

Notice of Meeting of the

ASSEMBLY

**to be held on Wednesday, 17 May 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: 9th May 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. Appointment of Chair and Deputy Chair

The Acting Chief Executive shall invite nominations and conduct the vote for the positions of Chair and Deputy Chair of the Assembly.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. 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.

4. Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2023 (Pages 3 - 10)

5. Minutes of Sub-Committees - To note the minutes of the JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Panel meetings on 20 March, 27 March and 24 April 2023 (Pages 11 - 16)

6. Appointment of Chief Executive (Pages 17 - 20)

7. Appointment of Strategic Director, My Place (Pages 21 - 23)

8. Leader's Statement

The Leader will present his statement.

9. Appointments to the Political Structure and Other Bodies 2023/24 (Pages 25 - 28)

10. Corporate Plan 2023-2026 (Pages 29 - 80)

11. Children's Care and Support Self-Evaluation and OFSTED Inspection Readiness (Pages 81 - 110)

12. Adoption and Corporate Parenting Annual Reports 2021/22 (Pages 111 - 155)

13. Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-2026 (Pages 157 - 208)

14. Members' Allowances Scheme 2023/24 (Pages 209 - 220)

15. Motions

16. Questions With Notice

17. **Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**
18. **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.**

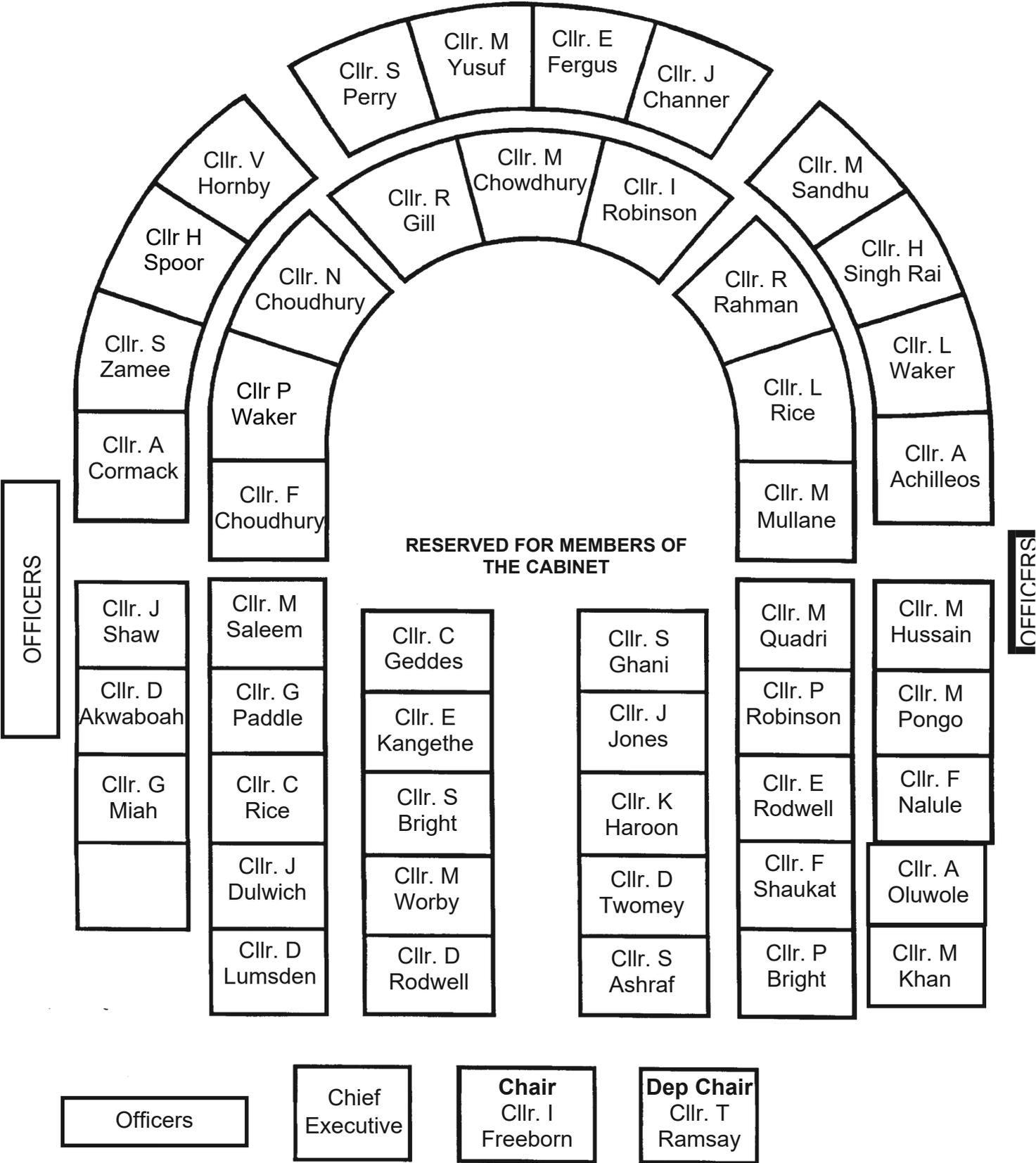
Private Business

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.***

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

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BARKING TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER



SEATING PLAN FOR THE ASSEMBLY

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MINUTES OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 1 March 2023
(7:00 - 8:43 pm)

PRESENT

Cllr Irma Freeborn (Chair)

Cllr Andrew Achilleos	Cllr Dorothy Akwaboah	Cllr Saima Ashraf
Cllr Princess Bright	Cllr Sade Bright	Cllr Josie Channer
Cllr Nashitha Choudhury	Cllr Alison Cormack	Cllr Cameron Geddes
Cllr Syed Ghani	Cllr Rocky Gill	Cllr Kashif Haroon
Cllr Victoria Hornby	Cllr Manzoor Hussain	Cllr Jane Jones
Cllr Elizabeth Kangethe	Cllr Mohammed Khan	Cllr Donna Lumsden
Cllr Giasuddin Miah	Cllr Fatuma Nalule	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 Paul Robinson
Cllr Darren Rodwell	Cllr Muazzam Sandhu	Cllr Faraaz Shaukat
Cllr Dominic Twomey	Cllr Maureen Worby	Cllr Mukhtar Yusuf
Cllr Sabbir Zamee		

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Faruk Choudhury	Cllr Muhib Chowdhury	Cllr John Dulwich
Cllr Edna Fergus	Cllr Margaret Mullane	Cllr Ingrid Robinson
Cllr Emily Rodwell	Cllr Muhammad Saleem	Cllr Jack Shaw
Cllr Lee Waker	Cllr Phil Waker	

55. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

56. Minutes (25 January 2023)

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2023 were confirmed as correct.

57. Minutes of Sub-Committees

The Assembly received and noted the minutes of the JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Panel meeting held on 23 January 2023.

58. 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:

Women's Empowerment Month: March marked the start of Women's

Empowerment Month, the ninth held by the Council. Barking and Dagenham was the only council in the country to dedicate the month to the fantastic contributions women and girls made. The Leader referred to Cllr Ashraf, who had featured in a documentary film called 'Marianne', which followed seven French Muslim women and would be premiering at the Broadway Theatre on 9th March 2023.

LGBT+ History Month: The Council had, last month, celebrated LGBT+ History Month, reflecting on the history of the LGBT+ movement and to understand the challenges they continued to face.

One Year on from Russian Invasion of Ukraine: The Leader reflected on one year on from the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The council would continue to show it's support for the Ukraine's fighting against Russian aggression.

Earthquakes in Turkey and Syria: There were many residents who were concerned for their family and friends following the devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria. The Council stood with those residents during this difficult time.

Passing of Baroness Boothroyd: Baroness Boothroyd, former speaker of the House of Commons and the first woman Speaker sadly passed away on 26 February, aged 93. Baroness Boothroyd was a close friend of former Barking MP, Jo Richardson, and opened a school in her name in 2002. The hall was named 'Boothroyd Hall' in her honour.

Jodie Chesney Memorial Bench: The Jo Richardson School recently unveiled the Jodie Chesney memorial bench in tribute to their former pupil.

Diagnostic Centre and Barking Hospital: The application for the Diagnostic Centre at Barking Hospital had been approved by the Planning Committee and it was hoped the new centre would begin welcoming patients in December 2023.

Eco Homes: 149 new sustainably heated eco homes were to be developed on the former Transport House site in Dagenham. The homes would be heated by air source heat pumps which meant they would be more efficient and cheaper to heat and reduce the development's carbon footprint.

Budget Framework: The Council's budget framework for 2023/24 would be presented by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth & Core Services later in the meeting. Through the budget framework, the Council would continue to support residents through the biggest cost of living crisis in almost half a century, on the back of a global pandemic, by leading the way with a growing economy and putting the needs of residents first.

59. Appointments

There were no appointments.

60. LBBD Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy 2023-2026

The Cabinet Member for Enforcement and Community Safety introduced a report on the Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy 2023-2026.

The Council, as the local licensing authority for gaming and betting, was required under the Gambling Act 2005 to have in place a statement of the principles by which it would abide in carrying out its licensing responsibilities, in accordance with a statutory three-year cycle. The Cabinet Member confirmed that a period of formal public consultation had been undertaken in respect of the draft Gambling Policy Statement 2023-2026 and the proposals had also been considered by the Licensing and Regulatory Committee on 31 January 2023.

The Policy was based on the promotion of the three statutory licensing objectives and the Local Area Profile, which referred to areas in the Borough most at risk of gambling related harm in the context of risk factors such as high levels of deprivation. The Cabinet Member stated that the Government was expected to release a White Paper on gambling reform in the near future. However, under the current legislation all the Council could do was produce a policy that was as localised as possible and aimed at putting the onus on applicants of gambling premises licenses to demonstrate how they would mitigate the risks of gambling related harm as part of their application.

Members discussed the significant detrimental impacts of gambling on individuals and society, particular during the cost-of-living crisis. Members recognised and shared the frustrations of residents that the Council had limited powers to control the number of gambling premises licences in the Borough.

The Assembly **resolved** to:

- (i) Adopt the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Statement of Gambling Licensing Policy 2023-2026, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (ii) Note that the policy statement shall take effect following the expiry of the statutory period of advertising after publication, in accordance with the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005.

61. Pay Policy Statement 2023/24

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core Services introduced a report on the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24, which the Council was required to agree annually in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

The Cabinet Member referred to the various elements that made up the Pay Policy Statement and he drew particular attention to the pay ratios which showed that Barking and Dagenham's pay arrangements for its highest and lowest earners compared very favourably against the London average. He stressed, however, the importance of setting pay at adequate levels in order to retain and attract the most skilled and talented workforce that would deliver the best services for residents and pointed out that the Council's Chief Officer pay structure had last been reviewed in 2013.

The Assembly **resolved** to approve the Pay Policy Statement for the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham for 2023/24 as set out at Appendix A to the report, for publication on the Council's website with effect from April 2023.

62. Audit and Standards Committee Annual Report 2021/22

The Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee presented the Audit and Standards Committee Annual Report 2021/22.

This was the second annual report of the Audit and Standards Committee and regrettably, the Assembly were advised that the 2019/20 audit was still outstanding. This was an ongoing concern for the Committee with many factors contributing to the late report, including a national auditor recruitment crisis and the Financial Reporting Council sanctioning a public sector auditor for not properly considering the accounting for components of assets within its audit strategy in relation to Plant, Property and Equipment (PPE), which also held up audits across the country. Furthermore, the Council's Auditor, BDO, had staff sickness issues and a backlog of work following the delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these challenges, lessons learned from the 2018/19 Audit were implemented. A schedule to implement the outstanding actions had been drawn up with clear lines of responsibility in terms of ownership.

The Committee began its oversight of internal auditing by reviewing the final report of internal auditing for the previous municipal year 2020/21. The Committee agreed, in the previous municipal year, to an internal audit plan of 50 audits. The Head of Assurance (HoA) as the Council's Chief audit executive, was required to give an overall opinion on the Council's internal control systems. The HoA's assessment was that the Council's internal audit systems were generally satisfactory with some improvements required. The Committee, therefore, focused on issues rated 'partial assurance' and 'no assurance probing the basis of the ratings and reviewed the implementation of improvements.

The Committee also reviewed the Internal Audit plan for 2021/22. It was noted that the audit remained on-going and the outcomes would be included in the next annual report.

The Chair took the opportunity to thank the Committee's Members, the Independent Advisor, Stephen Warren, the officers that had supported the Committee and others who had attended and assisted the Committee in its role or been subject to its scrutiny.

The Chair spoke briefly about the current municipal year, with Assembly noting that the 2019/20 audit was still outstanding and its completion remained the Committee's priority. The continuing issues in local authority audits, and possible adverse effects, meant that the Committee would continue to closely monitor the actions of officers and external auditors going forward.

The Assembly **resolved** to note the report.

63. Budget Framework 2023/24 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 - 2026/27

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core Services introduced the Council's proposed budget framework for 2023/24 which incorporated the following:

- Proposed General Fund revenue budget for 2023/24;
- Proposed level of Council Tax for 2023/24;
- Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023/24 to 2026/27;
- Draft capital investment programme 2023/24 to 2026/27;
- Housing Revenue Account budget 2023/24.

The General Fund net budget for 2023/24 was £203.568m, which incorporated decisions previously approved by Members in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, including the savings approved by Assembly in previous years, together with changes in Government grants and other financial adjustments. The Council proposed to increase Council Tax by 4.99%, made up of 2.99% for general spending and 2% that would be ringfenced as an adult social care precept.

The Cabinet Member presented the proposed budget framework against a backdrop of a cost-of-living crisis, which included rising energy and food prices and a government which had placed a decade of austerity on public services with no plan for growth in the economy. Despite this, Barking and Dagenham was one of the only councils in London not to be proposing any cuts to services and was, instead, focussing on growth for the borough, enabling the Council to continue to deliver on residents' priorities.

Members acknowledged the hard work undertaken by the Cabinet Member and officers to achieve a balanced budget against a backdrop of incompetency by the Government. The Council had a history of protecting the most vulnerable residents and would continue to do so with the proposed budget framework.

In accordance with paragraph 10.3.2 of Part 2, Chapter 3 of the Council Constitution, the budget was put to a recorded vote and was **agreed** as follows:

For: Councillors Achilleos, Akwaboah, Ashraf, P Bright, S Bright, Channer, N Choudhury, Cormack, Freeborn, Geddes, Ghani, Haroon, Hornby, Hussain, Jones, Kangethe, Khan, Lumsden, Miah, Nalule, Oluwole, Paddle, Perry, Pongo, Quadri, Rahman, Rai, C Rice, L Rice, P Robinson, D Rodwell, Sandhu, Shaukat, Twomey, Worby, Yusuf and Zamee (37).

Against: None (0)

Abstain: None (0)

The Assembly **resolved** to:

- (i) Approve a base revenue budget for 2023/24 of £203.568m, as detailed in Appendix A to the report;
- (ii) Approve the adjusted Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) position for 2023/24 to 2025/26 allowing for other known pressures and risks at this time, as detailed in Appendix B to the report, including the revised cost of borrowing to accommodate the capital costs associated with the implementation of the MTFS;
- (iii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Finance and Investment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core

Services, to finalise any contribution required to or from reserves in respect of the 2023/24 budget, pending confirmation of levies and further changes to Government grants prior to 1 April 2023;

- (iv) Approve the Statutory Budget Determination for 2023/24 as set out at Appendix D to the report, which reflects an increase of 2.99% on the amount of Council Tax levied by the Council, an Adult Social Care precept of 2.00% and the final Council Tax proposed by the Greater London Assembly (9.7% increase), as detailed in Appendix E to the report;
- (v) Note the update on the current projects, issues and risks in relation to Council services, as detailed in sections 8-10 of the report;
- (vi) Approve the Council's Housing Revenue Account budget for 2023-24 as set out in Section 11 to the report;
- (vii) Approve the approach to updating the stock condition survey for the Council's housing stock, as referred to in paragraphs 11.5 – 11.8 of the report, and delegate authority to the Strategic Director, My Place, as advised by the Council's Procurement Board and in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Leadership and Engagement, the Strategic Director, Finance and Investment and the Chief Legal Officer, to conduct the procurement and award and enter into the contract(s) and all other necessary or ancillary agreements with the successful bidders;
- (viii) Approve the Council's draft Capital Programme for 2023/24 totalling £388.126m, of which £43.909m are General Fund schemes, as detailed in Appendix F to the report;
- (ix) Note the update on the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy as set out section 13 of the report; and
- (x) Note the Chief Financial Officer's Statutory Finance Report as set out in section 15 of the report, which includes a recommended minimum level of reserves of £12m.

64. Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023/24

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core Services introduced a report on the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023/24 which set out the Council's borrowing, investment and funding plans for the year ahead.

Members noted the achievements of the Council in attracting large amounts of investment into the Borough and praised the Treasury Management team for delivering positive outcomes, despite the very difficult financial climate of high inflation and interest rates.

The Assembly **resolved** to adopt the TMSS for 2023/24 and in doing so:

- (i) Noted the current treasury position for 2023/24 in section 4 and prospects for interest rates, as referred to in section 8 of the report;

- (ii) Approved the Annual Investment Strategy 2023/24 outlining the investments that the Council may use for the prudent management of its investment balances, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (iii) Approved the Council's Borrowing Strategy 2023/24 to 2025/26, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report;
- (iv) Noted that the Capital Strategy 2023/24, incorporating the Investment and Acquisitions Strategy, shall be updated and presented for approval in April 2023;
- (v) Approved the Capital Prudential and Treasury Indicators 2022/23 – 2024/25, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report;
- (vi) Approved the Operational Boundary Limit of £1.85bn and the Authorised Borrowing Limit of £1.95bn for 2023/24, representing the statutory limit determined by the Council pursuant to section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003, as referred to in Appendix 3 to the report;
- (vii) Approved the revised Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2023/24; the Council's policy on repayment of debt, as set out in Appendix 4 to the report;
- (viii) Noted that changes made to the Prudential Code and Treasury Management code, published in December 2021, had been fully implemented for the 2023/24 TMSS;
- (ix) Noted the Liability benchmark data in section 11 of the report, including the impact of schemes agreed in 2022 as well as the impact of pipeline schemes on the amount of borrowing required by the Council; and
- (x) Delegated authority to the Strategic Director, Finance and Investment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core Services, to proportionally amend the counterparty lending limits agreed within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement to consider the increase in short-term cash held from borrowing. counterparty lending limits agreed within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement to consider the increase in short-term cash held from borrowing.

65. Motions

There were no motions.

66. Questions With Notice

There were no questions with notice.

67. Resolution to Extend Six Month Attendance Rule for Councillor Edna Fergus - Section 85 of Local Government Act 1972

(The Chair agreed that the following item could be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency under the provisions of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local

Government Act 1972.)

The Assembly received a report from the Acting Chief Executive regarding the consideration of dispensation under the provisions of Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of Councillor Edna Fergus' non-attendance at qualifying Council meetings since 28 September 2022 due to ill health.

The Assembly **resolved**:

- (i) To approve Councillor Edna Fergus' absence from meetings due to ill health, in accordance with the provisions of Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (ii) That Councillor Edna Fergus shall continue to be a Member of the Council.

MINUTES OF JNC APPOINTMENTS, SALARIES AND STRUCTURES PANEL

Monday, 20 March 2023
(11:00 am - 12:45 pm)

Present: Cllr Dominic Twomey (Chair), Cllr Saima Ashraf, Cllr Cameron Geddes, Cllr Adegboyega Oluwole and Cllr Muhammad Saleem

11. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

12. Private Business

It was resolved to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting by reason of the nature of the business to be discussed which included information exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

13. Appointment of Strategic Director, My Place

Further to Minute 10 (23 January 2023), the Panel reconvened to consider the papers that had been submitted in advance of the meeting, which included the job description and person specification for the post, the CV and supporting statement of the shortlisted candidate and the findings from the external technical assessment and psychometric personality test.

The Panel discussed the findings from the external technical assessment and psychometric personality test and agreed the interview questions to be asked of the candidate.

Following the interview, Members discussed the candidate's responses to the questions and the supporting information.

The Panel **resolved to recommend the Assembly** to appoint Leona Menville to the post of Strategic Director, My Place on a permanent basis.

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MINUTES OF JNC APPOINTMENTS, SALARIES AND STRUCTURES PANEL

Monday, 27 March 2023
(12:30 - 1:30 pm)

Present: Cllr Darren Rodwell (Chair), Cllr Saima Ashraf, Cllr Donna Lumsden, Cllr Muhammad Saleem, Cllr Dominic Twomey and Cllr Maureen Worby

14. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

15. Private Business

It was resolved to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting by reason of the nature of the business to be discussed which included information exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

16. Shortlisting for the Appointment of Chief Executive

The JNC Panel convened to consider the short-listing of candidates for the post of Chief Executive, which had been advertised via the Council's website and other sources from 23 February to 12 March 2023.

The Director of Workforce Change advised that the applications received had been assessed against the job description and person specification for the post and four candidates had been long-listed. Following that exercise, an external technical assessment panel, made up by Rob Whiteman, Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), and Nancy Scott, partner at executive search and recruitment specialists GatenbySanderson, had interviewed the four candidates to assess their individual motivations and strengths. The Council's Head of Talent and Resourcing was also present at those interviews.

The JNC Panel considered in detail the candidates' personal statements and CVs, together with the external technical assessment panel's report. Mr Whiteman also joined the meeting to advise on the key aspects of the technical report and discuss the findings with the Panel.

The Director of Workforce Change outlined the next stages of the recruitment process, which included short-listed candidates being invited to informal meetings with key stakeholders and Cabinet Members as well as undertaking psychometric testing. The JNC Panel would then reconvene on 24 April to interview the shortlisted candidates before making a formal recommendation on the appointment of a new Chief Executive to the Assembly meeting on 17 May 2023.

The JNC Panel **resolved** to shortlist candidates 2b and 2c (as identified in the Director's report) for the post of Chief Executive, to progress to stakeholder interviews and final interview by this Panel on 24 April 2023.

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MINUTES OF JNC APPOINTMENTS, SALARIES AND STRUCTURES PANEL

Monday, 24 April 2023
(1:30 - 5:00 pm)

Present: Cllr Darren Rodwell (Chair), Cllr Saima Ashraf, Cllr Donna Lumsden, Cllr Muhammad Saleem, Cllr Dominic Twomey and Cllr Maureen Worby

17. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

18. Minutes (27 March 2023)

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2023 were confirmed as correct.

19. Private Business

It was resolved to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting by reason of the nature of the business to be discussed which included information exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 1 of Part 1, Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

20. Appointment of Chief Executive (and Head of Paid Service)

Further to Minute 16 (27 March 2023), the Panel reconvened to consider the appointment of a new Chief Executive (and Head of Paid Service) following the shortlisting of two candidates to progress to the final stages of the selection process.

Since the last meeting, the two shortlisted candidates had participated in stakeholder panel interviews and undergone psychometric personality testing. Reports on those two processes had been prepared by Hays Consultancy for consideration by the Panel, alongside the job description and person specification for the post, the CVs and supporting statements of the two candidates and relevant extracts from the external technical assessment report. Rob Whiteman, Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and co-author of the technical assessment report, and representatives of Hays Consultancy were present at the meeting in an advisory capacity to answer any questions in relation to their respective reports.

The Panel reconsidered the candidates' applications and the findings from the external technical assessment and reviewed the findings from the stakeholder panel interviews and psychometric personality test. Candidates had been asked to give a brief presentation on the subject matter of "*What would be your key priorities for the first three months and also the first two years? Tell us what the Council will achieve over the next five years and your approach to securing this?*" and the Panel agreed the interview questions to be asked following the candidates' presentations.

Following the presentations and interviews, the Panel discussed the candidates'

responses to the interview questions and the supporting information and reached a unanimous decision.

The Panel **resolved to recommend the Assembly** to appoint Fiona Taylor to the post of Chief Executive (and Head of Paid Service) on a permanent basis at the spot salary of £184,557.

ASSEMBLY

17 May 2023

Title: Appointment of Chief Executive (and Head of Paid Service)	
Report of the Leader of the Council	
Open Report	For Decision
Wards Affected: None	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Alan Dawson, Head of Governance and Electoral Services	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 2348 E-mail: alan.dawson@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Gail Clark, Director of Workforce Change	
Summary	
<p>The external recruitment exercise for a permanent Chief Executive started in February 2023.</p> <p>An executive recruitment microsite was created that set out the Council's vision for itself and the borough, and what it was looking for in a Chief Executive. The post was advertised in a number of ways, including through the Municipal Journal (MJ), the industry-recognised recruitment magazine for local government, and LinkedIn and brought-in expertise where required, e.g. technical assessment and support for stakeholder interviews.</p> <p>At the closing date for applications of 12 March, five candidates had applied. One applicant was deemed not to have met the necessary criteria for the post and four were invited to technical panel assessment interviews.</p> <p>The technical panel assessment interviews took place on 23 March 2023. The findings and recommendations of that panel, together with the job description and person specification for the role and the four longlisted candidates' personal statements and CVs were considered by the JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Panel on 27 March 2023. The JNC Panel agreed to shortlist two candidates who would progress to informal meetings with key stakeholders and Cabinet Members, as well as undertaking psychometric testing, prior to final interviews on 24 April 2023.</p> <p>At the JNC Panel meeting on 24 April, Members interviewed the two shortlisted candidates and received a presentation from each on the subject of "<i>What would be your key priorities for the first three months and also the first two years? Tell us what the Council will achieve over the next five years and your approach to securing this?</i>".</p> <p>After a very thorough evaluation process, the Panel unanimously agreed to recommend the appointment of Fiona Taylor, the current Acting Chief Executive and Strategic Director of Law and Governance, to the position of Chief Executive (and Head of Paid Service) at the designated Chief Executive spot salary of £184,557.</p>	

In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, the appointment to the post of Chief Executive is the responsibility of the Assembly based on the recommendation of the JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Panel.
Recommendation(s)
The Assembly is recommended to agree the appointment of Fiona Taylor to the post of Chief Executive (and Head of Paid Service) at the spot salary of £184,557.
Reason(s)
To accord with the requirements of Part 2, Chapter 4 of the Council Constitution.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 At its meeting on 28 February 2022, the JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Panel agreed to appoint Fiona Taylor to act into the role of Interim Chief Executive (and Head of Paid Service) with effect from 15 April 2022. This followed the resignation of Chris Naylor as Chief Executive on 15 December 2021 and the ending of interim arrangements whereby Claire Symonds was Acting Chief Executive until she left on 14 April 2022 to become Chief Executive of London Borough of Redbridge.
- 1.2 It was agreed that the Council would recruit to the permanent post of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service in 2023.
- 1.3 Arrangements were put in place for the Council to run the recruitment search in-house using the expertise in the Human Resources and Organisational Development Service, and Digital and Communications teams. Additional services such as technical assessment and psychometric testing would be bought in to provide an extensive range of selection arrangements.

2. Search Arrangements

- 2.1 A recruitment crisis affecting local government has significantly impacted on the appointment to senior roles. At the point that the Council commenced its recruitment campaign, two other London Chief Executive positions were out for advert, alongside a number of other Local Government Chief Executive roles across England. To maximise interest in Barking and Dagenham's role, extensive attraction arrangements were deployed which included:
 - A bespoke executive search microsite
 - A paid editorial in the MJ (Municipal Journal) – the leading industry press, and half page advert in the appointments pages.
 - Paid promotion in LinkedIn and additional push notifications
 - Dedicated application portal
 - Opportunities for interested applicants to speak to the Leader about the role.
- 2.2 The advert was open from 23 February to 12 March 2023. Details of the response to the microsite and the editorial will be made available to Members.

2.3 Candidates were asked to submit a CV and a supporting statement addressing how their skills, knowledge, experience, and personal qualities meet the requirement of the post. Five applications were received by the deadline. One application was deemed not to have met the necessary criteria for the post.

3. **Selection arrangements**

3.1 The following selection arrangements were put in place:

- Interview with external technical assessment panel (23 March). The technical assessment panel comprised the following and was supported by Rosemary Oduntan-Oke, the Council's Head of Talent and Resourcing:
 - Rob Whiteman, Chief Executive of CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) and previously a Senior Civil Servant, Managing Director of the Local Government Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), Chief Executive of LBBB, and Director of Resources at Lewisham; and
 - Nancy Scott, partner at Gatenby Sanderson, experienced executive search and recruitment specialist.
- JNC Panel shortlisting (27 March).
- Stakeholder carousel panels for shortlisted candidates. Three stakeholder panels have been established: Community Leaders, Trade Unions, Chairs of Staff Networks. Stakeholder panels were assisted by external support to draw out their findings, which was presented to JNC members.
- Informal lunch with Cabinet Members.
- Informal meetings with Leader and Deputy Leaders.
- Tour of the borough.
- Psychometric testing (29 March to 4 April).
- Final JNC interview including timed presentation (24 April).

3.2 At the JNC Panel on 27 March, Members considered the applicants' personal statements and CVs together with the external technical assessment panel's report. Mr Whiteman also joined the meeting to advise on the key aspects of the technical report and discuss the findings with the Panel.

3.3 Arising from those considerations, the JNC Panel agreed to shortlist two candidates to progress to stakeholder interviews and final interview by the JNC Panel on 24 April 2023.

3.4 Hays Consultancy were engaged to support the stakeholder panel interviews and psychometric personality testing and the reports on those two processes were considered at a reconvened meeting of the JNC Panel on 24 April 2023. Alongside those reports, the JNC Panel reconsidered the job description and person specification for the post, the CVs and supporting statements of the two candidates and relevant extracts from the external technical assessment report. Rob Whiteman, Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and co-author of the technical assessment report, and representatives of Hays Consultancy were present at the meeting in an advisory capacity to answer any questions in relation to their respective reports.

- 3.5 The JNC Panel received a presentation from both shortlisted candidates on the subject of “*What would be your key priorities for the first three months and also the first two years? Tell us what the Council will achieve over the next five years and your approach to securing this?*” and passed a number of pre-agreed questions to the candidates.
- 3.6 Following a very thorough evaluation process, the JNC Panel unanimously agreed to recommend the appointment of Fiona Taylor to the post of Chief Executive (and Head of Paid Service) on a permanent basis at the designated Chief Executive spot salary of £184,557.

4. HR Considerations

Implications completed by: Rosemary Oduntan-Oke, Head of Talent and Resourcing

- 4.1 This report proposes the appointment of Fiona Taylor for the post of Chief Executive. HR/OD advice and support has been provided throughout and the recruitment and selection processes are in line with the Council’s arrangements.

5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Katherine Heffernan, Head of Service Finance

- 5.1 The post of Chief Executive is a funded post within the Council’s establishment budget. There are no further financial implications arising.

6. Legal Implications

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

- 6.1 The selection decision must be based on evidence of the candidate’s merit. The process for considering a recruitment should be carried out in accordance with the Council’s policies and procedures.
- 6.2 As set out in the body of this Report the formal appointment of the Chief Executive is under the Council’s Constitution an Assembly function following a recommendation of the JNC Appointment, Salaries and Structures Panel (see Constitution Part 2 Chapter 4 paragraph 2.1(x)(a)).
- 6.3 The Council Constitution defines the role of Chief Executive as including appointment to the statutory office of Head of Paid Service under section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

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

List of Appendices: None

ASSEMBLY**17 May 2023**

Title: Appointment of Strategic Director, My Place	
Report of the Leader of the Council	
Open Report	For Decision
Wards Affected: None	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Alan Dawson, Head of Governance and Electoral Services	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 2348 E-mail: alan.dawson@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Gail Clark, Director of Workforce Change	
Accountable Executive Team Director: Fiona Taylor, Acting Chief Executive	
Summary	
<p>The former Strategic Director resigned from the Council effective from 11 February 2023, having previously taken a four-month career break from 1 August to 30 November 2022. At the JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Plan on 4 July 2022, Members authorised the Acting Chief Executive to backfill the four-month career break period via an appointment from the existing Senior Management Team. Leona Menville, Director of Homes and Assets within My Place, was subsequently appointed as Interim Strategic Director, My Place, and continued in that role while the recruitment for a permanent replacement was undertaken.</p> <p>As part of the Council's 'grow our own' succession and talent management approach it was agreed to consider internal applicants for the permanent position in the first instance. An internal advert was circulated to staff on 23 December 2022 and prospective candidates were asked to submit a CV and a supporting statement addressing how their skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities met the requirements of the post.</p> <p>Only one candidate applied for the post via the redeployee and internal pool. Leona Menville was interviewed by an officer panel on 17 January 2023 and was recommended to go forward to interview by the JNC Panel.</p> <p>The JNC Panel met on 23 January 2023 and an initial interview was held. Members indicated, however, that in view of it being a Strategic Director role, any recommendation for appointment should be supported by additional information and evidence as to the candidate's suitability for the permanent position, to be presented to a reconvened meeting of the JNC Panel.</p> <p>That reconvened meeting took place on 20 March 2023 and, following a very thorough evaluation process, the Panel agreed to recommend the appointment of Leona Menville, the current Interim Strategic Director, My Place to the role on a permanent basis.</p>	

In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, the appointment to a Strategic Leadership Director post is the responsibility of the Assembly based on the recommendation of the JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Panel.
Recommendation(s)
The Assembly is recommended to agree the appointment of Leona Menville to the post of Strategic Director, My Place at grade CO5 (£134,750).
Reason(s)
To accord with the requirements of Part 2, Chapter 4 of the Council Constitution.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The former Strategic Director, My Place, resigned from the Council effective from 11 February 2023. Prior to this, the postholder had taken a four-month unpaid career break from 1 August to 30 November 2022.
- 1.2 At the JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Panel on 4 July 2022, Members authorised the Acting Chief Executive to backfill the career break period via an appointment from the existing Senior Management Team. Leona Menville, Director of Homes and Assets within My Place, was subsequently appointed as Interim Strategic Director of My Place.
- 1.3 In light of the resignation of the former Strategic Director, the recruitment for a permanent replacement to the role was commenced. As part of the Council's 'grow our own' succession and talent management approach it was agreed to consider internal applicants in the first instance. An internal advert was circulated to staff on 23 December 2022. Candidates were asked to submit a CV and a supporting statement addressing how their skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities met the requirements of the post.

2. Proposal and Issues

- 2.1 Only one candidate applied for the post via the redeployee and internal pool. Leona Menville was interviewed by an officer panel on 17 January 2023, which consisted of Fiona Taylor, Acting Chief Executive, Kevin O' Brien, Interim Managing Director, Be First and Jennifer Daothong, Executive Director, Housing Regeneration and Public Realm, London Borough of Lewisham (external Panel Member), and was recommended for interview to the JNC Panel.
- 2.2 The JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Panel met on 23 January 2023 and an initial interview was held. Members indicated, however, that in view of it being a Strategic Director role, any recommendation for appointment should be supported by additional information and evidence as to the candidate's suitability for the permanent position. Therefore, the Acting Chief Executive was instructed to commission an external technical assessment and a psychometric personality test and to present the full range of information and evidence to a reconvened meeting of the JNC Panel.

- 2.3 The JNC Panel reconvened on 20 March 2023 to reconsider the candidate's personal statement and CV as well as reports relating to the external technical assessment and psychometric personality test. Following a very thorough evaluation process, the Panel agreed to recommend the appointment of Leona Menville to the Strategic Director post on a permanent basis at the job-evaluated grade of CO5 (£134,750).
- 2.4 In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, the appointment to a Strategic Director post is the responsibility of the Assembly based on the recommendation of the JNC Appointments, Salaries and Structures Panel.

3. HR Considerations

Implications completed by: Rosemary Oduntan-Oke, Head of Talent and Resourcing

- 3.1 This report proposes the appointment of Leona Menville for the post of Strategic Director, My Place. HR/OD advice and support has been provided throughout and the recruitment and selection processes are in line with the Council's arrangements.

4. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Katherine Heffernan, Head of Service Finance

- 4.1 The Strategic Director, My Place is a funded post within the Council's establishment budget. There are no further financial implications arising.

5. Legal Implications

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

- 5.1 The selection decision must be based on evidence of the candidate's merit. The process for considering a recruitment should be carried out in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.
- 5.2 As set out in the body of this Report the formal appointment of Strategic Directors is under the Council's Constitution an Assembly function following a recommendation of a JNC Appointment, Salaries and Structures Panel (see Part 2, Chapter 4 paragraph 2.1(x)(a)).

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

List of Appendices: None

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ASSEMBLY**17 May 2023**

Title: Appointments to the Political Structure and Other Bodies 2023/24	
Report of the Acting Chief Executive	
Open Report	For Decision
Wards Affected: None	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Alan Dawson, Head of Governance & Electoral Services	Contact Details: E-mail: alan.dawson@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Alison Stuart, Chief Legal Officer and Interim Monitoring Officer	
Accountable Executive Team Director: Fiona Taylor, Acting Chief Executive	
Summary	
<p>The Assembly is responsible for appointments to the political structure and various other internal and external bodies, except those reserved to the Leader and/or Cabinet Members.</p> <p>Appendix 1 to this report shows the proposed appointments for the 2023/24 municipal year relating to Council committees and other internal and external bodies which are the responsibility of the Assembly.</p> <p>The appointment of the Mayor for 2023/24 will be dealt with at the meeting of the Ceremonial Council on Friday 19 May.</p>	
Recommendation(s)	
<p>The Assembly is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Approve the appointments to various Council committees and other internal and external bodies, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report; and (ii) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to approve the appointment of councillors to fill any vacant positions prior to the next meeting of the Assembly on 26 July 2023. 	
Reason(s)	
<p>To meet the Council's statutory and constitutional requirements and to ensure relevant positions are appointed to.</p>	

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Part 2, Chapter 4 of the Constitution sets out the Assembly's responsibilities in respect of appointments to the political structure and various other internal and external bodies.
- 1.2 Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 imposes a duty on local authorities at their annual meeting, or as soon as possible after it, to review the allocation of seats on committees of the Council between political groups. Political groups on the Council are formed in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 when two or more councillors notify the Chief Executive, as Proper Officer, of their wish to be treated as a Group.
- 1.3 At present, the Council consists of 50 Labour councillors and one independent councillor. The formation of the Labour Group was noted at last year's Annual Assembly meeting.
- 1.4 The following principles apply to the allocation of seats:
 - a) That not all the seats on the body to which appointments are being made are allocated to the same political group;
 - b) That the majority of seats on each committee are allocated to a particular group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;
 - c) That, subject to (a) and (b), when allocating seats to a political group, the total number of their seats across all the ordinary committees of the Council, must reflect their proportion of the authority's membership; and
 - d) Subject to (a) to (c), that the number of seats on each committee is as far as possible in proportion to the group's membership of the authority.
- 1.5 The Cabinet and the Health and Wellbeing Board are not required to be proportional, as they are 'Executive bodies', and so are outside of the political balance calculation.
- 1.6 Sub-committees, with the exception of the Licensing Sub-Committee, are also governed by the political balance rules, but it is not necessary to add up all the sub-committee seats and then allocate them in proportion. As far as this is practicable, the allocation of seats on each sub-committee should reflect the proportional representation of the political groups on the Council.
- 1.7 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires that, once the Assembly has determined the allocation of committee places between the political groups, it must then appoint the nominees of the political groups to the committees.
- 1.8 Any non-aligned (independent) members are to be appointed to available seats on committees by the Council.

2. Proposal and Issues

- 2.1 The nomination process for the various positions to which appointments are required for the municipal year 2023/24 is dealt with through party groups which, for Barking and Dagenham, is just the Labour Group.

- 2.2 Attached at Appendix 1 (to follow) is the provisional schedule of nominations from the Labour Group for the 2023/24 municipal year in respect of appointments which the Assembly has responsibility for appointing to. These appointments relate to main Council committees and other internal and external body meetings.
- 2.3 Any changes / additions to the information contained in the appendix will be reported at the meeting.
- 2.4 The Labour Group has agreed not to fill all seats on Council committees to which the Assembly makes appointments to allow the independent councillor to take up at least one position on a Council committee, in line with best practice.
- 2.5 In normal circumstances, the filling of any remaining vacancies on committees etc. that are the responsibility of the Assembly would require the approval of the Assembly. However, as the next meeting is not until 26 July 2023 it is proposed that the Chief Executive be authorised, in consultation with the Leader, to approve the filling of vacant positions to enable individuals to participate as a formal Member in relevant meetings as soon as possible.

3. Options Appraisal

- 3.1 Any delay in reappointing Members to the various meetings and other bodies puts the normal decision-making process and business of the Council at risk.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with Members and officers as appropriate.

5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by Katherine Heffernan, Head of Service Finance

- 5.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report. This concerns the annual appointment of elected Members to Boards and Committees. Where an appointment carries an allowance the financial impact of this is set out in another report to this meeting.

6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by Dr Paul Feild, Senior Governance Lawyer

- 6.1 The Assembly is a meeting of full Council for the purposes of Section 8 and Schedule 2 of the Local Government Act 1972. This meeting of the Assembly is the annual meeting where the Council decides on the overall political structure and makes the necessary appointments.
- 6.2 Part 2 (the Articles) of the Council's Constitution sets out the membership requirements and terms of reference for the various Council committees. The appointments in this report meet statutory and constitutional requirements and ensure the Council is able to proceed with the business reserved to each committee.

- 6.3 It is further proposed that the Interim Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to approve the appointment of councillors to fill any vacant positions that may not be filled at this Assembly meeting. This is permissible pursuant to section 101(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, so as to enable the new Member to take a full part in the Council's business straight away.

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

List of appendices:

- **Appendix 1** – Provisional schedule of nominations for 2023/24 (to follow)

ASSEMBLY**17 May 2023**

Title: Corporate Plan 2023-2026	
Report of the Leader of the Council	
Open Report	For Decision
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: Yes
Report Author: Richard Caton, Head of Performance and PMO	Contact Details: E-mail: richard.caton@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Executive Team Directors: Fiona Taylor, Acting Chief Executive, and Alex Powell, Director of Strategy	
Summary	
<p>This report introduces the new Corporate Plan for 2023-2026.</p> <p>As the period covered by the last plan (2020-22) has finished, we need to review and reflect on our activities and approach as a Council: how these address the challenges of today and work towards the long-term vision laid out in the Borough Manifesto.</p> <p>Whilst there is no specific statutory duty to produce a Corporate Plan, it is a necessary element of good governance, and it defines the Council's medium-term priorities. The Corporate Plan is part of the Council's agreed Policy Framework.</p> <p>This new Corporate Plan articulates what we need to achieve over the next three years and how we need to work to best deliver those aims, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision – setting out a new vision, that bridges medium-term plans with the long-term ambitions of the Borough Manifesto. • Our community profile – to better understand who the residents we serve are, in order to plan and prioritise effectively to meet their needs and aspirations. • Priorities – seven strategic priorities to focus Council activities and resources. • Our principles – a set of eight principles to be applied to all aspects of Council work, to drive service delivery, performance, and innovation. • Equality and Diversity – setting out our approach to embedding equality and diversity considerations and placing it at the heart of everything we do. • The way we work – the values and workplace culture that is needed to deliver on these objectives. • Turning strategy into action – how we will monitor progress and connect the high-level strategy with operational planning and delivery. <p>The Cabinet considered and endorsed the Corporate Plan at its meeting on 18 April 2023.</p>	

Recommendation(s)

The Assembly is recommended to:

- (i) Approve the Corporate Plan 2023-2026 as set out at Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Director of Strategy, in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leaders and Deputy Cabinet Member for Performance and Data Insight, to develop and implement an Outcomes Framework relating to the new Corporate Plan.

