

Members' Briefing



**Barking &
Dagenham**



Leader's borough update

In his video this week, the Leader mentions our new corporate plan, which sets out our key priorities for the next few years, and our vision to make sure our borough is a place people are proud of where they want to live, work, study and stay, making sure no one is left behind. For more information see the next item.

The Leader ends by highlighting our record of bringing investment and opportunities into the borough, including the two new film studios, the City of London markets, new transport links and thousands of new, affordable homes and our commitment to continue raising aspiration, tackling the issues that

matter and unlocking the benefits for everyone in our community.



New Corporate Plan for 2023-2026 agreed

A new three-year corporate plan setting out the main priorities for the council over the next three years has been agreed.

The document outlines the changes and challenges the area faces as a thriving London borough in the 21st century, as well as how the council will achieve its vision of making Barking and Dagenham a place people are proud of and want to live, work, study and stay, with no one left behind.

The publication focuses on seven key priorities, which includes supporting residents through the cost of living crisis, making residents feel safe and supported, providing good education and employment opportunities, and

helping residents live healthier lives.

The new Corporate Plan explains our focus through up-to-date priorities and aims, as well as how we will achieve them and how our progress on doing so will be tracked

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Residents can view the full document [here](#).



Borough's House for Artists scoops esteemed RIBA London Award

Our [House for Artists](#) in Barking has bagged the prestigious RIBA London Award for Client of the Year.

House for Artists is an ambitious model funded by the council and run by

Create London to bring affordable and sustainable housing to the borough for creative people. The house, built by Be First in collaboration with Apparata Architects, is located in the heart of Barking and is home to 12 artists and their families.

In exchange for reduced rent, the artists deliver free creative programmes for the local community, including schools through a street-facing, glass-walled community hall and outdoor exhibition space on the ground floor. The artists were selected by a panel including Grayson Perry, who recently unveiled a bespoke 'Inspiration Lives Here' work of art at the development.

All RIBA London Awards winners will be considered for the RIBA National Award, scheduled to be announced on Thursday June 22.



Local businesses invited to join our Safe Haven scheme

Earlier this year, we launched our Safe Haven scheme where through local businesses, we provide safe places for people to go if they're feeling scared, anxious, worried or just need some general help.

There are currently over 30 across the borough and we are looking for more. Safe Havens will:

- Provide a welcoming space.
- Help the person with calling someone – friends, family or the police if need be.
- Provide practical information, such as bus routes, information about train stations and directions.
- Make sure the person feels safe and confident to leave when they want to.

For businesses interested in becoming a Safe Haven, our partners at Studio 3 Arts are running several online training sessions over the next few weeks:

- Friday 26 May – 11am to 12.30pm
- Friday 9 June – 11am to 12.30pm
- Friday 16 June – 11am to 12.30pm

Any business that would like to attend or find out more information, can email fern@studio3arts.org.uk Please help spread the word.

Training updates for councillors

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

Borough News



Flag flown for International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia

Last Wednesday 17 May, we stood in solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community to mark the 17th International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia with a flag-raising ceremony at Barking Town Hall.

The rainbow flag was flown to mark the date in 1990 when the World Health Organisation declassified homosexuality as a mental disorder.

Residents or groups in the borough who would like to mark a day with a flag raising, should get in touch – they can find out more at lbbd.gov.uk/flag-flying

Become a foster carer

Barking & Dagenham

FOSTERING



Support a child & we'll support you.

It's Fostering Fortnight

Fostering Fortnight has been running since 15 May and will run until 28 May, raising awareness of the importance of fostering and celebrating the incredible work of foster carers.

It comes at a time when foster carers in Barking and Dagenham are set to receive up to £712.50 per week per child. The new allowance is part of a million-pound boost to attract more people into the role as well as encourage current foster carers to continue their commitment.

Our fostering service is looking for people who can step forward and give a

loving home to the borough's young people.

Anyone over the age of 21 can apply to be a foster carer. They don't need to live in the borough, all they need is to have their own tenancy or property and a spare bedroom.

The service is looking for people who can support sibling groups, teenagers, parent and child placements and unaccompanied children. We also need foster carers to work with children that are in our care.

