

Members' Briefing



**Barking &
Dagenham**

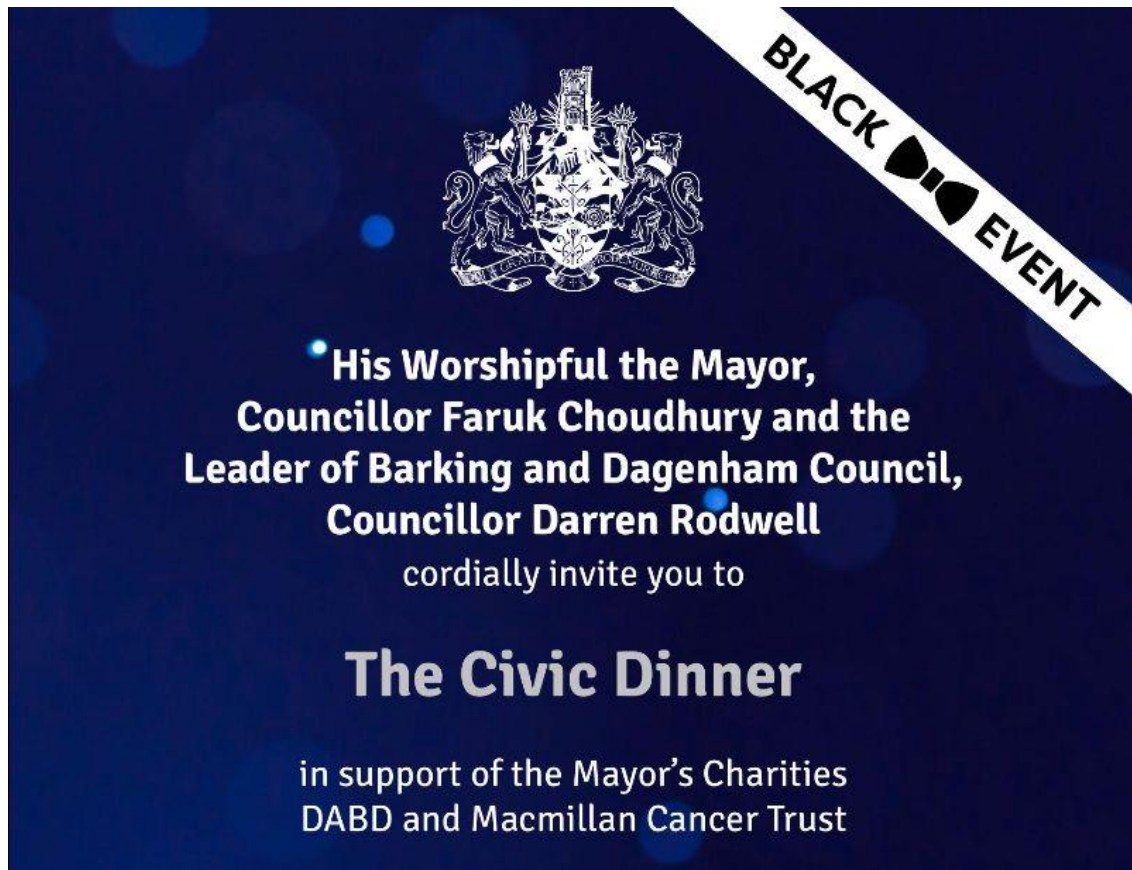


Leader's borough update

In his video this week, the Leader reminds residents of the council's free and affordable activities for children and young people during the half-term break. Following National Apprenticeship Week last week, he also reminds residents of the opportunities available on the council's website.

The Leader also mentioned this week's event which will see more than 500 secondary school students hear from industry pros and get a glimpse into what it could be like working in film and TV when the new film studios open.

He ends with the unveiling of the Jodie Chesney memorial bench and reminds residents that they can still make donations for victims of the Turkey and Syria earthquake disaster.



