

Cabinet

Minutes



Monday 13 October 2025

PRESENT

Executive Members

Councillor Stephen Cowan, Leader of the Council

Councillor Alex Sanderson, Deputy Leader (with responsibility for Children and Education)

Councillor Florian Chevoppe-Verdier, Cabinet Member for Public Realm

Councillor Wesley Harcourt, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Ecology

Councillor Rebecca Harvey, Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion and Community Safety

Councillor Andrew Jones, Cabinet Member for The Economy

Councillor Zarar Qayyum, Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Skills

Councillor Rowan Ree, Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform

Councillor Frances Umeh, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness

Other Councillors

Councillor Adronie Alford

Officers

Sharon Lea, Chief Executive

Grant Deg, Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

David Abbott, Head of Governance

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bora Kwon.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2025 were agreed as an accurate record.

4. FUNDING COMMUNITY BENEFITS THROUGH PLANNING OBLIGATIONS DRAW DOWN REPORT 2024/25

Councillors Andrew Jones (Cabinet Member for the Economy) and Rowan Ree (Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform) introduced the report that set out the projects and services in the financial year from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, that are to be funded (in part or in full), from monies received through Section 106 agreements or the Borough Community Infrastructure Levy. Together they represented £22.4m of investment in community benefits secured by the Council from developers as part of their planning permission.

Councillor Andrew Jones noted that the £22.4m that had been negotiated allowed the Council to invest in projects such as the Civic Campus and the rejuvenation of King Street, the Law Enforcement Team to help keep residents safe and secure, the innovative gangs unit, genuinely affordable housing, and climate change and flood mitigations.

Councillor Rowan Ree added that this was more than the Council had ever raised from Section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy, despite the challenging economic environment and showed the Council was getting as much money as possible for infrastructure and services for residents.

Councillor Adronie Alford asked if the additional money allocated to the Civic Campus was planned or an overspend. The Leader said the Council had always envisaged spending money to create flexible office space for entrepreneurs and they had expanded that. He added that there had been cost overruns that were well documented due to Brexit, the pandemic, and inflation, but the scheme would pay for itself within 15 years through income generation.

Councillor Alford asked if the issues with the Health and Safety Executive were due to be resolved. The Leader said that was a matter for the Health and Safety Executive. There was an accident on site, the Health and Safety Executive came in and carried out a detailed review which delayed the project by a year. But the project was back on track and aimed to be open early next year.

The Leader spoke about the Administration coming into office and their focus on improving negotiation with private developers to ensure the benefits of development were shared with residents. By improving training to officers and a change in culture he said they were able to achieve record sums and used that money to save the Lyric Theatre, give money to the H&F Foodbank, and have the largest number of Council-funded police officers in the borough's history. The Leader thanked Councillor Andrew Jones for his leadership in this area.

RESOLVED

1. That Cabinet approves the 2024/25 drawdown of Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy monies as set out in this report, to fund expenditure of £22,413,499 for a wide range of community benefits across the borough.

The reasons for decision and alternative options are set out in the report.

There were no declarations of interest and no dispensations in respect of any declared conflict of interest.

5. LOCAL PLAN REVIEW - REGULATION 18 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Councillor Andrew Jones (Cabinet Member for the Economy) introduced the report that sought approval to undertake a Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation. Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 outlined the initial public consultation stage for a local plan. This stage allowed the public, stakeholders, and other relevant parties to provide feedback on the draft local plan before it moved on to the next stage.

Councillor Andrew Jones noted that the Local Plan set the policy framework for the borough's development over the next 10 to 15 years and the Council welcomed feedback from residents and other stakeholders. He added that the plan supported the Government's ambition to build 1.5m new homes and would address key issues for residents, including setting out the future of the borough's high streets and plans to address climate change.

Councillor Adronie Alford asked about the proposal to demolish the Hammersmith flyover and replace it with a tunnel. She supported the idea in theory, but raised questions about whether it was realistic and what impact it would have on reopening Hammersmith Bridge.

The Leader said the tunnel and Hammersmith Bridge were separate issues. The Council had already spent £47m to stop the bridge collapsing. The total cost of restoration, estimated to be £300m, was beyond the bounds of a local authority and a matter for Government. Regarding the proposed tunnel, the Leader said the project could reclaim a lot of prime land and the money generated from the land could be used to fund the tunnel. He noted that this would required a different approach to planning in the city the Council would need to work with the Mayor of London and TfL on this.

Councillor Wesley Harcourt noted the Local Plan was a key part of the Council's climate change agenda, noting the significant technological advancements that had taken place since the previous plan.

The Leader reiterated that the Council wanted to hear from residents about their ambitions and concerns. He said we had to think about what the borough would look like in the mid-century, and how to future proof the borough for the new economy. He spoke about Upstream London, the Council's industrial strategy, and the goal to be a 'campus borough' that supported entrepreneurship and innovation. To support those goals, the borough needed affordable and flexible office space, housing, and more green spaces – and the new Local Plan would bring that vision closer to reality. The Leader thanked Councillor Andrew Jones for his work on this agenda.

RESOLVED

1. That Cabinet approved the draft Local Plan Regulation 18 for public consultation (Appendix 1).
2. That Cabinet gave delegated authority to the Director of Planning and Property, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Economy, to make any necessary editorial amendments and minor changes to the appendices prior to consultation.
3. That Cabinet approved the adoption and publication of the attached revised Local Development Scheme (Appendix 2) to reflect the adjusted Local Plan timetable.
4. That Cabinet approved the updated Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for adoption (Appendix 3).
5. That Cabinet noted that the evidence base documents (listed in this report) will be published alongside the regulation 18 Local Plan.

The reasons for decision and alternative options are set out in the report.

There were no declarations of interest and no dispensations in respect of any declared conflict of interest.

6. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITOR AND BUDGET VARIATIONS 2025/26 (QUARTER 1)

Councillor Rowan Ree (Cabinet Member for Finance and Reform) introduced the report which set out the details of the forecast capital programme for the financial year 2025/26 (including the financing of the programme for the year) and future years.

Councillor Rowan Ree noted that the report covered investments in the Council's housing stock to ensure they were warm, safe and green. As well as investment in the public realm, local schools, and the most comprehensive CCTV network in the UK.

Councillor Adronie Alford asked if members had concerns, given the current economic environment, about over-borrowing. Councillor Ree said that over the last four years borrowing had mostly been internal, as interest rates had been high. He explained that rates were monitoring closely, and the Council only borrowed where it made financial sense to do so. He explained that unlike other types of borrowing, borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board for the Housing Revenue Account was discounted. Councillor Alford asked what the difference in rates was and Councillor Ree replied that it was a 0.6% difference.

The Leader thanked Councillor Ree for the report.

RESOLVED

1. That Cabinet noted the overall forecast of £280.7m for 2025/26 capital expenditure which is a net increase of £13.4m in comparison to the revised budget of £267.3m at 2024/25 outturn.
2. That Cabinet approved a total additional investment of £105.2m across the revised four year programme, including new additional borrowing, the details of this investment are set out in Appendix 1.
3. That Cabinet approved the updated four-year capital programme for 2025-2029 of £679.8m, as detailed in the report. This is a net increase of £105.2m in comparison to the forecast four-year programme as at outturn 2024/25 (£574.6m).

The reasons for decision and alternative options are set out in the report.

There were no declarations of interest and no dispensations in respect of any declared conflict of interest.

7. KEY DECISIONS LIST - TO NOTE

The Key Decision List was noted.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm
Meeting ended: 7.42 pm

Chair: