

Members' Briefing



**Barking &
Dagenham**



Leader's borough update

In his video this week, the Leader mentions the financial challenges residents are facing due to the cost of living crisis and shares a few hints to help cut down on energy use and save money.

He reminds residents about the borough's warm spaces and the help and support available from the council and its partners to help people through the cost of living crisis.

And he finishes by reminding residents that nominations are still open for the 2023 Women's Empowerment Awards which celebrate the achievements of

women who live and work in Barking and Dagenham.



Residents are invited to have their say on the 2023/24 council budget proposals

Residents are being encouraged to give their views on [Barking and Dagenham Council's 2023/24 budget proposals](#).

The plans have been announced against a backdrop of severe and sustained cuts to local government, which have seen the council's funding slashed from £103m in 2010 to £80m in 2022 - taking into account inflation of over 40% during this time, funding given to the council is the equivalent of just £57m compared to £103m in 2010.

We are supporting residents through the biggest cost of living crisis in almost

half a century and the impact of spiralling inflation has driven up the costs of everyday essentials and is causing a big squeeze on an already stretched budget.

In response to the latest crisis, the council launched a network of community hubs to offer help and advice in neighbourhoods across the borough, as well as partnering with community organisations to create a [Cost of Living Alliance to support people](#) as early as possible, including providing help with energy costs, money worries, food and wellbeing.

A number of warm hubs have also been established to support residents who are struggling with their energy bills by providing a warm space for them to go to during the day.

Over the last few years, the council has faced major challenges across all of our services, particularly housing and social care. For every £10 we spend, £7 goes on caring for the most vulnerable people in our community before we can fund anything else and demand on our services continues to rise. The budget proposals acknowledge that despite making £50million in savings and efficiencies over the last five years, more help is needed from the government if we are to continue to balance the books.

To continue to provide key services for our most vulnerable residents, we are proposing a 5 per cent increase in Council Tax, including 2 per cent ringfenced for social care, which will add around £1.33 per week onto the average band D property (excluding the GLA element) from next April. The cost of delivering the council's services have been affected by inflation which has increased by 10.1% over the past year.

Residents can have their say on our 2023/24 budget proposals [here](#). The consultation will close on Sunday 5 February 2023.

Residents can also tune in to a special budget Facebook Live Q&A with Councillor Twomey, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core Services and Councillor Rodwell, Leader of the Council, on Thursday 26 January, between 6 – 7pm on the [Leader's Facebook page](#). They can

submit a budget question ahead of the session by emailing socialmedia@lbbd.gov.uk.

In addition to this, residents can also provide feedback in person at the following budget consultation sessions:

- Monday 30 January, 5.30 – 6.30pm at the Barking Learning Centre, 2 Town Square, Barking IG11 7NB
- Tuesday 31 January, 5.30 – 6.30 pm at Dagenham Library, 1 Church Elm Lane, Dagenham RM10 9QS.

The law has changed. Make sure you have the right photo ID to vote.

- UK, Channel Islands or EEA driving licence** (UK, Channel Islands or EEA driving licence)
- Blue Badge scheme card** (Blue Badge scheme card)
- UK, Commonwealth or EEA passport** (UK, Commonwealth or EEA passport)
- National identity card issued by an EEA state** (National identity card issued by an EEA state)
- Free photo travel pass like Oyster 60+ or a Freedom Pass** (Free photo travel pass like Oyster 60+ or a Freedom Pass)
- Biometric Immigration Document** (Biometric Immigration Document)
- PASS card issued by the National Proof of Age Standards Scheme bearing the PASS hologram** (PASS card issued by the National Proof of Age Standards Scheme bearing the PASS hologram)

You will need one of these approved forms of photo ID.

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Residents will now need photo ID to vote in elections from May 2023

The Electoral Law is changing and from May this year, residents will need to show some form of photo ID to vote in local and general elections.

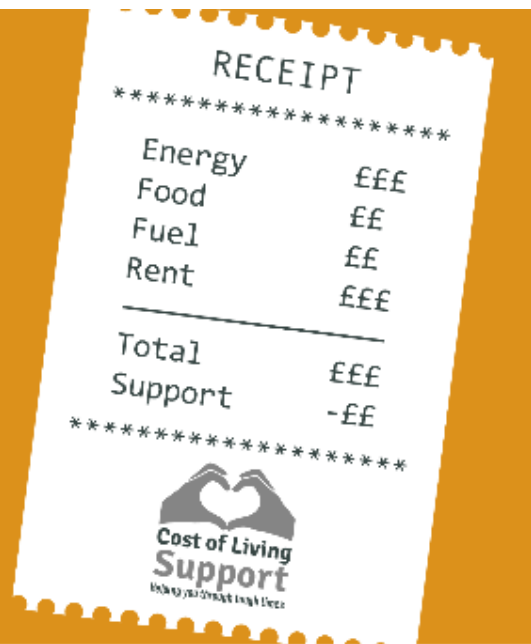
Many residents may lose their chance to vote if they are not aware of the change or if they do not have an approved form of photo ID.