The poster features a dark blue background with a white coat of arms at the top center. A white diagonal banner in the top right corner contains the text 'BLACK DINNER EVENT' with a black dinner jacket icon. Below the coat of arms, the text reads: 'His Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Faruk Choudhury and the Leader of Barking and Dagenham Council, Councillor Darren Rodwell cordially invite you to The Civic Dinner in support of the Mayor's Charities DABD and Macmillan Cancer Trust'.

BLACK DINNER EVENT

**His Worshipful the Mayor,
Councillor Faruk Choudhury and the
Leader of Barking and Dagenham Council,
Councillor Darren Rodwell**
cordially invite you to

The Civic Dinner

in support of the Mayor's Charities
DABD and Macmillan Cancer Trust

Book your tickets for the Civic Dinner

Join his Worshipful the Mayor, Cllr Farouk Choudhury and the Leader of the Council, Cllr Darren Rodwell at the Civic Dinner on Friday 3 March.

At this special event, you will hear from guest speaker Chris Hayward, Policy Chairman of the City of London Corporation, who championed the move of Billingsgate, Smithfield and New Spitalfields markets to the borough, and Film Barking and Dagenham who are celebrating 10 years since we opened our doors to the international film industry, and the likes of MARVEL, Netflix and

Apple TV.

We will also be fundraising for the mayor's chosen charities, Macmillan Cancer Trust and the Disablement Association of Barking and Dagenham (DABD), with a fantastic auction and raffle on the night!



Council welcomes plans for new Community Diagnostic Centre

The council's planning committee voted unanimously in favour of plans for a new Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) to be built at Barking Community

Hospital.

Plans for the new £14.9 million CDC were heard at a meeting of the Planning Committee on Monday 13 February.

The decision is an important milestone for getting the project completed, with the Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals Trust (BHRUT) hoping the new CDC will begin welcoming patients in December this year.

Councillors heard how the proposed development would dramatically reduce the time needed for residents to travel to vital screenings and health tests. They also heard how the plans were informed by BHRUT speaking to residents and finding out what is important for them.

Officers and councillors were strongly supportive of the scheme and the significant health benefits for the borough.

We hope that the legal agreement will be finalised over the coming weeks, which will leave the developer free to commence works on site and begin development of the new facility.

Over the past months, Barking Hospital has hosted mobile CT and MRI scanners, ultrasound facilities and X-ray machines, which have reduced waiting lists and ensured that residents have access to the care they need.

The proposed CDC will house MRI, CT and ultrasound scanners and have suitable waiting, changing and other public facilities. It will also restore car parking spaces at the hospital, which are currently being taken up by the temporary diagnostic units.



Council launches scheme to help address antisocial behaviour

Last week, the council launched an initiative to bring residents, Councillors and officers together to combat antisocial behaviour concerns across the borough.

The scheme, known as Ward Walkabout, kicked off in Chadwell Heath Ward on

Thursday 9 February when Community Safety Enforcement officers joined Cllrs Simon Perry and Michael Pongo on a walk around of the local area.

During the walk, both councillors raised issues on behalf of residents, including concerns about fly-tipping and damage to communal areas.

During the walk about, officers issued one Fixed Penalty Notice for spitting and two vehicles were reported to the DVLA for not having an MOT. Issues raised will be escalated to the relevant services in the council to resolve.



Council Leader visits Jodie Chesney Memorial bench

Last week, Council Leader, Cllr Darren Rodwell, visited the Jodie Chesney memorial bench at Jo Richardson Community School with Jodie's father, Peter

Chesney.

The bench is a poignant, powerful and permanent way to ensure Jodie is remembered for who she was to her family, friends and community. It is so great that Jodie's family have this wonderful tribute to her.

Training updates for councillors

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

Borough News



Supporting our residents through the cost of living crisis

As part of our efforts to support residents through the cost of living crisis, Cllr Maureen Worby, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health Integration, visited Kingsley Marks Gate Community Hub to hear about the help and support the council and its partners are providing to local people to help them through the crisis.

