



HILLINGDON  
LONDON



# Children, Families and Education Select Committee

## Councillors on the Committee

Councillor Heena Makwana (Chair)  
Councillor Becky Haggart OBE (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Kishan Bhatt  
Councillor Tony Gill  
Councillor Rita Judge  
Councillor Peter Smallwood  
Councillor Jan Sweeting (Opposition Lead)

## Co-Opted Member

Tony Little, Roman Catholic Diocesan  
Representative

**Date:** THURSDAY, 01 FEBRUARY  
2024

**Time:** 7.00 PM

**Venue:** COMMITTEE ROOM 5 -  
CIVIC CENTRE

**Meeting  
Details:** Members of the Public and  
Press are welcome to attend  
this meeting

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This Agenda is available online at:

[London Borough of Hillingdon - Committee details - Children, Families and Education Select Committee](#)

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## Terms of Reference

### Children, Families, & Education Select Committee

To undertake the overview and scrutiny role in relation to the following Cabinet Member portfolio(s) and service areas:

Cabinet Member Portfolios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cabinet Member for Children, Families &amp; Education</li></ul>
Relevant service areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Children's Services (including corporate parenting)</li><li>2. Children's Safeguarding</li><li>3. Youth Justice</li><li>4. Youth Services</li><li>5. SEND</li><li>6. Education</li><li>7. Children and Families Development</li><li>8. Skills &amp; lifelong learning</li></ol>

This Select Committee will establish a Panel to support strong oversight of the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities. The Committee may appoint 3 Members to this Panel based on political balance. Membership may include non-Cabinet Members not on the Committee. The Committee may also appoint relevant Council officers and other external stakeholders to the Panel and agree its chairmanship and operation. In agreeing its operation, the Committee will provide for the Panel not to be able to establish any other sub-group or body to carry out its responsibilities.

# Agenda

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of interest in matters coming before this meeting
- 3 Minutes of the previous meeting – **TO FOLLOW**
- 4 To confirm that the items of business marked as Part I will be considered in Public and that the items marked as Part II will be considered in Private
- 5 Learn Hillingdon Annual Report 1 - 14
- 6 2024/25 Budget Proposals For Services Within the Remit of Children, Families and Education Select Committee 15 - 26
- 7 Major Review – Updated Scoping Report 27 - 38
- 8 Forward Plan 39 - 46
- 9 Work Programme 47 - 50

## LEARN HILLINGDON ADULT COMMUNITY EDUCATION SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT, 2022-23

<b>Committee name</b>	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
<b>Officer reporting</b>	Debbie Scarborough, Service Manager Adult & Com Learning
<b>Papers with report</b>	Learn Hillingdon Self-Assessment Report 2022-23
<b>Ward</b>	All

### HEADLINES

The Self-Assessment Report from Learn Hillingdon is produced by the service annually and evaluates the effectiveness of the education delivered to learners and its impact on them.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee notes the report and questions officers on the report.

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

This report is submitted to the Local Authority for scrutiny and to Ofsted and the GLA for their information. It is used by Ofsted to support initial decisions about inspections planned for the service and by the GLA for funding and quality purposes.

### PERFORMANCE DATA

Service overall	Learners	Enrolments	Retention	Pass *	Achievement**
2022-23	1505	3417	94.70%	96.00%	91.00%
2021-22	1681	3639	93.4%	92.5%	86.4%
2020-21	1589	3298	92.1%	94.1%	86.6%

\*Pass rate: results of those who stayed until the end of the course, excluding those who left.

\*\*Achievement rate: results for all enrolled learners, including those who left before the end of the course.

### RESIDENT BENEFIT

The support and challenge provided to the Service Manager by committee members enables service developments and helps the service to improve where necessary.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications for this matter.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications for this matter.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NIL.



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# Learn Hillingdon Self-Assessment Report 2022-23

## Grade 2: Good.

*“On a personal note, I would like to say that learning is a lifelong adventure that shapes who we are and who we can become!*

*Learning requires dedication, perseverance and at times, the willingness to step out of our comfort zones. There are times when challenges may seem overwhelming, but I believe that it is during these moments that we truly discover our resilience and strength.*

*Whatever the field you choose to study, to expand your horizon, we all have a unique opportunity to shape our future, while also making an impact on society.”*

*(O, learner on Childcare and ESOL courses.)*

Debbie Scarborough  
October 2023

## Context of the provision

Hillingdon is the largest and most westerly borough of London with a population of 306,000. Although there are large employers in the borough, such as Heathrow, Hillingdon Hospital and Brunel University, approximately 90% are micro-businesses. Unemployment levels are low overall, but skills levels vary and wards in the south of the borough have lower qualification levels, greater levels of deprivation and higher claim rates of most benefits than those in the north.

<b>Total number of grant-funded learners/enrolments</b>	1439 learners	3225 enrolments
<b>Including Multiply*</b>	1505 learners	3417 enrolments

*\*Multiply is a government-funded initiative to improve the everyday numeracy and maths skills of adults in England. All data contained in this document has Multiply Project numbers included, unless stated otherwise.*

<b>Learners' Residency</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>
Hillingdon resident	3566 90.9%	2978 90.3%	3275 90%	3117 91%
London resident, (outside LB Hillingdon)	301 7.7%	249 7.5%	291 8%	230 7%
Out of London resident	58 1.5%	73 2.2%	73 2%	70 2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3925</b>	<b>3298</b>	<b>3639</b>	<b>3417</b>

Our learners are adults, and many are parents of the young people who attend the large local college. 18% of learners are male (21% of enrolments). Most learners are female, of white heritage and 35-49 years of age. 53% of learners who are Hillingdon residents live in the most deprived areas of the borough, who in turn are most likely to study ESOL\*, English and digital skills. Many enrol on programmes of learning with more than one qualification taken at a time.

*\*ESOL: English for Speakers of Other Languages.*

Hillingdon has identified health issues, namely mental health, obesity, diabetes and dementia as priorities, with obesity rates doubling between 2021 and 2022. Wards in the south have higher rates of obesity and Type 1 diabetes whereas wards in the north have higher rates of cardiovascular disease, dementia, stroke and more care homes. The south also has the highest rates of people not in education, employment or training.

## Improvements in year

New approaches to quality assurance and improvement have been developed this year, some for implementation next year, for example quality meetings throughout the year targeting specific issues.

A reduction in printed materials in line with Local Authority's sustainability policy and an increased online presence throughout the year that allows residents to access up-to-date information at their convenience and has reduced paper consumption and costs.

A newly renovated centre in Uxbridge has been established, offering modern classrooms and a purpose-built cookery room that benefits a wide range of learners and other council services



## **Service Strengths**

The service successfully reaches its target group of the most disadvantaged adults in the borough. 97% of learners on qualification courses are fully funded because they meet economic hardship criteria.

Overall attendance, retention, pass and achievement rates are all 91% or above. 49% of learners on vocational courses either gained or maintained employment this year.

Strong, targeted learning support is effective in enabling learners facing additional barriers to achieve. Learners who have declared learning difficulties and/ or disabilities achieve at or above the same level as those who have no declared disabilities.

The flexible and committed team prioritise individual needs well to ensure learners feel safe and confident in the centres and receive high quality learning opportunities.

Learners' benefit from a wide range of personal development opportunities that enhance their learning and help them link that learning with their lives outside the classroom.

## **Areas for Improvement**

Further strengthen partnerships to maximise the reach and impact of learning on the most disadvantaged residents

Further develop the capture, reporting and use of data to provide a more accurate picture of progression across the service.

## **Quality of Education**

### **Intent**

The intention of the provision is to target and recruit the most socially and economically disadvantaged residents; the low-skilled, low-paid adults often from deprived areas who are furthest away from education and least likely to improve their and their family's life chances without support. Most learners are from deprived postcodes and are on low incomes or are unemployed, and the vast majority of those on our qualification programmes are fully funded from within the grant.

The intention is well understood by staff. Vocational courses support learners to prepare for a new career; English/ESOL, maths and digital skills support learners to manage their everyday lives and consider, often for the first time, more possibilities opening to them in the future; and learners engaging for the first time through targeted outreach programmes are encouraged to enhance their mental and physical wellbeing as well as their skills. This continues into provision for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities, where skills that increase learners' ability to live independently and healthily are prioritised.

The curriculum offer reflects local need and national, regional and local priorities, and the service gained additional funding to support residents' everyday maths skills (Multiply). Learners are clear about the curriculum intent of their programme and the steps they need to take to achieve

their goals. Progression between and within subject areas is encouraged and additional study options and support help these learners to move into and achieve vocational qualifications.

## Implementation

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Tutors use their experience and subject expertise well to provide good learning opportunities and have high expectations of and ambitions for their learners. They get to know their learners and most use a variety of approaches and resources to help them understand key concepts, to ascertain learners understanding and to address or correct any misunderstandings.

*“We are only on lesson 4 of the course, however I have already been volunteering at school for over 3 months and I am finding it extremely enjoyable and instructive. The class teacher is trusting me with marking the children’s class work and also supporting some children with additional needs on a one-to-one basis. The teacher also told me that she looks forward to the day I’m in the class because I make a difference and can tell that I genuinely enjoy supporting the children” (GK, learner GM on Supporting Teaching and Learning, Level 2)*

Contextualised scenarios are used to good effect, enabling learners to understand the relevance and application of their learning in daily life and the workplace. In IT, tutors present information clearly by avoiding unnecessary technical language, highlighting instead the key terminology with which learners should become familiar. This builds confidence in a subject that some learners find intimidating due to the amount of ‘jargon’ used.

*“I enjoyed that the course was easy to comprehend”. (KC, learner on Cybersecurity L1 Award)*

All learners on qualification courses are offered a robust initial assessment and personalised information, advice and guidance to discuss their most appropriate pathway. As a result, placement is accurate, and learners settle quickly into their learning group. Learning support is used well to support learners’ achievement, and effective targeting and monitoring of most learners in danger of not achieving helps them complete their course. As a result, achievement gaps are closing, but the service needs to hone these approaches even more to prevent any achievement gaps at all.

*‘I have learnt to have the courage to ask for help. I have learnt that long courses like level 3 are more advanced and can be very hard work especially when this type of course requires you to be employed too.’ (E, learner on Level 3 childcare diploma course)*

Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities benefit from reinforcement of learning in ways that are relevant to their subject area, which helps them embed the learning into their long-term memory and, for some, make clearer connections between their learning and their lives outside college. This consistent approach across the department and the service is having a significant

impact on these learners over time, and the most able are beginning to show greater ambition for themselves and their potential.

