

#### Appendix 4 - Cabinet responses: scrutiny recommendations (budget 2026/27)

#	Dept	Recommendation	Recommendation details	Lead officer	Cabinet Member	Cabinet response
1	Finance	Budget gap	<p>The Panel noted with concern the risks associated with the cumulative new borrowing of £603m to be raised for Exceptional Financial Support by 2030/31 as illustrated in Table 3 of the draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement. The Panel also noted that, as stated in paragraph 13.6 of the November 2025 Cabinet report, due to the Council's limited financial resources, this may mean spending more in some areas of greatest need and priority and more significant reductions in other areas. It would therefore be necessary to understand further what this would entail for the future of adult social care services.</p> <p>The Panel recommended that Table 6 (Budget Gap 2026/27 to 2030/31) from the November 2025 Cabinet report be updated and published in the report to Cabinet in February 2026 in order to take</p>	<p>Taryn Eves</p> <p>Josephine Lyseight</p>	Cllr Carlin	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services notes this concern. The position presented for Exceptional Financial Support is forecast over the next five years based on assumed use in 2026/27. However. The following should be noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As per the draft budget presented elsewhere on this agenda and the updated Treasury Management Strategy Statement, the assumed need for EFS in 2026/27 has now reduced to £89.2m as part of finalising the draft budget.</li> <li>• This is also based on the 'do nothing' scenario – ie no further savings reductions or new income.</li> <li>• This assumes that the level of borrowing will increase as projected. Work continues across the council to reduce the borrowing requirement by consistently ensuring all capital projects are necessary and need to be done within the timescale suggested.</li> </ul> <p>The Cabinet are aware that the financial position is not sustainable and over the next 6 months, there will be work to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus on ensuring the current £53.9m savings for 2025/26 and 2026/27 are delivered in full</li> <li>• develop further cost reductions across all services, which will be considered by the new administration later</li> </ul>

			into account any changes in the projections.			<p>in the year. This includes statutory services, such as adult social care, to ensure that services and outcomes are met in the most cost-effective way possible but also an increased focus on preventative services that could lead to longer term cost reductions across.</p> <p>It is important to recognise that improving the council's financial sustainability will require looking across the next three to five years. This is likely to mean prioritising some services over others and will reflect the priorities of the new administration.</p> <p>At the same time, officers and Members (through Haringey, London and national networks) will continue discussions with Government that the position across the sector is not sustainable, to lobby for reforms to address the root causes of the budget pressures facing Haringey and more punitive conditions associated with EFS.</p> <p>An update on this work and financial position across the next five years will be reported in the next update to the Medium Term Financial Strategy in summer 2026. This will include a review of all assumptions around demand and price pressures.</p>
2	Finance	EFS	<p>The Panel recommended that information about the interest payments and the capital repayments for EFS be included in Budget papers in future years.</p> <p>OSC requested that Cabinet provide a more detailed response</p>	<p>Taryn Eves</p> <p>Josephine Lyseight</p>	Cllr Carlin	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources notes this recommendation. This 2026/27 draft budget report includes details of the Council's borrowing costs, separating borrowing for the capital programme and EFS. This can be found in Section 8 and the Treasury Management Strategy Statement included at Appendix 10.</p>

			on the long-term sustainability of the interest payments and the capital repayments for EFS.			<p>The Council's Section 151 Officer's Section 25 Statement in Appendix 11 of the report clearly states that the level of debt and interest is too high and must be addressed through future financial plans and also that use of EFS is not sustainable and nor does it provide best value for the taxpayer.</p> <p>Whilst there continues to be reliance on EFS (and its associated borrowing costs) and interest rates remain above the target of 2%, further opportunities to reduce or slow down capital schemes for the 2027/28 programme. This applies to both the General Fund and HRA to reduce total debt forecasts and any changes to the capital programme set out in this report will be subject to further decisions by Cabinet.</p>
3	AHH	Better Care Fund	<p>The Panel expressed concern about the cuts to the Better Care Fund and the risk of the knock-on impact on adult social care services. It was recommended that this be monitored further by the Panel going forward.</p> <p>OSC requested an update on the response from January 2026 given that this was an 'emerging picture' and the proportion of Adult Social Care that is funded through the BCF. The Panel requested that more information be provided in relation to the BCF Support Programme for Neighbourhood Health Planning.</p>	<p>Sara Sutton</p> <p>Jo Baty</p>	Cllr das Neves	<p>The revised policy for the 26/27 Better Care Fund, to be renamed Integrated Care Funding Framework is still pending. We have been advised that funding will remain the same for 26/27, any uplift to be confirmed.</p> <p>Work has been ongoing to review the current expenditure and outcomes from the different funded workstreams/projects so that once the final guidance is received, we will be able to better understand the alignment and implications.</p> <p>We are awaiting more information on the support offer from the BCF Support Programme for Neighbourhood Planning. It is likely to be learning and development across organisations for staff who are implementing our neighbourhoods' models of health and care.</p>