There's lots of other support available and residents can find out more by heading to our [Cost of Living webpage](#).



Local groups invited to help spend £10,000 on equality and diversity

The council is inviting local community groups to help spend a £10,000 pot of money to help promote social inclusion, celebrate diversity, and support equality across the borough.

Our Equality and Diversity Community Fund, which was launched in 2019, offers charities and local groups the chance to apply for up to £500 for initiatives that provide opportunities for residents with protected characteristics.

The next round of funding is now open for any equalities events – key dates

include Easter (April), St George's Day (April), Mental Health Awareness Week (May), Learning Disabilities Week (May), Carers Week (June), Windrush Day (June), Pride (June/July), Eid ul-Adha (July), and South Asian Heritage Month (July/August).

Interested groups can [apply here](#). Applications close at midnight on Tuesday, 28 February.



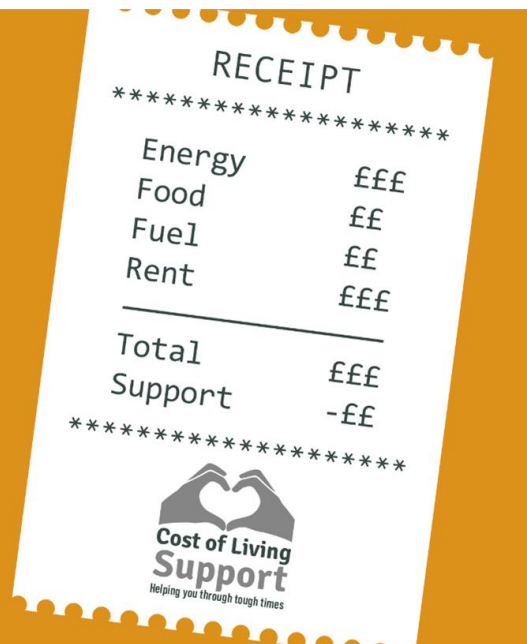
Wally drops broly in latest episode of Wall of Shame

The Wall of Shame is back with another helping of our borough's fly-tippers caught on camera.

You can watch the latest [episode](#) on our website. Please get in touch if you recognise anyone.