Reason(s)

Chapter 4, Part 2 of the Council's Constitution states that Assembly has the responsibility of "approving which plans and strategies shall form the Council's Policy Framework. The Corporate Plan is one of the strategies in the Policy Framework.

The Corporate Plan assists the Council in meeting the challenges of the present and achieving the long-term vision for the Borough, set out in the Borough Manifesto, by providing a clear set of priorities and bringing staff together behind common principles for the medium-term.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1. In 2017, the Borough Manifesto was developed in partnership with the local community, establishing a shared long-term vision to make the borough a place that people are proud of and want to live, work, study and stay. This continues to be a driving force behind our work as a council.
- 1.2. At the end of the period covered by the 2020-22 Corporate Plan, it is time to reflect on what has been achieved and set out a new Corporate Plan that lays out the way forward. Although there is no statutory requirement to have a Corporate Plan, it is a necessary element of good governance.
- 1.3. The Corporate Plan is a vital part of the Council's "Golden Thread", translating its long-term ambitions for the borough, as set out in the Borough Manifesto, into clear objectives to drive activity over the next three years. In turn, it will inform services' operational plans, which will be outlined through Service Plans that sit below the Corporate Plan, and individual employee performance, feedback and development objectives, aligning day-to-day operations with the long-term vision and goals for the borough.

2. Proposal and Issues

- 2.1. This new Corporate Plan establishes a clear agenda for the Council over the next three years, with an understanding of the context we are working in, and the key challenges facing us, such as the rising cost of living and an increasing complexity of health and social care needs. It sets out a unifying set of priorities and values for us as a Council, to bring staff, partners and the local community together behind a common goal and approach.

2.2. It establishes seven priorities for the Council, focussed on what we want to deliver for our residents:

- Residents are supported during the current cost-of-living crisis.
- Residents are safe, protected, and supported at their most vulnerable.
- Residents live healthier, happier, independent lives for longer.
- Residents prosper from good education, skills development, and secure employment.
- Residents benefit from inclusive growth and regeneration.
- Residents live in, and play their part in creating, safer, cleaner, and greener neighbourhoods.
- Residents live in good housing and avoid becoming homeless.

2.3. There are approaches and elements of good practice that will support us to deliver on those priorities. The Corporate Plan lays out set of principles, values and a working culture that will drive service delivery, performance and innovation. We will:

- Work in partnership.
- Engage and facilitate co-production.
- Be evidence-led and data driven.
- Focus on prevention and early intervention.
- Provide value for money.
- Be strengths-based.
- Strengthen risk management and compliance.
- Adopt a “Health in all policies” approach.

2.4. A commitment to addressing structural inequality must be central to our vision for the borough, to make sure we build a community where every resident can thrive. To reflect this, the new Corporate Plan also states our approach to equality, diversity, equity and inclusion. Our Equality Objectives set out three principal types of action the council will take to promote equality within the borough, going above and beyond our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010:

- Addressing structural inequality: activity aimed at addressing inequalities related to the wider determinants of health and wellbeing, including unemployment, debt, and safety.
- Providing leadership in the community: activity related to community leadership, including faith, cohesion and integration; building awareness within the community throughout programme of equalities events.
- Fair and transparent services: activity aimed at addressing workforce matters related to leadership, recruitment, retention, and staff experience; organisational policies and processes including use of Equality Impact Assessments, commissioning practices and approach to social value.

2.5. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council is required to publish Equality Objectives at least every four years.

2.6. The plan also outlines its place within the wider strategic framework, including how it integrates with other key documents as part of the ‘golden thread’ that translates our

long-term ambitions into meaningful day-to-day action. Its priorities and principles will inform annual Service Plans.

3. Corporate Plan Outcomes Framework

- 3.1. The Cabinet is responsible for implementing the Corporate Plan, and within its functions it has the responsibility to monitor corporate performance. A robust and effective monitoring regime is therefore required to assist Cabinet to keep oversight of performance, delivery and progress to outcomes.
- 3.2. An Outcomes Framework to accompany the Corporate Plan is in development. A recommendation of this report is to delegate authority to the Director of Strategy to finalise the development of the framework and to make arrangements for reporting and monitoring, including the design and development of reporting products.
- 3.3. Though the focus of corporate performance monitoring is on the Outcomes Framework, there are robust arrangements in place for monitoring operational performance. This is typically delegated to Directors and their management teams with escalation routes to the Executive Team and Portfolio Holders where there are performance issues or risks. Performance management arrangements for services are outlined in annual Service Plans.

4. Consultation

- 4.1. The Corporate Plan highlights that consistent engagement with the community and our partners must be at the heart of our approach as a Council, establishing “working in partnership” and “engaging and facilitating participation” as two of the key principles that define our way of working.
- 4.2. This Corporate Plan has been developed through collaboration with a range of stakeholders. Workshops with members and conversations with leaders and managers across the council have driven the choice and framing of the Priorities, the content of our commitments and the values and principles that we articulate in the plan. A roundtable was held with our partners from the VCSE sector to discuss and gather feedback on the approach outlined and whether it resonated with their own perspectives. Reflections from these discussions have been incorporated into the Corporate Plan.
- 4.3. The Cabinet considered and endorsed the Corporate Plan at its meeting on 18 April 2023.

5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Katherine Heffernan, Head of Service Finance

- 5.1. The Medium Term Financial Strategy and the 2023-24 budget were approved by Cabinet and then Assembly in February and March 2023. There will be further updates in summer and autumn/winter. As the MTFs sets out, the Council is under severe financial pressure and will need to draw down at least £9m from its reserves in 2023-24. It is very likely that substantial savings will need to be found in future years in order to balance the budget.

- 5.2. These financial pressures are the background against which the Corporate Plan will be delivered. The plan itself and the priorities set out should provide a framework for making decisions and choices about allocation of our very limited funding and where savings can be made. The Outcomes Framework must be deliverable within the available budget and this will be a constraint on the level of ambition possible.
- 5.3. In this context the adoption of the principles underpinning the plan will be important to ensure the Council remains financially sustainable, in particular the need to be evidence led, focused on prevention, have strong risk management in place and provide clear value for money is stronger than ever.

6. Legal Implications

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

- 6.1. The Corporate Plan is a non-statutory plan, but it is of central importance for the Council in determining its priorities. There is no specific statutory duty to produce a corporate plan, but it is a necessary element of good governance and of central importance for the Council in determining its priorities. The performance regime established by the Local Government Act 1999 as amended by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 together with supporting legislation, requires the Council to work to achieve continuous improvement and best value. A corporate plan, its objectives and in time how the delivery measures up in terms of outcomes, are therefore one of the signifiers of a well-run local authority.
- 6.2. Furthermore, the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 Regulations obliges the Council to produce an Annual Governance Statement for each accounting year evidencing how the Council has performed. This is to be done in accordance with proper practices. The CIPFA / Solace Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016 guidance sets out the required practice and that includes a clear statement of the Councils purpose and intended outcomes. The Corporate Plan thus plays a vital role in the legal duty to ensure sound governance of the Council.

7. Other Implications

- 7.1. **Risk Management** – Strengthening risk management is a cross-cutting principle of the Corporate Plan, highlighting the importance of proactively identifying and managing risk appropriately. The Council maintains a Corporate Risk Register that highlights the key strategic risks that may prevent the Council from achieving its stated objectives. These risks, controls and mitigating actions are reviewed periodically by the Audit and Standards Committee. Risk management is also embedded into the new service planning process, where services will identify and monitor risks to the delivery of work that contributes to the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan. There is proportionate reporting and escalation of issues and risks to the Senior Management Team, and to relevant Cabinet Members where appropriate. The recommendations of this report delegate authority to the Director of Strategy to develop and implement an Outcomes Framework for the purpose of monitoring performance and progress to outcomes. Once in place that monitoring regime will strengthen performance and risk management.

- 7.2. **Contractual Issues** – The vision and priorities will be underpinned by procurement activity, and this will be conducted in line with the Council’s Constitution and UK legislation (PCR2015).
- 7.3. **Staffing Issues** – The Corporate Plan sits at the heart of the council’s strategic framework, and therefore guides the work of all services and the workforce. It is a key resource which drives strategic and business planning at all levels of the organisation. The objectives and priorities of the Corporate Plan inform individual employee performance, development and feedback conversations ensuring day-to-day operations link and contribute to the medium-term and long-term vision and goals for the council and the borough.

The Corporate Plan also sets out the culture we want to foster to deliver these objectives, including accountable and inclusive leadership, harnessing the talents and resources of all, putting collaboration at the heart of everything we do, and performing at our best.

- 7.4. **Corporate Policy and Equality Impact** – The Corporate Plan sets out our approach to equality, diversity, equity and inclusion, including a set of Equalities Objectives. Setting and publishing Equality Objectives is a requirement of the Public Sector Equality Duty, as part of the Equality Act 2010. But our commitment to embedding equality and diversity goes above and beyond our responsibilities under the Equality Act. The Equality Objectives have been developed in line with, and as part of the development of the Corporate Plan, and are part of the service planning process, to ensure that equality, diversity, equity, and inclusion are at the heart of our plans for our work. A full Community and Equality Impact Assessment has also been carried out and is attached as Appendix 2.
- 7.5. **Safeguarding Adults and Children** – One of the seven strategic priorities is “Residents are safe, protected, and supported at their most vulnerable”, which sets out our work to safeguarding adults and children, our commitment to strengths-based practice and prevention, and our ambitions to improve services and support, to improve outcomes for this group of residents, and empower them to achieve.
- 7.6. **Health Issues** – The strategic priority “Residents live healthier, happier, independent lives for longer” covers the Council’s work to improve the health and wellbeing of residents, with a data-led, system-wide, and innovative approach working in partnership with other statutory and voluntary and private sector organisations. In recognition of the impact of social determinants of health, including socio-economic factors, behaviours, and quality of environment, we also commit to a “Health in all Policies approach”, across the Council, as part of our cross-cutting principles.
- 7.7. **Crime and Disorder Issues** – The strategic priority “Residents live in, and play their part in creating, safer, cleaner, and greener neighbourhoods” covers our approach to making our borough safer and challenging anti-social behaviour. Local priorities to address crime and disorder are defined within the Barking & Dagenham Community Safety Partnership Plan (CSPP) 2023-26 and underlying relevant thematic plans. The Community Safety Partnership Board and its subgroups are responsible for ensuring that progress against the CSPP is maintained and regularly reviewed. Legislation, including the Crime & Disorder Act 1998, Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, set out the Council’s statutory responsibilities.

7.8. **Property / Asset Issues** – Activity on the Council’s approach to all its assets – housing, community, service and other is covered throughout the Corporate Plan; in particular, our approach to investing in our housing stock is outlined under the priority “Residents live in good housing and avoid becoming homeless”. One of the principles of good practice for all work in the Council is to strengthen risk management and compliance, including a commitment to ensuring that we meet all regulatory standards, take our legal obligations and requirements seriously, and take a proactive approach to risk management, to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of our residents.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- Borough Manifesto (<https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-09/Barking-and-Dagenham-Together-Borough-Manifesto.pdf>)
- Corporate Plan 2020-22, Assembly 13 May 2020 (Minute 9)
<https://modgov.lbbd.gov.uk/Internet/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=179&MId=10441&Ver=4>
- Reviewed Corporate Plan 2020-22, Assembly 25 November 2020 (Minute 36)
<https://modgov.lbbd.gov.uk/Internet/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=179&MId=10821&Ver=4>

List of appendices:

- Appendix 1: Corporate Plan 2023-26
- Appendix 2: Community and Equality Impact Assessment Corporate Plan 2023-2026

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Barking & Dagenham

Corporate Plan
2023/26

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Vision

In the Borough Manifesto in 2017, following consultation with over 3000 residents and our partners, we set out our long-term shared vision for the future of our borough – **to make Barking and Dagenham a place people are proud of and want to live, work, study and stay.**

To achieve this, we are investing in the future of the borough and its residents. We recognise our strengths and will unleash the potential of our place and its people.

However, it is not enough to just bring new jobs and homes to the borough. Fundamental to our plans is that **no one is left behind**. We want local people to benefit from the growth and positive changes in the borough, and we know to do that we have to address the root causes of poorer outcomes, including poverty and inequality, which all too often hold back our residents.

We want to **create and foster the conditions and opportunities for people to thrive here** – and for our residents to live healthy, fulfilling lives for longer, with more choice and control, better financial resilience, in safe, supportive, and inclusive communities.

Introduction

Our vision drives the business of the Council, as we work together with our colleagues, partners, and residents to improve opportunity, prosperity, health and wellbeing and the physical environment.

In the five years since the launch of the Borough Manifesto there have been important achievements:

- More than 2,500 affordable homes have been built, with thousands more on the way.
- £4bn of inward investment has been secured with the arrival of film studios, a data centre, UCL PEARL, and the City of London Markets - all of which bring jobs and economic growth to the borough.
- £10.9m has been secured through the Levelling Up Fund to transform Dagenham Heathway.
- The Future Youth Zone, the first in London, opened in 2019 and is a £6m investment in the borough's young people.
- Educational attainment has improved, and school Ofsted ratings are among the best in London. In the 2021/22 academic year, the borough had its best performance on GCSE grades 9-5 in English and Maths.
- The Private Rented Property Licensing Scheme is driving up quality and standards of housing in the private rented sector.
- New transport links to Barking Riverside via the London Overground extension and the Thames Clipper.
- BD Money launched, providing access to affordable credit.
- We opened a network of Community Hubs across the borough, offering safe and welcoming spaces for residents to find support, access services and connect within their neighbourhood.
- The improved homelessness prevention offer has reduced the number of people living in Temporary Accommodation by 400 since 2019.

In addition to these achievements, we have also transformed the organisation. Our ambitious transformation programme, Ambition 2020, secured a longer-term financial position, saving the Council £50m year-on-year. By choosing to structure the organisation in a new way, rather than clinging to outdated models of the past, we have proven ourselves to be innovative. We will need to continue to innovate, to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

Despite everything we have done, a hard truth remains. Many outcomes for residents are still poor. In some cases, they have got worse.

Financial stability and security for many residents is worsening. Unemployment and economic inactivity are high, as is in-work poverty. Unsustainable debt is putting people into crisis. Many people are trapped in the housing crisis, finding it difficult to find affordable rents or get onto the property ladder. There is pressure on the limited supply of social housing. Health inequalities are widening, and ill health is adversely impacting quality of life across all ages. Domestic abuse is endemic. These issues are complex and inter-related.

Major international and national crises are fuelling these issues. Covid-19 impacted all aspects of life, and we are still recovering from the impact, as another big challenge faces us. The Cost-of-Living crisis, the worst in 30 years, will hit hard. As one of the most deprived communities in England, residents in Barking and Dagenham will feel the impact disproportionately and have less resilience to cope with the hard times ahead.

Added to this, as demand for services has continued to rise, we have already faced a decade of austerity. For every £1 we received 10 years ago, we now receive just 63p. Our income is going down as our costs are going up, meaning we are forced to make our already overstretched budget go even further. We know now that increases in demand have outstripped our transformation.

Support for the most vulnerable people in the borough accounts for nearly 80% of the Council's budget, and the proportion of spend in the area is rising. The more money we spend on care and support, the less there is for the other things the Council does. So, we need to make sure that we are prioritising our efforts and resources in the right places – the places that will have the biggest impact on improving residents' lives and outcomes. Prioritisation does not mean cuts. It means working smarter, using the insight we have to be more targeted, working in partnership to maximise influence and impact.

We need to build systems and services which can change the directions of people's lives for the better – preventing the big issues of poverty, unemployment, debt, health inequalities, poor housing, and domestic abuse from determining the lives led by our residents.

To do that, we need to think about the Council as a whole, working together, aligned in delivering our vision. Siloes need to be broken. We also need to work with our partners, both statutory and non-statutory, and in partnership with our residents. This requires a genuine commitment to a different way of working, sharing power, knowledge, and resources, and utilising local connections to deliver a better offer for residents. Together, we are better able to drive lasting change in the borough and help residents thrive.

Our community profile

Having a deep understanding of the borough's population helps us to plan and prioritise effectively so we can best meet their needs and aspirations. Since 2001 there has been significant change in the make-up and characteristics of the population. The latest [Census](#) and [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) reveals these important facts about the people of Barking and Dagenham:

The population has grown significantly faster than other places

- The population size (on Census Day) was 218,900. This had grown by 17.7% since 2011 – the third highest growth rate in England and Wales.
- The population is expected to grow another 42% to 309,000 by 2041.

...Barking and Dagenham is one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse communities

- The borough has seen the greatest increase in ethnic diversity between 2011 and 2021 with the percentage of non-White British residents rising by 18.6 percentage points over that decade.
- Two in five residents were born outside of the UK. Nigeria (4.31%), Romania (4.30%) and Bangladesh (4.24%) were the three countries outside of England where most foreign-born residents were born.
- 16% of the population are Black African – the highest proportion in England and Wales.
- 10% of residents are Asian Bangladeshi – the fourth highest proportion in England and Wales.
- The most common language of residents whose main language is not English is Romanian (4.8%) followed by Bengali (3.1%).
- Islamic faith has grown in the borough since 2001 – the percentage of Muslim residents has increased by 20 percentage points. Nearly a quarter of residents are Muslim.
- 45.4% of residents are Christian, down from 56% in 2011.

...and one of the youngest, with many young families

- 57,100 (26.1%) of residents were aged under 16 on Census Day – the highest proportion in England and Wales.
- There are 9,400 (12.8%) lone parent households with dependent children – the highest proportion in England and Wales
- Average household size is 2.96 – the fourth highest average household size in England and Wales

Residents experience some of the highest levels of deprivation in the country

- 46,100 (62.4%) households in the borough have at least one measure of deprivation – the highest proportion in England and Wales
- 46% of children are estimated to live in poverty - the third highest rate in England and Wales

Despite improvements, levels of education among adults are behind most other areas

- 37,000 (22.7%) residents aged 16 and over had no qualifications – the highest proportion of all London boroughs. This has improved since 2001 when 45,000 residents aged 16 or over had no qualifications.
- 54,000 (33.3%) of residents aged 16 and over had Level 4¹ qualifications – the third lowest proportion of all London boroughs. In 2001 only 12,000 residents aged 16 and over had Level 4 qualifications.

...as are levels of unemployment and economic inactivity.

- 9,100 (5.6%) people aged 16 and over were unemployed (including full-time students) – the seventh highest proportion in England and Wales – although our unemployment rate halved between June 2021 and September 2022.
- 58,100 residents were economically inactive. Of these:
 - 13,300 (8.2%) were inactive due to looking after home or family (fourth highest)
 - 7,800 (4.8%) were inactive due to other reasons (eighth highest)
 - 17,000 (10.5%) were retired (ninth lowest)
- 28,200 (18%) of economically inactive residents aged 16 and over had never worked (the 10th highest proportion in England and Wales), and 43% of people who were unemployed on Census Day had not worked in previous 12 months.

More residents are living in private rented accommodation

- The number of residents privately renting has increased by 412% since 2001 whereas home ownership has reduced by 16%, and social renting has reduced by 7%.

...and social renting is more prominent here

- 18,100 (24.5%) households rent their property from the Council – the third highest proportion in England and Wales. A further 5,200 (7.0%) households rent from another type of social landlord.

...and overcrowding is more common than in other places

- The borough has the second highest proportion of households in England and Wales living in a property without enough bedrooms (17.8%).

The self-reported health of the population is worse than most places in England and Wales and we have one of the highest levels of disability in London.

- 29.8% of households have at least one person who identifies as disabled – the highest proportion in London.
- 4.8% of residents reported that they consider themselves to be in “bad” or “very bad” health. After standardising for age, this is higher than average for London and England

To find out more about the borough and its people, visit: <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/about-borough>

¹ Level 4 or above qualifications: degree, foundation degree, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Master's degrees, Higher National Diploma (HND) or Higher National Certificate (HNC), NVQ level 4 or above, professional qualifications (for example, teaching or nursing)

- We must strive to **support residents at the earliest possible opportunity** – preventing people from moving from a low level of need to an acute one. This is essential in helping them achieve better outcomes and mitigate the effects of the Cost-of-Living crisis.
- We must **improve the capacity and efficiency of the support available** at every level of need, innovating our approaches by strengthening the voice of those with lived experience.

We will continue to support and help residents with their financial circumstances by:

- Making it easier for residents to get the support they need within their own neighbourhoods and local communities, through our partners and the Cost-of-Living Alliance.
- Building capacity within our communities and partners to help support residents. This includes working with Citizen’s Advice to deliver training and advice.
- Directing people to find the correct advice and guidance needed to empower them, including BD Money, our new digital hub.
- Continuing to help build financial resilience and promote savings activities through our Credit Union Partnership.
- Minimising costs for our residents where possible – including food costs, through the development and expansion of our food support networks, energy costs through the provision of schemes such as Warm Spaces; and minimising the influence of high-cost credit providers and loan sharks, with access to affordable credit.

To reach the most people in the best possible way

We will:

- Put partnership at the core of our response, working closely with partners across the faith, voluntary and community sectors, including the Cost-of-Living Alliance.
- Strengthen the voice of our residents ensuring that our action is tailored to local needs, e.g., the Barking and Dagenham Giving’s Citizen Steering Group which distributes endowment grants, and Cost-of-Living Surveys hosted through the Citizens’ Alliance Network.
- Ensure hardship funding is administered to those that are most vulnerable.
- Use our wealth of data and insight to identify those most vulnerable and reach out in a targeted way.

Supporting residents through the Cost-of-Living crisis cuts across all Council services and priorities. The actions taken here are crucial to enabling residents to realise their potential and there are relationships with support in other areas, for example, raising skills and improving access to employment, especially for those on low incomes; addressing the high cost of housing; reducing homelessness, improving housing conditions; and improving health outcomes.

Residents are safe, protected, and supported at their most vulnerable

Deprivation and vulnerability are tightly bound together. As a deprived borough, high numbers of residents are exposed to negative impacts on their health, wellbeing, and resilience, and need the support of care and support services. This has only been exacerbated by Covid-19 and the Cost-of-Living crisis, and we are seeing increasing complexity of needs.

In the face of limited resources and difficult market forces, we need to come together with our partners to build a system that supports, protects, and safeguards children, young people and vulnerable adults. Recruitment and retention of social workers, occupational therapists and other professionals is key. A focus on strength-based practice will drive us to deliver and develop services alongside our residents, to keep them safe, free from neglect and exploitation, and able to take up opportunities and realise their potential.

Protecting our children and young people and supporting them to achieve

Increasing levels of need are seen most acutely among our children and young people. In the last four years, the number of children on Children in Need support plans has increased by more than 600, a much higher rate than population growth. We also have a high rate of children in care; 66 out of every 10,000 children in the borough. We have a responsibility to work with children to protect them from harm and enable them to achieve in later life. To this end, over the next three years we aim to:

- Deliver an improvement programme focussed on promoting relational social work practice that centres the voice of the child in decision-making.
- Improve the quality and range of placements available, so that we can offer children in care stability in homes that meet their needs.
- Develop clear, supported pathways into adult services, including access to transitional safeguarding support.
- Implement the outcomes of local practice reviews and learning from our local Child Death Overview Panel.
- Further develop our contextual safeguarding approaches to protect children and young people from all forms of exploitation.
- Work to create social and physical environments that reduce their exposure to risks to their health and wellbeing (e.g. obesity, smoking).

Supporting victims of domestic abuse and tackling underlying causes

At 16.2 offences per 1000 people, we have the highest rates of domestic abuse in London. Helping victims of abuse to escape their situations and rebuild their lives is essential. Following the findings of the Domestic Abuse Commission, and the considerable work that has already been done to strengthen our response to domestic abuse in our borough, we will be rolling out the next phase of our improvement programme to:

- Promote collaboration with our partners in the police and health to establish consistency in approach and commitment.

- Deliver a trauma-informed approach to working with victims, their families and perpetrators.
- Challenge attitudes which normalise and tolerate domestic abuse to bring about long-term change.
- Develop a Public Health approach to domestic abuse which addresses the 'causes of the causes'.

Keeping people safe and offering access to care that enables independence

A high proportion of our population are known to care and support services, resulting from earlier frailty and diagnosis of long-term conditions, and a high prevalence of special educational needs and disabilities.

In preparation for the new statutory CQC regulatory framework, we are moving towards greater place-based and partnership working, through integration with health services and collaboration with local care providers. To build a health and social care system that offers access to the right care in the right place at the right time, we will:

- Design and implement a new operating model for delivering services to support those in our community living with disabilities, and their families.
- Collaborate with partners to improve our offer to residents who have been discharged from hospital, including wraparound care, to prevent cyclical admissions into hospital and promote independence.
- Prepare for the Adult Social Care Charging Reform
- Enable people to live at their optimum level of functional independence, through a focus on recovery, in line with the new Mental Health Act, currently under consultation.
- Build on our social prescribing approach to help residents find support within their communities.
- Ensure more residents with health conditions are assessed, identified, and provided with condition management as early as possible.

Residents live healthier, happier, independent lives for longer

Central to our vision of enabling people to thrive and realise their potential, is improving the health and wellbeing of people who live and work in the borough. We want people to have the opportunity to lead healthy, happy, and independent lives for longer, whilst knowing that they can connect to the right support at the right time.

Wider Determinants of Health

Access to health and care services and support is important, but evidence shows wider factors have a greater impact on health and wellbeing. Empowering and enabling residents to live healthier, happier, independent lives for longer requires action across the wider determinants of health, such as employment, education, transport, housing, and community networks which is why we are adopting a “health in all policies” approach (see page 24). We will ensure that improving health and wellbeing is identified as an outcome in all council policies and services.

The complexity of delivering health outcomes requires a place-based partnership approach. The new NHS Integrated Care System (ICS) brings more opportunities and powers to facilitate joint action to improve health and care outcomes and experiences and influencing the wider determinants of health and in tackling health.

Our residents are exposed to more negative influences on health than those in other areas. For example, 68% of households in our borough suffer at least one of the four main aspects of deprivation – the highest in England and Wales. Residents, who are still feeling the direct and indirect impacts of Covid-19, are now facing the impact of the Cost-of-Living crisis, which will exacerbate challenges around poverty, health inequalities, housing, and employment.

We know that we have:

- **The highest premature mortality in the borough in London**, with 404 deaths per 100,000 people aged below 75, compared to 299 for London overall.
- **The lowest life expectancies in London** for both women and men.
- **The highest levels of Year 6 obesity in England.**
- Low levels of school readiness.
- High numbers of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

A data-led, system-wide, and innovative response to living well for longer

We will:

- Deliver the Start for Life programme and the Best Chance Strategy, including the network of Family Hubs and improvements to locality based, early help provision so all children and their families or carers get the right support at the right time, including tackling early neglect, improving perinatal mental health support and uptake of immunisations, breastfeeding, and two-year old checks – as we recognise that the biggest impact can be made at the earlier stages of life.

- Review how we use data, insight, and analysis to target prevention approaches and interventions – including increasing the early diagnosis of long-term conditions (both in adults and children) through targeted action to find the missing cases.
- Develop new system-wide approaches to tackling obesity – including increasing access to safe open spaces for walking and cycling, allowing opportunities for physical activity and promoting wellbeing.
- Develop new frailty prevention approaches and piloting a new homecare and reablement model, aimed at supporting independence, safety, and wellbeing.
- Develop a new digital transformation strategy for Care and Support, becoming leaders in the field of care technology, providing accessibility, convenience, choice, and control that allows residents to have an improved independent quality of life at home and in the community – which is also cost-effective and more flexible. We will work with Care City, a Barking and Dagenham-based non-profit Community Interest Company, to deliver a programme of activity that will help us achieve our digital transformation within Care and Support and the wider health and care system.
- Continue to work with the voluntary and community sector via the BD_Collective to combat social isolation and loneliness, as improving people’s connectedness to the community is key to building independence, resilience, establishing and maintaining wellbeing.

Residents prosper from good education, skills development, and secure employment

We believe in the potential of the people of Barking and Dagenham and are committed to creating and fostering opportunities and environments where they can thrive. Fundamental to this, is to support the provision of quality learning and training that enables people of all ages to achieve.

There is much to be proud of already:

- For the first time ever, 95% of our schools are rated “good” or “outstanding” by Ofsted.
- Educational attainment has risen steadily over the years. In 2022, at GCSE, the borough gave its best-ever performance on grades 9-5 in English and Maths, above the national average for 2022. A-Level results have improved on all key performance measures since 2019.
- More young people are progressing to Higher Education from borough institutions. In 2022, over 1,100 young people in total went on to Higher Education. 81% of Year 13 pupils.
- Numbers of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or whose destination is unknown is low. The borough’s latest performance stands at 2.9% (provisional data) and is expected to be in the top performance quintile nationally.
- Inspiring Futures, the borough’s Cultural Education Partnership, has provided opportunities for thousands of our young people to work alongside diverse artists and organisations.

The impact of the pandemic and increasingly complex needs

There are still challenges. Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 results in 2022 demonstrate the profound impact of the pandemic on the youngest members of our community.

The national picture is seeing rising numbers of children and young people with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. Locally, demand for EHC plans doubled in 2022 and schools in Barking and Dagenham are welcoming ever-increasing numbers of children with complex needs into mainstream schools.

Addressing the high levels of unemployment, inactivity, low pay, and low skills among the adult population

Over a quarter (26%) of the population, or more than 36,000 people, are economically inactive – 7,800 of whom would like to work – and the borough has the highest proportion of working age adults in London without formal qualifications. While there have been significant improvements since 2011, 22.7% of residents aged 16 and over still have no qualifications, and only 33% have level 4 qualifications.

Our research with out-of-work residents suggests that people with low levels of literacy, numeracy, digital skills, and English take longer to find work than other jobseekers. People who have been unemployed for a long term and those with caring responsibilities, mental and physical health issues or learning disabilities also face additional barriers to work.

We want to maximise the Council’s wide range of influences and levers to play an even stronger role in raising aspirations and increasing opportunity for people who live and learn here.

By aligning with our economic development strategy, we are working with partners to ensure local people have access to skills pathways which put them in a position to benefit from growth sectors in the local economy such as film, food, and construction. And we will draw on the borough's cultural partnerships and volunteering opportunities to provide opportunities for local people to learn, develop new skills and broaden experiences.

Over the next four years, we will:

- Work towards exceeding national standards and then London standards across all headline performance areas in the borough's schools.
- Commission Barking and Dagenham School Improvement Partnership (BDSIP) to provide schools with support and training in agreed priority areas, such as primary reading and writing support, and maintaining a sharp focus on communication and language in Early Years.
- Support greater numbers of young people, including those with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), to progress at ages 16 and 18 to high quality, appropriate destinations.
- Provide positive diverse and inclusive role models for young people through good youth support which improves their mental wellbeing and enables them to realise their potential.
- Increase the number of adults supported by the Work and Skills team and its key partners into employment each year.
- Improve functional skills in the borough – supporting more residents to move towards sustainable employment by improving outreach into disadvantaged communities and expanding literacy, numeracy, ESOL and digital skills provision.
- Improve employment support for people with more complex barriers to work and those struggling with the Cost-of-Living – including a pilot programme to help households in temporary accommodation to move into sustainable housing and employment; improved outreach and support for people struggling with debt; and a new Supported Employment programme to improve employment outcomes among people with learning disabilities.
- Test and develop new approaches to support employers to improve and adapt jobs to attract diverse candidates, meet candidates' flexible working needs and create more opportunities for people with caring responsibilities, disabilities, and mental health conditions.
- Continue to show leadership on apprenticeships and internships and helping local employers to do the same, targeting the apprenticeship offer to residents, especially those from under-represented groups.

Residents benefit from inclusive growth and regeneration

We have an ambition to accelerate economic growth whilst ensuring it benefits residents and every neighbourhood across the borough. We want to enable residents to thrive by having access to high quality and affordable homes; and connect local people with the opportunities in the labour market.

Neglected for decades by national growth strategies, Barking and Dagenham's post-industrial legacy means it is dominated by micro businesses with fewer than 10 employees and jobs in the lower paid service sectors. The top three local occupations are care workers, cashiers and drivers, and the borough has one of the lowest average annual salaries in London.

However, the borough's land, location and connections to Central London, as well as our young, diverse and increasingly educated population, are also a huge opportunity. Arts Council England has identified Barking and Dagenham as a priority for investment as part of its work to support skill development and future economic growth in the arts, and the borough is at the heart of the Thames Estuary Production Corridor, with creative clusters focused on research, experimentation and advancements in new technologies.

The Council is already driving new partnerships to realise these opportunities and bring more good quality jobs to the borough – including UCL's state-of-the-art research laboratory PEARL (Person-Environment-Activity Research Laboratory), film studios at Dagenham East (currently under construction), and the planned relocation of the City of London's food wholesale markets to Dagenham Dock in 2027.

We want to continue to positively transform communities and encourage local businesses to grow; supporting and attracting long term investment that benefits our residents.

We are securing new investment, and creating new structured programmes, affordable housing, and local cultural institutions to ensure local people benefit.

The Council has secured major local endowments linked to the new film studios and the City of London's wholesale markets. Even before the new developments are operational in the borough, these are funding programmes to ensure local people understand and are able to access the new opportunities when they arrive.

The Make It Here programme was launched in 2022 in partnership with the film studios' owner-operators MBS/Hackman Capital. Supported by Film Barking and Dagenham, the programme is working with schools to support teachers, parents and young people understand the potential career opportunities linked to the film studios.

In March 2023, the Council and City of London launched a new Good Food Plan and Partnership to ensure the community benefits from access to healthier, more sustainable food and new employment, training and business opportunities linked to the wholesale markets.

More than £45m in grants and relief was distributed to local businesses to support them through the pandemic, plus additional help for businesses to mitigate job losses and become more environmentally sustainable. The Council continues to work with partners to develop affordable workspace and wrap around business support in Barking Town Centre to help small businesses access new opportunities and grow. The Ice House Quarter, House for Artists, Riverside Mills, Barking Enterprise Centre Three Sixty, and 'Make It Barking' initiatives are examples of how we are expanding and modernising commercial space to support business growth in the borough. We will continue to work in partnership to develop new business support programmes so that local entrepreneurs can thrive.

At the same time, our local house-building programme is supporting families to stay in the borough by creating new affordable homes to rent or buy. Our development contractor, Be First, is working on plans for eight 'Transformation Zones' which will deliver thousands of new homes. One in five of all affordable homes built in London is built here in Barking and Dagenham. This work is creating hundreds of jobs at least at London Living Wage, apprenticeships and supply chain opportunities in construction. Between 2020-23, Be First sites employed over 400 borough residents including more than 100 apprentices. The Council will continue to use its planning powers to ensure all development activity in the borough generates opportunities for residents.

We are ambitious for the borough.

This is a challenging time and local authorities cannot tackle high levels of structural disadvantage by themselves. Predictions suggest the UK economy will grow slower than any other G20 country except Russia in the coming years, as high interest rates, trade barriers and energy prices impact on business investment and jobs. Success will depend on the work of wider partners, the Government, and the health of the national economy.

But we are ambitious and committed to supporting improvements locally. We will:

- Create more places and spaces for our residents by building more affordable housing (40,000 by 2028) with more tenures.
- Launch new training, business support and community film programmes to ensure residents benefit from opportunities linked to the film studios.
- Launch new programmes with schools, local food businesses and entrepreneurs and community groups to improve access to healthy, affordable and sustainable food in the borough and establish a new borough food school to support this vision and enable access to good jobs in food.
- Drive improvements in the quality of existing jobs in the sectors where many people work – including better pay and progression pathways in social care.
- Deliver social value through our partnership with Care City who will help us achieve our digital transformation within Care and Support and the wider health and care system.
- With support of Arts Council England and key partners, continue to invest in and develop our cultural infrastructure on the ground, and invest in resilience building for our local cultural organisations to ensure they continue to thrive.

- Launch new business support programmes in food and care, help local businesses to understand how to access supply chain opportunities at the Council and the film studios, and improve access to modern industrial space in the borough.
- Help local businesses to access tools to help them to reduce costs, access new markets and become more environmentally sustainable.

Residents live in, and play their part in creating, safer, cleaner, and greener neighbourhoods.

The places where we live affect our health, wellbeing and happiness, and residents often tell us that the safety and cleanliness of the borough is their biggest area of concern.

Making our borough a safer place for current and future generations

We want Barking and Dagenham to be a place where people from all backgrounds feel safe and live well. We aim to do this by keeping our children and young people safe, tackling crime that affects people the most, reducing offending, and standing up to hate, intolerance and extremism.

We know that:

- Results from the 2021 Residents Survey show that crime is still the biggest area of concern for our residents.
- 42% of residents feel unsafe when outside in the local area after dark.
- There were 5,856 reported incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour in 2021/22, which was a significant decrease (-43.7%) from the previous year.

No one should feel unsafe when walking the streets of Barking and Dagenham. We have engaged with residents to identify where they feel the most unsafe and why, and we have been working hard to address these issues, including increased lighting in dark areas and overhauling our CCTV system. The launch of our Safe Haven scheme provides safe places to go to if people feel threatened, harassed or generally unsafe whilst out in the borough.

We have also invested in a new Community Safety Enforcement Team, who are working with the Police, to tackle anti-social behaviour by increasing the patrols and operational hours in hotspot areas such as Barking Town Centre and Dagenham Heathway.

Our Lost Hours campaign aims to tackle the issue of youth violence, knife crime and anti-social behaviour head on with the community, asking parents to take responsibility for knowing where their children are and what they are doing, and signposting to activities and support available.

Proactive, pre-emptive, and creative approaches to challenge anti-social behaviour

We will work together with people and communities, focusing on strengths and opportunities to build resilience in communities to challenge the corrosive effect of anti-social behaviour, intimidation and harassment caused by a minority of people.

We will:

- Continue to increase the presence and visibility of the Council on the streets.
- Maintain a tough approach to enforcement to bring perpetrators to justice and be a deterrent preventing future offences.
- Tackle serious youth violence and knife crime through a programme of interventions.

Keeping our borough clean

Environmental issues like litter, untidy gardens and fly-tipping have a negative impact on the quality of life for our residents and reduces pride and enjoyment of our public places.

We know that:

- Rubbish or litter is the biggest anti-social behaviour concern for residents.
- An average of 850kg of waste is collected per household each year, which is above the London average of 544kg.
- 26.9% of household waste is recycled every year, which is below the London average of 33%. The most recent data (as yet unpublished) shows improvement, with this figure is now nearer to 30%.

We have already rolled out a brand-new fleet of refuse trucks, improved our street cleaning service with new equipment and extended our recycling service, making it easier for residents to recycle at home.

Whilst tackling the issues that affect us locally, we must also be responsive to Government changes and take advantage of the opportunity presented by the end of the long-term waste management contract, to make changes to our waste and recycling management and achieve more cost-effective services for residents and businesses.

Council, businesses, and residents working together for a cleaner borough.

Improving the cleanliness of the borough, reducing waste and impacts on the environment cannot be achieved by the Council alone, and so we will work with local businesses and our residents to help them understand how changing behaviours is key to delivering this priority.

We will:

- Deliver 'Cleaner Communities', a long-term joint project between Public Realm, Landlord Services, Highways and Enforcement to tackle environmental crime, such as fly-tipping.
- Develop a new approach to keeping our streets and byways clean by harnessing data insight and behaviour change strategies that empower the community.
- Work with residents and local businesses to reduce waste through reusing, recycling and repair.
- Work with ELWA and the other constituent council partners on the procurement of the new waste disposal contract to ensure the borough's needs and priorities are met around waste management.
- Implement weekly food waste collections to all households, as required by the Environment Act 2021.

Becoming the Green Capital of the Capital

The impact of climate change is undeniable and although the UK has seen a reduction in carbon emissions, we know there is more we can do, individually and collectively. That is why we have pledged that the Council will become carbon neutral by 2030 and we will work to support the borough to become so by 2050.

We know that:

- We are in the top five London councils for poor air quality.
- The borough is responsible for emitting 566 kilotonnes of carbon every year.
- Housing, industry and transport each account for a third of our total carbon emissions as a borough.

We need to make some big changes.

Like other London boroughs we have a problem with high concentrations of pollutants outside schools. Air pollution is five times higher on the school run. We have introduced pedestrian and cycle-only zones at pick-up and drop-off times through the School Streets programme, in conjunction with issuing fixed penalty notices and the roll out of Controlled Parking Zones more widely across the borough.

Despite our actions to date, we cannot underestimate the magnitude of the task and our dependence on funding and technological advances to achieve our ambitions. We must also support our residents to adopt more sustainable methods of travelling and provide the infrastructure for moving to low emission transport.

Our 28 parks, and 465 hectares of open green spaces act as important natural carbon sinks and capture noxious emissions. Protecting, preserving and investing in our parks and green spaces sits at the heart of our masterplans for ten of the borough's parks. We have also committed to accelerating our tree planting programme, which has seen 48,000 trees planted over the past two years.

We need to make some big changes for greener homes, Council services, local industries and public spaces.

We will:

- Work towards the decarbonisation of the Council's fleet including refuse and street cleaning vehicles by 2030.
- Invest to improve our award-winning parks and green spaces for recreation, sports and leisure, and do all we can to maintain an attractive street scene.
- Plant up to another 50,000 trees across our streets, parks and open spaces.
- Implement Phase Two of the Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) scheme with a focus on delivering safer school streets.
- Deploy an additional 250 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points.

Residents live in good housing and avoid becoming homeless

Housing is an important determinant of health, wellbeing, and stability. The tragedy of Grenfell Tower and the recent death of Awaab Ishak from exposure to mould show the devastating potential consequences of unsafe housing.

On the other hand, access to affordable, safe, and stable homes provides a foundation for a community in which residents can thrive and achieve their personal, professional, and social ambitions.

Improving tenant satisfaction and landlord management services

As a social landlord to 18,000 households, we are focused on improving tenancy management and driving up satisfaction levels, by:

- Increasing the visibility of Landlord Services in wards to ensure tenant issues are dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Improving the speed and quality of repairs and maintenance to prevent stock from falling into disrepair.

Improving conditions in social housing

Though 93% of social housing stock currently meets the Decent Homes standard, we must continue to invest in these assets to maintain their condition and deliver for our tenants. We will:

- Strengthen the inspection and compliance regime to ensure that every Council-owned property meets gas, fire, and electrical safety requirements.
- Launch a damp and mould taskforce.

Improving energy efficiency

The 'Cosy Homes' programme delivered the highest uptake of free installations under the ECO3 scheme London, winning London region's best largest retrofit and insulation scheme at the 2021 Energy Efficiency Awards. In the last two years, we have delivered installations to 2,000 low-income households.

We are well-placed to build on this success. In total, we aim to deliver 2,000 more installations of energy efficiency measures, renewables and retrofits in our corporate estate and across all tenures of housing stock.

Investing in energy efficiency is a win-win; it reduces emissions in the long term and spending for residents in the here and now. This is particularly important in the face of rising energy prices and the highest rate of fuel poverty in England (22.5%). To help more residents to make improvements in their homes, we are exploring innovative options to finance retrofitting.