*"I've had great experiences on my courses here. I made new friends, I was a course rep for maths and English, and I was elected to the Learner Council.... I've gained skills, confidence and become more independent. If I can do it, you can too". (D, learner with LDD).*

Teachers use a good range of assessment techniques to ascertain learners' knowledge and use the curriculum flexibly to ensure teaching reflects learners' stages of learning. Holistic workplace assessments and professional discussions are used well, and internal quality assurance is effective in maintaining standards. However, a minority of learners' have late submissions that are not highlighted quickly enough, leading to last minute completions, and this will be addressed next year.

*"I am taking this opportunity to thank my tutor for the support throughout my course in Harlington. She has been supportive, encouraging and also in my employability course she assisted me to update my C.V, and now I have got a Learning Support Assistant job with Hillingdon Council." (JM, learner – Health and Social Care).*

## Impact

*"I write reports at work without worrying about spelling errors and now I speak fluently and confidently in meetings, home and social gatherings." (FG, English L1 learner)*

The impact of learning is good. Whilst enrolment numbers fell this year, the overall retention, pass and achievement rates for the service have significantly increased. Learners achieve their aims well across most curriculum areas.

Service overall	Learners	Enrolments	Retention	Pass *	Achievement**
2022-23	1505	3417	94.70%	96.00%	91.00%
2021-22	1681	3639	93.4%	92.5%	86.4%
2020-21	1589	3298	92.1%	94.1%	86.6%

\*Pass rate: results of those who stayed until the end of the course, excluding those who left.

\*\*Achievement rate: results for all enrolled learners, including those who left before the end of the course.

The service reaches its targeted audience well.

Breakdown of enrolments	No of learners		No of enrolments	Retention rate	Achievement rate
Female	1225	82%	2705 79%	96.1%	91.2%
Male	278	18%	710 21%	95.6%	89.9%

Unspecified	2	2	100%	100%
North of the borough	348 23%	789 23%	96.0%	92.2%
South of the borough	1009 67%	2328 68%	95.8%	91.0%
Outside the borough	148 10%	300 9%	97.7%	87.6%

Results by curriculum area, including the Multiply project.

Curriculum Area	Learners	Enrolments	Retention	Pass	Achievement
<b>Emotional Health and Wellbeing</b>	54	81	77.80%	96.80%	75.30%
<b>Multiply project</b>	153	192	98.40%	94.70%	93.20%
<b>Childcare</b>	140	343	97.10%	97.30%	94.50%
<b>Floristry</b>	60	103	94.20%	97.60%	92.00%
<b>Arts, Media, Leisure (AML)</b>					
Arts	104	173	93.10%	93.20%	86.70%
Languages	57	92	96.70%	96.60%	93.50%
Leisure	25	49	98.00%	100.00%	98.00%
<b>AML Total</b>	182	314	94.90%	95.30%	90.40%
<b>IT and Digital Skills</b>	151	169	94.60%	87.90%	83.10%
<b>English, Maths, ESOL (EME)</b>					
English	157	257	93.80%	95.80%	89.80%
ESOL	407	664	91.70%	96.50%	88.50%
Maths	40	61	85.20%	94.20%	80.30%
<b>EME Total</b>	564	982	91.80%	96.20%	88.30%
<b>Independent Living (adults with LDD)</b>	127	631	97.60%	96.40%	94.10%
<b>Targeted Outreach (TO)</b>					
Art	39	39	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
ESOL	67	122	94.30%	96.50%	91.00%
Family Learning	23	24	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Health & Social Care	25	25	88.00%	90.90%	80.00%
IT and Digital	62	142	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Leisure	18	18	100.00%	88.90%	88.90%
Maths	9	9	100.00%	66.70%	66.70%
<b>TO Total</b>	226	379	97.40%	97.00%	94.50%
<b>Health and Social Care</b>					
Counselling	38	39	97.30%	97.20%	94.60%
Health and Social Care	66	183	93.40%	99.30%	92.80%
<b>H&amp;SC Total</b>	103	222	94.10%	98.90%	93.10%

Achievement gaps are defined as results 5% or greater below the overall service achievement results, (91% this year) and are denoted in red ink.

There are no significant achievement gaps by gender, age, ward or north/south of the borough. Gaps identified last year for learners with dyslexia and those in the 'mixed any other' ethnic group have been addressed. However, achievement gaps for African and Caribbean learners have emerged. Most learners with declared learning difficulties achieve at the same level or better than those with no declared difficulties (91% vs 90.3% respectively). 21 learners across the service who live outside London struggled with retention on qualification courses (5 learners withdrew), resulting in a lower achievement rate in that area of 84.1%.

Achievement Gap	Enrolments	Retention	Pass	Achievement	% of overall enrolments
African	240	90.8%	94.4%	85.7%	5%
Caribbean	70	88.6%	91.1%	80.7%	2%
Speech, language and communication	51	92.2%	91.5%	84.3%	1.5%
Maths	61	85.2%	94.2%	80.3%	1.8%
L1 EDSQ	39	83.3%	76.7%	63.9%	1%
IT and Digital	169	94.6%	87.9%	83.1%	5%
ESFA	44	84.1%	100%	84.1%	1.3%
Mental Health	117	87%	95.7%	83.2%	3.4%

Poor retention of those on mental health courses resulted in an achievement gap for that group, although the service-wide gap has significantly reduced since last year (now 83.2%, up from 77% in 21-22). An achievement gap has emerged for those declared learning difficulties involving with speech and language (84.3%), which is a local priority and one which the service has already taken steps to address. Learners studying maths and digital skills at level 1 achieved less well than their peers, although the maths achievement rate remains significantly above the national benchmark of 47%.

Partnership work is effective but has the potential to be stronger. Links with community partners resulted in 337 enrolments in-year, and 98 residents booked 252 places on 17 workshops run by 32 council and local partners at our careers event. Additionally, 61 learners accessed 1-1 careers advice with National Careers Service advisors during the year. The service is strengthening links with other council services, and this will be developed further during 2023-24.

*“The advisor looked for jobs with me and showed me a template on how to write my application letter.” (MA, learner).*

*“I think the [careers] service was excellent.” (MP, learner).*

Residents are encouraged to volunteer within the service, and 15 of our 20 volunteers are ex- or current learners themselves. A survey of 95 vocational learners showed that 49.5% either gained or maintained employment following their course/s, an increase of 10.2% from a similar survey two years ago. In another survey of learners undertaking qualifications from Entry Level 3 to

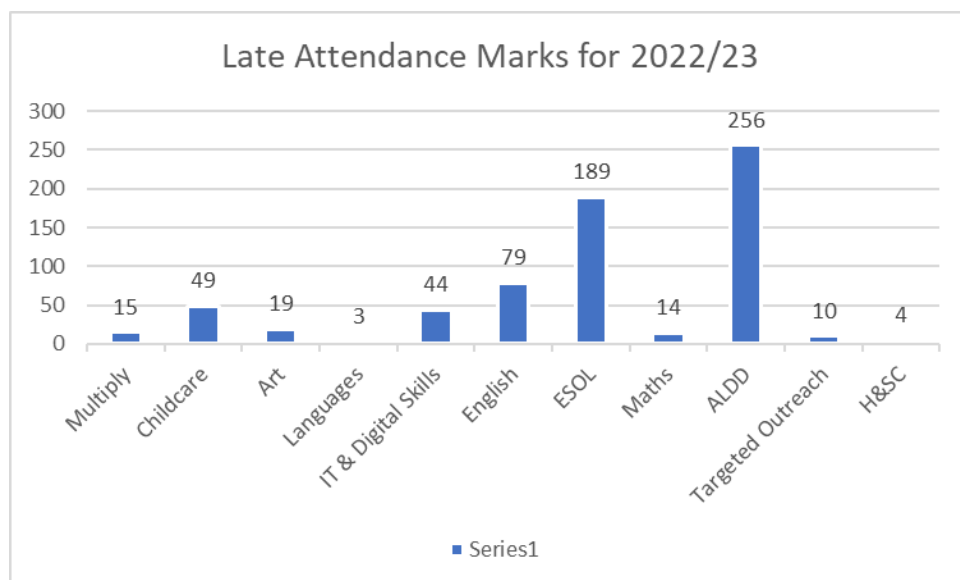
*“This course helped me gain knowledge and confidence to get a new job as a community support worker.” (J.A.Y., Health and Social Care learner).*

Level 3, 102 of 180 learners replied (57%). Of these, 45% remained in employment; 7% gained a promotion and 6% began volunteering, with 76% of these volunteering at Learn Hillingdon.

Two learners with learning difficulties and disabilities gained work placements locally following a 'Prepare for Employment' qualification. 48% of learners on qualification programmes progressed to further learning in 2023-24, of whom 74% continued in the same area of learning and 26% moved into a different curriculum area.

## Behaviour and attitudes

Staff and learners maintain a respectful atmosphere in the service. From the start of their learning experience, learners find the importance of attendance, punctuality and commitment to learning is emphasised by staff and monitored by managers. The service attendance rate is 95% and punctuality data demonstrates that late marks account for 682 (1.6%) of our total attendance marks (41,789).



Learners comment on the impact that learning has on their lives outside 'college'.

*"It feels amazing to see how proud my parents are of my achievements and the positive impact of my studies on my children." (A, Childcare learner)*

*'B loves this course and is often talking about it. He is really proud of the instruments he's made and has recently acquired a set of bongos as he enjoyed playing these in the class so much. And, much as we enjoy hearing what he's been learning, we were not unhappy when he took them back to his flat!' (Mum of learner with learning difficulties and disabilities, summer 2023).*

Safeguarding is effective. Across the service learners report they feel safe. Issues are quickly raised with a Designated Safeguarding Officer whose actions are checked by the Staying Safe Board, ensuring the required action is taken swiftly and effectively. The service is represented at the Council's Adult Safeguarding Board and Prevent Partnership Board.

Feedback from learners is positive and the service responds effectively to any issues that are raised. When informal feedback from learners during lesson observations suggested that some were not aware of initial steps to prevent radicalisation, swift action was taken to remedy this.

Learners enjoy their time with the service. The service's learner survey attracted 98 responses, of which:

- 99% said they felt safe and respected in their class
- 98% said they were supported well to complete their course
- 96% said their teacher gave helpful feedback
- 95% agreed or strongly agreed they know what safeguarding is and know what to do if they have a concern.
- 91% agreed or strongly agreed they knew what to do if they had a concern about someone at risk of becoming involved in extremism or terrorism.

