

Barking & Dagenham

Corporate Plan 2020/2022 Performance and Delivery Update

01 April 2021 to 30 September 2021

This report covers financial quarters 1 and 2 of 2021/22 (April to September) but it has been written to give the most contemporary position as at the time of writing; it therefore reflects performance and delivery up to the end of December 2021

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Inclusive Growth

Building new homes

Key performance and delivery messages:

- On the latest figures, over 2,500 affordable homes will have been completed in the borough between May 2018 and May 2022.
- This figure includes affordable homes built by all providers operating in the borough. LBBD/Be First is the largest builder of affordable homes in the borough, but residents will also benefit from a significant number of affordable homes built on Barking Riverside and those built by Housing Associations such as Clarion.
- Just over 1,600 have been completed between May 2018 and October 2021.
- Nearly 900 are therefore due to complete between October 2021 and May 2022 (so there is a risk that these numbers change if schemes are delayed).
- This includes homes completed at all sub-market tenures (e.g. social rent, intermediate rent and shared ownership).
- Based on data held by the Council, a reasonable estimate is that 80% of all the affordable homes went to local people.
- In August, the Council received an additional £171m of affordable housing grant, the largest allocation of any London borough. This grant will fund additional affordable homes that will start on site between 2022 and 2026.

Priorities for the next six months:

- A large number of new homes built by Be First are due to complete in the next six months. In total, nearly 400 new homes are scheduled to handover from Be First into management between January 2022 and May 2022. This includes:
 - 95 new affordable homes on the former Sebastian Court site, due to be fully complete by January 2022.
 - Over 200 new homes on the latest phase of the Gascoigne regeneration, due to complete in April 2022.
 - 169 new homes at the Crown House scheme in Barking Town Centre, due to complete in May 2022.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Construction delays owing to material and labour shortages, or difficulties in procuring from the supply chain. This could delay the completion of new homes.
- Risks relating to the sale of shared ownership homes in the current housing market.

Improving the quality and management of homes

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Responsive repair performance was significantly impacted by the number and type of repairs undertaken, which were restricted during the pandemic. In June 2021, Barking and Dagenham Management Services (BDMS)² initiated a backlog plan to target to reduce open repairs. Between June and October 2021 over 1000 open repairs were cleared from the backlog.
- Satisfaction with responsive repairs for council properties remains extremely low, at 47% in October 2021. The target is 87% satisfaction.
- The average void turnaround time for General Needs properties during October 2021 was 102.8 days. This is an increase of 19.5 days against the average figure in 2020/21.
- The stock investment spend for 2021/22 is now forecast to be £25m by the end of the financial year, against a budget of £35m. This means that the percentage of council properties that meet the Decent Homes Standard will remain below the target of 97%.
- The number of privately rented homes that are licensed has increased from under 10,000 in April 2021 to 11,617 in September 2021.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Joint work between My Place and BDMS on resident safety, with a focus on improving data and processes.
- My Place is working with BDMS to implement plans to improve performance in the repairs and maintenance service. The focus of this work is on disrepair cases, reducing complaints, responsive repairs and void works.
- The main cause of the delay in void turnarounds is due to the length taken for repair works to be carried out before the property is available for re-let. My Place are working with BDMS to reduce the time taken at each phase of the void process.
- Ensure stock investment programme delivery is optimised following the Covid-19 related delays.
- Support residents in rent arrears due to the impact of Covid-19.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Risk that performance continues to decline in the coming quarters, though improvement plans are being implemented within both BDMS and My Place to address the root causes of poor performance.
- Decent homes target for end of 2021/22 not met due to impact of delays to the stock investment programme in 2020.
- Risk to rent collection due to ongoing impact of Covid-19.

² Barking and Dagenham Management Services are responsible for the repair and maintenance of LBBD HRA assets.

Tackling Homelessness

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Total households in Temporary Accommodation (TA) are continuing to reduce, with 1,408 households in TA at end of October 2021. Although slight increases are expected in November and December in line with seasonal trends, it is projected that total households will be under 1400 by March 2022 - in line with target.
- The number of households in Private Sector Leased (PSL) Temporary Accommodation is at 974 as of end of October, a reduction of 112 PSL properties since March 2021 and on track to achieve budget savings.
- Homeless applications owed a full housing duty is at 5.5% of total approaches, showing the majority of approaches are resolved prior to this stage.
- The annual rough sleeper count found 3 people rough sleeping in the Borough, against a total of 10 in 2020 and 14 in 2019, evidencing a positive direction of travel against the strategic aim of ending rough sleeping.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Continue to reduce the number of households in Private Sector Leased Temporary Accommodation to reduce cost.
- Continue to use data and insight to find alternative housing options for households in temporary accommodation, keeping exits from TA at the high levels achieved to date and continue the downward trajectory of total number of households in TA.
- Continue to use prevention as the key method to prevent households entering TA and resolving their homelessness.
- Continue to deliver the rough sleeping plan developed for 2021/22.
- Develop the rough sleeping plan and associated Rough Sleeping Initiative Funding bid for 2022/23.

Key risks in the next six months:

- The reduction of Covid related welfare support and restrictions on evictions being lifted may result in increased homeless approaches. These risks are being mitigated by work to increase resident's financial stability as well as the preventative approach to homelessness.
- Potential risks of increased rough sleeping remain – while Brexit itself is not a key issue, issues around regularising immigration as a result of immigration issues such as criminal records or inability to provide evidence of identity can lead to loss and/or cancellation of benefits which can impact on housing status. This risk continues to be mitigated through work with the Home Office and to date see an increase in demand has not been seen (only notification of residents having benefits suspended due to Brexit).

Providing homes for vulnerable residents

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Panels set up to consider housing options for specific cases continue to identify improved housing solutions for vulnerable residents and avoid cost escalation. Examples of outcomes include:
 - Young person leaving care who required accommodation, in a placement costing £196 per week. The panel helped them move into a Reside property, with the council agreeing to pay the deposit. Cost to the council therefore reduced to zero, with the resident paying rent to Reside.
 - Two children who had been cleared to return to family home from care for a planned relocation – but parent could not move due to rent arrears. Panel facilitated clearing rent arrears to enable the move.
- 187 wheelchair accessible homes being built by Be First across all their new build schemes completing by 2024.
- Further extensions/adaptations of existing council properties approved.
- Plans for new bungalows are being progressed, as well as specialist housing co-designed with service users.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Carrying out a review of the work on housing for vulnerable people to agree priorities for 2022 onwards. This will include a focus on housing for older people.
- Letting of new wheelchair accessible homes on schemes being handed over.
- Bringing forward detailed proposals for specialist homes on small sites for approval.
- Carrying out works to extend and adapt existing council homes.
- Redevelopment of the Brocklebank site, to include new homes for people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The existing building is due to be demolished in early 2022.

Key risk in the next six months:

- Delays to building projects that will deliver new specialist homes.

Improving the quantity and quality of jobs in Barking and Dagenham

Key performance and delivery messages:

- The LBBD – Barking Enterprise Centre (BEC) Business Recovery Programme to mitigate COVID-related job losses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sector was supporting 76 local businesses as of the end of October 2021, with 12 more at initial diagnostic stage.
- A Film Sector Development Lead is in post and working to develop branding, launch and delivery plans for the programme of employment, training, supply chain and community pathways to ensure residents and local businesses benefit from the new film studios.
- A new Section 106 policy is being finalised to secure stronger construction and end-user phase employment, training and supply chain commitments from developers in the borough and compensation for non-compliance.
- A draft action plan to improve pay and standards in adult social care has been developed, with actions to improve recruitment, retention and career progression; develop the personal assistant workforce; launch a business support programme for the sector; and develop the funding and commissioning model to better support good quality jobs and services in adult homecare.
- A review of how to use the Council's commercial property portfolio to support economic development and increase income for the council has been conducted as part of work to develop a new economic development function to secure better jobs for residents.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Extend the BEC Business Recovery Programme to support businesses in other sectors that have been affected by COVID but haven't had access to grants and viable businesses being asked to relocate due to the Vicarage Fields development.
- Launch the Film Barking and Dagenham: Make It Here programme in January 2022 and develop the pathways to enable residents to access opportunities linked to the studios.
- Recruit a Food Sector Development Lead and Food Education Partnership Coordinator to deliver a food strategy linked to the City of London wholesale markets.
- Finalise, agree and launch the Care Sector Action Plan to support improvement in quality of jobs in the sector.
- Bring forward the business case for the proposed economic development function and new approach to the council's commercial property portfolio.
- Commission a review to identify how to grow the green economy in the borough.
- Work with My Place and the procurement team to pilot measures to increase the value of goods and services the council procures directly from local businesses.
- Work with the events team to deliver an in-person Business Forum event in line with national COVID guidelines.
- Improve signposting for businesses across the council and improve how different business-facing services across the council engage with and support businesses.
- Develop and launch a plan a plan to ensure the council's contracted service providers pay the London Living Wage.

Key risk in the next six months:

- New pandemic restrictions on the economy.
- Challenges engaging with care sector providers still very occupied with day-to-day workload related to long term impacts created by pandemic restrictions this year.

Supporting residents to access new opportunities in the borough

Key performance and delivery messages:

- In line with national trends, the end of the furlough scheme has not resulted in the widespread job losses that were feared – but LBBB has been left with one of the highest unemployment rates in the country (the latest figure for unemployment is a rate of 9.4%).
- The Job Shop achieved its strongest performance in 2019/20, with 1,251 residents supported into jobs. This reduced to 765 in 2020/21 due to Covid. As of October 2021, 355 residents have been supported into work this year (excluding S106 outcomes).
- Since the Kickstart scheme launched in September 2020, the council has secured over 300 Kickstart places for young people in the area across 50 employers, over 150 of which have been filled, with more vacancies still available. The scheme has been extended to March 2022 but closes to new employers in December.
- In the 2019/20 academic year the Adult College supported 1,147 unemployed residents into learning, with 829 in 2020/21 against a Covid-19 reduced target of 600. 684 have been recorded so far this year as of October 2021.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Drive up registration and employment outcomes again for residents as the economy recovers – including delivery of a successful Community Renewal Fund bid to support residents to access opportunities in the green economy.
- Achieve successful onward pathways for Kickstart employed young people beyond end of their placements, into work or training – and explore funding to develop a local scheme that meets the gap left by the end of the scheme in March 2022.
- Encourage more employers to set up apprenticeships for new entrants including by re-launching and promoting the Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Scheme in target sectors.
- Develop an innovative Social Value programme with BD Group, Community Solutions and Adult Care and Support services to create more supported training and work placements for people facing disadvantage in the labour market.
- Develop and launch a Youth Covenant with commitments to secure job and training opportunities for young people through our sector development activity.
- Launch a new specialist Innovation in Construction training centre at Barking Riverside and widen the Adult College curriculum to support entry into good jobs in growth sectors.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Potential for further pandemic restrictions in the economy, potentially leading to further job losses and economic uncertainty.
- Challenges supporting Kickstarters and long-term unemployed residents in the borough to move into sustainable employment, in a context of increased competition for jobs.
- Potential gaps in the Work and Skills team's funding if bids in the pipeline are not successful; the estimated budget gap based on secured funding is £433,000³.

Safe and liveable neighbourhoods

Key performance and delivery messages:

- A Barking Town Centre action plan and working group has been established to develop long term solutions and improve safety and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) in this location
- Performance has improved in a number of enforcement areas including the numbers of Fixed Penalty Notices issued, numbers of zero-rated food premises and £300k of fines have been issued to landlords in the last year.
- A pilot started in September 2021 to identify unlicensed privately rented properties and is being successful in this and identifying other issues.
- Two new ASB teams have been established. One is a pilot to ensure that cases are better co-ordinated and victims receive a better service and a new community safety enforcement team has been rolled out that is focussed on dealing with street based issues such as begging and street drinking.
- The Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) programme is progressing although it has been delayed and will not be completed until 2023. The third phase (of five) is well underway with six schemes implemented in Quarter 1 and Quarter 2.
- The Environmental Enforcement and Public Realm teams have been working closely to improve information sharing and joint work to tackle fly tipping and other environmental issues. ICT improvements, greater collaboration and resident engagement are being planned through 'Keeping the Streets Clean' work (detailed below).
- The number of reported fly-tipped cases in Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 was 1,302. During Quarter 1 the Keeping Our Streets Clean project started with the objective of addressing the issue of fly-tipping in the Borough.
 - This will be done by testing new approaches to prevent residents from fly tipping as well as testing new approaches to how services react to fly tips.

