

# Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Accountability Committee Agenda

Wednesday 31 January 2024 at 7.00 pm

145 King Street (Ground Floor), Hammersmith, W6 9XY

Watch live on YouTube: [youtube.com/hammersmithandfulham](https://www.youtube.com/hammersmithandfulham)

## MEMBERSHIP

Administration	Opposition
Councillor Natalia Perez (Chair) Councillor Genevieve Nwaogbe Councillor Emma Apthorp Councillor Ann Rosenberg	Councillor Amanda Lloyd-Harris
Co-optees	
Victoria Brignell, Action On Disability Lucia Boddington Jim Greal, H&F Save Our NHS Keith Mallinson, Healthwatch	

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Members of the public are welcome to attend but spaces are limited, please email [David.Abbott@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:David.Abbott@lbhf.gov.uk) if you plan to attend. The building has disabled access.

Date Issued: 23 January 2024

# Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Accountability Committee Agenda

If you would like to ask a question about any of the items on the agenda, please email [David.Abbott@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:David.Abbott@lbhf.gov.uk) by 12pm, 30 January 2024

<u>Item</u>	<u>Pages</u>
<b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
<b>2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST</b>	
<p>If a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a particular item, whether or not it is entered in the Authority's register of interests, or any other significant interest which they consider should be declared in the public interest, they should declare the existence and, unless it is a sensitive interest as defined in the Member Code of Conduct, the nature of the interest at the commencement of the consideration of that item or as soon as it becomes apparent.</p> <p>At meetings where members of the public are allowed to be in attendance and speak, any Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest or other significant interest may also make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter. The Councillor must then withdraw immediately from the meeting before the matter is discussed and any vote taken.</p> <p>Where Members of the public are not allowed to be in attendance and speak, then the Councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest should withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is under consideration. Councillors who have declared other significant interests should also withdraw from the meeting if they consider their continued participation in the matter would not be reasonable in the circumstances and may give rise to a perception of a conflict of interest.</p> <p>Councillors are not obliged to withdraw from the meeting where a dispensation to that effect has been obtained from the Standards Committee.</p>	
<b>3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING</b>	4 - 11
<p>To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as an accurate record and note any outstanding actions.</p>	
<b>4. 2024 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY</b>	12 - 42
<p>This report provides an update on the overall preparation and proposals for the 2024/25 revenue budget, risks, financial resilience, and the impact of those proposals. It also sets out the budget proposals for the services covered by the Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Accountability Committee and provides an update on any proposed changes in fees and charges.</p>	
<b>5. PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE</b>	

The Director of Public Health will provide a verbal update to the Committee.

**6. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee is asked to consider items for inclusion in its work programme.

**7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

To note the following dates of future meetings:

- 27 March 2024

# Agenda Item 3

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham



## Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes

Wednesday 15 November 2023

### PRESENT

**Committee members:** Councillors Natalia Perez (Chair), Genevieve Nwaogbe, Emma Apthorp, and Amanda Lloyd-Harris

**Co-opted members:** Lucia Boddington, Jim Grealy (H&F Save Our NHS) and Keith Mallinson (Healthwatch)

**Other Councillors:** Councillor Ben Coleman (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care)

### **Guests**

Mike Howard (Safeguarding Adults Board Chair)  
Susan Elden (NHS England)  
Carla Hobart (Specialist Registrar NHSE)  
Kevin Driscoll (Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust)  
Lucy Rumbellow (NHS North West London ICB)  
Anne Tunbridge (Immunisations commissioner NHSE London)

### **Officers**

Linda Jackson (Strategic Director of Independent Living)  
Jo Baty (Director of Independent Living, Strategy, Standards and Regulation)  
Dr Nicola Lang (Director of Public Health)  
Tahirah Chaves (Head of Child Public Health)  
Ceri Gordon (Safeguarding Adults Board Manager)  
David Abbott (Head of Governance)

### **Also in attendance**

Merril Hammer (H&F Save Our NHS)

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ann Rosenberg and Victoria Brignell.

The Chair formally welcomed Councillor Emma Apthorp to the Committee.

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

### **Matters arising**

In reference to Item 4, Councillor Ben Coleman (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care) asked if there had been any updates from the Government or the NHS about the allocation of funding for the rebuilding and refurbishment of local hospitals. The Chair said no progress had been reported. Jim Grealy suggested the Committee should invite NHS representatives to a future meeting to discuss the implications.

In reference to Item 5, Jim Grealy noted that the engagement document on palliative care options would not be released with enough time for H&F residents to read and digest before the scheduled engagement session. Merrill Hammer felt another H&F engagement session should be organised so as not to disadvantage H&F residents. Linda Jackson (Strategic Director of Independent Living) said the Council could request the session was delayed.

### **RESOLVED**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

## **4. SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23**

At the start of the item the Chair noted that a video had been circulated for members to watch prior to the meeting, summarising learning from the Alison review: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5jWEbFDSVo4>

Mike Howard (Safeguarding Adults Board Chair) addressed the Committee and introduced the Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2022/23. He was joined by Ceri Gordon (Safeguarding Adults Board Manager).

Mike Howard presented the report and highlighted the following points:

- The importance of multi-agency working and the contributions from all partners, including the Council.
- The improving understanding of fire risk and response.
- The new guidance produced on Safeguarding Adults Reviews for family, friends, carers, and professionals.
- The work done by the Board and partners to ensure people felt safe in their homes.

Keith Mallinson noted the housing issues in the report and asked what the Board could do, particularly with regard to the private rented sector. Mike Howard said there was a serious case of mould where the coroner wrote to the Minister of State for Housing, Planning and Building Safety. The Board had discussed the issue and had received updates on repairs from Housing

colleagues at the Council. Linda Jackson (Strategic Director of Independent Living) added that the Council had an improvement programme for its own housing stock and a licensing scheme for private sector housing. Members suggested the Board ask for a progress update from housing providers. Mike Howard agreed. Linda Jackson suggested an update on damp and mould in public and private housing be added to the agenda for Safety Advisory Board.

**ACTION: Mike Howard / Linda Jackson**

Dr Nicola Lang (Director of Public Health) noted that an easy read guide to housing for professionals had been published in February 2022. The guide explained the role of the new housing safety team and what they could do in response to issues with private sector or social landlords.

Jim Grealy noted the issues of self-neglect and isolation highlighted in the report and asked how services could ensure continuity through one point of contact to help build trust and confidence.

Linda Jackson said the Health and Social Care Partnership Board had agreed for partners to work together in neighbourhood teams and discuss who should be the lead professional for each case.

Councillor Emma Apthorp asked if frontline staff were trained in fire safety. Linda Jackson said all Adult Social Care staff were offered training to do fire safety risk assessments, in partnership with the fire service. The Housing team were also doing training around fire risk assessment. But she added that there were challenges when it came to choices made by residents and how to mitigate those risks.

The Chair asked if the safeguarding information leaflet for families and carers was available in languages other than English. Ceri Gordon (Safeguarding Adults Board Manager) said it hadn't been translated yet, but officers were looking at making all resources accessible.

Councillor Apthorp asked if officers had considered making domestic abuse training available to the Council's third sector partners. Mike Howard said the Board worked closely with 'Standing Together', a national charity working with communities to end domestic abuse.

Councillor Amanda Lloyd-Harris proposed a joint meeting with the Housing and Homelessness Policy and Accountability Committee to look at the damp and mould problem in housing in both Council housing and social housing from other providers. She was also interested in the standards for social housing and whether they were the same for all providers. Linda Jackson said all providers were judged against the 'Decent Homes Standard', a technical standard for public housing that set out the minimum conditions for social rented housing in the United Kingdom. She added that the Council had weekly operational meetings looking at housing safeguards including damp and mould.

Councillor Lloyd-Harris asked where the Council stood legally if a vulnerable resident didn't take advice or support and made risky decisions that led to their injury or death. Linda Jackson said if there were serious concerns about a person's ability to make decisions about their care, there were procedures that could be undertaken under the Mental Capacity Act. She noted it was very rare though, and subject to numerous safeguards.

Councillor Genevieve Nwaogbe asked how the Board could ensure all organisations complied with consistent training standards. Ceri Gordon said they sent an assurance template to track compliance and would follow-up if there were any gaps. Mike Howard added that they also would be asking senior representatives about training.

Councillor Nwaogbe asked how young adults with learning difficulties were effectively transitioned between Children's Services and Adult Social Care.

Jo Baty (Director of Independent Living, Strategy, Standards and Regulation) said the Council had a robust transition process and Adult Social Care worked closely with Children's Services and other local partners to identify issues as early as possible and plan for the future. The Chair suggested transitions as a future area of work for the Committee.