Making efficient use of our social housing stock

Demand for social housing is increasing. There are 5,800 applicants, currently without access to suitable accommodation, on the housing register.

To deliver sufficient properties that meet the needs of our residents, we need a data-led approach to development and allocation. We will:

- Review the Housing Allocations Policy
- Undertake long-term demand modelling, including identifying the levels of need for specialist and adapted homes for older residents and those with disabilities, to support the delivery of more of these properties.
- Help people to move into affordable rent or private sector rented accommodation where possible to promote stock turnover.

Raising standards in the private rented sector

Private renting in Barking and Dagenham has increased 412% since 2001. Expensive rents, insecure short-term tenancies, and poor conditions are acute problems in the private rented sector. We experience one of the highest rates of landlord possession action in the country, with 347 claims per 100,000 households owned by a private landlord from October to December 2022.

We are committed to raising standards in the private rented sector through a range of enforcement tools, including a borough-wide landlord licensing scheme. Where landlords fail to provide good quality housing, we have taken robust action, issuing over £200,000 of fines through issuing Civil Penalty Notices between April 2022 and February 2023.

To continue improving the quality of private rented accommodation in the borough, we will:

- Apply to renew the landlord licensing scheme to hold landlords to account.
- Target unlicensed properties to make sure we are able to inspect all non-exempt rented properties across the borough.
- Deliver training sessions to landlords to help them understand their responsibilities.
- Deliver 3,000 high quality affordable rent homes by 2025 through Reside, our innovative housing management company. As a benchmark for the local rental market, this will drive quality up and prices down, as well as providing secure tenancies.

Helping residents at risk of homelessness or who are sleeping rough

Our preventative approach to tackling homelessness in the borough has seen great success – the number of households living in temporary accommodation has decreased by 400 since 2019. Helping people move into social housing or affordable rent properties and to sustain tenancies, has saved millions of pounds on expensive temporary accommodation placements.

However, the rising cost of living is bringing increased financial pressure for many residents and with it, the risk of losing their homes. We recognise the need to provide additional support to residents during these times, and so we will:

- Continue to invest £1.4m a year in a rent deposit scheme which is helping people into affordable housing.
- Develop the list of approved private sector landlords, increasing the supply of affordable rents that we can use to exit people from temporary accommodation.
- Deliver proactive contact with people identified as having high levels of debt to help them with achieving financial stability, through the Homes and Money Hub.

Sadly, some people do end up sleeping on the streets. It is important we find and help these people with their immediate situation and to secure long term accommodation. Barking and Dagenham has been awarded more than £900,000 between 2022 and 2025 to deliver a three-year Rough Sleeper Initiative which will strengthen our response and capacity to support people who are on the streets. We have pledged that by 2025, no-one sleeps rough for more than 72 hours without a plan to exit them from rough sleeping.

Our principles

To support our priorities, a set of principles have been developed to be applied to our work across the whole Council. Together, with our values and culture, these principles will drive service delivery, performance, and innovation.

Work in partnership

Our collective response to Covid-19 and the Cost-of-Living crisis has demonstrated the strength of partnership working within the Council, and in the borough. We are committed to build on this, as we work together to develop new ways of supporting our residents and creating opportunities for them to thrive.

We need to break down existing siloes within the organisation. We will identify where we could work better and more effectively in partnership with others – other public services, community and voluntary organisations, businesses, local institutions, and our residents. And we also need to recognise where others are better placed to deliver what is needed, as the Council shifts to an increasingly enabling and facilitative role within the borough. We are one organisation in a growing social infrastructure approach, where everyone has a part to play, and where through power and resource sharing, we can collaboratively tackle the challenges facing our borough.

Engage and facilitate co-production

We commit to creating more opportunities for residents and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) to directly shape, influence and be part of making decisions that affect their local communities.

We will work with community partners to create more places and spaces for people to meet, work together, and participate meaningfully in their local area. The developing social infrastructure in the borough, and platforms, such as Citizens' Alliance Network support our desire for genuine collaboration. Resident engagement, networks and action groups provide tangible opportunities for people to engage with their communities and council services, shifting the balance from change happening *to* people to people *making change happen*.

Ultimately, it is about shifting the mindset from empowering individuals to raising their ambitions, to recognising that that ambition already exists and that we, as facilitators, can create the spaces, relationships and processes for residents and community partners to act on it, for the benefit of their communities.

Be evidence-led and data driven

We hold a wealth of information and data about the people and place of Barking and Dagenham. This insight is key in supporting us to deliver the best possible services for our residents – services that are personalised, targeted, effective and efficient. We will enable more effective and earlier use of data to inform better decision-making, better service design and delivery - and to inform

prevention and early intervention, which leads to better outcomes and less intensive (and costly) service provision.

Being transparent about all elements of data use in data analytics and predictive analytics is hugely important to us, because how we manage the use of information is critical to the relationship of trust we have with our residents.

Focus on prevention and early intervention

We will endeavour to ensure that people get the right support, in the right place, at the right time, to stop their problems becoming crises and aim to deal with the wider, root causes of the problems, preventing future incidents.

We will make best use of customer insight and business intelligence to ensure we make informed decisions and prioritise our resources appropriately, embedding the principles of prevention, prediction, and early intervention into everything we do.

We will engage with residents, the community, and partners, drawing on their knowledge, insight, trusted connections and resources, and committing our own support and resources in turn through collaboration, to develop a whole system approach to prevention and early intervention, which is key to better outcomes and financial sustainability.

Provide value for money

Residents expect to see that taxpayers' money is well spent. Despite the scale of the financial pressures that we – and all Local Government – currently face, we are committed to maintaining high quality services and continuing to improve the outcomes for our residents. We therefore need to work even harder to maximise the impact of the limited resources we have.

We will continue to ensure that the Council is financially stable with a balanced budget, and that they are sufficient controls and processes in place to provide assurance. And when we use our significant spending power, we ensure maximum value for money and social value.

Be strengths-based

Strengths-based practice is a collaborative approach between the person supported by services and those supporting them, to identify their strengths and capabilities and what support might be available from their wider support network or within the community to help them.

The aim is to enable people to achieve their goal or desired outcomes and reduce reliance on traditional services. The Council is committed to working in a strengths-based way, firmly rooted in our belief in the potential of all Barking and Dagenham people and our commitment to empower communities to build our future together.

Adopt a "Health in all Policies" approach

Social, physical, and economic environments and conditions, collectively referred to as the 'social determinants of health' have a far greater impact than medical or social care services on how long and how well people live. Factors include socio/economic factors (income, employment, education,

isolation), behaviours (smoking, alcohol consumption, diet, and exercise), and the quality of and access to the environment (housing, green spaces, clean air, and water).

Adopting a “Health in all Policies” approach means a common commitment to maximising the positive health impact of all council functions – e.g., the building and maintenance of housing, job creation, community engagement.

Strengthen risk management and compliance

The health, safety, and wellbeing of people in our borough is paramount. We take our legal obligations and requirements seriously. We identify and manage risk appropriately and proactively and encourage a culture of accountability and ownership at all levels. We will make sure that our regulatory and statutory functions are the best they can be.

Putting equality and diversity at the heart of everything we do

Barking and Dagenham is a vibrant, dynamic and culturally rich community, and we believe this is something to be proud of and celebrate. However, we know that celebrating diversity alone is not enough. We must also acknowledge and do more to address the disparities and inequalities that exist within our communities.

We need to understand our diverse communities better, and to embed this understanding into how we shape policy and make decisions. One size does not fit all. We need to recognise that treating people equally does not solve problems of inequality. Everyone is different and, through better understanding of their experiences and needs, we can design and deliver services and provide opportunities that are better tailored to our residents, with the aim of reaching an equal outcome.

Equity, equality, diversity, and inclusion are fundamental principles in the way that we work.

Our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 places specific responsibilities onto Public Sector Organisations, which is called the Public Sector Equality Duty.

When carrying out our functions, the Equality Act says we must have **due regard** or think about the need to:

- Eliminate **unlawful discrimination**.
- **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic² and those who don't.
- foster or **encourage good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Our equality commitment

We recognise the need to go beyond the responsibilities set out in the Equality Act 2010. We will ensure that equity, diversity and inclusion remains central to everything we do, from the money we spend and the people we employ, to the services we provide.

Our Equality Objectives for 2023-27 have been developed in line with, and as part of, the Corporate Plan priorities for the same period to ensure that tackling inequalities is at the heart of our vision.

- **Addressing structural inequality:** activity aimed at addressing inequalities related to the wider determinants of health and wellbeing, including unemployment, debt, and safety.
- **Providing leadership in the community:** activity related to community leadership, including faith, cohesion and integration; building awareness within the community throughout programme of equalities events.

² Protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

- **Fair and transparent services:** activity aimed at addressing workforce matters related to leadership, recruitment, retention, and staff experience; organisational policies and processes including use of Equality Impact Assessments, commissioning practices and approach to social value.

Specific areas of focus have been identified under each objective, to demonstrate the impacts being made. These will be kept under review, and we will monitor and report on progress.

Meeting our responsibilities and commitments

The Council as **a service provider**, we will:

- Understand that treating everyone the same does not address inequality. We will listen to, and understand, the needs of residents to ensure that access to services is fair.
- Involve service users and representatives in decision-making processes and service design.
- Complete Equality Impact Assessments to assess the impact of our decisions on those with protected characteristics, and to implement mitigations for adverse impacts, where possible.
- Operate an open and transparent complaints procedure.
- Require all organisations we commission to deliver services on our behalf to take the same approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

The Council as **a partner**, we will:

- Realise our role as a system leader in tackling inequality.
- Use research and analysis to underpin and strengthen our work to reduce inequality.
- Share knowledge and resources, where appropriate, to enable effective efforts to address inequality.
- Communicate with and engage partners in the delivery of our Equality Objectives.

The Council as **an employer**, we will:

- Aim to employ a workforce that reflects the diverse community of Barking and Dagenham, at all levels.
- Build and embed an inclusive and transparent culture where all feel comfortable and valued, and free from discrimination, bullying and harassment, and victimisation.
- Use recruitment processes that are equitable and inclusive, recognising the needs of diverse candidates.
- Promote equal access to career development opportunities for all and provide support in acquiring the necessary experience and skills needed to progress.
- Provide training to all staff and Members, to ensure that they understand their role in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.

- Strengthen the Employee Support Networks and consult with them on policy changes impacting staff.
- Continue to implement the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standards action plan, as one of 18 local authority pilot sites.
- Publish our gender and ethnicity pay gaps – and take appropriate action to reduce gaps, where identified.

The way we work

How our staff are led, managed, and engaged is key to the Council delivering the priorities set out in this Corporate Plan.

Our workforce needs to be clear about where we are heading and aware of the values and behaviours we expect them to uphold and demonstrate to get there.

Our foundations are strong – we are a Gold Investors in People organisation - and we strive to be even better.

Values

We want every Barking and Dagenham Council employee to embody our DRIVE values in their working life every day, and in interactions with each other, with partners and with residents.

- **Delivering** our best, every day – and doing what we promise.
- **Responding** in a prompt, positive way to our community's needs.
- **Inspiring** others with our attitudes and actions.
- **Valuing** people for who they are and what they can do.
- **Engaging** with others to improve our resilience and flexibility.

Our culture

We want to be an organisation that strives to deliver the best service and support the best outcomes for residents. In doing this, we will create a culture linked to the DRIVE values focussed on three key areas:

Accountable and inclusive leaders who harness the talents and resources of all, managing the complexities, tensions and challenges

We understand that no one person has all the answers – and the leaders of the organisation need to create a culture of leadership at every level, to harness ideas and co-create solutions. We want everyone to be their best self at work regardless of their background or cultural identity and we recognise that our diversity makes us stronger. We aim to attract the best people who truly share our values, and nurture and grow talent in the organisation.

Collaboration at the heart of everything we do

We drive a culture that encourages and facilitates partnership working, internally and externally, working beyond siloes. We collaborate, proactively problem solve, coming together to put residents at the heart of everything we do – and to co-produce with partners and residents. We work hard to understand our communities, their needs, their strengths, aspirations and how best to engage and work with them.

Performing at our best

We get the basics right, deliver on our priorities, tracking performance, measuring impact, and focussing on improvement. We use data and insight to deliver services that are personalised,

targeted, effective and efficient, and seek and act on feedback, using it as a driving force for learning. We take the time to recognise good practice that speaks to our values.

Turning strategy into action

The Corporate Plan sets out high level priorities and objectives for the organisation over the next two-four years. It provides strategic direction and explains how public resources will be used to deliver change and improvement which will achieve the vision and targets in the Borough Manifesto.

Corporate Plan Outcomes Framework

Clearly stating the Council's aims and how we intend to achieve them is important for local accountability, and by including outcomes measures we can evidence performance, progress, and impact.

Twice a year, Cabinet, who is responsible for implementing the Corporate Plan, will receive a report appraising performance and progress to outcomes in relation to its priorities. This ensures transparency and local accountability. The Chief Executive, as Head of Paid Service, is responsible for performance management in the Council and there are robust mechanisms which ensure oversight and rigour.

To find out more about the Corporate Plan Outcomes Framework, and to view past performance reports, visit: <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/performance>

Wider strategic framework

Alongside the Corporate Plan sits a suite of policies, strategies, and plans which set out in more detail our goals and how we will achieve them. For more information visit: <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/plans-and-priorities>

Service Plans

Beneath thematic and issue-based policies, strategies and plans sit even more detailed Service Plans which are refreshed every year. These are developed across all areas of the Council to ensure everything we are doing aligns with the vision and priorities, and that strategy is turned into action. We call this the 'golden thread' which joins high level strategy to day-to-day operational delivery.

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	Corporate Plan 2023-2026
Lead Officer	Sarah Myers, Strategy and Partnerships Manager Sarah.Myers@lbbd.gov.uk
Contact Details	Richard Caton, Head of Performance and PMO Richard.Caton@lbbd.gov.uk

Why is this service or policy development/review needed?
<p>In 2017, the Borough Manifesto was developed in partnership with the local community, establishing a shared long-term vision to make the borough a place that people are proud of and want to live, work, study and stay. This continues to be the driving force behind our work as a council.</p> <p>At the end of the period covered by the 2020-22 Corporate Plan, it is time to reflect on what has been achieved and to set out a new Corporate Plan that lays out our way forward for the medium term. Although there is no statutory requirement to have a Corporate Plan, it is a necessary element of good practice and good governance.</p> <p>The Corporate Plan will form part of the Council's "Golden Thread", translating our long-term ambitions for the borough, as set out in the Borough Manifesto, into clear objectives to drive council activity over the next three years. In turn, it will inform services' operational plans, which will be outlined through Service Plans that sit below the Corporate Plan and individual employee performance, feedback, and development objectives, aligning day-to-day operations with the long-term vision and goals for the borough.</p>

Why is this service or policy development/review needed?

The council, the borough and the challenges we face have continued to evolve. The impact of the pandemic is still with us, as is evident in educational outcomes for our young people and an increasing complexity of health needs. On top of this, we are facing the worst Cost-of-Living crisis in over 30 years. As one of the most deprived communities in England, these issues are hitting our residents hard, and we are faced with limited funding and resources to meet increasing needs.

In this context, we need to think carefully about how we use our resources. This means thinking about the Council as a whole, as well as working with our partners, both statutory and non-statutory, and in partnership with our residents.

This new Corporate Plan establishes a clear agenda for the council over the next three years. It communicates how we intend to work towards the vision in the Borough Manifesto, highlighting key challenges, such as the rising cost of living and an increasing complexity of health and social care needs. It sets out a unifying set of priorities and values for us as a council, to bring staff, partners and the local community together behind a common goal and approach.

It sets out the seven priorities for the council, focussed on what we want to deliver for our residents:

- Residents are supported during the current Cost-of-Living Crisis.
- Residents are safe, protected, and supported at their most vulnerable.
- Residents live healthier, happier, independent lives for longer.
- Residents prosper from good education, skills development, and secure employment.
- Residents benefit from inclusive growth and regeneration.
- Residents live in, and play their part in creating, safer, cleaner, and greener neighbourhoods.
- Residents live in good housing and avoid becoming homeless.

To help us to achieve these priorities, we need to work in a certain way. The Corporate Plan lays out set of principles, values and a working culture that will drive service delivery, performance and innovation. We will:

- Work in partnership.
- Engage and facilitate co-production.
- Be evidence-led and data driven.
- Focus on prevention and early intervention.
- Provide value for money.
- Be strengths-based.
- Strengthen risk management and compliance.
- Adopt a “Health in all policies” approach.

A commitment to addressing structural inequality is central to our vision for the borough, to make sure we build and support a community where every resident can thrive. To reflect this, this new Corporate Plan also states our approach to equality, diversity, equity and inclusion.

Our Equality Objectives set out three principal types of action the council should take to promote equality within the borough, going above and beyond our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010:

- **Addressing structural inequality:** activity aimed at addressing inequalities related to the wider determinants of health and wellbeing, including unemployment, debt, and safety.
- **Providing leadership in the community** – activity related to community leadership, including faith, cohesion and integration; building awareness within the community throughout programme of equalities events.
- **Fair and transparent services** – activity aimed at addressing workforce issues related to leadership, recruitment, retention, and staff experience; organisational policies and

Why is this service or policy development/review needed?

processes including use of Equality Impact Assessments, commissioning practices and approach to social value.

The Equality Objectives have been developed in line with, and as part of the development of the Corporate Plan, to ensure that equality, diversity, equity and inclusion are at the heart of our plans. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council is required to publish Equality Objectives, at least every four years.

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.

The Corporate Plan is a key strategic document that will drive the work of the organisation over the next three years, covering our priorities and outcomes for this period. It will, therefore, have a significant impact on the local community.

Individual EIAs will be developed for each policy decision, as required. This impact assessment will highlight examples of initiatives that our illustrative of our overall approach as a council and analyse how these will have an impact across the protected characteristics.

Our approach as a council must be grounded in an understanding of our population. Based on the findings of the 2021 Census and other recent datasets, we know that Barking and Dagenham:

...has a rapidly growing population

- The population size was 218,900 on Census Day. This had grown by 17.7% since 2011 – the third highest growth rate in England and Wales.
- The population is expected to grow another 42% to 309,000 by 2041

...is one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse communities in England and Wales

- The borough has seen the greatest increase in ethnic diversity between 2011 and 2021 with the percentage of non-White British residents rising by 18.6 percentage points over that decade.
- Two in five residents were born outside of the UK. Nigeria (4.31%), Romania (4.30%) and Bangladesh (4.24%) were the three countries outside of England in which most foreign-born residents were born.

- 16% of the population are Black African – the highest proportion in England and Wales.
- 10% of residents are Asian Bangladeshi – the fourth highest proportion in England and Wales.
- The most common language of residents whose main language is not English is Romanian (4.8%) followed by Bengali (3.1%).
- Islamic faith has grown in the borough since 2001 – the percentage of Muslim residents has increased by 20 percentage points. Nearly a quarter of residents are Muslim and less than half are Christian.

...and one of the youngest, with many young families

- 57,100 (26.1%) of residents were aged under 16 on Census Day – the highest proportion in England and Wales.
- There are 9,400 (12.8%) lone parent households with dependent children – the highest proportion in England and Wales
- Average household size is 2.96 – the fourth highest average household size in England and Wales

...has a diverse population in terms of gender identity and sexual orientation

- Barking & Dagenham had the highest proportion of trans women (0.25%) and 3rd highest proportion of trans men (0.24%) in England and Wales.
- 2.3% of the population identified as LGB+ (those who described their sexual orientation as something other than heterosexual)

...has a significant proportion of residents who consider themselves to be disabled

- 13,700 (6.7%) residents consider themselves disabled under the Equality Act and consider their day-to-day activities to be limited a lot – higher than London and England after age standardisation
- 15,300 (7%) residents consider themselves to be disabled under the Equality Act and consider their day-to-day activities to be limited a little – higher than London and England averages after age standardisation

...is one of the most deprived areas in the country

- 46,100 (62.4%) households in the borough have at least one measure of deprivation – the highest proportion in England and Wales
- 46% of children are estimated to live in poverty, the third highest rate in England and Wales

These statistics demonstrate the diversity of Barking and Dagenham’s population. We are proud of this diversity. We recognise, however, that inequalities continue to exist within in our communities: in access to services and in outcomes. It’s important that we recognise that treating people equally does not solve problems of inequality. Instead, we need to work to understand the lived experiences of residents, to build a better understanding of their experiences and needs to design and deliver services, and provide opportunities, that are better tailored to our residents.

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 clear vision of the role of the council in delivering for residents will unite us behind a common cause to help	The Corporate Plan incorporates our approach to equality, diversity, equity and inclusion. We recognise the importance of our responsibilities under the Equality Act, as well as the need to

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

			our residents live well and thrive.	<p>go beyond these to address structural inequality, provide leadership in the community and deliver fair and transparent services.</p> <p>The approach we outline recognises that treating people equally does not solve problems of inequality; the pursuit of equity requires us to understand our diverse communities better, so that we can design and deliver services and provide opportunities that are tailored to their needs and preferences.</p> <p>This approach of pursuing equity will also apply to workforce matters, relating to our staff and their experiences of working in the Council.</p>
Age	x		<p>We are a young borough (with the highest proportion of under 16s on Census Day), we also recognise that our population is ageing. This Corporate Plan reflects the council's commitment to building a network of support for residents at every stage of their lives.</p> <p>Programmes around Early Help, Children's Social Care and Education aim to give children the best start in life, setting them up to achieve their aspirations.</p> <p>Our approach to Adult's Social Care is focussed on enabling adults to live healthy, safe and independent lives for as long as possible.</p>	<p>A comprehensive early help offer, including perinatal mental health support and uptake of immunisations, breastfeeding and health checks on two-year olds, will support more families to give their children the best start in life.</p> <p>In Children's Social Care, our improvement programmes are promoting a relational model of social work practice that centres the voice of the child in decision-making, as we know this is the best way to keep them safe and support them to achieve.</p> <p>Through a strength-based approach and an emphasis on prevention, Adult's Social Care is focussed on helping vulnerable adults to maintain their independence and access care that works for them. working with the development of our Care Technology offer will support adults with care and support needs, including older residents, to overcome structural barriers to living independent lives. Similarly, we are working to improve our discharge offer by offering wraparound care to prevent cyclical admission into hospital.</p>
Disability	x		<p>Work to support children and adults with disabilities is covered in the priorities "Residents are safe, protected, and supported at their most vulnerable" and "Residents live</p>	<p>Our approach to adult's social care will help adults with disabilities to be safe to live healthy, independent lives as far as possible and enable them to draw on support when and how they need.</p> <p>This includes increasing the supply of adapted homes for disabled residents</p>

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

			<p>healthier, happier, independent lives for longer”.</p> <p>Throughout the plan, we also recognise challenges that disproportionately affect disabled people, such as barriers to education and employment, and outline targeted programmes to address these.</p>	<p>so they can live independently. Long term modelling to identify demand levels for this type of housing will help us to meet the needs of our population.</p> <p>Locally, demand for EHC plans doubled in 2022 and schools in Barking and Dagenham are welcoming ever-increasing numbers of children with complex needs into mainstream schools. We want to support greater numbers of young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities to reach educational destinations that meet their aspirations.</p> <p>Our research shows that disabled people often face additional barriers to finding and maintaining stable employment. Through a Supported Employment Programme and work with employers to improve the opportunities available, we are aiming to support more disabled people to work.</p> <p>As an employer, we will provide additional support to overcome the additional barriers into work, and work with and consult the Employee Ability Support and Enablement (EASE) network on policies impacting staff.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment</p>		<p>x</p>	<p>No specific impacts foreseen.</p>	<p>Our Equality Commitment includes objectives to address structural inequality, provide leadership in the community and run fair and transparent services. This will include addressing the barriers that transgender people may face in accessing services, promoting inclusion within the borough and celebrating the transgender community as part of our programme of equality events.</p> <p>The commitments to partnership working and engaging and facilitating co-production are core principles of the Corporate Plan, which will encourage all staff to work closely with local community groups in designing and delivering services to meet the needs and aspirations of residents. This includes development work alongside LGBT+ groups. This also applies to the Council as an employer, who will work</p>

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

				with the staff LGBT+ network, and consult on policies impacting staff.
Marriage and civil partnership		x	No specific impacts foreseen.	
Pregnancy and maternity	x		Our improvement work around our Early Help Offer and the development of a network of Family Hubs will focus on providing support to new and expecting mothers.	The locality-based Family Hubs programme will aim to make it as easy as possible for new and expecting mothers to access the support they need, for themselves and their children. A comprehensive early help offer, including perinatal mental health support and uptake of immunisations, breastfeeding and health checks on two-year olds, will support parents' health and equip them with the skills to give their children the best start in life.
Race (including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers)		x	Research shows that outcomes across England, Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic (BAME) people are worse than other groups, including that they are often poorer, more likely to suffer from underlying health conditions and report worse experiences of government services, including health, housing and social care. ¹ An emphasis on understanding the causes of these disparities and tackling structural inequalities is crucial to helping us to reduce inequalities and improve outcomes for residents.	<p>Our Equality Commitment includes objectives to address structural inequality, provide leadership in the community and run fair and transparent services. This includes addressing the barriers that Black, Asian and Multi-ethnic (BAME) people may face in accessing services, promoting inclusion within the borough and celebrating the BAME community as part of our programme of equality events.</p> <p>The commitments to partnership working and engaging and facilitating co-production are core principles of the corporate plan, which will encourage all staff to work closely with local community groups and residents in designing and delivering services to meet the needs and aspirations. This includes building relationships with groups who work primarily with BAME residents. This approach will help us to reach more of these residents.</p> <p>Access to services and opportunities (such as employment pathways into growth sectors and health checks) will be regularly monitored and analysed by ethnicity, gender, and disability to better understand experience and tailor the support available, to improve outcomes.</p> <p>As an employer, we will work with and consult the Stand Together Against Racism & Exclusion (STARE) Network on policies impacting staff and continue</p>

¹ [https://www.thelancet.com/article/S2468-2667\(20\)30287-5/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/article/S2468-2667(20)30287-5/fulltext)

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

				<p>to implement the Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standards action plan. We will publish our ethnicity pay gap annually and an action plan to address gaps where identified.</p>
Religion or belief		x	<p>Limited specific impact foreseen.</p> <p>The Corporate Plan underlines the need for us to work closely with our partners in the community, including local faith organisations.</p>	<p>The commitments to partnership working and engaging and facilitating co-production are core principles of the corporate plan, which will encourage all staff to work closely with local community groups and residents in designing and delivering services to meet the needs and aspirations. These partnerships will help us to reach and offer support to residents with a range of faith backgrounds.</p> <p>As part of our Equality Commitment, we also highlight the council's role in providing leadership in the community. This includes promoting inclusion, cohesion and integration for faith groups.</p>
Sex	x		<p>We know that women continue to make up most victims of domestic abuse. Our priority that "Residents are safe, protected, and supported at their most vulnerable" includes a focus on tackling domestic abuse.</p> <p>We also know that women are more likely to feel unsafe moving around the borough and will be more impacted by improvements to community safety.</p>	<p>As well as delivering a trauma-informed approach to support victims of domestic abuse to escape their situations and rebuild their lives, we are pursuing long-term cultural change.</p> <p>Recognising that it is a gendered crime, our approach will seek to challenge attitudes that normalise and tolerate domestic abuse to help reduce the number of women who experience it.</p> <p>Interventions such as the Safe Havens programme and an initiative to increase the council's presence on the street are designed to improve safety in the borough. The proposed outcome measures for the corporate plan include monitoring feelings of safety at night.</p> <p>As an employer, we will work with and consult the Women's Network on policies impacting staff, and publish our gender pay gap annually, with an action plan to address gaps identified.</p>
Sexual orientation		x	<p>No specific impact foreseen</p>	<p>Our Equality Commitment includes objectives to address structural inequality, provide leadership in the community and run fair and transparent services. This includes addressing the barriers that LGBT+ people may face in</p>

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

				<p>accessing services, promoting inclusion within the borough and celebrating the LGBT+ community as part of our programme of equality events.</p> <p>The commitments to partnership working and engaging and facilitating co-production are core principles of the corporate plan, which will encourage all staff to work closely with local community groups in designing and delivering services to meet the needs and aspirations of residents. This includes development work alongside LGBT+ groups. This also applies to the Council as an employer, who will work with the staff LGBT+ network, and consult on policies impacting staff.</p>
Socio-economic Disadvantage	x		<p>This Corporate Plan consistently emphasises the importance of supporting residents who face socio-economic difficulties, recognising that they often have the most contact with the council.</p> <p>In particular, disadvantaged residents will be hardest hit by the current Cost-of-Living Crisis. The programme of support that has been designed to help manage this crisis has this in mind.</p> <p>The Corporate Plan also recognises the relationship between socio-economic disadvantage and poor outcomes in other areas (e.g. vulnerability, health, housing, education).</p>	<p>Across services, we are committed to a preventative approach, aiming to identify residents at risk of hardship and to intervene before their problems escalate. This will help socio-economically disadvantaged residents to maintain control over their lives and achieve their goals, as well as preventing them from the stress of reaching a crisis point.</p> <p>The Cost-of-Living Alliance is designed to help us reach as many residents who are struggling financially as possible, by putting partnership working at the core of our approach. It also targets financial support to the most vulnerable, using data and insight to identify those in need.</p> <p>We are pursuing inclusive growth, so that every resident benefit from greater economic opportunity in the borough. By investing in skills education and working with local employers, we want to help residents to access high-quality, stable employment. This is particularly important for those currently experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, including the long-term unemployed who often face additional barriers to getting in to work. and we are providing dedicated support to help this group.</p>
Any community issues identified for this location?		x	<p>The Corporate Plan has a vision and an approach to working</p>	

				across the Council, for the entire borough.
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2. Consultation.

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

Borough Manifesto

Produced in 2017 in partnership with over 3000 residents, the Borough Manifesto sets out a long-term vision for Barking and Dagenham, with ambitious targets for what we hoped to achieve over the next 20 years. The strategic direction laid out in this Corporate Plan continues to be underpinned by the Borough Manifesto; it represents our approach to continuing to push towards this vision over the next three years.

Consultation with staff

The Corporate Plan has been developed through a process of consultation with leaders and managers across the council This has informed the choice of priorities, the content of our commitments and the values and principles that we lay out in the plan.

VCSE Roundtable

Partnership-working is emphasised as a key principle for the council in how it works. As part of the development of the plan, a roundtable was held with our partners from the VCSE sector. We discussed and gathered feedback on the priorities, the principles of how we work and our approach to service planning, to see if these resonated with their own points of views. Reflections from these discussions have been incorporated into the plan as it stands.

It was also highlighted that partners will have further opportunities to influence the council activity through the service planning process.

Annual Residents' Survey (planned)

The annual residents survey has been running since 2015 to collect data on resident perceptions of the Council, services and the local area. This information on residents' priorities and concerns will be used to reflect on the plan and inform the council's service development moving forward.

Our intention is to conduct the next survey in late summer / early autumn. To ensure responses are representative of the borough, we plan to weight the results by age, gender, ethnicity, working status and housing tenure.

3. Monitoring and Review

How will you review community and equality impact once the service or policy has been implemented?
*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.*

Action	By when?	By who?
Delivery of the Corporate Plan will be monitored using an Outcomes Framework. This will progress towards outcomes. On specific outcomes it is possible to draw in more granular data sets which highlight inequalities or reveal important intelligence about service users or cohorts of the population.	Twice a year	Cabinet Executive Team

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

A range of complex, inter-related challenges continues to affect the lives of Barking and Dagenham residents, including financial hardship, long-term health conditions, a lack of affordable housing and domestic abuse. We know we can only address these by working together, united behind a common agenda. The priorities and principles outlined in this Corporate Plan give a clear picture of how we need to work and what we need to achieve over the next three years. Driven by this plan, we aim to build a community where residents can thrive, by delivering long-term change in line with the vision set out in the Borough Manifesto.

We also know that these issues do not affect all of our residents equally, or in the same way. As a diverse borough, we recognise that we have a responsibility to use data and insight and work with residents to identify disparities, understand these different experiences and design systems that work for different groups. This impact assessment highlights key examples of how the approach laid out in the Corporate Plan will impact groups with protected characteristic. However, it cannot stop here. We need to maintain this rigorous attention to tackling structural inequality, providing leadership in the community and delivering fair and transparent services through the delivery of this plan.

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
Sarah Myers	Strategy and Equalities Manager	30 March 2023
Richard Caton	Head of PMO and Performance	30 March 2023
Alex Powell	Director of Strategy	30 March 2023

ASSEMBLY**17 May 2023**

Title: Children's Care and Support Self-Evaluation and OFSTED Inspection Readiness	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care and Disabilities	
Open Report	For Information
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Chris Bush; Commissioning Director for Care and Support	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8 227 3188 E-mail: christopher.bush@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Directors: April Bald, Operational Director for Children's Care and Support, and Chris Bush; Commissioning Director for Care and Support	
Accountable Executive Team Director: Elaine Allegretti, Strategic Director for Children's and Adults Service	
Summary	
<p>Children's Care and Support (Children's Social Care) was last the subject of a full OFSTED Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) inspection in February and March of 2019. The resultant OFSTED judgement from that inspection was one of 'Requires Improvement', which followed the previous inspection in 2014 that determined the same judgement.</p> <p>OFSTED uses classifications for its judgements. 'Inadequate'; 'Requires Improvement'; 'Good' and 'Outstanding'. Since 2019 work to deliver improvements in the service have been continuous, and progress throughout has been the subject of various briefings to elected Members, including updates provided to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC).</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to provide a contemporaneous update to the Assembly regarding the current position of Children's Care and Support regarding its readiness for the next ILACS inspection which is currently expected to take place during 2023. Section 4 of the report sets out details of the key improvements that have been made since 2019 and the priorities for 2023.</p>	
Recommendation(s)	
The Assembly is recommended to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note the preparations for the expected OFSTED Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services inspection, as detailed in the report; and (ii) Note the Children's Care and Support OFSTED Self-Evaluation 2022 at Appendix A to the report. 	

Reason(s)

To advise the Assembly, in light of Members' role as 'corporate parents', on progress within the Children's Care and Support services and preparations for the next OFSTED inspection into the services.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Children's Care and Support (Children's Social Care) was last the subject of a full OFSTED Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) inspection in February and March of 2019. The resultant OFSTED judgement from this inspection was one of 'Requires Improvement', this followed the previous inspection in 2014 that determined the same judgement.
- 1.2 The OFSTED Inspection Framework uses a 'proportionate and risk-based' inspection schedule that varies according to the most recent performance rating of the local authority. The components of this approach are:
 - Judgement inspections, which can be standard or short, and generally occur every three years;
 - Focused visits, which occur in the period between inspections (a visit may be replaced by a joint targeted area inspection [JTAI]);
 - Annual self-evaluation submissions, to be discussed at annual engagement meetings between OFSTED and the Local Authority;
 - Data from the OFSTED intelligence system (based on Annual Statistical Returns).
- 1.3 OFSTED uses classifications for its judgements. 'Inadequate'; 'Requires Improvement'; 'Good' and 'Outstanding'. Since 2019 work to deliver improvements in the service have been continuous, and progress throughout has been the subject of various briefings to elected Members, including updates provided to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC).
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to provide a contemporaneous update to OSC regarding the current position of Children's Care and Support regarding its readiness for the next ILACS inspection which is currently expected to take place at some point during 2023.

2. The Inspection Schedule

Inspection Outline

- 2.1 Five days' notice of inspections/visits will be given (compared with one day's notice currently) and new inspector teams will generally consist of four inspectors for inspections and two inspectors for visits (compared with seven currently).
- 2.2 Standard inspections will be for up to two weeks and short inspections for up to one week. Focused visits will normally be for two days. Detailed specifications of the data/information that must be provided in the week before the inspection have been provided, which is known as 'Annex A' information.

- 2.3 Local authorities will receive an overall effectiveness rating of outstanding, good, requires improvement to be good, or inadequate. Key judgements will also be made in the following areas:
- Experiences and progress of children in need of help and protection;
 - Experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers;
 - The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families.
- 2.4 The three key judgements have between four and seven domains describing 'good' performance, with narrative explaining how higher or lower judgements may be arrived at.
- 2.5 For the judgement on children needing help and protection, these relate to offering help early; responding appropriately to needs; decision-making and actions taken; quality of management; engagement with children/young people; and addressing abuse.
- 2.6 For the judgement on looked-after children/care leavers, these relate to decision-making; engagement with children and young people; reducing risks; meeting health needs; education and social and leisure activities; providing stable living situations and achieving permanence; and meeting the needs of care leavers.
- 2.7 For the judgement on leadership, these relate to strategic leadership; the culture of the organisation; performance management; and suitable workforce/working environment.

The Self-Evaluation

- 2.8 In preparation for the Annual Engagement Meetings, the Local Authority is required to produce a Self-Evaluation (SEF). The self-evaluation is framed around the three key inspection areas above and focuses on responding to three questions:
1. What do you know about the quality and impact of social work practice in your local authority?
 2. How do you know it?
 3. What are your plans for the next 12 months to maintain or improve practice?
- 2.9 The annual engagement meeting does not result in a judgement of the local authority's performance and no output is published.
- 2.10 The contents of this report are based upon the findings of our most recent Self Evaluation in December 2022, which is at **Appendix A**.

3. The Improvement Context

- 3.1 Whilst OFSTED apply a context-free approach to evaluating Children's Service i.e. they do not take into account wider contextual factors, it is vitally important it is understood that the background against, and landscape within, which improvement is required is exceptionally challenging.

- 3.2 A significant period of time (since the 2019 inspection) has been spent under pandemic-conditions. This placed significant strains on safeguarding services across the nation, forcing them to operate in ways that they were not used and stripped of many of the protective factors for children and families that would usually be there (e.g. Schools). It also placed understandable pressure on front-line social work services to maintain services and effectively safeguarding children and young people in ways that they were not ordinarily used to.
- 3.3 Barking and Dagenham is one of the poorest boroughs in the country, experiencing many of the associated challenges of poverty such as high levels of neglect and domestic abuse. These factors were only exacerbated by the pandemic – and more latterly the cost-of-living crisis – with already low levels of resilience amongst many of our families pushed beyond breaking point.
- 3.4 The borough is also growing rapidly, with one of the fastest increasing child populations in the country. The impacts of economic migration are felt – with families moving into the borough (both under their own steam, but also as a result of other Local Authorities taking advantage of our relatively low cost of housing) and many do so with complex needs requiring intervention and support from the Council.
- 3.5 The Social Care workforce market is under enormous pressure and Children’s Services in Barking and Dagenham continue to feel the impacts of this. Recruitment is very difficult, with many practitioners choosing careers in other Local Authority areas where it is perceived as ‘easier’ to practice (and often that perception is correct). This is compounded by a desire to continuously ‘raise the bar’ of quality, requiring robust performance management of those in the workforce unable to meet this challenge.
- 3.6 The service, like the rest of the Council, has to deliver improvements within understandable financial constraints. Whilst there has been investment made into Children’s Care and Support since the last inspection, it has been relatively modest (compared the levels of growth being experienced). The service works hard to contain its budgets as best as it can, but this is increasingly difficult in a competitive recruitment climate and, in particular, a placements and provide market that has seen very significant inflation in costs over recent years.
- 3.7 Grappling with historical policy decisions has also taken some time. The legacy of choices made under the Ambition 2020 programme (such as locating MASH and Early Help outside of Children’s Services) is one that has been reversed, but recovering from the impacts of this has taken some time.

4. Current Assessment

- 4.1 Appended to this report is the most recent Self Assessment completed in December 2022. This document shows good progress in many areas, with some stand-out features being:
- A journey of continuous improvement and transforming services in the context of considerable challenges.
 - Children are consistently kept safe from immediate harm throughout.

- Social workers and leaders continue to be passionate about doing their best for vulnerable children and families.
- Positive staff morale, social workers report feeling well supported and cared for by their managers and leaders.
- A comprehensive training and career progression pathway offer sees many staff staying and progressing in LBBD.
- Strong evidence of service user feedback evidencing a relational practice framework where children and families experience practitioners who are supportive, caring, non- judgmental and kind.
- A high support high challenge QA approach , with robust quality assurance activities informing improvement plans , whilst always celebrating strong practice.

4.2 The current assessment is that the service is an 'Improving Requires Improvement' in OFSTED 'judgement' terms. That is, the judgement in 2019 was one of a service towards the lower end of the 'Requires Improvement' judgement, and it is now much closer to the top end with the threshold of 'Good'. In some aspects the service is showing signs of 'Good' features – such as in Leadership and Management and the experiences of our Children in Care. The service is improving, but the pace and consistency of that improvement needs to increase further still.

4.3 Our Self Evaluation is also clear about where our focus needs to be in the coming months, setting out as it does our priorities for 2023. These are:

- Cracking consistency in the quality and impact of social work practice– with focus on:
 - Supervision and management oversight.
 - Quality planning informed by the child's lived experience and outcomes– (this includes safety planning , CP and CIN purposeful plans and permanence planning).
 - Purposeful visits and direct work.
 - Application of threshold.
- Further improving permanence for children in line with Ofsted Focused Visit in May 2022.
- Refreshed Practice Standards, Practice framework and a suite of risk assessment tools to support consistency of quality practice.
- Increasing level of permanent staff in the Assessment and Life planning services.
- Restructure Adolescent service to strengthen the offer for vulnerable adolescents and harness the good practice in that service.
- Develop a strengthened participation offer for our children in care and care leavers.
- SEND improvement work through the SEND Area Board (and to support preparations for a separate SEND Inspection).
- Developing the Family Hub/Early Help offer as part of our Early Help and Start for Life Improvement Programme.
- Implement the new Domestic Abuse offer.
- Strengthen sufficiency of placements options.

How do we know it?

- 4.4 During 2022 we introduced additional, significant capacity to work within Quality Assurance to ensure that there is adequate reach, at sufficient pace to cover our service as a whole. Known as our 'QA Leads', each has a dedicated service area of focus. In addition to our QA Leads, we have established a small unit of experienced, interim support to ensure there is sufficient oversight of continuous improvement, and to provide support to operational leadership to deliver.
- 4.5 A comprehensive programme to better understand the quality of practice from across the services is now embedded. This programme is supported through our Quality Assurance Division detailing a monthly review of focused areas to sit alongside our business-as-usual programme of audit and practice evaluation. This programme is underpinned with an approach of working alongside practitioners and managers and seeks to embed a culture of learning from the findings and themes arising from both our monthly audit and practice evaluation programme.