³ As at end of period 7 (October) financial monitoring.

- The project is set to run between June 2021 and January 2022 and will focus on encourage recycling, making it easier to dispose of bulky waste and improve reporting and clearing of fly-tips.
- The gross income from pest control, trade and green garden waste (GGW) for Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 was £3.21m, delivering a net surplus of £102k. However, GGW delivered a net deficit of £125k. As part of the latest setting of Fees and Charges⁴, a 2.5% increase to the subscription fee is effective from January 2022. The additional revenue will close this deficit.
- Phase one of the Cleaner Barking and Dagenham campaign is complete, and phase two of the campaign is currently ongoing. The Extended Recycling Scheme has been promoted, which launched in April 2021, and allows residents to recycle more items such as glass and mixed plastics in their recycling bins.
- In April 2021, Street Cleansing decided to look at alternative options to the Keep Britain Tidy (KBT) survey by utilising existing staff and the Geographic Information System (GIS) team. This work has helped design and build a bespoke ArcGIS123 App to benchmark, compare and receive more frequent and meaningful data. Hot Spots are being introduced based on worst areas and selected by the area operational teams.
 - This system has now been implemented and is currently being monitored to ensure it delivers the benefits of;
 - Reduced administrative duplication.
 - Development of a dynamic dashboard allowing for dynamic allocation of resource and identification of improvement areas.
 - Provide an internal audit capability that is built on open & honest evaluation of the day-to-day standards.
- Since 2020, a degree of workforce instability, both front-line and supervisory, has affected the reliability and resilience of Waste Services. A recruitment programme took place over the summer to address this. Despite these challenges, domestic, recycling, and GGW collections made on the scheduled day have consistently exceeded the target of 99% during Quarter 1 and Quarter 2.
- Service digitalisation to procure a back-office system and mobile “in-cab” technology for waste operations is in the process of going through procurement processes, for implementation for April 2022.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Deliver the Barking Town Centre Action Plan.
- Continue to rollout the CPZ programme with one scheme to rollout in December and three more in Quarter 4.

⁴ [Cabinet, 16 November 2021, minute 57](#)

- Evaluate the privately rented property licensing pilot (PRPL) and make a decision about the future resourcing of this work.
- Review resources delivering anti-social behaviour initiatives following the six-month pilot.
- Covid-19 continues to present a demanding environment for frontline services. These demands have risen as footfall around the borough has increased. The workload around ensuring a Covid-safe workplace and monitoring staff compliance places a continuing burden on frontline services. As we move through Autumn into Winter, the services need to remain vigilant around the possible effects from the Coronavirus and monitor if further measures are put in place.
- The campaign plan for the third phase of the Cleaner Barking and Dagenham Campaign is being developed with the Service Area and the Behavioural Science and Service Design Lead. The third campaign phase will focus on encouraging key behaviour changes we need our residents to do to help make our borough a cleaner and greener place. This phase will roll out between December 2021 and March 2022.
- Recruitment of waste operatives remains a priority going forward. The service has recruited into 15 of the 30 vacancies so far and continue to interview prospective candidates.
- The procurement of in-cab technology for the waste service is planned for Quarter 3 and Quarter 4, with the aim for implementation by April 2022.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Courts have largely been closed for enforcement cases so there has been a large backlog in prosecutions and thus a reduction in income although the team are now getting a steady stream of prosecutions through the system.
- Recruitment within Enforcement is a challenge meaning the service is carrying vacancies and is under strength in certain teams. A workforce development plan is in place.
- The main risk for frontline public realm services remains Covid-19, although measures were relaxed in July 2021, the new variant may result in a tightening of measures. Therefore, there remains a need to be vigilant and to focus on service continuity.
- Multiple agencies are now being used for frontline Public Realm staff but finding suitable people is slow and if the waste services are unable to recruit permanently to all vacant posts this may affect service continuity.

Investing in physical and social infrastructure

Key performance and delivery messages:

- A bid has been submitted to the first round of funding from the Levelling Up fund, focused on proposed improvements to access at Dagenham East station. The bid was unsuccessful, and feedback is awaiting from Central Government for the reasons as to why. Other options are being considered for bringing forward the proposals.
- The Council and Barking Riverside London (BRL) have agreed a plan to accelerate the delivery of a Health and Leisure Hub at Barking Riverside. The centre will bring together primary health services, community spaces with a leisure centre and pool together under one roof. The centre is expected to be open in 2024.
- Our draft Local Plan is now out for final round of consultation before it is submitted to the planning inspectorate early in 2022. The plan sets out in spatial terms how the council will facilitate the delivery of the new homes we need to provide, as well as setting out what infrastructure is needed to support it.
- Homes England agreed to provide some additional funding to allow the council to continue developing the business case for tunnelling the A13 to improve connectivity across the borough and provide land for new development.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Working with BRL to ensure the successful delivery of the new jetty (which the Council has part funded through CIL funding) that will see the arrival of Thames Clipper services to the borough from the Spring of 2022, providing a new transport link to Canary Wharf and Central London.
- Progressing work on preparing our bid for the second round of Levelling Up funding which is expected to launch in the Spring. This bid will focus on delivering transport improvements in Barking town centre.
- Working with National Rail and C2C to ensure the delivery of improvements to Barking station and surrounding public realm.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Rising costs of materials and labour is putting pressure on the delivery of construction projects which may lead to delays on progress with these schemes.

Shaping aspirational places

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Be First have started onsite on two sites at Thames Road which are the first steps in the wider transformation of the area. 12 Thames Road will provide a mix of new homes and commercial premises, while the Industrial development will provide a stacked industrial scheme that is one of the first of its kind in London.
- LBBD has agreed to lease Roycraft House in Barking Town Centre to an affordable workspace provider. This initiative will bring new businesses to the town centre and provide new public realm.
- Work has started on Barking Station improvements, including cleaning the façade of the station, clearing out vacant units and improving the public realm outside the station. These are the first step in the wider transformation of the station area.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Initial scoping work is underway to design the future of the Dagenham Heathway. A visit was hosted from the government's high street task force and initial engagement work with the community has been initiated.
- Working with Hackman to support them in opening the film studios at Welbeck Wharf, which is due to be operational by Spring 2022.
- Progressing the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process which will enable phase one of the Vicarage Field redevelopment to commence. Phase one will see the delivery of new homes and improved retail units.
- Progressing with work on the development of the council's vision for the South of the borough, including working with Homes England on the business case for tunnelling the A13.

Key risk in the next six months:

- Delays to projects caused by increasing costs of construction.

A decarbonised, local energy system

Key performance and delivery messages:

- 71 solar panel arrays and Tank Genies were installed in the households of vulnerable residents under Green Homes Grant Phase 1A, significantly cutting heating and power bills with case studies used by the Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). However, there was zero uptake of air source heat pumps as an alternative to gas for heating.
- Under Green Homes Grant Phase 1B, further solar PV units were beginning to be deployed.
- Works continued at pace to deliver the Barking Town Centre Strategic Heat Network and pipework has been laid across the town centre as part of the successful Heat Network Improvement Programme and Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) funding.
- A suite of energy conservation and renewable energy measures across 20 of the Council's largest energy consuming buildings drawn up into investment grade proposals.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Completion of Green Homes Grant Phase 1B solar installs.
- Connection of the district heat network to Barking Town Hall, the Abbey Leisure Centre and Broadway Theatre to be completed and operational.
- Beginning of works delivering retrofit and renewables installs across the corporate estate and securing borrowing from the low-interest Mayor of London's Energy Efficiency Fund (MEEF).

Key risk in the next six months:

- There is a risk that BEIS could claw-back Green Homes Grant 1B and PSDS funding should the programmes not deliver on time, but this is looking unlikely as the district heat network construction is being delivered at pace and uptake of 1B grant has been much stronger than was found with 1A grant.
- That the decarbonisation of the corporate estate falters, due to lack of funding. The Government pulled 0% interest Salix grant-funding with one month's notice early this year which threatened the delivery of the programme. Initial conversations with MEEF have been more promising but package is subject to the approval of the Mayor and the Council's senior leadership.

Energy efficient homes and buildings

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Cosy Homes programme continues to be a flagship scheme winning an industry award for London's Best Large-scale Energy Efficiency Award 2021.
- 1,002 energy efficiency measures have been installed, across tenure, in 855 homes, delivering £3.8m of expected lifetime bill savings for residents over 25 years.
- The scheme has leveraged in more than £1m of Energy Company Obligation (ECO3) funding and is due to save 11,000 tonnes of carbon.
- Successfully awarded £3.4m of Green Homes Grant Phase 3 and Homes Upgrade Grant 1 funding for the delivery of external wall and underfloor insulation and solar PV across 340 vulnerable owner-occupied properties.
- Submission of a consortium bid for £7m for phase 2 of the deep retrofit programme and £500k for works on the Whiting Avenue estate in Barking through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 1 process.
- Procurement and contractor issues hindered early progress on the deep retrofit pilot on Becontree, resulting in a new contractor only just being appointed and concept designs completed.
- As described in the 'a decarbonised, local energy system' section the planned funding regime for works was abruptly closed leading to a pause on the investment grade proposals for corporate retrofit and further exploration of community municipal investments.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Continued roll-out of measures under the Cosy Homes programme, transition to ECO4 and delivery of grant-assisted retrofit programmes.
- Finishing designs, securing planning permission and completion of works on the delivery of 39 deep retrofit properties by June 2022.
- Beginning the process of devising a Stock Decarbonisation Programme for the Council's 17,500 homes.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Due to the unique nature of the deep retrofit scheme, delivery has been consistently challenged and that will not dissipate with potential issues arising over the properties themselves, tenant sign-up, planning consents and claw-back of grant by BEIS
- We are not successful in our recent Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 1 bids – this would require the Council to find more of its own funding for phase 2 works of the deep retrofit and Barking estate project or potentially pause the schemes

A green local environment

Key performance and delivery messages:

- The Project Centre report into 150 potential sites for EV charge-point deployment was completed and provided a useful benchmark for discussions with charge-point operators, however the planned Cabinet paper to go to market was paused due to concerns about the quality of offers and lack of a values-led approach from a majority of operators.
- A new Supplementary Planning Document is being drafted, following the approval of the latest iteration of the Draft Local Plan, to capture revised planning obligation contributions for air quality, green infrastructure and biodiversity.
- The Draft Cycling and Walking Strategy has been completed and adopted as an appendix to the Draft Local Plan and will be progressed as part of a new Cycling Steering Group.
- Progress on devising an action plan for funding enhancement works to our local Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and the Tree Planting Action Plan has stalled due to time constraints and commitments for required external partners and general resourcing within the council and our £900k bid for the GLA's Future Neighbourhoods Fund, which was key to trialling an urban nature recovery network was unsuccessful.
- Successfully awarded monies from the Urban Challenge Fund and the Treescape Funds to deliver new almost 400 new trees on amenity greens across the borough and patches of street planting in the north of the borough. Members agreed to double tree canopy by 2040.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Seek Cabinet approval in January 2022 for the proposed deployment of 250 EV charge-points across our public realm over the next two years with a preferred charge-point operator.
- To work with external partners such as London Wildlife Trust (LWT), Thames Chase, Buglife, Citizen Zoo and others to devise the principles for an Ecological Recovery Plan for LBBD. This will seek to protect and enhance our Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), develops proposals for an Urban Nature Recovery Network, weaves in plans on the Becontree Estate to reimagine green spaces and supports our efforts to attract developer contributions for increasing biodiversity levels.
- 200 Standard⁵ trees are expected to be planted over the course of this tree-planting season with additional canopy being delivered under the conditions of the grant awarded.
- Consultant commissioned to help devise an air quality tariff base rate which is localised to the needs of Barking and Dagenham, which can be used to calculate developer's contributions to our Air Quality Action Fund.

⁵ Trees with a single, straight trunk, absent of lower branches for a minimum of the first 1.8 metres.

Key risk in the next six months:

- Funding for the development of an Ecological Recovery Plan is not forthcoming. Inclusive Growth are hopeful that project management costs recouped from current grant programmes can be used to fund the proposal.