Around the council

Cost of Living Support



Giving residents a helping hand through the cost of living crisis

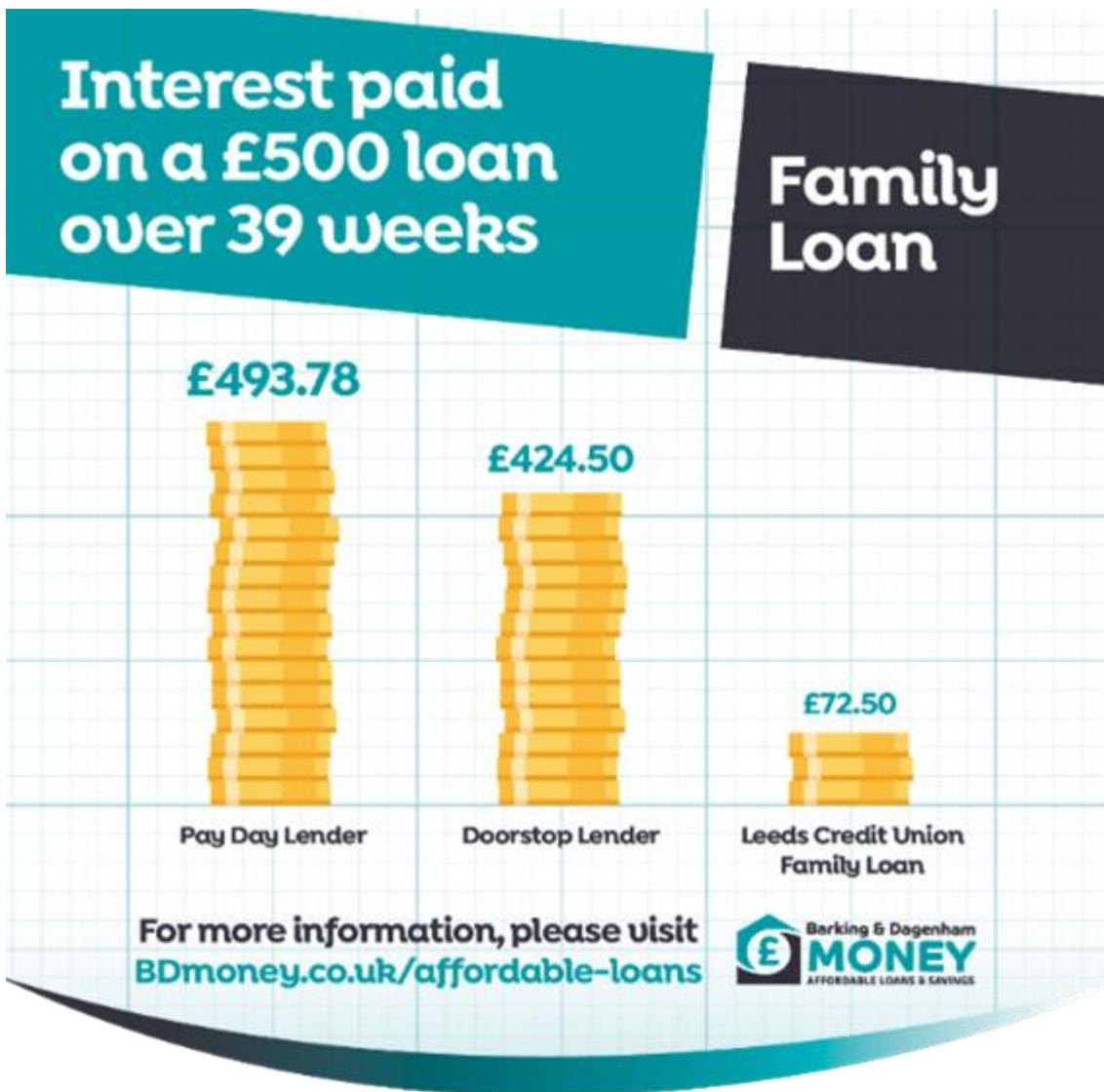
We've been sharing lots of ways residents can get help with money, food, energy, wellbeing and more.

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, residents can 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



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

We need more protection for private renters and more affordable homes

London Councils has welcomed a new parliamentary report on reforming the private rented sector, reiterating boroughs' support for stronger tenant protections and more affordable housing.

The report from the [Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities Committee](#) points to the precarious state of local government finances, the shortage of qualified enforcement staff, and a lack of reliable data. The report also highlights the need for more affordable housing to tackle the rocketing rental costs many tenants face.

London Councils, which gave evidence to the committee's inquiry, is urging ministers to prioritise the report's recommendations.

[London Councils' Executive Member for Regeneration, Housing & Planning, Cllr Darren Rodwell](#), said: "Two million Londoners live in private rented sector

homes and they all deserve stronger protection. In the face of an ongoing cost-of-living crisis, the issue is as urgent as ever.

“As the report makes clear, councils will also need strong enforcement powers and new resources to help ensure any changes in the law succeed in helping tenants and improving standards in the private rented sector.

“There is a chronic shortage of affordable housing in the capital. Ultimately, we need a massive expansion in the delivery of new affordable homes to relieve the pressures across the entire housing system.”

Children’s Summit

The Association of London Directors of Children’s Services and their sector-led improvement partnership LIIA (London Innovation and Improvement Alliance) hosted their annual children’s summit at the Guildhall in the City of London last week.