5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Philippa Farrell, Head of Service Finance

- 5.1 Children's Care and Support remains the biggest service area of spend for Barking and Dagenham, which is unsurprising given the context as outlined above. Barking and Dagenham has a rapidly growing younger populations, with one of the fastest increasing child populations in the country. It is subject to economic migration as one of the cheapest places to live within London and has very high levels of deprivation. A combination of these factors sees high levels of children requiring intervention. As such, the Council has continued to prioritise investment into this area but this is a complex balance when taking into account the financial challenges that Councils are facing as a whole.
- 5.2 Since 2019 the Council has increased Children's Care and Support Budget from c£37m to £42m in 2022/23. In addition there has been dedicated funding of £2m from 2022/23 for Early Help provision. Despite this, the area has continued to struggle with the impact of rising demand, rising economic pressure within the sector, and recruitment and retention, which has seen overspends in every financial year. 2022/23 is forecasting an outturn net expenditure of c£45m as at Period 9 reporting. The Medium Term Financial Plan for 2023/24 to 2026/27 has identified a further £1m to be invested into Children's Care and Support and £0.5m into Early Help.
- 5.3 Within 2022/23 there was a specific in-year investment of £800k to address the need to introduce additional, significant capacity to work within Quality Assurance and we established a small number of experienced, interim support to ensure there is sufficient oversight of continuous improvement, and to provide support to operational leadership to deliver.
- 5.4 The macro political environment surrounding Children's Care and Support with a lack of funding and market control in addition to the Council's unique circumstances with regards to population growth, deprivation and the availability of cheap housing combines to make this area financially challenging and a risk to the Council. Investment is prioritised but this must be balanced within the overall financial

position of the Council. The Council overall is feeling the impact of the economic climate, the legacy of COVID, and a period of significant financial uncertainty in relation to funding due to political events.

6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Daniel Longe, Principal Solicitor, Children Safeguarding

- 6.1 Section 118 and 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives the Secretary of State Statutory Powers to direct the Chief Inspector to conduct an inspection of the performance of a local authority's functions, including those functions as it pertains to its Children's Services.
- 6.2 Further guidance and framework is set out in detail in the Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILAC) Guidance, the recent version of which came into force of 1 January 2023.
- 6.3 Local Authorities are under a specific duty to ensure a high standard in the delivery of services to children in its area. This is graded as set out within the body of this report and the lowest grading that can be issued by Ofsted being "inadequate", such a grading could invoke further intervention from the Secretary of State hence the importance of maintaining a high standard of service delivery.
- 6.4 This report is providing an update on the steps being taken to improve standards within Children Services in light of the outcome of the last inspection, with the aim of improving the local authority's rating from "Requires Improvement" to a higher rating. The recommendations within the report are within the remit and powers of the local authority as mandated by statute.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- OFSTED guidance on inspecting local authority children's services from 2018 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services-from-2018>

List of appendices:

- **Appendix A:** OFSTED Self Evaluation 2022 Presentation

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OFSTED Self Evaluation 2022 Children's Care and Support

Summary of where we are, how we know it...and what next

December 2022

one borough; one community; no one left behind

Introductions

Key Messages



Demand reached unprecedented levels during 2022 (though stabilising) with the pandemic, cost-of-living crisis; and growth in the borough contributing to driving this demand.



We had to make some careful decisions during this period of exceptional demand to ensure our focus was on those most at risk – including using QA as a management tool.



The impact of some historical policy decisions (Ambition 2020) have had to be contended with; alongside a challenging workforce climate and placements market.



Council leaders and Members respond supportively, with investment made into Children's Social Care since 2021, Early Help Services in 2022 and Domestic Abuse services – though investment is modest in the context of growth (which is outstripping it).

Key Messages (cont.)

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- A journey of continuous improvement and transforming services in the context of considerable challenges.
- Children are consistently kept safe from immediate harm throughout.
- Social workers and leaders continue to be passionate about doing their best for vulnerable children and families.
- Positive staff morale, social workers report feeling well supported and cared for by their managers and leaders.

- A comprehensive training and career progression pathway offer sees many staff staying and progressing in LBBD.
- Strong evidence of service user feedback evidencing a relational practice framework where children and families experience practitioners who are supportive, caring, non-judgmental and kind.
- A high support high challenge QA approach, with robust quality assurance activities informing improvement plans, whilst always celebrating strong practice.

Key Messages: a reminder of our context

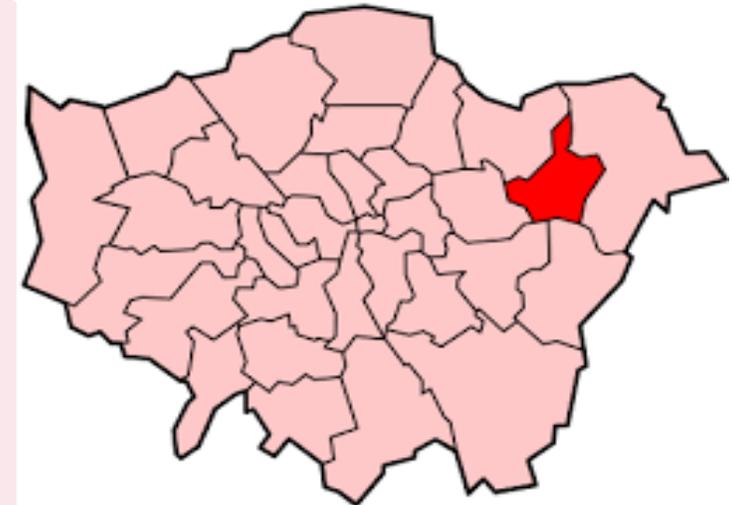
- A community hit hard by Covid, with many structural inequalities exacerbated – we are still learning the impact of this.
- A population that is growing rapidly with the highest rates of poverty in London (and in some areas the country).
- Very high levels of churn and mobility within vulnerable communities; likely to be some of the hardest hit by the looming cost of living crisis.

Our journey, knocked a bit off track by Covid and its aftermath, is one of whole system's improvement, on every area of practice and in a unique local context – we are working to be good in every area – partnerships, prevention, social work practice, recruitment, retention and caring for our staff and children and families.

Hard work paying off – not all at once, and in stages and different places, but we are prioritising, working tactically and keeping the system safe.

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Barking & Dagenham



one borough; one community; no one left behind

**Barking &
Dagenham**

What we know about practice (a summary)

Early Help

The data shows us

333 families (729 children) open to targeted early help at the end of September 2022/23. We have completed a higher number of Early Help assessments in the last 6 months.

Good performance

The majority of children/families open to targeted early help are seen every 4 weeks (on average 85%) and a high 93% in September.

Almost all children and families have an Early Help Assessment (EHA).

The majority of families with a completed EHA have a timely TAF meeting (average of 85%).

Supervision timeliness is improving – a high 94% in September and around 85% on average this year.

Areas requiring improvement

Allocation timeliness (10 Working Days) is improving due to increased staffing and capacity but remains a challenge.

Early Help Assessment timeliness, although improving to nearly 70% year to date, performance is below target.

Practice – Strengths and Progress

New structures now in place and recruited to (almost fully) following significant investment.

Practice Standards revised – co-developed with the service and implemented with a real focus on children seen; purposeful interventions; outcome focused plans, management oversight and reflective supervision.

There has also been essentials training and comprehensive resource bank developed (TREE).

Early Help (cont.)

- Good evidence through audit of direct work being undertaken; visits to the children are focused on practical and purposeful intervention, with good recording of the worker's observations of the mother's care for the children.
- Feedback from children, families and partners is positive overall, complaints dealt with quickly and learning used in the service, more formal methods of gaining feedback is being implemented
- Development of Rapid Response Team to support front door.

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Data tracker/monthly performance meetings firmly embedded and ensuring focus on areas of poor performance is maintained e.g. allocations and assessment timeliness. Action plans in place.

- Managers tracking practice through team meetings with TM group and locality-based group supervision and action learning sets.
- New Assurance Board implemented in May to focus on quality of practice has shown where practice is good and areas for further work and challenge. Action plan rigorously monitored.
- No audits graded as inadequate (a roughly 50/50 split between Requires Improvement and Good) – much improved.

Practice – Areas for Improvement

- Consistent Quality across each locality and timeliness of EHA . Timeliness needs improving across the service and Team Managers are now expecting a first draft of the EHA after 15 days.
- Greater consistency with including the child's voice, absent parents and other professionals' views and analysis.
- Recruitment of skilled frontline staff and team managers remains a priority, to ensure timely allocations and improved quality of supervision and management oversight.
- Continue to develop partnership working through the TAF to ensure children's plans are clear and outcome focused, lead to meaningful interventions and create sustainable change.
- Workforce development and training – particularly so given the planned move to Family Hubs.
- TEHAS development: single front door, wider partnerships and IAG
- QA process aligned and achievable development of consistent high quality practice – links to assurance board.

MASH and Assessment

The data shows us

Contacts to social care fairly stable with a monthly average in 2022/23 of 1163 compared to 1171 in 2021/22.

Referrals have increased post COVID-19 but we seeing some levelling out with a monthly average this year of 534 compared to 513 in 2021/22.

The majority of referrals progress to a statutory single assessment.

Good performance on feedback to referrer – over 90% monthly.

Most contacts are completed within timescale. On average 96% of contacts RAG rated red are dealt with in time (99.5% green).

Number of ongoing assessments is lower down to 619 at end of September and average caseloads in Assessment and Intervention have decreased to 19 in September compared to very high 32 in May this year.

Most assessments completed within 45 days.

Almost all children are seen during assessment.

Practice – Strengths and Progress

- MASH makes safe decisions, and no children are left at risk of immediate harm.
- MASH consults other professionals appropriately and responses are timely.
- EDT makes appropriate decisions and passes cases through appropriately.
- Most referrals give suitably clear picture of children's circumstances and the worries about them.
- In most cases MASH workers gather suitable range of good quality background information.
- Consent to MASH enquiries is consistently recorded.
- MASH managers clearly and consistently record their oversight and sign-off on contacts and referrals, and these decisions are appropriate.
- Strategy meetings are well attended, and information sharing is appropriate.

MASH and Assessment (cont.)

- Initial response to worries about children is robust and children are seen quickly when required
- When worries about children increase , workers take appropriate actions e.g. convene strategy meeting or arrange for the child to be looked after
- An improved timely through-put of children stepping across to Early help services and Family support and safeguarding services.

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Joint assessment approach with Housing colleagues for homeless 16 /17 year old's – improvement work overseen and positively endorsed by MHCLG.

Practice – Areas for Improvement

- Referrers to consistently address consent in the MARF making it clear who has consented, when, and their authority to give consent.
- Establish a permanent education presence within the MASH
- Work with health partners to consider how information from GPs

can be consistently obtained to help inform MASH decisions

- Sharpen focus on children's lived experiences to inform analysis and plans – more purposeful visits and direct work
- Improved focus and senior management oversight of repeat: contacts , referrals and repeat assessments- carefully applying the threshold / continuum of need at every step to reduce volume of referrals and assessment that lead to No further action
- Improve timeliness of assessments and children progressing to ICPC
- Improve quality of plans made at strategy meetings and at the end of an assessment - more outcomes focussed
- Refresh the Multi agency Threshold / Continuum of need document – with focus on children in specific circumstances i.e. physical chastisement , D.A and those with disability

Children in Need and Child Protection

The data shows us

Number of children on CIN plans declining due to CiN improvement work – 613 at end of September compared to 842 at end of 2021/22.

The majority of children in need are visited every six weeks.

The majority of children in need had their review in timescale.

The number of CP children decreased by 53 from 455 to 402 between August and September this year (now 390).

Almost all children on CPP seen every 4 weeks – good performance.

Good performance with few children subject to subsequent child protection plans (9%).

Almost all child protection reviews were completed in timescale.

Very few children (6%) have a ceased CP plan lasting more than 2 years – 15 out of 233 children.

Seeing CP children alone is improving. Aged 4+ seen alone on last 2 weekly visit improving to 67% – 12% higher than end of year 2021/22.

Around 3 in 5 of all CP children seen alone – up by 8% on end of year.

Over 40% of S47s progressed to ICPC – positive direction of travel.

Around 8 out of 10 children at ICPC result in a CP plan.

Lower proportion of repeat CP plans.

Practice – Strengths and Progress

- Most children in need and children subject to child protection planning are being kept safe, none audited have been found to be at risk of immediate harm.
- They are seen regularly by their social workers who know them well- with evidence of culturally sensitive work
- CP reports show social workers have an understanding of the child's lived experience and what is important to them.
- Partnership working and information sharing is a strength with partners consistently attending and participating in meetings.
- Specialist intervention service involvement provides practical support which is valued by parents and helps to improve parenting experienced by children.

Children in Need and Child Protection (cont.)

- Specialist intervention service involvement provides practical support which is valued by parents and helps to improve parenting experienced by children.
- Family group conferences are routinely offered to families.
- In most cases contextual safeguarding risks to children are recognized and well described with good multi agency information sharing
- Return home interviews offered to most children demonstrate an awareness of curiosity and contextual safeguarding issues including push /pull factors and signs of exploitation
- Management oversight in the Adolescent service is clear and consistent with concise analysis of contextual risks , making appropriate recommendations to progress work
- Through feedback we have a good understanding of what makes a positive difference in reducing risk of exploitation
- Established National referral mechanism panel (NRM) results in trafficked children having timely conclusive grounds decisions and multi agency support plans.

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Practice – Areas for Improvement

- Social work analysis and plans need to be more informed by the child's lived experience
- All planning needs to be more outcome focused – and CIN threshold need to be consistently and appropriately applied
- Visits to children need to be consistently purposeful with evidence of quality direct work
- Supervision needs to be consistently reflective
- Improved management oversight to address timeliness of children being seen two weekly when on CP plan and timeliness of Core groups
- Improve consistency of reviews of exploitation risk assessment tool and responding to Contextual Safeguarding case direction
- Refresh and embed a Domestic abuse risk assessment tool and more consistent use of the Graded care profile 2 assessment tool
- Progress improvement work on CSA in partnership with Centre of expertise in CSA.

Children in Care and Care Leavers

The data shows us

Increasing number and rate per 10,000 LAC up to 443 at end of September

Increasing proportion of LAC on ICO and declining proportion on FCO – S20 stable at around 25%.

Children entering care on police protection increasing (24%) – above benchmarks.

47 young people (11%) are in residential placements at September – down 1 on last month. Children's homes/schools have increased by 1 to 39.

The majority of children in care are visited 6 weekly.

Almost all looked after children that require them are visited every 3 months.

Few looked after children experience more than 3 plus placements and performance is at 13%.

The majority of looked after children have long term placement stability at 71% – above benchmarks.

Almost all looked after children had their review in timescale.

Almost all children in care have a permanence plan recorded.

Improved performance on RHIs – 69% of children were offered a return home interview (of which 88% accepted).

The majority of children in care for a year or more have an up to date medical.

The Aspire Virtual School (AVS) continues to be strong, providing an effective service.

The AVS continues to demonstrate robust outcomes in education with most children in care making good progress and above average attainment for children in care compared to national children in care average.

Most of our children in care are in good or outstanding schools, and where they are not, the AVS monitors their progress robustly.

The most recent data shows that we remain below the national average for unauthorised and overall absence and for fixed term exclusions although above average for persistent absence.

Children in Care and Care Leavers

The AVS has worked hard with social care colleagues, to improve the Personal Education Plan (PEP) completion rate. In 2021/22, 89% of children in care had an up-to-date PEP compared to 86% in 2020/21. The quality of PEPs has also improved.

High level of keep in touch with care leavers.

The majority of care leavers (68%) are in education, employment, and training.

Almost all of care leavers (92%) are also in suitable accommodation and our performance is above target of 90%.

The large majority of care leavers have an up to date pathway plan.

This year 8 students progressed to University, which is 50% increase from 4 young people who progressed to University in 2021.

Practice – Strengths and Progress

- Missing coordinators are persistent and consistent in offering quality RHI's to children in care , improving understanding of risks and reasons for the missing episode.

- Improving picture of tracking and progressing children's permanence plans
- Improved early permanence for new-born's through work of pre-birth team
- A Residential oversight meeting ensures circumstances for children in these settings are better understood with improvement on driving forward their plans for leaving residential care where appropriate
- Children in care visits are recorded in a child centred way evidencing their lived experience – workers know their children well and advocate for them
- Children in care are supported well by the Virtual School.
- Children in care are supported to see their family members
- Young people led corporate parenting board , improving members and leaders understanding of the experiences of being in care and a care leaver in LBBDD
- Care leavers have timely access to their move on accommodation due to a strong partnership between social care and Housing

Children in Care and Care Leavers (cont.)

- A new service structure aimed to offer children the opportunity to get to know their Leaving care advisors earlier than 18
- Care leaver apprentice and traineeship posts in social care
- Foster carers and children in care have access to a Mockingbird placement getting additional support.
- DfE national lead on improvement work for care leavers , sighted LBBD Enhanced Local offer as one of the best he had seen.

Practice – Areas for Improvement

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- Management oversight and improved supervision needs to consistently drive case direction – supporting more timely permanence arrangement being achieved for children
- Working with wider London partners to address sufficiency of placements
- Improve Initial health assessment timeliness and quality
- Improved focus on children coming into care via Police protection
- Improve quality of life story work
- Improve the quality of pathway plans for care leavers

How we know it: Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance

Our Approach to Quality Assurance (incl. practice evaluations)

- A revised Quality Assurance Framework and Practice Evaluation programme introduced in February 2022 with an increasing number of managers completing practice evaluations
- This included a new Practice Evaluation Tool and implemented a more systematic approach.
- Monthly training offered to managers completing practice evaluations on the practice evaluation tool
- To strengthen oversight, each service area completes audits for cases in their area.
- All completed audits are moderated for practice judgement and findings.

Building Capacity

During 2022 we have introduced additional, significant capacity to work within Quality Assurance to ensure that there is adequate reach, at sufficient pace to cover our service as a whole. Known as our 'QA Leads', each has a dedicated service area of focus.

In addition to our QA Leads, we have established a small cadre of experienced, interim support to ensure there is sufficient oversight of continuous improvement, and to provide support to operational leadership to deliver.

Quality Assurance (cont.)

Learning >>> Practice

- Quality Assurance Service leads on delivering messages of practice improvement through a range of quality assurance activity:
- Disseminating Monthly Practice Evaluations findings.
- Delivering Monthly 'QA practice evaluation workshops' to managers completing practice evaluations
- Attendance at practice evaluation moderation meetings,
- Attending service, and team meetings
- Learning from practice alerts and escalations from IROs and CP chairs

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- All completed audits are moderated for practice judgement and findings.
- Overview reports completed for each audit cycle, dip samples and thematic audits
- Practice of Concern process that tracks the completion of remedial action for all audits graded "inadequate"
- Service 'dip-sampling' across children's services.
- Live MASH multiagency audits since February 2022
- Parental and child feedback sought.
- Strengthened IRO and CP chair oversight (via planning, consultations, and midway reviews).

Quality Assurance (cont.)

Learning >>> Practice (cont.)

- Testing of the Practice through sitting with social workers.
- Practice week (Domestic Abuse Focus) September 2022
- Undertake thematic reviews and dip samples
- CP chair and IRO expectations outlined and disseminated across all teams
- Introduction of tool for application of the threshold for significant harm
- Cross section of service areas and themed audits.
- Targeted training to upskill CP chairs and IROs

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QA Areas for Improvement / Priorities for 2022

- Ensure QA activity is impactful and leads to improving the quality of practice.
- Compliance of at least 95% (currently 75%)
- To complete moderation of all sections within the practice evaluation tool
- CP Chair and IRO oversight and quality of minutes, analysis and plans
- Continue to build on the consultation undertaken with children, families and agency partners.
- Ensure learning is accessible to staff and user-friendly for managers to realise positive change through effective support/challenge

Improvement journey – and what next

Strengthening our understanding of the quality of practice

A comprehensive programme to better understand the quality of practice from across the services is now underway. This programme is supported through our Quality Assurance Division detailing a monthly review of focused areas to sit alongside our business-as-usual programme of audit and practice evaluation.

The forward programme includes (but not limited to) the following:

- Direct work with our child protection conference chairs, this includes observations of conferences.
- A review of all children subject to a child protection plan testing for effectiveness and robust application of thresholds.
- A range of dip-sampling activity focusing on repeat referrals, multi-agency MASH audits.
- Review of thresholds on the following areas: physical chastisement, S47 and Strategy Meetings, disability, and domestic abuse.

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“The plan is to review the programme monthly to ensure timely delivery of completed activity alongside providing assurances that all learning can evidence tangible improvements within practice over time.”

This programme is underpinned with an approach of working alongside practitioners and managers and seeks to embed a culture of learning from the findings and themes arising from both our monthly audit and practice evaluation programme.

Priorities for the next 12-months

Cracking consistency in the quality and impact of social work practice– with focus on :

- Supervision and management oversight
- Quality planning informed by the child's lived experience and outcomes–(this includes safety planning , CP and CIN purposeful plans and permanence planning)
- Purposeful visits and direct work
- Application of threshold
- Further improving permanence for children in line with Ofsted Focused Visit in May 2022
- Refreshed Practice Standards, Practice framework and a suite of risk assessment tools to support consistency of quality practice

- Increasing level of permanent staff in the Assessment and Life planning services
- Restructure Adolescent service to strengthen the offer for vulnerable adolescents and harness the good practice in that service
- Develop strengthened participation offer for children in care & care leavers
- SEND improvement work
- Developing the Family hub/Early help offer
- Implement the new DA offer
- Strengthen sufficiency of placements options

ASSEMBLY

17 May 2023

Title: Adopt London East and Corporate Parenting Annual Reports 2021-22	
Joint Report of the Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care and Disabilities and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration	
Open	For Information
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: No
Report Author: Vikki Rix, Head of Performance and Intelligence, Children’s Care and Support (Commissioning)	Contact Details: E-mail: Vikki.rix@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: April Bald, Operational Director Childrens Care and Support	
Accountable Executive Team Director: Elaine Allegretti, Strategic Director, Children and Adults	
<p>Summary</p> <p>The Adoption and Corporate Parenting annual reports are presented to Assembly each year to ensure Members have sight of the work being undertaken with the children and young people they are responsible for and/or whose plan is adoption.</p> <p>The Adopt London East Adoption Annual Report 2021-22 (Appendix 1) summarises the activity and performance of the East London Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) during this reporting year. ALE is jointly commissioned by Havering, LBBB, Tower Hamlets and Newham and is hosted by Havering. The report summaries all of the adoption work undertaken by ALE for all four boroughs which includes the recruitment of adopters, family finding for children awaiting adoption and all post-adoption support for children and adopted adults.</p> <p>The Local Authority is currently still measured on individual performance by the DfE requirements of A10 and A2 which are outlined at the end of the report at Appendix 1. This performance is a combined responsibility of the Local Authority and ALE as the LA is responsible for the children when they are Looked After awaiting court consent to the adoption plan and ALE is responsible for identifying suitable matches for children who have an adoption plan. Any delay in either of these areas impacts on these performance measures. The Local Authority retains all responsibilities for the children as Looked After until the adoption order is granted.</p> <p>The Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2021-22 (Appendix 2) summarises the activity and performance of the Council with regards to its corporate parenting responsibilities during that reporting year. It outlines our key achievements and how we are delivering on our promises to children in care and care leavers.</p>	

<p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>The Assembly is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Note the Adopt London East Report 2021/22, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report; and. (ii) Note the Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2021/22, as set out at Appendix 2 to the report.
<p>Reason(s)</p> <p>The Council is the corporate parent to all of our children in care and care leavers, including children awaiting adoption.</p>

1. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Antony Envoldsen-Harris, Finance Business Partner, Children's Care and Support

- 1.1 The report is a review of the performance for financial year 2021/22, its second year of functioning. It notes that service was delivered within the budget of £1,702,433, received from contributing authorities. There was a carry forward of £40k into 2022/23.
- 1.2 As it is a report of past performance it does not give rise to any future financial implications beyond the agreed annual contributions from Local Authorities including LBBD, who for 22/23 have contributed £505,404.

2. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Nicola Monerville, Principal Lawyer, Children Adult and

- 2.1 A child may be looked after during care proceedings by virtue of an interim care order (s.38 Childrens Act 1989) and on conclusion, a care order (s.31(1)(a)) or outside of care proceedings (s.20 Childrens Act 1989).
- 2.2 If the care plan for the child is to be placed for adoption a placement order must be granted at the conclusion of proceedings (s.21 Adoption and Children Act 2002) this order authorises the local authority to place a child with prospective adopters, alternatively if a child's parents have relinquished care they may consent to the adoption however the Local Authority remains responsible for the child until the adoption order is granted (s.46 Adoption and Childrens Act 2002).
- 2.3 Adopt London East via functions delegated to it act as an adoption Agency on behalf of the Local Authority. Local Authorities who act as an adoption agency must recruit, assess and approve suitable prospective adopters (*section 3A, ACA 2002*)

- 2.4 The Report is for note only and the contents of the report do not raise any issues that fall outside of the powers of the council and the report does not require a decision for which a legal implication would arise.

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

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Adopt London East (ALE) Report 2021/22

Appendix 2 - Corporate Parenting Annual Reports 2021/22

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ADOPT LONDON EAST ANNUAL REPORT April 2021-March 2022



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Introduction

This is the third Annual Report for the Adopt London East Partnership and its second full year of functioning, from April 2021 to March 2022. In line with pressures throughout Children Social care, the demand for adoption services has remained extremely high during this period. Services have been further compounded by unpredictable levels of need due to the global pandemic and various lockdowns.

We have seen an increase in the number of families seeking adoption support services, with increased complexity in need. The Contact Service has remained busy with direct face to face contacts being re-established over the course of the year following our use of virtual contacts during the pandemic. There has also been the impact of significant delays within care proceedings, on the number of children that Adopt London East have been able to family find for. To meet the needs of children and families and adopted adults and young people there has been a great deal of flexibility within the Adopt London Service.

A major change during this year was the retirement of Sue May as the Head of Adopt London East in March 2022. Sue had been involved in the conception of Adopt London East and the wider Adopt London group. Despite a close handover between Sue and the incoming Head, the change of leadership has resulted in differences in the working relationships with all of the boroughs. We are currently working to build strong relationships across all the boroughs to support the partnership. Following the impact of the pandemic, we have been given the opportunity to look at all aspects of practice and our return to face to face service rather than virtually.

This annual report provides a summary of the work over the last year, focusing on the innovations and improvements within Adopt London East and insights into challenges we are facing post-pandemic with increase in demand for all areas of the service.

Sarah Johnson, Head of Adopt London East



1. Context

In June 2015 the Government set out its vision for the future of Adoption Services in the paper 'Regionalising Adoption.' The premise of regionalisation was to:

- Increase the number of children adopted
- Reduce the length of time children wait to be adopted
- Improve post-adoption support services to families who have adopted children from care.
- Reduce the number of agencies that provide adoption services thereby improving efficiency and effectiveness

The government continues to drive forward with the structural reform programme regarding regionalising adoption and all but one of Local Authorities in England are now in a live Regional Adoption Agency (RAA). The government have noted the significant progress in cutting the time children wait to be placed with their adoptive parents and this is a positive outcome for children. However, the number children with plans for adoption has been falling over the last number of years.

Adopt London East is a partnership between four London boroughs of Havering, Barking and Dagenham, Tower Hamlets and Newham. The partnership Agreement sets out the legal and financial terms of the arrangements.

Adopt London East has responsibility for all the adoption functions including:

- Recruitment and assessment of adoptive parents
- Family finding for children in need of adoptive parents
- Adoption Support to adoptive families, adopted adults, and others impacted by adoption

These functions were delegated on the 1st October 2019 to the London Borough of Havering. Adopt London East (ALE) formally commenced operational activity on this date.

Responsibility for the child remains with the Local Authority. The Local Authority will therefore remain responsible for the child's progress through the court system and for final decisions in respect of care and adoption planning.

Adopt London East works in close collaboration with the 'Adopt London' adoption agencies who provide services for 24 Local Authorities in total. In this way we are able to develop a London wide profile, develop economies of scale and share best practice.



2. Governance Arrangements

All service functions and partnership arrangements are detailed within the partnership agreement. The agreement includes:

- Governance
- Finances and budget setting
- Data sharing agreement
- Dispute resolution
- Termination of agreement

The Adopt London East Governance Board has Director level representation from each of the four partner boroughs and has responsibility for all partnership decisions that need to be made above Head of Service level, and for monitoring performance and budget monitoring.

The Adopt London East Operational Board has membership of Heads of Service, Service Managers and Team Managers. The group monitors performance across the service and considers best practice innovations.

2. Staffing

Adopt London East employs around 30 members of staff who work across the service in differing teams areas. The service is managed by the permanent Head of Service, with direct reports of 3 Team Managers and an Adoption Panel Advisor. Overall it is stable team, currently there are 2 temporary workers seconded from other teams in Havering's wider children services to the vacant posts. It is planned that these posts will be permanently recruited to within 2022-23. There was one full time Agency worker from September 2021 in the Panel Advisor role, who was covering maternity leave, up to the return of the permanent worker in September 2022.

There will be some changes to the Business Support posts due to the review that is taking place within the London Borough of Havering. Adopt London East has had the equivalent of 3 Business Support Officers. Following the review whilst the establishment will remain the same, there will be changes to the way that work is managed. Adopt London East financial transactions will continue to be managed via the London Borough of Havering Brokerage Team with a 0.5 post in there. The other two posts will be managed directly by Adopt London East. One of the posts supports all the administrative functions in relation to panel. The other post is a general post working across the service.

During the Covid pandemic, workers adapted well to remote working and continued to provide all the core functions of an Adoption Service. In line with the restrictions being eased more work is being done face to face. Regular service meetings have taken place giving the whole service the opportunity to come together and look at service



development and practice issues. All assessments are now being done face to face, however some work has been very successful being done in a hybrid approach. A hybrid approach to working has developed and have enabled workers to be as efficient as possible.

4. Outcomes

Adopt London East aims to improve outcomes for adoptive families, and specifically for children. When Adopt London East was set up the following targets were identified: (Data is presented in from section 16 onwards).

- Increase the percentage of children adopted from care
- Improve timescales for placing children with adoptive families
- Fewer adoption placement disruptions
- More children placed in an early permanence placement
- Reduce the number of children for whom the permanence plan has changed from adoption
- Improve timescales for adopter assessments
- Higher conversion rate from enquiry to approval
- Fewer prospective adopter approvals rescinded
- More timely matching of approved adopters

Financial Outturn

The total budget for Adopt London East is £1,702,433, each borough contributes to the costs. 2021-22 the service was delivered within budget with a carry forward of £40,000 which will be taken towards the additional posts planned in 2022 – 2023.

5. Adopt London

Adopt London East is part of Adopt London, working in close collaboration with three other RAAs in London and together provides services for 24 London boroughs. During this period the London borough of Greenwich joined Adopt London South in April 2022. Adopt London is unique nationally given our close, consortium approach across a number of RAAs and large number of local authorities. Through this partnership, we aim to develop a London-wide profile, improve services that benefit from economies of scale, and share best practice. The host boroughs for Adopt London are Havering, Islington, Southwark, and Ealing. Heads of Service, Service Managers, Team Managers, and Marketing & Communications leads all work closely with their peers across Adopt London to develop shared services and practice standards.

Heads of Service and the host borough Directors and Directors of Children's Services meet quarterly at the Adopt London Executive Advisory Board chaired by a non-host partner DCS. The Executive Advisory Board oversees the joint project work of Adopt London, supports with problem solving, and considers Adopt London issues that need the support of other senior leaders to resolve.



In 2021 the Executive Advisory Board wrote to all member boroughs to request agreement to work towards an Adopt London legal partnership agreement linked to local agreements. This will formalise the responsibilities of the Executive Board and protect the ownership of our shared brand and online resources. This work is taking longer than anticipated to progress due to the legal complexities however, we hope it will be finalised before the end of the 2022/23 period.



6. Adopt London strategy and priorities

The Adopt London Heads of Service work towards a strategic work plan that is supported by the Executive Advisory Board. The plan covers:

- Governance and commissioning arrangements
- Strategic development including opportunities to access national funding
- Operational and practice developments
- The voice of adopters, adopted children, adopted adults, and birth family members, and marketing and communications.

Each practice-based group has a different focus and has made progress in taking forward their priorities during the last year:

Recruitment & Assessment

The group has launched Family & Friends preparation workshops – an opportunity for those who will be supporting new adoptive families to develop a better understanding of adoption and the needs of adopted children. Staff have been trained to deliver Early Permanence preparation training so we can deliver this in-house for the first time, improving availability of spaces and cost efficiency. The group are receiving training in a new, research-based Prospective Adopter Report tool which they hope to launch across Adopt London in 2022/23.



Family Finding

The group aims to improve family finding across the RAAs so that children who cannot be matched within their own RAA are more likely to still be placed within the London region. The group are implementing a system to enable them to share information about children and prospective adopters more effectively. They have developed Adopt London networking events for practitioners to share profiles and discuss potential links and are working to establish a more regular pattern of Adopt London 'activity events' for children and prospective adopters to meet.

Adoption Support

The group have been developing ideas together on managing increases in Adoption Support demand and learning from different models offering triage and duty systems. They have begun to pilot a model for offering specialist therapeutic parenting training to adoptive families together, funded through the Adoption Support Fund, with the aim to increase uptake of preventative support.

7. Adoption Panel

Adopt London East have one central panel which oversees recommendations of the following:

- Approval of prospective adoptive parents
- Adoption decisions for relinquished babies
- Matching recommendations in relation to the placement of a child
- Review or rescindment of approval of prospective of adoptive parents

Panel recommendations relating to individual children are presented to the Agency Decision Maker from the child's borough of origin. Recommendations relating to prospective adopters are dealt with by Agency Decision Maker in Adopt London East.

To support timeliness the panel meets fortnightly with the capacity for an extra panel should the need arise. The panels are chaired by two chairs and supported by a vice chair. There is a central list of all panel members who sit on each panel. Panel membership is diverse in relation to age, gender, relationship status, and ethnicity. The panel have regular training and annual appraisals.

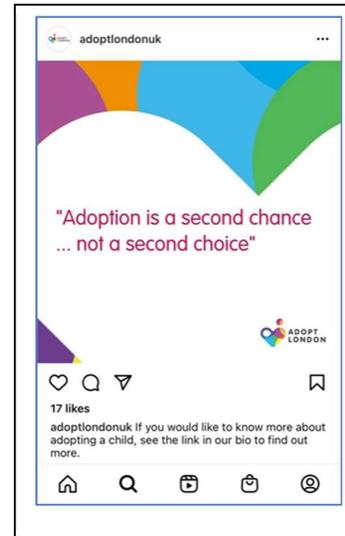
The panel provide feedback in relation to quality assurance to Adopt London East and to the relevant borough. Panel continues to be held virtually, feedback has been largely positive from staff, adopters and panel members. It is planned that virtual panels will continue as it offers convenience to clients who are able to participate in panel from the comfort of their own homes.



8. Adopt London Brand

A single brand identity and entry point for prospective adopters covering the 24 Adopt London boroughs remains central to the approach of Adopt London. It is crucial in reaching prospective adopters from all London boroughs and surrounding Home Counties, and means we are more likely to be considered by prospective adopters who are also looking into Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAAs). Pooling communications resources means we have a greater budget to maintain a professional, creative and up to date online presence.

We have a shared annual marketing strategy. Through the Adopt London brand we aim to celebrate the diversity of London, to demonstrate that London children are central to our agency, and to consistently highlight a range of voices impacted by adoption.



9. Adopt London Website

This year we have focused on building the range of support resources available through the Adopt London website and increasing the number and variety of personal blogs and stories about adoption that are available to those researching adoption.

We have undertaken a project to prepare for the transfer of our website to a new provider to ensure that it remains compliant with local government standards and enables us to expand our use of the site in the future – such as using it as a digital gateway for adoption support requests. This move will take place at the beginning of the 2022/23 period and will pave the way for a broader update of the site during the year to ensure it equally serves all those who might need to access it, not just prospective adopters.

Website views have continued to grow this year, with a **2% increase** in all website users and a total of **58,696** website sessions taking place during the period. Most initial enquiries and information session bookings are made through the website, with **2144** prospective adoptive households booking to attend an information session this year through the website.

10. Adopt London social media



Adopt London has successfully developed an identity and following on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. We have **over 2000 followers** across social media platforms, an increase from last year (1400 followers in 2020/21).

Growth in new followers and engagement has dropped this year, believed to be due to a reduction in capacity within the Marketing & Communications group by one member of staff and they were required to focus on a website transfer. A social media advisor has undertaken an audit of our activity and is now providing regular advice to the group to improve social media engagement. Developing content for social media and posting regularly is a challenge with the capacity available to the team however it remains a priority as an important way for prospective adopters to develop a connection and sense of loyalty to Adopt London whilst considering their plans to adopt.

Rather than paying for advertising, the Adopt London strategy is to create original content that will be viewed and shared online with the aim to build our social media reach and the numbers of individuals visiting and revisiting our website. Content that people want to share with others is most successful at reaching our audience. This year we created a new original animation entitled 'Our Children' which aims to communicate a sensitive, warm, and realistic message about the needs of our children who are waiting for adoptive families. The **video has been viewed over 5000 times**, demonstrating the potential reach of this type of accessible content. You can click on the image below to watch the video, and [click here to read the story behind the poem in the animation](#).

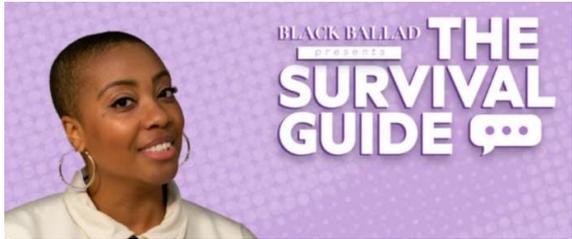




Adopt London podcasts

This year we broadened our communications approach through the use of podcasts. In partnership with We Are Family adoption peer support community we released the first series of 'Adoption Shared'. This podcast offers a range of perspectives on adoption from adoptive parents and professionals and is designed to be accessible to existing adoptive parents and those currently considering or preparing for adoption. By offering resources that provide a wide range of perspectives on adoption we hope to increase the readiness and resilience of prospective adopters as they enter the assessment process.

There have been **over 1500 downloads** of the podcast during season 1. [The Adoption Shared podcasts can be accessed by following this link](#), or in any podcast app.



This year we also supported Black Ballad, an online lifestyle community for Black women in the UK, to produce a podcast focused on Black adoption. They interviewed Adopt London adoptive parents and an adopted adult, and produced an accessible and informative podcast episode that now forms part of our resources. [You can access the episode here.](#)

11. Enquires and providing Information

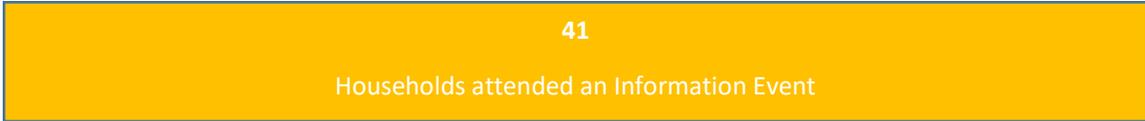
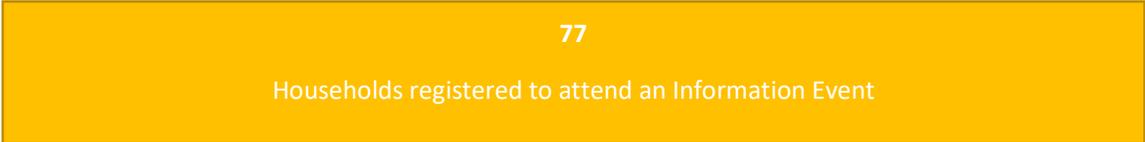


Information sessions have continued to be delivered virtually on a monthly basis and are well attended. In 2021/22 enquiry levels have remained high, with a total of 308 initial enquiries. The Adopt London website is very visible and directs prospective applicants to one of the four RAAs. The website enables applicants to book on to a Information Session.

77 households registered to attend an Information Event, however only 41 households actually attended.

'The presentation overall was very informative but also didn't overwhelm me.'
Information session feedback

'The whole event was very informative but in particular I found it very insightful to hear the express of the adoptive father.'
Information Session feedback



12. Assessment of Propsective adopters



The number of approvals has risen to 24 from 19 in 2020/21. Gradually coming out of Covid we are working with adopters with more face to face appointments during the preparation and assessment process. Going forward we will be using a hybrid approach to ensure effective use of social work time.

Table: Adoptive family approvals by year

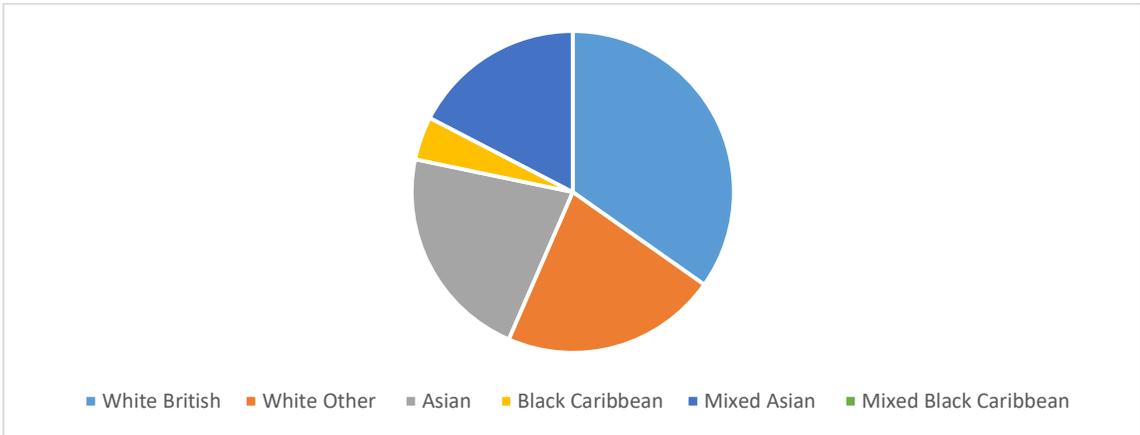
2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
18	19	24

The service modelling prior to ALE going live, gave a target to the number of approvals per year of 20 Households. The Pandemic appeared to have a major impact on people’s readiness to adopt, noted changes within applicants’ employment status, loss and bereavement, illness and mental health difficulties.

‘Being able to identify the ways that our childhood will affect the way in which we will parent even subconsciously. Having those ideas will enable me to be able to try and support our child through what will be difficult time. Looking at what we maybe did have in our childhood that we might have liked and trying to get to a point where the child feels safe and secure that no topic is off limits to talk about. Our social worker has supported us through the process and we feel prepared.’

There have been no foster carer assessments and connected people wishing to adopt children already in their care.

13. Ethnicity of Adoptive Households Approved in 2021-22





14. Number of Black families

As part of Adopt London, ALE has launched a new long-term project this year – The Black Adoption Project, in partnership with Laurelle Brown training & consultancy. The project recognises that there is a persistent gap in London between the number of Black adoptive parents and the number of Black children for whom an adoption plan is made. This gap has a significant impact on Black children, who may experience more delay before they move to live with their adoptive family, or who may remain long-term in foster care if an adoptive family cannot be identified. Whilst some adoptive parents of other ethnicities are strongly placed to adopt and support a Black child, and whilst this is right for some children, we need to have as much choice as possible in identifying the best possible adoptive family for every child.

We recognise that Black people may face more barriers to adopting and have more challenges to overcome when they become adoptive parents. We therefore need to take steps to remove obstacles and provide the support that is needed to Black adoptive parents before and after adoption, and to walk alongside and support parents of other ethnicities who have adopted Black children.

We know that many people who are not Black also face barriers to adoption, or don't receive the support they need, for a wide range of reasons. We want to address inequalities and improve our practice across all of these areas. However, the disparities that exist within Black adoption are particularly persistent and we know that we need co-ordinated focus to bring about change.

