that the Cabinet supported the proposed recommendations. Any issues arising from the Cabinet meeting will be reported to the Assembly.

Recommendation(s)

The Assembly is recommended to:

- (i) Note that the Cabinet agreed to implement an additional one-off reduction of up to £25.00 for households in receipt of Council Tax Support and to delegate authority to the Director of Support and Collections, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core Services, to determine and implement a scheme for its delivery in line with the guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities;
- (ii) Agree, in light of the positive response to the public consultation, to adopt Model 2, as detailed in the report, as the CTS Scheme for 2023/24, which would reduce the minimum payment from 25% to 15% of the individual Council Tax bill, as a way of supporting low-income residents during the cost-of-living crisis; and
- (iii) Note that a fundamental review of the CTS scheme shall be undertaken in preparation for the determination of the CTS scheme for 2024/25, with a view to providing a more transparent and simple approach, with predictable levels of support, via a new banded scheme.

Reason(s)

To assist the Council in achieving its vision of 'One Borough; One Community; No-One Left Behind' by supporting low-income residents during the cost-of-living crisis.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1. The Welfare Reform Act in 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit (CTB) from April 2013 and, in its place, support took the form of a local Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS).
- 1.2. The Local Government Finance Act 2012 contains provisions for the setting up of local support schemes. The current scheme in Barking & Dagenham has been based around the Default Council Tax Reduction Scheme and has been ratified by Assembly.
- 1.3. Local schemes must take account of and support the following principles:
 - Work incentives and avoid disincentives for those moving into work
 - The Council's duties to protect vulnerable people (under the Equality Act 2010, the Care Act 2014, the Child Poverty Act 2010 and the Housing Act 1996)
 - The Armed Forces Covenant
- 1.4. The current scheme in operation ensures that:

- The support for claimants is based on each individual's ability to pay through a means tested approach.
- Pensioners are protected under the nationally prescribed pension age CTS scheme and must be able to receive up to a 100% reduction under the national scheme rules
- A "minimum payment" of 25% of their Council Tax liability is required for all working age claimants in Barking & Dagenham irrespective of their financial circumstances
- Those who are not pensioners and with capital in excess of £10,000 are not eligible for CTS under this scheme

1.5 Expenditure on the CTS scheme has declined year on year, with the exception being the 2020/21 financial year due to the impact of Covid-19. The CTS caseload has also declined year on year with the value of CTS awards also reducing during this period for working age claimants. This is due to the Universal Credit (UC) Migration, as recipients of UC receive lower levels of Council Tax Support through the means testing process. The recipient also has to undertake a work commitment with UC and increase their hours or wages which reduces entitlement further.

1.6 The Council must consider whether to revise or replace its CTS scheme each financial year, for working age recipients. However, it does not actually have to revise or replace its scheme and can choose to retain the scheme unchanged from the prior financial year.

1.7 The scheme that exists for pension age recipients is a national scheme prescribed by regulations and this cannot be varied at a local level. Prescribed regulation changes to the pension age scheme must be applied.

1.8 In order to change its scheme the Council is required by law to:

- Consult with the major precepting authorities
- Consult with other persons it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme

2. Proposal and Issues

2.1 The current CTS scheme has a minimum payment of 25% for all working age claimants irrespective of financial circumstance. This is the minimum payment and the contribution rate is dependent on income levels.

2.2 The 25% minimum payment was introduced in the 2015/16 CTS scheme to reduce overall CTS expenditure due to ongoing budget pressures through the reduction in Central Government funding for Local Authorities.

2.3 A majority of London Boroughs have minimum payments within their CTS schemes that are less than the 25% currently applied. As the table below shows, only 6 out of 31 Boroughs have comparable or higher minimum contributions, meaning Barking and Dagenham has one of the less supportive minimum payment rates in Greater London. This equates to the 4th highest minimum payment in cash terms in Greater London of £446.20 for a Band D property, irrespective of financial circumstances.

London Borough	Scheme Type	Minimum Payment %	Band D payment
Barking & Dagenham	Means tested	25%	£446.20
Westminster	Means Tested	0%	£0.00
Wandsworth	Means Tested	30%	£259.81
Hammersmith & Fulham	Means Tested	0%	£0.00
Kensington & Chelsea	Means Tested	0%	£0.00
Newham	Means Tested	10%	£153.22
Tower Hamlets	Means Tested	0%	£0.00
Southwark	Means Tested	0%	£0.00
Lambeth	Means Tested	20%	£332.04
Hackney	Means Tested	15%	£250.66
Hillingdon	Income Banded	10%	£165.88
Greenwich	Means Tested	0%	£0.00
Islington	Means Tested	8.5%	£145.37
Ealing	Income Banded	25%	£433.87
Bromley	Means Tested	25%	£434.18
Barnet	Income Banded	28%	£411.40
Hounslow	Means Tested	0%	£0.00
Merton	Means Tested	0%	£0.00
Camden	Income Banded	0%	£0.00
Brent	Income banded	0%	£0.00
Lewisham	Means Tested	25%	£454.20
Redbridge	Means Tested	15%	£279.51
Enfield	Means Tested	24.5%	£451.21
Haringey	Means Tested	0%	£0.00
Bexley	Income Banded	20%	£384.59
Waltham Forest	Means Tested	24%	£465.58
Sutton	Income Banded	20%	£386.24
Croydon	Means Tested	15%	£294.84
Havering	Means Tested	20%	£394.19
Harrow	Income Banded	30%	£612.62

Richmond upon Thames	Means Tested	0%	£0.00
Kingston upon Thames	Means Tested	0%	£0.00

2.4 Analysis from the IFS ¹ has showed a direct link between higher minimum payments in CTS schemes and lower overall Council Tax collection rates.

Minimum payment level in CTS (liability restriction)	Estimated effect on Council Tax collection rate
Up to 8.5%	-0.09%
8.6 to 20%	-0.24%
Over 20%	-0.49%

2.5 Research also undertaken by the New Policy Institute (NPI) indicates a strong relationship between levels of minimum payments and Council Tax arrears and collection rates. This research indicates that there is a marked increase in arrears where the minimum payment is above 20% of liability and Councils with the largest increases in unpaid Council Tax were those with the highest minimum payments. 2

2.6 Consideration should be given to the ability to pay Council Tax. The collection rate for CTS claimants for 2020/21 was 87.6%. against an overall collection rate of 93.18%. In 2021/22, the collection rate for CTS claimants was 87.9% against an overall collection rate of 93.64%. The collection rate for CTS claimants in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) is lower at 83.1%.

2.7 The ongoing migration of the legacy benefit caseload to UC poses a risk to collection rates.

2.8 Current poverty trackers confirm Barking & Dagenham to have the lowest (worst average rank) combining the 10 poverty indicators in the Greater London area.

2.9 Since 2015/16 Council Tax has risen by a total of 34% in the borough. This results in a real term cut to the value of the CTS award over the period due to the minimum payment applied.

2.10 The current CTS scheme does not provide the same level of support to residents of the borough that was provided in 2015/16 and arguably does not provide sufficient support to residents in light of the socio-economic demographics and poverty indicators within the borough.

2.11 In light of these issues, the Cabinet considered a report at its meeting on 12 July 2022 on different options and models for the 2023/24 CTS scheme.

2.12 The options considered were as follows:

- (i) Maintain the 2022/23 scheme for 2023/24
- (ii) Maintain the 2022/23 scheme with changes to the % minimum payment

¹ Adam, Joyce & Pope – ‘the impacts of localised CTS schemes – IFS – 2019

² NPI analysis of collection rates 2012/13 to 2015/16 & Are Cuts to CTS in England a false economy for Councils – 2017

(iii) Implementation of a completely new 'Banded' CTS scheme

- 2.13 The Cabinet supported option (ii) and, in doing so, assessed three different models:
- Model 1: 5% reduction in the minimum payment amount to 20%
 - Model 2: 10% reduction in the minimum payment amount to 15%
 - Model 3: 15% reduction in the minimum payment amount of 10%
- 2.14 Model 1 was held to provide additional support for low-income residents of the borough but retained a minimum payment amount that could be considered too high against the socio-economic demographics of the borough.
- 2.15 Model 2 was held to balance the need to better support low-income residents of the borough, including the most financially excluded, with their ongoing Council Tax costs. Residents would be supported with their ongoing cost of living through an increase in the value of the CTS award, reducing the payable Council Tax charge, increasing resident income, and this was balanced against the financial cost to the Council.
- 2.16 Although Model 3 provided the highest relief, it was acknowledged that it had significant cost implications and financial impact for the Council for implementation in 2023/24.
- 2.17 The Cabinet supported Model 2 and noted that officers would progress the necessary public consultation in order for the Assembly to consider the revised scheme at this meeting.
- 2.18 The Cabinet also expressed its support for a fundamental review of the CTS scheme to be undertaken in preparation for the determination of the CTS scheme for 2024/25, with a view to providing a more transparent and simple approach, with predictable levels of support, via a new banded scheme. It was acknowledged that such a detailed review would have a lead-in time of approximately 18 months for evaluation, modelling and public consultation.
- 2.19 On 23 December 2022, notification was received from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) of a £100m Council Tax Support Fund to provide additional support in 2023/24 to low-income households in receipt of CTS with their Council Tax payments. Barking and Dagenham has been allocated £405,573 grant funding.
- 2.20 The guidance issued by DLUHC is very prescriptive as to how the grant funding should be allocated, albeit that the grant is to be administered through the Council's discretionary powers. The guidance states that households in receipt of CTS should receive up to £25, although this sum may be lower depending on the total number of eligible households (or if the household's remaining liability after CTS is below £25). The additional support will be provided as a reduction on the bill and will not require an application to be made.

3. Options Appraisal

- 3.1 As referred to above, the Cabinet considered three main options for a revised or replacement CTS scheme.

- Maintain the current scheme
- Maintain the current scheme with changes to the % minimum payment
- Implementation of a completely new 'Banded' CTS scheme

3.2 The implementation of a completely new 'Banded' CTS scheme requires the following:

- Engagement with members, residents & voluntary sector groups to obtain feedback on future changes
- High level principles of a scheme change to be agreed
- Engagement of an external third party to undertake scheme & financial modelling
- CSG and Cabinet approval
- Public consultation
- ICT engagement for implementation

3.3 Within this options appraisal consideration was given to changes to the % minimum payment and the replacement of the scheme with a new banded scheme.

3.4 A replacement of the current CTS scheme with a new banded scheme is an undertaking that has a significant cost and time implication in the modelling of a replacement scheme and the appointment of an external partner to support the modelling process.

3.5 An 18-month period is required for evaluation and modelling of a revised or new CTS scheme once a full evaluation has been undertaken.

3.6 It is recommended that this process is now commenced with consideration for the implementation of a new CTS scheme for 2024/25.

3.7 A revised scheme for 2023/24 with a change to the minimum payment amount is feasible in the time frame currently available.

3.8 The options appraisal has the following options for a revision of the CTS scheme 2023/24:

- Model 1: 5% reduction in the minimum payment amount to 20%
- Model 2: 10% reduction in the minimum payment amount to 15%
- Model 3: 15% reduction in the minimum payment amount of 10%

3.9 Model 1 is held to provide additional support for low-income residents of the borough but does retain a minimum payment amount that may be considered too high against the socio-economic demographics of the borough.

3.10 Model 2 is held to balance the need to better support low-income residents of the borough, including the most financially excluded, with their ongoing Council Tax costs. Residents will be supported with their ongoing cost of living through an increase in the value of the CTS award, reducing the payable Council Tax charge, increasing resident income, and this is balanced against the financial cost to the Council. For those reasons Model 2 is recommended.

- 3.11 Model 3 has significant cost implications and financial impact for the Council for implementation.
- 3.12 An options appraisal was not considered in respect of the Council Tax Support Fund due to the prescriptive nature of the DLUHC guidance.