**ACTION: David Abbott**

Councillor Lloyd-Harris asked that the easy-to-read housing guides be sent to the Committee for information.

**ACTION: Dr Nicola Lang**

Lucia Boddington asked about the reported increases in vulnerable people in the borough. Linda Jackson said there had been additional pressures since the Covid pandemic. Demand had increased, though she said it was manageable across the Health and Social Care sector. She added that while referrals had increased, the number of referrals that resulted in safeguarding investigations was relatively low. Work was ongoing to ensure partners were aligned on risk management and referrals.

Councillor Apthorp asked how referrals worked when residents moved in or out of the borough. Linda Jackson said if there were concerns about a resident who was moving, officers would speak with their counterparts in other local authorities.

The Chair asked if there were any updates on the reviews since the report was written. Ceri Gordon said officers were now working on an action plan to implement the recommendations. The key areas of learning were around mental capacity, multi-agency communication, neglect, and people with challenging behaviour and the impact on staff.

The Chair noted the decision by the Metropolitan Police to not respond to mental health calls from September 2023 and asked what the impact had been. Mike Howard said the Board had discussed the concerns with police representatives and noted they had given a reasoned explanation for what

they were going to do, and there was an escalation procedure and appeals procedure in place. They had agreed to monitor the impact and raise any issues with the police as part of their evaluation in the Spring of 2024.

Linda Jackson thanked Mike Howard for his leadership of the Board, and Ceri Gordon, for her hard work throughout the year. The Chair also thanked Mike Howard and Ceri Gordon for the report and their work during the year.

## **RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee note and comment on the Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2022/23.

## **5. VACCINATION SERVICES IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM**

Susan Elden (NHS England) introduced the item on vaccination programmes in Hammersmith & Fulham. She was joined by:

- Carla Hobart (Specialist Registrar NHSE)
- Kevin Driscoll and Lucy Rumbellow (NHS North West London ICB)
- Anne Tunbridge (Immunisations commissioner NHSE London)

From the Council, Dr Nicola Lang (H&F Director of Public Health) and Tahirah Chaves (Head of Child Public Health) attended to provide an update on the borough's plans.

Councillor Ben Coleman (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care) noted the community vaccine locations mentioned by NHSE in the presentation were not in the borough and asked for a commitment that there would be appropriate community locations in the borough. Carla Hobart said the aim was to have community locations in all boroughs. Susan Elden said she could provide the list of locations following the meeting.

### **ACTION: Carla Hobart / Susan Elden**

Councillor Genevieve Nwaogbe asked what officers and partners were doing to tackle the borough's consistently poor uptake of vaccines. Kevin Driscoll said they were making the offer as accessible as possible and promoting it to residents. He said they were fully invested and focused on community engagement.

Councillor Nwaogbe said the report implied that the problem was provision of staff but the Council had venues to offer. She also spoke about the genuine distrust amongst some communities due to past medical abuses and asked what the NHS and partners were doing differently to reach those communities. Kevin Driscoll said he accepted the challenge and said they took issues of lack of trust and structural racism very seriously. He noted their contracts stipulated hiring from within communities and they worked with faith health networks to improve community reach.



Keith Mallinson asked the NHS representatives if they were working with the right people and groups. He noted the report mentioned working with community organisations but the organisation he worked for hadn't received any information on vaccinations. He asked them to look again at who they were working with. Kevin Driscoll said he would take Keith's details. He noted they were building a model of community engagement and had successfully held clinics in food banks.

Tahirah Chaves said some communities were vocal and more engaged. The Council was trying to think about the groups that weren't engaging and think about the contexts where parents would get involved – in the new Family Hubs for example.

Councillor Amanda Lloyd-Harris said she felt the 82% vaccination rate in care homes seemed low. She also raised concerns about the relatively low rate of vaccinations for young people and suggested it may be because some people didn't have access to GPs. Kevin Driscoll said 82% coverage for care homes was very high. They had a team to go into care homes and work with residents and their families to get consent. Regarding access to GPs, Kevin Driscoll noted they had data for unregistered young people and have sent letters to parents in the past to encourage GP registration and other options for vaccinations.

Councillor Lloyd-Harris asked if statistics were available for the number of care home staff who were vaccinated. Officers said they could come back with an update on this.

Merril Hammer and Jim Grealy noted that the report did not go into detail about why the borough's vaccination rates were still relatively low. They also raised concerns that the ICB and partners were not learning lessons from the available data.

Linda Jackson said she felt the lessons learned from the Covid pandemic about working with communities hadn't been internalised by the NHS, noting the roving model was not based on community need. She said the borough already had successful models of community intervention, developed over two and a half years during the pandemic but NHS England had not showed an interest in learning from or building on that work. Kevin Driscoll noted that the outreach model described was about working closer with the communities mentioned.

Councillor Coleman said this was the sixth year in a row with unacceptable vaccination figures for Hammersmith & Fulham and the NHS did not appear to know how to address the problem. He said the lesson from the pandemic was that if we made the vaccine more accessible to people, they were more likely to take it. Allowing children to have vaccines at pharmacies would increase take-up. Kevin Driscoll said that was being considered and a national pilot had begun. Dr Nicola Lang said Hammersmith & Fulham was keen to be a pilot site and had a pharmacy ready to go. Linda Jackson also supported the pilot. She noted that during Covid the pharmacies wanted to do more. They were an important community resource.

Councillor Coleman asked if the borough could be part of the pharmacy pilot. Kevin Driscoll said they supported it in principle but would have to get agreement from regional colleagues. Councillor Coleman asked Kevin Driscoll work with Dr Nicola Lang to take the request forward.

**ACTION: Kevin Driscoll / Dr Nicola Lang**

Councillor Coleman said he was not persuaded that Hammersmith & Fulham was getting the focus needed and asked for a dedicated borough coordinator for vaccinations.

Kevin Driscoll said there was a coordinator working across Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea, and Hammersmith & Fulham. Councillor Coleman said it would be a worthwhile investment and asked how it could be actioned. Kevin Driscoll said Hammersmith & Fulham would have to have conversations locally around finance mechanisms to support a coordinator.

The Chair proposed a working group to look at improving vaccination rates in the borough. The Committee agreed.

**ACTION: David Abbott**

The Chair drew the discussion to a close, thanked attendees for their contributions, and summarised the agreed actions:

- To agree a community vaccine location in the borough.
- To provide a list of vaccine locations following the meeting.
- To take forward the request to be a part of the vaccines for children pharmacy pilot.
- To create a working group to look at improving vaccination rates in the borough.

## **RESOLVED**

1. That the Committee noted and commented on the report and presentation.

## **6. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chair proposed a working group to look at improving vaccination services in the borough.

## **7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The following dates of future meetings were noted:

- 31 January 2024
- 27 March 2024

Meeting started: 7.02 pm  
Meeting ended: 10.04 pm

Chair .....

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# Agenda Item 4

## London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

**Report to:** Health and Adult Social Care Policy & Accountability Committee

**Date:** 31/01/2024

**Subject:** 2024 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

**Report author:** Andre Mark, Head of finance (Strategic planning and investment)  
Prakash Daryanani, Head of finance (Adult Social Care and Public Health)

**Responsible Director:** Sukvinder Kalsi, Strategic Director of Finance  
Linda Jackson, Strategic Director of Independent Living (DASS)

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### SUMMARY

Cabinet will present their revenue budget and Council Tax proposals to Budget Council on 28 February 2024. This report provides an update on the overall preparation and proposals for the 2024/25 revenue budget, risks, financial resilience, and the impact of those proposals. This report also sets out the budget proposals for the services covered by this Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Accountability Committee (PAC). An update is also provided on any proposed changes in fees and charges in the budget.

The strategic operating environment continues to be challenging (inflation, interest rates, economic stagnation, unemployment, real terms reduction in household incomes) and this will have an impact on the overall national and public finances. After the Chancellor's Autumn Statement in November 2023, analysis by the Institute for Fiscal Studies has estimated that considering current spending commitments across the public sector, the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (which includes local government) may face a 3.4 per cent real terms cut each year from 2025/26 to 2028/29.<sup>1</sup>

The budget proposals for 2024/25 are intended to protect our statutory services, deliver services valued by residents/businesses/visitors, promote the prosperity of the Borough, and support the poorest and most vulnerable in society. All our services have been funded at a time of continued austerity within local government since 2010.