Our aim is to understand the many complex factors that impact the adoption of Black children. The project began with an analysis of the current situation across Adopt London, including a data analysis, focus groups, survey, and learning from practice examples and contexts. The initial analysis from this work will provide the basis for the project strategy for the coming year. A Steering Committee made up of those with personal and professional experience of adoption has been initiated, and stakeholder groups are being established to ensure we have input from those with a wide range of lived experience of adoption. Staff training and development are also an integral part of the plan for the project.



15. Arrangements for Permanency Planning

Each Borough is responsible for adoption planning of children and tracking the progress. ALE support the planning process by attending planning meetings for all children where the plan is likely to be adoption. Adopt London East also provide a panel adviser service for all children being presented to the Agency Decision Maker



(ADM) for an adoption decision. Allocation of a family finder takes place around the time that the adoption decision is made. Not all referrals result in a Placement Order being granted

16. Numbers of children with a plan for adoption

Table: Best Interests Decisions- data ASGLB rolling 3 year average

Agency	Total ADM Best Interests Decisions			ADM Best Interests Decisions per 10,000 people under the age of 18		
	2019/2020	2020/21	2021/22	2019/2020	2020/21	2021/22
Adopt London East	66	43	34	2.25	1.45	1.15
Newham	12	12	15	1.33	1.33	1.66
Tower Hamlets	24	16	6	3.17	2.06	0.77
Havering	5	9	8	0.82	1.46	1.29
Barking and Dagenham	25	6	5	3.17	3.00	2.59

ASGLB RAA Dashboard - Adopt London East 2021/22 Q4 - Placements and Placement Orders

Agency	Total Placements between			Total POs between		
	1-Apr-19 to 31-Mar-20	1-Apr-20 to 31-Mar-21	1-Apr-21 to 31-Mar-22	1-Apr-19 to 31-Mar-20	1-Apr-20 to 31-Mar-21	1-Apr-21 to 31-Mar-22
Adopt London East	36	46	27	49	34	18
ENGLAND	3256	3125	2867	3294	3027	2846
Barking and Dagenham	14	14	8	19	7	3
Havering	4	4	3	2	7	0
Newham	10	12	6	12	8	9
Tower Hamlets	8	16	10	16	12	6

The ASGLB data shows the reducing numbers children to be granted a placement order. This trend is across the whole of London as well as England. Provisional ASGLB 22-23 data shows that the number of placement orders look set to increase, however it is difficult to predict what the 22-23 numbers will be.

17. Family Finding

The Recruitment and Assessment and the Family Finding Teams have continued making links trying to develop the number of children being placed with Adopt London East in house adopters. If there is not an in-house link, a link with another RAA or VAA placement will be sought so that there is no delay for the child.

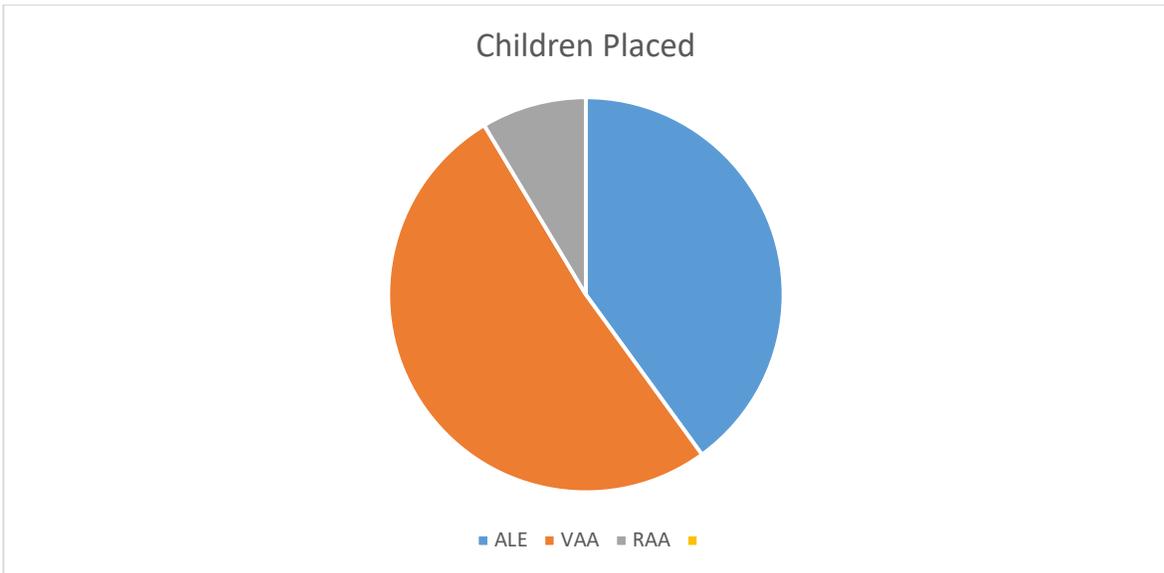


Working together as Adopt London with the four RAA's, we have access to a wider pool of adopters. We have also created a closed group on our national digital family finding platform so we have early access to approved families across London. More face to face family finding methods have been used which complement virtual meetings.

18. In House Placements

It is a priority to place as many children with our own adoptive parents as possible. We really understand the strengths and vulnerabilities of the adopters we have approved ourselves, there is clearer and faster communication between the different parties involved, and we can effectively and quickly escalate difficulties if they arise. All of these help to ensure that the match is appropriate, the right early support is in place, the transition is as careful as possible, and the child can maintain contact with their foster carer. It is also easier to provide support to children and adoptive families after placement. In order to grow our in-house placements it is important that we assess the adopters who are most likely to be matched with our children, and that we talk to them from the earliest stages about the benefits of waiting for a link internally. We know that not every adopter will be matched in-house and we support adopters who are ready to begin family finding on a wider basis. We will seek to increase the number of in-house placements used each year.

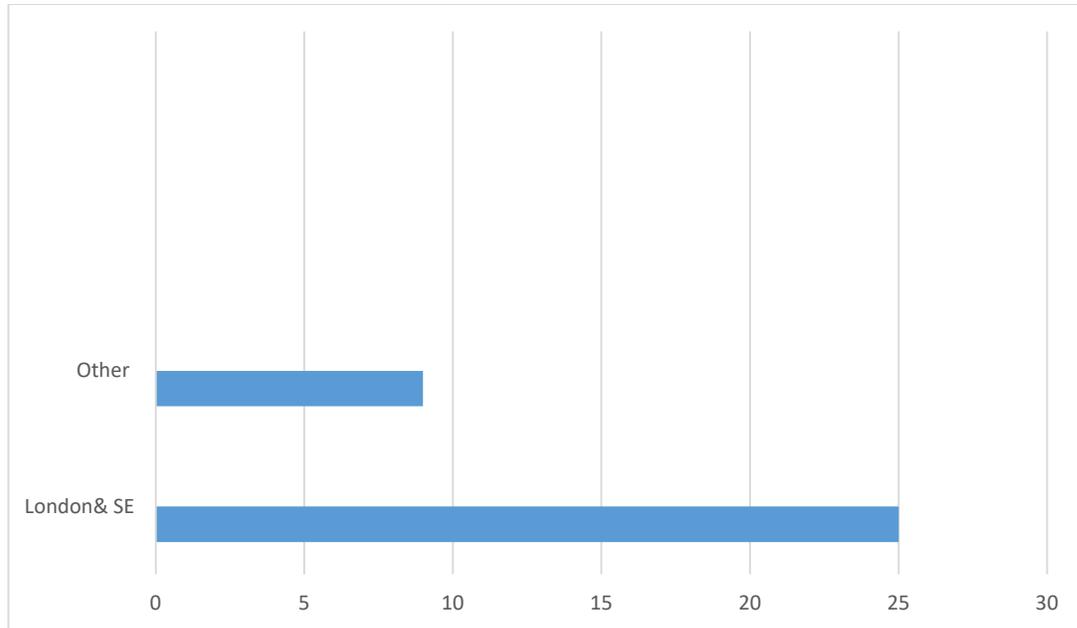
In 2021/22 a total of 35 children were placed. 51.4% were placed with Voluntary Adoption Agencies (18 children), 40% were placed in ALE In house placements (14 children), the remaining 8.6% were placed with other RAA's, Adopt London South, Adopt East, Adoption South East (3 children). Sadly, there was 1 placement breakdown of 2 siblings which was a VAA placement. There is an action plan in place to increase the number of in-house ALE placements for subsequent years.





19. Location of Placements

Where in house placements are not possible, we aim to place as many children as possible within London and the South East, this enables us to provide timely adoption support to children and families post placement. This year 73.5% were placed in London and the South East and 26.5% were placed outside of this area



20. Children awaiting for an Adoptive family

Adopt London East work closely with the children's social work teams to ensure that family finding is making good progress. Each Borough has a named family finding worker who links with the borough and regularly review family finding arrangements for each child and to ensure that a plan of adoption is an appropriate one. A regular tracking meeting is held to provide a management overview for children where any concerns can be escalated to senior managers within the borough.

The ALE Panel Adviser is part of ALE core staff and works with each ADM to support Should Be placed for Adoption (SHOPA) decisions being made.



21. Moving Children to Adoptive Families

Moving children into their adoptive families gradually became easier during 2021/22 with ending of pandemic restrictions. We have continued to establish the use of 'Moving to Adoption', the University of East Anglia's (UEA) research-based model for transitioning children to adoptive families, which emphasises an extended 'soft' getting-to-know-you period prior to the more intense main introductions, and an extended and planned goodbye period with the foster carer after moving to the adoptive home. The model is benefiting children, foster carers and adopters.



22. Placements Made

The number of placements of children declined this year:

Total number of children placed by Adopt London East

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021-22
47	29	44	35

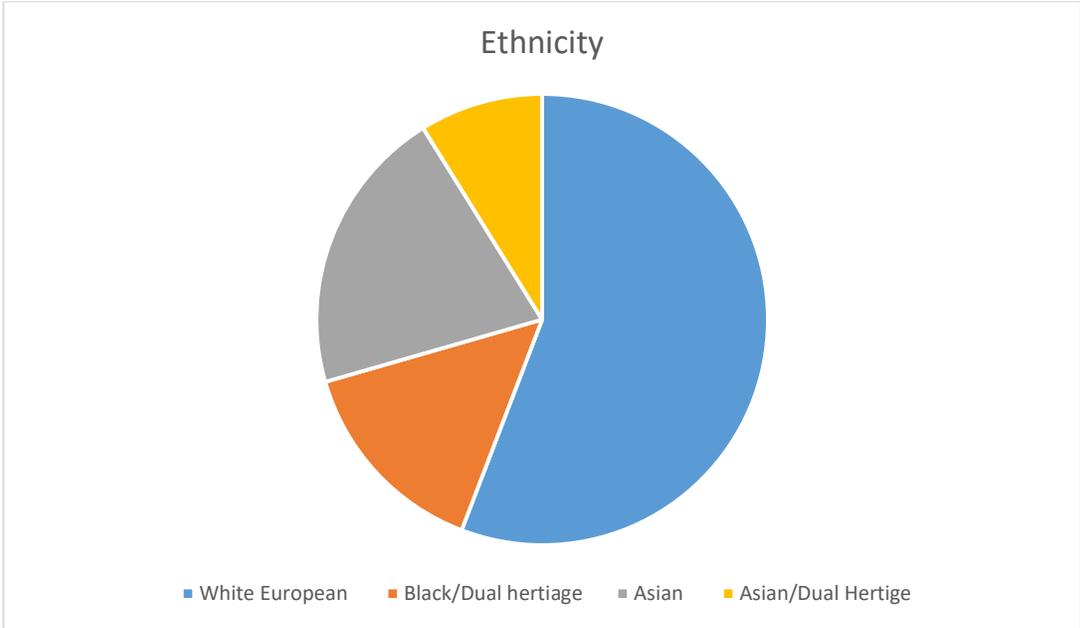
The national trend reflects that of ALE with fewer children being placed for adoption, however this is not the as low in the year 2019-20. Sadly in 21-22 one of the sibling of 2 placement disrupted shortly following placement.

Table: Children placed by borough

Borough	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Newham	5	10	14	12
Tower Hamlets	10	7	14	11
Havering	11	4	4	4
LBBB	21	8	13	8
Total	47	29	44	35

23. Characteristics of children matched

In 2021-22 4 children were placed within a sibling group, (2 sets of sibling groups of 2). We have found being part of a sibling group of 2 does not necessarily mean that the children wait longer. There are significantly fewer adopters waiting who are able to take a sibling group of more than 2 children.



The children’s ethnicities have been grouped into broader categories to demonstrate the types of adoptive placements that need to be recruited. In terms of children’s ethnicity the majority of the children were of White European, with Asian being second with Black Dual heritage being just over 14% of the children.



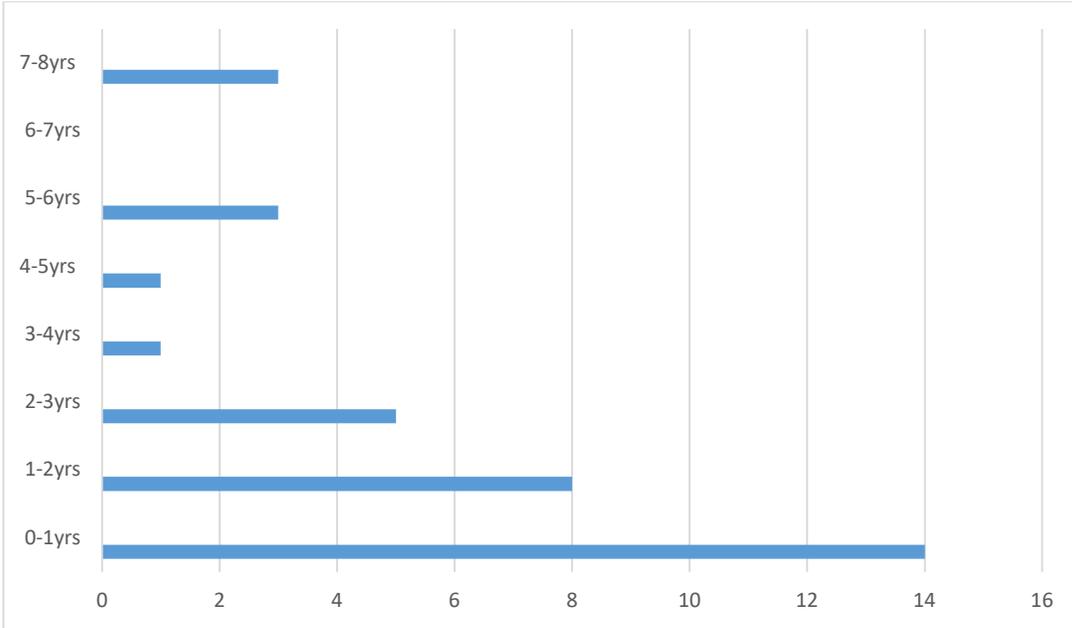


Table: Age at placement for Adoption

The majority of children placed continue to be under the age of 2 years, just under 63%. The data demonstrated that just under 20% of children are aged between 5 and 8 years, showing Local Authorities remain aspirational for the children.

There were a total of 8 children who were placed via Early Permanence this represents just under 23%, which is an increase on last year and is much higher than the ASGLB data of an average 4% for London in the 3 year average.

24. Providing Support to Adoptive Families

The Adoption Support Team provides support to adoptive families and adopted adults living within one of the boroughs, and contact support between adoptive families and birth families for all adoptive children and young people that were previously placed by one of our boroughs. Access to support is through the duty service who are also able to offer short-term support such as standalone applications to the Adoption Support Fund (ASF) and access to specialist training. Families requiring longer-term or more complex social work support are allocated to a social worker in the main team, who completes an assessment of their needs and recommendations for support. Many of the situations requiring longer-term social work support and coordination are at risk of family breakdown.

There has been an increase in demand for Adoption Support Services and the complexity of the needs is often greater. Every attempt is made to assess families



as soon as possible in order to prevent family breakdown, this has had an impact on the waiting lists for adopted adults (access to record requests) are very challenging to reduce.

Despite the pressure within the service, many families do value the support that they receive from the team and increases confidence in managing their individual family circumstances.

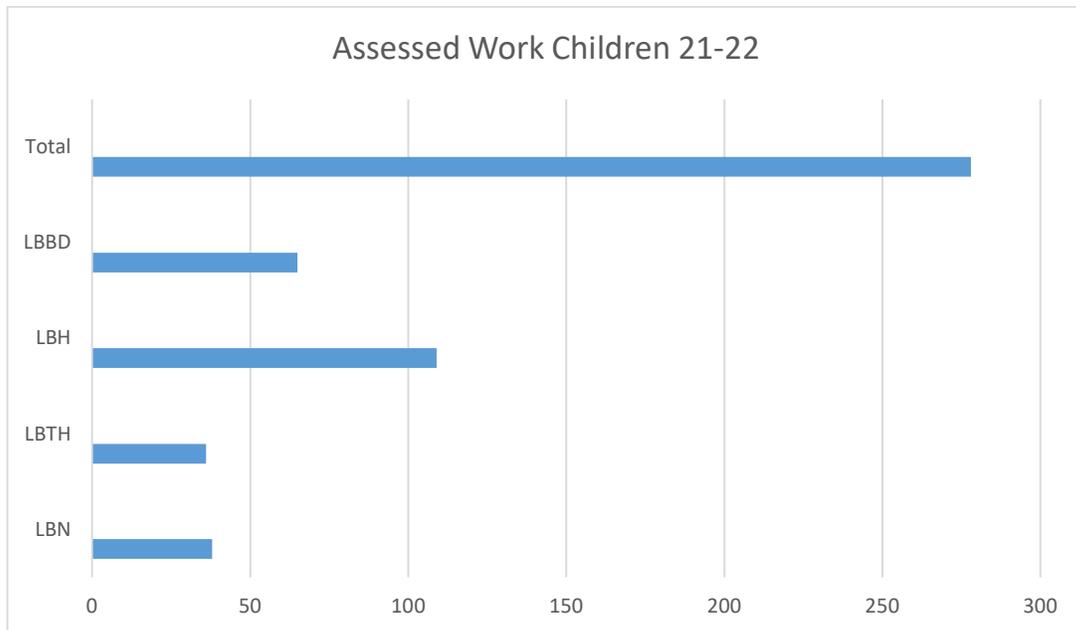
'The support that has been offered by R (social worker) has made the world of difference to our life and we are very much enjoying the time we spend together.'

(Feedback from an adoptive parent following intervention by the social worker).

'Thanks for this E (social worker) your continued support and actively being on the case is brilliant I can't tell you. I do feel like we are in safe hands which hasn't always been the case, as soon as I spoke to B in lock down I had a very good feeling about the post adoption support we would get.'

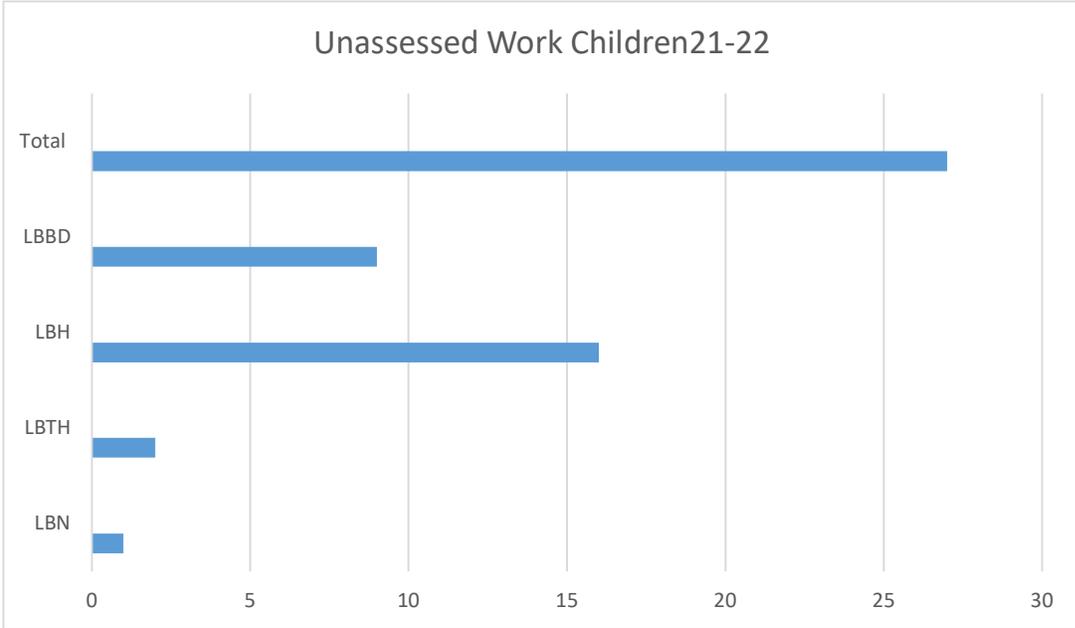
(Feedback from an Adoptive parent)

The below graphs show the breakdown of work completed in Adoption Support

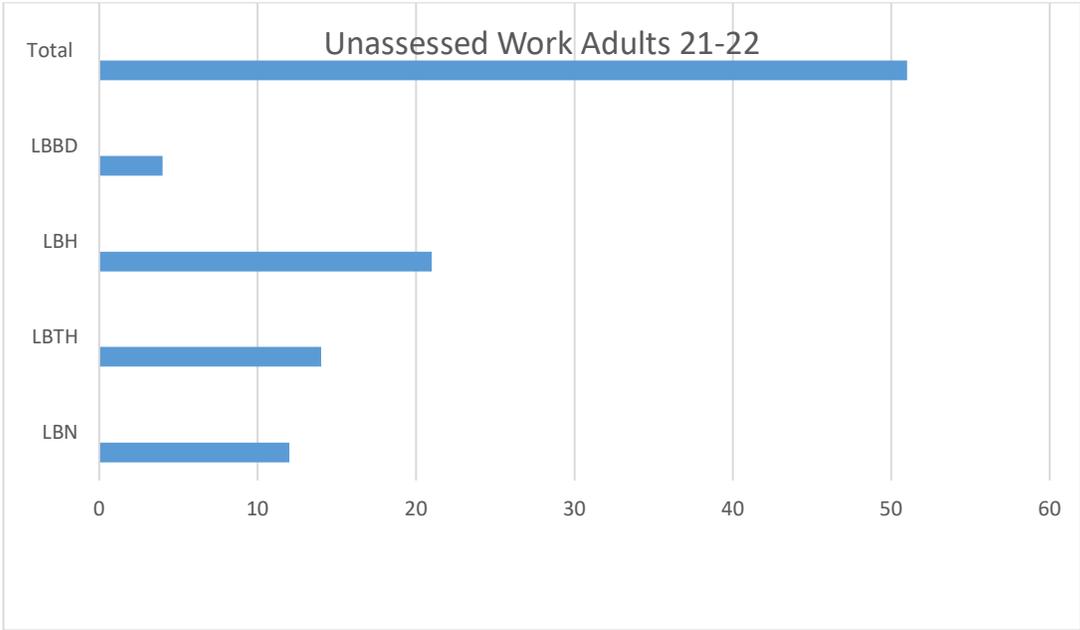
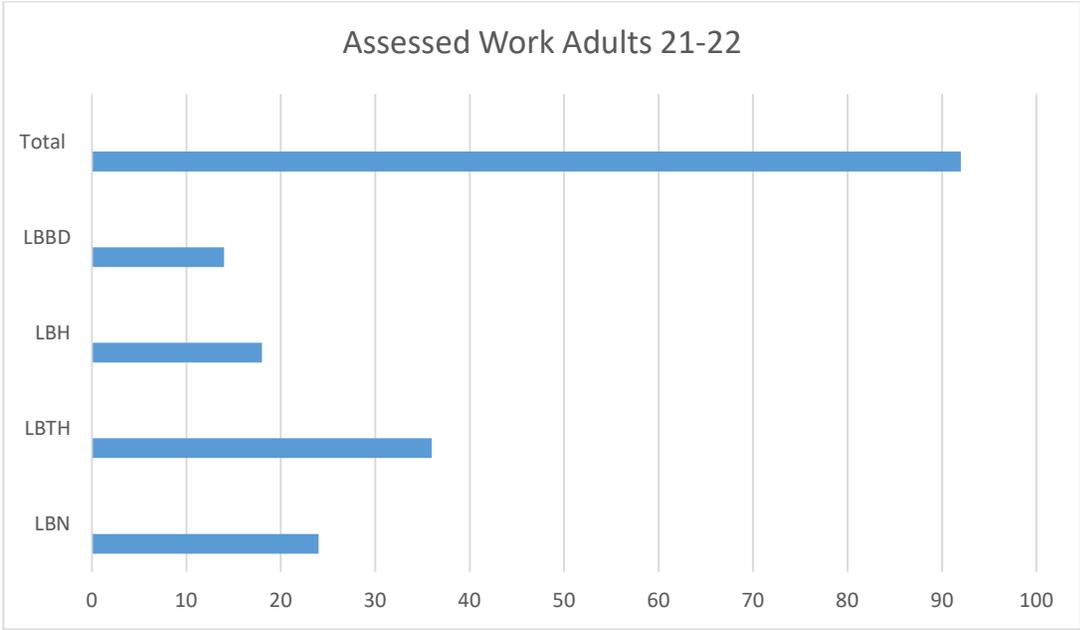




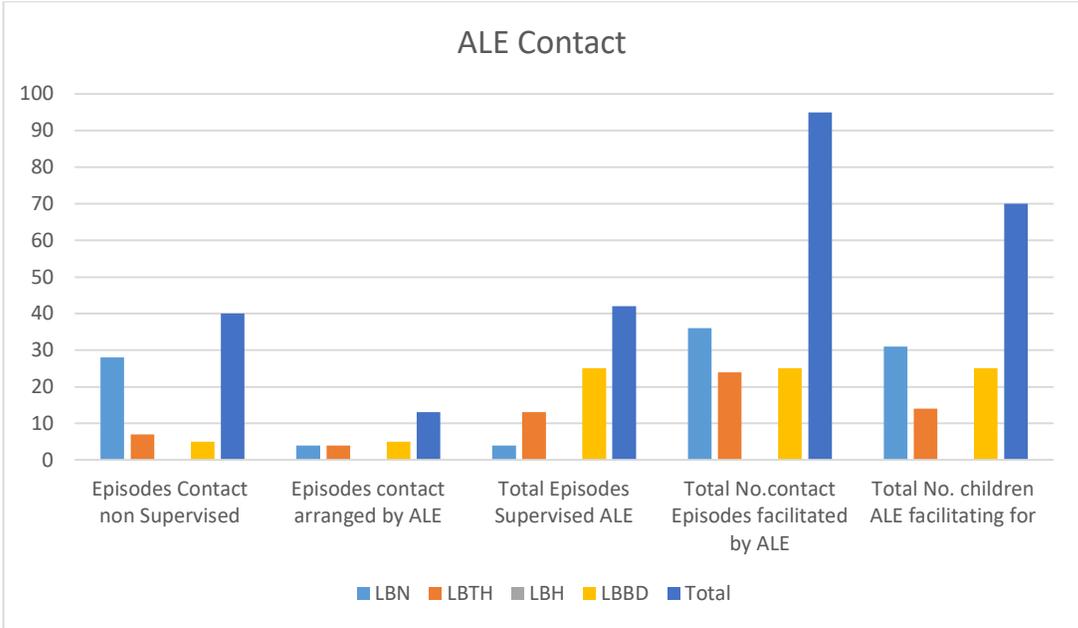
LBH still have many children living in the borough who are entitled for a service however were not previously known to the borough.



Unassessed work usually comes through to the Adoption Support via duty. All cases are subjected to an Initial Assessment. The Team Manager then makes a decision as to the outcome of the assessment. At times advice is given and case closed, other cases will await further allocation, such cases are regularly reviewed by the Team Manager and if there are any urgent issues these are picked up by a duty. Cases are allocated as soon as possible.



Once an Initial Assessment is completed the adult cases are placed on a waiting list to await allocation.



LBBB continue to have the most direct contacts facilitated by ALE. Over the past two years all the supervised contact has been reviewed and the wherever possible the supervision is stepped down.

Adoption Support Fund 21-22

Number of Applications	Total Spend	Average Spend per Application
96	£246,377.14	£2,566

Alongside individual work ALE offer other group work programmes including Birth Mothers’ Group, Birth Fathers’ Group and Adoptive Families’ Group. These groups are well attended and effective at offering support.

Demand for adoption support continues to rise. We continue to support adopters to access other support services such as those provided by We are Family and the Adopter Hub in order to ring-fence support services for those families most in need. Our duty service provides an immediate source of support for our adoptive families prior to allocation and following completion of allocated work.

Most families receiving direct support from Adopt London East have high levels of need. Adopt London East social workers work in partnership with workers from a range of organisations to support children on the edge of care and in need of safeguarding. In many



cases ALE social workers take a lead role in provision of direct support. Levels of need have increased.

Peer Support for Adoptive Parents

Through Adopt London we have continued our partnership with adopter peer support organisation We Are Family, who provide a comprehensive range of support to over 1000 adoptive parents and prospective adopters throughout London. This year We Are Family have restarted in-person local parent groups and family meet ups, as well as continuing to provide the virtual specialist support groups and specialist webinars that they introduced during the pandemic.



Recommendations for 22-23

Identifying, preparing and approving adoptive parents

- 1) Further develop the Black Adoption Project to better understand the needs of Black and mixed Black ethnicity adopters, and to improve our services to them for the long term.
- 2) Build Adopt London reach and engagement levels on social media.
- 3) Re-design stage 1 of the Adoption process for adopters and review preparation training.

Planning for Children

- 4) Increase awareness of Early Permanence in social work teams, to increase the use of EP for adoptive children.

Placing children with adoptive parents

- 5) Continue to focus on the number of children placed for adoption in Adopt London East placements.

Providing support to adoptive families and others



- 6) Increase access to support resources for everyone impacted by adoption through development of the Adopt London website.
- 7) Implement regular monitoring of Adoption Support work so that changes in demand can be reported.
- 8) Launch the ALE Adoption Support Helpline

Working as part of Adopt London

- 9) Strengthen arrangements through a legal partnership agreement for Adopt London.

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Performance

The National Adoption Insights Data (formerly known as Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board Data)

A10 – Average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive parents.

LBBDD standalone performance in 21/22 for A10 was 549 days, an increase on the 435 days in 20/21. Over a three year rolling average it was 492 days, this has decreased from the rolling average 2018-2021 where the average was 503 days. The national target for this measure is 426 days. The national England average is currently standing at 459 days.

A2 – Average time between Court Authority (i.e Placement Order) and a child being matched.

In 21/22 this was 224 days, an increase from 166 days 20/21. In terms of the three year rolling average is 218 days, and this has remained stable from 2018-21 rolling three year average. The national target for this measure is 121 and the national England average of 196.

It is evident that the pandemic has had an impact upon the timeliness, across the system. There has significantly delays within the court system, backlogs are still continuing particularly within East London Courts. Adoption matching practice has returned to pre pandemic practice.

The overall highlights of data show that the number of children being placed for adoption continues to fall. There are an increased numbers of prospective adopters within the system awaiting a match and a decreasing number of children waiting to be placed. However, there remains a cohort of priority children who take longer to be



matched. These children are mainly older, sibling groups and those with medical needs and developmental uncertainties.

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2021/22

Councillor Maureen Worby; Chair of Members Corporate Parenting Group; Lead Member for Social Care and Health Integration

Elaine Allegretti; Director of People and Resilience (Director of Children's Services)



November 2022

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Foreword

As Lead Member for Social Care and Health Integration and Chair of the Members Corporate Parenting Group, I am proud to introduce the 2021/22 annual report of Barking and Dagenham's Members Corporate Parenting Group (MCPG).

Since the last Corporate Parenting report was produced, we have moved out of COVID-19 restrictions and into recovery but are now being hit by the cost of living crisis. Barking and Dagenham is a community hit hard by the pandemic, with many structural inequalities exacerbated and we are still learning the impact of this. It is a borough with a population that is growing rapidly with the highest rates of poverty in London (and in some areas the country). We have very high levels of churn and mobility within vulnerable communities; likely to be some of the hardest hit with the cost of living crisis and looming recession.

Our improvement journey, knocked a bit off track by COVID and its aftermath, is one of whole system's improvement, on every area of practice and in a unique local context – we are working to be good in every area – partnerships, prevention, social work practice, recruitment, retention and caring for our staff and children and families, improving the lived experience and outcomes of the most vulnerable children and young people.

The work of the MCPG continues to focus on delivering the promises we have made to our children in care and care leavers. We are ambitious for children and young people and want them to lead happy, safe, and successful lives.

Our children in care council are pivotal to the work of the MCPG and that is why the MCPG changed its meeting structure last year. The business of the MCPG continues but this is once a quarter. Every meeting is now about the children and young people and hearing their experiences, voices and improvements required as well as spending time with them and taking part in fun activities together.

This annual report provides an overview of what we are doing well, our key achievements in the last year, what are our key challenges and our plans to address those challenges in 2022/23 and beyond. The report presents activity

and performance data from 2021/22 and sets out the plans for the next year ahead.

We know we still have a lot to do to improve the lives of our children and young people in care and care leavers, but with our strong and effective MCPG and as committed Corporate Parents, we are relentless in our ambition to achieve this.

Councillor Maureen Worby

Chair of the Corporate Parenting Group

1. Introduction and Background

Introduction

The concept of Corporate Parenting was first introduced in the Children Act 1989 and describes the responsibilities of the Council to provide the best possible care for our children in care and care leavers, as any good parent would do for their children.

Elected Members have a lead role in ensuring that the Council acts as an effective Corporate Parent and have high aspirations for our children and young people to improve their life chances.

Corporate Parenting has strong leadership, challenge, and accountability at every level – now young people led, improving members and leaders understanding of the experiences of being in care and a care leaver

Elected members are playing a leading role in championing the Council's aspiration for our children in care and care leavers with the Lead Member as Chair and three other elected Members. Our MCPG has good representation from Children's Social Care, Health, the Virtual School, Community Solutions including Housing, Homes and Money, Health, Commissioning, Education, as well as representatives from the Children in Care Council (Skittlz), and a Foster Carer representative.

The MCPG was very pleased with the positive feedback from the DfE follow up visit in March 2022 by Mark Riddell, the National Implementation Adviser for

Care Leavers. This confirmed the leadership and management commitment to remain ambitious and aspirational for care leavers and that our enhanced local is one of the best with a clear enhanced offer for the most complex care leavers.

The MCPG also kept its promise to getting to know our children in care and care leavers much more. All meetings are led by children and young people, for example, an outing to ten-pin bowling with children aged under 16 and a session with pizzas focusing on mental health with our care leavers. Both were fun, interactive sessions which has been regarded as extremely valuable for all.

We have finalised the internship position and will appoint a care leaver into this role, with a view to enhancing our participation work with care leavers. We also hope to secure funding for a participation lead in Care and Support this quarter in order to further develop this work as we recognise the current offer is not ambitious enough and more capacity is required.

Our priorities and plans for 2022/23 are based on the analysis of progress in this annual report, Ofsted recommendations, the DfE Care Leavers improvement visit and from what we understand about the lived experiences of children in care and care leavers.

The Promises made to our children in care and care leavers remain the focus of the MCPG to shape the Council being the best parent we can be to those we are responsible for. Progress on the Promises is outlined later in this report.

About the borough

Barking and Dagenham has become one of the fastest-changing communities in Britain. The population was estimated to be 218,900 at 2021 Census: an increase of 18% since 2011 Census - the 3rd highest growth in England and Wales. GLA projections estimate the population to increase to 264,500 people by 2030.

The age of the community is changing with the highest birth rate in London, and a large proportion of young people. Barking and Dagenham has the highest proportion of children aged under 16 in England and Wales at 26.1%. The borough becomes more diverse each year with 66% of the resident population identifying as coming from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds compared to 19% in 2001. 41.3% of Barking and Dagenham residents were born outside of the UK – 10.4 percentage points higher than 2011 Census.

Barking and Dagenham had the highest overall deprivation score in London and 17th highest in England (IMD 2019; MHCLG). The Census data 2021 shows that the borough has the fourth highest average household size at 2.96 and over 60% (3 in 5) households were deprived – the highest proportion in England and Wales.

People in the borough die earlier, have poorer health and lower levels of education and skills than across London whilst too many residents are in low paid work and struggle to find suitable homes they can afford. Unemployment remains high. Barking and Dagenham has highest percentage (12.8%) of lone parent households with dependent children in England and Wales.

An increasing number of families have and are continuing to experience the effects and impact of the pandemic and now the cost of living crisis and as a result, are displaying an increasingly higher level of need.

Our child population

Barking and Dagenham is a young borough, with around 63,509 children and young people under the age of 18 - 30% of the total population, the highest proportion in the England and Wales.

76% are from ethnic minorities and the proportion of children and young people who speak English as an additional language is more than twice the national average. This level of diversity presents its own challenges when working with families and young people, where a better understanding of cultural subtleties becomes crucial.

25% of children under 16 in the borough are living in relative low-income families, significantly above the UK average of 19%. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals in 2011/22 is 25.5% compared to 22.5% across England

Domestic abuse is a significant issue in Barking and Dagenham and impacts on all service areas - 16.5 domestic abuse offences per 1,000 people – a slight increase and still the highest in London. It accounts for 37% of violence with injury offences in the borough and is a presenting factor for at least 20% of children's social care contacts annually and around a third of social care assessments for children have domestic abuse as a presenting factor in the family.

Despite the challenging context, the Council and elected members are ambitious and aspirational in their commitment to improving the lives and outcomes of our residents and vulnerable children, young people, and families.

Our children in care and care leavers

At the end of 2021/22, the number of children in care increased to 413 compared to 391 in the previous year. This end-of-year position corresponds to a rate of 64 per 10,000 children, which remains higher than the London rates but lower than national and statistical rates. During 2021/22, the number of new children coming into care increased from 193 to 203, an increase of 5% and 181 children left care – a decrease on the 204 in the previous year.

Overall, this is positive when set against the growth in population and demand. The age profile of children in care is older than the local authority average and national average with 69% of our children in care aged 10-17 and we have a higher proportion of 16-17-year-olds in care – 26% compared to 9% in the population of the borough. White children are over-represented in Barking and Dagenham's children in care, comprising 51% of children in care at the end of 2021/22 (33% in the local under 18 population). Conversely, Black, and Asian children are under-represented, making up 17% and 12% of children in care, but 30% and 25% of the under 18 population. We have a higher proportion of males in care, with 226 (53%) males and 187 (47%) females at the end of 2021/22. Of the 413 children in care at the end of 2021/22:

- 293 (71%) lived with foster and kinship carers - up 2% on the previous year.
- 51 (12%) were in residential care. This is a decrease on the on the 2020/21 figure of 54 (14%) and the proportion is now below London and statistical neighbour averages.
- 18 children in care (4%) were placed with parents comparable with 2020/21.
- 45 (11%) were in semi-independent placements - comparable with 2020/21.
- 6 (2%) were in adoptive placements with prospective adopters at year end, lower than the previous year of 12 children (3%).
- 39% placed in the borough – no change on last year.

During 2021/22, 16 children were adopted (2 more than 2020/21), representing 9% of all children leaving care - above London and similar areas, but below the national average of 10%. . 17 children (9%) had become subject to special guardianship orders (SGOs), lower than the 2020/21 figure of 20 children (10%). We are in line with the London average, but below the national and statistical neighbour's average.

At the end of 2021/22, 312 young people 18 plus were care leavers, of which 110 were former UASC. This is a slight increase on the previous year of 310 care leavers (109 former UASC). The number of UASC aged under 18 decreased to 29 (0.04%) at the end of 2021/22 compared to 33 (0.05%) in 2020/21 and numbers remained below threshold set at 0.08% (52 children).

2. Key achievements in 2021/22

- A journey of continuous improvement and transforming services in the context of considerable challenges.
- Council leaders and Members continue to respond supportively, with considerable investment made into Children's Social Care since 2021
- Young people led Member Corporate Parenting Board going from strength to strength with honest conversations with children, young people, foster carers, and partners resulting in better understanding of lived experiences, what needs to be different and agreed actions for improvement.
- Social workers and leaders continue to be passionate about doing their best for vulnerable children and families.
- Positive staff morale, social workers report feeling well supported and cared for by their managers and leaders.
- Children in care and care leavers are supported by social workers who know them well.
- Specialist Intervention Service continues to develop interventions that reflect children, young people and community needs to help keep children in their families or return home.
- For those children in care, a strong in-house fostering service supported by the Mockingbird programme continues to keep placements stable and responding to the variety of needs of our children.
- Our work with care leavers underpinned by "no expiry date" ethos for our care and support offered, with strengthening relationships, good rates of keeping in touch, and celebration of their achievements.
- Ambitious, aspirational, and passionate Council investment to Care Leavers, an improved enhanced Local Offer, and improved outcomes
- No expiry date for young people robust, positive, and showing local ambition to improve outcome for vulnerable young people.
- Effective Virtual School - achieving good outcomes for children in care and care leavers
- Above average proportion of care leavers in education, employment and training for three years running.
- High proportion of care leavers living in suitable accommodation impact of improved housing offer and joint partnership working.

Promise 1: To make sure you get the best care

The MCPG is committed to making sure children in care and care leavers get the best care. Skittlz - our Children in Care Council – has an active but small membership and continues to help shape practice and influence decision-making through our Member’s Corporate Parenting Group (MCPG) guided by the Council’s *‘Children in Care and Care Leaver Promises.’*

Skittlz comprises of two groups: a 6 -13 and 14 - 21-year-old group. The Leaving Care team also have a cohort of young people with whom they regularly consult. The younger group has 21 members, and the older group 14.

Young people led corporate parenting board, improving members and leaders understanding of the lived experience of being in care and a care leaver; the MCPG has been revamped purposefully to ensure greater participation of children in care and care leavers. Each meeting of the MCPG is now activity and participation based led by young people with the support of participation workers. Priorities are set by young people and focus on care leaver housing, enhanced local offer, mental health, and emotional wellbeing, and lived experience. The MCPG led a social event at a local bowling alley where relationships with young people were developed in an informal fun setting, viewed positively for all. The more formal aspects of MCPG such as annual Virtual School and IRO reports and performance data are circulated separately.

In September 2021, both the older and younger groups participated in a MCPG meeting ran in the style of a ‘takeover day’. The children and young people set the agenda and led the meeting. Mental health, Enhanced Local Offer, and activities for younger children in care were key issues. Following the success of this meeting and how well everyone worked together, managers and councillors requested that every MCPG meeting throughout the year be run in this style. Therefore, the format of meetings changed, and young people attended for the full meeting and have pre-prepared questions to raise. This has enabled young people to work collaboratively with decision makers and has led to a **You Said, We Did** plan with progress against each action reported over the course of the year.

In 2021, on the return of face to face sessions, the older Skittlz group meet twice per month, increasing membership and providing young people with a more engaging environment to discuss issues and concerns as well as participating in consultations. In 2021/22 the older Skittlz group participated in a range of consultations, these included; reviewing and providing feedback about digital health passports for looked after children and young people, meeting a commissioner and volunteering to sit on a panel to agree the retendering of a contract for the Vineries, shared ideas for digital mental health resource which is being created locally for young people- the group were asked for specific content for care experienced children and young people and the group have worked with New Town Culture to suggest additional activities for their programme. A big focus has been mental health and the Enhanced Local Offer for care leavers, both discussed during group sessions and during MCPG meetings.