Residents must make sure they are registered to vote. Here's a full list of approved forms of photo ID:

- ✓ A United Kingdom passport
- ✓ A passport issued by an EEA state or a Commonwealth country
- ✓ A national identity card issued by an EEA state
- ✓ A UK driving licence
- ✓ A driving licence issued by the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or an EEA state
- ✓ A Biometric Immigration Document
- ✓ PASS card issued by the National Proof of Age Standards scheme bearing the Proof of Age Standards Scheme hologram
- ✓ A Ministry of Defence Form 90 (Defence Identity Card)
- ✓ A Blue Badge
- ✓ Concessionary travel passes funded by the UK Government: Older Person's Bus Pass, Disabled Person's Bus Pass, Oyster 60+ Card, Freedom Pass
- ✗ A student Oyster ID card will not be accepted!

Residents who don't have any of the photo IDs above must apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website to be able to vote. They can find out more information and register to vote at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote.

Worried about the cost of living?



We are supporting residents through the cost of living crisis

Times are really tough right now and we know so many people across the borough are being forced to make heat or eat decisions.

That's why we're working with community partners to support residents through this really difficult time.

Our message is simple: if a resident is worried about how to make ends meet, or they know someone who is, they should please reach out for help.

We've identified areas of support which include help with money, food, energy, wellbeing and getting connected – and have developed a set of information support guides that staff, partners and members can refer to when talking about the support that's available.

The printable guides will be kept up to date as more support becomes available and can be found at www.lbbd.gov.uk/cost-living-support/cost-living-support-guides

Training updates for councillors

This week we have included details of several LGA courses and events. For details on how to access the courses, please see the Members' Training section below.

Borough News



Nominations open until the end of the month for Women's Empowerment Awards 2023

Residents are being urged to put forward nominations for next year's Women's Empowerment Awards.

The event takes place in March to mark the end of Women's Empowerment Month and celebrates the diverse achievements of women who live and work in Barking and Dagenham.

This year's event features nine different categories, seven of which are open for public nominations, including Educator of the Year, Female Volunteer, and Businesswoman of the Year Awards.

This will be the eighth time the Awards have been hosted.

The deadline for nominations is Tuesday 31 January 2023. For more details and to nominate visit oneboroughvoice.lbbd.gov.uk/womens-empowerment-awards-2023



Daggers Celebrate Diversity Day
14 years of celebrating diversity in the local community

Saturday 28th January 2023

Daggers v Yeovil Town FC
Vanamara National League
3.00 kick-off

Chigwell Construction Stadium
Victoria Road, Dagenham RM10 7XL

The poster features the Dagenham & Redbridge FC crest on the left and the Yeovil Town FC crest on the right. The text is set against a background of black, brown, red, and orange horizontal bands.

Daggers Celebrate Diversity Day – Make it a date

Later this month Dagenham and Redbridge FC will be holding their annual Daggers Celebrate Diversity Day when they play their league game against

Yeovil Town on Saturday 28 January.

The event celebrates and showcases the many good things that are happening in the borough and thanks to sponsorship from [BD Group](#), residents will be able to get children's match tickets from as little as 50p and adult tickets from £4.99, plus under 10s go free.

Residents will be able to get their tickets now by heading to www.daggers.co.uk/tickets.



Funding available for local community and voluntary organisations to help reduce crime

The Council is calling on community and voluntary organisations to apply for funding to help with work to reduce crime and improve community safety in the borough.

The Mayor of Policing and Crime (MOPAC) provides the London Crime Prevention Fund (LCPF) to councils to commission services and interventions to support crime reduction. The council has allocated funding for the community and voluntary sector to apply for as long as they offer services to meet the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) priorities, which include:

1. Keeping children and young people safe
2. Reducing reoffending
3. Standing up to hate crime, intolerance and extremism

4. Tackling crimes that affect people the most
5. Tackling violence against women and girls

The council would like applications to focus on support for victims, perceptions of safety and reduction of violence.

The council now has a Community Safety Enforcement Team that focuses on areas that have been highlighted as hot spots for antisocial behaviour and they patrol them seven days a week.

In recent years, we have run several initiatives to reduce youth violence in the borough, including our [Lost Hours](#) campaign which urges parents to take more responsibility for their children as well as work the council is doing to reduce antisocial behaviour and crime in the borough.