Special allowances for holidays, birthdays and festivities will also be increased, as well as a range of additional benefits such as free access to council-owned leisure centres and expenses claims for parking.

Residents can find out more by contacting our Fostering service on 020 8227 5988 or visit lbbd.gov.uk/fostering



Local groups and organisations invited to apply for £1,000 to run activities in our parks

Local groups and organisations are being invited to apply for a share of £10,000 to organise physical activities in our parks this summer.

The money from the Park-tivity Project can be used for anything from fitness sessions using outdoor gym equipment and sports coaching, to gardening, children's play activity and much more.

Interested groups and organisations can [find out more and apply by Sunday 28 May](#).

Around the council

**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

Over £100,000 in affordable loans have so far been handed out to borough residents through our partnership with Leeds Credit Union.

The Council partnership with Leeds Credit Union aims 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.

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 <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/discretionary-hardship-support/discretionary-financial-support-schemes>.

Residents can also contact our Homes and Money Hubs which are open for a drop in at Barking Learning Centre Community Hub and Dagenham Library Community Hub 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.

Local Government News

Building London's sustainable and inclusive future

London boroughs are set to unveil a list of key infrastructure projects needed to secure “a more prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable” future for the capital.

The [London Infrastructure Framework](#) was officially unveiled at [UKREiiF 2023](#) – the UK's real estate investment and infrastructure forum – in Leeds last Wednesday.

The framework, which has been developed with the boroughs by the economic consultancy Metro Dynamics and through close working with Greater London Authority and Transport for London, will promote more efficient planning and delivery of infrastructure and enable a more united pan-London voice to support projects in accessing funding.

London Councils' Executive Member for London's Future: Business, Economy

and Culture, Cllr Elizabeth Campbell, said: “By setting out boroughs’ agreed priorities and the exciting range of development opportunities across the capital, the London infrastructure framework will drive investment towards where it will make the most difference.

“But alongside this new framework, we are also calling for a new devolution deal for the capital to support boroughs’ ambitions around growth and infrastructure. Letting boroughs keep more proceeds from locally driven growth would help us secure investment for these strategic projects and bring benefits not only to Londoners but the UK economy as a whole.

“Boroughs are more determined than ever to work with each other and with our partners in City Hall and central government, as well as with private investors. Together we can secure the infrastructure London needs to thrive in the coming years and maximise its contribution to the UK’s economic well-being.”

More than 100,000 households now living in temporary accommodation

The latest government statistics on homelessness in England (covering October to December 2022) show that there were 101,300 households living in temporary accommodation (TA) – the highest figure since 2005. The TA crisis is at its most acute in London, which accounts for two thirds of the total in England and Wales.

[London Councils’ Executive Member for Regeneration, Housing & Planning, Cllr Darren Rodwell](#), said: “These figures are the latest evidence of a homelessness crisis spiralling out of control.

“The situation is particularly bad in London due to the combination of cost-of-living pressures, a chronic shortage of affordable housing, and with rising rents and fewer properties available in the private rented sector.

“Boroughs do everything we can to support homeless households, but things cannot go on as they are. Homelessness has a devastating impact on people experiencing it, particularly children, and also leads to unsustainable pressure on council budgets.

“Emergency action is needed from the government to help households avoid homelessness and to reduce the number in temporary accommodation.”

London Innovation and Improvement Alliance website

The London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA) has launched a [new website](#), with clearer navigation and more detailed information about projects.

LIIA is the Association of London Directors of Children’s Services (ALDCS) improvement partnership and is hosted by London Councils. LIIA work to improve outcomes for London’s children and young people.

LIIA works with Department for Education, the Local Government Association (LGA), the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and the eight other Regional Improvement and Innovation Alliances across the country to promote learning, facilitate collaboration, enable governance, leverage investment and share best practice solutions.

They are taking forward four priority programmes on behalf of ALDCS in response to the most pressing challenges in the children’s sector: Adolescent Safeguarding; SEND: Resources and Commissioning; and Workforce.