4. Consultation process and feedback

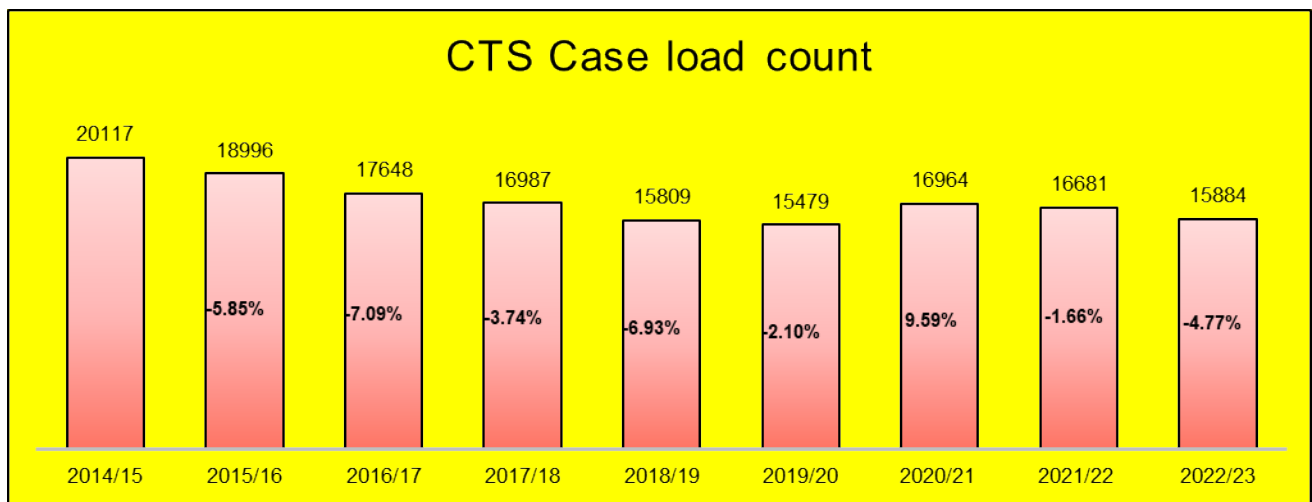
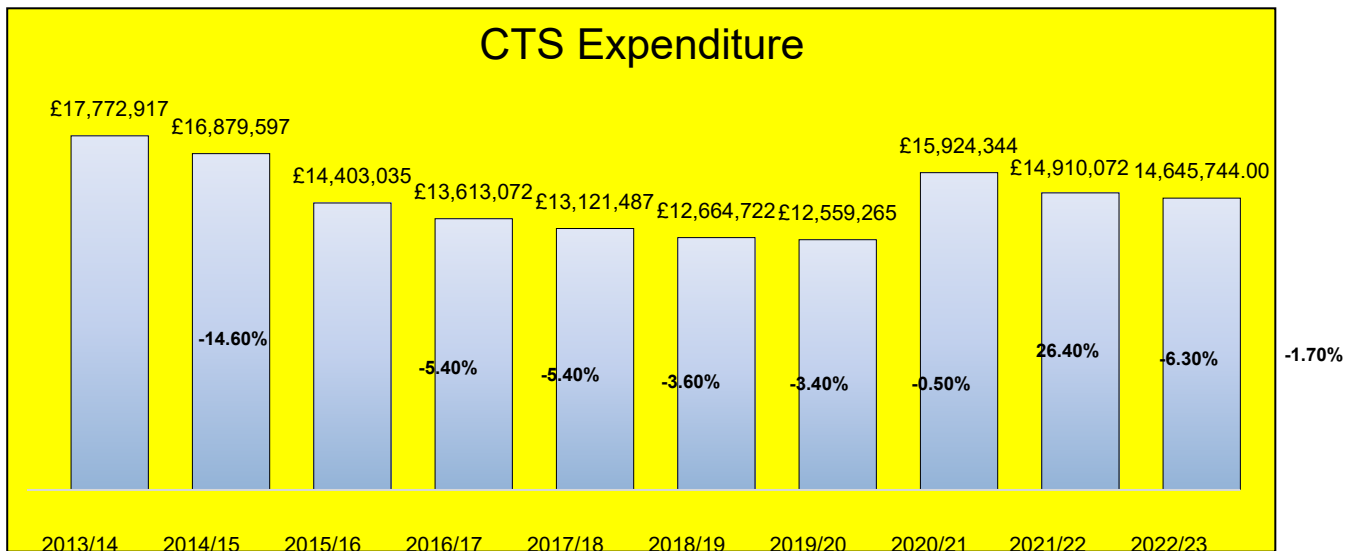
- 4.1 Prior to the implementation of any change to the CTS scheme the Council is required to consult with the residents of the borough.
- 4.2 A consultation on proposed changes to the CTS scheme was run between 5 September and 5 October 2022.
- 4.3 The survey was available and open to all Barking & Dagenham residents and stakeholders with an interest in the operation of the CTS scheme.
- 4.4 The consultation was promoted on the Citizens Alliance Network website alongside the main Council website. Social media was used to promote and advertise the consultation on Council Facebook and Twitter pages.
- 4.5 The consultation was also widely promoted with internal Council teams and was also directly promoted with key partner voluntary organisations. Outreach services were promoted and available at the Thames View and Marks Gate community HUBS to support residents with the completion of the survey. Notification letters for all current Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support claims were also inserted with paragraphs promoting the consultation.
- 4.6 A total of 87 residents and other organisations responded to the consultation survey. All responses were received through the online survey. Citizens Advice responded through a separate written response.
- 4.7 Attached at Appendix 1 is the 'Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24 Consultation Report' which provides a detailed analysis of the responses to the consultation. As the report shows, a majority of those surveyed (59%) supported the proposed change to reduce the minimum payment within the Council Tax Support scheme to 15% (from 25%) of the Council Tax bill.
- 4.8 The Cabinet is due to consider this report at its meeting on 17 January 2023 (the date of publication of this Assembly agenda). Any issues arising from the Cabinet meeting will be reported to the Assembly.

5. Financial Implication

Implications completed by: Phillipa Farrell, Head of Service Finance

- 5.1 The Council is required to maintain a CTS Scheme. This is now funded as part of the Council's overall funding settlement and so any increases or decreases in take up or cost fall upon the Council's budget (rather than being provided for by a grant) and becomes a cost to the authority's budget in the following financial year.

- 5.2 CTS expenditure has reduced year on year from the commencement of a localised CTS scheme in 2012/13 and will vary based on demand. This would infer that poverty in the Borough is decreasing but this is not the case. The threshold has remained static since around 2014. It has not been updated to reflect the cost of living. As part of the proposed changes the threshold will be altered to reflect the economic climate.
- 5.3 The impact of Covid-19 within the 2020/21 financial year saw significantly increased demand for access to the scheme resulting in an increase in expenditure of 26.4% and a CTS case load increase of approximately 10%. This was due to people who were employment but lost that income during the pandemic.
- 5.4 Expenditure and case load has again reduced in the 2021/22 & 2022/23 financial years.



- 5.5 The current CTS expenditure for the working age scheme for 2022/23 is currently £9,425,605.09.
- 5.6 The CTS case load has declined on average by -4.5% over the last 7 years (excluding 2020/21 – Impact of Covid-19). This average reduction in the case load (-4.5%) is costed at £424,152.22

- 5.7 The option that has been recommended is to initially reduce the minimum % to be applied in the CTS scheme. This will be an immediate response whilst a more fundamental redesign of the CTS scheme is undertaken. The financial implications has focused on the initial reduction as the redesign work has not commenced at this point.
- 5.8 A reduction in the minimum payment amount will see a corresponding increase in case load as more households become eligible. This can be modelled as follows, based on the 2021/22 case load to determine possible increased expenditure.

	Increase in expenditure
5% reduction in minimum payment	8.34%
10% reduction in minimum payment	16.29%
15% reduction in minimum payment	24.28%

- 5.9 A change to the minimum payment is likely to see the natural reduction in case load partially offset against an increase in case load from a change to the minimum payment amount. This cannot be accurately modelled.
- 5.10 The Council has chosen to reduce the contribution to 15% the cost of this is £1.2m to the Council.

Proposal Reduction:	Reduction to current level	Cost	LBBD Share 77.84%	GLA Share 22.16%	Community Solution Reserve Contribution	Pressure on Central Resource (Wider Organisational Impact)
Reduce to 15%	10%	£1,584k	£1,233k	£351k	£767k	£466k

- 5.11 The projected increase in case load is considered the most accurate financial model for the cost of implementing a scheme change to the minimum payment amount.
- 5.12 It should be noted that the above modelling relates only to the changes proposed for 2023/24. It does not model any impact on the more fundamental changes proposed. This modelling and consideration of the financial impact will be brought through the MTFS this financial year but following consultation outcome an update will be taken to the MTFS as of October 2023. However, it should be noted that should a lower level be approved for 2023/24 it will likely be the minimum level the Council will have to fund ongoing.
- 5.13 The Council has a reserve amount of c£767k within Community Solutions and a contribution from a central reserve (Welfare Reserve) of £466k, will fund the CTS scheme for 2023/24. Please note that the GLA will meet the GLA specific costs. This is a reserve amount and once used cannot be used again. Therefore, the ongoing impact would be a gap in the MTSF of a corresponding amount.
- 5.14 It should be noted that as part of the response to the cost-of-living crisis the Council proposed a ringfenced reserve of £4.5m (Welfare Reserve) be created as part of the 2021/22 outturn cabinet report. This one-off funding is available should the

Council wish to consider the alternative models proposed. However, it should be noted that this would then likely form the minimum requirement in future years creating a gap in the MTFS.

- 5.15 CTS is one of the most cost-effective ways for the Council to tackle financial pressures faced by constituents. But it is not the only mechanism and is not going to have an impact until next year, this should be kept in mind when considering the allocation of resource. The Welfare Reserve will be required for other initiatives so consideration of this needs to be taken in account. The cost-of-living crisis impact is already beginning to have impact and therefore this funding should also be considered for more immediate impact.
- 5.16 As outlined above any commitment here will be difficult to step back from and therefore the long-term impact on the MTFS should be considered and is a considerable risk. Community Solutions has submitted a growth bid to the MTFS to deliver a banded CTS scheme from 2024/25. The growth bid is detailed below. This is approved subject to savings proposals being found to provide a balanced financial position.

Year	Proposal	LBBB Full cost Impact	Incremental Cost	Funding
2024/25	New Scheme	£2,072k	£2,072k	MTFS Growth Bid Approved pending savings proposals
2025/26	New Scheme	£2,575k	£503k	
2026/27	New Scheme	£3,093k	£518k	

- 5.17 The award of £405k from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has no financial impact on the Council, as we are an intermediary passing the grant on to low-income households on CTS.

6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Dr. Paul Feild, Principal Standards & Governance Lawyer

- 6.1 As the CTS is being changed it is a statutory requirement for the Council to carry out consultation on the changes as set out by the Local Government Finance Act 1992 Schedule 1A paragraph 5 and that paragraph 3 of the said Act.
- 6.2 This paper sets out the consultation and responses in the final decision-making process on the proposal to change the CTS scheme.
- 6.3 Since the introduction of CTS schemes there have been a number of legal challenges in relation to the consultation undertaken. Most of these challenges have been relation to the consultation undertaken in the sense of it being meaningful and to due regard to equality impact assessments. As determined by a Supreme Court ruling in 2014 R (Moseley) v London Borough of Haringey, consultation is critical when there is a possibility of an adverse outcome. However, with regard to the recommended proposal the outcome is to establish greater support for those eligible to CTS.

7. Other Issues

- 7.1 **Risk Management** - The risks associated with implementing and operating a revised scheme with a reduced minimum payment are considered to be low with the endorsement of the scheme change by residents and stakeholders to further reduce any associated risk. It is considered likely that keeping the current scheme unchanged will continue to make it difficult to collect Council Tax from those entitled to a reduction under the scheme.

The current minimum payment of 25% required for all working age claimants will continue to disproportionately affect the lowest socio-economic group and not provide the required level of support to residents of the borough.

With the cost of the scheme determined by demand, there remains a risk that future fluctuations in demand could place an additional financial burden on the Council.

- 7.2 **Corporate Policy and Equality Impact** - An Equality Impact Assessment of the proposed CTS scheme 2023/24 has been undertaken and is attached at Appendix 2.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- [LBBD -Council Tax Support Scheme 2022-23.pdf](#)
- www.gov.uk/government/publications/council-tax-support-fund-guidance

List of appendices:

- **Appendix 1:** Council Tax Support scheme consultation – full report
- **Appendix 2:** Council Tax Support Scheme Review 2023/24 - Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)



Community Solutions

Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24

Consultation Report

Author

James Johnston

Revenues & Benefits

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Introduction and background

The Welfare Reform Act in 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit (CTB) from April 2013 and, in its place, support took the form of a local Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS).

Council Tax Support is a means tested discounts for Council Tax. The amount of the discount awarded is based on the income and size of the household. A means test is applied, and an award granted for those eligible. This discount is applied directly to the Council Tax account to reduce the amount to be paid.

The Local Government Finance Act 2012 contains provisions for the setting up of local support schemes. The current scheme in Barking & Dagenham has been based around the Default Council Tax Support Scheme

The Council has a statutory duty to consider annually whether to revise its Local Council Tax Support scheme for working age recipients, replace it with another scheme or retain the current scheme. This excludes the scheme that exists for pension age recipients which is a nationally prescribed scheme and cannot be varied locally.

The scheme must be approved by Assembly by the 31 January 2023.

The current Council Tax Support scheme has a minimum payment of 25% of the Council Tax bill for all working age claimants irrespective of financial circumstance.

This was introduced in the 2015/16 Council Tax Support scheme.

With the current cost of living increasing the Council wants to better support low-income residents of the borough with their ongoing Council Tax costs.

The Council is proposing to:

- **Reduce the minimum payment applied within the scheme from the current 25% to a reduced minimum payment of 15%**

Where there are significant changes proposed to the Council Tax Support scheme, it is necessary for a public consultation to be undertaken which requires early consideration of any proposed changes.

The Council Tax Support scheme consultation was launched to seek the views of residents and stakeholders on these proposed changes.

The purpose of this report is to set out the Council Tax Support scheme 2023/24 consultation process and key consultation findings.

The results of this consultation will help to determine the final Council Tax Support Scheme for 2023/24 with full details of the new scheme to be published in January 2023 with the changed scheme coming into effect from the 1 April 2023.

Methodology

Barking & Dagenham Council undertook a consultation on proposed changes to the Council Tax Support scheme 2023/24 between the 05 September 2022 and 05 October 2022.

The consultation questionnaire and survey along with consultation policy documents was published online and was available through the Citizens Alliance Network website.

Residents were also able to email their views on the consultation to the Benefits department directly.

The survey was available and open to all Barking & Dagenham residents and stakeholders with an interest in the operation of the Council Tax Support scheme.

The consultation was promoted on the Citizens Alliance Network website alongside the main Council website. Social media was used to promote and advertise the consultation on Council Facebook and Twitter pages. Results from social media promotion are available later in the report.

The consultation was widely promoted with internal Council teams and was also directly promoted with key partner voluntary organisations. Outreach services were promoted and available at the Thames View and Marks Gate community HUBS to support residents with the completion of the survey. Notification letters for all current Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support claims were also inserted with paragraphs promoting the consultation.

Results for the consultation will be made available through the Council website.

Summary of results

A total of 87 residents responded to the consultation survey.

Although this is a low figure historically Council Tax Support consultations have had low engagement from residents.

Respondents did not have to answer every question so the total number of responses for each question may vary.

Every effort has been made to promote and ensure visibility of the survey for residents to engage with the proposals.

No direct emails were received from residents regarding the consultation.

All responses received were through the online survey.

No residents attended the community HUBS when outreach services were available.