4	Finance	Digital solutions	The Panel welcomed the approach to invest to save through improvements to digital solutions but noted that similar proposals had been seen by Scrutiny in previous years that had not fully come to fruition. The Panel therefore noted a potential risk in the delivery of these improvements. The Panel challenged the Cabinet to explain how previous proposals to improve digital solutions to make savings had been delivered by the Council and why the Panel should have confidence that the current proposals would be successful.	Taryn Eves  Jenna Scott-Brining	Cllr Carlin	<p>It is acknowledged that, historically, some savings anticipated from digital initiatives have not been fully realised. Cabinet has rightly sought assurance that future savings are credible and deliverable. The context for delivery has now changed materially.</p> <p>This represents a fundamental shift from previous arrangements, where capability was fragmented and delivery relied heavily on short-term or external support. The Council now has a much stronger, more accountable model in place.</p> <p>Key changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Digital Services function, established in March 2025, bringing together the full range of skills required to deliver complex change at scale, including enterprise architecture, service design, business analysis, delivery management and technical capability</li> <li>• Skilled, permanent in-house capacity to design and deliver solutions, reducing reliance on short-term or external resource and improving continuity, accountability and value for money</li> <li>• Service led delivery, with Digital working closely alongside services to co-design solutions that are operationally viable, owned by services, and aligned to Haringey's priorities</li> <li>• Robust governance through the Service Modernisation Programme, overseen by a Board comprising all Corporate Directors. No initiative proceeds without explicit agreement from the relevant service on scope, deliverability, and the timing and quantum of savings</li> </ul>
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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear gateway and approval processes via the Service Modernisation Board, ensuring benefits, risks and dependencies are assessed before delivery, and that savings are formally signed off by services</li> <li>• Reduced financial risk, with savings held corporately from 2026/27 so that service budgets are not adjusted until solutions are implemented and savings are demonstrably deliverable</li> </ul> <p>Recognising the time required to implement and embed digital change effectively, the £2m of additional savings previously planned for 2026/27 has been re-profiled to 2027/28. This ensures that 2026/27 remains focused on securing savings already delivered or agreed, including those already removed from budgets.</p> <p>Progress will continue to be reported through Quarterly updates to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny, with more detailed six-monthly reporting available to Overview and Scrutiny to provide ongoing assurance.</p>
5	AHH	Care provider pricing	The Panel felt that there was a particular ongoing risk over the rising costs from service providers within the adult social care sector and the potential impact of this on the modelling of anticipated expenditure over the MTFS period. The Panel made reference to the risk highlighted in the recent KPMG Value for Money Risk	Sara Sutton  Jo Baty	Cllr das Neves	<p>We recognise the pressures associated with rising provider costs and the impact this can have on future financial planning. A number of actions are already underway to strengthen both commissioning and procurement practice in this area.</p> <p>For home care, reablement and supported care, we have an established Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) which helps ensure competitive pricing alongside quality based evaluation. We are currently reviewing our commissioning and procurement approach for these services to strengthen value for money further.</p>

			<p>Assessment to the Audit Committee which stated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <i>“The Council does not have adequate procurement processes in place to enable it to achieve value for money in respect of contracts entered into for services received.”</i></li> <li>o <i>“The Council does not have adequate processes in place to ensure that Adult Social Care spend is sufficiently forecast and managed”</i> (page 43, agenda papers for Audit Committee, 10<sup>th</sup> Nov 2025).</li> </ul> <p>It was recommended that the strengthening of procurement processes be monitored further by the Panel going forward and that this should include the sharing of an Action Plan with the Panel.</p>			<p>For care homes, we are moving towards a greater proportion of block contracts, which gives more stability around pricing and sufficiency. In parallel, we are involved in the North Central London (NCL) Councils Market Management Programme, through which boroughs take a coordinated approach to annual price reviews for both care homes and supported living. This helps manage market inflation collectively and improves the consistency of fee setting.</p> <p>A commissioning review of supported living is also in progress and is due to report in late January/early February. This will provide updated recommendations on future commissioning models and pricing approaches.</p> <p>These strands of work collectively strengthen oversight, forecasting and procurement practice, and we will continue to report progress to the Panel.</p>
6	AHH	Supported living contracts	The Panel emphasised the importance of ensuring that the housing capital projects would align with social care commissioning needs and anticipated levels of demand. It was acknowledged as part of the	Sara Sutton  Jo Baty	Cllr das Neves	Ensuring residents receive the right level of support is central to how supported living is commissioned and monitored. Each resident has a Support Plan that sets out their assessed needs, and these are reviewed at least annually to make sure the support remains appropriate.

			<p>discussion that this was a complex area as different residents required different levels of support.</p> <p>The Panel recommended that the Cabinet should explain what oversight is in place to ensure that residents received appropriate levels of support.</p>			<p>Supported living services are currently commissioned through the DPS, with providers evaluated on both price and quality. Providers are expected to deliver care and support in line with each person's Support Plan, and any changes in need are reflected through the review process.</p> <p>We have a Quality Assurance and Contract Management Framework in place, and quality assurance visits are carried out on a risk basis. This gives oversight of service quality, safeguarding, and the extent to which residents' needs are being met. Any concerns or changes in risk trigger more frequent monitoring or formal contract actions where required.</p>
7	AHH/CS	Transitions	<p>The Panel recommended that further scrutiny was required on transitions, in partnership with the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel, in order to understand the reasons for the reduced numbers despite the national trends appearing to indicate greater demand.</p> <p>The Panel has previously been provided with details of service user numbers with a care package between the ages of 18-64 as this is the format of data collected. The Panel recommended that details of care packages by more specific age cohorts will be required in</p>	<p>Sara Sutton</p> <p>Ann Graham</p>	<p>Cllr das Neves /</p> <p>Cllr Brabazon</p>	<p>We will arrange for a further scrutiny of the data through a detailed report that responds to the points raised in the question. We will arrange this for the next Joint Children and Adults Overview Scrutiny with the agreement of the Chair of the Committee.</p>