In 2021/22, Skittlz members have been awarded the Jack Petchey each term by project youth workers. This was set up by the virtual School and all monies so far have been used towards trips for each of the groups. Young people have been awarded for their commitment to the Skittlz project, their personal growth, developing new skills and affecting positive change locally.

One Skittlz member created social media content for use on Council Instagram account. This content addresses specific issues that care experienced children and young people will relate to, such as transition to independent living, staying motivated and dealing with emotions and poor mental health.

In 2021, Skittlz and the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum were invited to work in partnership with the East End Women’s Museum, aimed at gathering young people’s views on the museum content. Other opportunities afforded to Skittlz members includes benefits workshop to educate them about their entitlements and how to avoid financial instability, delivered by the Homes and Money Hub. Five young people also participated in a project called Bikewise educating about bike repair and maintenance providing a free bike, lock, and helmet.

During the summer 2021, work was undertaken with young people individually and in groups to explore the impact of the Black Lives Matter. Young people engaged well resulting in a programme of work being developed for foster carers, social workers and IROs to address issues of diversity, particularly where

there are issues of cross cultural, racial, and religious placements. This is ongoing in 2022/23.

In 2022/22, the IRO service continued to strive to deliver a quality service to children in care. A high percentage – 89% - of children participate before and during their care planning review meetings. Children in care reviews are also timely with 94% being held in statutory timescales in 2021/22. We have a tracking system for all reviews. IRO contribution to permanence planning for children is improving but we have lots of work to do in this area.

During 2021/22, 105 practice alerts were raised by IROs on behalf of young people. This is a slight increase on the 100 practice alerts raised in 2020/21. The key themes arising from practice alerts were drift and delay (recommendations not being acted on); reports not being prepared for statutory reviews; and visits taking place outside of timescale. Our senior IRO will present those findings and the 2021/22 IRO annual report to MCPG later this year.

Promise 2: To look after you and treat you well

Promise 2: To look after you and treat you well

We are ambitious corporate parents to all children in care and care leavers up to the age of 25 with no expiry date. In 2021, the Corporate Parenting Service reorganised and aligned three children in care teams with three care leaver teams. This has enabled the Leaving Care Advisors (LCA) to form relationships and get to know children better in preparation for allocation and joint work is undertaken with the social workers before allocation post 18 to an identified LCA. This provides flexibility for allocation so that social workers can retain responsibility for a period of time post 18 if this is in the best interests of the young person, whilst receiving support from the LCA.

The number of LCAs increased from 12 to 15 in response to the rising number of young people post 18 within the service, allowing LCAs to spend time with young people rather than increasing caseloads which impact on relationships and quality time.

The reorganisation has integrated the ethos of Corporate Parenting and a shared ownership for all children in care and care leavers, rather than the responsibility of individual teams.

Integrated working has improved with a return to dedicated office space for the service, where children and young people can drop in to see workers post COVID.

A staff Away Day was also facilitated by New Town Culture (Arts project) to facilitate sessions on how to work more creatively with young people. This developed new connections within the service after a high level of individual/home working during the COVID and was an opportunity to develop new ideas for life story work, diversity work, using creative methods to communicate with young people in a different way.

In 2021/22, the majority children in care - 82% - were visited every six weeks and almost all (97%) were seen every three months.

Care leavers are also visited regularly and keep in touch figures are high at 99% at 99% for 17-18 year olds and 97% for 19-21 year olds. We are pleased with this performance given that COVID was still very much a feature of the reporting period of 2021-22.

Pathway planning has been an area for improvement and the good news is that performance for care leavers improved to 86% at end of 2021/22, an increase of 9% on previous year. Pathway planning for children in care aged 16-17 also improved to 86% but both need to further improve as all should have a pathway plan updated. Improving compliance, consistency and the quality of pathway plans remain priority areas for the Corporate Parenting Service and MCPG. The development and roll out of the revised pathway plan should drive forward improvements as it is shorter and succinct co-produced with young people.

Stability and permanence for children and young people is a top priority and the Ofsted focused visit on permanence in May 2022 has clearly set out a set of recommendations in permanence. An improvement plan is in place and progressing well. A permanence arrangement framework is in place with a revised permanence operational protocol and a permanence tracker for all children in care and a new permanence scorecard implemented in 2022/23.

Improving picture of tracking and progressing children's permanence plans. Almost all children in care have a permanence plan recorded and this an improving picture. Improved early permanence for new-borns through work of pre-birth team and a residential oversight meeting ensures circumstances for children in these settings are better understood with improvement on driving forward their plans for leaving residential care where appropriate.

In 2021/22, most of our children in care (over 70%) continue to be placed within family settings and are living in stable homes. Most children continue to be placed less than 20 miles from their home enabling them to maintain connections with school, family, and friends – a positive outcome. Of those 22% that are placed more than 20 miles, we know that the majority are living in surrounding areas overall, for example Essex, Kent, and other London boroughs.

Nationally, sufficiency and suitability of placements is under pressure and impacting on stability and permanence. We have a well-regarded in-house fostering service striving to actively recruit new foster carers, but this remains very challenging. In 2021/22, 13 new foster carers were approved, and ongoing recruitment remains a priority. Commissioning is also exploring all options for increasing external placement providers, but again this is a national challenge. Work is underway to provide a detailed refreshed Children in Care and Care Leaver Sufficiency Plan due to the challenging national context.

Barking and Dagenham has embraced the Mockingbird Programme to support children and carers using an extended family support model. This is a key achievement stabilising fragile placements due to the extensive support Mockingbird offers. At the end of March 2022, there were five constellations all supporting approximately ten families each with the aim of all foster families being part of a constellation in the longer term.

These initiatives are increasingly important as although long term placement stability is strong and improving to 70% at end of 2021/22 (above all comparators), short term placement stability – the proportion of children in care having three plus placements increased to 13% (comparators 10-11%). This is a complex picture linked to the availability of foster carers as well as challenging adolescents, children with complex needs who are more at risk of placement breakdown.

We have also increased investment in good edge-of-care services to ensure, where possible, children can remain at home with their families. The Specialist Intervention service offers a range of existing edge of care services such as Family Group Conferencing, Restorative Intervention, Family Support, Therapy, Family Contact, Lasting Links, Group work and the Volunteer Offer.

Since 2020, we have seen an increase in the demand for residential placements, due to the level and complexity of need of children coming into care. In 2021/22, 51 (12%) were in residential care and this is a slight decrease on the 2020/21 figure of 54 (14%) but still higher than 2019/20 at 34 (9%). Our proportion remains below London and statistical neighbour averages.

The number of children coming into care via police protection slightly decreased in 2021/22 to 19% (38 children) but we are now above London, similar areas, and England. We track and report numbers of children entering care on police protection weekly and audit all children subject to police protection. Findings and recommendations are reported to senior leadership, the Children's Improvement Board and MCPG.

All unaccompanied asylum-seeking children enter the Corporate Parenting service to ensure expertise is utilised and we continue to provide a timely and effective service placing them in independent accommodation or foster care according to their assessed needs. The number and proportion of UASC placed in semi-independent accommodation was 45 (11%) comparable with 2020/21 but lower than 2019/20 at 62 (15%) at end of 2019/20. This is still high compared to London, similar areas, and national averages.

Our vulnerable children in care at risk of abuse, exploitation and going missing are reviewed regularly at MASE (Missing and Sexual Exploitation) and CEG (Criminal exploitation Group), both of which are informed by the monthly pre MASE/CEG operational group. We continue to monitor missing children through the effective monthly multi-agency missing children operational panel (MCOP) which reports directly into the strategic groups. This Panel has been further strengthened and now also considers our top reporting 16+ accommodation providers to ensure compliance with the Philomena Protocol on a quarterly basis.

An area for improvement previously set out by Ofsted was to ensure that for

children in care who go missing or who are vulnerable to exploitation, return home interviews are routinely completed. Missing coordinators are persistent and consistent in offering quality RHIs to children in care, improving understanding of risks and reasons for the missing episode. The take up and timeliness of the return home interviews has subsequently improved with a richer set of data.

A daily missing children report is circulated to the DCS and other safeguarding partners and includes children placed in LBBB by other authorities who have been reported missing to police. We also monitor the completion of the return home interviews to ensure we have met with children and or their parents and carers to check on welfare but also identify the reasons why they are going missing as well as potential indicators of exploitation. The themes and issues identified in these reports also inform the MASE and CEG. An area for continued focus is to ensure that the data captured in the interviews with children and their parents/carers is fully considered in the ongoing work and safety planning for the child.

Barking and Dagenham continues to be part of Adopt London East (ALE) - the Regional Adoption Agency also covering Havering, Tower Hamlets, and Newham. During 2021/22, 16 children achieved permanence through adoption compared to 14 in 2020/21. This represented 9% of all children leaving care (compared to 7% in the previous year) - above London and similar areas but below the national average. The proportion of children leaving care on a SGO decreased from 20 (10%) in 2020/21 to 17 (9%) in 2021/22. We are in line with the London average, but below the national and similar areas.

The latest published DfE adoption scorecard covering 2019-22 demonstrates continued improvement. The average time between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family was 492 days – a decrease on the 503 days for 2018- 2021. However, this remains above the ambitious DfE threshold of 426 days, but we are closing the gap. The average time between court authority for adoption and a match with their adoptive family was 218 days – no change on the 218 days reported for 2018-2021. This is above the DfE threshold of 121 but again we are closing the gap.

Performance on adoption and timeliness is gradually improving, but we are adopting fewer children overall. The East London Court is granting less

Placement Orders, especially for older children, who we have successfully placed in the past, impacting on adoption.

A further issue is the lack of clarity that has occurred within care proceedings about the use of Early Permanence placements and whether or not we need court permission to place in such arrangements. This has now been clarified that we do not need permission to make such arrangements as the prospective adopters are in the role of foster carers until the granting of a placement order and are aware of the risks of a child returning to birth family. More early permanence placements would have a positive impact on scorecard performance. All local authorities in ALE have experienced the above issues and this has been raised with the lead Judge in East London Court.

We have worked hard to improve oversight and quality of placement with parents' arrangements, and this is ongoing. At end of March 2021/22, there were 18 children placed with parents compared to 14 in 2020/21. The number of children privately fostered is low in the borough at seven children but those that are, are assessed in a timely way, visited regularly, and are living in suitable care arrangements.

Promise 3: To keep you healthy

Strategic oversight and leadership to improve health outcomes for children in care improving but still much to do.

The multi-agency LAC health sub-group chaired by the CCG and the health focused Zoning Meeting reports into the MCPG on performance health for children in care and care leavers.

Performance with Initial Health Assessments (IHA) in 2021/22 was 43% and remains a challenge for a variety of reasons – delays in providing Health completed paperwork within 5 days of coming into care, plus Health having enough clinic slots to meet demand on a monthly basis when the number of children entering care peaks above average. Infection with COVID has also impacted with many appointments for assessments being cancelled at late

notice or on the day. These issues continue to be a challenge and are a priority for 2022/23 with high visibility in the LAC Health Sub-Group.

Performance with Review Health Assessments (RHA) in 2021/22 was 92%, which was better than the previous year as dental checks were significantly impacted upon by COVID. Performance on dental checks has started to recover from COVID-19 increasing to 60% at end of 2021/22. Eye checks for all children in care has remained stable at an average of 66% - up on end of year by 2%. However, this requires improvement as a much higher proportion of children in care should have an up to date eye check.

The majority of children in care for one year or more had an up to date medical at 84% in 2021/22.

As part of health assessments, emotional issues are identified, and emotional wellbeing is monitored as part of the annual health check process. A very high proportion (87%) of children in care return a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), and the results of those SDQ scores show good performance. SDQ scores reduced from 11.6 to 10.0 (the lower the better) and remain below London, similar areas, and England.

In 2020/21, we set up SDQ scoring on Liquid Logic for all children in care aged four or over. At the end of the year, a high proportion had an SDQ recorded in the last 12 months with a lower SDQ score of 9.7. This means that changes in emotional health over time will also be more clearly tracked and appropriate provisions to support emotional wellbeing will be identified as part of the health assessment process.

Hot Clinics provided by CAMHS ensure children in care and foster carers receive the appropriate help and support, and during the pandemic, this was critical in preventing placement breakdowns.

A dedicated CAMHS looked after children social worker works directly with a small number of children to ensure their needs are addressed within local CAMHS services, liaising with services out of borough when necessary. This worker also offers support to foster carers through training sessions as well as

consultations on an individual basis. In January 2022 CAMHS practitioners were invited to join Skittlz at MCPG meeting to open a conversation about how best to support looked after children. A number of gaps were identified, and these are now tracked at the LAC health subgroup and progress fed back to Skittlz members on a bi-monthly basis.

In November 2021, the Healthy Smiles Pilot (NHSEI) was launched in North Central and East London to increase children in care and care leavers' access to dental treatment in recognition of the impact of Covid on accessing dentists. The initiative did assist some young people in accessing dental treatment, who might otherwise have not had a check-up or treatment.

One issue in particular that impacts on both IHAs and RHAs is the lack of suitable interpreters for specific languages for some UASC. Whilst the majority of languages can be accommodated for appointments, there have been a number of occasions when we cannot locate a certain language or dialect which impacts on the timeliness of the appointment taking place.

In order to provide a better health service to UASC across the North East London footprint, Newham Looked after Children health team has developed a bid to be considered by Barts Charity, to provide services across this area for new UASC, but no decision has yet been made re the outcome of the final stage of the bid. It is proposed to have a trauma informed integrated pathway adapted to local requirements. This includes longer assessments with CAMHS specialist clinicians and a health improvement practitioner, delivery of workshops for UASC around their common concerns, and multidisciplinary meetings to follow-up and review needs. It also includes universal infectious diseases screening and intensive mental health support.

The LAC Health Sub Group meets on a monthly basis and addresses areas of concerning performance and Ofsted improvement plans relating to health. It has a wide representation from the ICB, NELFT, CAMHS and the Local Authority, and requests attendance of specific professionals when addressing particular topics e.g., sexual health.

Improving health for care leavers update

Progress has been made locally in North East London area regarding the offer of free prescriptions for Care Leavers and has been agreed. LBBD will be involved in the pilot in 22-23 as to how this will be rolled out in practice to young people.

The senior LAC nurse has been working with Skittlz to devise the best offer for Care Leavers for accessing their health information (previously Health Passport) post 18. The NHS App contains all relevant information, and a LAC nurse will meet with young people around the age of 18 to show them how to use the App and to answer any questions. However, some young people would like a hard copy of their information and this work is ongoing with Skittlz as to how all young people can access the information now and in the future in a format that works for them. The NELFT LAC team are in the early stages of designing a QR code to support care leavers in accessing health information.

We are very proud of the appointment of our Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Worker for Care Leavers as this is a coveted post by many Leaving Care Services across the country. Having secured ongoing funding from the CCG to maintain this post means that it can be fully integrated into the Corporate Parenting Service with no concerns about funding ceasing for the near future. We are already seeing an impact for individual young people who are attending sessions and we will be evaluating the themes emerging from this work in 2023/24 to inform the development of this work and how other professionals can contribute more meaningfully to the emotional wellbeing of children and young people at an earlier stage.

In recognition of the positive impact of physical activity/sport on emotional wellbeing, one LCA has led on a boxing initiative for Care Leavers. She linked up with a local gym and set up a male and a female boxing group that offered 10 sessions per group. The feedback was very positive from young people who enjoyed the activity, but also enjoyed meeting other young people after a time of isolation during Covid. One young man who was experiencing mental health issues and very isolated has progressed so well, that he will be undertaking his first formal fight in the near future.

Promise 4: To get the best education

Effective Virtual School - supporting other professionals

The Aspire Virtual School (AVS) continues to be strong, providing an effective service. It has recently grown, with an identified KS4-KS5 transition lead, an interim Assistant Headteacher to lead on the extended role of the Virtual School and an interim Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities coordinator (SENDco)

Building on good practice, the AVS continues to hold virtual Designated Teacher (DT) network meetings, enabling out of borough colleagues to attend and hear first-hand the Virtual School's offer of support. As a result, contact with out of borough colleagues continues to increase considerably. The AVS staff cannot be at every PEP meeting so it is important that our DTs are the best that they can be to support our students in school, so it is vital that they attend this training. We have also purchased licences from a company called AC Education <https://www.ac-education.co.uk/>, who provide excellent online courses for both school and social care professionals.

We run training for our foster carers. This year we are focussing on emotion coaching and the foster carer's role in the PEP meeting. We are hoping that we can go back to 'live' training this year, rather than 'Teams' as we like our training to be as interactive as possible.

One of our core functions is to ensure our students are placed in the most appropriate schools, attending every day, and making a good level of progress. We do this by having a new to care advisory teacher, who contacts the social worker straight away to make sure that the first Personal Education Plan (PEP) meeting happens within timescales. This allows us to quickly identify where a student needs a new school place and support social care colleagues with the application. Occasionally, our students are not in school for a period of time, due to a variety of circumstances and then we commission tuition for them as a short term stop gap. Where a student has an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), (around 25% of our students), we support the EHC team to place the young person in school as the AVS is unable to do this.

The AVS continues to attend fortnightly 'high needs' meetings with the inclusion, EHC, Social care, Health, Educational Psychology teams and the Commissioning Director Education to ensure our most vulnerable students are supported. This meeting ensures that students are placed in the most appropriate provision and help is available to prevent education placement breakdown.

Aspirational Virtual School – supporting our young people

We commission tuition for students not in education, for example those who had a placement move. This is delivered either face to face or virtually, depending on the preference of the student. This is usually a short-term option whilst a school place is being applied for. We use a number of different agencies who provide qualified teachers quickly when we need them. This sometimes continues for a short period to support the student's transition to a new school.

The AVS commissioned Third Space Learning, an online maths intervention, to work with all of our year 6 students to support their preparation for KS2 SATs. This intervention was received very well by teaching staff and students alike. One student commented:

'I found it very good and useful. I like the tutor he's very kind. It helps me a lot. It makes my maths easier. I can understand more. It's helps as gives me more help and makes work in class easier. He's a kind person and really helps me a lot so I feel better about maths and more comfortable with maths'

We also continue to build in additional careers interviews for year 10 and 11, where necessary, to support KS5 choices. We do this for both students placed in and out of borough.

The AVS Awards have been created to inspire our young people, with the winners receiving a trophy or medal, a gift card, and a certificate. A new award has been created, in memory of Deb Wiltshire, a colleague from the EHC who sadly died of COVID in January 2021. The Deb Wiltshire Award is awarded to 'a student with SEND who has accessed their education and made full use of the opportunities offered to them.' We are hoping to be part of the CIC awards this year to give them out personally.

The Virtual School continues to work successfully with The Transformed You mentoring service – who provide a bespoke for Looked after Children. In

addition, we have used PP+ funding to commission mentoring services out of borough, bespoke support with behaviour management for schools, counselling for young people in crisis (where CAMHs referrals were taking a while), play therapy, art therapy and top up tuition, where there is an identified need.

The **Aspire Higher** Programme continues to be developed alongside our **University Alumni**. The Aspire Higher Programme is organised in collaboration with local universities and the Careers Team in the council for an identified group of young people from Year 4 to Year 13. We now have 43 students identified on the Aspire Higher Programme. Different events have been organised for the different year groups to ensure that they are inspired to focus on higher education and subsequently supported to achieve this goal. We now have a former LBBB care leaver running these two projects on our behalf.

We ran our first residential trip for 12 students to the Trewern Outdoor Activities Centre in Wales. This trip aimed to build independence and social skills. Students engaged in various activities including caving, gorge walking, swimming in the open river, mountain climbing and archery. The Virtual School ensured that the trip was accessible to our children with additional needs, and a communicator was arranged for the child with a hearing impairment. Four members of the Virtual School accompanied the young people on the trip.

Students gave us the following feedback:

"I enjoyed making new friends, and I was very proud of myself for caving as I was scared of heights but did the challenges."

This weekend was good. I made new friends, tried new things, and went on the water slide"

"This weekend I had an amazing time we went gorge walking, the food was great, we went underneath the waterfalls. I had the most amazing time I could have had"

Strong Virtual School - achieving good outcomes

The Aspire Virtual School continues to demonstrate robust outcomes in terms of attainment, attendance, exclusions, PEP quality and timeliness. Most children in

care make good progress and attainment for our children in care remains above national children in care average. The most recent data shows that we remain below the national average for all for unauthorised and overall absence and for fixed term exclusions. Most of our children in care are in good or outstanding schools, and where they aren't the AVS monitors their progress very closely.

There is no validated data at KS1 or KS2 for 2021. At KS4 in 2021, 30.8% of children in care achieved 9-4 pass in English and maths compared to the national average of 28.8%. KS4 Average Progress 8 score is in the A quartile and also above national average.

The AVS has worked hard with social care colleagues, to improve the Personal Education Plan (PEP) completion rate and in 21/22, 89% of children in care had an up-to-date PEP compared to 86% in 20/21. The quality of PEPs has also improved and during the recent OFSTED focused assurance visit we received positive feedback from the HMI who commented on the 'love and care' shown in the PEPs sampled.

The AVS **Management Committee** provides an extra layer of challenge and support to the Virtual School. It is comprised of an Independent Chair, 7 members and a clerk to record minutes. We have termly meetings, and it is now in its 3rd academic year. Members of the committee decide the agenda and what they want to focus on.

Promise 5: To be successful in life

Ambitious, aspirational, and passionate Council investment to Care Leavers, an improved enhanced Local Offer, and improved outcomes

Our ambition, investment and progress were confirmed by the follow up DfE visit in March 2022 by Mark Riddell, the National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers. The visit and feedback endorsed our rapid improvement and progress to have a better offer for care leavers across the whole service area. It also confirmed the strengthened leadership in this area and the significant progress we have made in our approach to Corporate Parenting, our enhanced local offer and the extended duties that apply to care leavers up to 25 years.

As corporate parents we are proud with the feedback from the National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers stating that our Enhanced Local Offer *"is really good and is one of the best I have seen in the country as it has a clear enhanced offer for your most complex care leavers. The approach of 'no expiry date' is a clear indication that you will always be there for care leavers post 25yrs which is an exceptional approach"*.

Following on from the DfE lead recommendations, the Leaving Care Service now has a dedicated Housing Officer and an Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Worker – two key posts to support young people to be successful into their adulthood. The recruitment of the Emotional Wellbeing Worker is a key achievement offering individual support, group work and consultation with social workers and Leaving Care Advisors on emotional health and wellbeing.

New Town Culture has been a key partner over the year in providing children in care and care leavers (including UASC) with creative opportunities to develop their confidence and interests. They have provided a range of groups and activities for these young people, but they have also been able to join other groups if they wish to e.g., LGBTQ+ group. The range of clubs includes Sound Club, Drama Club, Dance Club, Gardening Club, Banner Making and four groups throughout the year that include foster carers and their foster and birth children, to enable the whole fostering family to participate in activities.

Our housing offer to care leavers is good given the challenges with supply and demand in the borough. Suitable accommodation for care leavers, therefore, has improved further despite the pressure of the pandemic and the supply challenges faced in the borough. At the end of 2021/22, 85% of care leavers were living in suitable accommodation, down by 3% on 2020/21. Performance however remains above the London, similar areas, and England averages of 81% and 83% respectively.

We have further strengthened housing offer to care leavers ensuring a range of options of good quality are available. This is an evolving offer as more options are developed for example access to Reside properties, refurbishments of properties via Homes for Humanity. Whilst the majority of care leavers would like to have their own social housing flat, this is not always possible, and work continues to explain these limitations and to promote high quality alternatives.

The Vulnerable Housing Panel continues to improve housing options for care leavers with dedicated staff to support young people paying their rent and preventing evictions.

Care leavers continue to be supported in a range of semi-independent provision secured through commissioned framework, and includes shared houses rented from the private sector with bespoke support packages if required. This framework ensures an appropriate service that delivers excellent outcomes for young people and ensures consistency in the quality of accommodation.

2020 and 2021 has been an exceptionally difficult year for young people due to the pandemic. So as corporate parents, we were pleased that for the third consecutive year running, over 60% of care leavers were in education, employment, or training, above London, similar areas, and England averages by 8% and 12% respectively. Our 2021/22 performance was 62% - an increase of 2% on our 2020/21 performance of 60%. This is testament to senior leaders and managers across the Council and partnership working hard to support and improve young people's education, employment, and training outcomes through internships, in-house apprenticeships, and traineeships.

The Aspire Virtual School is committed to supporting the achievement and progress of our care leavers. We have recently created a dedicated role to support all 16+ with an EHCP who is supported by our new interim SENDco. In addition to this, a new post is now in place which is the Key Stage 4 to Key Stage 5 transition lead, focused on ensuring that our care leavers do not become NEET. She is working with the Deputy Headteacher on the early identification of care leavers struggling in education and exploring options such as apprenticeships, employment, and internships. She has started working closely with our Social Care colleagues and attending meetings like NEET Panel and the Care Transition Panel.

This year 8 students progressed to University, which is 50% increase from 4 young people who progressed to University in 2021.

Aspire Virtual School is keen to increase the number of care leavers who progress to university. To address this, the Aspire Virtual School is using "an early inspiration strategy." An Aspire Higher and Alumni Project Lead has been appointed who is a previous care leaver. She is working on creating an alumni

network of care leavers currently or previously at university, to inspire younger looked after children with a focus on 16+. The alumni network would serve as both an informal mentoring, support group and social gathering for care leavers previously or currently at university.

We have extended the Independent Visitors (IV) offer to include care leavers and currently three Members have been mentoring three of our young people, offering them inspiration, guidance, and support. Our under 18 IV programme continues to expand and fully meet rising demand, with 19 current long term matches compared to 14 a year ago. Of those three children in care that are currently on the waiting list for an IV, none have been on the waiting list for more than 3 months and we have not gone above three at any point in the past year. Becoming an IV forms part of the Council's formal volunteering offer for staff, strengthening our corporate parenting approach. Independent visiting for care leavers has continued for one care leaver in particular with a long standing supportive relationship having developed.

We have high aspirations for our care leavers, and they are involved in their services and their achievements are celebrated. We ensure that the Local Offer to care leavers is available to all eligible young people in various formats. A text messaging service to keep young people updated on events, jobs and opportunities will be launched in 2022-23.

We usually celebrate our children's achievements at an annual awards ceremony but last year, due to the pandemic, workers visited young people to deliver trophies, certificates and took pictures to mark the occasion. Post COVID-19, we are planning a face to face celebration event with care leavers in January 2023 and in the summer for children in care.

Our headline plans for the next 12 months – 2022/23

Continue to implement and monitor progress against the DfE Care Leavers Improvement plan.

All Elected Members to continue to be ambitious and passionate corporate parents.

Elected Members to continue to hold all partners to account and champion the needs of our care leavers, unlocking the full potential that the council, voluntary services, and businesses offer to improve the lives of our carer leavers. This includes signing up to the Care leaves Covenant and the whole Council celebrating National Care Leavers week.

Refresh the Corporate Parenting Strategy by the end of the year.

Consult and ensure greater participation with a larger cohort of children in care and care leavers, including those placed further away. This is a top priority for the year ahead .

Further improve the offer and take-up of return home interviews to children in care who go missing, so that information is gathered and used to minimise risk and to inform safety planning (Ofsted recommendation).

Improve the quality and impact of services to support care leavers and to help them to prepare for adulthood, with a specific focus on their emotional and physical health and well-being (Ofsted recommendation).

Further strengthen participation in children in care reviews.

Maintain or further improve performance on placement stability. Working with wider London partners to address sufficiency of placements.

Ongoing focus on edge of care work and rehabilitation home to ensure the right children are in care.

A continued focus on unregulated 16+ placements; maintain fostering post 16 when placements can become fragile and increase foster care options for UASC.

Management oversight and improved supervision to consistently drive case direction – supporting more timely permanence arrangement being achieved for children.

Implement permanence improvement plan and address all Ofsted Permanence Focused Visit recommendations

Maintain positive outcomes for Care Leavers in Employment, Education and Training.

Continue to ensure the housing offer to care leavers and the support they need to manage independent living.

Extend the use of mentors/independent visitors for care leavers who have no or limited contact with family.

Improve Initial Health Assessment timeliness and quality.

Improved focus on children coming into care via Police protection.

Improve quality of life story work.

Improve the quality of pathway plans for care leavers.

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ASSEMBLY**17 May 2023**

Title: Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-2026	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Enforcement and Community Safety	
Open Report	For Decision
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: Yes
Report Author: Chris Lyons, Community Safety Partnership Manager	Contact Details: E-mail: chris.lyons@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Gary Jones, Operational Director Enforcement and Community Safety	
Accountable Executive Team Director: Alison Stuart, Chief Legal Officer	
<p>Summary</p> <p>This paper provides an overview of the recent work to create the Community Safety Partnership Plan (CSPP) 2023-26 at Appendix 1.</p> <p>The CSPP 2023-26 retains the existing crime and disorder priorities of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority 1 - Keeping children and young people safe. Priority 2 - Tackling safety in the neighbourhood & community. Priority 3 - Reducing offending. Priority 4 - Standing up to hate, intolerance and extremism. Priority 5 - Tackling violence against women and girls. <p>The activities defined within the Community Safety Partnership Plan will influence crime and disorder levels in the borough. The Community Safety Partnership Board and its subgroups will be responsible for ensuring that progress against the plan is maintained and regularly reviewed.</p> <p>The Cabinet considered and endorsed the CSPP at its meeting on 18 April 2023.</p>	
<p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>The Assembly is recommended to approve the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-26, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.</p>	
<p>Reason(s)</p> <p>The CSPP is linked to Council priorities “Prevention, Independence and Resilience” and “Participation and Engagement” as well as linking to theme 8 of the Borough Manifesto: Crime and Safety.</p>	

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Community Safety Partnership Plan (CSPP) represents a significant commitment by partners including the Council, Police, Fire, Probation and Health authorities as well as local voluntary groups to working together to improve the lives of our residents.
- 1.2 Every three years the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Board is required to develop an overarching Community Safety Partnership Plan under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The plan provides an overview of the work and priority areas that fall under the responsibility of the CSP.
- 1.3 The CSPP incorporates local data, an insight on the roles and responsibilities of the board and its subgroup structure and how the Council will work in partnership to address local community safety priorities. The plan is published on the Council website to keep residents informed on the progress of the CSP in reducing crime and disorder.
- 1.4 Within the three-year plan cycle, annual reviews of the CSPP are conducted through the CSP and its subgroups to ensure that the governance structure of the CSP and its responsibilities remain valid and any new workstreams are reflected in the plan.

2. Proposal and Issues

- 2.1 In advance of the CSPP 2023-26 being written, a full Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment (CDSA) is undertaken by the Council's Community Safety Analyst to understand trends and patterns in crime and disorder locally and to support priority setting. The CDSA took place between July and October 2022, and the learning from this year's assessment is set out below:
- 2.2 In Barking and Dagenham in 2021/22 all major crime types had exceeded pre-Covid 19 levels, except for the following offence types:
 - Burglary offences
 - Robbery offences
 - Theft offences
 - Vehicle offences
- 2.3 In 2021/22 there was a total of 20,560 offences reported to and recorded by the Police, which is an increase of 1,931 offences (+10.4%) on the 18,629 offences reported in 2020/21.
- 2.4 The majority of the additional 1,931 offences reported were seen in:
 - Violence Against the Person Offences which accounted for 724 (37.5%) of the additional 1,931 offences. Most of these were in the Violence Without Injury (VWOI) minor offence type, accounting for 27.5% of the overall increase in offences reported. This will be mainly due to ongoing improvements in the recording of offences by the Police.
 - Theft offences which accounted for 399 (20.7%) of the additional 1,931 offences. Ongoing improvements in recording of offences by the Police will be

contributing to these increases but figures were still lower than pre Covid 19 levels.

- Public Order offences which accounted for 242 (12.5%) of the additional 1,931 offences. This is likely to reflect ongoing improvements in the recording of offences by the Police.
- Vehicle offences which accounted for 234 (12.1%) of the 1,931 additional offences. These are thought to be well reported and recorded by the Police and reflect a genuine increase in crime but still lower than pre-Covid 19 levels.
- Arson and Criminal Damage offences which accounted for 220 (11.4%) of the additional offences reported. The majority of which is criminal damage which can be affected by ongoing improvements in the recording of offences by the Police.

2.5 Based on this year's assessment of offence volume, cost and estimated harm, the recommendation is for the existing priority crime and disorder types to remain priorities. This includes:

Priority 1 – Keeping children and young people safe.

Priority 2 - Tackling safety in the neighbourhood & community.

Priority 3 - Reducing offending.

Priority 4 - Standing up to hate, intolerance and extremism.

Priority 5 - Tackling violence against women and girls.

2.6 With the data and insights gathered through the CDSA process, the Community Safety Partnership Team moved forward with drafting the CSPP 2023-26 for further consultation and engagement. The re-write of the Community Safety Partnership Plan has focussed on the following areas:

- The CSP governance structure, priorities and cross cutting themes will be reviewed to consider if the structure and priorities areas are still valid and no changes are required.
- The data focusing on the makeup of the borough and communities and community safety data have been reviewed and updated in line with the refreshed annual Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment.
- The priority groups provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities for each subgroup.

2.7 The flightpath for the CSPP 2023-26 is set out below:

- Crime & Disorder Strategic Assessment (October 2022)
- Workshops held with CSP Board members (December 2022)
- Draft plan circulated to CSP board members (January 2023)
- Corporate Performance Group report and discussion (January 2023)
- Resident engagement through One Borough Voice Platform and virtual resident event (February 2023)
- Oversight & Scrutiny Committee (February 2023)
- Formal sign-off of CSP Plan at the CSP Board (March 2023)
- Endorsement via Cabinet (April 2023)
- Approval by the Assembly (May 2023)

2.8 In December 2022, the draft CSP Plan was circulated to all CSP subgroup chairs and members. This included an in-person engagement workshop with CSP board

members to gather feedback and insights into emerging issues and priorities for the borough.

2.9 CSP Board members were asked to focus on four questions which would help steer the CSPP development:

- Is anything missing in the plan that has been identified as a priority in the strategic assessment?
- Are the cross-cutting themes covered sufficiently, and how are they best delivered - VAWG, cost of living, perceptions/engagement, drugs? Where should the responsibility sit?
- Does the CSP feel as though it has sufficient oversight of delivery against the plan? Could future meetings be organised differently?
- Are we doing enough engagement? Should we be asking for more feedback on priorities, suggestions for delivery?

2.10 High-level feedback from CSP board members in December 2022 included the following, which have been incorporated into the final version of the CSPP:

- Women's safety and serious violence are emerging priorities which need to feature more prominently in the next Community Safety plan.
- There is a need to increase visibility of the Police, council, and partners working within our community.
- Cost of living: concerns about the impact on local crime, in particular low level offending and the exploitation of young people.
- Tackling organised crime: Street begging is an issue within the borough and there is an organised crime element which sits behind it such as deploying people to certain areas and also filters down to lower-level crime.
- The local authority and partners should increase their support of grassroots organisations to carry out work that tackles crime and exploitation.
- Amendments should be made to the CSP subgroups to ensure they remain fit for purpose and sharing of good practice from the Barking Town Centre Meeting, Ending Gang and Youth Violence Panel.
- Priority 2 of the CSP plan - 'Tackling Crimes that affect people the most' is vague and should be re-named to 'Tackling safety in the neighbourhoods / community', picking up issues such as anti-social behaviour.
- The VAWG priority area has seen improvements with the launch of the strategic board and the new local authority domestic abuse lead. The CSP board will need to be kept engaged in the strategy and workplan of this group moving forward.

2.11 The Community Safety Partnership Plan online consultation survey received 231 visits to the consultation with 37 engagements. Residents were in support of the community safety priorities and actions. The highest level of support was received for the following priorities:

- A dedicated approach to reduce knife crime and organised offending across the borough.
- Focus on improving visibility of police, council, and partners in the local community.
- Having a connected community that respect each other and celebrates different backgrounds.

- Educate and communicate the issues around domestic abuse and challenge abusive behaviours.
- Issues that are affecting residents the most included fly tipping, anti-social behaviour, and drug use.

2.12 From the online consultation survey, the comments received from residents included:

“These places look ok 9-5.00 but after dark - the night city changes when the sun goes down round here. Barking station area, the steps to the right of Upney Station, Leftley Estate, just about any TESCO cashpoint in the borough.”

“Near the Barking station, there are always police which is a clear sign there is drugs or gang activity quite prominent in the area. There are peddlers everywhere you turn, outside the shops, outside the bar which is next to the Boots, that is a very significant area where we know things happen there.

“I would never want to walk alone at night for fear of being mugged or robbed, especially because there seem to be so many kids around in hoods and covered masks. I don't think it's safe for women.”

“Police are only attending when a call is made. Although sometimes they still don't. Policing should be preventative rather than reactive but it appears not. More police and some CCTV would help.”

“More community police presence. They should never remove the police hub on Woodward/Hedgeman's road.”

2.13 A summary of the survey responses is set out at **Appendix 2**.

2.14 Feedback from the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee in February 2023 included:

- Highlighting the importance of communication between all stakeholders and praised the acknowledgement of this in the Plan.
- Noting the need to listen to residents' voices through the virtual resident engagement event and encouraged the Committee to promote this event in their communities.
- Noting concerns about the perceived increase in violence towards women and girls.
- The community is conscious about the abstractions of Police officers out of the borough to Police large scale events and the impact this has on local safety.
- The visibility of Police is felt to have reduced and needs to be improved.
- The rise in online crime and the online safety of young people online is an area which needs to have a clear emphasis through the Community Safety Partnership.
- Burglaries have not increased and the need for a continued focus on this area.
- Vehicle crime and particularly the theft of catalytic convertors are an ongoing concern to residents.
- The emergence of cannabis factories in private sector housing and how the Police, Council and partners increase the detection and response to this issue.

- 2.15 The responsibility for the delivery and progress of the Community Safety Partnership Board Plan 2023-26 will sit with the Community Safety Partnership Board and its relevant subgroups, led by Cllr Syed Ghani and Chief Superintendent Stuart Bell. The senior managers responsible for delivery and progress of the plan from a Council perspective will be Alison Stuart, Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer, and Gary Jones, Operational Director for Enforcement and Community Safety.

3. Options Appraisal

- 3.1 Do nothing – this assumed not to be a valid option as the Council has a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to produce audits and strategies to plan for future input to the reduction of crime in our area.
- 3.2 Proceed with the creation of the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-26 – to set out the priorities and activities to meet the Council’s statutory responsibilities and to further reduce crime and related issues.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 As referred to above, there has been extensive consultation and engagement in the development of the CSPP 2023-26 including:
- (i) Consultation and discussions with Community Safety Partnership Board members including the Police, Probation, Health, Voluntary, Council services and Community Sector organisations took place through a dedicated Community Safety Partnership Board Plan workshop on 7 December 2022.
 - (ii) Internal discussions at portfolio meetings with the Lead Cabinet Member for Enforcement and Community Safety Cllr Ghani. Internal discussions with Operational Director, Enforcement & Community Safety, Community Safety Operations Manager.
 - (iii) Presentation of the CSPP 2023-26 at Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8 February 2023. Committee members were invited to provide input and their comments were noted and incorporated into the final plan.
 - (iv) A virtual resident workshop and Q&A session held on 21 February 2023 chaired by Councillor Worby and included presentations by the Community Safety Partnership Manager, Community Safety Operations Manager, LBBDD Comms Team, Domestic Abuse Improvement Lead and representatives from the Police.
 - (v) Wider and formal public consultation with residents, visitors, partners and community and voluntary organisations about their experiences of safety in the borough and their priorities for the future. The consultation closed on Tuesday 28 February 2023 through the One Borough Voice Platform and the public’s feedback was incorporated into the final plan.
- 4.2 The Cabinet also considered and endorsed the CSPP at its meeting on 18 April 2023.

5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Afzal Hussain, Senior Accountant

- 5.1 This report seek approval to the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-26.
- 5.2 The activities defined within the CSPP will influence crime and disorder levels in the borough. The Community Safety Partnership Board and its subgroups will be responsible for ensuring that progress against the plan is maintained and regularly reviewed.
- 5.3 The plan will be funded through grants and thus have no financial implications on the Council's budget. Finance will be working closely with the service to ensure grants are claimed and spent according to the grant conditions.

6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Kayleigh Eaton, Principal Contracts and Procurement Solicitor

- 6.1 The Council has a statutory duty to work in partnership to reduce and prevent crime and disorder, including anti-social behaviour and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment, in its area, placed upon it by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. That Act also places requirements on the Council to develop Community Safety Partnerships, for the discharge of this duty. These partnerships are made up of representations of police, local authorities, fire and rescue authorities, health services and probation services. There is a duty for this partnership to develop a Community Safety Partnership Plan
- 6.2 This Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023 – 2026 represents the Borough Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy which, in accordance with Part 2, Chapter 4, section 2.1 (ii) (a) in the Constitution, forms part of the Council's overall Policy Framework. As such the Assembly is responsible for approving the CSPP.

7. Other Implications

- 7.1 **Risk Management** - Proceeding with the recommended actions assists in mitigating Corporate Risk CR.4 – Significant Incident in the Community'.
- 7.2 **Corporate Policy and Equality Impact** – The Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment (CDSA) referred to in paragraph 2.1 above was used to inform the development of the Equality Impact Assessment at **Appendix 3**.

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

List of appendices:

- **Appendix 1** – Draft Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-26
- **Appendix 2** – One Borough Voice resident consultation report
- **Appendix 3** – Equality Impact Assessment

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London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-2026

APPENDIX 1



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Contents

1	Foreword
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5	What does our local data tell us?
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7	How do we work in partnership?
8	Consultation
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1. Foreword

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD) has a new identity. It is a borough which is at the heart of London's growth, creating 50,000 new homes by 2037 which will provide new housing for approximately 120,000 residents. Barking and Dagenham will become the 'gateway to London'.

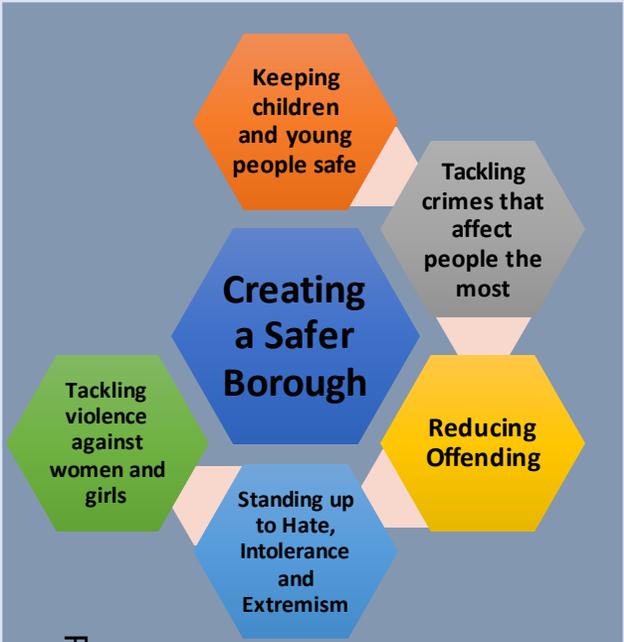
The borough is also becoming a creative hub; a place where the arts and commercial industry can thrive. Almost one-third of Barking and Dagenham residents are under the age of 20, which is the highest proportion of 0 to 19s in the United Kingdom.

