

Members' Briefing



**Barking &
Dagenham**



Leader's borough update

In his video this week, the Leader talks about the Levelling Up bid for Dagenham Heathway which saw the borough awarded £10.8m for works to breathe new life into the area. The funding will go towards work to revitalise the Heathway – bringing in 316 new affordable homes, shops and creating new pathway and cycle paths.

He also urges residents to sign up to the Green Garden Waste collection

service and reminds people to get their nominations in for the 2023 Women's Empowerment Awards.

PROPOSED SPORTS HUB - PARSLOES PARK



Work underway on new £12m state-of-the-art sports facility at Parsloes Park

Construction of a new community sports centre featuring a gym, fitness studio, a café, and meeting rooms has started at Parsloes Park in Dagenham. The £12 million development will replace the old single-storey pavilion and provide new shower and changing facilities to support 16 grass sports pitches and three 3G pitches.

When complete, one of the pitches will feature four covered seating stands and will become the permanent home for two local football clubs, May & Baker Eastbrook Community FC, who play in the Eastern Counties League Division

One South, and Cobra FC, who feature in The Echo Junior League and the Essex Sunday Corinthian League.

The project is being funded by a £6.2million grant from the Premier League, The FA and the Football Foundation, as well as £6.1million investment from Barking and Dagenham Council with contributions from the London Marathon Charitable Trust and Greater London Authority.

The new sports centre, which is being built by Alliance Leisure, will provide a venue for schools and grassroots sports clubs to hold meetings and education sessions.

Once operational, the Sports Hub will be operated by the charity, Leisure United, under the National Football Trust, itself a registered charity.

All surplus income will be re-invested back into grassroots football in the borough, creating a sustainable future for the sport.



A day of learning for borough landlords

The first of six training sessions aimed at teaching private landlords in the borough the rules and responsibilities when it comes to renting properties, has been held at Barking Town Hall.

About 20 landlords attended the one-day event, which took place on Tuesday 24 January, to hear about everything from legal expectations and how to set up a tenancy, to repair and maintenance, safety certifications, and the laws around houses in multiple occupations or HMOs.

The course, run by the London Landlords Accreditation Scheme, was launched in 2004 as a way of promoting good practice in the private rented sector across the capital, and is available to any current or prospective private landlord.

Further sessions in are planned for March, May, July, September, and November, although more dates are available across London.

For more information visit www.londonlandlords.org.uk/.

Have your say!

**Give us your views on our
2023/24 budget proposals**



Residents 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. We have also partnered 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.

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 – 6.30pm at Dagenham Library, 1 Church Elm Lane, Dagenham RM10 9QS.

Training updates for councillors

This week we have included details of a Member's Briefing session on our Investment Strategy, and several LGA and LGiU courses and events. For details on how to access the courses, please see the Members' Training section below.

Borough News



Marking Holocaust Memorial Day 2023

Last Friday we marked Holocaust Memorial Day, a time to remember and reflect on those murdered under Nazi persecution and the genocides that have sadly followed.

To mark the day, a commemoration event was held outside Barking Town Hall. There was an opportunity to hear prayers, participate in a minute's silence, raise the Holocaust Memorial Day flag and view a screening of the 'HMD 2023 Ordinary People' video.

Earlier in the week, Holocaust Survivor Susie Barnett BEM also visited the borough to share her remarkable story and the horrors she and her family faced in Nazi Germany. If you missed it, you can hear a short message from Susie [here](#).



Council announces 2023 LGBT+ History Month programme

Barking and Dagenham Council is proud to announce its 2023 LGBT+ History Month programme, which will feature a variety of events and initiatives to raise awareness and celebrate the contributions of members of the LGBT+ community.

It's the fifth time Barking and Dagenham Council has joined in the national event, which launched as a way of marking lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender history, as well as celebrating gay rights and the civil rights movements.

Some key events include:

- A panel discussion on the history and current state of LGBT+ rights and activism
- A film screening and Q&A with the director of a documentary on the lives of LGBT+ people in the borough
- A series of workshops on LGBT+ inclusive language and practices for local business and organisations

Check out the full programme [here](#)

SEASON 2 | EPISODE 2



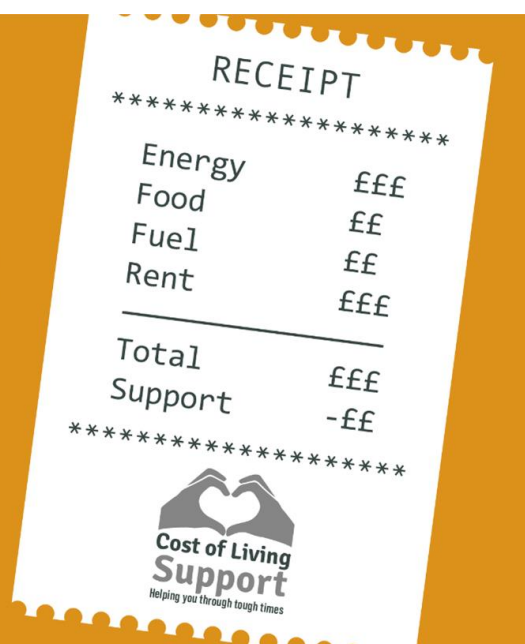
Grime and Punishment

The next episode of our new Grime and Punishment video series is out and you can watch it [here](#).