			order to scrutinise this area effectively (e.g. the 18-25 age group when considering transitions).			
8	AHH	Care worker retention	<p>The Panel welcomed the additional investment in staffing. However, historic challenges with staff retention were acknowledged as part of the discussion and the Panel highlighted this as a substantial potential risk as this could impact on the Council's ability to fulfil its statutory duties.</p> <p>It was recommended that workforce issues be monitored further by the Panel going forward, particularly in relation to improvements to Care Act assessments.</p> <p>The Panel also recommended that the Cabinet set out how the risks associated with staff retention would be mitigated.</p>	<p>Sara Sutton</p> <p>Jo Baty</p>	Cllr das Neves	<p>A Staffing Task Group has been established for several months now to review recruitment, retention and workforce development with the Service – focusing on the continued professional development for our workforce and equality of opportunity as part of the Workforce Race Equality Team.</p> <p>We have extended our Leadership Group to involve a wider group of Senior Staff in shaping, developing and implementing the Improvement Plan and in co-production with residents for visibility.</p> <p>Our new Principal Social Worker commences in post in March 2026 and will lead the development and implementation of our Workforce Development Plan – working with residents, with Housing and Children's Services, with the NHS and the Voluntary and Community Sector to give our staff creative learning and development opportunities to give us resilience and stability.</p>
9	AHH	Social care charges	The Panel concluded that this was a necessary piece of work and the income generation was welcomed by the Panel. The Panel sought	<p>Sara Sutton</p> <p>Jo Baty</p>	Cllr das Neves	We acknowledge the points raised by the Panel and welcome the opportunity to provide further reassurance.



			<p>assurances that residents on low incomes would not be put in circumstances where they did not have access to care services and the Panel felt that this point had been answered to their satisfaction.</p> <p>However, the Panel expressed concerns that this policy change had not been carried out in the past as this could have achieved savings at an earlier stage.</p> <p>The Panel queried whether there were any other similar areas where practice was out of step with other comparable Boroughs and opportunities for income generation may be being missed and recommended that assurances be sought from the Cabinet that all possible such areas had been considered.</p> <p>OSC requested further reassurance from Cabinet on:</p> <p>1 - Whether further information, guidance and advocacy are available before changes start.</p>		<p>We have statutory advocacy pathways in place, including through our commissioned advocacy services, and we maintain a strong partnership with Disability Action Haringey and other voluntary and community sector partners. These organisations will be fully briefed on the forthcoming changes so they can support residents effectively.</p> <p>The Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) remains a central protection within the national charging framework, ensuring that everyone retains a set amount for daily living costs. Residents also have the right to request a review of their assessed charge if they believe it is unreasonable. In exceptional circumstances, charges can be reduced or waived under delegated powers held by the Head of Service.</p> <p>In response to the Committee's specific questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Information, guidance and advocacy – These will be available ahead of changes being implemented, with targeted communication and signposting for those who may need additional support.</li> <li>2. Reasonable adjustments – These are embedded in our approach and are made proactively wherever possible.</li> <li>3. Appeals, pauses and reviews – Residents can request a review at any time without any negative impact, and adjustments can be made where circumstances change.</li> <li>4. Impact on care uptake – The Minimum Income Guarantee and the review/waiver processes ensure that residents are not placed in a position where cost prevents them from accessing essential care.</li> </ol>
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			<p>2 - Whether reasonable adjustments were automatic rather than reactive</p> <p>3 - Whether residents can appeal, pause or review these changes without any detrimental impact.</p> <p>4 - Whether this policy could discourage care uptake from vulnerable groups.</p>			We will monitor the impact of the charging policy and work with partners to ensure residents are supported throughout the process.
10	Finance	Business cases in budget papers	The Panel would like to recommend that business cases related to savings should also be included in budget papers being considered by Scrutiny Panels.	<p>Taryn Eves</p> <p>Josephine Lyseight</p>	Cllr Carlin	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources notes this recommendation. Consideration will be given to expanding the level of detail included for savings proposals as part of next year's budget process.</p> <p>All Cabinet and officer delegated decision reports include full details of financial, procurement and legal statutory comments and any assumptions from the business case to inform the decision.</p>
11	ERE	Leisure income generation	The Panel noted that the Leisure provision was brought in house last year and so the Council now had full control so there is potentially more opportunity to generate income by utilising assets and improving the Council offer to be competitive with other comparable service providers. It was noted that the Council was now in a good position to carry out	<p>Barry Francis</p> <p>Zoe Robertson</p>	Emily	<p>The Leisure Commercialisation Plan was formed using industry intelligence from third party independent leisure experts, who helped cost the in-house service in readiness for insourcing. This was later developed into a Commercialisation Plan including ideas from within the service. This was independently verified by 31ten as part of their work on financial assurance for the council.</p> <p>The Commercialisation Plan includes indicative income figures for a wide range of activities and is considered to be commercially sensitive due to the active competition in this</p>