Organisations have until Monday 20 February to submit their applications and can apply on the [council's consultation portal](#).

Around the council



Residents invited to open a savings account today through Barking and Dagenham Money

The Council has partnered with Leeds Credit Union to bring more affordable loans options and saving accounts to residents through Barking and Dagenham Money (BD Money).

The aim is to help local people become more financially resilient, keep more money in their pockets and access appropriate services to meet their financial needs and ambitions. This is not-for-profit, with all benefits staying in the

community.

Since its launch earlier this month we've racked up hundreds of new members. For residents considering opening a savings account through BD Money, it's straight-forward, hassle-free and there's also a wide range of trusted, low-interest loans available.

More information can be found at www.BDMoney.co.uk



Help and support available for residents through the Household Support Scheme

Residents who may be struggling with their finances or to make ends meet are being encouraged to get in touch.

Funding is available to vulnerable residents to support them with essentials over the coming months.

Residents can [apply online](#) or email benefits@lbbd.gov.uk.

There are also [a number of other support services](#) including:

- Our Community Food Clubs which are free of charge and can provide £20 worth of food per week for a period of either three or six months at www.lbbd.gov.uk/community-food-clubs
- Our money and debt webpages provide an income and expenditure calculator and budgeting tools that will help people understand how much money they have coming in and how much is going out, helping them look at areas where they can make savings at www.lbbd.gov.uk/money-and-debt
- Residents who are worried about their finances and need help to tackle debt can now get advice and support from our local Barking and Dagenham Money website at: www.bdmoney.co.uk
- People struggling with increasing energy costs should contact their energy supplier about possible funds they may be entitled to, to help them through difficult periods. They can also access the Warm Homes Grant at www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme
- People with disabilities who aren't claiming specific disability benefits may be able to take advantage of a number of benefits available, including Personal Independence Payments, Disability Living Allowance (for children), and Universal Credit. For those caring for someone with disabilities they may be able to claim Carer's Allowance although this is means tested, at www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled/disability-and-sickness-benefits
- People with a water meter who are experiencing financial difficulties may want to look into the Watersure scheme at www.ofwat.gov.uk/households/customer-assistance. Most water companies also have a fund to help those who are struggling, and it might be worth contacting their water provider.
- People who are out of work and looking to get into employment can get help and support from our Job Shops at www.lbbd.gov.uk/help-finding-work
- Anyone worried about a lack of skills can find courses and support on the Adult College website at <https://adultcollege.lbbd.gov.uk/>

- Residents who need help with emergency living expenses for food, fuel (gas and electric for customers who pay via a key meter), travel expenses and household appliances and/or clothing in exceptional circumstances can apply for help from our Hardship Fund (Individual Assistance Payment) at www.lbbd.gov.uk/hardship-and-covid-support-schemes.

Residents can also contact our Homes and Money Hubs which are open for a drop in at Barking Learning Centre and Dagenham Library from 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday or via email at: homesandmoneyhub@lbbd.gov.uk.



Jobs and training opportunities available from our Job Shops

Residents who need help and support to get into work can visit our Job Shops.

Jobs and training opportunities are advertised on the website every Monday, and residents can register with the service by completing the [online form](#). They

will then be contacted by a member of staff.

Alternatively, residents can contact the shops by telephone: Dagenham Job Shop – 020 8724 8877; Barking Job Shop – 020 8724 8870.

For details of jobs available every week, residents can visit www.lbbd.gov.uk/help-finding-work.

For more information about help and support, residents can visit the Barking and Dagenham Working Together campaign page at www.lbbd.gov.uk/working-together.

Local Government News

Local welfare services play a vital role supporting struggling residents

Local welfare services provided by local councils provide a vital safety net to households in financial crisis and should receive long-term government funding, a new study concludes.

London Councils commissioned analysts at [Policy in Practice](#) to carry out the first ever in-depth evaluation of Local Welfare Assistance (LWA) schemes across the capital.

The research found that a wide range of events can cause financial crisis and trigger an application for financial assistance, including domestic abuse, flooding of homes, redundancy, and bereavement. Many applicants had experienced delays in receiving benefits payments, suggesting delivery problems in the national benefits system are a factor driving demand for local welfare support.

Concluding that councils are best placed to provide such emergency support to residents, the researchers recommend that central government re-establishes

ring-fenced, long-term funding for local authorities' LWA schemes. The government abolished direct funding for LWA from 2015/16, leaving local authorities to decide whether to maintain an LWA service paid for via their general funds.

[London Councils' Executive Member for Communities, Cllr Claire Holland](#), said:

“As this research shows, councils' local welfare services provide a vital safety net. We're often our residents' last hope and a bulwark against homelessness and despair. Boroughs believe the money invested in this support pays real dividends, not only by assisting those in crisis but also through avoiding additional costs to the wider public sector.”