Money and Debt

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Council Tax current year collection is 1.5% higher than the same time in 2020/21. Residents are clearing the arrears they accrued during the pandemic with the collection of debts in previous years increasing by 88%.
- Rent collection of general needs properties is 0.3% below collection rates in 2020/21. An additional £2.6m of arrears was created due to the pandemic in 2020/21 and work continues with tenants to help them clear those debts. This work includes payment plans, budgeting advice, work and skills training and guidance and assistance with applications for any further benefit entitlement. The pandemic has resulted in an increase in the number of tenants transitioning which has continued into 2021/22 and the delays in Universal Credit payments are resulting in tenants falling into arrears.
- Business Rates collection is now 3% above the same time in 2020/21. However, collection rates have not yet returned to the 2019/20 levels. Businesses have been contacted to discuss repayment of any debt accrued as a result of the pandemic. The Business Rates team has been working with businesses and is paying particular attention to agreeing repayment plans that do not place unnecessary risk upon the business and its continuation.
- Housing Benefit overpayments collection is 1.2% below 2020/21. However, the creation of overpayments has steadily declined since the introduction of universal credit. Many debts are collected via deductions from ongoing benefits. However, as debtors move to Universal Credit this method of collection is considerably less effective as the DWP have deprioritised deductions.
- Commercial rent collection is 5% above the same time in 2020/21. Whilst the pandemic impacted collection it has been possible to work with businesses to help them clear any arrears.
- Collection from Reside properties is 1.3% higher than in 20/21. Work continues with tenants to ensure that payment plans are in place to clear the arrears that accrued as a result of the pandemic.
- General income collection is 12% behind the same time in 20/21. However, backdated invoices to the NHS totalling £9m have been issued which have increased the debt. These invoices will be paid and will result in an increase in collection compared with 20/21.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Progression of debt recovery action against those wilfully refusing to make payment. The Becontree Collection Service (BCS) is currently engaging with residents using its ethically collection approach and will shortly be doing same for business rates debtors.
- Completion of a service wide review of recovery processes and their effectiveness. A full review of processes has been undertaken during the last few months. It has identified points in the process where it is possible to take a different approach to collection by using data from OneView.
- Completion of the Additional Reductions Grant scheme for businesses by March 2022. This is currently supporting a small number of businesses via way of grant, business advice and planning given by the BEC.
- Development of payment trend analysis to identify tenants transitioning from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit. This will allow for early contact with the tenants to assist them with payment plans and prevent arrears.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Tenants that transition to Universal Credit may fall further into arrears due to delays in payment by the DWP.
- Further restrictions as a result of new Covid variants will affect employment levels and business trading.
- Ending of the furlough scheme on 30 September 2021 may result in increased unemployment.

Participation and Engagement

Building capacity in the social sector

Key performance and delivery messages:

- An Endowment fund worth £906,595 has been transferred to BD Giving to own and manage on behalf of the social sector of Barking and Dagenham. Under their stewardship, the fund will grow and its proceeds will be distributed to community groups through participative funding processes. BD Giving has also secured £358,160 over four years from the National Lottery Community's Reaching Communities Fund. This has enabled BD Giving to grow their team which will contribute to building BD Giving's longer-term sustainability, help develop new services, and build their capacity to grow the Endowment.
- The Social Infrastructure Contract continues to be delivered by the BD_Collective with networks being established in the areas of: Reimagining Adults Social Care; Early Help for Families, Food Banks; and Young People. Partners now come together through these networks to explore practical solutions to issues, both in terms of how organisations work together and how residents get the support they need. A good example of this is the New Home Move Checklist, which via collaboration between community networks and council partners, has seen a comprehensive set of resources hosted in one place on the Council's website to make it easier for residents when moving home in the borough.
- Organisations now seek funding collaboratively, rather than in competition with one another. A good example of this, was a successful bid to the Holiday Activities Fund, done in partnership between Community Solutions and five different community groups. This saw funding accessed by different partners who could subsequently run fun, healthy summer activities as a result. Partners reflected at the BD_Collective's End of Year 2 event that significant progress has been made in developing connections and networks between organisations in the borough. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and this was exemplified by BD CAN where partners came together to rise to the challenge of Covid-19 and groups felt valued, trusted and listened to because they were genuinely involved in the design of the programme. One of the network members describes levels of trust as '*being the best in his memory*'. Building on this progress, a Neighbourhood Networks programme has launched, linked to Community Hubs with the BD_Collective playing a key co-ordinating role, with partners having a kick-off meeting in November 2021.
- Efforts to establish a shared volunteering platform for the Borough continue between the Council and the Social Sector, with organisations gradually signing up to the Better Impact platform. The volunteering response to Covid-19 was significant, with a rapid mobilisation of the Broadway Theatre Vaccination Centre, which had over 317 volunteers recruited and trained, and over 14,000 registered volunteering hours.
- The Faith Builds Community Policy has continued to be delivered; however, issues have been noted regarding the capacity of the local faith sector to come together on shared agendas. Lifeline have won a faith capacity building contract to lead on work over the next 18 months to support this policy and facilitate collaboration between faith groups.
- Internal engagement and research has been undertaken to inform the future approach and management of community assets. Guiding principles have been developed and

these will form the basis of any future policy and related actions. Any significant strategic documents in this area will however need buy-in and commitment from across the organisation if they are to succeed.

- Work has continued in the past six months with current community centres and halls, reviewing their leases and arrangements and taking action where necessary to better connect them in supporting their local community. Creating transparent and engaged processes to lease community spaces has informed the new approach being developed. Clear progress has been made with Heath Park and Sebastian Court in particular. This has taken up significant resource and will continue to do so until strategic, sustainable actions are agreed in the area of Community Assets.
- The Neighbourhood Fund - a participative funding process where residents make decisions on community groups apply for Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure funding - has continued to be delivered, with resident panel members awarding £113,764 of funding to 14 community groups in Round 6 of the process. This round saw a hybrid of in-person and online sessions, with panel members highlighting how much they enjoyed meeting and working together in person during this process. One panel member said: *'I have really learnt a lot about the Borough. I also enjoyed the Dragon's Den meeting yesterday and the presentation most organisations was dynamic. I will avail myself to support this Borough in different ways to move this community forward'*.

Priorities for the next six months:

- With the Social Infrastructure contract continuing to be delivered successfully by the BD_Collective, it has been proposed to take up the one-year extension option in the existing contract, to enable the BD_Collective to continue delivering the contract and further build on the progress outlined above until June 2023.
- Working closely with Social Sector partners, the overall approach to volunteering in the Borough will be considered in the next six months.
- The Participation and Engagement team will continue to work closely with BD Giving as they develop an approach to growing the Endowment Fund, with an officer actively taking part in sessions focused on designing the Endowment Fund investment policy. The team will also work closely with BD Giving as they seek to distribute the Endowment through participative funding processes shaped by residents.
- The Faith Capacity Building support will continue to be delivered by Lifeline, as outlined above. It will seek to ensure that the Faith Forum is further established as a strong, independent, robust organisation, where it can seek out independent opportunities to deliver, grow and build capacity amongst faith groups in the borough. This will involve delivering administrative and governance support, to build capacity that will remain after the funding has ended and see at least eleven faith forum meetings taking place per year, while also helping the forum to develop a comprehensive digital presence. It will also see the Forum supported with its leadership capacity to work with other organisations and individuals across LBBDD, connecting to local resilience and cohesion efforts and responding to local need, building a more connected Borough as a result.
- The BD_Collective will continue to co-ordinate the Neighbourhood Networks Programme which will build on the progress made by the BD_Collective and the developing Social Infrastructure in the past five years. This will explore how strong, vibrant and supportive neighbourhoods are developed, with residents at the core of the design. It builds on the network approach that has been developed over the last two years and will work closely

in partnership with the developing Community Hubs. This programme will run between November 2021 and March 2022. Following this, an end of pilot output will be provided which will include data and findings from each network. This should demonstrate and consolidate learning and impact and set out opportunities and recommendations to enable the ongoing sustainability of the network.

- Overarching strategic work will continue in the community assets space, with the aim to have Cabinet agree upon future actions, principles, required roles and responsibilities that that will provide capacity to deliver an implementation plan.

Key risk in the next six months:

- Local Lottery ticket sales continue to be a challenge, with sales consistent but proving difficult to stimulate beyond current levels in a challenging economic climate, and as such the ambitions for the Local Lottery scheme may not be fully met.
- The Endowment is unlikely to be grown to £2.5 million by Quarter 1 2022/23. This is due to the longer than expected time it took for the Endowment to be transferred to BD Giving, with there being delays in opening the required Charities Aid Foundation bank account.
- Lack of whole organisation buy-in for future community assets strategic agreements and actions continues to pose a major risk. Any future work on community assets will only be successful if all relevant council services are fully committed to the agreed approach. Anything less and this area will continue to present a significant challenge.

Developing opportunities to meaningfully participate

Key performance and delivery messages:

- The Council has run an ambitious programme of community engaged festivals, workshops and activities for residents of all ages and backgrounds, starting with the Thank You Roadshow in July, to the Becontree Forever Weekender in August, the Winter Lantern Parade and EFG London Jazz Festival in November and rounding the year out with Barking Mad About Christmas in December 2021.
- So far in 2021, LBBD's public festivals have been attended by over 35,000 people, delivered in partnership with more than 75 local arts, national partners and community organisations including: The White House, Company Drinks, Studio 3 Arts, Creative Barking and Dagenham, Greenshoes Arts, Barking and Dagenham Youth Dance, Arc Theatre, East End Women's Museum, Create London, Soul and Sound, Girls Like Us, Excel Women's Centre, UKON Careers, Serpentine Galleries, EFG London Jazz Festival and Love Music Hate Racism.
- Through our Cultural Educational Partnership, we have worked with 59 local schools to shape and deliver community focused programming with children in the borough, including workshops, exhibitions and collaborative artist-led commissions
- New Town Culture continues to develop artistic activity as a core part of social care services, including training for social workers, research, projects, exhibitions, publications, tools, residencies, workshops and knowledge exchange to bring together creative and social practitioners in their work. The New Town Culture programme has seen 600 young people in social care involved in the last three years, and as at December 2021 New Town Culture is currently working with over 100 social workers.
- A 'Creative Social Work' MA Course module has also been developed by New Town Culture in partnership with Goldsmiths University and has so far been taken by 24 social care staff, with a further 29 staff partaking in related 'intervisioning' sessions. Strategically New Town Culture continues to focus its work on aligned with the work being done in Children's and Adult's Care and Support to develop a practice framework and standards so that 'creative social work' is embedded in our approach.
- The legacy of Becontree Forever⁶ activities, a socially engaged cultural programme running across the Becontree estate throughout 2021 to mark its centenary, continues to grow and flourish in the Borough with ongoing initiatives such as the Becontree Broadcasting Station (co-funded by Arts Council England and Serpentine Galleries), and the establishment of the Arts and Culture Hub at Valence Library.
- Collaborative Becontree centenary activities have focused on both the history and future of the estate, running since the programme launched in March 2021 with local partners such as Arc Theatre, Barking & Dagenham Youth Dance, East End Women's Museum, Girls Like Us, Green Shoes Arts, Love Music Hate Racism, Studio 3 Arts, Soul and Sound and The White House; national partners include Create London, EFG London Jazz Festival, Focal Point Gallery, Serpentine Galleries and the Wellcome Trust.

⁶ <http://www.becontreeforever.uk/>

Schools involved in programming include Valence Primary, Becontree Primary, Henry Green Primary, Sydney Russell Primary and Secondary, amongst others.