			<p>an options appraisal to analyse this properly.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are provided with detailed figures in relation to the savings presented for Leisure Commercialisation as part of future budget monitoring reports.</p> <p>Details of social value would also be welcomed by the panel.</p>			<p>market. However, the plan is designed to flex and grow as new ideas come onboard, and services are tested and grown. In addition, appointments have been made to three new officers to the Leisure Management Team who all bring a wealth of experience in leisure and income generation and will all add their expertise to the Commercialisation Plan as it develops.</p> <p>The delivery of the plan is monitored through the council's budget monitoring process. Leisure budget reporting includes accounting for income and expenditure and is monitored monthly.</p>
12	ERE	Moselle Brook culvert repairs	<p>The Panel recognised that repairing the culvert was a necessity and the budget cited that the £1.1 million allocation could potentially increase following the initial repairs.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> The Scrutiny Panel recommended that following the initial repairs, a policy paper on the condition of the culvert and a survey regarding maintenance plans going forward with set timelines should be developed which could be reviewed on a 10-year basis. The Panel recommended robust systems for monitoring the state of the culvert be put in place.</p>	<p>Barry Francis</p> <p>Eubert Malcolm</p>	Cllr Chandwani	<p>The Cabinet Member for Resident Services and Tackling Inequality notes the recommendation. With regards current works, temporary plating has been installed over the culvert collapse area. This is in the western footway of the High Road, around 20m south of the White Hart Lane junction. This will be the priority location for long-term repair, with lining of the culvert anticipated, where it is under the carriageway and footway for a length of 50 linear m. Other culvert locations along the High Road, between the White Hart Lane and Scotland Green junctions have been surveyed. The survey report gives recommendations and identifies locations, prioritised for repairs within timescales, based on severity of condition. Repairs are anticipated to be carried out within funding constraints, prioritised in accordance with the survey report. With regards a longer-term maintenance plan for the Moselle Culvert, we accept the scrutiny recommendation. This strategy will be developed in conjunction with the environment agency and inspections and surveys undertaken as part of the annual highways works plans.</p>

13	ERE	Waste vehicle fleet: insourcing	<p>The Panel wanted further details regarding the financial options of buying or leasing the vehicles for the contract provision of recycling and waste collection, street cleansing and ancillary services from April 2027. The Panel were advised that a report to Cabinet in October 2024 on the Waste Services Review had noted that a high-level review of fleet purchasing considered 3 options which were hire, purchase, contractor purchase and authority purchasing.</p> <p>Authority purchase was the cheapest and preferred option, as the council could get better interest rates and contractor purchase was the most expensive due to addition of the contractor margin and less favourable interest rates.</p> <p>The report outlined that previously it has been common within waste contracts for contractors to purchase vehicles as part of requirements. A benchmarking of recent waste contracts awarded showed the trend has been more to authority purchase for these reasons.</p>	<p>Barry Francis</p> <p>Eubert Malcolm</p>	Cllr Chandwani	<p>The Cabinet Member for Resident Services and Tackling Inequality notes the comments. The finance options for purchasing vehicles to deliver the waste and street cleansing services were evaluated as part of the Waste Service Review, as noted by OSC. This work was undertaken by third party technical advisors, with engagement directly with vehicle suppliers and lease companies</p> <p>The options were further tested directly with the market during the first stage of the procurement process; the market showed a strong preference for the council financing vehicles and provided high-level cost differences should the authority go for a lease option. The report to Cabinet in March 2026 to recommend the award of the contract will also include further details of the value for money considerations of purchasing fleet.</p>
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			<p>The Panel noted the above information and were advised that further financial details on these options could not be provided as this was commercially sensitive and would be part of the considerations for Cabinet when making a final decision on the service provider to deliver recycling and waste collection, street cleansing and ancillary services in March 2026. The Panel were disappointed that they were not provided with the business case in order to scrutinise this financial detail and recommended that the value for money considerations for fleet purchase be explicitly set out in the final Cabinet report in March 2026.</p>			
14	ERE	Tree planting	<p>The Panel considered the information on tree planting budget allocation and were not clear on the tree planting budget of £1.1m and wanted clarity on how this figure had been compiled, and what the £1.1m was being spent on? They queried whether this figure had changed from previous years i.e. was it less before and</p>	<p>Barry Francis</p> <p>Zoe Robertson</p>	Ibrahim	<p>The £1.1m tree planting budget is spread over 5 years, consisting of an average of £230k per year.</p> <p>This funding allows for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining trees that have already been planted;</li> <li>• Match funding up to 250 community sponsored trees per year (community pays 1/3 and council pays 2/3) - average of £172k per year</li> </ul>

			has been added to? The Panel recommended that it would be prudent to receive the tree planting plan with the funding allocations included to understand this figure and ensure that a correct, robust and consistent allocation was being agreed.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£50,000 per year as match funding for external grant applications to further increase the number of trees planted in the borough (across streets, parks or housing estate locations). During the last four-year period the service has secured over £1m in match funding against the council's £600k commitment.</li> </ul> <p>This level of funding is an increase on the council's tree planting investment. In March 2022 the Council agreed a five-year tree planting capital allocation of £675k over the five-year period to March 2027. This next five year period will see £1.1m of investment to tree planting.</p>
15	AHH	Void targets	In view of the challenges faced in meeting the 1% target, is this target still in place? That Cabinet comment on whether they are happy that having a 1% target is advantageous, given the challenges and the proportion of voids that are generated through the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme, and the fact that the Neighbourhood Moves scheme is being reviewed.	Sara Sutton  Rachel Sharpe	Cllr Williams	<p>Improvements to the service have been made, where changes to the management and teams across the Housing Repairs Service have assisted in the oversight and resource allocation in this area. This has been supported by an increased budget and new contracts being implemented to ensure appropriate resources are allocated.</p> <p>Progress against the pipeline of current void properties has been lower than initially projected, due to the previous ongoing union negotiations and procurement timescales, both of which have since been resolved. There has been sustained demand from the Neighbourhood Moves scheme through our new build programme, representing 18% (60) of the 330 new voids since April 2025.</p> <p>However, we will be assessing internal operational effectiveness and outcomes of the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme in addition to reviewing the voids end-to-end process in full, including analysis of the varying processes across all</p>