Despite the financial pressures on the council, our ruthlessly financially efficient approach (by generating more than £118m of efficiencies since 2014/15), securing more than £100m in contributions from developing the Borough and generating more than £60m in annual income). Few organisations would be able to deliver the same services they delivered over a decade ago with less than half of the resources available. In Hammersmith & Fulham we have not just maintained front line services

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<sup>1</sup> [What does the Autumn Statement mean for local government and public service spending? | Institute for Fiscal Studies \(ifs.org.uk\)](https://www.ifs.org.uk/what-does-the-autumn-statement-mean-for-local-government-and-public-service-spending/)

that residents rely on, but we have gone further, providing new services to support those living in the borough. We have also eased financial burdens that residents by keeping taxes low, freezing key charges and providing one of the country's most comprehensive Council Tax Support Schemes.

Hammersmith & Fulham is unique in many ways. In recent years, the Council has been able to abolish home care charges, provide free breakfasts for school children, create a new Law Enforcement Team to keep our street safe and clean, maintain weekly bin collections across the borough, and end the use of bailiffs to collect Council Tax debt.

This has only been possible because of the ruthlessly financially efficient approach that we have taken to managing residents' money. We will continue to reform the council to ensure that we provide the best value for their money possible. This budget does this through innovative use of new technology and data, and council-wide efficiency programmes to streamline operations and ensure the best use of resources.

Despite the financial pressures on the council, our ruthlessly financially efficient approach has allowed us to keep Council Tax levels low. There is no better place to be a Council Taxpayer than right here in Hammersmith & Fulham. Not only do we have the third lowest council tax rates in the country, with this administration cutting or freezing Council Tax five times in the last nine years, but our Council Tax Support Scheme provides a discount to 42% of residents, with 11% of the most vulnerable paying nothing at all. This administration took the decision to exempt care leavers from paying Council Tax entirely, and this year, for the first time, we will also exempt in-house foster carers and special guardians so that they do not pay a penny of Council Tax.

The objectives of the General Fund revenue budget proposals for 2024/25 set out in the report:

- Protect the delivery of our core statutory services.
- Continue to deliver services valued by residents/businesses/visitors.
- Ensure the safety of our residents/businesses/visitors.
- Promote the prosperity of the borough.
- Embeds an agile, modern and innovative approach within the Council.
- Maintains strong financial governance and resilience across the Council.

The proposals include investment of £10.7m across many services and will allow the continued delivery of the best services to our residents/businesses and visitors. This includes an extra £4.2m for home care, £1.3m to support school transport services for children, £1.5m for people affected by homelessness and £1.7m to support our housing services.

The Council will continue to manage its financial resources effectively to financial resilience and sustainability (including a good level of reserves and in year contingencies).

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 obliges the Council to set a balanced budget, and the detailed proposals contained in this report will put the Council in a strong position to be able to do so for the next financial year. Cabinet in February will need to

consider these alongside the outcome of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement and any other funding statements that may follow.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Accountability Committee (PAC) considers the budget proposals and makes recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate.
2. That the PAC considers the proposed changes to fees and charges and makes recommendations as appropriate.

**Wards Affected:** All

Our values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F values
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	The council has a proud record of maintaining low Council Tax to its residents. The revenue budget for 2024/25 proposes savings and efficiencies across services and corporate functions that rationalise its estate and reduce its operating costs, whilst also delivering value for money from external contractors
Creating a compassionate council	The proposals in the revenue budget for 24/25 supports the ongoing investment in services that directly support residents in living, healthy and independent lives. This includes continuing to provide free home care for older residents, providing Council Tax support to foster carers and increasing investment to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.
Building shared prosperity	A significant proportion of services are delivered in partnership with local and national companies, and this will continue to promote all business sectors to the benefit of residents.
Doing things with residents, not to them	The budget for 24/25 will invest in our Family Hubs, ensuring that every child, young person, and family is able to access the right support at the right time. The Hubs will also be developed by collaborating with

	children and young people and their families, family groups, the local third sector, the NHS and the council's children's services in genuine partnership.
Taking pride in H&F	The council's revenue budget will invest over £50m in public realm services. These services will provide access to safe clean, green spaces for all to enjoy, visit and live in. It will deliver improvements to highways, whilst continuing to invest in the Law Enforcement Team and regulatory services to crack down on anti-social behaviour and rogue traders.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	The council has an ambitious target to become a net zero borough. To help achieve this, the budget will invest in the roll out of food waste caddies for more than 50,000 households, continue to keep our streets and parks clean, and take a tough stance against anyone dropping litter, creating graffiti, or dumping rubbish.

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## Background Papers Used in Preparing This Report

Not Applicable

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## DETAILED ANALYSIS

### The Budget Requirement and Gap

1. The gross General Fund budget<sup>2</sup> rolled forward from 2023/24 to 2024/25 is £642.0m of which a **net budget requirement of £198.0m** is funded from council resources (such as Council Tax and business rates) and general government grant.

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<sup>2</sup> Figures exclude capital charges and internal service level agreements. These have a net nil impact on the budget.

**Table 1 – Budget rolled forward from 2023/24**

<b>2023/24 Budgeted Expenditure</b>	<b>£m</b>
Housing benefit payments	91.2
Departmental budgets	550.8
<b>Gross budgeted expenditure</b>	<b>642.0</b>
<b>Gross revenue income budget requirement (specific government grants, fees and charges and other contributions)</b>	<b>(444.0)</b>
<b>Net revenue budget requirement</b>	<b>198.0</b>
<b>To be met from:</b>	
General grants	(56.7)
Locally retained business rates	(62.5)
<b>2024/25 Council Tax requirement (including the Adult Social Care precept)</b>	<b>(78.8)</b>

## Budget assumptions

### Investment and growth pressures

- Additional investment and growth of £10.7m is being provided following the budget setting and review process. The proposed investment and growth items are summarised in Table 2. The detailed investment proposals for this PAC are set out from paragraph 44 and in Appendix 1 to this report.

**Table 2: 2024/25 Investment Proposals**

<b>Department</b>	<b>£m</b>
Adult Social Care	4.8
Children Services	1.6
Environment	0.5
Corporate Services	0.2
Economy	1.5
Other Services	2.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.7</b>

## Savings and Income Generation

- After more than a decade of austerity, it is increasingly difficult to identify and deliver substantive savings. However, further savings are necessary if the financial challenge of real terms government funding cuts, unfunded burdens, inflation, and demand and growth pressures is to be met and the council has been able to find these. In the future, the Council must consider all available options to operate within the funding available to it.



4. The proposed savings (including additional income) for 2024/25 are set out in Table 3. The savings proposals for this PAC are outlined in detail from paragraph 44 and in Appendix 1 to this report.

**Table 3: 2024/25 firm savings and additional income**

<b>Department</b>	<b>£m</b>
Adult Social Care and Public Health	(2.1)
Children Services	(1.6)
Environment	(1.5)
Corporate Services	(0.3)
Economy	(1.4)
Finance	(0.4)
Other Services	(0.8)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(8.1)</b>

### **Inflation**

5. Inflation has been consistently high over the past two years (reaching 10.5% in December 2022, and the highest level for 40 years). The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for September 2023 is 6.7%. The Office of Budget Responsibility is forecasting inflation of 2.8% by Q4 of 2024/25 and the proposed budget for 2024/25 includes provision for both pay and price inflation in line with those assumptions: This budget allows for:
- Contract and external services inflation of £9.2m.
  - £4.5m provision for a 2024/25 pay award (this equates to a 3.0% pay award)

### **Fees and Charges**

6. Charges governed by statute are set in accordance with those requirements and not varied in accordance with inflation. For non-statutory **fees and charges** levied by the council, it is recommended that:
- They are frozen for Adult Social Care, Children’s Services and Housing in line with administration policy.
  - Commercial services that are charged on a for-profit basis, will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in response to market conditions and changed as appropriate, with due authorisations according to the Council constitution.
  - Parking charges and fines are to be set in line with transport policy objectives and not considered as part of the budget process.

- A standard uplift of 6.7% is applied for other non-commercial and non-parking fees, as per September 2023 CPI.
- The exceptions to these assumptions for this committee are attached in **Appendix 4**.