The service routinely negotiates personal, social and/or work goals with individual learners, especially in non-accredited courses, to measure the impact of learning in their wider lives. This year, 932 learners choose which of these they would like to prioritise. Results show that:

- 98% of 415 overcoming challenges outcomes were achieved,
- 98% of 352 said they achieved their work skills goals,
- 98% of 508 achieved their social skills goals and
- 97% of 546 achieved their health and wellbeing goals.

## Personal Development

Personal development is good. Learners gain from a range of opportunities throughout the year, from ESOL learners presenting on their choice of inspirational women on International Women's Day to 200+ learners attending a range of mental health workshops.

*"I learned how to recognise a low mood, its impact on me and what can I do to break the cycle." (MM, learner feedback from a mental health workshop).*

*"It helped me learn about how I can improve my sleep by using different techniques." M "I learned how to deal with my stress" (SH, learner feedback from a mental health workshop)*

*"I learned that some countries women are more unlucky than others but still a woman can achieve anything she wants". (O, learner feedback from International Women's Day events).*

Learners' achievements are celebrated. Certificate presentation ceremonies are led by local dignitaries, with 120 learners and their 80 guests attending the qualification achievement celebration, and 140 learners and guests attending the equivalent celebration for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities. Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities also engaged with workshops delivered by Health4All, a health-based partner organisation, who explained the purpose and benefits of annual health checks for this target group.

*"I liked when the nurse checked my blood pressure, my weight and my oxygen level. I have learnt how health checks is important every year." (HS, learner with LDD).*

*"Talking about medication, that I should take it as I've been advised, take your medication to the appointment" (JK, learner with LDD)*

British Values are emphasised throughout the service, with debates by ESOL learners, 63 English and ESOL learners attending Parliament Week workshops.

Internal elections to the Learner Council are held during Parliament Week and nine elected Learner Councillors meet with management termly and provide feedback on a range of subjects. They also carry out secret shopper activities, the findings of which are used to improve customer

*Feedback from Parliament Week debates and workshops included:*

*"Hearing opposite opinions that never think about it before." (RZ, learner)*

*"I learn the pros and cons about the Windfall tax and how this is going to affect us." (EB, learner)*

*"Listening to others and be respectful to others". (MG, learner)*

*"Debating skills, speaking with confidence". (WH, learner).*

service. For example, their feedback resulted in more badge challenge sessions being scheduled across the service for 2023-24, and the mystery shopper exercise, whilst mostly positive, led to improved initial information for learners.

Good information, advice and guidance helps learners to enrol and to take their next steps. Vocational learners have practise interviews built into their programmes and support is available with vocational work placements for those who need it. 66 learners with learning difficulties and disabilities attended annual health check workshops this year, aimed at demystifying them and increasing uptake, and eight ESOL learners attended a 'Healthy Heart' workshop run by a partner in the south of the borough.

## **Leadership and Management**

Leadership and management are good. Provision is targeted well to reach the most disadvantaged learners, who are welcomed into the service and feel included, respected, informed and encouraged throughout their learning.

Staff are supported to provide a high-quality service and learners are well supported to achieve; however, difficulties in recruiting qualified tutors and an aging workforce are creating increasing pressures for the service. Good use was made of funding flexibilities to provide tutors and learning support staff with qualifications which will develop their skills and further improve support for learners. Managers acted where poor practice was identified in an ongoing effort to drive continuous quality improvement, for example, achievement rates increased this year following interventions to improve consistency of evidence capture across non-accredited learning. This work will continue into the next academic year.

*"The workshop was very both interesting and informative. The presenter also took the blood pressure of every learner in my class and then discussed the reading with each learner which was excellent feedback/advice. She ended the workshop with a great quiz and gave a pink bag to the learner with the most points! What an exciting finish!" (LP, tutor).*



*“Just touching base re the [staff and volunteer] conference - it was fantastic and really enjoyable. I know we'll be asked to give feedback shortly. I just wanted to say that I'm really appreciative of the way this was organised (well planned and brilliantly executed) - I took notes, but my goodness did it have an impact - I've gained so many insights and the hints and tips were really helpful - so huge thank you again to you and your team and I've noted that you'll be providing more resources in due course, which I'm looking forward to.” (Tutor).*

The management team responded well to a significant period of change during the year and minimised any negative impact on learners. The service changed name in August and relocated its main venue. A move to online marketing with minimal printed materials, coupled with the cost-of-living crisis and ongoing concerns about Covid, saw slow recruitment of learners in vocational curriculum areas, but managers adapted their approaches well and enrolment numbers recovered. For example, marketing and promotion of courses ranged from sponsored social media posts and e-newsletters to a greater presence at local events and a podcast interview on Uxbridge radio. The service has been preparing for a second venue change scheduled for 2023-24, and the team is focused on minimising the impact on learners.

Partnership work, too, has adapted to meet changing local needs. The effective use of local careers fairs continues to ensure learners gain direct links with employers and progression opportunities with other providers. However, reduced capacity within schools and the voluntary sector, coupled with the emphasis on underpinning outreach courses on health and green outcomes, meant that the approach to learning in the community needed to adapt to meet demand this year. As a result, learners from a range of partners benefitted from combined group learning, exposing them to different people with new perspectives and ideas. For example, a Get Online week coffee morning was attended by six residents, leading to enrolments onto longer digital skills courses. One learner reported,

*“I found out about online security and about cookies! I normally accept them all!” (VA, learner).*

Managers accessed additional project funding in-year, including ‘Multiply’ and ‘Holiday Activities and Food Programme’ funding. As a result, learners such as those on the Teaching Assistant programmes had access to contextualised maths programmes; and residents with children in receipt of free school meals accessed ‘Cookery Club’ sessions, cooking and eating a hot meal with their children whilst learning new skills. Plans are underway to extend these initiatives further during 2023-24.

*‘I have really been able to upskill my skills in teaching maths. I thoroughly enjoyed listening to other Teaching Assistants and their interactions with children and how they overcome these problems.’ (Learner, ‘How to Support Children with Maths (for TAs\* and Volunteers)’ spring 2023).*

*\*TAs – Teaching Assistants*

Good governance of the service had a direct impact on learners. A financial investment from the council resulted in the main adult education centre relocating to a newly renovated area of the Civic Centre, providing additional and centrally located facilities for learners, whilst a move to

greater online marketing and promotion throughout the year, in line with council's sustainability strategy, improved sustainability and reduced costs. A refreshed approach to governance structures is in development, with roll-out planned for 2023-24.

DS/December 2023.

## 2024/25 BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR SERVICES WITHIN THE REMIT OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE

<b>Committee name</b>	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
<b>Officers reporting</b>	Andy Goodwin, Head of Strategic Finance Sheilender Pathak, Head of Finance – Children and SEND
<b>Papers with report</b>	N/A
<b>Ward</b>	All

### HEADLINES

1. To comply with the Budget and Policy Framework procedure rules as part of the agreed consultation process for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets, alongside the Council's Capital Programme, this report sets out the draft revenue budget and Capital Programme for the services within the remit of the Children, Families and Education Select Committee. Following consideration by Cabinet on 14 December 2023, these proposals are now under consultation, and the relevant proposals being discussed at the January cycle of the Select Committees.
2. Cabinet will next consider the budget proposals on 15 February 2024, and the report will include comments received from Select Committees. At the meeting on 15 February 2024 Cabinet will make recommendations to full Council regarding the budget and Council Tax levels for 2024/25. Subsequently, Council will then meet to agree the budgets and Council Tax for 2024/25 on 22 February 2024.
3. The Committee needs to consider the budget proposals as they relate to the relevant service areas within the Children, Families and Education Cabinet Portfolio, but within the corporate context and the constraints applying as a result of the aggregate financial position of the authority.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

4. **That the Committee:**
  - a. **Notes the budget projections contained in the report; and**
  - b. **Comments as appropriate on the combined budget proposals affecting the relevant service areas within the Children, Families and Education Cabinet Portfolio, within the context of the corporate budgetary position.**

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

#### General Fund Budget

#### **Budget Strategy**

5. Budget proposals for 2024/25 have been prepared in the context of a wider strategy addressing the five-year MTFP period through which service expenditure is to be managed

within available resources in the context of a challenging economic environment both in terms of an exceptional inflationary pressures, the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and the continuing legacy of COVID-19. To balance the budget, the Council has a number of mechanisms at its disposal to deliver this including a combination of delivering efficiency savings, increases in the Council Tax, and Fees and Charges, whilst setting a strategy that increases reserves above those forecast within the 2023/24 position.

6. This budget strategy is based upon the principle of sound financial management set against the backdrop of these challenging economic conditions, with the latest monitoring position for the 2023/24 financial year reporting a net underspend of a minor £2k which will leave uncommitted General Balances at £26,848k entering the 2024/25 financial year.
7. However, the 2023/24 position reflects the use of Earmarked Reserves to fund £3,622k of exceptional inflationary pressures on service budgets including the 2023/24 pay award. Furthermore, the Council is drawing down £1,785k from reserves to fund local priorities, £1,535k to fund legacy impacts against taxation income driven by the pandemic and £692k of other costs. With windfall income from the West London Waste Authority of £1,500k offsetting these drawdowns, the net impact is a £6,134k use of reserves, leaving a closing balance of £13,926k against the Council's Earmarked Reserves.
8. The Month 7 monitoring position for the services within this select committee present a net variance of £236k underspend as presented in the table below:

**Table 1: Service Operating Budgets**

Cabinet Member Portfolio		Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance (As at Month 7)	Variance (As at Month 6)	Movement from Month 6
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Children, Families & Education	Expenditure	96,576	97,059	483	(122)	605
	Income	(24,295)	(25,014)	(719)	31	(750)
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>72,281</b>	<b>72,045</b>	<b>(236)</b>	<b>(91)</b>	<b>(145)</b>
Services within the remit of other committees	Expenditure	395,422	396,737	1,315	758	557
	Income	(206,936)	(208,017)	(1,081)	(669)	(412)
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>188,486</b>	<b>188,720</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>Total Service Operating Budgets</b>		<b>260,767</b>	<b>260,765</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>0</b>

9. With the following narrative setting out the variances and movement from Month 7 on an exception basis:
  - a. **Children, Families & Education** – an underspend of £236k is being forecast at Month 7, which represents a favourable movement of £145k, with education functions including SEND and Adult Education largely breaking even, with additional expenditure being incurred to support Children in Need alongside the running of the Early Years Centres, offset by a reduction in the cost of service delivery for Looked After Children and measures put in place to contain staffing expenditure to deliver a further benefit for the portfolio. The movement in this area relates to a reduction

in respite costs for Children with Disabilities, with the large movements between expenditure and income relating to Asylum support of £750k offset by grant funding.