						<p>types of voids and teams involved in the process across Housing Services. This will enable focus on improvements at key stages to reduce turn-around times.</p> <p>The 1% target is still in place for the year 2025/26 however this will be reviewed for 2026/27 as part of our KPI setting process.</p>
16	AHH	Floating support contracts	<p>That Cabinet provide further assurances around the proposed £257k saving in floating support contracts. The Panel is concerned that this may be a false saving and would like further assurance that there is a genuine financial benefit arising from this saving. The Panel is concerned that the short term saving from a reduction in tenancy sustainment may result in additional costs to the Council in the long run.</p>	<p>Sara Sutton</p> <p>Rachel Sharpe</p>	Cllr das Neves	<p>The proposed £257k saving in the floating support contract has been assessed as part of the wider budget strategy, and we recognise the importance of tenancy sustainment in preventing homelessness and reducing long-term costs. The intention behind this saving is to achieve efficiencies without compromising critical support for vulnerable residents.</p> <p>To provide assurance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will continue to commission the Haringey Advice Partnership, as well as mental health and older people's floating support services.</li> <li>• While we acknowledge that the reduction may increase pressures on services and lead to longer waiting times, we are working closely with providers to mitigate these risks. This includes exploring ways to modernise services, deliver real-time advice and guidance so people aren't left waiting, and implement brief interventions where appropriate.</li> <li>• High-risk cases will be prioritised to ensure those most in need receive timely support. A detailed impact assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the reduction does not lead to increased evictions or homelessness.</li> </ul>

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring arrangements will be put in place to track tenancy sustainment outcomes and any potential cost pressures arising from this change.</li> </ul> <p>We remain committed to balancing financial sustainability with safeguarding residents and will continue to review the impact of these changes closely.</p>
17	Finance	Borrowing costs (HRA)	<p>The Housing Panel notes that while the 30-year HRA business plan and model provide a long-term assessment of financial viability, it does not in itself provide a mechanism for regular member scrutiny of incremental HRA borrowing decisions or their interaction with the Council's wider, pooled debt and treasury management arrangements.</p> <p>It is recommended that Cabinet considers introducing an annual HRA debt management statement alongside the HRA budget and Capital Strategy.</p> <p>The statement should summarise the Council's risk appetite for HRA borrowing, the key prudential metrics used to assess affordability and sustainability within the HRA model, how these are informed by sector practice and relevant peer</p>	<p>Taryn Eves</p> <p>Josephine Lyseight</p>	Cllr Carlin	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services notes this recommendation.</p> <p>The level of borrowing and debt is higher than statistical neighbours but the Council recognises the long term sustainability of the HRA relies on investment in both its existing stock and new Council Homes to address the shortage in supply. Therefore, although borrowing is high and debt levels are forecast to increase to deliver the capital programme, the HRA Business Plan remains in balance and as can be seen in Table 6.1 in the separate report on the agenda, is forecast to make a surplus (contribution to capital / reduced borrowing requirement) in excess of the internal target of £8m from year 2032/33 onwards as rental income from current voids brought back into operation and new homes begins to materialise. The financial position also improves year on year from that point.</p> <p>Full details of the borrowing strategy and forecast level of borrowing and debt across a five year period is included in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement which is included in the suite of budget reports presented to Cabinet and for approval by full Council each year. In year monitoring is also included in the treasury management quarterly monitoring</p>



			<p>benchmarks, and the cumulative impact of HRA borrowing decisions on the Council's overall debt position.</p> <p>The Panel considers this would strengthen transparency, support effective scrutiny, and ensure alignments between HRA investment decisions and the Council's broader capital and treasury strategies.</p>		<p>report to Audit Committee and the finance monitoring report to Cabinet and scrutiny panel.</p> <p>The Treasury Management Strategy Statement includes details of prudential indicators which reports interest costs as a percentage of rents due which is key performance indicator for financial sustainability and a measure of affordability. This ratio is set at minimum of 1.10 (interest cover). This means the HRA should generate enough surplus to cover the borrowing cost plus additional 10%. Over a long term this metric is forecast to increase above the 1.10 mark. The in-year reporting of both the TMSS and the HRA budget will explicitly include reporting against this indicator from 2026/27 and has been included in the final draft of the Business Plan for 2026/27.</p> <p>In addition, the financial model for the HRA tracks the loan to property values (LTV) and this has been set at 50% maximum. Where the LTV exceeds the 50%, we would consider loan repayment strategy such as setting aside sums yearly for repayment of loan at the end of maturity as done in General Fund. The current LTV forecast over the next ten years does not exceed 50%</p> <p>As part of the next review of the HRA Business Plan, starting in Summer 2026, all spend budgets across revenue and capital will be reviewed to identify opportunities to reduce costs and maximise value for money. This may require pausing or slowing of some capital schemes as interest rates remain higher than the target of 2% and prioritise schemes in line with the Council's priorities.</p> <p>Although there is no statutory requirement for Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) within the HRA, this assumption will</p>
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						<p>be reviewed for 2027/28 if debt levels do remain following the next annual review of the HRA in summer 2026.</p> <p>The HRA model is structured in line with CIPFA's Prudential Indicators (PI). All incoming projects are appraised using Discounted Cash Flow (DCF) methods to ensure viability and the HM Treasury 5 Case Model to demonstrate value for money.</p> <p>The HRA is supported by a Minimum HRA Reserve of £20m, which exceeds the benchmark of 10% of turnover.</p>
18	AHH	Tenant affordability assessment – rent increases	That Cabinet give consideration to undertaking an assessment of tenant affordability, as it undertakes assumed year-on-year rent increases to its tenants as part of the planned investment programme. The Panel is concerned that that year-on-year rent increases would cross an affordability threshold at some stage and that the Council should be reviewing and modelling this.	<p>Sara Sutton</p> <p>Rachel Sharpe</p>	Cllr Williams	<p>As household circumstances are prone to change this would be extremely difficult to model. For existing tenants, affordability assessments are carried out by our Income team and we provide budgeting and income maximisation advice. We encourage any tenants struggling to pay their rent to contact us for help as soon as possible.</p> <p>On an individual basis on letting a property, there is not currently an assessment of affordability of Part VI offers (beyond confirming benefits being received); the rents are set at a level that would be below Housing Benefit entitlement so would either be fully covered or, if in employment, receiving a greater income than a person on full benefits.</p> <p>The proposed rent increases follow the national rent policy of CPI + 1% for social rents, as set by Government. This approach is necessary to maintain the financial viability of the HRA and fund essential investment in existing stock and new homes. Without these increases, the HRA would face a significant shortfall, limiting our ability to meet statutory</p>