### **Local Government Finance Settlement and Core Spending Power**

7. The provisional 2024/25 Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) was published by DHLUC on the 18th of December 2023. This statement outlines provisional funding allocations for local authorities for 2024/25 alongside the Core Spending Power for each authority. For the sixth year in a row, this was a single year funding settlement. There was not a great deal of new funding included, as much of the funding announced in the statement had already been declared in the 2023/24 LGFS, particularly funding ringfenced for Adult Social Care and Council Tax referendum limits.
8. Core Spending Power estimates total revenue funding available to authorities and includes Government assumptions on a maximum increase in Council Tax (4.99%) and business rates income (including compensation for under indexing the multiplier) as well as growth in the Council Tax base. The Statement provided an increase in Core Spending Power of 6.7% (the level of CPI inflation in September) if the council increases Council Tax and the Adult Social Care Precept to the maximum extent without triggering a local referendum. It also includes compensation for the decision to freeze the small business rates multiplier, which has resulted in lower council revenues in other areas.
9. A summary of the Council's funding settlement and Core Spending Power in comparison to 2023/24 is set out in **Appendix 5**.
10. The 2024/25 Settlement continues the recent trend of single year funding settlements with no grant allocations confirmed beyond next year. The lack of future certainty continues to undermine effective medium-term financial planning and resource allocation. The planned review (Fair Funding Review) to explore changing how central grants are distributed between local authorities and with the potential for resetting the baselines for determining each local authority's need has been pushed back to April 2025 at the earliest after first being announced in 2016.
11. It should be noted that whilst the overall Core Spending Power for the Council has increased by £13.78m, only £5.75m (42%) of this relates to grant funding distributed directly to local authorities as part of the LGFS, as both Council Tax and business rates income are locally generated sources of income.

An explanation of the key funding streams is outlined below:

12. **Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA)** – The SFA is made up of two elements: The Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and the Baseline Funding Level (BFL). RSG is given to local authorities and can be used to finance revenue expenditure on any service. This grant has increased by £1.35m. This increase from 2023/24 is in line with the September CPI increase of 6.7%.

13. The BFL is the estimated retained Business Rates as calculated by the Government, usually updated in line with the small business rates multiplier. The actual business rates estimated by the Council is set out in the business rates section below.
14. **Social Care funding** – There are four separate grants as part of the Core Spending Power which relate to Social Care funding. Except for the Social Care Support grant (which can be used for matters relating to Childrens and Adults Social Care), all the others are ringfenced and passported to the Social Care budget. The grants are as follows:
  - Social Care Support grant
  - Improved Better Care Fund
  - Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (now includes the MSIF Workforce Fund)
  - ASC Discharge Fund
15. A two-year funding package for Social Care was outlined in last year's LGFS and the funding this year represents the second year of this. Beyond 2024/25, it is unclear and uncertain the sustainability and level of funding which will be available to local authorities for Social Care.
16. **Compensation for the under-indexing of the business rates multiplier** – this is funding to compensate local authorities for lost business rates income arising from the decision to freeze the small business rates multiplier.
17. **New Homes Bonus** - There will be new rounds of New Homes Bonus (NHB) payments in 2024/25. In line with last year, these payments will not attract new legacy payments. It is unlikely that the New Homes Bonus will continue beyond 2024/25, and whether any alternative funding will be provided should this be the case.
18. **Services Grant** – The services grant has reduced by over 84% in 2024/25. The Government have made significant cuts to this funding (from £822m in 22/23 to £77m in 24/25) as it has been top sliced to offset the rising cost of other grants in the settlement. Although the local government finance policy statement on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December stated that this grant would reduce, the scale of reduction was not anticipated or communicated to local authorities earlier in the budget setting process.
19. Other Funding
20. **Household Support Fund (HSF)** - In 2021, the Department for Work and Pensions announced that vulnerable households across the country would be able to access a new support fund to help them with essentials over the winter. The total HSF allocated to Hammersmith and Fulham during 2023/24 was £2.8m, all of which is planned to be spent as part of the council's Cost of Living response.

21. However, after the Autumn Statement, it was confirmed by DHLUC that the HSF will not continue beyond 31 March 2024. At time of writing, it is not known if this funding will be replaced with another scheme or will be folded into existing funding, but the ending of this funding stream will place a significant additional financial burden on the Council and those most vulnerable and affected by the Cost-of-Living crisis.
22. There are other specific grants which sit outside the main LGFS and for which allocations have been announced. The Council will receive £24.3m for the Public Health Grant, £3.89m for the Homelessness Prevention Grant (a further £120m has been announced nationally but allocations are not known at the time of writing), plus £177.3m for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). These grants are ringfenced and are assumed will have a neutral impact in the current budget proposals.

### **Other Measures**

23. It is estimated that £5.0m relating to income from investing cash balances will be available as favourable interest rates is assumed as per the Bank of England's economic forecast assumptions. This income will be used to balance the budget in 2024/25 and our cash balances and base rate assumptions will be reviewed throughout the financial year in line with our treasury management strategy.
24. A comprehensive review has been carried out across both front and back-office functions within parking services. This has resulted in a programme of measures that has delivered more effective and efficient systems and processes, particularly in permit and suspension management, together with the introduction of more streamlined delivery and operational models. Front line services benefit from the introduction of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technologies in on-street enforcement, and the continued roll out of automated cameras in moving traffic, capturing alerts and contraventions. This outcome of this review is reflected in the budget for 2024/25.
25. In addition, there are budget measures to reduce budgeted reserve contributions, realigning corporate charges between the HRA and General Fund and short-term contributions arising from lower than budgeted contributions to the concessionary fares (freedom pass) scheme. The latter is due to the impact of passenger usage on public transport in response to the pandemic and changes to ways of working. This is not expected to continue beyond 2024/25 as demand is forecast to return to pre pandemic levels and fares increase.

### **Council Tax**

26. The Council is proud to have the third lowest Council Tax in the country, and to have cut or frozen Council Tax in 5 of the last 9 years. LBHF also has one of the most progressive Council Tax support schemes in the country, with almost half of residents not paying the full amount, and those least able to pay facing no charge at all.

27. The national economic conditions of high inflation and interest rates made a Council Tax increase in 2023/24 unavoidable and a 2.99% increase in the Hammersmith & Fulham element of Council Tax was required to achieve a sustainable budget. As the current level of Council Tax is so low, even an increase of 2.99% keeps the overall level well below other local authorities.
28. The budget proposals assume Council Tax will be increased by the amount modelled in the Government's Core Spending Power calculations, including the ringfenced Adult Social Care precept. The level of Council Tax increase reflects the assumption that has been outlined by Central Government in the Autumn Statement made on the 17 November by the Chancellor and assumed in the funding settlement for local government. The additional income will fund rising costs, protect, and support investment in key services for residents, and strengthen future financial resilience. The increase is equivalent to £26 per annum, or 50p per week, for 2024/25 (at Band D). For the Adult Social Care precept, this is the equivalent to £17.44 per annum, or less than 35p per week (at Band D).
29. For 2024/25, despite the financial pressures on the council, our ruthlessly financially efficient approach has allowed us to keep Council Tax levels low. There is no better place to be a Council Taxpayer than here in Hammersmith & Fulham. Not only do we have the third lowest council tax rates in the country, but our Council Tax Support Scheme provides discounts and exemptions to many residents, with the most vulnerable paying nothing at all.
30. This administration took the decision to exempt care leavers from paying Council Tax entirely, and this year, for the first time, we will also exempt in-house foster carers and special guardians so that they do not pay a penny of Council Tax.
31. As set out in Table 4 below, it is estimated that 42% of residents will not be required to pay the full increase (as they will be supported through the single person household discounts, Council Tax Support, and exemptions).

**Table 4: Liability for Council Tax at November 2023**

Total dwellings in the borough	94,117
Reductions:	
Exemptions (mainly students, includes care leavers and vacant properties)	(3,415)
Council Tax support claimants (elderly & working age on low income)	(10,087)
Single person discount (25% discount)	(26,143)
<b>Dwellings liable for 100% of Council Tax</b>	<b>54,472</b>
	<b>58%</b>

## Business Rates

32. The recent change in legislation has meant that the business rates multiplier has been 'decoupled', and ministers now have the power to set different levels of rates for the elements of the multiplier (small and standard multipliers). The Autumn Statement confirmed that the standard multiplier rate would increase in line with September's CPI inflation (6.7%).
33. There will be a freeze in 2024/25 for the small business rate multiplier for the fourth year in a row. The 75% Retail, Hospitality and Leisure relief will be also extended for 2024-25. Local authorities will be compensated by the government for the resultant loss of income from these measures.
34. The forecast assumes that Hammersmith & Fulham will receive and retain the minimum amount guaranteed, the safety net threshold, by Government. This is £62.5m for 2024/25.