The survey asked the following questions:

'Increase the maximum CTS award to 85% of the Council Tax bill. This means all residents on CTS must pay a reduced minimum contribution of 15% of their bill'

Response	Number of residents	Percentage
<i>Strongly agree</i>	35	42%
<i>Somewhat agree</i>	15	18%
<i>Neither agree or disagree</i>	7	8%
<i>Somewhat disagree</i>	4	5%
<i>Strongly disagree</i>	23	28%

'Increase the maximum CTS award to 80% of the Council Tax bill. This means all residents on CTS must pay a reduced minimum contribution of 20% of their bill'

Response	Number of residents	Percentage
<i>Strongly agree</i>	12	16%
<i>Somewhat agree</i>	17	22%
<i>Neither agree or disagree</i>	13	15%
<i>Somewhat disagree</i>	7	9%
<i>Strongly disagree</i>	29	38%

'Keep the maximum CTS award of 75%, meaning all residents on CTS must pay the same minimum contribution of 25% of their bill'

Response	Number of residents	Percentage
<i>Strongly agree</i>	14	17%
<i>Somewhat agree</i>	12	15%
<i>Neither agree or disagree</i>	19	24%
<i>Somewhat disagree</i>	6	8%
<i>Strongly disagree</i>	30	36%

'Do you agree with the Council proposing to introduce a replacement Council Tax Support scheme for 2024/25'

Response	Number of residents	Percentage
<i>Strongly agree</i>	18	22%
<i>Somewhat agree</i>	21	25%
<i>Neither agree or disagree</i>	20	24%
<i>Somewhat disagree</i>	6	7%
<i>Strongly disagree</i>	18	22%

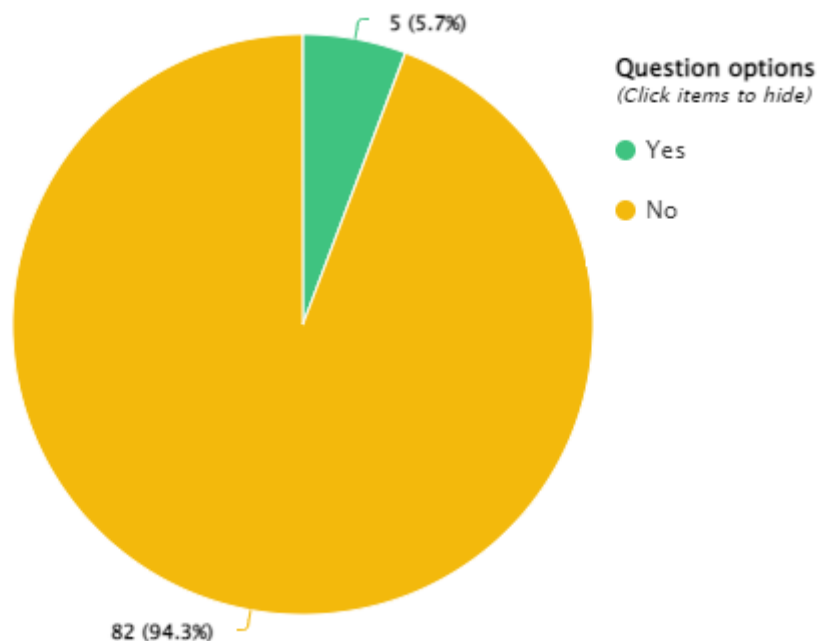
Based on the results of the survey:

- A **majority of those surveyed (59%)** have supported the proposed changes to reduce the minimum payment within the Council Tax Support scheme to 15% of the Council Tax bill.
- A **majority of those surveyed (45%)** disagreed with the proposals to reduce the minimum payment within the Council Tax Support scheme to 20% of the Council Tax bill.
- A **majority of those surveyed (44%)** disagreed with the proposals to leave the Council Tax Support scheme unchanged with a minimum payment of 25% of the Council Tax bill
- A **majority of those surveyed (47%)** also supported the proposal to introduce a replacement Council Tax Support scheme.

Analysis of results

The following analysis provides a breakdown of the survey results for all those surveyed.

'Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?'



	Number of residents	Percentage
<i>Resident of the borough</i>	82	94.3%
<i>Other organisation</i>	5	5.7%

Other organisations
LBBD
LBBD
Barking Muslims Association (AL Madina Mosque)
LBBD
LBBD

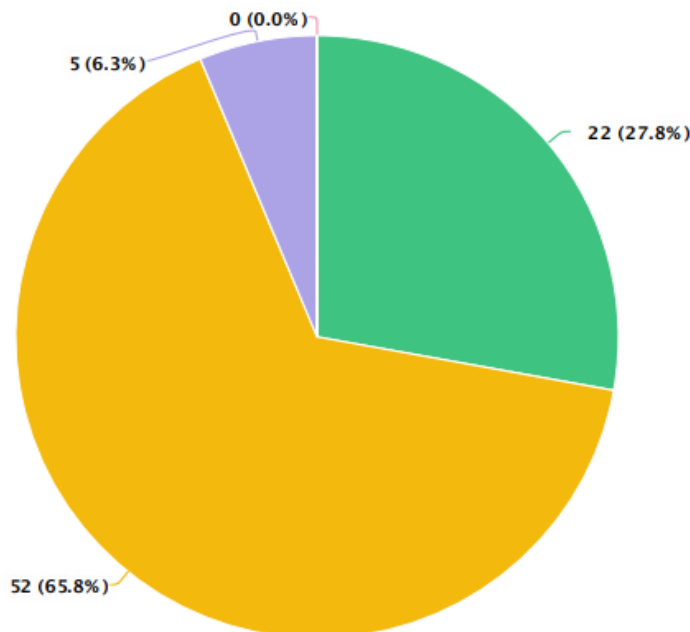
The response rate from other organisations (voluntary and key stakeholders) was low. The majority of responses received were from residents in the borough.

Demographics

Respondents were asked a range of demographic questions about themselves to help us understand the characteristics of the people who took part in the consultation.

'What is your gender?'

What is your gender?



Question options

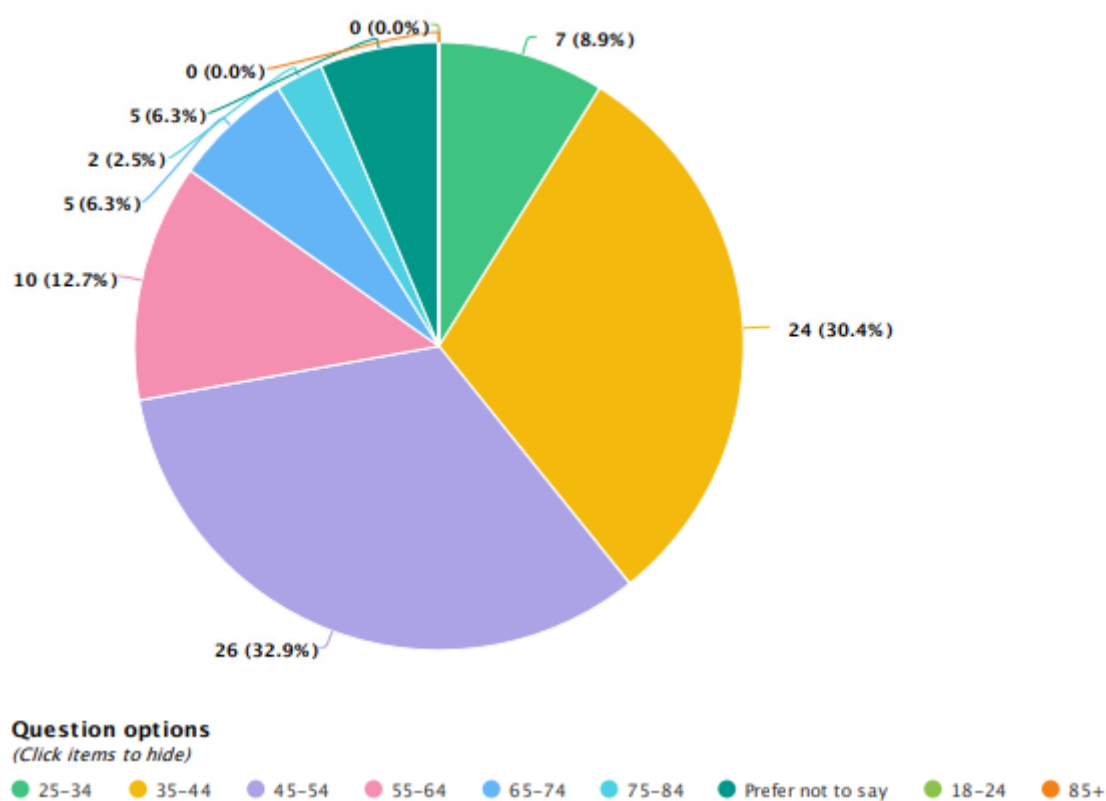
(Click items to hide)

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

Gender	Number of residents	Percentage
Male	21	26.9%
Female	52	66.7%
Prefer not to say	5	6.4%

A significant majority of the respondents were from female residents with 66.7% coming from this demographic. This is comparably higher than the borough demographics of 51.5% of residents identifying as female. There were 79 responses and 8 skipped this question.

'What is your age?'

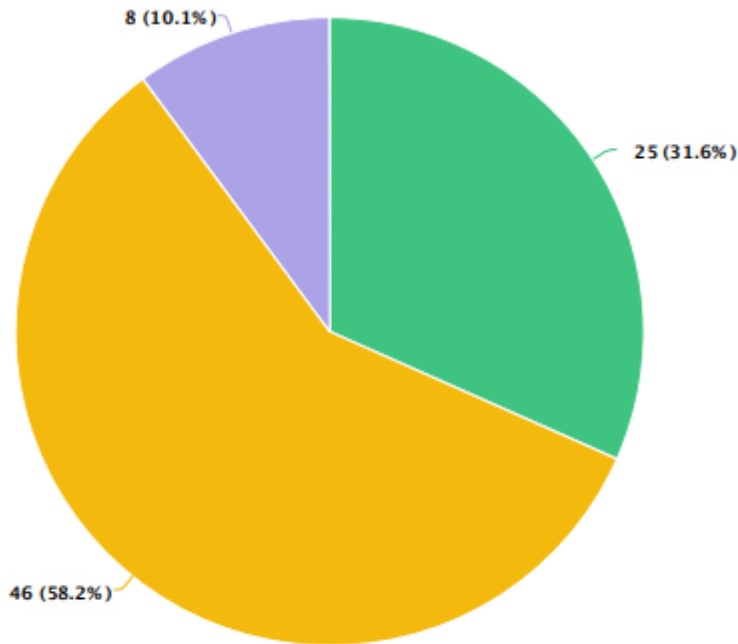


Age	Number of residents	Percentage
18-24	0	0%
25-34	7	8.9%
35-44	24	30.4%
45-54	26	32.9%
55-64	10	12.7%
65-74	5	6.3%
75-84	2	2.5%
85+	0	0%
Prefer not to say	5	6.3%

Most respondents identified themselves as being aged 35-54. Younger and older age groups were under represented in the survey.

There were 79 responses and 8 skipped this question.

'Do you have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity?'



Question options

(Click items to hide)

● Yes ● No ● Prefer not to say

Illness/Disability	Number of residents	Percentage
No	46	58.2%
Yes	25	31.6%
Prefer not to say	8	10.1%

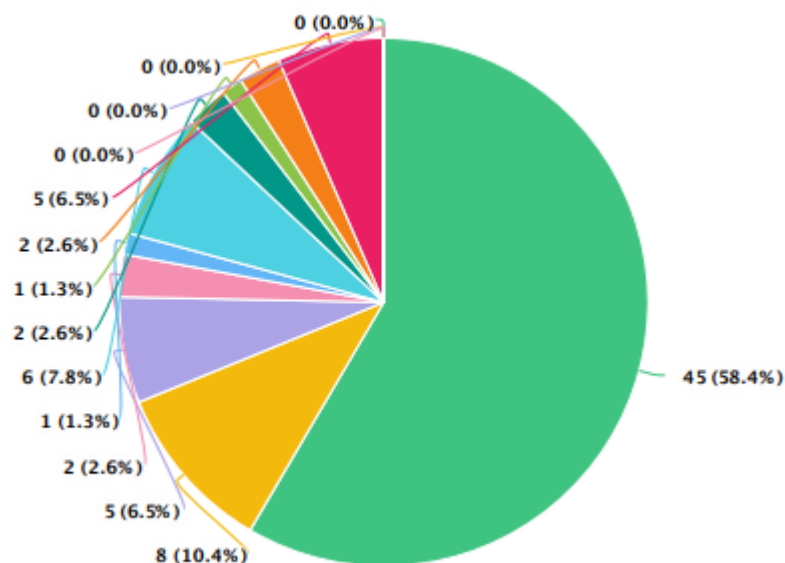
A majority of residents did not identify themselves as having a long-standing illness or disability.

Currently 4% of residents in the borough are claiming disability benefits.

A response from 31% of those surveyed with a long-standing illness or disability is over represented against borough demographics suggesting an interest in the proposals from this cohort of residents.

There were 79 responses and 8 skipped this question.

'What is your ethnic group?'



Question options (Click items to hide)

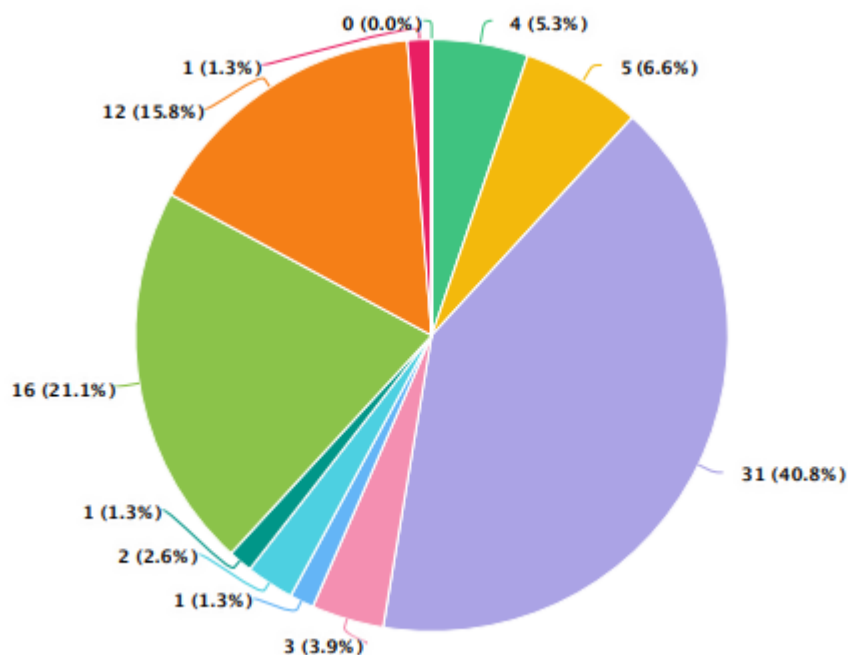
- Other (please specify)
- Other - Arab
- Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White and Asian
- Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White and Black African
- Any other Black / African / Caribbean background
- Asian or Asian British - Chinese
- Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
- White - Cypriot or Irish Traveller
- White - Irish
- Prefer not to say
- Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background
- Black or Black British - Caribbean
- Black British
- Black or Black British - African
- Any other Asian background
- Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi
- Asian or Asian British - Indian
- Any other White background
- White - English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British

Ethnic group	Number of residents	Percentage
<i>White – English</i>	45	58.4%
<i>Other white background</i>	8	10.4%
<i>Asian, Asian British - Indian</i>	6	7.8%
<i>Asian, Asian British - Bangladeshi</i>	2	2.6%
<i>Any other Asian background</i>	1	1.3%
<i>Black or Black British - African</i>	5	6.5%
<i>Black or Black British- Caribbean</i>	1	1.3%
<i>Black British</i>	2	2.6%
<i>Any other mixed ethnic background</i>	2	2.6%
<i>Prefer not to say</i>	5	6.5%

A majority of residents identified themselves as being from a white background. This is significantly higher than the current borough wide demographics confirming 66% of residents identify as coming from black and minority ethnic backgrounds with only 34% identifying as from a white background.