						<p>obligations on building safety, decarbonisation, and repairs. Ultimately, the HRA business plan would become unsustainable, and we would not be able to deliver the services that our tenants need if there were limited or no planned rent increases.</p> <p>In July 2025, government announced (as part of the Spending Review) that there will be a 10-year rent settlement for social housing from 1 April 2026 in which rents will be permitted to increase by CPI+1% per annum and this plan includes proposed rent increase in 2026/27 of 4.8% is based on September CPI of 3.8% plus 1%. Alongside this was a consultation on rent convergence. The convergence would allow rents for Social Rent properties that are currently below 'formula rent' to increase by a proposed set amount (likely to be either £1 or £2) each year, over and above the CPI+1% limit, until they 'converge' with formula rent. It is recognised nationally that this proposed rent convergence will assist close the gap in HRA funding caused by years of rent reduction and ensure that rents are comparable.</p>
19	AHH	Neighbourhood moves scheme	That a review is undertaken of the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme to assess its financial and strategic impact on the Housing Register. The Panel is concerned that offering properties to households where there is no net improvement in housing need - such as cases where there is no overcrowding or priority change - should be reconsidered alongside the known	Sara Sutton  Rachel Sharpe	Cllr Williams	<p>The Neighbourhood Moves Scheme forms part of the Allocations Policy, for which there is a wider Allocations Policy review being undertaken. As part of this, we will be assessing internal operational effectiveness and outcomes.</p> <p>The Housing, Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel have requested an overview of the scheme which will be prepared for the March 2026 meeting.</p>

			additional costs to the HRA, including void costs and reletting expenses. The Panel recommends that the review considers whether amendments are required to ensure that limited housing resources more effectively to reduce the impact of the housing crisis.			
20	Finance	Savings proposals in report – level of detail	That Cabinet endorse that future budget scrutiny reports include more detail on individual savings proposals, in order to reduce the number of clarification questions at the meeting.	Taryn Eves  Josephine Lyseight	Cllr Carlin	The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services notes this recommendation and Cabinet and Officers will ensure that the level of detail on savings in future reports is sufficient to allow review by Overview and Scrutiny and Scrutiny Panels.
21	Finance	Independent sounding board	The Committee noted plans to establish an ‘independent sounding board’ to oversee the delivery of the new Financial Sustainability Plan. The Committee acknowledged that these plans were at an early stage but requested that further details be provided when available, including who would be appointed to it, whether the meetings would be held in public and whether the Committee would be able to see	Taryn Eves  Josephine Lyseight	Cllr Carlin	The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services notes this recommendation.  The Council’s Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer are currently developing plans to bring in external sector expertise to support the Council in improving its financial sustainability. Further updates will be provided as part of the Quarterly Monitoring reports to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny.

			the agendas and minutes from the meetings.			
Further22	Finance	Debt level reporting	The Committee recommended that, in future years, the most up to date details of the Council's overall debt levels be provided to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee as an appendix in the agenda papers at the main budget scrutiny stage (i.e. November) in order to bring this in line with the information available at this point to the Audit Committee.	Taryn Eves  Josephine Lyseight	Cllr Carlin	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Service notes this recommendation.</p> <p>Further details on debt and borrowing costs will be included in budget reports to Overview and Scrutiny Panel as well as continuing to be included in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement.</p> <p>In addition, from 2026/27, as well as reporting levels of debt and interest costs to Audit Committee as part of the Treasury Management Quarterly reporting, this will also be included in the quarterly finance monitoring report to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Panel.</p>
23	Finance	Monitoring processes	<p>The Committee expressed concerns about the weaknesses in the monitoring processes that were highlighted in the KPMG report and recommended that reassurances were sought that more robust processes were being established.</p> <p>KPMG report (see Item 7):  <a href="#">Agenda for Audit Committee on Monday, 10th November, 2025, 7.00 pm   Haringey Council</a> </p>	Taryn Eves  Josephine Lyseight	Cllr Carlin	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services notes this recommendation and the findings of the 2024/25 Annual report by KPMG.</p> <p>Full details of the weaknesses identified, recommendations and management responses were presented to Audit Committee on 29 January 2026. Progress will be reported to Audit Committee during 2026/27 and 2027/28 as part of the Annual Governance Statement.</p>
24	Finance	Property lease/rent reviews	The Committee welcomed the ongoing work on lease and rent	Taryn Eves	Cllr Gordon	The Cabinet Member for Placemaking and Local Economy notes this recommendation.