Within this portfolio, there are three services that are reported in the Council's budget strategy under Demand-Led Growth: Children's Placements, Asylum Funding and SEND Transport. There remains inherent volatility in demand for Looked after Children and Asylum services, with the Looked After Children service continuing to present a pressure in Month 7, which is being driven by asylum placements and is offset by Government funding as part of the Asylum Dispersal programme. SEND Transport is currently forecasting a pressure due to higher numbers than anticipated of pupils requiring transport, with this pressure being offset by re-routing efficiencies, leaving a net pressure which is forecast to be funded through the release of Balance Sheet provisions.

10. Of the £22,762k savings within the 2023/24 budget, 75% are banked or on track for delivery in full, with potential risks arising on 1% (£242k), relating to timing issues on practical implementation of two projects, which are ultimately expected to be resolved. Further information on this position is set out in the month 7 budget monitoring report also presented to Cabinet on this agenda, but it is expected that all 2023/24 savings will ultimately be banked in full or replaced with alternative measures in the event of any ongoing shortfall.
11. The position on the savings included in the 2023/24 budget within the remit of this Select Committee is as follows:

**Table 2: Savings Tracker**

Cabinet Member Portfolio	Blue Banked £'000	Green Delivery in progress £'000	Amber I Early stages of delivery £'000	Amber II Potential problems in delivery £'000	Red Serious problems in delivery £'000	Total £'000
Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education	(150)	(820)	(50)	(415)	0	(1,434)
Services within the remit of other committees	(6,834)	(8,725)	(582)	(1,995)	(242)	(18,378)
Cross-Cutting	(500)	0	(500)	(1,950)	0	(2,950)
<b>Total 2022/23 Savings Programme</b>	<b>(7,484) 33.0%</b>	<b>(9,545) 42.0%</b>	<b>(1,132) 5.0%</b>	<b>(4,360) 19.0%</b>	<b>(242) 1.0%</b>	<b>(22,762) 100.0%</b>

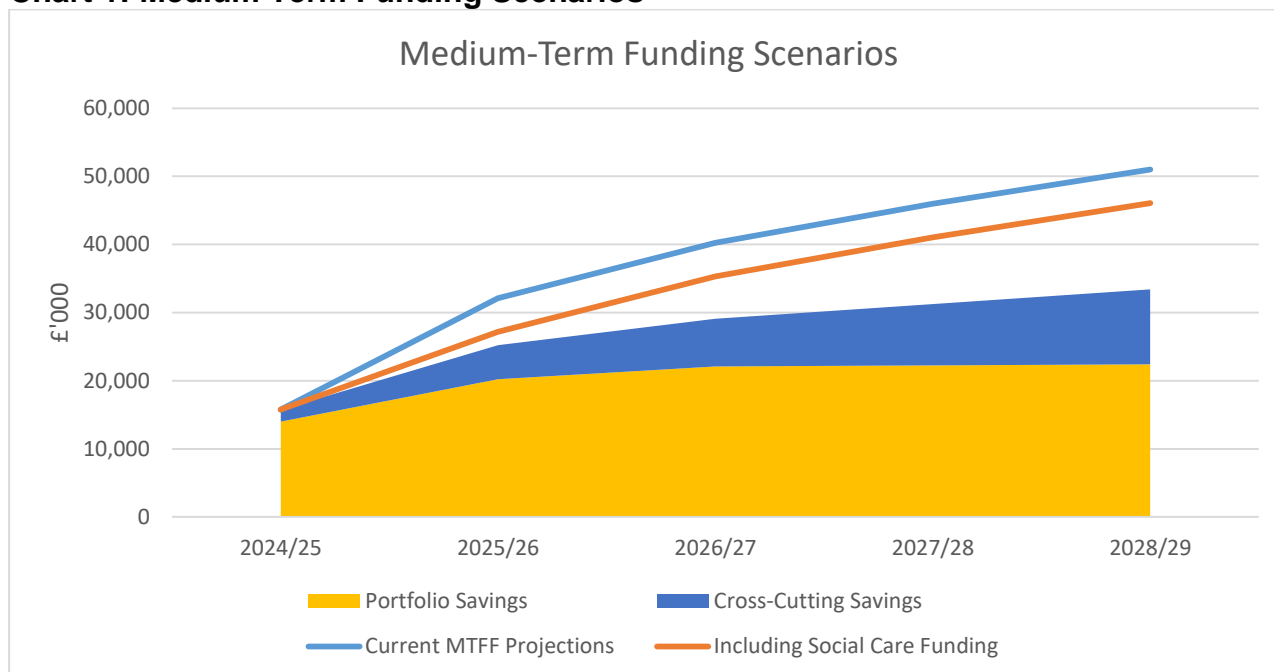
12. Based on 2.99% per annum increases in the core Council Tax and 2% per annum increases in the Social Care Precept for 2024/25, reducing to 3.8% overall increase in 2025/26 and 2.8% thereafter, funding available to support service expenditure is projected to grow by £35,209k to £298,487k between 2024/25 and 2028/29. A combination of exceptional inflationary pressures particularly in the earlier years of the budget strategy and demand-led pressures (including the legacy impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic), together with capital investment plans is projected to generate a £52,788k uplift in service expenditure across the five-year term. In order to address this differential, to date, a savings programme of £33,411k has been developed, leaving a residual budget gap of £17,579k across the five-year MTF period, with £15,752k of savings being proposed for 2024/25 increasing throughout the later years of the MTF period.

**Table 3: Budget Strategy**

	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000
Total Resources	263,278	280,712	280,462	287,245	292,253	298,487
Total Service Expenditure	263,278	280,712	287,351	298,386	306,971	316,066
<b>Cumulative Budget Gap</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(6,889)</b>	<b>(11,141)</b>	<b>(14,718)</b>	<b>(17,579)</b>
<u>Of which, Service Expenditure in the remit of this committee:</u>						
Children, Families & Education	58,231	59,878	60,030	62,139	64,300	66,512
Services within the remit of other committees	205,047	220,834	227,321	236,247	242,671	249,554
<b>Total</b>	<b>263,278</b>	<b>280,712</b>	<b>287,351</b>	<b>298,386</b>	<b>306,971</b>	<b>316,066</b>

13. As is the case for the vast majority of local authorities, the Council has experienced exceptional economic factors that are driving a material inflationary requirement, which is having a significant impact on the cost of providing services to residents, with Government funding no longer keeping pace with the increased expenditure the Council is facing. The generally accepted measure of inflation, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) continues to track above the Bank of England target rate of 2% and peaked at 11.1% in October 2022 before falling to 4.6% in the latest published data for October 2023. This high inflation environment has yielded a forecast inflationary requirement of £16,659k in 2024/25, rising to £48,176k by 2028/29.
14. This compares to a forecast of £10,906k for 2024/25 when the Council set out the previous iteration of the budget strategy in February 2023, with this latest refresh presenting a 53% increase from these projections. Inflation, together with further increase in demand-led growth and corporate items has generated the need for the continuing development of savings programmes. It is expected that this will continue to be a key requirement within our budget strategy in the years ahead.
15. The Autumn Statement announced in parliament on 22 November 2023 implied spending targets for unprotected Government departments from 2025/26 onwards will result in real terms spending reductions, with the OBR estimating spending on unprotected departments would fall by 2.3% in real terms from 2025/26, with this number forecast to increase to 4.1% per year, should the government follow through on its ambition to increase defence spending to 2.5% of GDP and return overseas development assistance to its 0.7% of gross national income target. This therefore might imply that the best-case scenario would see cash flat settlements from 2025/26 onwards.

**Chart 1: Medium Term Funding Scenarios**



16. As can be seen from the analysis above, the savings programme outlined in this budget strategy would only be sufficient to contain service expenditure within the resource envelope in a scenario where the £4.9m funding allocated by the Government in core Adult Social Care spending is retained in 2025/26 and beyond. However, the current savings programme reflects specifically identified actions at this time and we expect to develop and increase the programme further over the life of the MTFF. It should be recognised that in the absence of the retention of the aforementioned Adult Social Care Funding and increased savings, a requirement for a 30% uplift in core government grant support would be necessary in order to balance later years budgets.
  
17. The continuation of a second year of adverse economic conditions and the stubbornly high inflationary pressures represents the main cause of the current cost-of-living pressures, with the impact from increasing costs and declining revenues having negative impacts on local residents and businesses, with the Council in turn exposed to these forces and facing similar challenges in service delivery, albeit on a larger scale and in the context of a range of statutory responsibilities. The impact of this is particularly evident in the Council's homelessness prevention service, which is experiencing a sustained period of high demand, with the Council needing to materially increase the level of budgetary provision in this area. Furthermore, COVID-19 legacy issues continue to impact on Council services and finances, with pandemic related pressures believed to be a strong driver for the ongoing financial pressures within Adult Social Care.
  
18. Notwithstanding the additional challenges presented by adverse economic conditions and the legacy impacts from the pandemic, this budget strategy does not rely upon use of General Balances to support service expenditure and aims to increase net reserves over the five-year MTFF period to build the Council's financial resilience going forward, with this strategy proposing an increase in reserves of £7,500k by 2028/29 if no unforeseen economic shocks are sustained. A review of the range of general risks affecting the Council and the anticipated release of significant sums from provisions and EMRs in 2023/24 indicates that the recommended level of uncommitted reserves (General Balances) should be between £22,000k and £41,000k, meaning that £4,848k over and above earmarked reserves remains available to the Council to deploy, should it be required.

