

Members' Briefing



**Barking &
Dagenham**

 click to watch



Leader's borough update

In his video this week, the Leader mentions the tough times councils up and down the country are facing and the difficult financial decisions having to be made. He says our reduced funding since 2010 means we will continue to call on the government to give us the fair funding we so desperately need.

He also urges residents to give their views on our consultation on the 2024/25 budget proposals. They can also join the live budget Q&A on Tuesday 16 January from 6 to 7pm on his Facebook page.

The Leader ends by reminding residents that the council is here to help those who are struggling through the cost of living crisis, and reminds them that they can also pop into any of our community hubs to speak to someone about the help and support available.

Have your say!

Give us your views on our 2024/25 budget proposals



Residents urged to give their views on our 2024/25 budget proposals

We're asking residents to have their say on our [2024/25 budget proposals](#).

Councils up and down the country are facing severe financial pressures. In Barking and Dagenham, our government funding has fallen by 40% since 2010. We now face rising inflation, with increased demand for services and increased costs, especially in children's and adult services, and for energy and utilities.

To balance our budget, we are reviewing all our services and making sure we are getting value for money from every pound we spend. This includes taking a number of measures to immediately reduce our spending, such as a pause on recruitment, making staff savings and stopping all non-essential spending.

To continue to provide key services for the most vulnerable in our community, the council is proposing a 5% increase in Council Tax, including 2% ringfenced for social care, which will add around £1.40 per week onto the average band D property (excluding the GLA element) from April.

Residents can have their say on the 2024/25 budget proposals by [completing a short survey here](#). The deadline for residents to give their views is Sunday 21 January.



LIVE with the Leader
Budget 2024/2025

Email in your budget related questions:
socialmedia@lbbd.gov.uk

#BDLeaderLive Barking & Dagenham

Leader Live Budget 2024/25

Residents are invited to tune in to a special budget Facebook Live Q&A session with the Council Leader, Cllr Darren Rodwell and the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth and Core Services, Cllr Dominic Twomey on Tuesday 16 January, from 6pm to 7pm on the [Leader's Facebook page](#).

Residents can find out more about the [2024/25 budget proposals](#) and ask their questions.

For those who cannot watch it live, it will be available to watch on the [Leader's Facebook page](#) following the session.

Training updates for councillors

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

Borough News



Nominations are now open for our 2024 Women's Empowerment Awards

Nominations are now open for our 2024 Women's Empowerment Awards which

celebrate the amazing achievements of women who live and work in the borough.

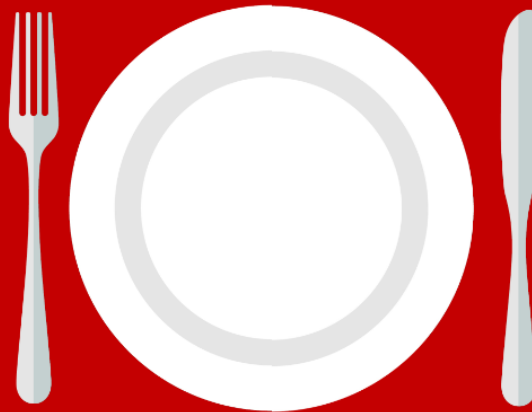
This year we have nine special award categories which include:

- Community Project of the Year
- Community Impact Award
- Entrepreneur of the Year
- Educator of the Year
- Health and Wellbeing Champion of the Year
- Woman of Courage
- Jodie Chesney Young Community Champion of the Year
- Anne Eastlea Lifetime Achievement Award
- Barking and Dagenham Woman of the Year 2024

Nominations close midnight Wednesday 31 January and can be made [here](#).



**53% OF RESIDENTS SKIP
OR HAVE SMALLER
MEALS BECAUSE OF COSTS**



**IT'S NOT OKAY.
BUT IT IS OKAY TO REACH OUT FOR SUPPORT**

WWW.LBBD.GOV.UK/COST-LIVING-SUPPORT

We are still supporting residents with the cost of living

Now more than ever, as the temperatures drop, residents will be feeling the pinch with sky high energy prices and the cost of food and shopping.

That's why we're sharing easy ways for residents to access help if they need it - from benefits and low-cost loans, through to income maximisation and signposting them to food banks, warm spaces, and wellbeing support.

There's lots of help available and it's really important that we can all talk

confidently about it.

Residents can take a look at the latest cost of living support guides which bring together the support we offer, alongside our partners in one place.

[View the Cost of Living Information Support Guides here.](#)

Residents can also drop into [Community Hubs](#) across the borough to access support face to face.



Apprenticeship Jobs Fair

Residents are being invited to an Apprenticeship Jobs Fair which will take place on Wednesday 7 February as part of events for National Apprenticeship Week 2024.

[National Apprenticeship Week](#) (NAW) 2024 runs from 5 to 11 February and is the 17th annual celebration of apprenticeships.

The theme for this year is 'Skills for Life' and is encouraging everyone to consider how apprenticeships can help them develop the skills and knowledge

for a rewarding career and for employers to develop a workforce with future ready skills.