			<p>reviews within the Council's commercial portfolio. The Committee noted that this was an area where the government had encouraged local authorities to look at investment in digital technology and AI to improve the process of updating old leases and suggested that this possibility should be examined further by officers.</p> <p>The Committee also proposed to monitor this programme further as part of the budget scrutiny process next year.</p>	Josephine Lyseight		<p>Good progress has been made on improving the data and oversight of the Council's commercial property portfolio and this has been acknowledged in the recent Annual Auditors report by KPMG presented to Audit Committee on 29 January. Income is now £1m higher than was collected in the same period last year.</p> <p>However, the Council acknowledges that further improvements are needed and increased pace on review of overdue rent and lease reviews which is resulting in potential lost income to the Council but also unknown liabilities that could materialise. The Corporate Director is considering options to expand the capacity within the team to expedite the completion of the reviews and have a full and accurate register in place for the commercial property portfolio.</p> <p>The Council's Disposal Policy was agreed by Cabinet in June 2025 and stringent governance is now fully embedded for all disposals or surplus assets. This along with the introduction of the SAMPIP are two key recommendations from the external property review carried out in 2019/20. Disposal of surplus assets is part of good asset management and all disposals are subject to the SAMPIP process before disposal is recommended.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member welcomes Overview and Scrutiny Committee receiving further updates on progress as part of their work plan and during the 2027/28 budget process. Updates will also continue to be provided to Audit Committee as required during 2027/28 and a full report will be presented to their meeting in March 2026.</p>
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25	Finance	Bad debt provision	The Committee emphasised the importance of maintaining an approach that would not worsen the circumstances of residents experiencing financial difficulties.	Taryn Eves  Josephine Lyseight	Cllr Carlin	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services notes this recommendation.</p> <p>The Council's bad debts provision is £173m. This is considered high by the Section 151 Officer and is reflective of the improvements needed on income due from fees, charges, rents and housing benefit overpayments. The Council must make a provision for estimated bad debts each year based on realistic assumptions of amount recoverable. The methodology can be subject to review by KPMG as part of their External Audit each year.</p> <p>It is important that the Council collects money due because income directly supports the continuation of essential service provision and improves the financial position - reducing the budget gap.</p> <p>There are a range of initiatives underway to improve collection which distinguish between 'can't pay' and 'won't pay'; each of which requires a different response and support by services. For those that won't pay, the focus will be on making it as easy as possible to pay, which we know can be quite cumbersome currently, and enforcement action where appropriate.</p> <p>In response to those who 'can't pay', we try to avoid placing residents in additional financial stress. We know the cost of living crisis is deeply impacting many of our residents and we encourage residents to let us know at the earliest opportunity if they are struggling so that we can connect them to council and third sector sources of support, and put in place payment plans that are affordable. Where debts are not affordable and paying</p>
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					<p>them would create financial hardship even after all available forms of support are obtained, we will write these debts off so that we don't incur additional costs attempting to recover.</p> <p>We offer personalised one-to-one help from the Financial Support Team which is accessible via a public phone number and email address. Haringey's Here to Help offer, in place since 2019, describes all the different sources of support available for those struggling, as well as direct assistance such as the Haringey Support Fund, foodbanks, and national benefits. We are determined that our residents get their share of the £19bn worth of unclaimed welfare benefits that they are eligible for.</p> <p>We assist over 24,000 households with their council tax either offering discounts or full exemptions; we have supported residents facing rent debt with over £1m a year help from Discretionary Housing Payments; we have worked with Thames Water to assist residents to get help with their water bills and helped save over £700,000 this year alone; we've helped over 500 families towards the purchasing of their school uniforms; we've helped low income pensioners claim nearly £2m of pension credit since October 2024.</p> <p>For Haringey Housing tenants struggling to pay their rent, we support all tenants in our social and private sector tenancies through proactive intervention, pragmatic repayment plans and detailed income maximisation casework. This involves engaging new tenants before and after sign-up, using automation to notify tenants the as soon as their rent accounts fall into arrears, supporting tenants to pay housing costs via UC and verifying rents swiftly using automation. We use</p>
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						<p>predictive analytics to target arrears cases most at risk of tenancy failure and use tailored text messages to support non-payers. We recognise that eviction benefits no one and will only pursue legal action when all other options have been exhausted.</p>
26	ERE	Housing benefit overpayments	<p>The Committee expressed frustration that local authorities had to bear these additional costs through no fault of their own and suggested that the DWP should be lobbied to cover costs in full.</p>	<p>Barry Francis</p> <p>Kari Manovitch</p>	Cllr Chandwani	<p>The Council utilises every opportunity to lobby the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) to fully subsidise statutory benefit payments, at local, regional and national levels, and has done so on numerous occasions over the past year, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) As part of our response to the Government's Supported Housing consultation in 2025.</li> <li>2) During routine conversations with the DWP about Supported Accommodation in Haringey.</li> <li>3) During meetings with DWP as a member of BenX, a group of local authorities who meet regularly with DWP to discuss welfare policy.</li> </ol> <p>It will also be incorporated into the conversations held by the Corporate Director of Finance Resources with Government regarding the funding gap that Haringey faces.</p> <p>We will continue to use every opportunity to lobby for change, whilst reviewing our internal processes to ensure that the cost to the Council is minimised.</p>
27	CSC	Election costs	<p>The Committee recommended that the feasibility and potential cost savings of venue sharing with</p>	Jess Crowe	Cllr Carlin	<p>Haringey's only recent experience of running a multi borough count was the 2024 GLA election, which for the first time was counted by hand rather than through the usual ecount. This</p>