19. In addition to General Balances, the Council holds Earmarked Reserves to manage specific risks, projects and cyclical expenditure commitments. At 31 March 2024, these are projected to total £13,926k, with £3,048k being the remaining balance of identified funding to meet exceptional inflationary pressures. This strategy includes no further release from earmarked reserves to fund ongoing service expenditure.
20. Savings proposals totalling £33,411k have been developed towards mitigating the emerging expenditure pressures as funding levels are projected to grow at a slower rate than demand for Council Services, with a residual £17,579k budget gap to be mitigated over the period from 2024/25 to 2028/29. As in previous years, savings proposals for the forthcoming financial year are specific in nature, with medium-term plans structured around wider strategic approaches to transformation of local services. Proposals have been developed within the themes of Service Transformation, Effective Procurement, Digital Strategy, Workforce, Managing Demand and Income Generation & Commercialisation and Zero Based Reviews, with an overview of specific measures set out within this report.
21. Following on from the Autumn Statement announcement in November 2023 and whilst the Local Authority settlement is still awaited, it is considered highly likely that Government Grants and Business Rates income will fail to match prevailing levels of inflation currently being experienced in the medium term and that demand levels for Adult and Children's Social Care provision have shown and will continue to show unrelenting growth. It has therefore proved necessary for the Council to continue the approach of proposing increases in Fees & Charges to keep pace with inflation and in part mitigate the shortfall in Government funding.
22. This draft budget outlines £346,869k of proposed capital expenditure – including substantial investment in local infrastructure, a new leisure centre and delivery of significant additional SEND capacity in the borough's schools – of which £74,076k is to be financed through borrowing. Taken together with historic capital spending, this investment will result in the Capital Financing Requirement peaking at £318,748k in 2025/26 and declining thereafter. Of this peak borrowing requirement, £271,057k is expected to necessitate external borrowing, with £47,691k being financed through General Fund reserves and working capital.
23. The following sections of this report and Appendix A provide further commentary and analysis to support the General Fund budget strategy, before returning to a summary of the Schools Budget position and Housing Revenue Account in turn.

## **Risk Management**

24. In developing a strategy to deliver services within a constrained resource envelope, it is necessary to reflect upon both risk and opportunity arising from the Council's current financial standing, with this assessment in essence representing an informed view of the organisation's financial resilience. The following paragraphs provide an update on the constituent elements of this assessment:
  - a. **General Fund Reserve-levels:** a key indicator of financial resilience, the Council is projected to retain £45.2m at 31 March 2023 between general and earmarked reserves at the time of budget setting in February 2023, with the final outturn for the year seeing this sum increase to £46.9m. Latest projections for the 2023/24 year would see this sum fall to £40.5m by 31 March 2024, which remains broadly in line with budget strategy assumptions as one-off or windfall gains are being deployed to meet additional



cost pressures arising from the ongoing high inflation environment while also reflecting that the Council has historic commitments against specific earmarked reserves. Of this sum £26.9m is projected to be held in unallocated General Balance, with £13.9m earmarked for specific purposes.

The Corporate Director of Finance is required to set out a recommended range for unallocated reserves, which was set between £22m and £41m for the 2023/24 financial year. Current reserve levels are therefore towards the lower end of the acceptable range for an authority such as Hillingdon, and as outlined in the Section 25 Statement in the Budget Strategy report presented to Cabinet in February 2023, this budget now proposes increasing reserves by £7.5m by 2028/29. The recommended range for General Balances is predicated on the Council being able to deliver balanced budgets and makes no provision for substantial deployment of reserves over the MTFF period.

While reserve-levels remain within the recommended range, it is notable that the Council's absolute levels of reserve are an outlier in London – being ranked 31 from 33 authorities at 31 March 2022 (the last date for which comparable data is available). This will impact how the Council develops its budget strategy over the coming years with a focus on building resilience through £7.5m budgeted contributions to reserves over the five year period of the MTFF

- b. **Dedicated Schools Grant Deficit:** the cumulative deficit arising from sustained underfunding of SEND provision by the Department for Education stood at £21.9m at 31 March 2023, equivalent to 47% of the Council's total General Fund Reserves. There is currently a time-limited statutory override in place until 31 March 2025 which ensures that this deficit does not impact upon general reserves, and the Council's General Fund budget strategy is predicated on the further continuation of this override. As the Council continues to invest significant funds and capacity to bring this ringfenced account into balance over the medium term, the DSG deficit will continue to represent an additional call on financial capacity.
- c. **Capital Financing Requirement:** this reflects the Council's underlying need to borrow and the element of historic investment that has not yet but will ultimately be funded from Council Tax receipts. At the time of the last budget setting in February 2023 this was projected to total £259.7m at 31 March 2023, with the final outturn position falling marginally to £257.6m as a result of slippage in planned capital spending. At 21.5% of the Council's £1,196m asset base, this does not represent an excessive level of borrowing for an authority such as Hillingdon and plans are in place to fully meet this obligation over the useful economic lives of the associated assets.

The Council retains no material interest in investment property or other commercial interests on its balance sheet, with assets held primarily for delivery of services to local residents. As a result, a material write-down of asset values is not considered a material risk for Hillingdon and economic conditions would not be in a position to require accelerated funding of the Capital Financing Requirement.

Shareholding in the Council's housing development company currently totals £4.9m, with facility for further lending to finance specific schemes on a case-by-case basis. Given the scale of projects delivered by the company and the Council's status as sole shareholder and lender, the risk of this operation adversely affecting the Council's broader financial resilience is limited.

25. On the basis of these core balance sheet measures, Hillingdon maintains significant capacity for capital investment with limited exposure to commercial risk, albeit with a lower level of reserves cover than other authorities which emphasises the requirements for a greater focus on reliable delivery of balanced budgets. While it is likely that almost all local authorities are facing a budgetary challenge of a similar nature to Hillingdon, it is notable some of those authorities may have higher debt and associated risk with the recent increases in interest rates. In this context the current MTFF strategy depends on the achievement of asset sales with circa £75 million assumed over the next five years and these providing the financing towards the Council's transformation programme and DSG Safety Valve agreement requirements.
26. Based on the Council's assessment of its financial resilience, the budget strategy presented in this report has taken a prudent approach to the review of inflation, with the Council's core inflation assumption being that CPI continues to track at circa 7% per annum for 2023/24 and 2024/25, before falling to 4% for 2025/26 before returning to the Bank of England target rate of 2% for the remainder of the five-year strategy. The approach assumes that much of the Council's core contracted expenditure ultimately presents for an increase of this magnitude, albeit with an expectation that the timing of uplifts will present on a staggered basis. On a similar approach, Social Care continues to generate a significant inflation requirement against an expenditure budget exceeding £110m. Energy and fuel inflation forecasts continue to track significantly above inflation, predominantly linked to the impact from the war in Ukraine with a further risk from the current Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.
27. Following ten years of Hillingdon freezing Council Tax before applying more modest increases in recent times, Hillingdon has positioned itself as a low tax authority, however, as the Government assume that Councils will raise Council Tax in line with the referendum threshold, the Council's core spending power is tracking behind where Government models would assess it to be. Indeed, it should be noted that as a result of the ten-year freeze, even after an increase in 2023/24, Council Tax levels in Hillingdon are amongst the lowest in London. This means that the robustness of estimates is critical as the Council needs to ensure that Service Operating Budgets are sufficient to fund services going forward without the reliance on reserves.
28. The Council continues to take a robust approach to the recommended Savings Programme, which is focussed on making improvements and efficiencies in service delivery rather than service reductions, with assessed proposals being included in the Council's budget strategy, and the majority of savings targets assigned to specific service departments, This allows the Council to have greater certainty in the delivery of the saving programme, albeit with an inherent level of risk due to continuing adverse economic conditions and the increasingly complex nature of the savings initiatives being undertaken.
29. The combination of this substantial savings programme and proposed uplifts in Fees & Charges are projected to secure £15.7m benefit in the 2024/25 financial year, indicating the scale of measures required to manage the increased savings requirement for the forthcoming financial year.
30. Based on the approach adopted to generating the Council's budget strategy, the procedures it follows, and the assumptions included in this report, the budget strategy is deemed to be based on sound forecasting and realistic assumptions that enable the Cabinet to present this position to the public, local businesses and Council members for consideration.

31. As part of the Cabinet's final budget proposals to Council presented in February 2024, the Corporate Director of Finance will provide assurances around robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves as part of the statutory framework for local authority budget setting. These assurances will be framed with reference to principles and standards included within CIPFA's Financial Management Code.

### **Budget Proposals for the Children, Families and Education Select Committee**

32. Service expenditure will grow due to inflationary pressures, demand-led growth and other corporate items including capital financing costs. The below table sets out the impact of these expenditure movements across the Cabinet Portfolios within the remit of this Select Committee for 2024/25.

**Table 4: Service Expenditure Budget Proposals**

	2023/24	Inflation	Demand-led Growth	Corporate Items	Savings Proposals	2024/25
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Children, Families & Education	58,231	3,721	(400)	36	(1,710)	59,878
Services within the remit of other committees	205,047	12,938	10,854	6,037	(14,042)	220,834
<b>Total Service Expenditure</b>	<b>263,278</b>	<b>16,659</b>	<b>10,454</b>	<b>6,073</b>	<b>(15,752)</b>	<b>280,712</b>

33. Inflation: Cost pressures of £3,721k are projected against 2023/24 expenditure going into 2024/25, with material uplifts in relation to workforce budgets, care placements, contracted expenditure and energy costs. In line with wider MTFE modelling, inflation projections are predicated on CPI being 7% during 2023, 3% in 2024 and 2% from 2025 onwards, with a forecast one-year time lag on these indices impacting on Council expenditure. For a second successive year, the exceptional inflationary environment within the national, and global, economy is the largest driving force behind the Council's saving requirement in the short-term, with 2023/24 pay award being greater than the Council's assumptions at the time of setting the 2023/24 budget, leading to the 2024/25 budget proposals including an element of funding for the 2023/24 pay award above the budgeted level which is being funded from Earmarked Reserves in-year.
34. Demand-Led Growth: items within the remit of this Select Committee account for a £400k reduction of the £23,950k total increase across the Council over the life of the budget strategy to 2028/29, with a breakdown of these items presented below.
35. The demand for Looked After Children services continues to grow, however, in 2024/25 an overall reduction in spend of £3k is presented due to the normal 2% increase in demand being offset by a more appropriate mix of service delivery within this area. During the pandemic, court delays led to more children being supported in residential care, with the service now able to align service provision with need more effectively which also leads to reduced spend. From 2025/26 onwards, demand is forecast to grow by 2% per annum and accounts for the increase in the service requirement of £1,610k over the remaining four years.