The summit, chaired by London Councils Executive Lead for Schools and Children’s Services, Cllr Ian Edwards, was attended by over 160 delegates comprising a wide variety of London-wide senior figures from children and young people’s services. Also in attendance was the Permanent Secretary from the Department for Education Susan Acland-Hood who, in addition to a pre-recorded address from Claire Coutinho Minister for Children, Families and Wellbeing, shared some of the findings from the recently published Care Review Implementation Consultation.

[You can read more about the Summit and the work of LIIA on their website here.](#)

LOTI: Pan-London Data Sharing Agreements Project

Organisations across London share personal data daily to deliver their statutory obligations, prevent crime or harm, and improve the wellbeing of residents. There are many Data Sharing Agreements (DSAs) across London boroughs, the Metropolitan Police, health trusts, the Probation and London Ambulance

Services, voluntary sector groups, and more.

The Pan-London Data Sharing Agreements Project, led by the London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI), aims to tackle barriers to effective data sharing, to provide clarity to professionals and promote a shared understanding of when and how information should be shared.

[You can find out more about LOTI's Pan-London Data Sharing Agreements Projects on their website here.](#)

This week's coverage in the national and regional media

Evening Standard, 16 February – [Standard launches major report setting out road to e-car future.](#) Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 15 February – [London has the worst toxic air hotspots as Ella's mother calls for change.](#) Mentions Barking and Dagenham

On London, 15 February – [Which London councils will be increasing their council tax in 2023/24?](#) Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 15 February – [Where to buy your first home: London's best neighbourhoods for first-time buyers.](#) Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Metro, 14 February – [London to face second-lowest rise in council tax among UK regions.](#) Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 14 February – [Record number of tenants leaving London as rents continue to rise.](#) Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Air Quality News, 14 February – [London boroughs objecting to ULEZ expansion have installed the fewest charging points, study finds.](#) Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Civil Society, 14 February – [88 Charities form coalition to campaign on unpaid care](#). Mentions Carers Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 14 February – [Armed robbery gang who proudly posed with stolen watches facing lengthy jail sentences](#). Mentions Dagenham.

Property Wire, 13 February – [Affordable, sustainable, new homes coming to Dagenham](#).

LGA, 11 February – [Vapes need to be ‘out-of-sight and out-of-reach’ to tackle underage sales – LGA](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

London Post, 9 February – [London’s private renters deserve ‘stronger protection’](#). Mentions Cllr Darren Rodwell.

City Transport & Traffic Innovation, 9 February – [Climate charity accuses anti-ULEZ boroughs of providing too few EV charge points](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

BBC Cumbria, 9 February – [Brighton council chief executive to leave for London role](#). Mentions Be First.

Media Releases

[East London council launches Ward Walkabout Scheme to help address antisocial behaviour](#).

Members’ Training

Member’s Briefing

The next Member Briefing will take place on Tuesday 28 February at 7pm online via Teams and will focus on Zero Carbon Roadmap and Climate Change

Action Plan.

Training from the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU)

The LGiU are offering the following training:

Speed Reading – Tuesday 21 March, 10am to 3pm (online)

Learn fun ways to train your brain to remember lots of information and understand specific techniques to improve your ability to process and absorb written information using different reading techniques.

Training from the Local Government Association (LGA)

The LGA are offering the following session:

Sustainability in council services – Show and Tell – Thursday 16 March, 10.30am to 12 noon.

The LGA has commissioned the Zero Carbon Britain team at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) to undertake an exciting project to develop draft route maps for councils across England to understand how to embed sustainability across some service areas, through an Innovation Lab.

The lab consisted of a series of workshops bringing together voices from across councils to contribute expertise in how service areas and operations work in reality. Participants were from all levels, from officers to senior management and CEOs. This approach enables a whole system understanding of councils to inform the outputs of the lab.

In this webinar, funded by Government, we will be hearing from the CAT team, as well as some of the lab's participants, about how they found the experience and what the next steps are for the project. There will also be ample time for questions and feedback from attendees.

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.