			other Boroughs for future election counts should be considered.	Fiona Alderman  Gareth Harrington		<p>meant the responsibility for organising the count sat with the GLA constituencies.</p> <p>Suitable large venues in North London are limited, so both the Enfield and Haringey constituency and the Barnet and Camden constituency wanted to use Alexandra Palace. Enfield and Barnet acted as the lead boroughs for their respective counts. However, because Haringey has existing links with Alexandra Palace and the venue prefers to work with a single borough, we managed the operational delivery for both counts. This showed how complex a multi borough count is to run.</p> <p>Alexandra Palace is costly, but it remains one of the few venues that can securely and efficiently deliver a count for Haringey. Boroughs also generally want to count and declare in their own borough, so they are unlikely to share a venue simply to reduce costs.</p> <p>We will look at this further as part of our post-election review, but at this stage it does not appear that shared venues would offer practical or financial benefits for future council elections.</p>
28	CSC	Advertising targets	The Committee acknowledged that the targets were challenging and suggested that the advertising income should be included in the tracker for the Committee during the Budget scrutiny next year so that the Committee could track this.	Jess Crowe  Claire McCarthy	Cllr Carlin	The Cabinet member notes the recommendation and we will publish in the quarterly monitoring report.
29	Finance	Corp landlord model	The Committee recommended that this issue be added to a future	Taryn Eves	Cllr Carlin	The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources notes this recommendation.

			Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme to be monitored further after there had been further implementation of the corporate landlord model and there was greater clarity over the business rates issue.	Jonathan Kirby		<p>The Corporate Landlord Model was established in April 2025 and work to fully embed the new model took place during 2026/27. A full asset condition survey was completed across the estate during 2025/26 and details of costs and income from running the buildings is now known. As reported in the 2026/27 draft budget, this has identified pressures of £800,000 from increased utility costs and business rates.</p> <p>Updates will be reported as part of the quarterly monitoring reports to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee during 2026/27 but the Cabinet Member welcomes a more detailed update and progress with the Corporate Landlord Model to be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of their work programme.</p>
30	ERE	NLWA levy forecasts	Noting that the forecasts for levy contributions did not take into account any increase associated with the new North London Heat and Power facility, the Committee highlighted this potential additional cost as a possible future risk.	Barry Francis  Eubert Malcolm	Cllr Chandwani	<p>The Cabinet Member for Resident Services and Tackling Inequality notes the recommendation. The draft budget for 2026/27 and MTFS period to 2030/31 includes budget provision for the estimated levy based on the latest medium term financial plan published by NLWA.</p> <p>As reported in the budget report to Cabinet in November 2026, additional costs associated with the new heat and waste plant are likely and expected to be reflected in the levy payment from 2030 but any increase in financial impact on Haringey is not yet known. Updates will be provided as part of future financial reports as more information becomes available from NLWA.</p>
31	Finance	Digital onboarding	Noting that this proposal was part of an ongoing process, the	Taryn Eves	Cllr Carlin	The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources notes this recommendation. Progress against the delivery of all savings

			Committee proposed to monitor progress in this area during the budget scrutiny process next year.	Jenna Scott-Brining		<p>will be reported to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the Quarterly Monitoring reports during 2026/27.</p> <p>In line with the strengthened process for monitoring and reporting of savings, this will track both the delivery of the financial savings and progress with implementing the changes required to deliver the saving. It is acknowledged that the narrative and explanations for savings reported as at risk needs to improve and this will be addressed during 2026/27 to include more details on actions taken for delivery to be on track and/or any mitigations being put in place.</p>
32	CSC	Business support cuts	OSC requested that further updates on the approach to business support comeback to the Committee as and when available. The Committee would also like there to be an All Member Briefing on the Haringey Growth Plan.	<p>Jess Crowe</p> <p>Abigail Stratford</p>	Cllr Gordon	<p>Discovery work to inform the emerging Inclusive Growth Plan has just commenced. An all member briefing on the Inclusive Growth Plan will be arranged once the discovery work is complete and emerging options have been developed.</p> <p>Options for the business support service will be developed, informed by and alongside the emerging Inclusive Growth Plan. Further updates on scope and role of Business Support service will be brought back to Members once the discovery work to inform the Inclusive Growth Plan is complete.</p>
33	Finance	Digital schemes reduction	Noting that digital was a significant area of spend, elements of which had been considered across the Scrutiny Panels as part of the budget process, it was recommended that this issue be added to the Committee's future	<p>Taryn Eves</p> <p>Jenna Scott-Brining</p>	Cllr Carlin	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources notes this recommendation.</p> <p>Spending and progress with the delivery of digital savings will be reported as part of the quarterly monitoring reports to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee during 2026/27 but the Cabinet Member welcomes a more detailed update and progress with the Service Modernisation Programme to be</p>

			work programme to be monitored further.			reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of their work programme.
34	Finance	Budget reports – financial circumstances	The Committee recommended that the budget reports should accurately reflect the structural financial issues faced by the Council and should make clear that the situation was now unsustainable without increased local government funding or fundamental changes to the services delivered by the Council.	Taryn Eves  Josephine Lyseight	Cllr Carlin	<p>The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services notes this recommendation. Details of the financial position are set out in the full report. The current levels of increasing demand and prices but significantly smaller increases in grants is explicitly reported as unsustainable with the use of Exceptional Financial Support expected to be required over the medium term.</p> <p>Members are specifically directed to the Section 151's Section 25 Statement at Appendix 11 of the report which provides full details and which Members must consider as part of agreeing the 2026/27 budget and which addresses this recommendation.</p>