36. Numbers of Children with Disabilities are expected to grow in line with historic trends, adding a further £200k to the cost of this service over the life of the budget strategy. As a result of increasing numbers of children being supported by an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), demand for SEND Transport is expected to grow by £4,230k by 2028/29 to finance transport to education settings within and outside the borough.
37. Demand pressures associated with supporting Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), some of which is being driven by global crises, are intended to be met through specific grant. Within this area, a reduction in the service expenditure requirement of £433k is presented, driven by increased UASC funding increasing over 2023/24. However, it should be noted, that grant funding remains well below that required to meet the financial burden on the Local Authority and the net budget for this service area remains at £1,341k with government funding continuing to lag behind expenditure and the Council continuing its lobbying efforts in this area.
38. Corporate Items: budget movements within the remit of this Select Committee account for £36k of the £14,073k increase across the Council over the life of the budget strategy to 2028/29, with a breakdown of these items presented below.
39. The planned switch of funding from capital to revenue for the Council's embedded transformation resources contribute £36k for services within the remit of this committee of the total £989k added to service expenditure between 2024/25 and 2025/26.
40. Corporate risks are monitored via the Council's monthly monitoring process, with outputs from this feeding into the medium-term budget strategy. This includes reviewing the impact of capital financing assumptions, both in terms of the Council's Capital Programme and cashflow management as well as the financial markets and the impact on the cost of borrowing and investment income due to interest rate changes both in the short and medium terms. An element of cover is included in the Council's Balances & Reserve Policy, with the Council also well placed manage cashflow requirements on a proactive basis through the regular review of the financial markets.

### **Savings Proposals**

41. As mentioned above, £15,752k of savings proposals have been incorporated into the draft budget for 2024/25, with £1,710k falling within the remit of this Select Committee. Details of the savings programme propels within the remit of this Select Committee are discussed below.
42. Children, Families and Education: Demand management and innovation to reduce costs are the key focus within Children's Services. Hillingdon is facing a shortage of foster carers, so the Council is seeking to improve and modernise its fostering offer by addressing barriers to fostering and adopting a customer service approach to both recruit and retain foster carers. Lack of fostering households can result in children and young people being accommodated in inappropriate high-cost residential settings and prevent children returning from residential settings to stable home environments. Savings of £462k are anticipated in 2024/25 as a result of this work, with a further £1,300k targeted in 2025/26.
43. Alongside improving and modernising the Council's fostering offer, the Council is committed to reducing the costs of Childrens Placements through the increasing the number of in-borough residential placements, ensuring children are close to their original Hillingdon community when safe to do so, and have uninterrupted access to local education and

professional support networks delivering better outcomes for the child. Grant funding has been secured and work is underway to develop two sites creating additional capacity for 14 beds within the borough, reducing the reliance on high cost out of borough placements. Savings of £950k will be delivered across the MTFF through the creation of additional in-house registered care beds.

## Capital Proposals

44. Capital investment of £217,772k over the period 2024/25 to 2028/29 has been incorporated into the wider General Fund budget strategy set out within this report, with £88,800k investment in major projects, primarily delivering new or expanded infrastructure, and £128,972k investment in recurrent programme of works, ensuring that existing infrastructure is maintained and improved. An overview of these investment plans including changes from the programme approved by Council in February 2023 is detailed below, with further detail available in Appendix A8 that accompanied the Consultation Budget Report presented at December Cabinet.

**Table 5: General Fund Capital Programme by Cabinet Portfolio**

	Major Projects £'000	Programme of Works £'000	Total £'000
<b>Total Capital Programme</b>	<b>88,800</b>	<b>128,972</b>	<b>217,772</b>
<u>Of which, Service Expenditure in the remit of this committee:</u>			
Children, Families & Education	1,734	2,725	4,459
Services within the remit of other committees	87,066	126,247	213,313
<b>Total</b>	<b>88,800</b>	<b>128,972</b>	<b>217,772</b>

45. Further to the overview presented above, the below section sets out the Capital Proposals within the remit of this Select Committee.
46. **Children, Families and Education** – within Major Projects a total of £1,734k based on current confirmed grant funding is included for increasing special educational needs places at several identified school sites, supporting the DSG recovery plan, with this being the remaining investment on a much larger project that is due to conclude in 2024/25. There is also £2,725k under Programmes of Works for providing new uniformed scout/guide groups facilities (£800k) and devolved capital to schools.

## SCHOOLS BUDGET

### In-Year monitoring position and background

47. At month 7, the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Budget is reporting an in-year overspend of £12,820k against the original budgeted position. The cumulative DSG deficit is therefore forecast to be £26,487k at 31 March 2024 after accounting for the forecast £2,500k of Safety Valve funding and £8,000k Local Authority amortisation.
48. While the DSG is expected to remain in deficit in the short-term the comprehensive range of measures included in Hillingdon's latest DSG Safety Valve management plan submission to the DfE are anticipated to bring the DSG into balance and reduce the cumulative deficit over the medium-term.

49. The submission of a revised DSG management plan reflects the significant change in national economic conditions over the last eighteen months. Inflation has driven up costs significantly beyond the prevailing rates at the time of finalising the original agreement, which has particularly impacted Hillingdon in relation to school places and the high level exposure to the independent sector which has been used to meet the growth in this statutory service. Whilst the development of in borough school places is being progressed as a priority the timescale required to achieve these together with cost pressures and volatility in the construction sector, leaves the borough exposed to the inflation driven pricing and the market forces of independent schools ahead of these additional places being delivered.

### **Funding Outlook**

50. The core funding assumptions for the 2024/25 DSG budget have been informed by the provisional funding announcements which indicated a 1.6% increase in funding for the Schools Block and a 4.6% increase in funding for the High Needs Block. In line with the process introduced in 2020/21 the historical funding element for the Central School services will decrease by a further 20% in 2024/25 resulting in a net decrease of 2% in Central Schools funding. The final funding settlements for the DSG are usually published in December alongside the wider local government settlement details and the detailed impact set out in the discrete Schools Budget report.

### **Timetable**

51. In relation to the Schools Block funding the Council is required to transition towards the national funding formula and in 2024/25 will need to be within 10% of this measure, with the Council presenting an update to Schools Forum to agree the Council's approach in January following the Government funding announcement in December, with the formal Schools Budget being set in March 2024.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET: MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL FOECAST 2024/25 - 2028/29, presented to 14 December 2023 Cabinet Meeting

## UPADTED SCOPING REPORT FOR REVIEW ‘PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM’

<b>Committee name</b>	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
<b>Officer reporting</b>	Ryan Dell, Democratic Services Officer
<b>Papers with report</b>	Updated Scoping Report for Review
<b>Ward</b>	All

### HEADLINES

At its meeting on 09 January 2024, it was confirmed that the next review of the Children, Families and Education Select Committee focus on the topic of persistent absenteeism. Officers have therefore produced an updated scoping report on the topic, for the Committee’s consideration.

It is envisaged that there will be four witness sessions, with a suggested schedule set out in the attached scoping report and on the Committee’s Multi-Year Work Programme.

### RECOMMENDATION:

**That the Committee comment on and consider the scoping report to initiate the review.**

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The updated scoping report for the review is attached.

### Implications on related Council policies

A role of the Select Committees is to make recommendations on service changes and improvements to the Cabinet, who are responsible for the Council’s policy and direction.

### How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

Select Committees directly engage residents in shaping policy and recommendations from the Committees are presented to Cabinet to consider, and ultimately seek to improve the way the Council provides services to residents.

### Financial Implications

It is important that the Committee considers cost effective proposals that benefit resident taxpayers in relation to this review, which would ultimately be determined by Cabinet as part of the Council’s broader budget planning process.

### Legal Implications

None at this stage.

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.

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## Children, Families and Education Select Committee

### Review Scoping Report - 2024

#### **Persistent Absenteeism: Statutory School Age Children in Hillingdon**

##### **1. OBJECTIVES**

###### **Aim of review**

Following its meeting on 15 November 2023, the Select Committee agreed as its major review to consider the issue of attendance/ persistent absence of statutory school age children in Hillingdon, including how this has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This document serves as an introduction to the topic of persistent absenteeism and sets out in general terms the context within local government, the objectives, the challenges and offers a framework for any subsequent review.

It is intended that the review will support the work of the Attendance Support service in helping to shape its ways of working, identifying areas of weakness and how overall engagement with key stakeholders can be improved.

###### **Terms of Reference**

The following Terms of Reference are suggested for the review, subject to any changes agreed by the Committee:

1. To identify the prevalence and patterns of persistent absenteeism in statutory school age children in Hillingdon, including a reference to primary planning areas
2. To explore the root causes and contributing factors of persistent absenteeism in statutory school age children in Hillingdon
3. To consider the impact of persistent absenteeism on academic outcomes on statutory school age children in Hillingdon

4. To understand and explore the nature of partnership working in relation to persistent absenteeism in statutory school age children in Hillingdon, including parents/ carers, young people, teachers, officers and other stakeholders
5. To review the effectiveness of existing interventions and policies in place for children and families struggling with absenteeism in Hillingdon
6. To explore the measures in place for child protection and safeguarding in relation to attendance
7. To review how other Local Authorities, including statistical neighbours, are tackling persistent absenteeism
8. Subject to the Committee's findings, to make any conclusions, propose actions, service and policy recommendations to the decision-making Cabinet

## **2. BACKGROUND**

### **Attendance Support team**

The Attendance Support team currently consists of eight officers.

### **Context and key information**

Government statistics have shown that COVID-19 and its aftermath has had a damaging effect on school attendance, which has lasted longer than originally anticipated.

The rate of absence in schools in England has increased significantly since the pandemic. The most recent full-year statistics (which cover the 2021/22 academic year) showed an overall absence rate of 7.6%, up from around 4–5% pre-pandemic. Within this, 5.5% of missed sessions were authorised absences and 2.1% were unauthorised. Authorised illness was the main driver, at 4.4%, (whilst unauthorised holiday absences sat at 0.4%). 22.5% of pupils were persistently absent, which is around double the pre-pandemic rate, and 1.7% of all pupils were severely absent compared to less than 1% pre-pandemic.

Prior to the impact of the pandemic, absence and persistent absence had been gradually declining since 2010, but there is no sign of a return to this trajectory. Being in school is important to every child's achievement, wellbeing, and wider development. Evidence shows that the pupils with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE and A-Level results. Research found that pupils who performed better both at the end of primary and secondary school missed fewer days than those who didn't perform as well.

In 2019, primary school children in Key Stage 2 who didn't achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths missed on average four more days per school year than those whose performance exceeded the expected standard. Similarly, in the same year, secondary school pupils who didn't achieve grade 9 to 4 in English and maths missed on average 10 or more days over the key stage than those who achieved grade 9 to 5 in both English and maths.

Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure their child gets a full time-education. Usually, that means going into school from the age of 5 to 16. There are only a small number of circumstances where missing a school day is permitted. A child must attend every day that their school is open, unless:

- They are too ill to attend.
- Permission has been given by the school in advance for the child to be absent on a specific day due to exceptional circumstances.
- A child cannot go to school on a specific day because they are observing a religious event.

### Relevant Legislation

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Children Act 1989](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)

### External issues and risks

Persistent absenteeism can be impacted by a range of factors and challenges, including:

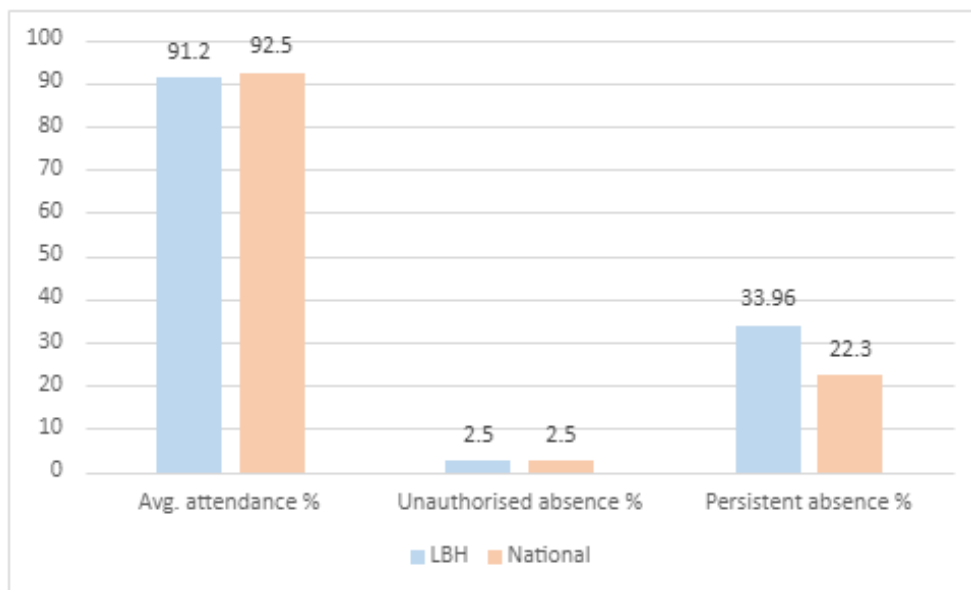
- **Health Issues:**
  - **Chronic Illness:** Children with long-term health conditions may face difficulties attending school regularly.
  - **Mental Health:** Mental health issues, including anxiety and depression, can contribute to school avoidance.
- **Socioeconomic Factors:**
  - **Poverty:** Families facing financial challenges may struggle to provide basic necessities, impacting a child's ability to attend school consistently.
  - **Housing Instability:** Frequent relocations and unstable housing situations can disrupt a child's education.
- **Family Dynamics:**
  - **Parental Involvement:** Lack of parental engagement or interest in a child's education can contribute to absenteeism.
  - **Family Issues:** Family conflicts, such as divorce or domestic violence, can impact a child's well-being and school attendance.
- **School Environment:**
  - **Bullying:** Instances of bullying or harassment at school may lead to a child avoiding attendance.
  - **School Culture:** Unsupportive or unwelcoming school environments can negatively affect student engagement.
- **Academic Challenges:**
  - **Learning Disabilities:** Undiagnosed or unaddressed learning difficulties can lead to frustration and avoidance of school.

- **Lack of Relevance:** Students may disengage if they find the curriculum irrelevant or not challenging enough.
- **Transportation Issues:**
  - **Lack of Transportation:** Limited access to reliable transportation can hinder regular school attendance.
- **Peer Influence:**
  - **Peer Pressure:** Negative peer influence or the desire to fit in may contribute to absenteeism.
- **Communication Barriers:**
  - **Language:** Language barriers, particularly in families with limited English proficiency, can hinder communication between parents and schools.

## Current data, best practice and research

### Attendance in Hillingdon

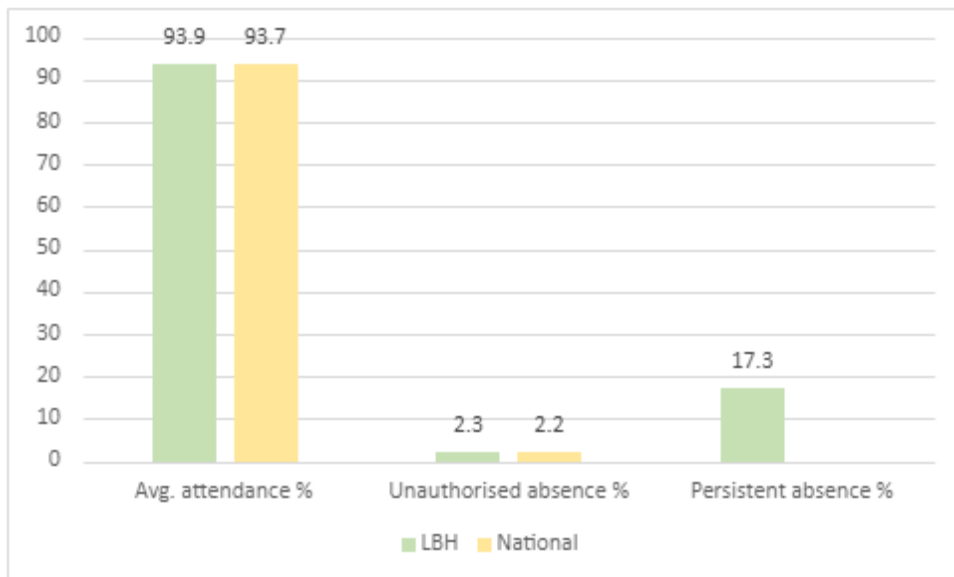
The graph below shows Hillingdon's Statutory School Age attendance rates during the last academic year (22/23) compared to those nationally. Data for statistical neighbours was not available to at the time of writing (Nov 2023).



Data: Department for Education Aug 23

The data shows that whilst Hillingdon's overall attendance and rate of unauthorised absence is broadly in line with figures recorded nationally, our rate of persistent absence is higher. A child who only attends school for 90% or less of the time is classed as a persistent absentee.

As we are at the start of the new academic year, there is limited data on attendance available. However, we are able to compare Hillingdon's rates of attendance and unauthorised absence with national figures.



Data: Department for Education 9 Oct 23

The data shows Hillingdon's overall attendance and rate of unauthorised absence remains broadly in line with figures recorded nationally. Whilst we are unable yet to compare our rate of persistent absenteeism, the figure above demonstrates an improvement on that recorded last year which is positive.

Further data and research will be identified as the review progresses.

### Plan moving forward

In May 2022, the DfE published new guidance for attendance in schools 'Working together to improve school attendance' which came into effect from September 2022. Broadly speaking, it highlighted:

- Improving attendance is everyone's business. Attendance is never 'solved' and is part of a continuous process.
- The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent or carer to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.
- Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly.

Moving forward, the expectations of schools and local authorities have changed considerably. Under the new guidance, all schools are now expected to:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.

- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

Local authorities are now expected to:

- Provide all schools with a named contact in the Attendance Support Team. This includes independent and specialist settings.
- Create networking opportunities to share effective practice
- Hold termly targeted support meetings with all schools
- Be part of multi-agency efforts to improve attendance borough-wide with schools and other partner agencies
- Provide formal support to schools, including parenting contracts and education supervision orders
- Initiate legal action including penalty notices, parenting orders and prosecution.

In Hillingdon, we have already begun much of this work, and we have extensive plans for the academic year ahead. To date, we have:

- Rebranded our Participation service to Attendance Support
- Developed a new practice model to meet the revised guidelines from the DfE for allocated officers to use when conducting their termly meetings with schools. These meetings will focus on overall attendance and persistent and severe absence, as well having a greater emphasis on the attendance of vulnerable cohorts and those children placed on part-time timetables or in alternative provisions
- Published revised guidance on attendance for all schools
- Published revised guidance on the use of part-time timetables
- Published revised guidance on alternative provision
- Successfully delivered a series of webinars and provided training and resources to all schools in the borough to support with the implementation of the Working Together to Improve Attendance guidance for this academic year
- Created a more robust system to track and process unauthorised exceptional leave
- Engaged with the parents/carers of pupils that had one day of absence in the first week of term in the last academic year or pupils where they have been previously recorded as persistent or severely absent to encourage parents to prepare them for the start of the new term
- Created and shared an attendance self-evaluation form for schools to utilise
- Taken part in refresher training with legal colleagues in the use of Education Supervision Orders.

Over the coming year we have plans to:

- Publish a revised borough-wide protocol for the use of penalty notices
- Devise a three-year strategy for improving school attendance which utilises the support of statutory partners
- Work more closely with colleagues in the Virtual School to promote the importance of attendance of all children with a social worker

- Improve communication and advice with schools via virtual drop-in clinics for schools to attend to discuss any concerns regarding attendance. These clinics will be held fortnightly
- Invest in our Attendance Support service by providing increased training opportunities in key issues affecting attendance, such as Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA), working with children who have suffered complex trauma and working with families who have had negative experiences of education
- Develop attendance hubs in parts of the borough or with clusters of schools which may be struggling with particular aspects of attendance and to promote the sharing of good practice.

### **Executive Responsibilities**

The Cabinet Member responsible is Councillor Susan O'Brien, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education.

## **3. EVIDENCE & ENQUIRY**

### **Lines of Enquiry**

Lines of enquiry can be expanded as the review progresses or included in relevant witness session reports. However, lines of enquiry may include:

- Establishing the historical background of persistent absenteeism in statutory school age children in Hillingdon.
- A focus on children and young people and how they have found the service in practice.
- Exploring what support functions are in place and whether these can be improved.
- The nature of partnership working and how it is combined in practice.

### **Potential witnesses**

Witnesses will be identified by the Committee in consultation with relevant officers.

### **Surveys, site-visits or other fact-finding events**

Such opportunities will be identified as the review progresses. A possible survey of suppliers will be considered to provide useful feedback and evidence for the Committee.

### **Future information that may be required**

Further information may be identified as the review progresses.