The war in Ukraine, rising inflation and the cost of living crisis has led to a significant and wide-ranging impacts across the country and Barking and Dagenham is no different. Now more than ever it is important we are all working towards the same goals. Providing a safe environment for residents, businesses and visitors is essential.

If we are to achieve the ambitious plans that are ahead of us we need a strong and effective partnership that can deliver a safe and secure environment, take a long term approach to tackling the underlying causes of crime, and supporting victims so that they can rebuild their lives.

The recent setup of the Barking & Dagenham cost-of-living alliance, and the call on community groups across the borough to pledge their support to residents at this difficult time has highlighted the role every member of the community has to play - and this will have to continue in order to rise to the challenges we are facing. Working in partnership across the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and with other partnership boards and our communities we can ensure Barking and Dagenham comes through the current situation strong and united, and build on that together to make our borough a safer place for current and future generations.

Councillor Syed Ghani and Chief Superintendent, BCU Commander - East Area BCU Stuart Bell
Chairs of the Barking and Dagenham Community Safety Partnership



2. What do we aim to achieve?



The aims of the LBB Community Safety Partnership is to;

- **To create a safer borough, an environment where people and communities can flourish;**
- **To work in partnership to deliver key priorities to improve levels of crime and disorder**
- **To deliver local, regional and national priorities**

Every year the Partnership produces a Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment which is used to inform the Community Safety Partnership Plan. The assessment is an annual audit of crime and disorder looking at community safety trends based on recent data, the views of our residents and the emerging community safety challenges. The assessment enables the CSP to set priorities locally, compared to the national and regional priorities set by Central Government, the Mayors Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), other key agencies such as the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), London Fire Brigade (LFB), Counter Terrorism Units and National Crime Agency. The CSP conducts a 6 month review of the assessment to analyse the performance against key areas, targets and current data establishing emerging issues that may have an impact of crime and disorder in future years.

The Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment has identified and offers clear direction on the key local priorities for Barking and Dagenham CSP. The local priorities that have been adopted by Barking and Dagenham CSP are non-domestic abuse violence with injury, serious youth violence and knife crime, burglary, anti-social behaviour.

In addition to local priorities the plan sets out the 5 priority areas for the CSP for 2023-2026. Alongside the local and overarching priorities the plan has identified the three key cross cutting themes which each subgroup will have an element of focus on over the next three years.

Improved perceptions of safety: Local surveys indicate that residents feel less safe in the borough after dark when compared to other similar boroughs. The CSP and its subgroups are committed to developing a long-term plan to improve perceptions of safety.

Increase safety for victims: Support to victims is an important theme and focus for each priority area under the CSP. We aim to ensure that victims are supported following a crime or incident and are able to access support services.

Reduction in violence: Monitoring local data to support partnership working and development of a local Serious Violence and Knife Crime action plan that sets out tasking such as introduction of injunctions to keep young people safe, reduce reoffending, supporting vulnerable residents and reduce youth offending.



Our changing population: In 2001-2006 we saw a 23% rise in population and predict a further 10% rise by 2020. From year 2017 to year 2022 we have a predicted additional 17,800 people to reside in the borough. The population increase will be the size of 10 further wards in Barking and Dagenham which is equivalent to the size of Exeter.



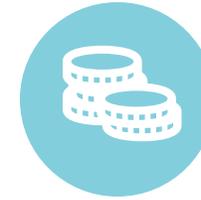
Brexit: It is unclear at this time what the overall impact will be for community safety. However, it is important that all organisations are aware of emerging issues and trends, particularly those related to community cohesion, reports of hate crime and hate incidents.



Substance Misuse: Barking and Dagenham are seeing a change in trends reported for substance misuse. Less are presenting to services that use crack and heroin and there is an increase in reported use of synthetic drugs such as spice and nitrous oxide. This could be because they are perceived as being legal because of the term “legal highs”. As a result services are having to tackle more challenging behaviours than previously experienced.



Mental Health and Wellbeing: An average 1 million people in London are living with mental health needs. From 2013 to 2015 LAS data shows that London experienced a 64% rise in the number of crimes involving mental health and a 31% increase in number of vulnerability reports. In 2017, a projected 3,723 people were accessing mental health services in Barking and Dagenham.



Finance and Resource: Services are experiencing a reduction in budget and resources whilst pressure is increasing. Police numbers have reduced by 3,000 and London Fire Brigade had to make £100 million savings in 2008/09 resulting in a reduction of frontline staff. The Probation Service has undergone significant changes as an impact of financial strain.



Regeneration: The “Healthy New Town” at Barking Riverside will offer 10,800 new homes and around 6000 new jobs. It is important that the CSP are at the forefront of the regeneration programmes from the design and maintenance including fire safety and crime reduction measures.



Cost of living crisis: The Institute for Government defines the ‘cost of living crisis’ as the fall in ‘real’ disposable incomes (adjusted for inflation and after taxes and benefits) that the UK has experienced since late 2021. The cost of living has become an issue of major political concern in the UK in 2022. The subsequent war in Ukraine and consequential energy challenges, followed by rising inflation and interest rates, have added to the mounting concern and resulted in large scale government interventions. Whilst the lasting impacts of the current cost-of-living crisis on communities is unknown, London’s mayor has warned of a rise in shootings and stabbings amid concerns that the increasing cost of living could lead to more violence and make it easier for gangs to lure vulnerable young people.



Changes to Criminal Justice System in London: The unification of Probation Service and redesign of service delivery across London has taken place. The Probation Service is now focused on shaping how they work in partnership to address offending behaviour and potential commissioning of services.

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8. What does our Borough tell us?

Housing, Health and Education



Only 46.4% of the borough population own their own homes.



25% of children in B&D live in poverty.



781 per 1,000 0-4 years attended A&E



Attainment score of 8 per pupil



B&D is ranked 30 out of 33 boroughs for homelessness across London at 14.7%.



Female Life expectancy 81.9
Male life expectancy 77.5



64.8% 5 year olds
78.8% Achieving a good level of development

2022 data shows B&D is ranked 27 of 33 boroughs across London for unemployment at 6.8%



The highest birth rate in England and Wales 2021



Only 61.5% of residents are physically active



3.2% NEET below London average

Population

66.2 per 10,000 under 18s are Looked after children



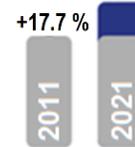
29.8% are under 18 years



Highest number of 0-17 year olds in England and Wales

There is a predicted rise of 27.3% in the overall population between 2019-2029

Population Increase



International migration increased by 135% from 2013-16.



Transport and environment



From 2020, London rail and tube lines will connect around 29,000 people to the borough.

2021/22 the Office and Rail and Road (ORR) reported that 13,473,374 entries and exits were made at Barking station



B&D are ranked 12 out of 32 for open space within the borough at 48.8%.

Barking and Dagenham are ranked 9 out of 33 for levels of fly tipping.

B&D has the highest waste production across London

* Reader must take into consideration the impacts on COVID-19 on data and crime trends

4. What does our Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment tell us?

Crime against the person



Increase in burglary of 10.8% in 2021-2022 compared to previous year

Increase in theft of a motor vehicle by 16.9% from 2021-22 compared to previous year



Sexual offences increased 7.7% from 2021-22 compared to previous year.

Possession of weapons has reduced by 18.1% in 2021-22 compared to previous year



Possession of knife offences reduced by 15% in 2021-22 compared to previous year



In 2021-22 violence against person increased by 11.3% compared to previous year

Offender profile

- Those most at risk of Serious Violence (victims and offenders) extend in the age range of 18-30 year olds.
- Serious Youth Violence are at peaks between the ages of 15 and 20 years
- Half of all serious wounding including GBH with intent, attempted murder, stabbings and shootings were carried out by those aged between 10-24 years.
- Repeat victimisation rates for ASB, Domestic Abuse and TNO were shown to be higher than the London average

Crime



Serious youth violence has seen an increase from April 2019- March 2020 by 5.7%.

Arson and criminal damage decreased by 11.4% in 2021-22 compared to previous year



Police data shows increase in the number of incidents involving mental health and vulnerability.

Recorded crimes increased by 10.4% in 2021-22 compared to the previous year



Crime and disorder rates are higher than the boroughwide average in Abbey, Thames and Gascoigne wards.

Class A drug overdoses have increased in 2019/20 compared to the previous year by 9%.



Anti-social Behaviour

- ASB calls to the police fell in 2021-22 compared to previous year
- In 2017 there were 172 deliberate fires recorded.
- 2017: 5 fires in buildings with commercial and residential use. The council and LFB are working together to focus on these types of dwelling to reduce the risk of fire.
- Graffiti and Noise reports have increased
- LBBB has high rates per 1,000 population compared with the rest of London for these incidents

* Reader must take into consideration the impacts on COVID-19 on data and crime trends

An important role for the CSP is to ensure that we address and improve the perceptions of crime and safety for people who live, work and visit the borough. Improved perception of safety will support the building of community confidence and cohesion in the borough. Addressing perceptions of safety and building resilience in our communities are shared priorities across the partnership boards and a focus within the Borough Manifesto and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2023.

Page 172
5. What does our local data tell us?



2021 resident's survey showed crime as top area of concern which is increasing each year

Only 43% of residents felt safe outside in their local area after dark compared to 35% in 2018.



82% said they felt safe outside in their local areas during the day compared to 81% in 2019



In 2021 the council carried out an analysis to identify reasons for lower levels of perceptions of safety. The following reasons were identified as areas of concern by residents;

36% of the 1,000 respondents felt that people being drunk and rowdy in public places was a problem in the local area.



Lack of visible policing, security and a reduction in public services



The fear of being robbed, stabbed and the visible signs of drug activity and alcohol consumption.



53% felt that people dealing or using drugs was a problem for the area.



Poor lighting, isolated areas and signs of poor maintenance.



Rubbish or litter is the biggest anti-social behaviour concern.

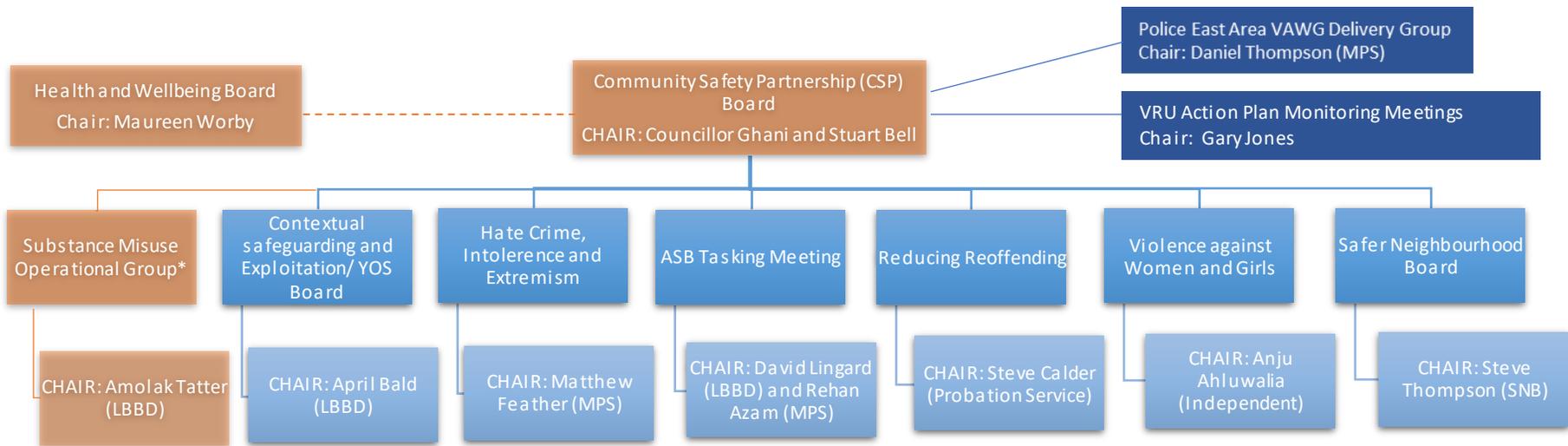
- The London Ambulance Service have seen a rise in alcohol related calls, with just under 1,200 calls received in 2017, a 4.5% rise compared to 2016, however drug related offences have seen a 27% reduction.

Page 173

6. Subgroup Structure and Priority Groups

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (CSP)

Board and Subgroup Structure Chart



*Substance misuse operational subgroup added for 2023, to reflect the Government’s new Combatting Drugs Partnership strategy.

Responsibility sits with the Contextual Safeguarding and Exploitation subgroup and YOS Board

- Review the teaching of online safety in schools and focus on improvements around how young people can protect themselves from unsafe content and promote safe online spaces.
- Lead on the implementation of a contextual safeguarding approach across the Council and its partners
- Coordinate and support a multi-agency contextual safeguarding response to reduce children's experiences of significant harm that happen outside the family context.
- Coordinate the development of the multi-agency exploitation strategy and oversee the implementation.
- Oversee the contextual safeguarding working group which aims to collaboratively develop, test and embed contextual safeguarding systems, processes and tools.
- Work with local businesses and community groups ensuring they play a role in providing safe places and locations for our children
- Identify and remove blockages or obstacles which increase risks of exploitation and serious youth violence for our children.
- Ensure young people's voices are heard and that they influence service development and partnership responses.
- Ensure early intervention and prevention, reduce levels of youth offending and re-offending rates and support positive resettlement of those leaving custody.
- Oversee work of the ending gang and youth violence meeting that works with medium to high risk individuals to apply meaningful interventions and support with education, employment, training, housing, mentoring and reducing offending.
- Oversee the delivery of the NRM pilot for duration of 18 months from June 2021.
- Implement and oversee the Harmful Sexualised Behaviour (HSB) pilot in conjunction with Safer London and Youth at Risk Matrix (YARM) workers.
- Implement the Your Choice programme within the Adolescent service.
- Oversee the delivery of the Step Up Stay Safe (SUSS) initiative including commissioned programmes that work to reduce offending and exclusions with schools.
- Support a new community and voluntary sector forum that can share intelligence to reduce offending and risk of exploitation.

Monitoring our focus

- Listen to the views of young people and their families and include young people in co-production of plans and interventions
- Good quality services to victims of young offenders in line with victims code of practice
- Assurance of 'good' quality services to reduce risk of youth offending and exploitation through a robust quality assurance and outcomes focussed framework
- Work with health colleagues to understand and meet our young people's physical and mental health needs
- Early recognition of special education needs and disabilities ensuring appropriate services and support are available
- Review local service offer to identify gaps in services to inform local bids
- Monitor relevant actions through the local serious violence and knife crime plan
- Link in with the Youth Offending Service board which reports on key performance indicators as defined by the Youth Justice board
- Monitor local data from SUSS, commissioned providers and EGYV to agree where resources and support needs to be focused

Priority 1

Keeping children and young people safe

Priority 2

Tackling safety in
the
neighbourhood &
community

Page 10

Focus

Responsibility sits with the ASB Tasking Meeting

- Work in partnership to create safer public spaces for all residents including a focus on the safety of women and girls
- Focus on improving visibility of police, council and partners in the local community
- Review the impact of cost-of-living crisis on crime and disorder and link in with wider partnership work to support residents most at risk
- Sub-group has responsibility for the multi-agency response to begging, including cross boarder organised gangs
- Relevant actions within the local serious violence and knife crime action plan to ensure partners are using resources effectively to deliver on commitments outlines in the plan
- Determine any trends, hotspot areas, offending and victim cohorts
- Deliver and coordinate a partnership response to MOPAC priorities and improve perceptions of safety
- Improving fire safety and fire prevention
- Reduce levels of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) including ASB around local licenced premises and identified hotspots
- Review licenced premises to ensure any violence/crime is managed and reduced
- Conduct an in depth review of local data and dashboards to monitor high harm crimes to inform allocation of council and partnership resources.
- Reduce levels of complex ASB and hate crime through a local standing case conference to resolve high risk/complex cases and provide support to victims, including reducing levels of repeat victimisation
- Provide support to commissioned services and projects that improve community safety is designated areas to improve the environment (Community Payback, Safe Haven, Street Space and PSPOs)

Monitoring our focus

- Ensure the community is engaged in the work we do and that their feedback and input is used to develop our services
- Proactively communicating success stories and good work which improves residents perception of safety and the reputation of partners.
- Monitor data through the MOPAC and MPS Crime dashboards and looking at monthly updates on high harm crime across boroughs allows us to monitor trends and whether crimes are decreasing or increasing
- Review local data to monitor changes to perceptions of safety
- MOPAC weapon enabled crime allowing the CSP to identify levels of weapon enabled crimes to monitor success.
- Review MPS data on repeat callers to ensure the reduction of repeat callers into MPS.
- Use local data to look at causes of crime and ASB using the Victim, Offender, Location and Time model
- Review local data/intel to access where resources from the Council and MET are best deployed to have most impact.
- Monitor repeat callers into the MPS to ensure support services are available.
- Use LFB data on fire trends and tasking to monitor levels of offences
- Monitor commissioned providers performance and delivery

Priority 3

Reducing Offending

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Focus

Responsibility sits with the Reducing Reoffending subgroup

- To work in partnership implement the statutory **Serious Violence Duty** and to develop a Serious Violence Local Needs Assessment and Plan on an annual basis.
- Implement the **Combatting Drugs Partnership** structure in line with the release of the **Home Office 10-year drugs strategy**.
- To work in partnership to support the Pan-London Met Police priority to reduce burglary offences and the impact of these offences on the local community.
- Increase support to offenders with access to accommodation, education, training, employment, finance, debt and drug and alcohol services.
- To work in partnership to support the reduction of offending and reoffending, particularly within priority indicators and areas of focus (Non-Domestic Abuse Violence With Injury, Theft of Motor Vehicle, Robbery of Personal Property).
- To improve statistics in the reduction of recidivism.
- Improve rates of individuals involved in alcohol and drug treatments through the criminal justice system.
- Continue to explore co-location opportunities to improve a multi-agency approach to managing offenders.
- Implement the IOM structure in line with the MOPAC review (roll out ECINS Information Sharing for IOM).
- Subgroup to have oversight of the multi-agency response to knife crime and serious organised offending across the borough.
- Promotion of focused task and finish groups to ensure proactive response to emerging strategic challenges/borough dynamics.
- Subgroup to undertake a review of current data sets and develop a set of KPIs

Monitoring our focus

- Monitor the LBBD CSP serious violence and knife crime action plan
- Monitor partner data sets across key performance areas in relation to reduce reoffending
- Monitor adult cases referred to the ending gang and youth violence case management meeting and IOM to understand the picture of offending and outcomes of interventions applied
- To track and review criminal justice cases referred to drug and alcohol treatment providers of successful completions
- Monitor the number of people engaged in full time employment, education and training and keeping up stable accommodation at the point of disengagement with statutory services

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Priority 4
 Standing up to
 Hate,
 Intolerance and
 Extremism

Focus

Responsibility sits with the Hate Crime, Intolerance and Extremism and Tension Monitoring subgroup

- Increase staff and residents understanding hate crime and hate incidents for both online and in-person
- Inform staff across the borough to understand how to report hate crime and hate incidents outside of the Police
- Encourage more victims of hate crime and hate incidences to report
- Encourage more residents to be supportive bystanders and witnesses to hate crime and hate incidents
- Provide a co-ordinated approach to supporting victims and preventing hate crime and incidents
- Reduce the levels of repeat victimisation of hate crime and hate incidents
- Identify and work with those most vulnerable to hate crime and incidents
- Link in with Prevent to safeguard individuals from risk of extremism as outlined in the Home Office PREVENT agenda and contained within the priorities and action plan of the Barking & Dagenham PREVENT strategy;
- Develop a partnership approach to understanding the risk of radicalisation.
- Identify vulnerability to all forms of extremism or radicalisation, develop tools to prevent people being drawn into terrorism
- Develop a stronger focus on community cohesion activities that prevent extremism and hate crime
- Identifying extremism in school settings to support schools in reducing racist and hate incidents
- Log and map racist and hate graffiti to identify hotspot locations and develop a partnership response
- Creating a partnership approach to tackling a rise in tensions involving racism or hate crime incidents

Monitoring our focus

- Data to monitor increased reporting of victims of Hate crime is monitored through the Metropolitan Police Hate Crime and Special Crime Dashboard to monitor areas including racist and religious, faith, disability, sexual orientation and transgender hate crimes.
- Monitor data through the MOPAC Hate Crime Dashboard for figures at a borough level and further information on victims and offenders.
- Monitor the number of residents who have been referred and accessed services and support
- Monitor levels through schools of early identification of hate crime and extremism through reporting
- Review referrals into local Standing Case Conference on complex hate crime cases to understand content of cases and processes that have been undertaken to support residents.
- Monitoring the racism and hate graffiti map to identify hotspots and emerging trends including tensions
- Monitoring tensions through faith, community and voluntary sector organisations
- Monitoring tensions reported through the council reporting mechanisms

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Priority 5
Tackling violence against women and girls

Focus

Responsibility sits with the Violence against women and girls (VAWG) subgroup

Priority 1: Support Survivors

- Improved effectiveness and efficiency through services
- Reduction in repeat victimisation and levels of high risk cases
- Increased confidence in services
- Improved joined up response to survivors

Priority 2: Educate and Communicate

- Reduction in victimisation and repeat victimisation
- Improved resilience in individuals, families, and communities.
- Reduced socioeconomic costs related to VAWG
- Disruption of the normalisation of violence.

Priority 3: Challenge Abusive Behaviours

- Reduction in repeat offending
- Reduction in victimisation and repeat victimisation
- Reduction in risk to children and survivors where families choose to remain together

Priority 4: Include Lived Experience

- Earlier positive engagement with survivors
- Services are designed to work towards positive outcomes as set by survivors
- Services are cost effective as a result of being more visible, accessible and responsive to the needs of survivors.

Monitoring our focus

- Reduction in repeat victimisation through police reporting
- Decreased percentage of young people reporting an acceptance of abusive behaviours through the biennial school health survey
- An increased conviction rate through the criminal justice system.
- Improved engagement rate through specialist advocacy services
- Police Data – prevalence rates and volume data for domestic and sexual incidents and offences at borough level across London.
- Average number of offences in previous 12 months per survivor (this is reducing at a faster rate than East London)
- MARAC repeat referral rates. Recommendations from sector leads SafeLives state 28-40% repeat MARAC referral rate is appropriate.
- Children’s Care and Support data
- Specialist Service Data

The Domestic Abuse Commission has a clear focus on data gathering in order to build a wider picture of domestic abuse locally. The first three months of Refuge delivering our specialist services have offered much insight into the wider VAWG data available and a performance framework will be developed to provide regular updates to the relevant boards.



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How do we work in partnership?



Delivering on our priorities

The CSP board holds overall responsibility on monitoring and delivering on the priorities outlined in the Community Safety Partnership Plan and other local strategies and plans such as the Serious Violence and Knife Crime Action Plan and VAWG strategy. This requires partner organisations to work together to share the skills, powers and resources that are available to them in order to effectively deliver. The LBBD CSP has established a structure consisting of five priority subgroups, Youth Offending Service Board and Safer Neighbourhood Board (SNB), that brings together partners at a strategic, performance and operational level. This includes senior representatives of criminal justice agencies, the council, Health, LFB, MPS, SNB, and voluntary and community organisations to support the delivery and drive to improving levels of crime and disorder across the borough.

The borough has an active SNB, providing a platform for residents to meet with the Police and Council to discuss local priorities and hold the Council and partners to account to deliver. It also provides a vital link between Independent Advisory Groups (IAG) Neighbourhood Watch, Stop and Search, Ward Panels and Community Groups to support the community safety agenda.

Working with other Partnership Boards on shared priorities

The CSP board works closely with the four other key strategic partnership boards, the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB), Safeguarding Childrens Partnership (SCP) and Health and Wellbeing Board, to focus on cross cutting areas such as violence against women and girls, child sexual and criminal exploitation, tackling serious violence and keeping children and young people safe to ensure that all areas are supported by an effective partnership approach. The partnership understands that some priorities require a safeguarding focus and long term health intervention to ensure that the underlying causes are addressed.

A number of the priorities, cross cutting themes and emerging trends outlined in the plan are shared across the strategic partnerships. To ensure a collaborative approach between the partnerships the board managers of the CSP, SAB and SCP meet on a regular basis to review each boards work plans, look at the cross cutting areas of work and ensure these are presented to each board and review and discuss share priorities and each boards response.

8. Formal Consultation – Community Safety Partnership Board members

Community Safety Partnership Board Consultation Workshop December 2022 – High level findings

- Women’s safety and serious violence are emerging priorities which need to feature more prominently in the next Community Safety plan.
- There is a need to increase visibility of the Police, council, and partners working within our community.
- Cost of living: concerns about the impact on local crime, in particular low level offending and the exploitation of young people.
- Tackling organised crime: Street begging is an issue within the borough and there is an organised crime element which sits behind it such as deploying people to certain areas and also filters down to lower-level crime.
- The local authority and partners should increase their support of grassroots organisations to carry out work that tackles crime and exploitation.
- Amendments should be made to the CSP subgroups to ensure they remain fit for purpose and sharing of good practice from the Barking Town Centre Meeting, Ending Gang and Youth Violence Panel.
- Priority 2 of the CSP plan - ‘Tackling Crimes that affect people the most’ is vague and should to be re-named into ‘tackling safety in the neighbourhoods/community’ picking up issues such as anti-social behaviour.

8. Formal Consultation – Residents, businesses and visitors

Barking & Dagenham Community Safety Partnership Plan Online Consultation – February 2023

We received 231 visits to the consultation with 37 engagements. Residents were in support of the community safety priorities and actions. The highest level of support was received for the following priorities:

- Dedicated approach to reduce knife crime and organised offending across the borough
- Focus on improving visibility of police, council, and partners in the local community
- Having a connected community that respect each other and celebrates different backgrounds
- Educate and communicate the issues around domestic abuse and;
- Challenge abusive behaviours

Issues that are affecting residents the most included fly tipping, anti-social behaviour and drug use.

Feedback included:

“These places look ok 9-5.00 but after dark - the night city changes when the sun goes down round here. Barking station area, the steps to the right of Upney Station, Leftley Estate, just about any TESCO cashpoint in the borough.”

“Near the Barking station, there are always police which is a clear sign there is drugs or gang activity quite prominent in the area. There are peddlers everywhere you turn, outside the shops, outside the bar which is next to the Boots, that is a very significant area where we know things happen there. I would never want to walk alone at night for fear of being mugged or robbed, especially because there seem to be so many kids around in hoods and covered masks. I don't think it's safe for women.”

“Police are only attending when a call is made. Although sometimes they still don't. Policing should be preventative rather than reactive but it appears not. More police and some CCTV would help.”

“More community police presence. They should never remove the police hub on Woodward/Hedgeman's road.”

8. Formal Consultation – Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Barking & Dagenham Overview & Scrutiny Committee Comments - February 2023

- The Overview & Scrutiny Committee highlighted the importance of communication between all stakeholders and praised the acknowledgement of this in the Plan.
- The committee noted the need to listen to residents' voices through the virtual resident engagement event and encouraged the Committee to promote this event in their communities.
- Concerns were noted about the perceived increase in violence towards women and girls.
- The community is conscious about the abstractions of Police officers out of the borough to Police large scale events and the impact this has on local safety.
- The visibility of Police is felt to have reduced and needs to be improved.
- The rise in online crime and the online safety of young people online is an area which needs to have a clear emphasis through the Community Safety Partnership.
- Burglaries have not increased and the need for a continued focus on this area.
- Vehicle crime and particularly the theft of catalytic convertors are an ongoing concern to residents.
- The emergence of cannabis factories in private sector housing and how the Police, Council and partners increase the detection and response to this issue.

Information and Advice

Community Safety Partnership: For more information and advice on the Community Safety Partners please visit <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/community-safety-partnership>

Domestic Abuse and sexual violence : For information and advice on where to get help for domestic violence please visit the service directory on the LBBB council website using the following link: <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/residents/community-safety-and-crime/dv/getting-help/>

Healthy Lifestyles: For information and advice on leading a healthier lifestyle please visit the service directory on the LBBB New Me London website using the following link: <https://newme.london/>

Health and Wellbeing: For information and advice on health and wellbeing please visit <http://careandsupport.lbbd.gov.uk/kb5/barkingdagenham/asch/adult.page?adultchannel=5>

Hate Crime and Hate Incidents: For more information on understanding hate crime and incidents and how to report please visit <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/hate-crimes-and-incidents>

Reporting Crime: <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/report-crime>

Substance Misuse: For information and advice on where to get help for Substance misuse please visit the service directory on the LBBB Care and Support Hub website using the following link <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/drugs-and-alcohol-help>

Prevent Referral: To make a referral or discuss a referral to prevent please contact prevent@lbbd.gov.uk

Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) – For more information on PSPOs across the borough please visit <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/public-spaces-protection-orders-pspos>

Victims of Crime: For information and advice if you are a victim of crime please visit <https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>

In an emergency call 999

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Community Safety Partnership Plan Resident Consultation

SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

22 January 2023 - 28 February 2023

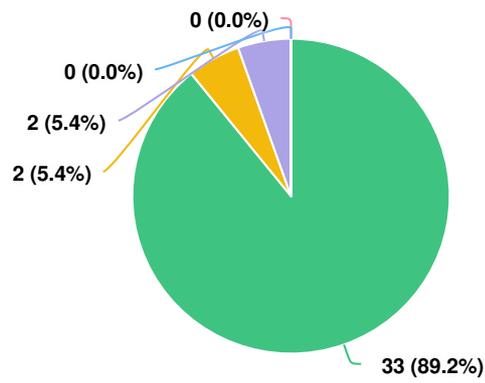
PROJECT NAME:

Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-2026



SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q1 Are you responding to this consultation as a...



Question options

- Resident of the borough
- A visitor of the borough
- A community of voluntary organisation
- A business
- A partner

Optional question (37 response(s), 1 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Q2 Please provide your postcode

Anonymous Rm107ah
2/01/2023 06:45 PM

Anonymous lg118JX
2/01/2023 10:00 PM

Anonymous RM6 5TJ
2/01/2023 11:06 PM

Anonymous RM9 4JS
2/02/2023 12:20 AM

Anonymous RM108TH
2/02/2023 09:27 AM

JanBro259 RM10 7FN
2/02/2023 01:48 PM

Anonymous IG11 0GE
2/02/2023 08:50 PM

Anonymous lg117qd
2/05/2023 06:35 PM

Anonymous Rm8 3lt
2/05/2023 10:23 PM

Anonymous IG11 0AP
2/06/2023 09:10 AM

Anonymous lg11 0fq
2/06/2023 09:25 AM

Anonymous IG110UX
2/06/2023 10:36 AM

Anonymous IG11 0YJ
2/06/2023 10:39 AM

Anonymous Rm8 3sa
2/06/2023 02:16 PM

Anonymous IG11 0YA
2/06/2023 05:59 PM

Anonymous lg110ww
2/07/2023 12:29 PM

Anonymous RM6 5TJ
2/08/2023 09:15 PM

Anonymous Rm9
2/09/2023 02:21 PM

Anonymous RM7 9DH
2/09/2023 02:49 PM

Anonymous lg11 7qn
2/10/2023 07:49 AM

Anonymous RM6 5PT
2/10/2023 09:19 AM

Anonymous RM8 2JL
2/10/2023 01:07 PM

Anonymous W3 7RT
2/13/2023 02:42 PM

Anonymous Rm9
2/14/2023 02:06 PM

Anonymous Rm10 7la
2/14/2023 02:36 PM

Anonymous RM94AJ
2/14/2023 10:32 PM

Anonymous IG11 7ZE

2/16/2023 07:08 PM

Anonymous Ig118ug

2/16/2023 07:57 PM

Anonymous IG11 0FA

2/19/2023 09:17 AM

Anonymous IG11 0NT

2/19/2023 04:33 PM

Anonymous IG11 0ZQ

2/19/2023 09:22 PM

Anonymous RM8 1DG

2/21/2023 04:02 PM

Anonymous IG11 8AF

2/23/2023 01:56 PM

Anonymous RM9 5UU

2/26/2023 03:06 PM

Anonymous Ig11 0qa

2/26/2023 03:49 PM

Anonymous IG11 8NW

2/27/2023 07:09 AM

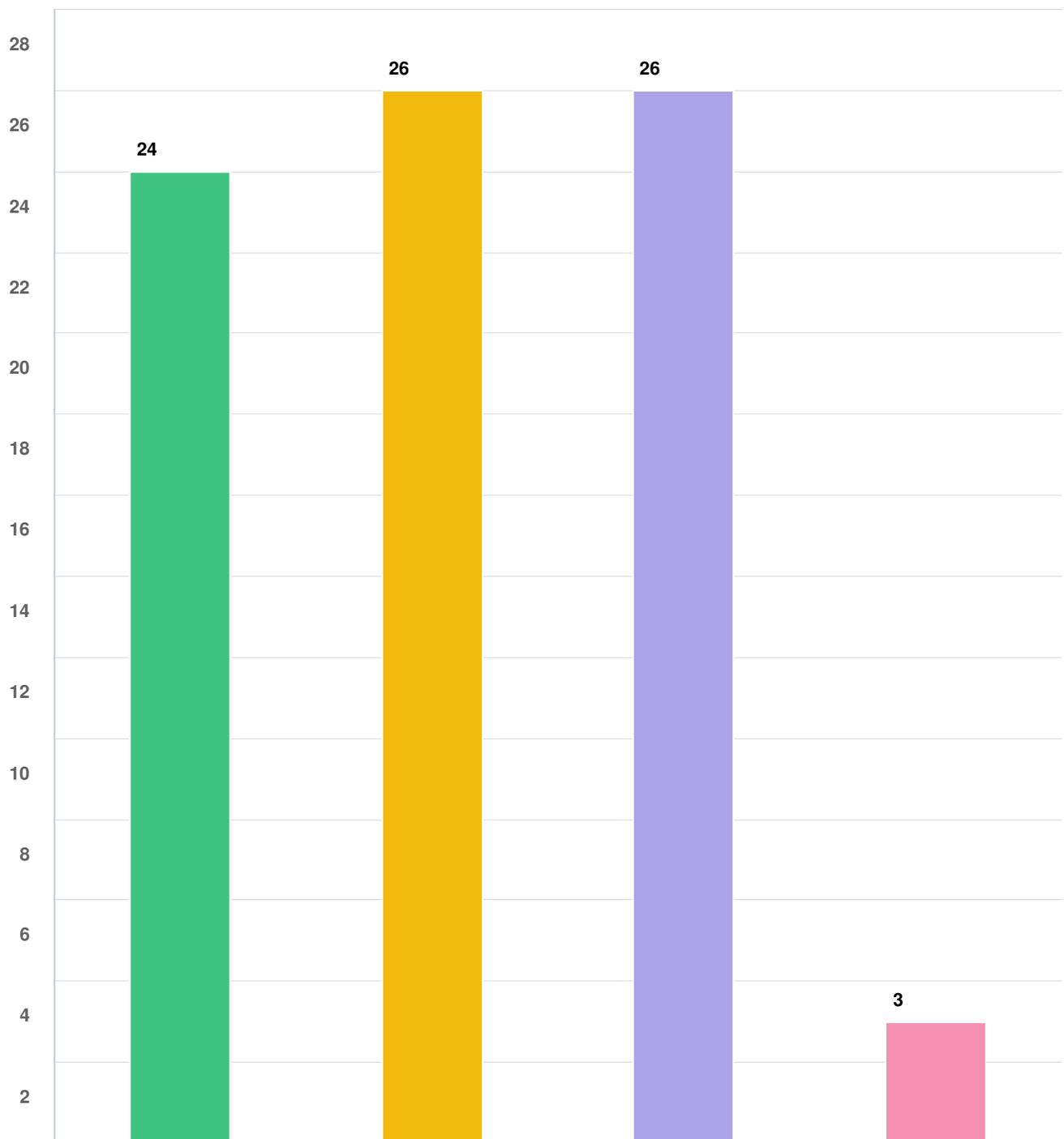
Anonymous RM6 5TJ

2/27/2023 12:02 PM

Optional question (37 response(s), 1 skipped)

Question type: Single Line Question

Q3 Keeping children and young people safe

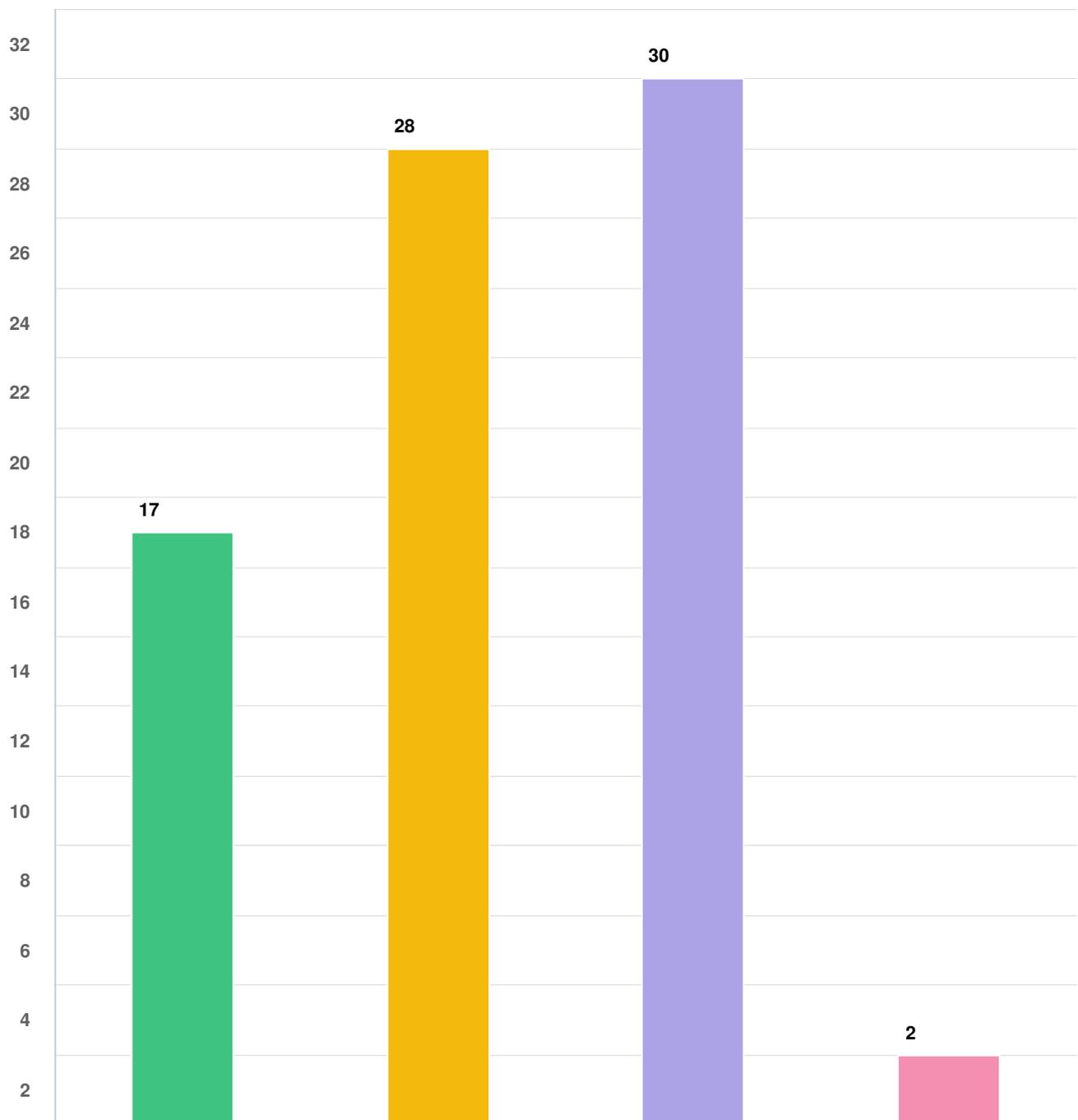


Question options

- Focus on the harm to children outside the home
- Reducing youth offending
- Supporting young people by providing opportunity into education, employment, training and mentoring.
- Other (please state)

Optional question (37 response(s), 1 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q4 Tackling safety in the neighbourhood and community

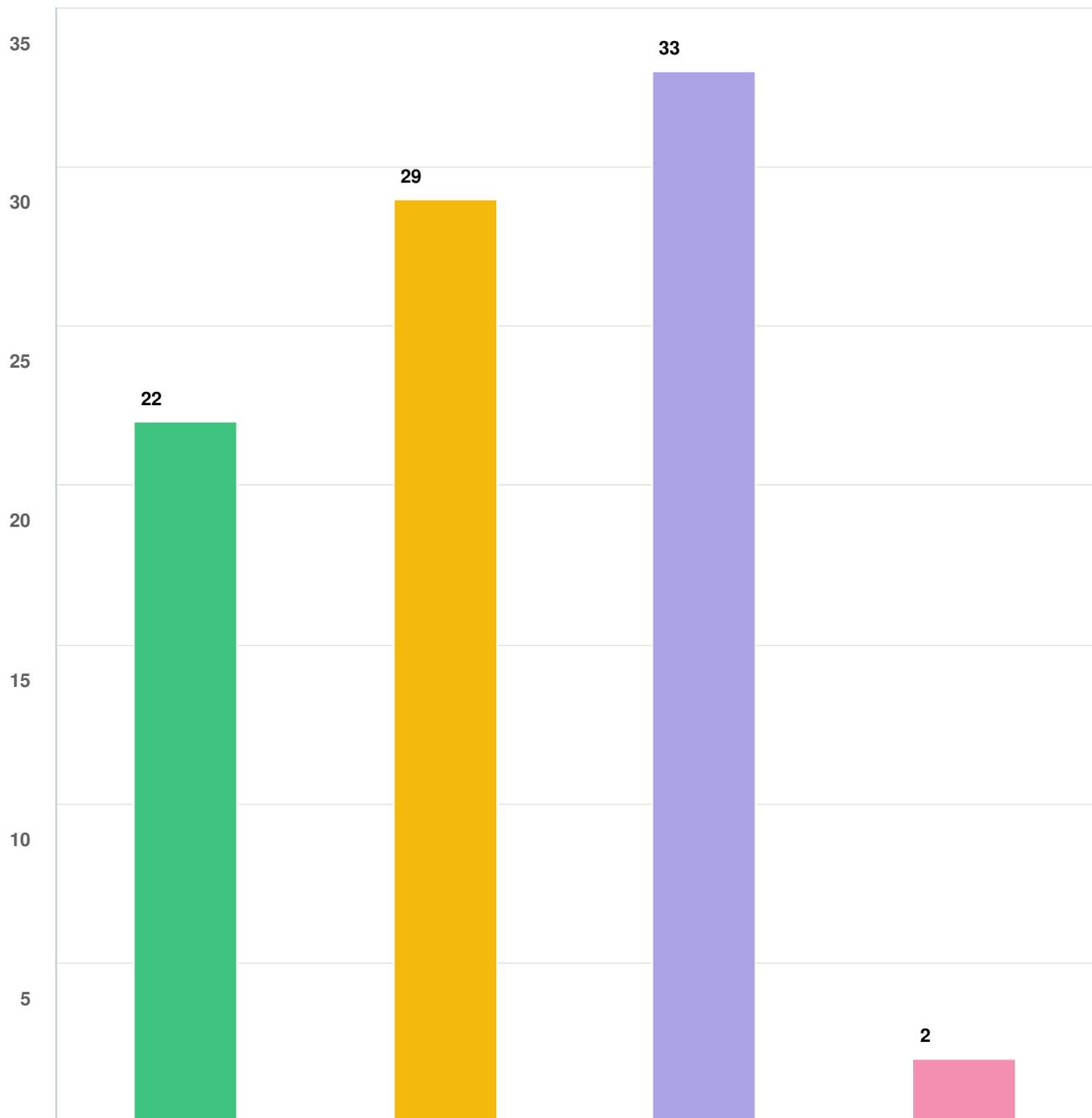


Question options

- Review impact of cost-of-living crisis on crime and support residents most at risk
- Tackle public anti-social behaviour including, spitting, begging, urination, use of alcohol.
- Focus on improving visibility of police, council, and partners in the local community
- Other (please state)