## Risk and financial resilience

35. Under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Strategic Director of Finance is required to include, in the budget report, a view of the robustness of the 2024/25 estimates and also views of the adequacy of the balances and reserves the budget provides for in light of the medium-term risks facing the authority.
36. An updated reserves strategy and forecast will be included within the suite of finance reports presented to Cabinet and Full Council.
37. The current reserves forecast is set out in Table 5 and models a fall in overall general fund reserves and balances to £91.6m by 2027/28. This assumes a balanced budget is set each year with no further call on reserves.

**Table 5: Reserves and general balances - cash flow forecast to 2027/28**

	<b>April 2023 £m</b>	<b>April 2024 £m</b>	<b>April 2025 £m</b>	<b>April 2026 £m</b>	<b>April 2027 £m</b>
General balances (recommended range £19m - £23m)	21.3	21.3	21.3	21.3	21.3
Earmarked reserves	98.3	72.0	62.0	68.7	70.2
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>119.6</b>	<b>93.3</b>	<b>83.4</b>	<b>90.0</b>	<b>91.6</b>
Developer contributions (Subject to separate monitoring and approval)	48.9				

38. The Council's general balance for 2023/24 is £21.3m, after the council ran a budget surplus and contributed additional funds to general balance reserves. This equates to 3.8% (14 days spend) of the Council's gross budget of £550.8m. The Strategic Director of Finance has recommended that the optimal range for the general balance is between £19m and £23m.
39. Reserves play a crucial role in good public financial management. They enable investment in service transformation and provide resilience against unexpected events or emergent needs.
40. Hammersmith & Fulham holds reserves for two main purposes:
  - As a contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies – this forms part of general balances.
  - To build up funds for known or predicted requirements; these specific reserves are known as earmarked reserves.
41. Reserves are also a key enabler for future service transformation. The financial challenge facing the council will require investment to deliver future efficiencies to enable the council to balance the budget in future years.
42. The lack of an appropriate safety net has resulted in several councils running into financial difficulties. Over the last two years, nine local authorities have produced a section 114 notice (this is a notice from the s151 officer in their view that a Council's resources are not sufficient to fund its forecasted expenditure for a financial year) and one in five local authorities have reported that they "think it is very or fairly likely that their chief finance officer will need to issue a Section 114 notice this year or next due to a lack of funding to keep key services running".<sup>3</sup>

## Key Risks

43. The key financial risks that face the Council have been identified and are set out below:
  - The continuing economic conditions relating to inflation, interest rates, unemployment, real household incomes (these may all increase our service delivery costs, recovery of income and viability of major projects).
  - The increasing national legislative requirements (e.g., Environment Act 2021, Social Regulation 2023) will add additional pressures on our service delivery.
  - The increasing regulation from national government (e.g., OfLog, Housing Ombudsman, CQC) will increase our cost burdens.
  - The demographic pressures especially on Adult Services, Childrens Services (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), homelessness (temporary accommodation) and people from abroad will continue (as is the case nationally for many other local authorities). This is a combination of a number of factors including the Covid-19 recovery, addressing pent-up demand and supply issues post Brexit.

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<sup>3</sup> [Section 114 fear for almost 1 in 5 council leaders and chief executives after cashless Autumn Statement | Local Government Association](#)

- Higher pay inflation particularly given current labour shortages.
- The stabilisation and restoration of Hammersmith Bridge, with the council incurring revenue and capital costs at risk until government funding is confirmed.
- The future impact on London of the government's 'levelling-up' agenda and wider local government finance reform (such as business rates)
- The impact of the wider economy on major council development projects and future contributions from developers
- The impact of, and costs of, tackling climate change
- The challenge of identifying further significant future savings that balance the budget over the longer-term.

Departmental risks for the services covered by this PAC are set out in Appendix 2.

### **Comments of the Strategic Director of Independent Living (DASS) on the 2024/25 Budget Proposals**

#### **44. Budget Headlines**

- H&F continues to be the only Council in England to provide free home care for disabled people and older residents. I am proud that we have been able to prepare a budget that maintains this – along with not charging for other community services such as day care, short stay services and transport, all of which remain free.
- The Council is proposing to support residents by investing £4.803m in Home Care and Independent Living and in the Integrated Learning Disabilities Transition Team.
- We are also one of few Councils to provide a subsidised daily “Meals and a Chat” service (previously called Meals on Wheels). The charge of £2 per meal has not been increased for 9 years now.
- We also continue to offer a subsidised Careline service, for which the charge has stayed the same for 8 years.
- The department funds a range of Social Care support for 2,803 older and disabled residents, most of whom have extremely high support needs. 2,248 live in the community and 555 people live in a care home.
- Since 2014/15, the department has contributed savings of £28.9m to the Council's overall budget. This equates to 24.5% of the Council's total savings.

#### **45. Pressures on the Social Care system**

- Covid-19 has made an already volatile care market even more susceptible to market failure.



- The focus on even more rapid discharges from hospital has placed further pressure on the system.
- Delays in elective surgery have caused additional demands as residents are becoming more debilitated and in need of ongoing support.
- Until a long-term funding solution is found, more short-term support is needed to help manage the Adult Social Care response from the pandemic. As the national funding review of Social Care Finances has been deferred by Government, the Local Government Finance settlement announcement is on an annual basis, with specific ringfenced time limited grants to partly address the demand pressures ongoing from the pandemic in Social Care.
- There are increasing demographic pressures, with a focus on support for working age adults. There has been no growth provision proposed in the 2024-25 budget and this has been shown as a risk in the finances.
- Social Care's future ability to make further savings is challenged due to the additional pressures placed on it by the ongoing budget pressures.
- Looking at the impact of cost-of-living pressures on care market providers, the Government's "Fair Cost of Care" (FCC) exercise has resulted in a market sustainability report which has led to significantly higher costs. This would introduce a further budget pressure in coming years. The average increases in unit costs of care paid in 2023-24 have been between 5 to 10.7% depending on the service provided to support FCC to providers.
- The delays in elective surgery, severe workforce issues in the NHS and bed closures have led to a "ward at home" environment for those receiving support in their own homes, in which carers (now called "independent living workers") on lower pay and with less training are expected to undertake activities traditionally done by nurses, such as medicine management and wound dressing. A consistent approach is needed for funding Social Care and the NHS as two parts of an interlinked system, with any future NHS budget increases replicated for Social Care to put it on a more sustainable level to meet growth and demand for an ageing population and to strengthen Social Care's ability to support hospitals to discharge patients.

#### **46. Key policy outcomes delivered in Social Care**

- The administration continues its commitment to making life more affordable for older and disabled residents by providing free home care, day care, short stay support services and transport.
- For the ninth year in a row, residents are only paying £2 a time for 'Meals and a Chat' from local providers. We are also not increasing Careline charges for the eighth year in a row.

- H&F's Reablement Service has a Care Quality Commission's rating of **Outstanding** for the third year in a row. High quality and responsive reablement is essential for avoiding hospital re-admissions.
- As we have since 2015, the Council continues to pay our contractors and sub-contractors the London Living Wage. This makes life more affordable for our 1,500 care staff. It also helps us retain care staff for longer and so ensure an improved consistency of independent living workers.
- Excellent collaboration with our local hospitals means that H&F is among the leading boroughs in London for timely discharges. We are pleased by the greater prominence being given to this in relieving the intense pressures facing the NHS.

#### **47. Key achievements being delivered in Social Care**

- Co-producing a new service offer with parents to provide day opportunities for independent living for adults with profound autism.
- Achieving Dementia-Friendly Community status from the Alzheimer's Society, publishing a dementia guide for residents and carers.
- Establishing an all-age autism partnership board to co-produce improvements to services and support for neurodiverse residents and their families.
- Working with Action on Disability and our Strategic Co-production leads to launch our new Independent Living Delivery Group, with six newly recruited Disabled residents co-producing with the Council.
- Moving to improve support for transitioning young people into adulthood, growing our workforce capacity to meet demand and putting new protocols and a panel in place.
- We have received 174 compliments since April 2023 from residents, which continues from the high number of compliments in the last three years. We have received 69 complaints since April 2023.

#### **48. Public Health**

- Public Health is fully funded by a ring-fenced grant from the Department of Health and Social Care and will remain a zero-cost budget to the Council. The indicative 2024/25 level of grant is expected to be £24.3m, which is an increase of £0.3m to pay for inflationary pressures.
- The Council's base budget for Public Health Investment in Council services has increased to £7.456m, an increase of £0.522m in 2024/25. This results from the service collaborating with other Council departments to achieve more

compassionate, effective and ruthlessly financial efficient ways of delivering Public Health outcomes in the challenging financial environment.