There were 77 responses and 8 skipped this question.

'What is your religion or belief?'



Question options

(Click items to hide)

● Agnostic
 ● Atheist
 ● Christian (all denominations e.g. Catholic, C of E, Baptist)
 ● Hindu
 ● Jewish
 ● Muslim
 ● Sikh
 ● No religion
 ● Prefer not to say
 ● Other (please specify)

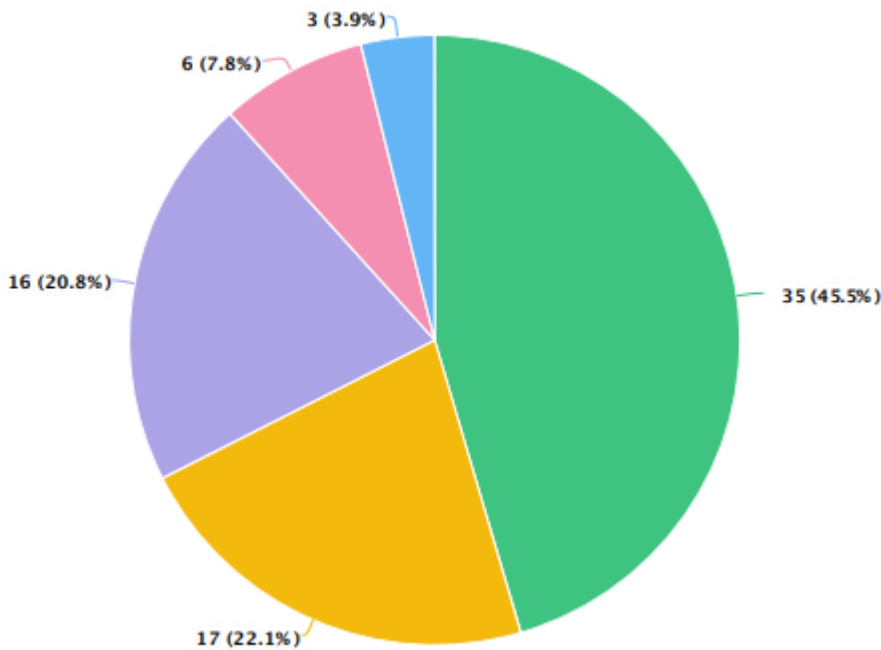
Religion/Belief	Number of residents	Percentage
<i>Agnostic</i>	4	5.3%
<i>Atheist</i>	5	6.6%
<i>Christian</i>	31	40.8%
<i>Hindu</i>	3	3.9%
<i>Jewish</i>	1	1.3%
<i>Muslim</i>	2	2.6%
<i>Sikh</i>	1	1.3%
<i>No religion</i>	16	21.5%
<i>Prefer not to say</i>	12	15.8%
<i>Other</i>	1	1.3%
<i>Buddhist</i>	0	0%

A majority of residents identified as Christian. This majority is under represented against borough wide demographics which confirm 56% of residents in the borough identify as Christian.

Currently 13.7% of the borough identify as Muslim with this demographic under represented in the survey.

There were 76 responses and 9 skipped this question.

'Do you have children who live with you?'



Question options

(Click items to hide)

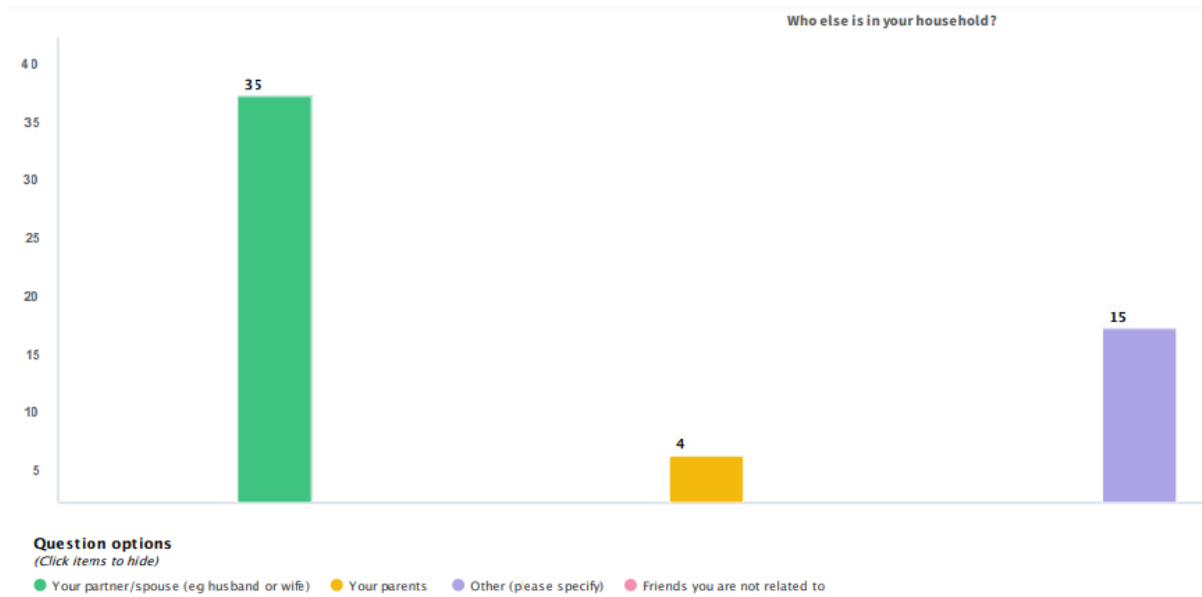
● No children in the home
 ● One child in the home
 ● Two children in the home
 ● Three children in the home
 ● More than three children in the home (please specify)

Number of children in the home	Number of residents	Percentage
<i>No children</i>	35	45.5%
<i>One child</i>	17	22.1%
<i>Two children</i>	16	20.8%
<i>Three children</i>	6	7.8%
<i>More than three children</i>	3	3.9%

A majority of residents have identified as households with children.

There were 77 responses and 8 skipped this question.

'Who else is in your household?'



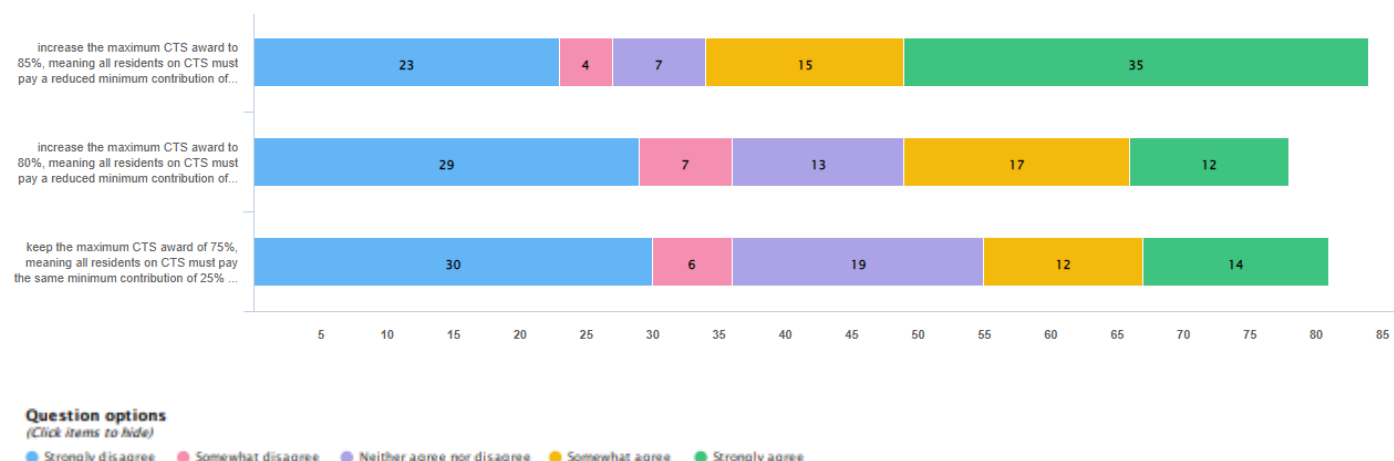
Who else is in your household	Number of residents	Percentage
<i>Your partner/spouse</i>	35	67.3%
<i>Your parents</i>	4	7.7%
<i>Other</i>	15	28.8%
<i>Friends you are not related to</i>	0	0%

A majority of households main residents were partner and spouse only with no other household members.

There were 54 responses and 32 skipped this question.

Survey results

'How much do you support the following options for proposed changes to the Council Tax Support scheme?'



Type of change	Question options	Number of residents	Percentage
Increase the maximum award to 85%	Strongly agree	35	42%
Increase the maximum award to 85%	Somewhat agree	15	18%
Increase the maximum award to 85%	Neither agree or disagree	7	8%
Increase the maximum award to 85%	Somewhat disagree	4	5%
Increase the maximum award to 85%	Strongly disagree	23	27%

42% of residents strongly agreed with the proposed change to reduce the minimum payment to 15% and this was the highest % against all the options presented.

A total of 60% of residents agreed with this proposal against 33% who disagreed.

A majority of residents therefore agreed with this proposal.

Type of change	Question options	Number of residents	Percentage
Increase the maximum award to 80%	Strongly agree	12	15%
Increase the maximum award to 80%	Somewhat agree	17	22%
Increase the maximum award to 80%	Neither agree or disagree	13	17%
Increase the maximum award to 80%	Somewhat disagree	7	9%
Increase the maximum award to 80%	Strongly disagree	29	37%

Support for the other proposals was significantly less with only 15% strongly agreeing with this proposal to reduce the minimum payment to 20%.

A total of 37% agreed with this proposal against 46% who disagreed.

A majority of residents therefore disagreed with this proposal.

Type of change	Question options	Number of residents	Percentage
Keep the existing award of 75%	Strongly agree	14	17%
Keep the existing award of 75%	Somewhat agree	12	15%
Keep the existing award of 75%	Neither agree or disagree	19	23%
Keep the existing award of 75%	Somewhat disagree	6	7%
Keep the existing award of 75%	Strongly disagree	30	37%

17% of residents strongly agreed with this proposal to keep the existing minimum payment of 25%.

A total of 32% agreed with this proposal against 40% who disagreed.

A majority of residents therefore disagreed with this proposal.

There were 86 responses and 2 skipped the questions.

Free text comments

The consultation provided residents with the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed changes.

Comments received both agreed and disagreed with the proposals.

A sample of comments received are below:

Agree with the proposals:

By reducing the minimum contribution from 25% to 15% for me personally and many others in my financial situation would greatly benefit from reduction in regular payment commitments. The difference would go in some way to bridge the gap with the cost of basics such as food while still feeling like I am contributing to the boroughs services but in true reflection to my circumstances. There are only so many cutbacks one person can make and when there is nowhere else to cut back on a reduction in my CTS contribution would be an essential increase in income which is so vital for many across the Borough right now. Well done to Barking and Dagenham for this consultation and putting the most vulnerable residents at the forefront of providing helpful targeted support.

We need to support the poorest as much as we can due to cost of living

25% is a quarter of their council tax charge and this is too much for people on a low income to afford

People are struggling to get food on table bills etc, any additional discounts given will be a help

Disagree with the proposals:

This would need to be funded somehow. How would LBBD propose to fund this additional cost? At an additional cost to other residents already paying 100% council tax and higher cost of living? Or by further cuts to already poorly funded services

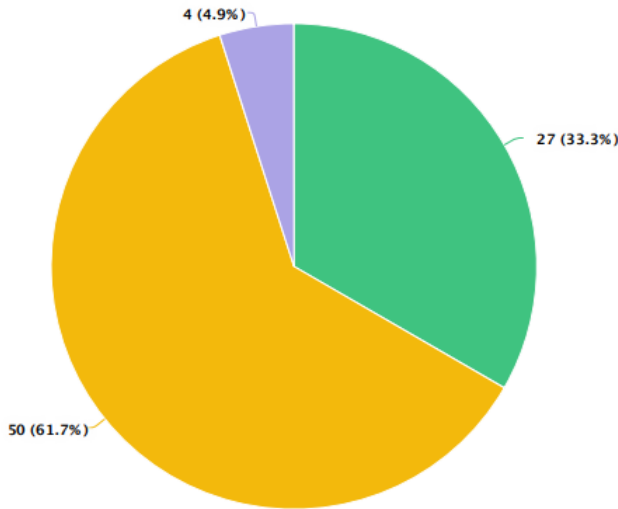
If LAA will increase a support for them, it automatically will increase CT for those who is not eligible for CTS.

This means that low wage residents get more help and those who do get any main stream benefit are not helped but the council tax bills will increase to cover the reduction that is being proposed as the council will need to get the money from somewhere. So single working people will have to pay and get no help. We are all struggling everyone should be helped not just those who get main stream benefits.

This is fine, but what about increasing the income levels at which support can be claimed? If you are working but on a borderline income that only just disqualifies you for c/t support, where is the help there? On benefits a family with 3 or more children can have more disposal income than myself as a working single mother has; and yet the support is targeted towards them and not borderline low income working families such as myself. We are all suffering at the moment due to the cost of living crisis.

'Were you aware of the discretionary relief fund?'

Were you aware of the Discretionary Relief fund?