In this episode we're cracking down on the sale of illegal cigarettes and showing what we're doing to protect our residents from dodgy medicines, fake vapes and illegal cigarettes which are often linked with organised crime, which we're determined to stamp out.

Around the council

Cost of Living Support



Giving residents a helping hand through the cost of living crisis

We've been sharing lots of ways residents can get help with money, food, energy, wellbeing and more.

If you know someone who could benefit from this support, please do help us spread the word. There's lots of information available online, or if they prefer, they could speak to staff at one of our Community Hubs or partner buildings. They can also take a look at where these are located [here](#).

While we might not have the answer to everything, residents can reach out and we'll do our best to connect them to the support they might need.

And as temperatures continue to drop, residents are reminded that there are lots of [warm spaces](#) across the borough that they can visit so they don't have to put the heating on at home.

More information on the cost of living support available can be found at www.lbbd.gov.uk/cost-living-support

**Interest paid
on a £500 loan
over 39 weeks**

**Family
Loan**

£493.78



Pay Day Lender

£424.50



Doorstop Lender

£72.50



Leeds Credit Union
Family Loan

For more information, please visit
BDmoney.co.uk/affordable-loans



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

Arts Council funding cuts in capital will harm economy, MPs warn

Both the Conservative and Labour co-chairs of the all-party parliamentary group (APGG) for London have expressed serious concern at Arts Council England (ACE) reducing its funding allocations in the capital by around £50 million, announced in November last year.

Sir Bob Neill MP, Chair of the APGG for London, said: “Hundreds of highly skilled jobs are at risk, all for the sake of rigidly redistributing funding away from London at any cost. I fear these decisions will damage London’s world-leading culture sector, which in turn will harm the wider economy and the UK’s invaluable soft power. As a cross-party group of London MPs, we urge ministers to intervene.”

Florence Eshalomi MP, Co-Chair OF THE APGG for London, said: “As much as we support the aspiration to level up the country, this cannot be achieved by levelling down London. Cutting arts funding for the capital and ending support for these irreplaceable cultural assets is a short-sighted policy that will leave us all poorer.”

Sir Bob Neill tabled a Westminster Hall debate on the topic on Wednesday, 18 January, [which you can watch on Parliament TV here](#).

The [APPG for London](#) is a forum for MPs and peers to work together on a cross-party basis to strengthen the capital's voice in parliament. The group's secretariat is provided by London Councils.

Levelling Up Fund

The government has announced funding for more than 100 projects around the country who will receive a share of £2.1 billion from round 2 of the government's Levelling Up Fund.

You can find details of all the successful bids, including from the London boroughs of Barking and Dagenham (more information about our bid was in last week's Members' Briefing), Camden, Hackney, Haringey, Lewisham, Sutton and Waltham Forest, on the [Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities \(DLUHC\) website here](#).

Get Online London: Device Bank

[Get Online London](#) is London's first Digital Inclusion service offering Londoners access to refurbished devices, free mobile connectivity and digital skills they need to get online.

Supported by the London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI) and the Mayor of London, the service is delivered by Good Things Foundation.

A core element of the service is a new 'Device Bank' for London with the aim of providing appropriate devices to Londoners who need them. Creating this pool of devices and equipment will heavily rely on donations from private and public sector organisations. There are no costs involved for the organisations wishing to donate devices. This will also support the circular economy, reducing e-waste as well as having a positive social impact.

If you're a business looking to support, you can do so by donating your disused

devises and/or equipment. [Please fill in this form](#) or contact the [Good Things Foundation](#).

This week's coverage in the national and regional media

Evening Standard, 26 January – [Ulez expansion: 'Backlash? What backlash?' says Sadiq Khan as Labour borough leader joins calls for delay](#). Mentions Cllr Darren Rodwell.

BBC London, 26 January – [First Labour council objects to mayor's ULEZ plans](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 25 January – [Young people aged 16 – 24 in England and Wales twice as likely to identify as LGB+, census reveals](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 25 January – [Stolen van driver admits killing Uber passenger in head-on London crash](#).

Architecture Today, 24 January – [Architecture Today Awards 2022: Residential finalists](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Medium, 24 January – [Local authorities and charities in London during the cost of living crisis](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

On London, 23 January – [Dave Hill: Levelling Up Fund 2 – The 'Boris' flagship has sunk](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

New Statesman, 20 January – [Where has the levelling-up fund money gone?](#) Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Media Releases

[Barking and Dagenham announces 2023 LGBT+ History Month Programme.](#)
[#StaringisScary – East London council talks directly to men in order to address women's safety concerns.](#)

Members' Training

Member's Briefing

The next Member Briefing will take place on Monday 6 February at 7pm online via teams and will focus on the Council's Investment Strategy.

Training from the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU)

The LGiU are offering the following training:

Strategic thinking - Wednesday 8 February, 10am to 3pm (Online)

Creative, strategic thinking is massively important to a politically led and fast-changing organisation. That's why we're taking you beyond the buzzwords and confusing jargon to focus on how to think strategically and apply that mindset to a coherent vision for your organisation's future. Get the tools you need to influence your team and implement your plans in this highly interactive training.

Scrutiny - Wednesday 22 February 2023, 9.30 to 11.30am (online)

This introductory session explores the role of overview and scrutiny within an authority, how to get the best results from its work and the key skills and approaches for doing so. Join us as we take part in guided, interactive activities that will help you build a team, program your work, scope your project, and gather evidence.

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.