Making Every Contact Count

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHD) London and the London Directors of Public Health (ADPH London) have launched [MECC Link London](#) – an online directory of health and wellbeing services for all 33 London councils, as well as information on key healthy lifestyle topics, suggested open questions using the Ask, Assist, Act model and information on a range of primary self-care tools and resources.

The platform is intended for use by health and social care professionals, GPs, nurses, police, social prescribers and anyone offering frontline help and support in communities across London.

This week's coverage in the national and regional media

Children & Young People Now, 18 May – [London Mayor pledges £4m to improve speech and language support](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 17 May – [Concern over 'realism' of London Fire Brigade's high-rise training](#). Mentions Fiske Court in Barking.

Independent Nurse, 15 May – [The suffocating cost of poverty](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Architects' Journal, 15 May – [RIBA London Awards 2023: all 52 winners revealed](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Public Sector Executive, 12 May – [London Councils outlines need for emergency action](#). Mentions Cllr Darren Rodwell.

Media Releases

[Barking business found guilty of selling illegal cigarettes.](#)

[East London council's Regulatory Service launches charity initiative.](#)

[East London business owner fined thousands for supplying illegal cigarettes.](#)

[Council invites residents to its first ever mega Jobs and Skills Fair.](#)

Members' Training

Member Briefing

The next Member Briefing session will take place on Monday 12 June at 7pm. It will be online via Teams and will focus on: Meet the B&D Trading Partnership.

Training from Local Government Information Unit (LGiU)

The LGiU are offering the following sessions:

Chairing: Wednesday 7 June, 9.30am to 12.30pm (Online)

Improve how you chair online, hybrid and in-person meetings and learn easy-to-implement techniques to manage participation. Master the technology and processes around online meetings and gain confidence in how you navigate challenging situations that may arise. The session will also touch on team dynamics and how to best facilitate productive and engaging sessions.

Scrutiny: Wednesday 21 June, 9.30am to 11.30am (Online)

Asking questions and actively listening is of course a crucial skill for elected members. But this is most intensely highlighted when it comes to scrutiny, probing, and questioning in a local authority. This engaging training will keep participants on the edge of their seats in anticipation while providing comprehensive tools and frameworks to implement moving forward.

Training from Local Government Association (LGA)

The LGA are offering the following sessions:

Progress on children and young people's mental health policy in England

Thursday 18 May, 2pm to 3.30pm (Online)

A range of policies such as the 2017 Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Green Paper, the NHS Long-Term Plan, and post COVID-19 recovery, have been announced regarding children's mental health in England over the past decade. However, the scale of children's mental health needs remains of real concern to councils, schools, families and young people themselves, particularly given the impact of the pandemic, school closures and the current cost of living crisis. Children's mental health has also been highlighted in recent announcements including the Family Hubs and Best Start for Life, Schools White Paper and Special Educational Needs Green Paper. The Government is currently developing a strategy for mental health (all-age).

The Centre for Mental Health and the Children and Young People Mental Health Coalition (CYPMHC) have been commissioned by the LGA to produce a report exploring these policy approaches, announcements and steps taken to tackle the rising demand in children's mental health. It looks at the progress that has been made and what else needs to happen to ensure that central government, local government, NHS and wider partners are able to tackle children's mental health needs in England. This webinar will explore the outcomes of this report.

Adult social care assurance: the return of regulation and the role of elected members: Tuesday 6 June, 1.30pm to 3pm (Online)

On 1 April 2023, a new system of adult social care assurance went live. Under the Health and Care Act 2022, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has a new duty to independently review and assess councils' delivery of their adult social care duties under the Care Act, and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has new legal powers for statutory intervention in cases where a council is judged to be failing, or has failed, to discharge its duties. A programme of improvement and support will also be part of the assurance process.

The role of elected Members in assurance is important, as is the role of democratic leadership in maximising the opportunities of assurance and mitigating its risks. This webinar – specifically aimed at elected Members – will bring together senior colleagues from the Department of Health and Social Care, the regulator and local government. Delegates will hear updates on all recent developments and have plenty of opportunity to raise questions and comments with all speakers.

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 email yon.edomi@lbbd.gov.uk if you have any suggestions on items for inclusion in future bulletins and any feedback you may have on how it can be improved.