- The Every One Every Day in-person platform has re-launched, with shops beginning to re-open as part of the Autumn programme of participatory activity and residents able to participate together in person again. During the pandemic, the platform was moved online, with the Mighty Networks virtual space and the Tomorrow Today Streets programme launched with local residents able to participate from the safety of their own homes.
- During this time, the Every One Every Day platform provided support to other organisations in the Borough through their Organisational Membership scheme which has continued to grow, with 110 local groups having signed up to the platform in some form.
- Over 400 residents are involved in Every One Every Day business programmes, with 11 collaborative business brands having been developed and four co-operative businesses preparing to launch. 15 young residents were able to take up employment opportunities with the Every One Every Day platform through the Kickstarter scheme, with these young residents then helping to launch pop-up collaborative shops in the Heathway Shopping Centre.
- Over 210 neighbourhood projects have been run since Every One Every Day's initial launch, with over 6,000 residents participating and over 40,000 hours of participation recorded.
- Every One Every Day has further embedded in the borough, for the long term, by launching a collaborative business, in the form of the Grounded Coffee Co-operative, at the Wilds Ecology Centre in partnership with Barking Riverside.
- Valence House Museum and Local Studies library have seen a significant increase in visitor numbers since reopening. Although this is not yet back to the pre-covid numbers, it is performing well. This is mainly due to a number of family focused events within the programme, including the Ava's 'chain of kindness' charity event and Victorian Christmas Fayre.
- Education visits have performed better than expected and are now back to pre-Covid-19 numbers, with schools booked in through to the end of March 2022.
- The Parklife football project is underway at Parsloes Park. The first phase is the construction of the pitches which will be completed in February 2022. The building and changing rooms construction are due to start early 2022.
- The soil importation project within Central Park commenced in November 2021. This is a two-year project and phased within four areas of the park. Work will begin on installing the new play equipment in Quarter 4.
- LBBD has significantly improved its standings in the Good Parks for London Guide in the past year. In terms of the overall scores, we have moved from 17th to 5th. Since 2017, and the adoption of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, we have moved up 19 places from 24th to 5th. We are also one of seven councils recognised in the 2021 report for significant improvement. The theme this year was 'Parks and Climate Change', and the Parsloes Park 'Forest of Thanks' was recognised and acknowledged by the judges.

- Eastbrookend Country Park was voted the number one 'best things to do in Dagenham' in Time Out magazine⁷. Valance House also appears at number seven.
- A brand-new website for the Country Parks went live in October 2021 providing visitors with a wealth of information about the Dagenham Corridor sites. The new website and content will promote the Dagenham Corridor and encourage residents to venture outdoors and visit and enjoy the wonderful and exciting countryside on their doorstep.
- The results of the 2021 Green Flag Awards were announced by Keep Britain Tidy on 14 October 2021. Both Eastbrookend Country Park and the Beam Parklands Country Park were successful, and in terms of the urban parks, the following sites also achieved the standard: Barking Park, Greatfields Park, Mayesbrook Park and St Chads Park.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Finalise phase two funding and governance arrangements for Every One Every Day and with partners, ensure closer alignment and engagement of Every One Every Day across other strategic and social infrastructure in the borough – increasing participation and positive effects for residents.
- Use community hubs and their development as opportunities to engage residents in designing use of spaces and the activities on offer that meet local needs.
- Further embedding Every One Every Day's collaborative business approach into the Borough is an important focus, with it forming part of an economic recovery from the pandemic. Over 25% of platform participants are unemployed and as such it has an important role to play in this regard.
- Together with partners, review and develop proposals to further strengthen and grow volunteering opportunities for residents to participate and benefit from pathways to jobs.
- Eastbury Manor House remains closed due to Covid-19 health and safety reasons. The aim is to reopen in early spring 2022.
- Work will continue on the two large park development schemes in both Parsloes Park and Central Park.
- A review on the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy will be carried out in Quarter 4. The strategy was adopted in 2017 and the review will look to ensure that the priorities are still relevant given the pandemic and the increased focus on climate change.
- The Playing Pitch Strategy (2015) will be reviewed and updated by April 2022. This will help, support and shape any future parks development schemes.
- A merger of Culture and Heritage services will take place with the aim to be in place by April 2022. This is to broaden the heritage service's focus on the wider heritage of the borough, balanced against the management and operation of the two sites. This will improve the connection and 'embeddedness' of the service in the wider developments in cultural and community programming.

⁷ [Timeout.com - The best things to do in Dagenham, picked by a clued-up local](https://www.timeout.com/london/what-to-do-in-london/best-things-to-do-in-dagenham)

- Establish an operating model for the Heritage Service that matches the budget available, stabilising the staffing structure for the medium term and providing a platform for development of more ambitious partnerships and approaches.
- Work with the Cultural Partnership Group to develop a new Culture and Heritage Strategy for the borough for 2023-2027

Key risks in the next six months:

- Any future Covid-19 lockdowns which would prevent in-person participation represent a significant risk in this space.
- It is wholly unlikely that 22,000 participants will be registered by the Every One Every Day platform by 2022, as intended. This is in part due to the negative impact that the Covid-19 pandemic had upon in-person participation opportunities.
- The Covid-19 pandemic continues to be a risk to the successful delivery of the Heritage service performance, in particular the impact on visitor numbers should there be an increase in positive cases.
- The weather could play a significant part in the delivery of the first phase of the Central Park soil important scheme. A wet winter/spring would cause a delay to the programme.
- New Town Culture MOPAC⁸ funding continues through 2022 calendar year end, with the Culture Service currently seeking c.£1.3 million in funding to continue our work in social care into 2023/25
- Two key SCIL funded projects in Culture and Public Realm continue to run over schedule: The East End Women's Museum continues to seek funding to meet a significant budget deficit in their capital project in Barking and the project is now delayed to end 2022. The Create London public realm commissions on the Becontree Estate continue to run behind schedule in their realisation due to the impact of the pandemic and other factors with projects currently being installed into early 2022.
- The Every One Every Day Project does not secure sufficient funding to launch a potential phase two is a significant risk.

Facilitating democratic participation

Key performance and delivery messages:

- The last six months saw the Citizens Alliance Network (CAN) reach its initial set of target metrics, and then quickly meet a newly revised set. It is now working towards achieving new stretch targets.
- Currently 2039 residents are signed up to the CAN platform; 9,706 residents are 'aware' of the platform; 3,940 residents are 'informed' about the platform; 862 residents are regularly 'engaging' with the platform. 39 projects have been launched on CAN. 25 virtual meetings have been held with residents.
- With CAN having launched in June 2020, a year one report was written in June 2021. This report carried out an evaluation of the first year of the platform. The lessons taken from this evaluation will form part of the future direction of CAN and of its place in the 2022/26 strategic priorities.
- The Women's Safety Survey, launched on the platform in April 2021, saw significant levels of meaningful engagement with residents and national media coverage⁹.
- Online Neighbourhood Hub pages have been developed on CAN to facilitate a more localised approach, with lots of input from elected Members. They were also presented to the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise sector for preview and input. The pages were well received at both online sessions, and they will be launched and promoted in the coming weeks.
- Future development work for the platform has been carried out over the past six months, looking at the future shape and direction of the platform. This has been discussed at internal boards and will continue to inform the 2022/26 strategic priorities for the Council.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Continuing to shape the CAN platform and build on previous development work, looking at the role of CAN in the short and medium term (2022/26).
- Hitting newly agreed stretch targets for CAN performance metrics including the number of residents signed up to the CAN platform, the number of projects launched and the number of resident meetings that take place.
- Launch the Community Hubs Network and roadmap for all neighbourhood hubs by Winter 2022.
- Online Neighbourhood Hub pages launching, aligned with Community Hubs launch and the Neighbourhood Networks programme, with take up and use increasing amongst residents.

⁹ [East London borough asks women to anonymously pinpoint streets they feel afraid to walk along alone at night on a map, following the murder of Sarah Everard - and Barking station already has 82 pins](#)

Key risks in the next six months:

- Deliberative processes on new markets - if this process happens, it will not be by March 2022. Much of the Council's focus over the past year has been on working with the City of London, and them in turn working with their traders to promote the benefits of the move, while at the same time the planning application was submitted and determined.
- Achieving all stretch targets will be a challenge as it is dependent on projects being created and submitted from the wider organisation, into the CAN platform. The CAN platform will only be able to meet its targets around resident engagement if sufficient projects are submitted to the platform for engagement to take place around.
- A lack of corporate engagement concerning future changes in our borough, such as planning, CPZ's and other material impacts.

Designing relational practices into the Council's activity

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Building a 'relational council' has advanced in the past two years through different workstreams, including the New Town Culture programme, the Homes and Money Hub and the developing of a Customer Experience Strategy. There are also tools and mechanisms through which the approach and its outcomes can be built and monitored, such as the Engagement Champions programme the Digital Inclusion programme, for example.
- The Engagement Champion Network has been launched and over 50 council staff have signed up. The network will now meet every three to four weeks, working through a range of activities designed to increase the champions' awareness and experiences of engagement, build a forward plan of opportunities, and surface the needs of participants. These needs will be supported via the development of a toolkit in the first instance, and through training in early 2022.

Priorities for the next six months:

- The next stage is testing and agreeing an organisational approach to further building a 'relational council' and associated workplan that will focus on two things: first, to reflect and actively use the breadth of places and opportunities that exist to embrace the principles of a 'relational council' in everyday work with residents, service users and customers – drawing together what works, good examples and sharing widely to support changes elsewhere.
- The creation of a toolkit and development of a training offer around engagement, in partnership with the Engagement Champions network.
- A review of the Engagement Champions Network, ensuring there is sufficient buy-in and representation from across the organisation including key areas where there is frequent resident engagement.

Key risks in the next six months:

- A lack of organisational commitment and or understanding of what it means to be relational.
- Suitable programmes or opportunities are not available to build on the strong start we have had with our engagement champions.

Prevention, Independence and Resilience

Every child gets the best start in life and all children can attend and achieve in inclusive, good quality early years settings and local schools

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Numbers of children attending early years settings increased steadily from April 2021 through to September 2021.
- Take up of two-year-old early education places has increased from 71% to 81% and is the highest take up in London (as shown by the Census in Summer term 2021).
- The percentage of three and four-year-olds accessing an early education place has increased from 78% to 84%, although this is 3% lower than previous years. However, nationally the drop in take up is larger.
- Graded Ofsted inspections have now recommenced for Early Years settings. 97% of children are accessing a place in a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' setting.
- The proportion of schools rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted remained at 91.5% (54/59 schools)¹⁰. This is unchanged from the previous academic year as Ofsted did not carry out standard inspections during 2020/21 due to Covid-19. This performance remains well above the latest published national benchmark (86% in March 2021) and just under (the equivalent of one school below) the London benchmark (93% in March 2021). This and other key achievements and developments was set out in the Annual Education Performance Review 2020/21.¹¹
- Strong partnership work between schools, Barking & Dagenham School Improvement Partnership (BDSIP), the Council and partners has continued during Covid-19. In the May 2021 Ofsted focused visit to the Local Authority's Children's Services, strong partnership working between children's services and schools was highlighted.
- During the Summer term 2021, the overall trend in attendance at the borough's schools was positive, evidencing the successful work of schools, the Council and BDSIP working in partnership to encourage most children to return to school. Data from schools indicated most mainstream schools were reporting overall pupil attendance to be 90% or higher at that time¹².
- BDSIP has delivered advice and guidance to schools during the pandemic. This has included effective use of e-learning and online teaching and curriculum resources and development of a remote learning micro-site for schools¹³.
- In the Summer term 2021, the Council commissioned a review of all 27 Additional Resourced Provisions (ARPs) by Ofsted accredited practitioners. Each ARP was evaluated against the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes of pupils, personal

¹⁰ As at 31 August 2021.

¹¹ [See minute 8. Cabinet, 16 November 2021](#)

¹² As at 29 September 2021.

¹³ <https://sites.google.com/lbbdschool.org.uk/remoteteaching/home>

development of pupils, leadership and management and safeguarding. The visits highlighted a wealth of strong and, in many cases, inspiring practice. This showed that, for most pupils, the borough's ARPs offer a high-quality curriculum which is increasingly tailored to meet the highly complex needs of pupils. The report's recommendations for further improvement are being taken forward.

- The increased provision of school places, in terms of planning and projects in procurement, is going well. Greatfields Secondary School, phase 2b, is under construction and ahead of programme. It has a completion date of Spring 2022 which will enable two-year groups, currently being taught from City Farm, to move to their permanent location.
- Ford View, a new three-Form Entry Primary school, which will be located on Beam Park, has been in design development. A planning application will be made by the DfE who are procuring the project in December 2021. It is planned that this provision will be open in 2024.
- Mallard Primary, another new three-Form Entry Primary school, is approved for the Barking Riverside development to meet future need from this community. Collaboration is underway with the developer to agree the location of the school. The school operator will be Partnership Learning Trust and the project will be procured by the DfE.
- The Council used the Government's Winter Covid-19 Fund to support eligible Free School Meals (FSM) pupils from Christmas 2020 through to Summer 2021. The funding enabled schools to purchase supermarket vouchers or food hampers to distribute to families in need. This campaign was a contributing factor in the number of pupils eligible for FSMs increasing from 10,600 to 12,755 during the 2021/22 academic year. By February 2022 it is expected to rise to 13,000.
- The Council's total grant for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme¹⁴ was £1.2m. With it, the Council delivered a comprehensive HAF programme, with six providers over Easter 2021 working across 12 sites (reaching around 800 children), in addition to activity packs for every child in the borough linked to the GLOW Festival. For the Summer 2021 holidays, 20 providers worked across 30 sites, including 18 schools, with 3,183 children and young people reached through the programme, including 2,897 eligible for Free School Meals and 347 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Priorities for the next six months:

- Continuing to support the childcare market to re-build take up of early education places to pre-pandemic levels and to support the market's sustainability. The childcare market has been impacted by low occupancy caused by the pandemic and a change in parental demand for childcare for example, due to more parents working from home.