Optional question (37 response(s), 1 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q5 Reducing re-offending

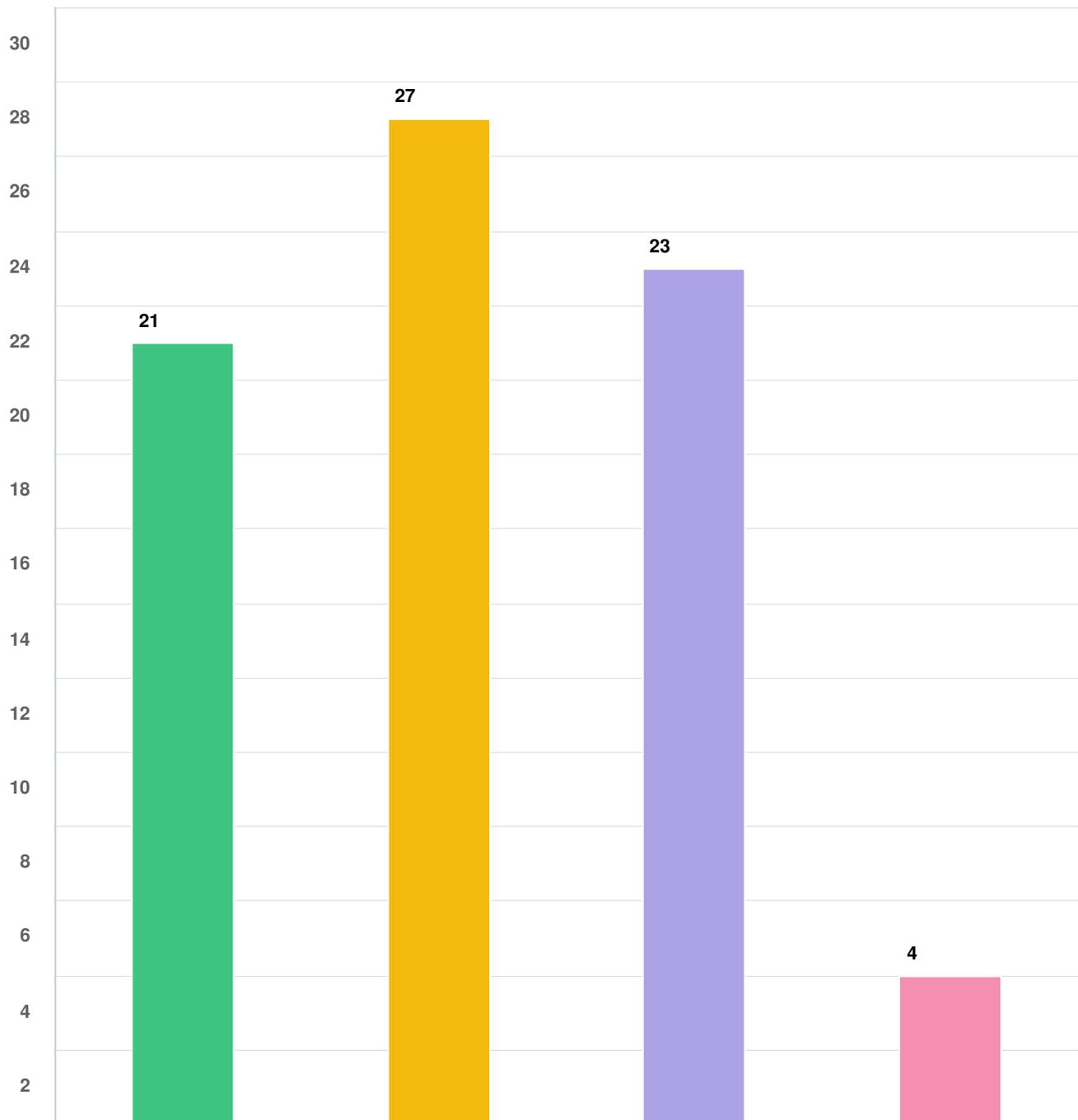


Question options

- Reduce burglary and improve the service from the police In the community
- Reduce crime that affect people the most: (Non-Domestic Abuse Violence With Injury, Theft of Motor Vehicle, Robbery of Personal Property).
- Dedicated approach to reduce knife crime and organised offending across the borough
- Other (please state)

Optional question (37 response(s), 1 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q6 Standing up to hate, intolerance and extremism

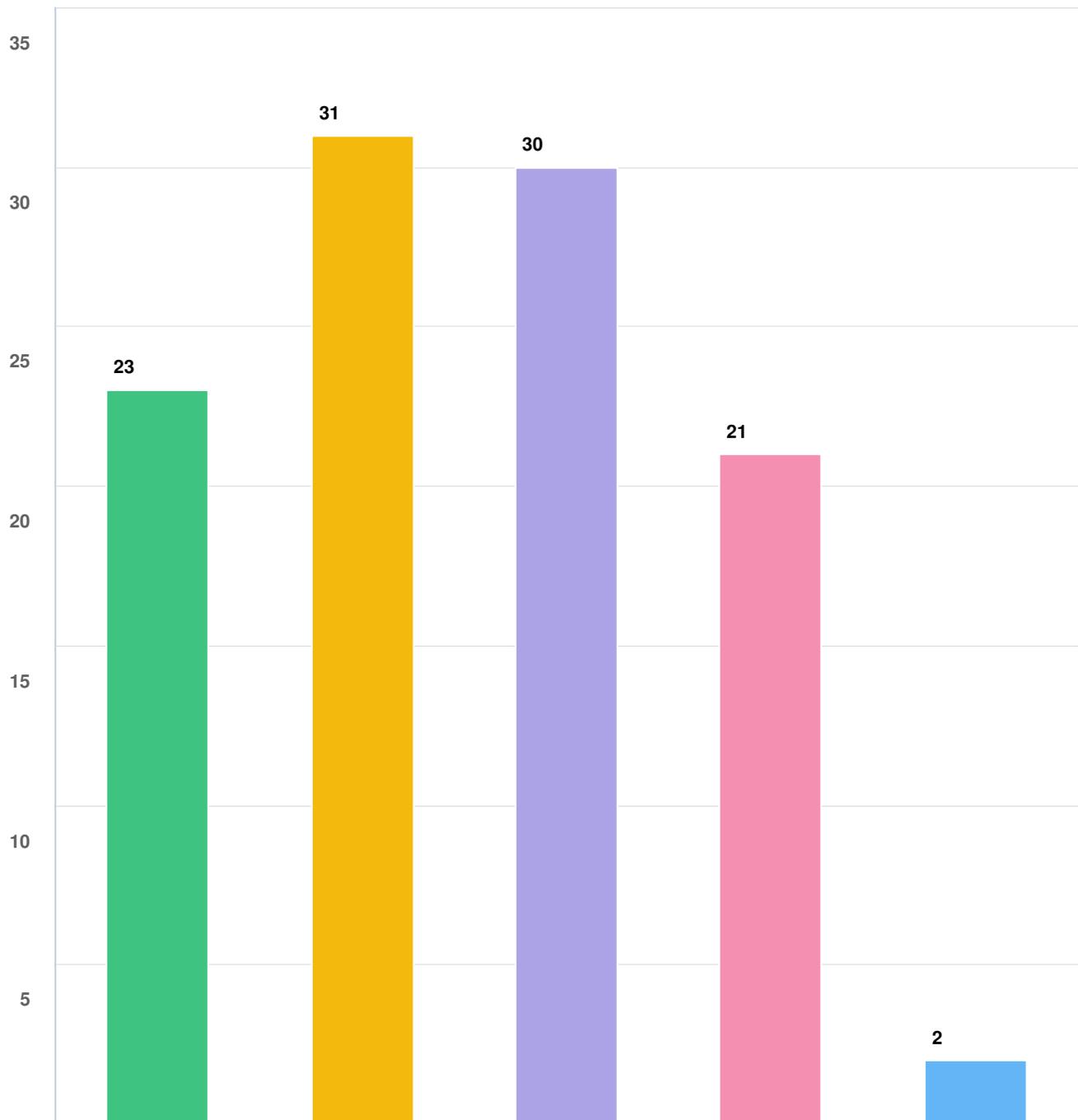


Question options

- Support residents to understand hate crime, how to report and get help.
- Having a connected community that respect each other and celebrates different backgrounds
- Prevent hate preaching and extremist activity in the community
- Other (please state)

Optional question (36 response(s), 2 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q7 Tackling violence against women and girls

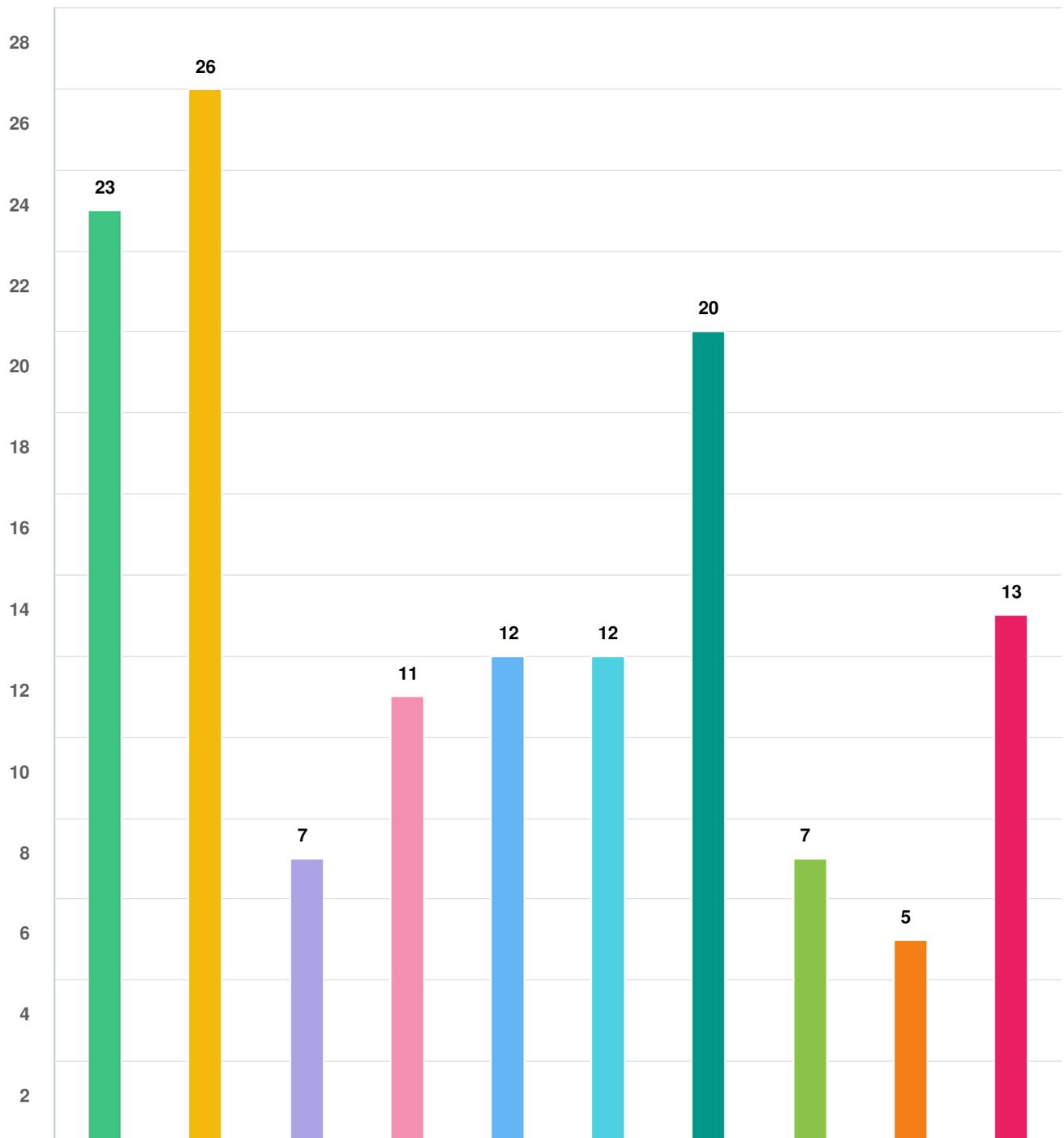


Question options

- Support survivors of domestic abuse
- Educate and communicate the issues around domestic abuse
- Challenge abusive behaviours
- Support survivors of domestic abuse and include their lived experience
- Other (please state)

Optional question (37 response(s), 1 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q8 What are the issues in the local area that are affecting you the most?



Question options

- Anti-social behaviour
- Fly-tipping
- Public order offences
- Violent behaviour
- Knife crime
- Robbery
- Drug offences
- Criminal damage
- Hate crime
- Other (please provide details)

Optional question (37 response(s), 1 skipped)
 Question type: Checkbox Question

Q9 | Where are these issues in your local area occurring?

Anonymous

2/01/2023 06:45 PM

Rm107ah

Anonymous

2/01/2023 10:00 PM

Barking and local areas in borough

Anonymous

2/01/2023 11:06 PM

Knife crime all over the Borough. Antisocial behaviour and fly tipping and rubbish in RM6 postcode area. Specifically East Road Chadwell Heath and surrounding roads

JanBro259

2/02/2023 01:48 PM

These places look ok 9-5.00 but after dark - the night city changes when the sun goes down round here. Barking station area, the steps to the right of Upney Station, Leftley Estate, just about any TESCO cashpoint in the borough

Anonymous

2/06/2023 09:10 AM

Near Barking station, my friend was attacked

Anonymous

2/06/2023 09:25 AM

Samuel Garside house

Anonymous

2/06/2023 10:36 AM

Dangerous driving is around the George Carey School. Car theft is all over the barking riverside estate, I live in the Caspian quarter

Anonymous

2/06/2023 10:39 AM

Everywhere you look/smell!

Anonymous

2/06/2023 02:16 PM

Green lane and local parks

Anonymous

2/07/2023 12:29 PM

All around phase 2 of barking riverside.

Anonymous

2/08/2023 09:15 PM

Late/early hours in the RM6 area

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:21 PM

Young people being intimidated, robbed and attacked on the streets when coming home from school in their uniform. Also these young

people are targeting adults. They make the community feel unsafe and young people are scared to walk home or to the shops! Becontree Station, sheppey road, Martins corner, goesbrook Road and alleyway. By the shops on Woodward road

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:49 AM

Town centre and drug dealers in my road quite blatant

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:19 AM

all over

Anonymous

2/14/2023 02:06 PM

Heathway. Everywhere in Dagenham

Anonymous

2/14/2023 02:36 PM

Near my house, Oxlow lane/Marston Avenue

Anonymous

2/14/2023 10:32 PM

Drunks and drug addicts in the park

Anonymous

2/16/2023 07:08 PM

Near the Barking station, there are always police which is a clear sign there is drugs or gang activity quite prominent in the area. There are peddlers everywhere you turn, outside the shops, outside the bar which is next to the Boots, that is a very significant area where we know things happen there. I would never want to walk alone at night for fear of being mugged or robbed, especially because there seem to be so many kids around in hoods and covered masks. I don't think it's safe for women.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 07:57 PM

As above

Anonymous

2/19/2023 09:17 AM

Right outside my doorstep at Barking Riverside

Anonymous

2/19/2023 09:22 PM

Drugs use Around the Wilds at Northgate Road

Anonymous

2/21/2023 04:02 PM

Barking and Dagenham, literally every area is unsafe and full of knife crime/drug crime/gang crime.

Anonymous

2/23/2023 01:56 PM

London Road, Barking Town Centre, Barking

Anonymous

2/26/2023 03:06 PM

The council

Anonymous

2/27/2023 07:09 AM

By the station, in the parks

Optional question (25 response(s), 13 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Q10 | Do you have any comments?

Anonymous

2/01/2023 06:45 PM

You not be picking special groups to protect. Everyone has a right to feel/ be safe.

Anonymous

2/01/2023 10:00 PM

How can I help my local area ie Harts lane

Anonymous

2/01/2023 11:06 PM

We never see any enforcement to lorries and cars parked on double yellow lines or throwing rubbish away. Been designated an anti social behaviour area because the trees keep being knocked over or removed because drivers coming to the shops can't park. Never see a street cleaner. Underpass lights not good in the one at the end of east road to Marks gate Ed and don't feel safe coming through in the dark. Have asked fir the light that are nog working to be repaired and the light covers cleaned but still waiting.

JanBro259

2/02/2023 01:48 PM

Please commit to community action - resource local community-led Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations out on the ground locally NOT just the leviathan charities and public sector - who after all have the benefit of our tax dollar to support them

Anonymous

2/06/2023 09:10 AM

I would love to have some street lights on Benson Street, it's pitch black at the moment and very scary when walking home

Anonymous

2/06/2023 09:25 AM

Every single time We reported an issue the police never looked intonate problem

Anonymous

2/06/2023 10:36 AM

There is no visible sign of any police presence in the area, lack of CCTV and other deterrents to crime

Anonymous

2/06/2023 02:16 PM

There should be more patrols to keep watch on these things

Anonymous

2/07/2023 12:29 PM

Police are only attending when a call is made. Although sometimes they still dont. Policing should be preventative rather than reactive but it appears not. More police and some cctv would help

Anonymous

2/09/2023 02:21 PM

More community police presence. They should never remove the police hub on woodward/hedgemans road

Anonymous

2/10/2023 07:49 AM

Let's see more police in the community make a presence move the low life away from our streets

Anonymous

2/10/2023 09:19 AM

their are no police in this area no ctv working people drive up and down the pavement and the council is incompetent of filling its roll in this part of the Borough

Anonymous

2/14/2023 02:06 PM

Rather than surveys actually do something

Anonymous

2/14/2023 02:36 PM

Drop kerb parking is issue blocking our drive and littering next to tesco and corral oxlow lane, need cctv.

Anonymous

2/16/2023 07:57 PM

Better communication needs to be had from the police and council when a complaint has been made, especially when it is an ongoing complaint. I understand agencies are busy and so am as I work too and I have much better things to do with my time than complain but a quick email with an update would mean such alot instead of residents including myself having to keep chasing for information all of the time and make us feel like we are being listened to so that our mental health is kept healthy. Thank you.

Anonymous

2/19/2023 09:17 AM

Anti social behaviour, people doing drugs, drinking, urinating and defecating in public spaces, walking dogs without leads that lead to attacks on people and other dogs, car theft, knife crime - all happening at Barking Riverside, "a place to be, become and belong"... NOT!

Anonymous

2/19/2023 09:22 PM

We need regular police presence along Fielders acre.

Anonymous

2/23/2023 01:56 PM

I have been complaining about these issues to the council for a number of years. Desperate and in need of urgent help. No voice is being heard. We are being ignored. We live in unhealthy and dangerous conditions. Please help.

Anonymous

2/27/2023 07:09 AM

The playgrounds are disgusting, I worry my son will cut himself on broken glass every time. I've reported it and nothing is done.

Optional question (19 response(s), 19 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

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Community and Equality Impact Assessment

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

This is to determine whether the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on different groups within 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

As well as supporting you to look at whether there is, or will be, a significant impact, the guidance will also consider ways in which you might mitigate this in the future.

About the service or policy development

Name of service or policy	Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-26
Lead Officer	Chris Lyons, Community Safety Partnership Manager
Contact Details	Chris.lyons@lbbd.gov.uk

Why is this service or policy development/review needed?
<p>Every three years the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Board are required to develop an overarching Community Safety Partnership Plan under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998. The plan provides an overview of the work and priority areas that fall under the responsibility of the CSP.</p> <p>The Community Safety Partnership Plan incorporates local data, an insight on the roles and responsibilities of the board and its subgroup structure and how the Council will work in partnership to address local community safety priorities. The plan is published on the council website to keep residents informed on the progress of the CSP in reducing crime & disorder.</p> <p>Within the three-year plan cycle, annual reviews of the Community Safety Partnership Plan are conducted through the CSP and its subgroups to ensure that the governance structure of the CSP and its and responsibilities remain valid and any new workstreams are reflected in the plan.</p> <p>In advance of the Community Safety Plan being written, a full Crime & Disorder Strategic Assessment (CDSA) is undertaken by the Council’s Community Safety Analyst to understand trends and patterns in crime & disorder locally and to support priority setting.</p> <p>The Community Safety Partnership Plan represents a significant commitment by partners including the Council, Police, Fire, Probation and Health authorities as well as local voluntary groups to working together to improve the lives of our residents.</p>

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

<p>What impacts will this service or policy development have on communities? Look at what you know? What does your research tell you?</p> <p><i>Consider:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and 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.
<p>Demographics</p> <p>A review of demographic information available through the borough data explorer has been considered as part of this equality impact assessment. The annual Community Safety</p>

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Partnership Crime & Disorder Strategic Assessment (CDSA) provides a multi-agency overview of crime and disorder in the borough as well as the identification of specific hotspot areas of concern.

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		<p>Enforcement activities are generally the option of last resort and are not taken in isolation without linking to the supportive approaches highlighted above.</p> <p>Staff involved in enforcement activities receive appropriate training and guidance and are aware of the Children's Act 2004 and the Care Act 2014 relating to vulnerable adults or children.</p>
Age	X				<p>Young people are disproportionately affected by higher harm crime types including robbery and knife crime. Priority 1 of the CSPP focusses on keeping children and young people safe, such as the Council's approach to contextual safeguarding, criminal and sexual exploitation, gangs, and work to reduce and prevent serious violence.</p>
Disability	X				<p>Disabled people are affected by hate crime and this plan contains actions that address local tensions, hate crime, intolerance and extremism. This includes a focus on increasing understanding of hate crime and hate incidents both online and in person and encouraging victims to report.</p>
Gender reassignment	X				<p>As above, hate crime actions are included in the strategy.</p>
Marriage and civil partnership	X				<p>Those who are pregnant may be at higher risk of domestic abuse. Priority 5 of the CSPP is aimed at tackling violence against women and girls and includes a focus on supporting survivors, educating, and communicating, challenging abusive behaviors and including lived experience of survivors.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	X				<p>As above, actions are included in the strategy.</p>

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT				
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Race (including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers)	X				As above there are specific actions to tackle hate crime, and as such people defined by race, colour, ethnic or national origins are affected more (assessed positive impact).
Religion or belief	X				As above there are specific actions to tackle hate crime, and as such people defined by race, colour, ethnic or national origins are affected more (assessed positive impact).
Sex	X				As above, hate crime actions are included in the strategy.
Sexual orientation	X				As above, hate crime actions are included in the strategy.
Any community issues identified for this location?					No further issues identified.

2. Consultation.

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?

Consultation and discussions with Community Safety Partnership Board members including the Police, Probation, Health, Voluntary, Council services and Community Sector organisations took place through a dedicated Community Safety Partnership Board Plan workshop on 7th December 2022.

Internal discussions at portfolio meetings with the Lead Cabinet Member for Enforcement and Community Safety Cllr Ghani. Internal discussions with Operational Director, Enforcement & Community Safety, Community Safety Operations Manager.

Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-26 was presented at Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8th February 2023. Committee members were invited to provide input and their comments were noted and incorporated into the final plan.

A virtual resident workshop and Q&A session held on 21st February 2023 chaired by Councillor Worby and included presentations by the Community Safety Partnership Manager, Community Safety Operations Manager, LBBD Comms Team, Domestic Abuse Improvement Lead and representatives from the Police.

Wider and formal public consultation with residents, visitors, partners and community and voluntary organisations about their experiences of safety in the borough and their priorities for the future. The consultation closed on Tuesday 28th February 2023 through the One Borough Voice Platform and the public's feedback was incorporated into the final plan.

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?
Review of the annual Community Safety Partnership Crime & Disorder Strategic Assessment (CDSA).	Annually in financial Quarter 2	Community Safety Partnership Board members
Review and refresh of the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-26	Annually in financial Quarter 3	Community Safety Partnership Board members
Regular reviews of CSP subgroup forward plans and action plans	Bi-monthly and quarterly	Community Safety Partnership Board subgroup members

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 community as a whole.

Take some time to précis 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.

<p>Implications/ Customer Impact</p>
<p>In summary, whilst we will be targeting protected characteristics and particular residents in the borough based on identified need, we anticipate the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-26 will have a positive impact on residents to improve safety for all.</p>

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
Chris Lyons	Chris Lyons, Community Safety Partnership Manager	30/03/2023

ASSEMBLY**17 May 2023**

Title: Members' Allowances Scheme 2023/24	
Report of the Acting Chief Executive	
Open Report	For Decision
Wards Affected: None	Key Decision: No
Report Authors: Alan Dawson, Head of Governance & Electoral Services	Contact Details: Email: alan.dawson@lbbd.gov.uk
Accountable Director: Alison Stuart, Chief Legal Officer and Interim Monitoring Officer	
Accountable Executive Team Director: Fiona Taylor, Acting Chief Executive	
<p>Summary:</p> <p>This report sets out proposals in relation to Members' allowances for the 2023/24 municipal year covering both the Basic Allowance payable to all councillors and Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) for those councillors appointed to specific positions.</p> <p>Last year, the Assembly approved the first set of changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme since 2018. Those changes included an increase to the Basic Allowance in line with the London Councils Independent Remuneration Panel (LCIRP) recommendations in its 2022 report which, to all intents and purposes, represented an increase to the Basic Allowance equivalent to the local government staff pay awards since 2018. A benchmarking of other London Boroughs' SRA payments, based on allowance levels in 2021/22, was also considered alongside the 2022 LCIRP report's recommended levels of SRAs. Although it was agreed not to increase SRAs to the LCIRP recommended levels due to the ongoing pressures on the Council's finances, the Assembly did agree specific increases to some of SRA positions as well as an 'inflationary' increase to all other SRAs, again equivalent to the local government staff pay awards since 2018.</p> <p>The 2022 LCIRP report also recommended that Basic Allowances and SRAs should be linked to the local government staff pay award each year, as a way of ensuring that councillors received annual increases in line with those received by staff. Although that proposal did not form part of the recommendations to the Assembly last year, it is now proposed that the staff pay award for the preceding year be applied to the Basic Allowance and SRAs going forward (ie. the average local government staff pay award of 6.6% for the 2022/23 financial year be applied to the 2023/24 Members' Allowances Scheme).</p> <p>The report also proposes the standardisation of an annual uplift to the Dependents' Carers' Allowance in line with the effective date of the London Living Wage.</p>	

<p>Recommendation(s)</p> <p>The Assembly is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Agree that the Basic Allowance paid to all councillors and Special Responsibility Allowances be increased annually in line with the average local government staff pay award for the preceding year; (ii) Agree that the Dependants' Carers' Allowance be increased in line with the effective date of any uplift to the London Living Wage; and (iii) Adopt the Members' Allowances Scheme 2023/24 at Appendix A to the report, to be effective from 18 May 2023.
<p>Reason(s)</p> <p>To accord with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.</p>

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require local authorities to make an annual scheme of allowances.
- 1.2 In setting its annual scheme, the Council must have regard to any recommendations of an independent remuneration panel (IRP). The exceptions to this requirement are where allowances are to be increased in accordance with an approved index or where no increase is proposed, subject to a review every four years.
- 1.3 In June 2014, the Council disbanded its own IRP due to a number of the Panel Members stepping down and the decision was taken that, from that point, the Council would have regard to the London Councils Independent Remuneration Panel (LCIRP) recommendations when considering its annual allowances. The LCIRP was established by London Councils in 2001 to exercise the function on behalf of London Boroughs and produces a report every four years, the latest being its 2022 report.
- 1.4 At the Annual meeting on 23 May 2018, the Assembly agreed an interim Members' Allowances Scheme for 2018/19 which kept the majority of allowances at the same levels since 2008/09. The changes to the Scheme were confined, at that time, to the SRAs relating to those roles that were revised / introduced as a direct result of the new Council governance and committee structure arrangements that had been approved by the Assembly at its 28 February and 23 May 2018 meetings.
- 1.5 At an extraordinary meeting of the Assembly on 18 July 2018, a report was presented on the outcome of a detailed review of the impact of the new governance arrangements and Members' new responsibilities under those arrangements, as well as the appropriate level of allowances having regard to the recommendations of the LCIRP Report 2018 and benchmarking against all other London Boroughs' allowances. The Assembly acknowledged that the basic allowance paid to all

councillors had remained frozen since 2008/09 at £10,006 and SRAs were also at the same levels as they were 10 years previously, except for the interim changes agreed at the 23 May 2018 meeting. With that in mind and having regard to the LCIRP recommendations and the benchmarking data, the Assembly agreed at the July 2018 meeting to increase the basic allowance from £10,006 to £11,000 and to increase the SRAs payable to a range of Chair and Deputy Chair positions, Cabinet Members and the Leader and Deputy Leader positions. Members' Allowances have remained at the 2018 levels since that time.

- 1.6 Last year, the Assembly approved the first set of changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme since 2018. Those changes included an increase to the Basic Allowance in line with the London Councils Independent Remuneration Panel (LCIRP) recommendations in its 2022 report which, to all intents and purposes, represented an increase to the Basic Allowance equivalent to the local government staff pay awards since 2018. With regard to SRAs and particularly the roles of Leader, Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member and Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, consideration was given to the levels recommended in the 2022 LCIRP report and officers also conducted a benchmarking exercise against other London Boroughs' schemes to provide a comparison, which was based on allowance levels in 2021/22. Stemming from that, although it was agreed not to increase SRAs to the LCIRP recommended levels due to the ongoing pressures on the Council's finances, the Assembly did agree specific increases to some of those posts referred to above as well as an 'inflationary' increase to all SRAs, again equivalent to the local government staff pay awards since 2018.
- 1.7 The Members' Allowances Scheme forms part of the Council Constitution (Part 6).

2. Proposal and Issues

2.1 Basic Allowance

- 2.1.1 In its 2018 report, the LCIRP recommended a Basic Allowance for all councillors of £11,045 – LBBD set its rate at £11,000.
- 2.1.2 In its 2022 report and in the wider context of considerable uncertainty and the financial climate, the LCIRP proposed a Basic Allowance of £12,014 which merely reflected the cumulative application of local government staff pay awards since 2018 (approx. 8.77% across the four-year period). That recommendation was adopted by the Assembly at its annual meeting on 25 May 2022.
- 2.1.3 The LCIRP also suggested that local authorities increase the Basic Allowance each year in line with the local government staff pay award (with the increase being backdated to 1 April). Following discussions between senior councillors and officers, it was decided not to automatically apply that uplift to Members' Allowances during 2022/23.
- 2.1.4 It is now proposed that the staff pay award for the preceding year be applied to the Basic Allowance and SRAs for 2023/24 and the future (ie. the average local government staff pay award of 6.6% for the 2022/23 financial year be applied to the 2023/24 Members' Allowances Scheme and the staff pay award for 2023/24 be applied to Members' Allowances for 2024/25).

2.1.5 The net effect of the increase from £12,014 to £12,807 for 2023/24 equates to an additional cost of circa £40,400 per annum (excluding on-costs).

2.2 Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)

2.2.1 With the exception of the annual uplift referred to in paragraph 2.1.4 above, there are no other proposed changes to SRAs for 2023/24.

2.2.2 The net effect of the annual uplift to SRAs for 2023/24 is circa £25,000 (excluding on-costs).

2.3 Other Allowances

2.3.1 The Members' Allowances Scheme also includes allowances in relation to co-opted (and other) members, travelling, subsistence and dependants' carers' allowances.

2.3.2 It is proposed that those allowances remain unchanged for 2023/24 with the exception of the dependants' carers' allowance, which may be claimed towards the cost of care for children or other dependants within the household who have a recognised need for care when councillors are undertaking 'approved duties'.

2.3.3 The Council's Pay Policy Statement reflects that the Council is committed to pay its staff, including apprentices, no less than the "London Living Wage", which is currently £11.95 per hour. Although the dependants' carers' allowance is not linked to the Council's Pay Policy, it is considered appropriate for that allowance to be increased annually from the effective date of the new London Living Wage. The increase to the dependants' carers' allowance would have a minimal impact on the overall Members' Allowances budget and can be contained within the annual budget.

2.4 The proposed Members' Allowances Scheme for 2023/24 is set out at **Appendix A**.

3. Options Appraisal

3.1 The two most apparent options would be (i) freezing allowances for 2023/24, and (ii) applying the rates recommended by the LCIRP in its 2022 report.

3.2 As was the case last year, the proposals in this report are largely focussed on bringing Members' Allowances into line with the local government staff pay awards, albeit one year in arrears. This is considered to represent an appropriate balance between the cost-of-living pressures affecting all while being mindful of the impact on the Council's finances of any increase to the Members' Allowances budget.

4. Consultation

4.1 The proposals in this report have been discussed with relevant Cabinet Members and officers.

5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Katherine Heffernan, Head of Service Finance

- 5.1 The Members' Allowances budget for 2023/24 is currently £1,006,565. The cumulative impact of the proposals in this report would amount to an additional £66,000 in payments to members. Together with the increased rate of National Insurance contributions the budget requirement is expected to increase to £1,152,981. This increase will be funded from the pay and prices inflation provision included in the budget as part of the MTFS.
- 5.2 It should be noted that the pay award for Local Government staff was based on a flat rate which was equivalent to 6.6% on average. It has been agreed to use this percentage for members allowances for simplicity and fairness – however in practice this will result in slightly different increases (some higher, some lower) than staff on equivalent salaries.

6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Dr Paul Feild, Senior Governance Lawyer

- 6.1 The legal basis for the payments is section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and regulations made by the Secretary of State being the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require local authorities to make an annual scheme of allowances.
- 6.2 Agreeing the scheme is specifically not a Cabinet function by virtue of paragraph 2(5) of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations 2000 as amended, and so it must be approved by the Assembly.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- London Councils Independent Panel Report “The Remuneration of Councillors in London 2022” (<https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/who-we-are/about-us/financial-information/leadership-and-expenses/remuneration-councillors-london>)
- “Members’ Allowances Scheme 2018/19” report to Assembly 23 May 2018 (Minute 10) (<https://modgov.lbbd.gov.uk/Internet/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=179&MId=9404&Ver=4>)
- “Revised Members’ Allowances Scheme 2018/19” report to Extraordinary meeting of the Assembly 18 July 2018 (Minute 19) (<https://modgov.lbbd.gov.uk/Internet/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=179&MId=10257&Ver=4>)
- “Members’ Allowances Scheme 2022/23” report to Assembly 25 May 2022 (Minute 9) (<https://modgov.lbbd.gov.uk/Internet/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=179&MId=11188&Ver=4>)

List of appendices:

- **Appendix A** – Proposed Members’ Allowances Scheme 2023/24

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Members' Allowances Scheme 2023/24

The Council of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, pursuant to the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("the Regulations"), hereby makes the following scheme.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Members' Allowances Scheme ("the Scheme") is approved each year by the Assembly at its annual meeting. The Assembly shall have regard to any recommendations made by an independent remuneration panel before making or amending the Scheme, except where allowances are to be increased in accordance with an approved index or where no increase is proposed, subject to a review every four years.

2. Types of Allowances

- 2.1 The allowances payable are:
- a) Basic Allowance;
 - b) Special Responsibility Allowance;
 - c) Co-opted Members' Allowance;
 - d) Travelling and Subsistence Allowance;
 - e) Dependants' Carers' Allowance;
 - f) Other allowances as described in the Scheme.

3. Effective Date

- 3.1 This Scheme has effect from 18 May 2023.

4. Definitions

- 4.1 "Approved duties" means attendance by a Councillor or Co-opted Member at any:
- a) formally convened meeting of any committee or body to which the individual has been appointed or nominated by the Authority, including any sub-committees or working parties thereof;
 - b) conference, training session and presentation organised by or on behalf of the Authority which the individual is required to attend;
 - c) meeting with a Strategic or other Director where the Councillor's attendance has been requested in writing or by e-mail or where the Councillor is a member of the Cabinet.
- 4.2 "Co-opted Member" means any co-opted, added or independent Member of a Committee or other body to which this scheme relates regardless of whether or not the Co-opted Member receives a Co-opted Members' Allowance.

5. Basic Allowance

- 5.1 A Basic Allowance shall be paid to each Councillor in accordance with Appendix 1 to this Scheme.
- 5.2 The Basic Allowance shall be annually adjusted in accordance with the average local government staff pay award for the preceding year.

6. Special Responsibility Allowances

- 6.1 Special Responsibility Allowances shall be paid in accordance with Appendix 1 to this Scheme.
- 6.2 Special Responsibility Allowances shall be annually adjusted in accordance with the average local government staff pay award for the preceding year.
- 6.3 Where a Councillor would otherwise be entitled under the Scheme to more than one Special Responsibility Allowance, the entitlement shall only be to the highest allowance.
- 6.4 In the event of a person receiving a Special Responsibility Allowance being absent or substantially unable to act for a period of at least three months, the Council may resolve to reduce the level of Special Responsibility Allowance payable to that person and instead resolve to pay the allowance, or part of it, to any person appointed as a deputy or vice-chair for such period as it determines.

7. Travelling and Subsistence Allowances

- 7.1 Travelling and subsistence allowances in respect of Approved Duties undertaken by Councillors and Co-opted Members are payable in accordance with Appendix 1 to this Scheme.
- 7.2 The provisions relating to eligibility to Travelling and Subsistence Allowances apply only to Approved Duties undertaken outside the Borough. Councillors and Co-opted Members are not permitted to claim Travelling and Subsistence Allowances for any activities undertaken within the Borough.

8. Dependants' Carers' Allowance

- 8.1 The Dependants' Carers' allowance in respect of Approved Duties undertaken by Councillors and Co-opted Members shall be annually adjusted in line with the minimum London Living Wage.
- 8.2 The allowance may be claimed towards the cost of care for children or other dependants within the household who have a recognised need for care.
- 8.3 The allowance will not be payable to a member of the immediate family or household.
- 8.4 The maximum period of the entitlement will be the duration of the approved duty and reasonable travelling time.

9. Co-opted Members

- 9.1 Co-opted Members shall be paid in accordance with Appendix 1 to this Scheme.

10. School Appeal Panel Members

- 10.1 School Appeal Panel (Admissions and Exclusions) members shall be entitled to an allowance as set out in Appendix 1 to this Scheme but shall not be eligible to receive travelling, subsistence or Dependants' Carers' allowances.

11. National Insurance and Income Tax

- 11.1 Payment of allowances shall be subject to such deductions as may be statutorily required in respect of national insurance and income tax.

12. Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

- 12.1 In accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014, Councillors are not eligible to be members of the LGPS.

13. Renunciation

- 13.1 A Councillor and/or Co-opted Member may, by notice in writing to the Chief Executive, elect to forgo all or any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under this Scheme.

14. Payments and Claims

- 14.1 Payment of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances shall be made in instalments of one-twelfth of the amounts specified on a monthly basis, unless other arrangements are agreed.
- 14.2 Where an individual takes office part way through a year, a proportionate part of any applicable allowance is payable, unless the allowance is a Special Responsibility Allowance for serving on a committee which is appointed for a period of less than a year.
- 14.3 The Council may determine that an allowance or a rate of allowance will not come into effect until a date other than the effective date of this Scheme. In such circumstances, the alternative date that the allowance shall be payable from shall be specified in Appendix 1 to this Scheme.
- 14.4 Claims for travelling, subsistence and dependants' carers' allowance should be completed monthly and no later than three months from the date that the expenditure was incurred.

15. Councillors who are Members of another Authority

- 15.1 Any Councillor who is also a Member of another Authority shall only receive allowances from one Authority in respect of the same duties.
- 15.2 In such instances, the Councillor shall be required to nominate the Authority from whom he/she wishes to receive the allowance(s) and advise the Chief Executive accordingly.

16. Record of Allowances Paid

- 16.1 A record of the payments made by the Authority to each Councillor and Co-opted Member shall be maintained and published in accordance with the Regulations.

17. Publication of Scheme

- 17.1 As soon as practicable after the making or amendment of this Scheme, arrangements shall be made for its publication within the Authority's area in accordance with the Regulations.

**London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
Schedule of Allowances for 2023/24**

Type	Allowance (per annum unless otherwise stated)
BASIC ALLOWANCE (for all Councillors)	£12,807
SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES	
Leader of the Council	£53,833
Deputy Leader(s) of the Council	£31,980
Other Cabinet Members	£22,030
Deputy Cabinet Members	£7,995
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£13,858
Deputy Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee	£6,929
Chair, Planning Committee	£10,660
Deputy Chair, Planning Committee	£5,330
Chair, Assembly Chair, Audit and Standards Committee Chair, Health Scrutiny Committee Chair, Licensing and Regulatory Committee Chair, Pensions Committee Chair, Personnel Board Chair, Policy Task Group	£5,797
Deputy Chair, Assembly Deputy Chair, Audit and Standards Committee Deputy Chair, Health Scrutiny Committee Deputy Chair, Licensing and Regulatory Committee Deputy Chair, Pensions Committee Deputy Chair, Personnel Board Deputy Chair, Policy Task Group	£2,898
Leader(s) of the Minority Groups	£397 per seat (with a minimum of £1,287 per Leader)

Type	Allowance (per annum unless otherwise stated)
Mayor's Allowance (payable under section 3(5) of Part I of the Local Government Act 1972)	£13,913
CO-OPTED MEMBERS' AND OTHER ALLOWANCES	
Independent Member (to Audit and Standards Committee for audit functions)	£500 per meeting
Independent Persons (to Audit and Standards Committee for standards functions)	£500
School Appeal Panel Members (Admissions and Exclusions)	£20 per session (up to four hours)
TRAVELLING ALLOWANCES	
Mileage Rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car: 45p per mile • Motorcycle: 24p per mile • Bicycle: 20p per mile
SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES	
Meal Allowances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast (away between 7.00am and 11.00am) - £4.92 • Lunch (away between 12.00 noon and 2.00pm) - £6.77 • Tea (away between 3.00pm and 6.00pm) - £2.67 • Evening (away between 7.00pm and 11pm) - £8.35
Overnight (continuous period of 24 hours involving absence overnight)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal - £79.82 • Greater London, AMA Annual Conference or other approved Association conferences - £91.04
DEPENDANTS' CARERS' ALLOWANCE	
	£11.95 per hour effective from 22 September 2022 (equivalent to minimum London Living Wage)