Question options
(Click items to hide)

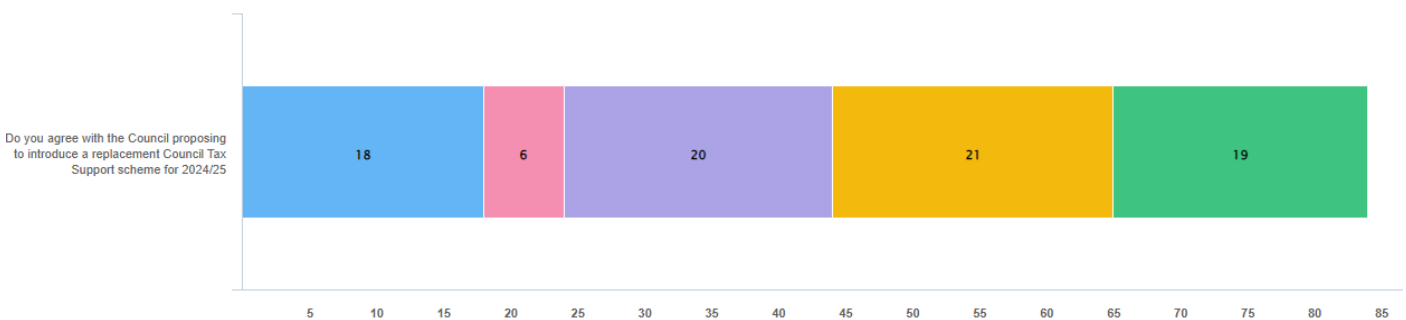
- Don't know
- No
- Yes

Response	Number of residents	Percentage
Yes	27	33.3%
No	50	61.7%
Don't know	4	4.9%

A significant majority of residents (61.7%) were unaware that there was a [Discretionary relief Fund](#) for Council Tax available.

There were 81 responses to this question and 4 skipped the question.

'Do you agree with the Council proposing to introduce a replacement Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25?'



Response	Number of residents	Percentage
<i>Strongly agree</i>	19	23%
<i>Somewhat agree</i>	21	25%
<i>Neither agree or disagree</i>	20	24%
<i>Somewhat disagree</i>	6	7%
<i>Strongly disagree</i>	18	21%

A significant number of residents were undecided on the proposals for a replacement CTS scheme for 2024/25.

A majority of residents (48%) still supported the proposal for a replacement CTS scheme with 38% disagreeing with this proposal.

There were 84 responses to this question and 4 skipped the question.

Free text comments

The consultation provided residents with the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed changes for a replacement CTS scheme.

Comments received both agreed and disagreed with the proposals.

A sample of comments received are below:

Agree with the proposals:

Any new initiative that can help and simplify the system should be considered.
It seems like it would be a fairer system
A scheme that does not need frequent self-reporting and consequent changes will be easier to understand and for tenants to comply with
Makes it easier for residents to understand – simplified

Disagree with the proposals:

It doesn't take into consideration the level of saving, capital, or investments someone has, meaning they wouldn't actually need any financial support, but would still get it. Similarly, anyone that is self-employed, company director etc could claim with a low income, while reinvesting in their company or being paid dividends. Reducing what needs to be notified could cause abuse of the system.
It is not fair that single people working will have to pay more through Council tax rises which is the only place LBBD will be able to get this money from.
I strongly disagree because you haven't got the money to start with. Make people work for their money. Stop giving unemployed people a council house and then pay their rent and CT while they buy X boxes and have sky TVs. Make them work or they lose their luxuries
No details available on how this will be funded. Just suggestions of support without any reference to funding

Other comments:

I think those who are unable to work due to health or disabilities are being unfairly punished. We cannot increase our income & what little we have gets eaten away when the council tax is increased each year. It's pushed many in this borough into even further poverty. This borough has some of the highest poverty in the country & charging council tax to those on little to nothing is one of the main reasons. Wealthy pensioners should not be being protected by those who have nothing. It's simply not fair. Also, those who own more than one property should pay a higher rate of council tax. It's an incredibly disproportionate & unfair system to those struggling at the bottom. Nobody should be having to forego food & heating because paying CT has left them with nothing. This 25% I am paying would help towards my heating which I currently cannot afford.

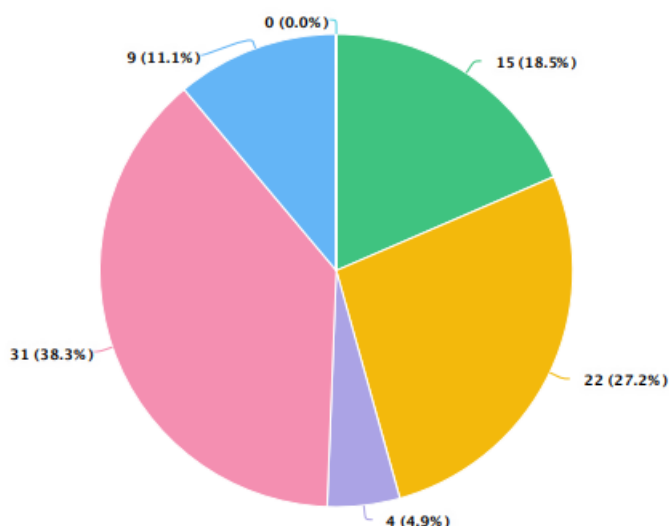
In light of the current economic circumstances increase the income levels at which support is available. If fuel bills increase as projected, my council tax and fuel bill will require half my income to service.

Look at what is representative of a low income household. With the way things are going, all households in the borough will be low income as overall pay has not increased in line with cost of living or inflation for many years.

For households registered disabled in receipt of unable to work benefits they should qualify for full exemption and full support.

'How did you find out about this consultation?'

How did you find out about this consultation?



Question options

(Click items to hide)

● Letter
 ● Other (please specify)
 ● LBB Social Media / Comms
 ● Newsletter
 ● Email
 ● LBB website

Response	Number of residents	Percentage
Letter	0	0%
Other	9	11.1%
Social Media	31	38.3%
Newsletter	4	4.9%
Email	22	27.2%
Website	15	18.5%

A majority of residents found out about the consultation through social media promotion.

Social media stats (posts on Facebook and Twitter):

- Posts reached 12,000 people
- Had 15,7000 impressions (how many times it was shown on someone’s screen)
- Total link clicks: 298
- Shares and retweets: 18

One Borough Newsletter:

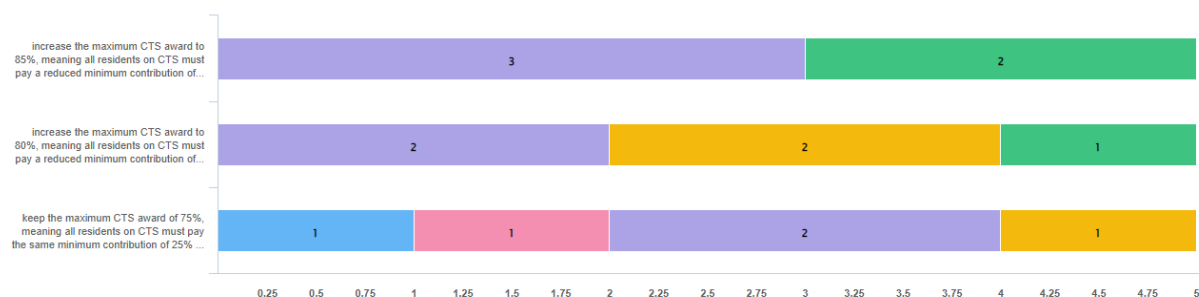
- 18,000 subscribers

There were 81 responses to this question and 4 skipped the question.

Survey responses from Organisations

The following analysis provides a breakdown of the survey results for all those responding on behalf of an organisation.

‘How much do you support the following options for proposed changes to the Council Tax Support scheme?’



Question options (Click items to hide)

● Strongly disagree
 ● Somewhat disagree
 ● Neither agree nor disagree
 ● Somewhat agree
 ● Strongly agree

Type of change	Question options	Number of organisations	Percentage
Increase the maximum award to 85%	Strongly agree	2	40%
Increase the maximum award to 85%	Neither agree or disagree	3	60%

Type of change	Question options	Number of organisations	Percentage
Increase the maximum award to 80%	Strongly agree	1	20%
Increase the maximum award to 80%	Somewhat agree	2	40%
Increase the maximum award to 80%	Neither agree or disagree	2	40%

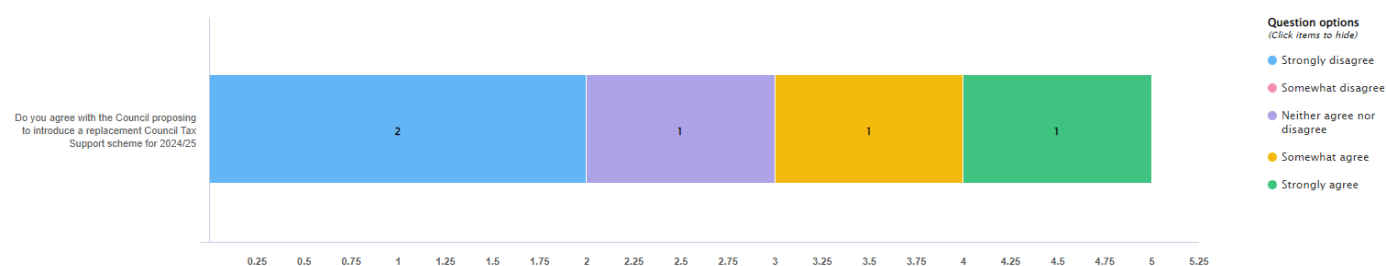
Type of change	Question options	Number of residents	Percentage
Keep the existing award of 75%	Strongly agree	1	20%
Keep the existing award of 75%	Somewhat agree	1	20%
Keep the existing award of 75%	Neither agree or disagree	2	40%
Keep the existing award of 75%	Somewhat disagree	1	20%

The consultation provided organisations with the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed changes.

These proposals received 3 individual text comments.

We need to support the poorest as much as we can due to cost of living
I think the cost-of-living crisis is affecting families across the board. Supporting only those who qualify under the existing rules means placing an extra burden on this who don't qualify but who are also suffering
25% is a quarter of their council tax charge and this is too much for people on a low income to afford

'Do you agree with the Council proposing to introduce a replacement Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25?'



<i>Response</i>	<i>Number of organisations</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>Somewhat agree</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>Neither agree or disagree</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>40%</i>

This question received 2 individual text comments regarding the proposals.

I would need to understand this better
 It doesn't take into consideration the level of saving, capital, or investments someone has, meaning they wouldn't actually need any financial support, but would still get it. Similarly, anyone that is self-employed, company director etc could claim with a low income, while reinvesting in their company or being paid dividends. Reducing what needs to be notified could cause abuse of the system

'If the Council retains the existing Council Tax Support scheme, what minimum contribution do you think low-income households should make?'

This question received 4 individual text comments regarding the proposals.

Minimum 10%
 remain at 25%
 10%
 15%

'Do you have any other suggestions on how we can operate a scheme that best supports low income households?'

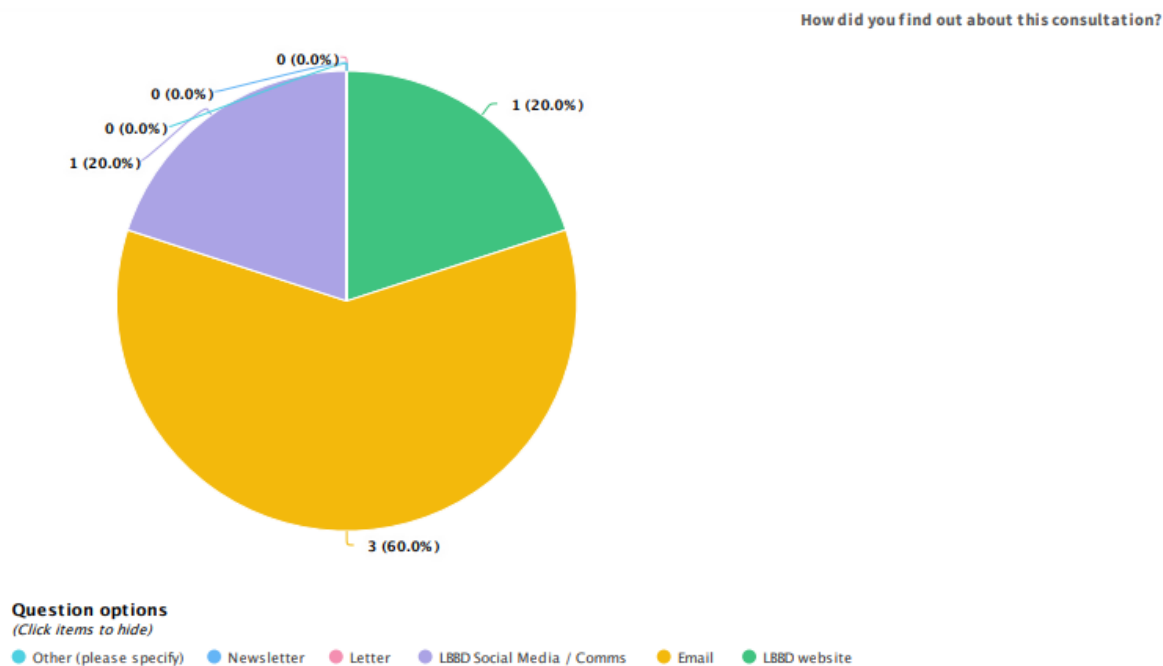
This question received 4 individual text comments regarding the proposals.

When making UC claim, CTS should be offered as people often think that it is included (as this is the case for HB)

Research the household income and place a price that is affordable. There may be households that cannot afford and they should be dismissed from paying it.

leave the scheme as it is, but consider reducing the contribution of working age people to 10%

'How did you find out about the consultation?'



Response	Number of organisations	Percentage
Website	1	20%
Email	3	60%
Social Media	1	20%

A majority of organisations found out about the consultation through email promotion.

Final conclusions

The demographics of those residents surveyed was not reflective of the overall demographics of the borough. Female residents, residents with long-term illness or disability and those with a white ethnic background were all over represented within the survey. Ethnic minorities, male residents and those who identified as Christian were all under represented within the survey.

Engagement from stakeholders was low despite promotion and publication of the survey.

The consultation has confirmed that a majority of those residents/organisations who completed the survey were supportive of the Council's proposal to reduce the minimum payment within the Council tax Support Scheme from 25% to 15%.

Residents who commented and supported this proposal recognised the further support being offered to low income residents within the borough and agreed with this approach.

Concerns were raised about how increases in funding for the Council Tax Support scheme would affect the wider Council budget and how this would be paid for, with cuts in other areas and services required in order to fund this increase.

While this is a legitimate concern raised the proposed increased investment in the scheme has been fully costed for the 2023/24 financial year and forms part of the medium term fiscal plans for the Council.

A number of comments were made that these proposals only supported residents in receipt of Council Tax Support and no further support was being offered to residents struggling with Council Tax costs, who were not in receipt of Council Tax Support, against a backdrop of significantly increased cost of living.