#### **49. Key achievements delivered by Public Health in 2023-24**

- Procurement of a new integrated drug and alcohol service (provided now by Turning Point alone).
- Launch of “Beat the street”, an excellent, evidence-based programme of physical activity to promote walking in children.
- Commissioning of The Listening Place to do expert, bespoke suicide prevention work with residents and partner services.
- Second year of an innovative education and empowerment programme to promote uptake of flu and Covid vaccines in nursing home staff.
- The Council is rare in having its own infection prevention and control nurse. She has led on innovative work in our care homes, conducting detailed environmental audits, designing new safety systems which mirror Care Quality Commission processes. She provides monthly education for care staff around infection control and immunisations.
- The Director of Public Health (DPH), working together with housing and economy colleagues, has developed a practical, easy-read guide to housing and employment services for the NHS across GPs, hospitals, and the mental health trust. This includes how to get help with damp and mould, Council housing repairs and medical queries around allocations. The guide has been shared with London DPHs and adopted by neighbouring boroughs.
- The DPH and housing colleagues identified several issues with homeless hostel residents gaining access to mental health services, as they often have dual diagnosis (concomitant mental health and substance misuse needs). Working with our mental health trusts and substance misuse services, we are building an innovative model of bespoke specialist mental health and dual diagnosis expertise for the hostels in LBHF to reduce crisis / emergency use of services.

#### **50. Market management and inflationary pressures**

- Both the supply of independent living workers to deliver home care and the supply of beds in care homes available at an affordable price have become limited across London. We will continue to implement business continuity plans locally so that we can continue to meet our statutory requirements under the Care Act to provide appropriate care and support following a Social Care assessment.

- Care homes are continuing to ask for higher rates. Some homes are seeking to move away from making a distinction between health, Social Care, and self-funder rates. The national body representing care homes is arguing for full cost of recovery for all placements rather than a business model which is balanced between a mix of private and public funded placements. We are looking to continue to secure competitive rates as a west London region in this changing context.
- In 2023, early hospital discharge of residents who are deemed medically fit continued to increase the demand for home care. The level of acuity of need remains high. For example, 212 residents currently require two independent living workers three to four times per day. Some residents require live-in and night-time care.
- Since the start of the year, 33 residents with Learning Disabilities have been receiving support in a placement, with costs averaging over £2,000 per week.
- For older residents with physical support needs, there are currently 126 placements with costs averaging over £1,000 per week, equating to 47% of all physical support placements. This is a significant increase compared to 12 months ago, when placements exceeding £1,000 per week equated to just 24% of all physical support placements.
- Mental health placements' weekly costs have increased by over 11% since the start of this budget year, whilst resident numbers have increased by 8%.
- As part of the Council inflation strategy (see section 3), Social Care is proposed a budget increase of £3.024m for initial inflationary pressures, which represents a 4% uplift for 2024/25.

## **51. Adult Social Care additional ringfenced grants**

As detailed in the provisional local government finance settlement there are two continued ringfenced grants in 2024/25.

### Market sustainability and improvement funding and workforce – £4m (an increase of £0.4m in 2024/25)

- As part of moving towards the Fair Cost of Care (FCC) in the Social Care market, the government proposes to maintain current levels of FCC funding for local authorities for 2023-2025. This is to continue to support the progress that local authorities and providers have already made this year on fees and cost of care exercises.
- An additional £0.4m for H&F Adult Social Care has been allocated for 2024/25. This extra funding will support inflationary settlements above the 4% proposed budget and for the increase in the London Living Wage.

- This grant is also intended to make tangible improvements to Adult Social Care, address Social Care waiting times and workforce pressures, and promote technological innovation in the sector – all with the aim of improving market sustainability.

Discharge funding – £2.3m (an increase of £0.9m in 2024/25)

- This is a ring-fenced grant which must be pooled with the NHS as part of the Better Care Fund. The funding is intended to support improvements to Adult Social Care and to address new and increasing discharges from April 2023-2025.

## **52. Investment and Savings strategy**

Given the significant pressures in Social Care there are 2 investments proposed for 2024/25 totalling £4.803m, which accounts for 44% of proposed investment in all services. Further details are in appendix 1.

Home Care and Independent Living (HCIL) procurement award for six borough-based new contracts (these contracts are for the Patch and Bridging Service and Home Care spot demand pressures) – £4.2m

- The Cabinet meeting of 15 January 2024 approved the award of twelve contracts for the provision of Home Care and Independent Living following an open tender procedure.
- In order to deliver this service, the Council intends radically to improve the quality of the care provided to residents both in their own home and in the borough's care homes through the introduction of a new Total Quality Management approach.
- A total of £21.4m is expected to be invested in the HCIL service in 2024/25, an increase of £4.2m from 2023/24 (subject to approval of the Annual Budget for 2024/25 by Full Council in February 2024).
- The funding restates the requirement for all independent living workers to be paid at the London Living Wage (LLW) as a minimum. This will include their travel time between visits.

The integrated Learning Disabilities (LD) Transition Team – £0.603m

- Additional resources are required for the increasing number of disabled young people transitioning into adult services. We have estimated that there are likely to be 126 more young people by 2027/28 creating a cost pressure on an already overspending budget.

### 53. Savings Proposals.

- The department proposes 9 Social Care and 4 Public Health efficiency proposals with themes around continuous improvement of services, commissioning market opportunities and redesign of services. These total £2.122m of savings in 2024/25. This represents 26% of all the efficiencies proposed by the Council as a whole for this year. Further details of these are in Appendix 1.

### 54. Indicative Budget 2024/25

- The Social Care and Public Health department revenue budget for 2024/25 is summarised at divisional level in the table below.
- The net budget for 24/25 is £73.629m. This represents an increase of 11% for 2024/25 compared with a net budget for 2023/24 of £66.036m.

**Table 6**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Expenditure £000</b>	<b>Income £000</b>	<b>Net Budget £000</b>
Independent Living, Quality, Performance & Safeguarding	63,863	(31,872)	31,991
Specialist Support and Independent Living	33,530	(4,888)	28,642
Commissioning	10,080	(3,603)	6,477
Resources	6,080	(037)	6,043
Social Care	528	(052)	476
Public Health	24,348	(24,348)	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>138,429</b>	<b>(64,800)</b>	<b>73,629</b>

- The main budget changes are described in the above paragraphs and are shown in more detail in the appendices to this report.

### 55. Fees and charges

- The Meals and a Chat and Careline charges remain unchanged in 2024/25. For the ninth year in a row, residents only pay £2 a time for 'Meals and a Chat' from local providers. We are also not increasing Careline charges for the eighth year in a row. Further details are in Appendix 4.

### 56. Equality Implications

- A draft Equality Impact Analysis (EIA), which assesses the impacts on equality of the main items in the budget proposals relevant to this PAC, is attached as Appendix 3. A final EIA will be reported to Budget Council in February 2024.

### List of Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Savings and investment proposals
- Appendix 2 – Risks
- Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessments
- Appendix 4 – Fees and Charges
- Appendix 5 – Spending Power Calculation