New Year Honours

A number of London local government figures were recognised in the [2023 New Year Honours list](#), including former Chair of the City of London Policy and Resources Committee and London Councils Vice Chair, **Catherine McGuinness**, who was awarded a CBE for services to the financial sector and educational inclusion.

Others recognised in the awards include: Former Hounslow Leader **Stephen Curran**, who received a CBE for services to local government; former Brent Deputy Leader **Margaret McLennan**, who received an MBE for services to digital inclusion and to the community in Brent; Head of Culture and Place, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, **Verena Cornwall**, who received an MBE for services to local government and to the community in Kensington and Chelsea; and **Jahran Allen-Thompson**, Mortuary Service Manager at the London Borough of Waltham Forest, who received an MBE for services to local government.

Age friendly communities

London Councils is keen to promote best practice of boroughs who are

supporting older people in their communities and are part of the age-friendly boroughs strategy working group which aims to encourage councils to sign up to become World Health Organization (WHO) age-friendly communities.

The Centre for Ageing Better is running a webinar to share the WHO framework for creating an age-friendly community and how places across the UK have made their communities great places to grow old in.

[More details and online booking for the Introduction to Age-Friendly Communities webinar on Wednesday 15 February 10 to 11am can be found here.](#)

To have a conversation about making your borough an age-friendly community contact [AFC Network](#). And for more information on the Age-friendly London approach, contact Sue Johnson, Senior Policy Officer, Equality, Inclusion and Diversity, GLA at sue.johnson@london.gov.uk

This week's coverage in the national and regional media

Evening Standard, 11 January – [One in 58 Londoners revealed to be homeless, far higher than rest of the UK](#). Mentions Cllr Darren Rodwell.

Architects' Journal, 11 January – [Barking and Dagenham seeks architects for £35m housing design framework](#).

The Money Pages, 11 January – [Credit Union unveils £1m scheme to help with cost-of-living debt consolidation](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 11 January – [Property market forecast: should you buy a London home in 2023 as cost of mortgages overtakes renting](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

University of Warwick, 10 January – [New research projects to examine impacts of the 'Go Home' Campaign](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Options, 9 January – [5 things to do along River Thames and London's scenic canals](#). Mentions Barking Riverside Pier.

Construction News, 6 January – [10 companies to watch in 2023](#). Mentions Be First.

Design Week, 6 January – [Picks of the month: design events in January](#).
[Mentions Barking and Dagenham](#).

The Guardian, 5 January – [Number of households renting has more than doubled since 2001, census reveals](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Media Releases

[Funding available for Barking and Dagenham community and voluntary organisations to help reduce crime](#).

[New routine childhood immunisations booking service launched in Barking and Dagenham](#).

[Have your say on the council's budget proposals during the biggest cost of living crisis in 50 years](#).

Members' Training

The next Members' Briefing will take place on Thursday 19 January at Barking Town Hall at 7pm and will focus on the Budget.

Local Government Association (LGA) Events

The LGA are offering the following sessions:

Handling online abuse and intimidation - Wednesday 1 February, 6 to 7.30pm

This Government funded practical programme will provide attendees with an awareness of the steps that can be taken to manage trolls and cyber-bullies and includes a gentle introduction to the legal framework around social media posts. There will be guidance on how to be safe online generally, as well as tips on how to create a positive online presence.

Personal safety for councillors – Tuesday 21 February, 2 to 3.30pm

This Government funded webinar has been specially devised for councillors who are keen to improve their awareness of personal safety. Built around the role of the elected member, the session is full of practical advice and guidance. Included within the webinar are references to surgeries, canvassing, home visits and managing unexpected doorstep visitors.

One to One Development Sessions

The LGA are offering councillors the opportunity to have one-to-one development conversations with one of the Leadership Academy Facilitators. This will be available to councillors in leadership positions for the next three months. These sessions are not political and will be provided by tutors from the LGA's Leadership Academy programme who a number of councillors might have met from participation on the programmes. They will be focussed on helping councillors adapt their personal leadership style through three structured coaching calls. For more information, please contact Leanna McPherson at: leanna.mcpherson@lbbd.gov.uk

If you are interested in joining any or all of these courses, please email: leanna.mcpherson@lbbd.gov.uk or lois.taylor@lbbd.gov.uk

The LGA also offers help for new Councillors via the New Councillor Hub, which can be found [here](#).

And finally...

The Members' Briefing is intended to keep you up to date with what is going on in the council, in the borough and in the world of local government. Please let us have your suggestions on items for inclusion in future bulletins and any feedback you may have on how it can be improved.

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