This is also a legitimate concern and reflects the demographics of the borough with a high proportion of low paid and insecure employment prevalent, and some of the highest poverty indicators within the Greater London area. This issue sits outside of the remit of this consultation and the proposed changes to the 2023/24 Council Tax Support Scheme. These considerations will be looked at through the proposals for a replacement Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25 and how the Council can continue to better support low income residents with increasing Council Tax costs.

The survey identified that a majority of residents were unaware that there was a Discretionary Relief Fund for Council Tax bills. Although the scheme has a limited budget further promotion of the availability of this scheme may be considered as part of support offered by the Council on cost of living challenges.

Comments received concerning a replacement Council Tax Support scheme were mixed with some residents being unclear as to what the proposal for an income banded Council Tax Support scheme actually mean in practice.

Concerns over the funding of the scheme were again raised, alongside how to support residents who may not qualify for Council Tax Support or fall outside of an income band threshold and those with larger families who may not receive additional support based on the illustrative scheme example.

Supportive comments regarding the simplification of the scheme and how it may address issues with Universal Credit awards and monthly changes were received, supporting the principle of simplification, and reducing the number of changes to awards.

The responses regarding a replacement scheme have highlighted the importance of effectively communicating why a new scheme is being proposed and how this will affect residents of the borough directly and will be considered for any future scheme change.

A majority of residents still supported the proposal to introduce a new income banded Council Tax Support scheme.

Appendix 1: Free form text commentary

The consultation provided residents with the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed changes.

This question received 50 individual text comments regarding the proposals.

‘How much do you support the following options for proposed changes to the Council Tax Support scheme?’

We need to support the poorest as much as we can due to cost of living
cost of living increases so money is needed to eat and put onto increasing energy bills
By reducing the minimum contribution from 25% to 15% for me personally and many others in my financial situation would greatly benefit from reduction in regular payment commitments. The difference would go in some way to bridge the gap with the cost of basics such as food while still feeling like I am contributing to the boroughs services but in true reflection to my circumstances. There are only so many cutbacks one person can make and when there is no where else to cutback on a reduction in my CTS contribution would be an essential increase in income which is so vital for many across the Borough right now. Well done to Barking and Dagenham for this consultation and putting the most vulnerable residents at the forefront of providing helpful targeted support.
This is most likely be reflected in a increased CT for other residents who are struggling and can't apply for the CTS.
This is fine, but what about increasing the income levels at which support can be claimed? If you are working but on a borderline income that only just disqualifies you for c/t support; where is the help there? On benefits a family with 3 or more children can have more disposal income than myself as a working single mother has; and yet the support is targeted towards them and not borderline low income working families such as myself. We are all suffering at the moment due to the cost of living crisis.
Cab barely afford to eat and top up energy at the moment so, any savings will help. I need to eat!
I think the cost of living crisis is affecting families across the board. Supporting only those who qualify under the existing rules means placing an extra burden on this who don't qualify but who are also suffering
I support that because I have lived at my address for 30+ . I feel a lot more money is needed is needed to see improvements where I live . I heavily rely on Adult Social care for my son. any cuts in council tax will hinder social care , emergency funds . Even my local library . activities for young and old . In this case I feel we must solider on . Even keeping things healthy lifestyles adult learning . I am looking at the wider picture . The Borough needs money .
This means that low wage residents get more help and those who do get any main stream benefit are not helped but the council tax bills will increase to cover the reduction that is being proposed as the council will need to get the money from somewhere. So single working people will have to pay and get no help. We are all struggling everyone should be helped not just those who get main stream benefits.
We must help those who are in need, I think an increase to 80% would be more realistic and affordable.
Its not an equal scheme people who have savings above the threshold will have to contribute a huge amount than someone on a lower wage and on benefits
As I’m disabled I am on a fixed income with no possibility to increase it. Council tax has greatly increased the amount of poverty I am in and has caused me huge debt with my rent as I have had to use money meant for that & food/ heating to pay it. It’s also meant I’m now suffering with depression.
25% is a quarter of their council tax charge and this is too much for people on a low income to afford
The Council SHOULD considering proposals to implement a new CTS scheme for the 2024/25 financial year. This will involve bigger changes which will need longer to be implemented
Those on benefit receive discounts and the majority of those on benefit use the majority of services delivered during working hours which are not available to those who work and pay for it.
People are struggling to get food on table bills etc, any additional discounts given will be a help

<p>I am worried because this plan is confusing. I know people would like to pay less CT but I'm worried of the consequences of increasing the CTS to maximum, so the council will need more funds to support more discount to people so the CT bill will be automatically higher than usual so this have nonsense</p>
<p>Those who live alone should get more than the current 25% discount on the total bill anyway! Those that have worked for most of their lives but are now unable to work due to ill health should receive the biggest discounts. Those that have never worked (unless due to severe disability) and keep having children should not be receiving any discount. They have the ability to work and are choosing not too.</p>
<p>Being unemployed and able to work is a choice. There are so many jobs out there, and people need to work and pay their way in society. Since I was 13 I worked. Usually 2 jobs at a time and at one stage 3 jobs. I've been paying my own rent and council tax since I was 22 and I'm 40 now. Stop giving out free handouts. This country is already in trillions of pounds worth of debt.</p>
<p>Council tax should be abolished, it's useless tax</p>
<p>CTS should be lowered to %50 max</p>
<p>Given the high cost of living, it will be very helpful to reduce the financial burden of households.</p>
<p>Barking & Dagenham is poverty ridden throughout everyone needs help not just those the Labour council want to collect votes from. You will reduce this and increase money grab elsewhere such as paying to collect green waste, more CPZ's, car park charges etc etc you'll give with one hand whilst sticking your other hand in another pocket</p>
<p>If LAA will increase a support for them, it automatically will increase CT for those who is not eligible for CTS.</p>
<p>Many families on low income are struggling to even find the 25% required to pay. It is causing hardship and stress trying to balance all the outgoings on reduced incomes</p>
<p>I feel that more support needs to be given to working households on slightly higher wages, with 3 children at home rising bills and no support at all from any benefits.</p>
<p>Why is there no help for working households, we both work hard but after paying our mortgage and bills are still struggling but we don't get any help. It seems if you try and better yourself you get no help.</p>
<p>23 to 24 is too late we need help now</p>
<p>Any and All financial help is needed right now</p>
<p>I earn just over £1200 per month working for the council full time in a school and get help with universal credits but am not entitle to any help with my council tax and pay just under £120 a month that's 10 percent of my wages I find this a burden</p>
<p>I find it hard to pay the 25 percent has it is, also most council tenants of other councils that are on disability payments don't pay anything plus I have to pay bedroom tax and I need the spare room for my son to stay when I have bad days and need help.</p>
<p>JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT IN RECEIPT OF BENEFITS, DOES NOT MEAN YOU'RE NOT STRUGGLING. WE ARE A ONE INCOME FAMILY, NOT ENTITLED TO BENEFITS, BUT WE ARE STRUGGLING WITH OUR BILLS, ALL OF THEM</p>
<p>I am a single working mum of one living in a one bedroom flat. Despite working full time (I am on a low income. My take home pay after tax is around £18k meaning I am just about the threshold for most support. I actually would be better off not working and being in benefits but I wasn't brought up to have that mindset. More support is needed for people who do not meet the requirements for benefits but work hard and on low income. My council tax is £105 a month and that's with the single person discount. I am struggling to pay that and my rent which goes up each year.</p>
<p>It would help if properties were banded correctly in the first place. I am under the firm impression that my apartment has been in the wrong band from day 1, but the valuation officer has upheld the council's belief. When asked how they came to that conclusion, they said that they stood outside the property on the ground floor and looked up. Our apartment is a totally different configuration to the ground floor flat of the same size, and they have a separate kitchen to their living space. There is no way we should be banded into C when we have no separate kitchen. So as it is our council tax is astronomical.</p>
<p>Not of working age so can't work out how it would affect those concerned.</p>

Discount should be available to maximum people who does not covered under CTS scheme. There are families who left with £10 at the end of the month. Saving on council tax help them to maintain basic benefits.
Cost of living is having a real life affect on residents in the Borough. Higher amount of reduction on the council tax would be preferable.
Even at the lowest payable rate it would still not be affordable For some people.
Depends how it would be financed - whether it would involve cuts in other types of expenditure.
I do not support this. I live in a one wage family wife can not get benefits because I work(60hrs+) pay a mortgage the people on benefits are a lot better off than me. The Tories are helping the rich list and now this council want to help the lazy work shy with extra discounts on council tax no wonder this country has gone to pot. Never help the middle man shocking but not unexpected
I support and I am very grateful for the help. But I can't figure out why I'm paying £116 for a one bedroom flat when my friend who lives half a mile away is paying £120 for a three bedroom house? we live on universal credit on a very low income and pay more than bigger houses in the neighbourhood! why?
More benefits for low income when those people can actually work. Why? Only give to residents working full-time. Stop making people lazy and live on benefits. There are enough jobs for people to work.
Any more financial help would be great.
It is a huge struggle to pay these it should definitely be lower I'm terrified how I'm going to be able to pay it with the cost of living rising so disgustingly
Because why should hard working residents who actually end up being financially worse off because they work and pay bills where some of the lower income residents have no intention on working because they get more in benefits and discounts then workers. We're all!!!!!! Feeling the pinch and you want to stiff us more.
I work who going to help me or my family. I don't claim benefits as told earn to much' What about helping working people I am struggling with bills as well. Which I'm sure your going to increase next year
This would need to be funded some how. How would LBBDD propose to fund this additional cost? At an additional cost to other residents already paying 100% council tax and higher cost of living? Or by further cuts to already poorly funded services
90% of the people are on benefit, does not work hard. They just want to enjoy the benefit. Because. It's better off being on benefit than working. Whole benefit system is broken.
I think the council don't provide enough reliable services for the amount they charge.

'Do you agree with the Council proposing to introduce a replacement Council Tax Support scheme for 2024/25?'

This question received 48 individual text comments regarding the proposals.

Council should introduce a new scheme
to help the most vulnerable in the borough. Also people who are working not entitled to benefits and struggling on there income
Any new initiative that can help and simplify the system should be considered.
This might be reflected in an increased CT for other residents who can't apply for CTS
It seems like it would be a fairer system
Don't entirely understand it.
I would need to understand this better
Because it is un clear and I feel it will be translated to suit the 28hose28l . It is a bit unfair to encourage people to want to achieve as people so not always look at the bigger picture . It takes a long time to get results . especially whilst struggling . The saying if it is not broken why fix it .

As yet again those that 29hose to have large families get more help and those that do not have any family because the cannot afford to get no help. The scheme should remain the same.
I agree with the new scheme providing it remains to be levelled at those in need depending on the size of the household and not an across the board discount same for all.
Cost of living crisis is impacting hugely on people's income being distributed to pay bills.
How is the discount to be covered/funded if council spending is not to be reduced.
Council are punishing working class people who are on a higher wage & people who have savings and don't meet the criteria. They will be contributing a huge amount to help others which is totally unfair. This scheme is very unpopular and will not work
Because it means that despite only getting £128pw ESA you would still be expecting me to pay 25% of the CT bill. This doesn't help those of us who are sick and unable to work. We cannot increase our income so I feel we are being treated incredibly unfairly.
It doesn't take into consideration the level of saving, capital or investments someone has, meaning they wouldn't actually need any financial support, but would still get it. Similarly, anyone that is self employed, company director etc could claim with a low income, while reinvesting in their company or being paid dividends. Reducing what needs to be notified could cause abuse of the system.
The Council SHOULD considering proposals to implement a new CTS scheme for the 2024/25 financial year. This will involve bigger changes which will need longer to be implemented
It is not fair that single people working will have to pay more through Council tax rises which is the only place LBBD will be able to get this money from.
Where do pensioners come into this including those who still have to pay 2rds of the council tax and live on their own (owning house)
I want there to be a solid, useable scheme in place for people who can't afford to keep up with their Council Tax payments. It's the council's responsibility to take care of its most vulnerable people, and now more than ever, people deserve dignified and simple help with unavoidable costs like Council Tax.
I want there to be a solid, useable scheme in place for people who can't afford to keep up with their Council Tax payments. It's the council's responsibility to take care of its most vulnerable people, and now more than ever, people deserve dignified and simple help with unavoidable costs like Council Tax.
Simplified, and more accessible. More people will get to benefit
Still is not clearly explained
Once again, those that choose to breed instead of work are rewarded. If people cannot support themselves then they should not be having children they can't support. There is not enough social housing in the borough for this all to continue.
I strongly disagree because you haven't got the money to start with. Make people work for their money. Stop giving unemployed people a council house and then pay their rent and CT while they buy X boxes and have sky TV. Make them work or they lose their luxuries
Don't entirely understand it.
Council tax replacement it's Ginsberg the same just different name
CTS should be limited only to those that really need it, e.g. disabled people that cannot work., Being on a lower income is not a valid excuse for not paying your fair amount for amenities used
A new scheme is needed to support households in need.
Makes it easier for residents to understand – simplified
The more kids you have the expense you have that end of the scale also needs a massive discount
On universal credit, your income can be up and down . It's stressful enough trying to meet the demands of universal credit and then receiving letters stating your payments have changed etc . Also the payment dates should be tailored to the client in line with their pay days not the council date decision as it's very stressful receiving messages stating you Havant paid on the date when your pay day is two weeks later and all your outgoings eat up you money before it's council due date .
Although I feel that any more support for families is beneficial I feel that support should be extended to hard working families whose wages are not rising with the cost of living.
Need to have more help before that

As Tesco say, "Every Little Helps' , financially . .
I don't know
People need help
Help people who are actually working and contributing but on low wages.
A scheme that does not need frequent self reporting and consequent changes will be easier to understand and for tenants to comply with
Introduce new scheme to help all residents.
As it will cover more people in scheme rather than just low income
Don't know enough about the existing scheme to comment, but it seems obvious that people would want to pay as little out as possible in CT or anything else
Don't really understand what is proposed.
No
I'm fine
Only help people who actually need them, not people misusing the system
Again only supporting the lower earners and Sit on the butt's work shy..what about the middle bands who work But are just above the lower earners But they pay more BUT again because of that they are actually worse off.
I work what help am I going to get. I'm also struggling to pay bills
No details available on how this will be funded. Just suggestions of support without any reference to funding need more details, what happens if I get help towards child care

'If the Council retains the existing Council Tax Support scheme, what minimum contribution do you think low-income households should make?'

This question received 62 individual text comments regarding the proposals.