## Adult Social Care Efficiencies &amp; Investment Proposals

Ref Nos	Service	Title & Theme	Summary	2024-25 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)	2025-26 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)	2026-27 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)	2027-28 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)
SC1	Independent living, Quality, Performance and Safeguarding	Reform - Commissioning Market Opportunities	Review care costs with NHS (CHC) as people with very high needs are discharged from hospital.	(200)	(250)	(300)	(300)
SC2	Independent living, Quality, Performance and Safeguarding	Reform - Continuous improvement of services	Supporting resident independence though better integration of council services with community networks.	(150)	(350)	(350)	(350)
SC3	Independent living, Quality, Performance and Safeguarding	Reform - Continuous improvement of services	Further increased take-up of Direct Payments for choice and control for residents and increasing wellbeing and coproducing as part of the Direct Payment steering group.	(200)	(400)	(600)	(600)
SC4	Specialist Support and Independent Living	Cross Cutting - Continuous improvement of services	Joint commissioning steering group with Economy department on implementing the Disabled People's Housing Strategy and reducing voids. This will be done through reviewing the Extra Care Homes available for residents, ensuring new builds are co-produced with disabled residents and make good Housing voids	(200)	(200)	(400)	(400)
SC5	Independent living, Quality, Performance and Safeguarding	Transformation - Continuous improvement of Services	Maximising adaptations in people's homes through use of Disabled Facilities Grant. Review Occupational Therapy service delivery across the department with a view to undertake joint care assessment. This increases a person's independence and reduces the need for longer-term care.	(200)	(200)	(200)	(200)
SC6	Independent living, Quality, Performance and Safeguarding	Reform - Service redesign	Better use of equipment to improve independence of residents with sensory disability.	(100)	(150)	(200)	(200)
SC7	All Divisions	Artificial Intelligence - Improve access to and support provided from our front door	Improved support and information for residents and make better use of digital technologies (such as care cubed, use of resident portal, timely return of equipment).	(250)	(450)	(550)	(550)
SC8	Commissioning	Reform - Commissioning Market Opportunities	Review of commissioning contracts in line with the third sector strategy. This will be managed by adjusting the available contingencies within this budget (it will not affect existing contracts or the Fast Track allocations and inflation will be allocated to contracts in 2024/25).	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
SC9	All Divisions	Reform - Service redesign	Reshaping the department as an all-age adults service and over a medium term neighbourhood resident focus.	(200)	(500)	(500)	(500)
<b>Social Care Efficiencies Proposals subtotal</b>				<b>(1,600)</b>	<b>(2,600)</b>	<b>(3,200)</b>	<b>(3,200)</b>
<b>Investment Proposals</b>							
SC10	Independent living, Quality, Performance and Safeguarding & Specialist Support.	Home Care	Home Care and Independent Living procurement award for 6 borough-based new contracts (these contracts are for the Patch and Bridging Service and Home Care spot demand pressures)	4,200	4,200	4,200	4,200
SC11	Specialist Support and Independent Living	Learning Disability Transitions	The integrated Learning Disabilities (LD) Transition Team	603	603	603	603
<b>Social Care Investment Proposals Total</b>				<b>4,803</b>	<b>4,803</b>	<b>4,803</b>	<b>4,803</b>



Ref Nos	Service	Title & Theme	Summary	2024-25 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)	2025-26 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)	2026-27 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)	2027-28 Budget Change Cumulative (£000's)
<b>Public Health</b>							
<b>Firm Savings</b>							
PH1	Public Health	Transformation	Review of Community Champions Programme and Re-provision of Services to align services with resident needs and support the Councils response to the cost of living.	(250)	(250)	(250)	(250)
PH2	Public Health	Environmental Health	Review of Environmental Health Contributions to manage and support the health protection and outbreak prevention.	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
PH3	Public Health	Rough Sleeping	Review of Rough Sleeper Public Health Contribution to support residents with independent living.	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
PH4	Public Health	Community Safety	Review the impact of targeted provision with underserved groups to improve community engagement.	(72)	(72)	(72)	(72)
<b>Public Health Efficiencies Proposals Subtotal</b>				<b>(522)</b>	<b>(522)</b>	<b>(522)</b>	<b>(522)</b>

**Social Care Risks/ Challenges**

Department & Division	Short Description of Risk	Mitigation
<b>Social Care</b>		
Learning Disabilities	<b>Learning Disabilities Transitions:</b> Additional funding is required for the LD budgets to fund the increasing number of disabled young people transitioning into adult services. We have estimated that there are likely to be 126 more young people by 2027/28 creating a cost pressure on an already overspending budget.	Regular and robust review of residents' care is needed to ensure that care plans accurately reflect current assessed care needs.
All Divisions	<b>Demographic Pressures:</b> The Social Care budget is under severe pressure due to increasing demand in support at home, greater acuity of need, an ageing population and increasingly complex needs resulting from specialist services. For H&F demographic pressures relating to the increased numbers of older and disabled people requiring social care is forecast to be an average of 1.52% over the period 2023 to 2026.	Tight monitoring of the budget on a monthly basis, reprioritising as required.
All Divisions	<b>Better Care Fund (BCF) Health Pressures:</b> 1) Reduced allocation in hospital discharges 2) Review of all services in preparation for 24/25 by NWL Health	Tight monitoring of the budget and joint work with Health on the BCF review.
All Divisions	<b>Equipment contract:</b>	Monitored as part of the contract negotiations and any additional funding to be managed over the lifetime of the contract. However, the consortium is also working through other options and will be updating Boroughs when they've received legal advice. These options may mean that we may not need to make additional payments.

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT 2024/25 - SOCIAL CARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH SAVINGS AND INVESTMENT PROPOSALS**

### **Social Care Savings Proposals**

#### **Review care costs with NHS Continuing Health Criteria (CHC) as people with very high needs are discharged from hospital – savings proposal of £0.200m**

This proposal has a **neutral** impact on our residents that share protected characteristics as CHC can apply to any resident across health and social care where every individual receives the same level of access to social care and medical help regardless of their background or identity. It also allows people to receive the care and support they require from the NHS without charges that apply to social care as their needs become greater.

#### **Supporting resident independence through better integration of council services with community networks - savings proposal of £0.150m**

This proposal has a **neutral** impact for those with shared protected characteristics as the service re-design aims to promote independent living through improving the process of signposting residents to the range of services and support provided in the local area by the voluntary and community sector. Implementing an integrated workforce development plan for staff to ensure that all staff are aware of the range of services and support available in the local community, will minimise unnecessary costly interventions which could be better met by other services and organisations, at a reduced cost preventing the escalation of issues at the earliest opportunity and promoting the residence independence.

#### **Further increased take-up of Direct Payments for choice and control for residents and increasing wellbeing and co-producing as part of the Direct Payment steering group – savings proposal of £0.200m**

This proposal has a **positive** impact on those with shared protected characteristics and in particular Disabled people as Direct Payments (DP's) are key enablers for Independent Living giving people choice and control over how they meet their assessed needs. The approach to DPs in Hammersmith and Fulham has been co-produced with residents in line with recommendations of the Disabled People's Commission (2017) and an independent review of DPs in Hammersmith and Fulham (2018). Continuing to co-produce and refine improvements in the way Hammersmith and Fulham communicate and engage with residents around DP's continues to reduce reliance on traditional care and support and provides residents with the opportunity to be visible and active members of the community with less reliance on the "public purse".

#### **Joint commissioning steering group with Economy department on implementing the Disabled People's Housing Strategy and reducing voids. This will be done through reviewing the Extra Care Homes available for**

**residents, ensuring new builds are co-produced with disabled residents and make good Housing Voids – savings proposal of £0.200m**

This proposal should have a **positive** impact on those with shared protected characteristics and in particular Disabled people as a workstream around housing has been established as part of the Commissioning for Independent Living Workstream.

This work focuses on better placing disabled residents at the heart of our planning and delivery of accessible and affordable housing solutions locally, co-produce the improvements to existing housing and new developments required. This work aligns to our Independent Living Vision, the Disabled Peoples Housing Strategy and our newly established resident led Independent Living Delivery Group. In addition to this we will be focusing on how to reduce voids, re-purpose existing commissioned provision to meet the needs of a wider cohort of adults and reviewing the Extra Care available for residents.

**Maximising adaptations in people's homes through use of Disabled Facilities Grant. Review Occupational Therapy service delivery across the department with a view to undertake a joint care assessment. This increases a person's independence and reduces the need for longer-term care – savings proposal of £0.200m**

This proposal has a **positive** impact on those with protected characteristics in particular age and disability as the provision of adaptations and equipment can enhance a person's independence and reduces the need for longer-term care, as appropriate. There are physical and mental advantages to enabling a resident to do more for themselves and adds to a sense of confidence – this reduces the need for additional homecare provision.

**Better use of equipment to improve independence of residents with sensory disability – savings proposal of £0.100m**

This proposal has a **positive** impact on those with shared protected characteristics and in particular Disabled people by adopting the processes and introducing new digital capabilities to deliver a new, modern digitally capable adult social care system. Utilising and encouraging the use of assistive technology and equipment, as appropriate, to support residents with sensory disabilities aims to increase a person's independence, giving residents greater control over their lives. This will enable service enhancements, cost reductions, and alleviate the use of carer costs which is not cost effective.

**Improved support and information for residents and make better use of digital technologies (such as care cubed, use of resident portal, timely return of equipment) – savings proposal of £0.250m**

This proposal has a **neutral** impact on groups that share protected characteristics with the aim to better utilise digital technology to prevent and reduce the escalation of needs, for example, social isolation and loneliness, minimise pressure on unpaid carers, reduce hospital admission. This will further promote independence and give people greater control over their lives.

The approach develops multi-disciplinary solutions for some of our most complex residents. It also aligns with working in collaboration with our colleagues from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) with focused on how we ensure the Better Care Fund is used relevant service and the monitoring of their outcomes for residents.