¹⁴ On 08 November 2020, the Government announced that the holiday activities and food programme will be expanded across the whole of England in 2021. The aim of the programme is to make free places available to children eligible for and in receipt of free school meals for the equivalent of at least 4 hours a day, 4 days a week, 6 weeks a year. £220 million was made available to local authorities to coordinate free holiday provision, including healthy food and enriching activities.

- Focussing on outcomes for our youngest children, specifically in speech, language and communication, and personal, social, and emotional development. This includes supporting early years settings to implement rich and exciting learning environments and particularly extensive opportunities for outdoor play. Several children are presenting with complex social, and communication needs and severely underdeveloped play and language skills during the pandemic.
- In addition to the schools' own arrangements to help pupils recover lost learning, the Government has provided three funded routes to assist this which are: Tuition Partners, Academic Mentors and School-Led Tutoring. Barking and Dagenham schools are taking advantage of these pathways and evaluating their impact with the support of the Local Authority.
- A continuing focus on promoting regular school attendance in support of the Government's campaign to see attendance return to pre-pandemic levels.
- Schools will continue to assess where children with special educational needs and disabilities are in terms of learning, identifying the most important gaps and adjusting and developing the curriculum to focus on those gaps. The Council and BDSIP will continue onsite visits to schools, including ARPs and special schools, to provide additional support.
- A renewed Post-16 Partnership, comprising representatives from schools, Barking & Dagenham College, the Council and Barking and Dagenham School Improvement Partnership, has been developed and will recommence in the Autumn term 2021. Areas of focus will include improving A-level outcomes, particularly in Maths and Science, and developing vocational pathways.
- Education is working with Be First around the Local Development Plan, and separately with Planning Officers, regarding major proposed housing applications from developers. These include for Barking Town Centre, South Dagenham, and Thames View area. A key focus is pupil yields arising from these proposals and the strategy for meeting the demand for school places.
- In October 2021 the Government announced Housing Support Funding which replaced the Winter Covid Fund Grant. The Council will use some of this funding to continue to support Free School Meals pupils during the holiday periods, including the October half term 2021, February 2022 half term and for Christmas 2021. The funding will enable schools to continue to purchase vouchers or food hampers for families before school holiday periods, as they have been doing to date. The commissioning and delivery of a Holiday Activities and Food Winter Programme is also underway.

Key risk in the next six months:

- Ongoing challenges around managing Covid-19 in schools, including our special schools, and early years settings, particularly where there are higher numbers of unvaccinated staff.
- Recovery in education locally, as elsewhere, is expected to take several years given the widespread and continuing disruption to children and young people's schooling, and significant impacts on their wellbeing. For example, the current Year 11 last had a full academic year in school in Year 8. Current Years 11 and 13 have suffered more disruption than any other exam group.

- We might also reasonably expect that children from vulnerable groups will have lost more in terms of their learning and the impact on wellbeing from the impact of the pandemic, and particularly where they fall across more than one vulnerable group.
- In relation to the curriculum, it is potentially more straightforward for schools to pinpoint gaps in learning for their older children. For these children, for example, at Key Stage 4, there is also a greater potential for remote learning opportunities to provide ways to help them catch up.
- For our youngest children, some of spent half of their lives in the pandemic context and have missed vital social interactions and opportunities for physical play. Their social, physical, and linguistic development are closely entwined. Schools are needing, first and foremost, to focus on what these children have missed from their nursery and reception years. This means a strong play-based curriculum. Strong speaking and listening opportunities are also needed, for example, through singing, use of rhymes and storytelling.
- The Government set out contingency arrangements in case Key Stage 4 and 5 exams need to be cancelled for the third year.
- The pressure for places for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities continues to increase. The picture is similar across London where it is believed that the pandemic has contributed to these higher numbers. The creation of seven Additional Resource Provisions (ARPs) at several schools will help, as agreed by Cabinet in November 2021.¹⁵ However, further capacity will be required and is a priority. This includes two new Special Schools in procurement:
 - A permanent site for Pathways, which is in South Dagenham on the former Dagenham Motors site, is being procured by the DfE who will be submitting a planning application in November 2021. It is planned that the school will open in 2023.
 - A second new Special School called Oxlow Bridge will be built on the former Pondfield site. Over the past six months the scheme has been developed to meet the needs of pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities. It is anticipated that the school will be open in 2024.
- The reopening of schools following the lockdown periods resulted in a surge in Electively Home Educated (EHE) cases, nationally and locally, reaching a highpoint in the borough of 377 during April 2021. These have now steadily reduced and sit around 320 as of November 2021. However, EHE numbers remain significantly higher than pre-Covid levels. Monitoring is in place to ensure that reasons are recorded for all cases, and that families engage with the Local Authority to monitor the education provided. Covid-19 or 'health reasons' had made up the most common reasons for choosing to home educate since September 2020, but this has now been replaced with 'philosophical choice'. This may indicate that families are committing to EHE for a longer period and that figures may remain high for some time to come. No single school in the borough is overrepresented in the rise in EHE cases. The numbers of current EHE children who are known to care, or who have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities, are low and in line with the

national picture. The distribution of EHE children across the Key Stages is more even than is seen nationally, with most of the borough's cases being in Key Stage 2 (as opposed to Key Stage 3 nationally). Full analysis of the borough's local data compared to national data is being presented to the Safeguarding Partnership.

- In the May 2021 Ofsted focused visit to the Local Authority's Children's Services, positively, Ofsted recognised that 'routine oversight of children [...] who are electively home educated has increased since the beginning of the pandemic'.

More young people are supported to achieve success in adulthood through higher, further education and access to employment

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Between 2020 and 2021, the proportion of Year 12s and 13s in Barking and Dagenham who were not in education, employment, or training (NEET) or whose post-16 destination was 'unknown' increased very slightly to 3.7% as result of Covid 19 (equating to 210 NEET young people and 21 young people whose destination is 'Unknown'). This is a better position than several neighbouring boroughs and better than national (5%) and London (4.5%). Barking and Dagenham has retained its position of being in the second highest performance quintile nationally for its proportion of NEETs and 'Unknowns'.
- Pending the release of updated NEET data from December 2021 onwards, indications suggest that that the progression of young people to appropriate post-16 destinations continues to be strong. 99.3% of our outgoing Year 11 cohort had a guaranteed offer of education or training at post-16, and 95.9% for Year 12. This gave a combined performance of 97.5%, 0.5% higher than 2020 and the highest September offer performance the borough has ever achieved (against a sub-regional average of 96.9%).
- A further 62 young people were rewarded with a Colin Pond Scholarship for their outstanding GCSE results and for choosing to continue studying in borough at A-level, with two further schools joining the programme. This continues to strengthen the ability for the borough to retain our top attainers and promote our schools as centres of excellence at post-16.
- Data from schools demonstrates that progression of our young people to Higher Education continues to increase year-on-year. In 2021, 1,044 Year 13s progressed to Higher Education, 444 of which went to a top third institution. This is an increase on 2020 of 5% and 6% respectively.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Working with partners in Inclusive Growth and beyond to further develop and consolidate training, employment, work experience and careers opportunities for all children and young people. This will capture all key workstreams and build aspiration and pathways into key local industries in the borough over the next five years.
- Embedding a Food Education Hub Co-ordinator who will work with schools around building aspirations and pathways into the food and hospitality industries.
- Working with schools and BDSIP to build back face-to-face work experience at Key Stage 4. Additionally, working with Local London to make the most of the GLA-funded East London Careers Hub for schools.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Further disruptions to education delaying the ability to implement face-to-face programmes such as work experience, further impacting on young people's employability skills and self-esteem.

More children and young people in care find permanent, safe, and stable homes

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Joining the Commissioning Alliance enabled us to increase the number of providers for residential and Independent Fostering Agency provision. This has contributed to a reduction in spot purchased placements and will enable us to make savings through placement stability, sibling discounts and volume discounts.
- Whilst we have increased the availability of supported and unsupported accommodation for Looked After Children (LAC), we are aware that the quality and consistency of many providers are not as robust as we would expect. To mitigate this Quality and Performance Officers are now working to ensure providers' commitment to maintain a high standard of quality in the way they work, the services they deliver, the relationship with staff and stakeholders, and ensure continuous improvement remains consistent.
- Although LAC numbers have reduced, placement spend has significantly increased primarily due to the lack of available provision for our children and young people with more complex needs.
- In 2020/2021 we received more than 13,000 initial contacts of which 3,913 progressed to referrals.
- We aim to improve the timeliness of adoption and ability to recruit adopters and has been part of Adopt London East, Regional Adoption Agency since 1 October 2019.
- Adopt London East is recruiting and assessing prospective adopters, family find and offers post adoption support. The timeliness for adoption placements is improving however not the number of children being adopted.

Priorities for the next six months:

- We are currently undertaking a review of our in-house foster carer rates, which will enable us to retain and recruit further foster carers, reducing the numbers of children needing residential care. We plan to recruit specialist foster carers able to meet the needs of more complex children.
- Offering Suitable placements for identified gaps in services such as placements for children and young people with ASD/Complex disabilities and child sexual exploitation provision.
- We also need to continue to develop the range and quality of children homes and secure units within and in surrounding boroughs.
- We need to increase the number of adopters able to offer a permanent family to siblings, children with disabilities, and BAME children.

Key risk in the next six months:

- The new costs of the Intercounty Adoption fee circa £455,000, payable to Adopt London East was not included in our forecast previously and we are now increasing our scrutiny of this offer.
- The price of residential care has risen exponentially in the last year and we are seeing higher costs than ever. Work to mitigate this through our existing frameworks and new ones is ongoing.

All care leavers can access a good, enhanced local offer that meets their health, education, housing, and employment needs

Key performance and delivery messages:

- There is a dedicated Housing Officer working jointly with Children's Services and young people to identify appropriate housing offers. This will include the setting up of rent accounts, regardless of the accommodation, to assist young people with getting used to managing a tenancy.
- Access to our enhanced leaving care grant (£2,500) and the person's individual savings is standard practice for furnishing move-on accommodation. We know that all circumstances are individual, and some situations may require additional funding. Access can be requested to a further discretionary grant of up to £1,000 that we would support care leavers to access where applicable (subject to assessment).
- Dedicated resource from the LBBD Jobshop to assist with preparing CVs, completing job applications and interview preparation, with a 24-hour response agreement specifically for our care leavers.
- The Local Authority will pay travel costs to attend work or university until the first pay cheque/student loan is available.
- Access to New Town Culture arts and drama programmes and opportunities specifically for care leavers which are beneficial to emotional wellbeing.
- Dedicated substance misuse support from Subwise who work with young people until the age of 25 years old.

Priorities for the next six months:

- We will establish access to our dedicated Emotional Health and Wellbeing Practitioner, which is to be recruited to. This would also include access to group work and individual support.
- We plan to commence health workshops to include sexual health including contraception, dental health, and emotional wellbeing.

Key risks in the next six months:

- There is an on-going need to address identified gaps in Looked After Children, Children in Need, mental health provision, while taking a holistic view on the prevention of

escalation to statutory services regarding children and young people's mental health service provision.

- There is a gap in wellbeing and emotional support provision for Looked After Children and Care Leavers who do not meet secondary mental health threshold once they turn 18. Commissioners are working with social care, voluntary sector, CCG and NELFT to consider the gap in provision. Further work will be undertaken to consult with those who have left care and those who are leaving care to fully understand those needs.