Minimum 10%
5% to 10%
15%
15%
25%
20%
10%
remain at 25%
10-15%
25 or 20
I think it should be 20%
15
20%
10%
25%.
I do not believe those out of work due to sickness/disability should have to contribute. We are already on an incredibly low income. Paying council tax means I struggle to have any money left for food & utilities.
15%
15%
50%
Where do you come in all this if you are in receipt of government pension and live along, will we get some sort of extra
15%
15%

20%
If the 25% total bill discount for single people was better, then I think the 25% for all is actually quite fair.
35%
Low income households should mean those who have a poorly paid job or work zero hours, but you mean those on benefits. They should pay at least 25% which rises unless they get a job. Make people work. Stop giving out handouts
8%
minimum should be set to 50%
minimum of 20%
15%
15-20%
20%
5% for a limited period otherwise there's no incentive to improve your wealth
25%
15%
20%
Like i have already said I think all residents should benefit from assistance
up until a few years ago if you were on a low income/benefit, you paid nothing
15%
Proposed 15per cent
10% to 0%
15
20%
25%
50
None. Spend it on food or heating
90%
15% good
75%, as most of them can work. Because of the benefits they do not work
15%
As little as possible. People need as much help as they can get at the moment.
0 other councils are £1
10% unless disabled then must be 0%
I dont think that low income families should pay
What it is, this maybe should be means tested.
Full amount like I have to pay
25%
25%
25
Any they can afford
15
25%

‘Do you have any other suggestions on how we can operate a scheme that best supports low-income households?’

This question received 62 individual text comments regarding the proposals.

When making UC claim, CTS should be offered as people often think that it is included (as this is the case for HB)
- Reduced garden waste costs when in receipt of a means tested benefit. - Access to easy family meal recipes online (LBBD WEBSITE) which would in turn help local shops. Allow residents to share meal tips and ideas. - promote and encourage reuse and repair ideas. Any reduction in outgoing payments is essential to cover the costs of food and I'm sure would be an initiative warmly welcomed.
In light of the current economic circumstances increase the income levels at which support is available. If fuel bills increase as projected my council tax and fuel bill will require half my income to service.
Freeze council tax and reduce rent payments, especially for the inadequate homes that don't even meet the Defective Premises Act 1972!
I have No Idea
No, the council tax discount is far the easiest and probably most direct system to give uninterrupted help. Good luck!
Research the household income and place a price that is affordable. There may be households that cannot afford and they should be dismissed from paying it.
People who have mental health issues should be given There are people on benefits been awarded a huge amount every month £900 per month & is applying for more benefits & only paying £20 towards his council tax & receives free housing
I think those who are unable to work due to health or disabilities are being unfairly punished. We cannot increase our income & what little we have gets eaten away when the council tax is increased each year. It's pushed many in this borough into even further poverty. This borough has some of the highest poverty in the country & charging council tax to those on little to nothing is one of the main reasons. Wealthy pensioners should not be being protected by those who have nothing. It's simply not fair. Also those who own more than one property should pay a higher rate of council tax. It's an incredibly disproportionate & unfair system to those struggling at the bottom. Nobody should be having to forego food & heating because paying CT has left them with nothing. This 25% I am paying would help towards my heating which I currently cannot afford.
leave the scheme as it is, but consider reducing the contribution of working age people to 10%
CAP OF £2500 ON RENT AND USE OF UNIVERSAL CREDIT
Provide free childcare and get them into work.
Are pensioners included? Some are on their own but still have to pay 2 rds, and are not eligible for any other benefits because we are suffering bad health
Use an independent auditor or public testing scheme to make sure that the process for applying for the scheme is as streamlined as possible, from end to end.
For all benefits, support, MHS, etc., it should depend on the tax and N.I. contributions people have made from working. The more contributions made then the more support they should get when in need. Also more help for some with budgeting that would explain you can't run cars, have children, privately rent, have holidays and everything new, etc, when your income (if any) won't stretch to that!
They should do a better off calculation and see how they are better off. Some families are entitled to no UC or CTS as they earn too much, however just cutting their hours by 5 per week could mean they are then entitled. Or, get a better paid job. The job centre help with flexible support fund and low value provision payments as well as upfront childcare costs and reimbursement of childcare costs. There is so much help to get people into a good job.
Talk more to the people living in said households. Everybody's situation is different. You cannot possibly accommodate all but you CAN get an average consensus of the struggles and needs, etc.
No
The country is in crisis the people are desperate need of support
Free internet usage via the council network, free CPZ and council car park charges like our councillors get, free green garden waste collections ... basically reduce the money grab burden you place on residents whilst ensuring developers who are rinsing profits from our borough contribute to a hardship fund reducing their profits from an impoverished area

Find them job.
Cater for our payment dates
NO
No
REDUCE THE COUNCIL TAX FOR ALL
By only going on the Tenants income not the Tenants working children's income
Look at what is representative of a low income household. With the way things are going, all households in the borough will be low income as overall pay has not increased in line with cost of living or inflation for many years.
Make the scheme less difficult to understand
My LBBDD website is terrible, difficult to access information and submit applications. Disabled people who need to live in certain locations and are in higher tax band because of this should have discount.
Help those that actually work for survival
No
Guide them train them to work full time
For households registered disabled in receipt of unable to work benefits they should qualify for full exemption and full support.
Lower it or scrap it completely, council tax is ridiculously high, even with this discount. Plus rent, and everything else on top
How about means tested help, if they don't want to work or to be seen working then they shouldn't get help. But if they are unable to work, disabled or pensioners then support With advice.

Appendix 2: Council Tax Support Consultation Policy

London Borough of Barking & Dagenham

Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme 2023/24 Consultation

What is this consultation about?

The purpose of this consultation is to get the comments and opinions of residents in the borough and relevant stakeholders on the proposals to change the Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme for working age households for 2023/24.

Working age households are those under State Pension age (66).

The scheme for pension age households is set by government and will continue to operate in the same way as it does currently.

The new scheme will come into effect from the 1st April 2023.

The maximum level of support available to working age residents through the CTS scheme is currently a maximum of 75% of the Council Tax bill.

This means a minimum payment of 25% of the Council Tax bill is required for all residents who receive CTS, regardless of financial circumstances.

Details of the current scheme can be found here:

[Council Tax Support Scheme 2022/23](#)

Background to the Consultation

What is Council Tax Support (CTS)?

CTS is a means tested discounts for Council Tax. The amount of the discount awarded is based on the income and size of the household. A means test is applied, and an award granted for those eligible. This discount is applied directly to the Council Tax account to reduce the amount to be paid.

How much does CTS cost?

The CTS scheme currently supports 15,885 residents in the borough at a total cost of £14.6 million per year.

Cost of Current Scheme by age group 2022/23			
Age Group	Number of Households	Support Payable (£/annum)	Average Discount (£/week)
All working age	11,293	£9,425,605.09	£16.05
Pension age	4,591	£5,220,139.16	£21.86
Total	15,884	£14,645,744.25	£17.73

Why are changes to the CTS scheme being considered?

With the current cost of living increasing the Council wants to better support low income residents of the borough with their ongoing Council Tax costs.

Residents will be supported with their ongoing cost of living through an increase in the value of the CTS award, reducing the payable Council Tax charge.

What CTS scheme changes is the Council proposing to introduce?

The current CTS scheme limits the maximum award to 75% of the total Council Tax bill.

This means a minimum payment of 25% of the Council Tax bill is required for all working age residents in receipt of CTS, regardless of financial circumstances.

We are proposing to increase the maximum award to 85% of the total Council Tax bill for all working age residents in receipt of CTS.

This means a reduced minimum payment of 15% of the Council Tax bill is required for all working age residents in receipt of CTS, regardless of financial circumstances.

Who will this affect?

All working age residents in the borough in receipt of CTS from the 1st April 2023 and any residents who apply for CTS after the 1st April 2023.

Pension age residents will not be affected as Central Government sets this scheme and it cannot be changed.

Have we considered any other proposals to change the CTS scheme?

The Council has thought about other options.

We have considered keeping the current CTS scheme unchanged which will keep a current minimum payment of 25% of the Council Tax Bill for all working age residents in receipt of CTS.

A proposal to reduce the minimum payment to 20% of the Council Tax Bill has also been considered.

The legislative requirements and time required to make substantial changes or to implement a replacement CTS scheme are significant and require an 18 month period for implementation.

As an interim proposal to support residents with their current cost of living the Council is reacting by proposing a change to the 2023/24 CTS scheme to reduce the minimum payment required to 15% of their Council Tax bill, for all working age residents in receipt of CTS.

The Council is considering proposals to fully implement a new CTS scheme for the 2024/25 financial year.

Appendix 3: Survey Questions

About you

We collect this information to help us understand the residents of the borough so that our services and polices can be delivered to meet the needs of everybody.

All of the information collected in this questionnaire is confidential and anonymous.

Your personal information will not be passed on to anyone and your personal details will not be reported alongside your responses.

Have you read the background information about the CTS scheme?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Are you a resident of the Borough?

- Yes
- No (unable to proceed on form?)

Do you currently receive Council Tax support?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?

- Yes
- No

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please state which one.

- Free text

What is your Sex? (do we need others??)

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

What is your age?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54

- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85+
- Prefer not to say

Disability: Do you have day to day activities that are limited because of a health problem or disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Ethnic origin: What is your ethnic group?

- Prefer not to say
- White British
- White Irish
- White Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Any other White background
- Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White & Black African
- Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White & Black Caribbean
- Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White & Asian
- Any other multi mixed background
- Asian or Asian British Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British Indian
- Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi
- Asian or Asian British Chinese
- Any other Asian background
- Black African
- British Caribbean
- Black British
- Any other Black background

Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS) changes for 2023/24 for Working age households.

** Working age households are those under State Pension age (18-66).*

Proposal 1:

The maximum CTS we can currently award to residents of the borough of working age is 75% of the Council Tax bill. This means all residents on CTS must pay a minimum of 25% of their bill, regardless of financial circumstances.

Do you think we should increase the maximum CTS award to 85% of the Council Tax bill. This means all residents on CTS must pay a *reduced minimum contribution of 15%* of their bill, regardless of financial circumstances.

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
- Any other comments (free text)

Proposal 2:

The maximum CTS we can currently award to residents of the borough of working age is 75% of the Council Tax bill. This means all residents on CTS must pay a minimum of 25% of their bill, regardless of financial circumstances.

Do you think we should increase the maximum CTS award to 80% of the Council Tax bill. This means all residents on CTS must pay a *reduced minimum contribution of 20%* of their bill, regardless of financial circumstances.

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
- Any other comments (free text)

Proposal 3:

Do you think the Council should retain the existing CTS scheme with a maximum award of 75% of the Council Tax bill. This means all residents on CTS must pay a minimum of 25% of their bill, regardless of financial circumstances.

Should the Council consider administering the CTS scheme with the same level of support as it does now?

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
- Any other comments (free text)

The Council currently has a Discretionary Relief fund for circumstances of exceptional hardship to provide extra help to residents who are unable to pay their Council Tax.

Discretionary Council Tax Relief

Were you aware of this scheme?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

The Council is also considering proposing implementing a completely new replacement Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme for 2024/25.

In deciding which scheme to adopt the Council is looking to:

- Simplifying the scheme making it easy for residents to understand and access
- Provide the maximum level of support for all low income households
- Remove the requirement to continually make changes in awards making support more consistent
- Improve how the scheme works with the Universal Credit system
- Create a scheme that is fair and equitable to all residents
- Build in capacity to better manage an increase in demand for the scheme

The Council is considering whether to implement a simple and straightforward income banded CTS scheme, with set levels of discounts available based on income bands.

This allows varying set levels of discounts on the Council Tax bill based on income and household size.

This type of scheme can help to reduce the burden of residents notifying changes.

An example of a discount banded scheme can be found below.

This is for illustrative purposes only and is not a proposed scheme.

Income Banded Council Tax Support Scheme

Discount		Single Person	Single Person with one child	Single Person with two or more children	Couple	Couple with one child	Couple with two or more children
		(Income)	(Income)	(Income)	(Income)	(Income)	(Income)
100%	Band 1	£0 to £80	£0 To £130	£0 To £180	£0 to £125	£0 To £170	£0 To £220
75%	Band 2	£80.01 To £125	£130.01 To £180	£180.01 To £230	£125.01 to £170	£170.01 To £220	£220.01 To £270
55%	Band 3	£125.01 To £175	£180.01 To £230	£230.01 To £275	£170.01 To £220	£220.01 To £270	£270.01 To £320
40%	Band 4	£175.01 To £225	£230.01 To 280	£275.01 To £325	£220.01 To £270	£270.01 To £320	£320.01 To £370
25%	Band 5	£225.01 To £275	£280.01 To £330	£325.01 To £375	£270.01 To £320	£320.01 To £370	£370.01 To £420
10%	Band 6	£275.01 To £325	£330.01 To £390	£375.01 To £425	£320.01 To £370	£370.01 To £420	£420.01 To £470

The scheme for pension age households is set by government and will continue to operate in the same way as it does currently.

Do you agree with the proposals to introduce an income-based banded discount scheme to replace the current traditional means tested scheme?

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

If you agree with this proposal, please explain why?

- Free text

If you disagree with this proposal, please explain why?

- Free text

If you disagree with this proposal, do you think we should keep the existing Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS), please explain why?

- Free text

If the Council retains the existing CTS scheme, what minimum contribution do you think low income households should make? (The current contribution is a minimum of 25% and is proposed to reduce to 15%).

- Free text

Do you have other suggestions on how we can operate a scheme that best supports low income households?

- Free text

How did you find out about this consultation?

- Website
- Email
- Letter
- Newsletter
- Social media / comms
- Other (free text)

Next steps....

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

If you would like to submit any further comments or questions, please email benefits@lbbd.gov.uk with the heading Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme consultation.

The consultation will close on 05.10.2022.

The Council will review the results from the consultation which will be taken into consideration before a final decision is made on the Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme 2023/24.

The full results from this consultation will be available on the Council's website.

The new CTS scheme will be implemented from the 1st April 2023.

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Community and Equality Impact Assessment

As an authority, we have made a commitment to apply a systematic equalities and diversity screening process to both new policy development or changes to services.

This is to determine whether the proposals are likely to have significant positive, negative or adverse impacts on the different groups in our community.