The Jobs Fair will take place at the Conference Room at Barking Learning Centre from 10am to 12 noon. There will be live vacancies for attendees to apply for, plus apprenticeship providers to answer any questions residents may have.

For more information, please email vacancies@lbbd.gov.uk

Around the council



Residents interested in a career in construction invited to get in touch

Residents interested in a career in the construction industry are being invited to get in touch with the Barking Riverside Innovation in Construction Centre (BRIC).

The BRIC training centre in Barking Riverside is offering construction training and qualifications plus brand-new test centre facilities where interested residents can book for their CITB Health, Safety and Environment tests. They will also be able to gain a Level 1 Health and Safety in Construction qualification.

On successful completion of the course, participants will gain the green CSCS labourer card which will allow them to work safely in the construction industry. Staff at the BRIC will also assist participants in gaining other industry related construction cards.

To find out more please contact bric@lbbd.gov.uk or telephone 020 8227 2777/07977 017133.

You can also visit the website at: www.lbbd.gov.uk/BRIC



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 partnership 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

Spring Budget

The date of the Spring Budget has been confirmed and will take place on 6 March. The deadline for submitting a representation is 5pm on 24 January 2024.

As with previous major fiscal events, London Councils will be making a representation on behalf of London local government.

Behaviour Change

The London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI) will be hosting a lunchtime session exploring the COM-B (Capability, Opportunity, Motivation – Behaviour) model for implementing behaviour change in organisations.

COM-B is a well-established model for behaviour change and has previously mostly been used in public health settings.

The session, on Monday 29 January (12 to 1pm), will explore the necessary conditions for successful behaviour change, with real world examples and how

you can apply them. [You can find out more and join the guest list here.](#)

Retrofitting in Kingston

In the latest in London Councils' ongoing series of blogs highlighting London boroughs' net zero work, RB Kingston Upon Thames' Green Economy Lead, Ioanna Rossi and Green Economy Assistant, Ananya Tewari, explain how the council are looking for ways to tackle the barriers to retrofitting and make it more appealing to residents, including the borough's first ever Efficient Homes Show.

'Retrofitting' is the process of making changes to a building that lowers its energy use, improves its energy efficiency and cuts the emissions associated with heating and powering it. It can also bring a range of other benefits. For example, homes which are retrofitted tend to be cheaper to run, more comfortable and healthier to live in, and often increase in value.

[You can read the blog post in full here.](#)

The blog is a space for London borough officers and London Councils' climate programmes to share their work on net zero and adaptation. If you wish to contribute by writing a post or have any questions, please get in touch with London Councils' Climate Communications Officer Katrin Vangelova by email: katrin.vangelova@londoncouncils.gov.uk

New Year's Honours

A number of leading figures across London local government and beyond were recognised for their service in the New Year's Honours.

Among those awarded an OBE were Kensington and Chelsea Councillor Ian Henderson, for services to the community, and former Greenwich Councillor Spencer Drury, for political and public service.

MBEs awarded included: LB Camden lead for adult safeguarding, Shabnam Ahmed Butt, for services to social care; LB Enfield strategic lead for children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health, Susan Francis, for services to children with special educational needs, LB Camden independent family group conference co-ordinator Azara Issifu, for services to children and

families; and LB Sutton operations assistant, Marco Antonio Valencia, for services to local government.

Mitcham and Morden MP Siobhain McDonagh was appointed Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE), for parliamentary and political service.

Mayor of Bristol, and chair of Core Cities, Marvin Rees was awarded an OBE for services to local government.

Deputy Chair of the Local Government Association (LGA) Abigail Brown was appointed OBE for services to local government, and LGA director of policy Ian Hughes was awarded an MBE for services to local government.

This week's coverage in the national and regional media

BNN, 11 January – [ELWA introduces online booking system for waste disposal](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Housing Today, 10 January – [Council-owned developers Be First and Populo Living record profit increases](#).

BBC, 9 January – [Iron Miah shooting: 'Three guilty of brutal execution'](#). Mentions Dagenham.

Metro, 9 January – [Want to buy a house in London? This map shows where house prices fell in 2023](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Conservative Home, 9 January – [By hoarding surplus assets, councils are making the housing shortage worse](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

City AM, 8 January – [Pessimism is for better times, 2024 can reboot the City if we leverage its strengths](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Nursery World, 8 January – [Our working relationship: creating a recipe for success](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Media Releases

[What a waste of money! Property investment company issued with a confiscation order of over £60k.](#)

[Washing money away as local business ordered to pay costs of over £20k.](#)

[Multi-million pound Bobby Moore sports hub opens in Dagenham.](#)

Members' Training

Training from the Local Government Association (LGA)

The LGA are offering the following sessions:

Data and managing council performance – free introductory training for councillors - Friday 1 March 2024, 10am to 12.30pm

This introductory training session will focus on data and the role it plays in managing council performance. The programme which has been developed in association with King's College London has been designed for councillors.

The session will cover the following topics:

- what is data?
- common ways in which data is analysed and presented
- key questions to ask of our data
- performance management – measuring what matters.

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, across the borough and in the world of local government. Please email von.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.

This email was sent to lois.taylor@lbbd.gov.uk

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