Young people and adults at risk are safeguarded in the context of their families, peers, schools, and communities and safeguarded from exploitation

Key performance and delivery messages:

- A successful 'Step Up, Stay Safe'¹⁶ virtual workshop was held in June 2021, focusing on the impact so far since the programme launched. The workshop was joined by Members, community partners, schools, and the Police. Young people shared their experiences of being supported by partners.
- A Choices and Consequences Exhibition has been launched by the Ben Kinsella Trust in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham based at the Foyer, Barking. The exhibition opened in September 2021 and offers young people knife crime prevention workshops, through a series of interactive and immersive experiences, young people follow the journey of both the victim and the offender. Young people take part in quizzes, immersive theatre, role play and activities, designed to teach them how their choices can lead to consequences. The exhibition aims to change young people's attitudes to knife crime and teaching them how to make positive choices to stay safe. The exhibition is open to schools in Barking and Dagenham and features the Council's 'Lost Hours' campaign. Bereaved parents, who lost their children to knife crime, have supported the development of the 'Lost Hours' section of the exhibition.
- 472 young people potentially at risk of exploitation were reached through the GLA's Young Londoners Fund programme, called 'From Roads to Communities', during April-September 2021. The programme is a combination of detached youth work and face-to-face youth service provision.
- The Youth Independent Advisory Group, a sub-group of the BAD Youth Forum, has resumed face-to-face meetings with the Police and has met to discuss issues around stop and search.
- A Year 6/7 Transition group, including schools, BDSIP and the Local Authority, worked together to focus on identifying vulnerable children who were due to transfer to secondary school.

¹⁶ 'Step Up, Stay Safe' is a multi-agency partnership programme to work to prevent young people from involvement in violence and exploitation.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Recruitment to the post of the Step Up, Stay Safe Coordinator, which has been vacant since September. This post is key in driving forward and supporting the partnership.
- Further developing the Step Up, Stay Safe programme. Following the June 2021 workshop, it was agreed that it was timely to review some of the workstreams in Step Up, Stay Safe considering some changing demands during Covid-19.
- Continuing to support all providers delivering the GLA's Young Londoners Funded project to meet their quarterly participation targets as set out by the GLA as they were pre-Covid-19.
- Delivering an inclusive and comprehensive Young People's Safety Summit to all secondary schools to capture young people's views and priorities around safe and unsafe spaces, and for the outcomes to be acted upon by the Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
- The new Early Help Target Operating Model will enable the YARM¹⁷ workers to continue to deliver work at the highest level, supported by early intervention work to support adolescents.
- Continue to promote the Ben Kinsella Trust Exhibition and encourage professionals working with children and young people to book workshops. Promote the learning on choices and consequences through children and young people settings.
- Delivery of the priorities within the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) Local Violence and Vulnerability Action Plan that are focused on safeguarding and educating children and young people and positive diversion from violence.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Further restrictions during the pandemic impacting on face-to-face programmes with young people at risk such as detached youth work.
- Further tensions amongst young people that are developing online that might spill out into harmful behaviours following the lifting of Covid-19 measures.
- Risks have been identified around securing funding for the Ben Kinsella Trust Exhibition, grant funding is being sought however core funding we provide security for the continuation and ongoing delivery of the exhibition.
- Risks have been identified by the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) team with regards to funding for YARM workers. 6 YARM workers are currently funded via the London Crime Prevention Fund and Violence Reduction Unit Fund however this does not provide long term security and funding is limited therefore cannot fund all CSP priority areas identified through the Partnership. We will need to consider how funding is allocated for future financial years. This may have an impact on Community Safety funding into YARM.

Zero tolerance to domestic abuse drives local action that tackles underlying causes, challenges perpetrators, and empowers survivors

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Our ambition is to take a fully integrated and systemic approach to Domestic Abuse, with a range of evidence-based services that meet the needs of children and families and prevent escalation where possible. This has necessitated a strategic review of the area.
- Our approach will encompass the remaining findings and recommendations of the Domestic Abuse Commission, Ofsted inspection¹⁸ and Early Help audits.
- Domestic Abuse has been established as one of the key priorities of the Children's Safeguarding Partnership and work is being undertaken specifically in the Early Help and Neglect subgroup.
- A needs analysis has been specified and work commenced to correctly identify need and ensure we can tailor services to users and intelligently design pathways.
- Early conversations have commenced to agree a joint assessment tool across the partnership, this will enable joined up processes and better joint commissioning to meet need.
- Three additional Independent Domestic Violence Advocates posts have been agreed through the Early Help Improvement programme, these have been costed and procurement work is commencing with Refuge to mobilise this work and initiate an early intervention service. This will help to manage demand into Children's Social Care.
- Tackling violence against women and girls is a main priority for the Community Safety Partnership, the board have developed a Violence Reduction Unit Local Violence and Vulnerability Action Plan that sets out key priority areas for reducing serious violence. The board have included a focus on improving women's safety and the delivery of the ReMove Abuse Perpetrator programme.

Priorities for the next six months:

- We will establish a clear governance route for Domestic Abuse including roles and responsibilities, and clarify where risk is held across all services, including Community Safety and Community Solutions.
- We plan to initiate an improvement plan with the MARAC¹⁹ to ensure that intelligence is shared in an accurate and timely way between decision makers and service providers.

¹⁸ Through the Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) regime.

¹⁹ Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference.

- The current provision for domestic abuse has been mapped and whilst it is extensive, this needs greater cohesion. We will write a new commissioning plan for domestic abuse to ensure that gaps are filled, and duplication is removed, and that we are commissioning best value evidence-based services.
- Secure funding to deliver the Safe Haven scheme that aims to provide safe spaces in community settings through local businesses to support residents in particular women and girls if they feel unsafe or vulnerable in the community.

Key risk in the next six months:

- There is a national shortage of Independent Domestic Violence Advocates, and it is possible that Refuge may struggle to recruit to the agreed posts in a timely way.
- Securing ongoing funding for the delivery of the ReMove Abuse perpetrator programme. An element of the funding is delivered through the London Crime Prevention Fund, however there is limited funding available to allocate across all Community Safety Partnership priority areas.

All residents with a disability can access from birth, transition to, and in adulthood that is seamless, personalised and enables them to thrive and contribute to their communities²⁰

Key performance and delivery messages:

- There continues to be pressure within the children's Life Planning Team, with caseloads still above recommended safe caseload thresholds. Between April 2021 to September 2021 the average caseload was 21.5, the target is 17. There is a plan to commission additional social work capacity in the short term, whilst reconfiguration of the service and permanent recruitment takes place.
- Work on the Autistic Spectrum Disorders diagnostic and pre/post diagnostic pathways is developing, with monthly multi-disciplinary progress meetings, 'trouble shooting' issues at a sub-regional and borough level. Co-designing the behaviour pathways with parents starts in earnest in January 2022, although a series of parental consultations have scoped the breadth and depth of the work starting in the new year. This work links to the SEND/Disability Improvement Plan.
- The Heathway Resource Centre which has moved to Becontree Children's Centre, is now open to children and families, offering stay and play, parenting and early help assessments. The Centre is under the management of a qualified social worker, which has strengthened our early help offer and management of risk.
- There has been a growing pressure against the Council's school transport budget. This has been driven by an increase in the number of children and young people with eligible

²⁰ This is intrinsically linked to the "Every child gets the best start in life and all children can attend and achieve in inclusive, good quality early years settings and local schools" theme, and the developments in Early Help (as summarised above).

SEND and/or medical needs that meet statutory guidance for assistance to school. Since 2018/19 to 2020/21, there has been a 26% increase in applications for school transport and a 15% increase in the number of direct travel arrangements that are provided by the service. This has been compounded by an increase in the number of young people that attend specialist provision outside of Barking and Dagenham, as we are unable to offer school placements that will meet their needs. Last academic year (2020/21) 47 minibus routes were in operation. This academic year there are 69 bus routes running. The increase has been driven by an increase in the number of SEND children and expansion of specialist Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARPs) and Social Emotional Behavioural schools in the borough.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Fully reopen day services, which will include the reconfiguring of the offer for young people transitioning to adult services. The detail of this reconfiguration has been set out in a recent Cabinet report²¹. It ensures that young adults have age-appropriate services that maximises independence and choice, in line with the Care Act 2014.
- To bring to Cabinet a proposal for Oval Road, which will make the case for opening a residential and respite unit for disabled children and young people, up to the age of 25.
- Implement Baby and Us parenting programme at Heathway Resource Centre, which supports maternal mental health and early maternal bonding with her baby.
- To consider and redesign the Portage Model given the numbers of very young children presenting with global development delays, complex physical health needs and Autism; this will include the development of the statutory Disability Register.
- Ensure that the identification and actioning of safeguarding concerns are proportional and robust, focusing on outcomes for service users. Cases will be dip sampled by the Principal Social Worker and Head of Service to ensure quality of intervention and assessment.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Significant cost-avoidance is invested in the successful redevelopment of the Brocklebank site which is a complex project with surrounding risks.
- The number of children and young people in the Disability Service continues to rise creating pressure on social worker caseloads.
- As CQC and Ofsted inspections restart post-Covid-19, we have seen several residential settings being rated as 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate'. This necessitates reassessment of our service users and potentially moving them to new settings, which is another factor putting pressure on caseloads.

Children, young people, and adults can better access social, emotional, and mental wellbeing support - including loneliness reduction - in their communities

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Adult Mental Health continues to see sustained pressure on both the mental health and dementia pathways. Barking and Dagenham have the highest number of women requiring inpatient care in North East London. Commissioners and NELFT are currently analysing this trend so that we can develop preventative programs and support to reduce the requirement for inpatient care.
- There continues to be sustained pressure on the dementia pathway, with significant chronicity of presentations due to delayed diagnosis. Families are also more inclined to ask for residential and nursing home placements, in part due to the vaccination programme and the perception that care homes are now safe for their loved ones.
- A procurement strategy for Healthwatch has successfully navigated council governance and is now open for organisations to apply for the contract. Service users are part of the assessment process and will be involved, with commissioners, to appoint the new Healthwatch contract.
- The day service tender has successfully navigated council governance and wider community / voluntary sector consultation. The framework will support both older adults with dementia and young adults with enduring mental health needs.
- MIND have been awarded the Mental Health Peer Support Service, which will create an expert by experience team to support people with emerging or fluctuating mental health needs. This is in the implementation phase and will be rolled out across Barking and Dagenham in the next three to six months.
- After a successful recruitment campaign by NELFT, the two Mental Health in Schools Teams (MHST) will be fully operational in January 2022 for a phased roll out in 2022/23.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Local authorities still await the final Liberty Protection Safeguarding (LPS) Legislation and time scales for implementation. The Deprivation of Liberty operational team (DOLs) continues to roll out training across adults and children's social care in anticipation of the final guidance.
- Inspired by the dementia friendly work curated by national gallery's, operational teams and commissioners will be working with the Culture Service to enhance dementia pathways with an Arts and Music offer. We are seeking to reduce social isolation with an enhanced community offer that supports service users and their families to access activities locally.
- Due to the chronicity and complexity of dementia presentations, we will be actively reviewing all service users against continuing healthcare frameworks to ensure that we correctly apportioning costs across the health and social care system.
- Continue to work with Community Solutions to ensure appropriate move on accommodation for people in hospital or supported living, who are well enough to manage in the community with a package of care which maximises independence.

- NELFT, working with the Council, will continue to develop pathway mitigations for the increasing number of women that require inpatient care due to mental health crisis. This will include specialist intervention for women who are at risk of having their children taken away due to substance misuse or enduring mental ill health.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Given the daily struggle that people living in poverty experience life to be, it is not surprising that poverty increases the risk of mental health problems and is both a cause and consequence of mental ill health. Given the number of residents experiencing unemployment, zero-hour contracts and who are experiencing the long-term impact of reduced income due to furlough we would expect to see a rise in demand across all mental health services.
- At points during the pandemic demand for inpatient acute care rose by 36%, all of whom required assessment and packages of care on discharge. The core numbers in Mental Health services have risen and we would not anticipate returning to pre-pandemic numbers until 2023/24 based on average length of open caseloads for secondary Mental Health services.
- As the dementia diagnostic pathways have now resumed, Adult Mental Health are expecting to see significant rise and the number of older adults with a formal diagnosis of dementia. Due to Covid-19, most older adults have experienced a delay in a dementia diagnosis, which means early intervention packages are no longer suitable. We are seeing a rise in double-handed packages and residential/nursing care placements. Commissioners are expecting this trend to continue until quarter three of 2022/23. Growth in such placements is driven by the current size of the NELFT dementia diagnosis waiting list, coupled with expected demographic growth.