This process has been developed, together with **full guidance** to support officers in meeting our duties under the:

- Equality Act 2010.
- The Best Value Guidance
- The Public Services (Social Value) 2012 Act

About the service or policy development

Name of service or policy	Comsol: Welfare Service Council Tax Support scheme review 2023/24
Lead Officer Contact Details	James Johnston (Senior Housing Benefit Officer) & Donna Radley (Head of Benefits) James.johnston@lbbd.gov.uk Donna.radley@lbbd.gov.uk

Why is this service or policy development/review needed?
<p>The Welfare Reform Act in 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit (CTB) from April 2013 and, in its place, support took the form of a local Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS). The Local Government Finance Act 2012 contains provisions for the setting up of local support schemes. The current scheme in Barking & Dagenham has been based around the Default CTS scheme.</p> <p>The CTS scheme helps residents on low incomes to pay their Council Tax. Under the current scheme, a working-age household liable for Council Tax could get up to 75% of the charge paid through the scheme, dependent upon their circumstances. (Working age is anyone under Pension Credit age).</p> <p>The Pension age scheme is nationally prescribed, with a maximum liability of 100% and cannot be changed at a local level.</p> <p>It is proposed that the Council consults on a revision to its CTS scheme for 2023/24 to reduce the minimum payment required by 10% to a minimum payment of 15%.</p> <p>Currently a minimum payment of 25% towards Council Tax liability is required for all working age claimants in Barking & Dagenham irrespective of their financial circumstances and ability to pay.</p> <p>A majority of London Boroughs have minimum payments within their CTS schemes that are less than the 25% currently applied. Only 6 out of 31 Boroughs have comparable or higher minimum contributions giving the Council one of the highest minimum payment rates in Greater London.</p> <p>Current poverty trackers confirm Barking & Dagenham to have the lowest (worst average rank) combining the 10 poverty indicators in the Greater London area.</p> <p>The current CTS scheme does not provide the same level of support to residents of the borough that was provided in 2015/16 and potentially does not provide sufficient core support to residents in light of the socio-economic demographics and poverty indicators within the borough.</p> <p>This is against the current backdrop of a cost-of-living crisis that is particularly acute within the borough that is significantly affecting residents.</p>

Why is this service or policy development/review needed?

It is proposed that the scheme requires revision to reduce the minimum payment applied within the 2023/24 CTS scheme to provide better core support to low-income residents of the borough, including the most financially excluded, with their ongoing Council Tax costs.

1. Community impact (this can be used to assess impact on staff although a cumulative impact should be considered).

What impacts will this service or policy development have on communities?
Look at what you know. What does your research tell you?

Please state which data sources you have used for your research in your answer below

Consider:

- National & local data sets
- Complaints
- Consultation and service monitoring information
- Voluntary and Community Organisations
- The Equality Act places a specific duty on people with 'protected characteristics'. The table below details these groups and helps you to consider the impact on these groups.
- It is Council policy to consider the impact services and policy developments could have on residents who are socio-economically disadvantaged. There is space to consider the impact below.

Demographics

➤ Local communities in general

Barking & Dagenham is a diverse borough as outlined by the following demographic trends below.

➤ Age

Barking & Dagenham currently has a total population of 218,900, this shows a 17.7% increase since the 2011 census. Of this population currently 65.2 % (142,722) are considered of working age (16 – 64) & 8.7 % (19,044) are considered of pension age (over 65).

There are currently 15,779 live CTS cases, of which 11,203 (71%) are working age and 4575 (29%) are of pension age.

The CTS working age caseload is currently 11% of the working age population of the borough.

The CTS pension age caseload is currently 25% of the pension age population of the borough.

CTS expenditure for the financial year 2022/23 is currently £14,523,991.

Of this expenditure £9,325,766.87 (64.20%) is against working age claimants and £5,198,225.63 (35.80%) is against pension age claimants.

Working age claimants currently make up 63.4% of the population and account for 71% of the CTS caseload and 64.20% of the total CTS expenditure.

Pension age claimants currently make up 9.2% of the population and account for 29% of the CTS caseload and 35.80% of the total CTS expenditure.

(CTS case load data extraction 14/06/2022)

(Census 2022)

➤ **Disability**

Barking & Dagenham currently has 4,631 people of working age (16-64) claiming Disability Living Allowance & 8,669 claiming Personal Independence Payment.

(DWP Stat-Xplore extraction 14/06/2022)

➤ **Gender reassignment**

Barking & Dagenham is currently estimated to have approximately 40 people in the borough who have or who will undergo gender reassignment.

There is currently no monitoring data available within the CTS case load data to distinguish claimants by gender reassignment.

(Gender Identity Research and Education Society advice 2016)

➤ **Marriage & civil partnership**

Barking & Dagenham currently has 41.9% of the population aged 16 and above as registered as married, 38.8% are single and not married, and 0.2% are in a same sex civil partnership.

There is currently no monitoring data available within the CTS case load data to distinguish claimants by civil status.

(Census 2011)

➤ **Pregnancy & maternity**

Teenage pregnancy rates are significantly higher than average. The under-18 conception rate in 2018 was 20.3 per 1,000 females aged 15 to 17, which was the 4th highest in London.

There are 74.2 births per 1,000 women of childbearing age, which was the highest in London.

(LBBD teenage conception data 2018)

(Office for National Statistics 2020 (Births))

➤ **Race and ethnicity**

The proportion of the borough population identifying as coming from black and minority ethnic backgrounds has increased from 19.1% to 50.5% between the 2001 and 2011 censuses, and is now at 67.1%, compared to 32.9% identifying as White British based on the 2020 census.

This sits above the London average of 62.2%.

There is currently no monitoring data available within the CTS case load data to distinguish claimants by race or ethnicity.

(Census 2020)

➤ **Religion**

56% of the population identify as Christian, 18.9% identify with no religion and 13.7% identify as Muslim.

There is currently no monitoring data available within the CTS case load data to distinguish claimants by religion.

(Census 2011)

➤ **Sex/Gender**

Currently 51.5% of the borough's residents are female, and 49.6% are male.

(Census 2011)

➤ **Sexual orientation**

Between 10,000 – 14,000 people in Barking & Dagenham are lesbian, gay and bisexual.

There is currently no monitoring data available within the CTS case load data to distinguish claimants by sexual orientation.

(Stonewall estimates)

➤ **Socio-economic disadvantage**

Council Tax Support is means tested across low-income socio-economic groups.

All claimants will be in a lower socio-economic category and Barking & Dagenham showed that 62.4% of its households were deprived in the 2022 census.

There are currently 15,779 live CTS cases, of which 11,203 (71%) are working age and 4575 (29%) are of pension age.

The CTS working age caseload is currently 11% of the working age population of the borough.

The CTS pension age caseload is currently 25% of the pension age population of the borough.

Current poverty trackers confirm Barking & Dagenham to have the lowest (worst average rank) combining the 10 poverty indicators in the Greater London area.

The current 'minimum payment' of 25% required for all working age claimants will continue to disproportionately affect the lowest socio-economic group and not provide the required level of core support to residents of the borough.

It is considered likely that keeping the current scheme unchanged will continue to make it difficult to collect Council Tax from those entitled to a reduction under the scheme, and this will have a greater impact on the lowest socio-economic group in the borough.

(CTS case load data extraction 14/06/2022)

(Poverty tracker April 2022)

Potential impacts	Positive	Neutral	Negative	What are the positive and negative impacts?	How will benefits be enhanced and negative impacts minimised or eliminated?
Local communities in general	X			A reduction in the minimum payment amount for working age claimants will have a positive impact by providing a greater level of core support against Council Tax liability.	There are no negative impacts from the reduction in the minimum payment amount for working age claimants.
Age	X			Pension age claimants remain protected with	Pension age claimants are protected and will continue to receive full support, inclusive of outreach services.

			<p>no minimum payment required.</p> <p>Support remains in place from the Visiting & Welfare outreach service to assist pension age claimants with the application process.</p> <p>A reduction in the minimum payment amount for working age claimants will have a positive impact by providing a greater level of core support against Council Tax liability.</p>	<p>There are no negative impacts from the reduction in the minimum payment amount for working age claimants.</p>
Disability	X		<p>A reduction in the minimum payment amount for working age claimants will have a positive impact on any claimant with a disability by providing a greater level of core support against Council Tax liability.</p>	<p>There are no negative impacts from the reduction in the minimum payment amount for working age claimants with a disability.</p>
Gender reassignment		X	<p>No impact.</p>	<p>The scheme will not treat people of different genders any differently.</p>

				There is no CTS data held for this specific category.
Marriage and civil partnership		X	No impact.	<p>The scheme will not treat people either married or in a civil partnership any differently.</p> <p>There is no CTS data held for this specific category.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	X		A reduction in the minimum payment amount for working age claimants will have a positive impact on any claimant who is pregnant or on maternity leave/benefit by providing a greater level of core support against Council Tax liability.	<p>The scheme will only treat people who are on maternity leave differently in so far as considering their income & household with regards to the means testing of CTS entitlement.</p> <p>There are no negative impacts from the reduction in the minimum payment amount for working age claimants who are pregnant or on maternity leave/benefit.</p>
Race (including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers)		X	No impact.	<p>The scheme will not treat people of different ethnicity or race any differently.</p> <p>There is no CTS data held for this specific category.</p>
Religion or belief		X	No impact.	<p>The scheme will not treat people of different religion any differently.</p> <p>There is no CTS data held for this specific category.</p>
Sex	X	X	A reduction in the minimum payment amount for working age claimants will have a positive impact on all claimants regardless of gender by providing a greater level of core support against	<p>The scheme will not treat people of different gender/sex any differently.</p> <p>Pension age claimants are protected and will continue to receive full support.</p> <p>There are no negative impacts from the reduction in the minimum payment amount for working age claimants of all gender/sex as these are treated the same.</p>

				Council Tax liability.	
Sexual orientation		X		No impact	The scheme will not treat people of different sexual orientation any differently. There is no CTS data held for this specific category.
Socio-economic Disadvantage	X			A reduction in the minimum payment amount for working age claimants will have a positive impact on residents of the lowest socio-economic demographic by providing a greater level of core support against Council Tax liability.	Pension age claimants are protected and will continue to receive full support. There are no negative impacts from the reduction in the minimum payment amount for working age claimants with socio-economic disadvantage.
Any community issues identified for this location?		X		No impact	No issues recognised

2. Consultation.

<p>Provide details of what steps you have taken or plan to take to consult the whole community or specific groups affected by the service or policy development e.g. on-line consultation, focus groups, consultation with representative groups.</p> <p>If you have already undertaken some consultation, please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any potential problems or issues raised by the consultation • What actions will be taken to mitigate these concerns
<p>Prior to the implementation of any change to the CTS scheme the Council is required to consult with the residents of the borough.</p> <p>The guiding principles that have been established through case law for fair consultation are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consultation must be carried out at an early stage when the proposals are still at a formative stage

Provide details of what steps you have taken or plan to take to consult the whole community or specific groups affected by the service or policy development e.g. on-line consultation, focus groups, consultation with representative groups.

If you have already undertaken some consultation, please include:

- Any potential problems or issues raised by the consultation
- What actions will be taken to mitigate these concerns

- Sufficient information on the reasons for the decision must be provided to enable the consultees to carry out a reasonable consideration of the issues and to respond
- Adequate time must be given for consideration and responses to be made
- The results of the consultation must be properly taken into account in finalising any decision

The aims of any consultation should be to:

- Inform residents and help them understand the impact of the proposals
- Confirm why the proposals are being made
- Detail any alternative proposals
- Give purposeful consideration to realistic alternative proposals presented
- Obtain feedback on whether residents support the proposals

The consultation is anticipated to be primarily web based with information made available on the website and advertised in the media, with further promotion at the libraries and community hubs, to encourage residents to participate.

To account for digital exclusion paper copies will be made available.

A further public consultation will be held on sites within the borough to enable consultation to take place in person for residents. This will also be promoted to encourage residents to attend and engage.

Consideration will be given to direct contact with current CTS claimants, either by email or with paper copies if email addresses are not held.

Contact and engagement with affected stakeholders such as CAB, DABD and other voluntary groups will also be required to obtain their views on the proposed changes. This may be in person or via online meetings.

The outcome of the consultation will be reported to Cabinet to support in a decision being reached on any change to the scheme.

3. Monitoring and Review

<p>How will you review community and equality impact once the service or policy has been implemented? <i>These actions should be developed using the information gathered in Section 1 and 2 and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.</i></p>		
Action	By when?	By who?
Impact of change monitoring by reviewing Council Tax collection rates and the number of CTS claims made and ongoing expenditure against the CTS scheme.	Ongoing	James Johnston
Regular monitoring based on performance frameworks	Ongoing	Robert Nellist

4. Next steps

It is important the information gathered is used to inform any Council reports that are presented to Cabinet or appropriate committees. This will allow Members to be furnished with all the facts in relation to the impact their decisions will have on different equality groups and the wider community.

Take some time to summarise your findings below. This can then be added to your report template for sign off by the Strategy Team at the consultation stage of the report cycle.

Implications/ Customer Impact
<p>The proposal for the CTS scheme 2023/24 is a reduction of 10% in the minimum payment amount to 15%.</p> <p>Pension Age claimants continue to be protected with no minimum payment and 100% CTS awards as per the nationally prescribed scheme.</p> <p>A revision of the current CTS scheme for 2023/24 to reduce the minimum payment will have a positive impact on all demographic groups within the borough.</p> <p>There are no further negative customer impacts that arise from the reduction in the minimum payment amount.</p> <p>A reduced minimum payment to 15% required for all working age claimants will continue to disproportionately affect the lowest socio-economic group and it is considered likely that this will still make it difficult to collect Council Tax from those entitled to a reduction under the scheme.</p> <p>The means testing of the support for claimants, based on each individual's ability to pay, outside of the minimum payment amount, is fair and equitable and protects the most vulnerable.</p> <p>A revision of the current CTS scheme will see neutral impacts on demographics such as gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, ethnicity, sexual orientation & religion or belief, as these characteristics have no specific data held against them and are not addressed within the make up of the scheme i.e., they have no impact on the administration</p>

or award.

The CTS scheme continues to meet government guidelines for the protection of current levels of support for pensioners, the encouragement of people to work while not acting as a disincentive & considers the equality impact on the most vulnerable residents, meeting the needs and delivering outcomes, both social & economic for residents of the borough.

5. Sign off

The information contained in this template should be authorised by the relevant project sponsor or Divisional Director who will be responsible for the accuracy of the information now provided and delivery of actions detailed.

Name	Role (e.g. project sponsor, head of service)	Date
Stephen McGinnes	Director of Support & Collections	
Donna Radley	Head of Welfare	