**Review of commissioning contracts in line with the third sector strategy. This will be managed by adjusting the available contingencies within this budget (it will not affect existing contracts, or the Fast Track allocations and inflation will be allocated to contracts in 2024/25) – savings proposal of £0.100m**

This proposal has a **neutral** impact on groups that share protected characteristics as there are no plans to reduce the service provided but rather to review key priority areas that grant funding is focused on delivering. This will afford the opportunity to explore how well grants can be aligned to delivery of priority manifest commitment and the different council departmental priorities.

**Reshaping the department as an all-age adults service and over a medium-term neighbourhood resident focus – savings proposal of £0.200m**

This proposal has a **neutral** impact on those with protected characteristics as this is a review of the staffing structure and the front door into an all-aged adult service which will work to ensure that any solutions put in place appropriately meet the needs of all individuals utilising them. An equalities impact assessment will be undertaken as part of the restructure process to identify any potential impact on groups of staff who share protected characteristics.

### **Social Care Investment Proposals**

Throughout the 2024/25 MTFS process, the department has presented evidence-based Adults Social Care demand and acuity pressures of £4.803m. This proposed funding will have a **positive** impact for residents requiring assessed needs with physical support, learning disability and mental health needs and their carers as there is additional funding to meet the new care needs.

**Home Care and Independent Living procurement award for 6 borough-based new contracts (these contracts are for the Patch and Bridging Service and Home Care spot demand pressures) – Investment of £4.2m**

This proposal is **positive** as the awarding of the new Home Care and Independent Living Service contracts will ensure vital and long-term existing provision which can

adapt to the needs of residents. To deliver this service, the Council intends radically to improve the quality of the care provided to residents in their own home through the introduction of a new Total Quality Management approach.

The delivery of the new service model is expected to be a key driver of improving quality through:

- Residents having choice and control and a focus on outcomes of care.
- Increased number of contracted providers over smaller geographical locations allowing the council more choice of providers and an incentive for providers to keep quality high to continue receiving packages of care.
- Flexible use of commissioned hours
- Better conditions for care staff, with fair pay, paid travel time, consistent training, and career progression

A total of £21.4m is expected to be invested in the HCIL service in 2024/25, an increase in funding of £4.2m from 2024/25 (subject to approval of the Annual Budget for 2024/25 by Full Council in March 2024).

### **The integrated Learning Disabilities (LD) Transition Team - £0.603m**

This proposal is **positive** as additional funding is required for the Learning Disabilities Transitions team to support the increasing number of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) transitioning into Adult Social Care and particularly those with more complex needs. Children with SEND transfer to ASC without any budget provision, so they create a cost pressure on an already overspending budget.

There are several factors causing cost pressures in LD, which include:

- Increasing volume of children with SEND transitioning into adult services, reflecting the fact that more children with complex disabilities live to become adults.
- Increasing acuity of need
- People with LD now have a life expectancy which is not particularly shorter than the general population.
- As people with LD age, so does the age of their parents, who may no longer be able to provide the care and support they used to, which results in increased demand for support from ASC.
- Increasing numbers of care packages/direct payments against LD budget for those not meeting eligibility for LD, but who have assessed needs under the Care Act 2014, we have a growth in the number of young people with a diagnosis of autism.

### **Public Health Savings Proposals**

**Review of Community Champions Programme and Reprovision of Services to align services with resident needs and support the Councils response to the cost of living – savings proposal of £0.250m**

This proposal has a **neutral** impact on groups that share protected characteristics. Funding from the previous community champions budget will be used to support core cost of living work in the council to provide immediate emergency assistance to residents in financial crisis. The cost-of-living crisis impacts all residents irrespective of background, identity, or belief. Disabled people are adversely affected by the cost of living; therefore, the proposed funding will support and prioritise disabled people.

**Environment: Review of Environmental Health Contributions to manage and support the health protection and outbreak prevention – savings proposal of £0.100m**

This proposal has a **neutral** impact on groups that share protected characteristics as the current complement of Environmental Health Officers (EHOs), who deliver core public health and health protection function - outbreak prevention, inspection of premises, expert questionnaires and potting of residents to ascertain outbreak spread with GI illness, can be maintained until the termination of the fixed-term contract in March 2024. As this is a technical service, the direct impact on equality, diversity and inclusion can be managed within the remaining environmental health service.

**Economy: Review of Rough Sleeper Public Health Contribution to support residents with independent living – saving proposal of £0.100m**

This proposal has a **neutral** impact on groups that share protected characteristics as temporary funding has been used to upskill the workforce to better manage the needs of residents. Following a review of the Rough Sleeper's pathway with residents gaining employment and moving into longer term accommodation, the PH temporary contribution of £100,000 to the rough sleeping contract, can be achieved. The complexities of these residents are being addressed by engaging residents in wider commissioned services.

**Community Safety: Review the impact of targeted provision with underserved groups to improve community engagement – savings proposal of £0.072m**

This proposal has a **neutral** impact on groups that share protected characteristics. Temporary funding was provided for delivering key community safety work as well as

key public health outcomes around infectious disease management, communication and liaison with faith and other underserved global majority groups. This was key to maintaining the head of the faith forum and expert lead for prevent (anti-terrorism) work. The existing community safety team will continue this role of community engagement, ensuring residents feel safe and within the borough.



**Appendix 4 Social Care - Fees and Charges**

Fee Description	2023/24 Charge (£)	2024/25 Charge (£)	Proposed Variation (%)	Total Estimated Income Stream for 2023/24	Total Estimated Income Stream for 2024/25	Reason For Variation Not At Standard Rate
<b>1. Meals and a Chat service</b>	<b>£2.00</b>	<b>£2.00</b>	0%	£54,000	£30,000	There is no change proposed in the flat rate contribution residents will pay towards the meal service for 2024/25. There has been a reduction in projected income both this year and assumed next due to declining numbers of residents. The £2 charge has remained unchanged for nine years.
<b>1. Careline Alarm Gold Service (Pendant)</b>						
Private Clients ( Home owners & Private Sector Tenants)	<b>£23.14</b>	<b>£23.14</b>	0%	£45,900	£45,900	There is no change proposed in the Careline charge in 2024/25. There has been no increase for eight years.
Council Non-Sheltered or Housing Association (RSL) Tenants	<b>£17.21</b>	<b>£17.21</b>	0%	£15,600	£15,600	
<b>2. Careline Alarm Silver Service (Pendant) - Monitoring Service only</b>						
Private Clients ( Home owners & Private Sector Tenants)	<b>£16.12</b>	<b>£16.12</b>	0%	£22,800	£22,800	
Council Non-Sheltered or Housing Association (RSL) Tenants	<b>£10.30</b>	<b>£10.30</b>	0%	£5,700	£5,700	
<b>3. Careline Alarm Gold Service (Pull cord) - Emergency Response &amp; Monitoring Service</b>						
(A) Provided to Registered Social Landlord Sheltered Accommodations (RSL Financed)	<b>£6.76</b>	<b>£6.76</b>	0%	£17,600	£17,600	

<b>Funding within Core Spending Power</b>	<b>2023/24 £m</b>	<b>2024/25 £m</b>	<b>Change £m</b>	<b>Change %</b>
<b><i>Government grant funding</i></b>				
Revenue Support Grant (part of Settlement Funding Assessment)	20.19	21.54	1.35	7%
New Homes Bonus grant	1.19	1.60	0.41	34%
Social Care Support grant	17.28	20.59	3.31	19%
Multiplier cap compensation	10.93	12.32	1.39	13%
Services grant	2.50	0.39	(2.11)	(84%)
<b>General Grants (excludes cap compensation tariff and housing benefit admin grant)</b>	<b>52.09</b>	<b>56.44</b>	<b>4.35</b>	
<b><i>Ringfenced Social Care grants</i></b>				
Improved better care fund	10.02	10.02	0	0%
ASC Discharge Fund	1.41	2.34	0.93	66%
Market sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF) [now includes the MSIF workforce fund]	2.15	4.02	1.87	87%
MSIF Workforce Fund <sup>1</sup>	1.40	0	(1.40)	(100%)
<b><i>Sub-total grant funding</i></b>	<b>67.07</b>	<b>72.82</b>	<b>5.75</b>	
<b><i>Locally generated sources</i></b>				
Baseline Funding Level (part of Settlement Funding Assessment)	64.17	67.58	3.41	5%
Government assumed Council Tax yield (increase of 4.99% including 2% adult social care precept)	73.18	77.95	4.18	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>204.11</b>	<b>217.89</b>	<b>13.78</b>	<b>6.7%</b>

<sup>1</sup> This grant was not included in the Core Spending Power for 23/24 but is now rolled into the 24/25 calculations