All vulnerable adults and older people are supported to access safe, timely, good quality, sustainable care that enables independence, choice and control integrated and accessed in their communities, and keeps them in their own homes or close to home for longer

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Care and Support services have been reliable and resilient, although the impact of the pandemic is manifesting in mental health services, and we have seen an increase in the number, acuity and complexity of packages and placements for all ages.
- Between April and September 2021, Adults Care and Support have seen a significant increase in requests for support compared to the previous year. Between April and September 2021, the number of people in receipt of care and support services increased by 6%, from 2,694 to 2,953.
- This includes an increase in safeguarding concerns being raised. Despite the surge in concerns safeguarding remained outcomes focused and the proportion of enquiries resulting in reduced risk remained above the target of 90% throughout the pandemic and to date.

- The number of mental health cases climbed 19% over the last 18 months from 783 in March 2020 to 930 in September 2021.
- In response to increased demand average caseloads per social worker increased from 14 in April to 16 in September but remain within service thresholds.
- Short term Crisis Intervention Services remain effective and efficient. Between April and September 2021, the average length of closed services was 4.8 weeks; this is a reduction from 6 weeks in 2020/21 and remains within the target of 4-8 weeks. Furthermore, outcomes for people completing the service improved, with 61% moving onto lower-level services or no further services, compared with 46.7% in 2020/21.
- The annual survey of people in council-funded residential and nursing care placements on 30th September 2021 showed the number of placements increased by 16% compared with the 2020 survey, from 411 to 477. Local analysis showed there has been a 20% rise in the number aged 65 years and a 33% increase in the number of people supported due to dementia.
- LBBD has continued to work jointly with health partners, Barking, Havering and Redbridge colleagues and local care providers to ensure the health and social care system continues to respond effectively to the far-reaching impacts of the pandemic, particularly around hospital discharge, infection control, market resilience and vaccine take-up. For example, the mandatory care home vaccination regulations did not lead to a closure in beds due to the high take-up of the vaccine following ongoing partnership work in this area.
- The Better Care Fund (BCF) provides financial support for councils and NHS organisations to jointly plan and deliver local services. For Barking and Dagenham this equates to £28.7m. Every year, the local authority and the CCG are required to submit a template and/or narrative to NHS England to set out how the BCF is delivered in Barking and Dagenham and how our performance meets several metrics and national conditions²². The narrative plan has been developed by Commissioners and stakeholders from across the BHR health and social care system, reflecting four jointly agreed priorities for the BCF which are:
 - Hospital Discharge Planning & Support: Ensuring effective discharge & increasing patient independence
 - Targeted Out-of-Hospital Care: Supporting people with higher care needs in the community
 - Community Wellbeing, Care & Support: Prevention & early intervention for low level care & support needs.
 - Integration, market stabilisation and Covid recovery: Strategic joint working to support integration and borough partnerships; essential market and provider support to ensure services are available; reducing the risk of provider failure and to minimise the impact of recent effects of the COVID 19 pandemic and beyond.

²² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/better-care-fund-policy-framework-2021-to-2022/2021-to-2022-better-care-fund-policy-framework>

The plan was submitted on 16 November 2021 and the ongoing delivery of the BCF will be monitored via the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Borough Partnership and BHR BCF management meetings.

- Hospital discharge arrangements have been remodelled with new teams now in place. LBBD's social workers have been brought back into the community through a newly created Community and Hospital Assessment Team to improve discharge pathways and assessments. We have also worked with Havering, Redbridge, the Hospital Trust and NELFT to establish a new unit to co-ordinate discharges within the hospital. The changes have focused on improving resident outcomes and experience, ensuring that residents stay as independent as possible and away from long-term care options. Success of the changes will be monitored over the coming months.
- Through the BD_Collective there are now several groups which bring together Care and Support staff and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise colleagues, including a group focused on 'reimagining adult social care'. Alongside the development of the Community Hubs and Neighbourhood Networks these offer an opportunity moving forward for professionals from all sectors to come together and better support our residents. Social isolation will be a key theme for future work.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Preparation for the vaccination mandate for all CQC regulated activity – we will take key lessons from the work carried out in supporting care homes.
- Monitoring and analysis of packages and placements to determine further areas for commissioning and the way that we work with our health partners.
- The publication of a new Carers Charter to set out our commitments to carers in Barking and Dagenham.
- Implementing new therapy-led discharge processes at home and in a nursing home in the borough to ensure that residents are getting the right assessment and support and reducing re-admission to hospital.
- Concluding the tender for an innovation partner for a new All-Age Care Technology Service. This will be an exciting new service which will deliver three specific service elements:
 - Innovation and development of technology and/or digital services for Barking and Dagenham residents that complement their own support and networks.
 - The establishment of a 'Technology First' cultural change for operational social care, including a Care Technology Learning and Development programme.
 - The management and delivery of a core care technology service, including the supply, set up, monitoring and response of Care Technology.
- Rolling out a service in partnership with district nurses, the local GP, BHRUT, St Francis Hospice and the CCG for an end-of-life care satellite service at Kallar Lodge.

Key risk in the next six months:

- Recruitment and retention remain an issue across health and social care providers due to Covid-19 and Brexit issues and we are monitoring this closely to ensure that this does not affect placements and packages across the market. Equipment is being similarly

impacted by similar factors, with freight issues and costs meaning that equipment is harder to source and is more expensive. The situation now and into the future is being monitored through the pan-London equipment contract.

Tackling inequality in all aspects of our service delivery and within our communities jointly with partners and Public Health

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Vaccination uptake (1st and 2nd dose) for those aged 12+ is 55.2% (for London this is 60.7%).²³ Work continues to tackle vaccine hesitancy and improve access. Specific support provided to care homes to increase vaccination levels in staff, prior to them becoming mandatory on 11 November 2021 (current uptake is 94.6%) and NHS staff at beginning of April 2022.
- An Integrated Care System is being developed across North East London, replacing the current Sustainability and Transformation Plan and includes the establishment of a place-based partnership to enable more decisions to be taken at a local level, with the wider system taking responsibility only for things where there is a clear need to work on a larger footprint e.g., across the sub-region.

Priorities for the next six months:

- As part of the establishment of new Integrated Care System arrangements from April 2021, LBBD needs to agree with system leaders the proposed place-based partnership arrangements for 2022/23, including their boundaries, leadership, and membership.
- Continue the roll-out of the Covid-19 vaccination alongside national vaccine programme delivery of 12-15-year-olds, booster vaccination for eligible adults and 'evergreen' offer for those who have not yet completed first and second doses, strengthen engagement with communities to promote vaccination of pregnant women (Covid-19 and seasonal flu), and the wider social care workforce in preparation for the introduction of mandatory of Covid-19 vaccination as a condition of deployment for all frontline health and social care workers, expected to come into force in April 2022.
- Agree governance and build strong foundations for B&D Borough Partnership in shadow form by 31 March 2022, as part of the new Integrated Care System infrastructure.
- Agree local priorities and delivery outcomes within the partnership and ensure they are reflected in the new system, including addressing health inequalities (as part of a Covid-19 recovery programme), access to core public health programmes for vaccinations and screening, identifying, and addressing unmet health care needs. Current priorities in discussion are to address the health and care needs of the most vulnerable children (e.g., looked after children), reducing obesity, improving mental health and wellbeing across all ages, preventing domestic violence and serious youth violence and

²³

As at 30 November 2021 [Source](#)

development of a Multi-Disciplinary Team model to provide proactive care and reactive support for people living in care homes

- Publication of the updated Joint Strategic Needs Assessment in January 2022 and Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment in July 2022.
- Deliver the Adult and Children's Weight management services as part of a system wide approach to reduce obesity, with a focus on high quality prevention and treatment provision across the life course Strengthening this approach includes working with the Obesity Action Group and the B&D Delivery Board, reviewing healthy start uptake and proposing measures for future related action, and producing a deep dive report that includes looking at obesity via three inequality lenses (see below).
- Deliver the phase two of the health inequalities work identified in the Annual Public Health report 2021, by producing deep dive reports on Stop Smoking (February 2022), NHS health checks and Obesity (May 2022) (highlighting access, outcomes/outputs via three inequality lenses – i.e., age, gender, and ethnicity); and to incorporate addressing health inequalities, particularly those exacerbated by Covid-19, as a key theme within the next Corporate Plan.
- Improve access to health checks for BAME communities aged 30 to 39 living in Barking and Dagenham. Health checks for this cohort bring forth opportunities to screen for health issues and will be an important means to target healthcare to groups with health inequalities or risks.
- Continue to embed the Healthy New Town principles within the proposal for the Model of Care for Barking Riverside includes new roles such as social prescribing, and health and care staff working in a more integrated way, with strong links with the local school and community assets, focussed on meeting the needs of local people with reduced barriers to the smooth delivery of care, including the use of digital technology to support health and care staff to work in the community.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Rising Covid-19 infections, low vaccination rates and new variants could put an additional strain on health and care services alongside usual winter pressures.
- Potential loss of staff with the introduction of mandatory Covid-19 vaccination for all frontline health and social care workers.
- If the place-based partnership structure is not agreed and established in shadow form by 31 March 2022 it will compromise LBBDD's central role in improving the health and wellbeing of people in Barking and Dagenham through integration of services with the NHS. There is also the threat that a new form of partnership may be imposed on the borough.
- Unable to provide of adult and children weight management services after the finance ends for the one-year pilot.
- Discontinuing or pausing the wellbeing navigator pilot at Barking Riverside after six months will result in halted community activation efforts and may reduce the sign posting residents to the "right" community intervention or support in accessing services. This may weaken the community's ability to self-support each other in a sustainable way.

Well Run Organisation

Delivers value for money for the taxpayer

Key performance and delivery messages:

- The Council's General Fund budget for 2021/22 is £173.614 million. The Quarter 2 forecast outturn position is £184.322 million which would be an overspend of £10.708 million or £10.187 million once income is taken into account. The Budget Support Reserve has a balance of £11.4 million which could be used to fund the overspend at year end. The overspend is driven by both one-off issues that will not recur in future years and ongoing cost and demand pressures. Action is being taken to address and mitigate the ongoing pressures to avoid overspends in future years.
- There is a savings target of £8.210 million for 2021/22 – of which £2.641 million are new savings approved in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, £5.033 million are unachieved Ambition 2020 savings brought forward from the previous year(s) and c.£536,000 are Transformation Programme savings in Care and Support. £4.799 million of these savings depend on efficiencies and cost reductions and £3.411 million are based on new or increased income. 47% of savings are rated as high risk.
- At the end of Quarter 2, 20% of the original plan of risk and compliance audits were at least at draft report stage. This falls short of the target for the end of Quarter 2 which is for 25% of audits to be at draft stage. This is due to the resources that needed to be diverted during Quarter 1 to complete the prior year audit plan. Audit resources are already booked in for Quarter 3 to bring performance back in line with the target of 50% by December 2021.
- By the end of Quarter 2 the Counter Fraud Team had accepted 175 new cases for investigation and completed 96 cases. This has resulted in the recovery of four Housing Revenue Account properties and detected fraud in excess of c.£225,000.
- A dividend of c.£6 million is expected to be received from Be First from their retained surpluses from the financial years up to 2020/21. Other commercial income will also be received from Be First to make up the expected £10.3 million return to the Council. There is a dividend of £2 million from BDTP included within the Council's budget. We do not expect to receive a dividend from BDTP this financial year. Income from Reside companies are included in Investment income budgets which are forecast to fall short of budget, however, other investment income is offsetting this shortfall.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Deliver a balanced 2022/23 budget for approval by Cabinet and Assembly which is informed by the Local Government Finance Settlement.
- Deliver updated Medium Term Financial Strategy for approval by Assembly in March 2022. This will form the basis to develop proposals that will deliver a balanced budget beyond 2023.
- Complete the 2019/20 external audit of the Council financial statements and grant claims. Complete the 2020/21 external audits of the Council and Subsidiary financial statements and grant claims.

- Confirm position in relation to opting-into Public Sector Audit Appointments for the procurement of external auditors for the Council for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28.
- Complete the Audit Plan and develop next year's risk-based work.
- Continue to support the Oracle ERP Replacement Programme to ensure delivery by the revised go-live date of 4 April 2022.
- Secure Assembly approval and implement new Procurement Operating Model and continue to improve procurement compliance ensuring practices and processes are delivering best value.

Key risks in the next six months:

- There are significant risks to funding that will become clearer once the Local Government Finance Settlement is published. There is an expectation that the Government's approach to fair funding, business rates and social care will be published by the end of 2021.
- There is a risk that BDO will not be able to complete the external audits and grant claims for 2019/20 and 2020/21 by the end of March 2022. If the audits go beyond this date they will coincide with the go-live date of the new Oracle ERP system which could result in additional work and testing being required.
- There is a risk related to the capacity of audit partners to deliver the required internal audit work.
- The trading environment for the Council's commercial companies continues to be weakened by the impact of Covid and Brexit, leading to increased construction and operational costs resulting primarily from supplies and materials shortages.

Employs capable and values-driven staff, demonstrating excellent people management

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Temperature check was undertaken and analysed which showed the employee engagement index is at 82%, a slight (but not statistical) decrease since the last survey. Other themes are being measured including understanding what our employees think of the new approach to recruitment.
- Dispersed working model is in place and currently working well and now being tested.
- The Apprenticeship Action Plan agreed and refocussed building on success over the last 4 years. We currently have 150 employees who are on an apprenticeship. March 2020 – April 2021 LBBB had the highest number of apprenticeship starts across all London Boroughs.
- Stress related absence is below target, but good monitoring arrangements are in place, and monthly oversight by internal boards, with new interventions in place.
- The Gender Pay Gap is narrow. The Council has undertaken an ethnicity pay gap analysis.

- There has been an expansion of staff networks and we have started a reverse mentoring programme pilot.
- A range of health and wellbeing measures are in place including a growth in mental health first aiders, and support for bereavement.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Continuing to keep our workforce safe and productive working within the context of a global pandemic.
- Developing a dispersed working model continues to be a priority as we commence phase three of the dispersed working programme. This will have focus on wellbeing, leadership and induction.
- The inclusive employer programme delivery, with a particular focus on inclusive leadership, values-based recruitment, talent management and succession planning
- Implementing the Apprenticeship Action Plan to increase the opportunities for residents and meet the public sector target.
- Investors in People Gold was obtained in February 2021. Organisational development preparation for Investors in People Platinum.
- Continue to apply the Firm but fair approach to sickness absence supported by targeted interventions.
- Implementation of key HR systems including a new approach to performance management.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Despite meeting HR and organisational development criteria to achieve the Good Work Standard, at present we have no mechanism for confirming if contractors in our supply chain pay the London Living Wage. This is a significant barrier to achieving the accreditation.
- Working in the context of a pandemic presents challenges in terms of business continuity, absence, ill health and wellbeing. But good processes and management oversight are in place.

Enables democratic participation, works relationally and is transparent

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Between April and September 2021, 20,860 people have visited the Council's online engagement platform, One Borough Voice, with 3,075 engaging in a consultation.
- 75% of Cabinet Reports that require an Equality Impact Assessment had one. Processes around decision-making and policy development have been strengthened to identify where EIAs are required and to ensure they are completed at the appropriate time to influence decision and policy making.

- All Cabinet Key Decisions and agendas were published in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Over 94% return on 2021 annual canvass (91.8% in 2020; 89.7% in 2019).
- The third phase of the Lost Hours Campaign launched in July 2021. Communications and marketing materials were distributed via primary schools, using their channels to reach parents.
- The Fostering Campaign launched in Summer 2021. The campaign has so far seen over 1,977 unique visitors to the fostering webpage. The latest burst of campaign activity saw 456 visits in September 2021, resulting in 73 enquiries.
- The Christmas Cheer campaign launched on 01 December 2021, aiming to bring festive cheer to residents after another difficult year and provide families in need with gifts and financial support.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Grow the number of visitors and engagements on One Borough Voice, through continuing to raise the profile of the platform and working with services to undertake timely and meaningful engagements with residents and staff.
- Continue to improve the number of Cabinet reports that have an Equality Impact Assessments, where applicable, and to work with services to improve the quality of the assessments.
- Complete the statutory Polling District and Polling Places/Stations review, including four-week public consultation, by end of January 2022, in response to new ward arrangements published by Local Government Boundary Commission for England.
- Successful delivery of May 2022 Local Elections.
- The next stage of the Lost Hours Campaign is a collaboration with the new Ben Kinsella exhibition, which launched in the Foyer at Barking on 29 September and aims to educate young people on gangs and serious youth violence. The campaign will evolve to incorporate more messaging around child exploitation and may potentially tap into a national campaign using LBBD's assets and materials as the basis.
- To refresh the winter artwork for the next phase of the Fostering Campaign and to explore a commissioned video featuring existing foster carers. Ongoing dialogue to see if the service can increase the incentives for foster families to give LBBD a more attractive offer to compete with neighbouring boroughs.
- Funding has been secured for phase 3 of the Cleaner Barking and Dagenham campaign, which will start at the end of January 2022.
- Negotiate funding for a Safer Borough campaign, to highlight the recent developments in this space i.e., new police team in Barking, updates from the women's safety survey, progress with the Domestic Abuse survivor hub, Neighbourhood Watch etc.

Key risk in the next six months:

- As more services return to face-to-face interactions, the need to engage residents online may reduce which may negatively impact on usage of One Borough Voice.

- Covid-19 considerations may impact on arrangements for the May 2022 Local Elections and result in significant additional cost to the Council.
- Success of the fostering campaign hinges on whether case studies can be secured. The use of case studies is crucial to make the campaign human and authentic. There is also high competition between boroughs who also have attractive offers for foster carers which sets the campaign in a challenging context.
- The Winter period is a testing time for Waste Management Services because of bad weather, bank holidays, sickness and higher than usual levels of annual leave. It is important to maintain high levels of service performance at all times otherwise it risks undermining phase 3 of the Cleaner Borough campaign in the new year.
- Adequate and timely funding for the safer borough campaign could result in a missed opportunity to highlight the positive developments taking place in this space, which is a key priority area for residents.

Puts the customer at the heart of what it does

Key performance and delivery messages:

- Contact Centre performance continues to struggle with the percentage of calls answered currently at around 70% which is behind the 90% target and short of the standard we want for residents calling the Council. A fundamental area of concern continues to be Council Tax, over 27% of calls are Council Tax payments and there is ongoing development to make it easier for residents to pay online. A robust recovery plan in place for the contact centre covering short, medium, and long-term priorities, such as accurate knowledge management systems, staff deployment to peak times and overflow calls into other teams to reduce waiting times.
- Additionally, resourcing for the Contact Centre has been challenging and this is now back on track to ensure we have the right balance against the resource planning model.
- Despite some performance challenges, the Contact Centre's overall and call handling satisfaction performance remains high at 87% for overall satisfaction and 92% for call handling satisfaction.
- Complaints and Members Enquiries cases are increasing, and we continue to struggle to meet the performance target, averaging 76% answered within timescale for member enquiries. Improvement plans have been introduced for the poorest performing services. Progress is monitored and challenged at senior levels in the organisation and services are being held to account for delivering their action plans for improvement and lead on presenting these via corporate boards with the support of the Customer Feedback Team. Upheld cases remain low at 35%, with 32% relating to missed bin collections. Those will be upheld unless we are able to prove there was no fault on behalf of the Council.

- Since the launch of the Chat Bot there have been 1,259 interactive conversations held in the Bot. 86% of Chat Bot uses were 'successful conversations'²⁴. This is a significant difference in outcomes compared to the public website which has a success rate of around 20% for users finding the information they were looking for. The Chat Bot is constantly updated to include questions residents are asking which the bot has not been able to answer. This has also helped us to drive improvements to the website as the Chat Bot by nature identifies weak points in terms of content quality and navigation.
- The Council has identified improving digital inclusion as a key challenge for improving and modernising customer services and how residents interact with the Council. Approximately 46,000 adults (aged 16-64) in the borough do not have access to a computer at home. In light of this we are developing a strategic response to embed digital inclusion into our major programme's outcomes. A Digital Inclusion Group is working to 10 priority areas; these are: Smart Services, Community Banking, Digital Champions, Employee Skills Gap, Device Lending, Community Hubs, Home Access, External Funding, Learning & Education and Council Fibre Broadband.

Priorities for the next six months:

- Re-design of the Council's website to improve navigation and accessibility is a priority; though it should be noted the current website has a high accessibility score of 84 on SiteImprove²⁵. As part of the website development, we aim to establish an editorial process so that content is better managed, maintained, and accurate. All online council services and official information will have a consistent user experience, sharing a single design system making the website intuitive for users.
- Further development of the Voice of the Customer Programme, which gathers resident feedback at various stages of an interaction with the Council so individual services can use this to drive service improvement. Through this programme we will develop service-level analytics about customer services which operational services can use to inform service development and improvement. Also, we will develop a Customer Panel Community to act as a steering group to design and test new approaches and solutions.
- Focusing on actions and measures to support Contact Centre recovery. A major strand of this work involves working with the three top repeat calling services for process and communication improvement; specifically, this will include leveraging technology, such as the new Chat Bot, to answer and direct residents to self-serve platforms, where appropriate.
- Complaints and Members Enquiries: focus on learning from casework, developing cases and recommendations for continuous improvement and root cause analysis. Continue placing a focus on key service areas delivering and implementing action plans to improve performance and quality.
- We will continue to develop desired outcomes and establish funding requirements to further our aims for better digital inclusion. The Digital Inclusion Strategy and Action Group can be leveraged further to deliver real impact in the borough, including but not limited to: growing the network of Digital Champions from 25 to 50; launching a pilot

²⁴ This means the user's request for information and advice was resolved within that conversation

²⁵ 84, as at 30 September 2021. <https://siteimprove.com/en-gb/>

laptop lending scheme; fully understanding the digital skills gap for LBBD employees; and using the newly developed community banking website to initiate 100 debt interventions.

Key risks in the next six months:

- Customer experience success relies on individual service engagement and a culture change across the organisation. A lack of engagement could lead to continued challenging performance measures and detrimental impacts to both the contact centre and customer feedback teams.
- Ensuring there is a balance of resources to deliver aspirational change and use technology to its maximum.
- Non-digitally connected staff get left behind and do not feel part of the organisation.

Equipped with the tools, information and capability to deliver its vision

Key performance and delivery messages:

- The Oracle ERP Replacement Project has now been re-planned with the new planned go-live date being 1 April 2022.
- The My B&D service to replace Agilisys Digital was implemented in September, it has performed well to date with low numbers of issues and no critical issues. The project team are now working with stakeholders to plan and prioritise Phase 2.
- A new Information and Technology Strategy has been finalised. The new strategy is supported by a set of technology roadmaps agreed with business units across the Council. The recommendations in these have been broadly accepted and over the next few months they will be used to firm up multiyear programmes of work to improve Digital capability & Maturity across the Council
- A New Cyber security tool to reduce risk of a successful cyber-attack on the Council has now been implemented.

Priorities for the next six months:

- The current delivery model for Housing services across the Council involving multiple internal departments and an external repairs body is not working effectively with the current Capita Housing system. The current Capita contract has a breakpoint in late 2023 and ends in 2026. The Council needs to decide whether the best approach is to stay with Capita and upgrade to their new housing product or to adopt a different approach at the 2023 breakpoint. To inform this decision a review of housing technology requirements needs to be undertaken. It's important that this completes early in 2022 to allow time for the recommended approach to be adopted.
- The new ERP solution is scheduled to go live on 1 April 2022. Ensuring that this is delivered and that we can support and sustain the solution is a key priority to IT for the first part of 2022

- The Wide Area and Local Area network service at Council sites are at the end of their support lives and contract periods. IT are deploying a full refresh of Wide Area and Local Area network connectivity including WiFi in the first few months of 2022. This will deliver improved performance, security, reliability and futureproofing for the Council sites.
- Part of the improved employee experience being delivered alongside the new ERP system is a single portal and technology for reporting and managing requests, problems and issues for IT, HR and Finance service using an in House CRM. This will be delivered in parallel with the ERP rollout in early 2022.
- My B&D deployed in September 2021 is now working well and delivering the planned improvements for Customer access. Planning for and commence implementation for phase 2 of My B&D will be a priority activity for IT and Customer teams in early 2022
- IT have reviewed what needs to be done to improve how this team supports Council Strategy and operations. The recommendations have now been budgeted for in 2022/23. Consultation and implementation of the structural changes will commence in Quarter 1 2022/23.

Key risks in the next six months:

- The Oracle replacement timeline is very tight. Any slippage in activity such as extended downtime on the live Oracle system could impact the live date.
- Cyber security continues to be a major risk with attackers continually increasing the sophistication of their attacks.