## **4. REVIEW PLANNING & TIMETABLE**

Proposed timeframe and milestones for the review:

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Purpose/ theme</b>	<b>Witnesses/ officers attending</b>
09 January 2024	Confirm topic selection	To confirm the subject of the review	Committee; Democratic Services; Officers
01 February 2024	Agree updated Scoping Report	Information and analysis	Committee; Democratic Services
14 March 2024	Witness Session 1	Setting the scene/ The voice of the authority	Officers
18 April 2024	Witness Session 2	The voice of providers	Schools (e.g. teachers/ attendance officers)
<b>Private Committee witness session – TBC</b>	Witness Session 3	The voice of young people	Young people/ parents/ carers
18 June 2024	Witness Session 4	The voice of other authorities	Officers from other Local Authorities
17 July 2024	De-brief and emerging findings	To discuss key findings and identify potential recommendations	Committee; Democratic Services
18 September 2024	Approval of draft final report	Proposals – agree recommendations and final draft report to Cabinet	Committee; Democratic Services
07 November 2024	Target Cabinet reporting	Final report to Cabinet for formal approval	Cabinet

### **Resource requirements**

Internal only at this stage. Any recommendations developed may have financial implications and these will be assessed at that stage.

### **Equalities impact**

None at this stage, pending any findings by the Committee.

### **Background Papers/ further reading**

- Briefing Paper: Statutory School Age Attendance in Hillingdon
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>
- [Persistent absence for unauthorised other reasons: who is at risk? - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/persistent-absence-for-unauthorised-other-reasons-who-is-at-risk)



- [Persistent absence and support for disadvantaged pupils - Education Committee \(parliament.uk\)](https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/all-panels/e/education-committee/)
- [Securing good attendance and tackling persistent absence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/securing-good-attendance-and-tackling-persistent-absence)

## **Appendices**

App A – TBC

App B – TBC

App C – TBC

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## CABINET FORWARD PLAN

<b>Committee name</b>	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
<b>Officer reporting</b>	Ryan Dell, Democratic Services
<b>Papers with report</b>	Appendix A – Latest Forward Plan
<b>Ward</b>	As shown on the Forward Plan

### HEADLINES

To monitor the Cabinet’s latest Forward Plan which sets out key decisions and other decisions to be taken by the Cabinet collectively and Cabinet Members individually over the coming year. The report sets out the actions available to the Committee.

### RECOMMENDATION

**That the Children, Families and Education Select Committee notes the Cabinet Forward Plan.**

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Cabinet Forward Plan is published monthly, usually around the first or second week of each month. It is a rolling document giving the required public notice of future key decisions to be taken. Should a later edition of the Forward Plan be published after this agenda has been circulated, Democratic Services will update the Committee on any new items or changes at the meeting.

As part of its Terms of Reference, each Select Committee should consider the Forward Plan and, if it deems necessary, comment as appropriate to the decision-maker on the items listed which relate to services within its remit. For reference, the Forward Plan helpfully details which Select Committee’s remit covers the relevant future decision item listed.

The Select Committee’s monitoring role of the Forward Plan can be undertaken in a variety of ways, including both pre-decision and post-decision scrutiny of the items listed. The provision of advance information on future items listed (potentially also draft reports) to the Committee in advance will often depend upon a variety of factors including timing or feasibility, and ultimately any such request would rest with the relevant Cabinet Member to decide. However, the 2019 Protocol on Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet Relations (part of the Hillingdon Constitution) does provide guidance to Cabinet Members to:

- Actively support the provision of relevant Council information and other requests from the Committee as part of their work programme;
- Where feasible, provide opportunities for committees to provide their input on forthcoming executive reports as set out in the Forward Plan to enable wider pre-decision scrutiny (in addition to those statutorily required to come before committees, *i.e. policy framework documents – see para. below*).

As mentioned above, there is both a constitutional and statutory requirement for Select Committees to provide comments on the Cabinet’s draft budget and policy framework proposals after publication. These are automatically scheduled in advance to multi-year work programmes.

Therefore, in general, the Committee may consider the following actions on specific items listed on the Forward Plan:

	<b>Committee action</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>How</b>
1	<b>To provide specific comments to be included in a future Cabinet or Cabinet Member report on matters within its remit.</b>	<p>As part of its pre-decision scrutiny role, this would be where the Committee wishes to provide its influence and views on a particular matter within the formal report to the Cabinet or Cabinet Member before the decision is made.</p> <p>This would usually be where the Committee has previously considered a draft report or the topic in detail, or where it considers it has sufficient information already to provide relevant comments to the decision-maker.</p>	<p>These would go within the standard section in every Cabinet or Cabinet Member report called "Select Committee comments".</p> <p>The Cabinet or Cabinet Member would then consider these as part of any decision they make.</p>
2	<b>To request further information on future reports listed under its remit.</b>	<p>As part of its pre-decision scrutiny role, this would be where the Committee wishes to discover more about a matter within its remit that is listed on the Forward Plan.</p> <p>Whilst such advance information can be requested from officers, the Committee should note that information may or may not be available in advance due to various factors, including timescales or the status of the drafting of the report itself and the formulation of final recommendation(s). Ultimately, the provision of any information in advance would be a matter for the Cabinet Member to decide.</p>	<p>This would be considered at a subsequent Select Committee meeting. Alternatively, information could be circulated outside the meeting if reporting timescales require this.</p> <p>Upon the provision of any information, the Select Committee may then decide to provide specific comments (as per 1 above).</p>
3	<b>To request the Cabinet Member considers providing a draft of the report, if feasible, for the Select Committee to consider prior to it being considered formally for decision.</b>	<p>As part of its pre-decision scrutiny role, this would be where the Committee wishes to provide an early steer or help shape a future report to Cabinet, e.g., on a policy matter.</p> <p>Whilst not the default position, Select Committees do occasionally receive draft versions of Cabinet reports prior to their formal consideration. The provision of such draft reports in advance may depend upon different factors, e.g., the timings required for that decision. Ultimately any request to see a draft report early would need the approval of the relevant Cabinet Member.</p>	<p>Democratic Services would contact the relevant Cabinet Member and Officer upon any such request.</p> <p>If agreed, the draft report would be considered at a subsequent Select Committee meeting to provide views and feedback to officers before they finalise it for the Cabinet or Cabinet Member. An opportunity to provide specific comments (as per 1 above) is also possible.</p>
4	<b>To identify a forthcoming report that may merit a post-decision review at a later Select Committee meeting.</b>	<p>As part of its post-decision scrutiny and broader reviewing role, this would be where the Select Committee may wish to monitor the implementation of a certain Cabinet or Cabinet Member decision listed/taken at a later stage, i.e., to review its effectiveness after a period of 6 months.</p> <p>The Committee should note that this is different to the use of the post-decision scrutiny 'call-in' power which seeks to ask the Cabinet or Cabinet Member to formally re-consider a decision up to 5 working days after the decision notice has been issued. This is undertaken via the new Scrutiny Call-in App members of the relevant Select Committee.</p>	<p>The Committee would add the matter to its multi-year work programme after a suitable time has elapsed upon the decision expected to be made by the Cabinet or Cabinet Member.</p> <p>Relevant service areas may be best to advise on the most appropriate time to review the matter once the decision is made.</p>

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## BACKGROUND PAPERS

- [Protocol on Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet relations adopted by Council 12 September 2019](#)
- [Scrutiny Call-in App](#)

**Scheduled  
Upcoming  
Decisions**

Ref

Further details

Ward(s)

Final  
decision by  
Full Council

Cabinet  
Member(s)  
Responsible

Relevant  
Select  
Committee

Directorate /  
Lead Officer

Consultation related  
to the decision

**NEW  
ITEM**

Public or  
Private  
(with  
reason)

SI = Standard Item each month/regularly Council Directorates: AS = Adult Services & Health P = Place C = Central Services R = Resources CS= Children's Services

**Cabinet meeting - Thursday 15 February 2024 (report deadline 29 January)**

110a	<b>The Council's Budget - Medium Term Financial Forecast 2024/25 - 2028/29 (BUDGET FRAMEWORK)</b>	Following consultation, this report will set out the Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF), which includes the draft General Fund reserve budget and capital programme for 2024/25 for consultation, along with indicative projections for the following four years. This will also include the HRA rents for consideration.	All	Proposed Full Council adoption - 22 February 2024	Cllr Ian Edwards - Leader of the Council / Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance	All	R - Andy Evans	Public consultation through the Select Committee process and statutory consultation with businesses & ratepayers		Public
141b	<b>Changes to school admissions arrangements</b>	Continuous review of school places and Published Admissions Numbers ensures schools and the Council can best meet the needs of all pupils across the Borough, and make effective use of resources in schools and between them. Following consultation on proposals to reduce Published Admission Numbers (PAN) in some schools, Cabinet will receive the outcome of the consultation and make the necessary decisions.	All		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education	Children, Families & Education	CS - Laura Baldry / Hayley Murphy / Jenny Chalmers			Public
Page 41	<b>Public Preview of matters to be considered in private</b>	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	CS - Democratic Services			Public
SI	<b>Reports from Select Committees</b>	Reports, findings and recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, when referred from the appropriate Committee.	All		All	TBC	CS - Democratic Services	TBC		Public

**Cabinet Member Decisions expected - February 2024**

188	<b>Staying Close Support for Care Experienced Young People</b>	Staying close is a programme of support for 18+ year old Care Experienced Young People. Staying close aims to support the independent living needs of this cohort of young people including their accommodation, independent living skills, health and wellbeing, education and employment and managing relationships. Cabinet Member approval will be sought for a contract award for the use of an independent living provider to deliver the support element of this programme; which is fully funded by Department for Education grant funding until 31 March 2025.	N/A		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education / Cllr Ian Edwards - Leader	Children, Families & Education	CS - Emma Kavanagh			Private (3)
SI	<b>Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	CS - Democratic Services	Various		Public

# Scheduled Upcoming Decisions

Ref

Further details

Ward(s)

				Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Relevant Select Committee	Directorate / Lead Officer	Consultation related to the decision	NEW ITEM	Public or Private (with reason)
SI = Standard Item each month/regularly Council Directorates: AS = Adult Services & Health P = Place C = Central Services R = Resources CS= Children's Services										
<b>Cabinet meeting - Thursday 21 March 2024 (report deadline 4 March)</b>										
SI	<b>Public Preview of matters to be considered in private</b>	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	CS - Democratic Services			Public
SI	<b>Reports from Select Committees</b>	Reports, findings and recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, when referred from the appropriate Committee.	All		All	TBC	CS - Democratic Services	TBC		Public
<b>Cabinet Member Decisions expected - March 2024</b>										
SI	<b>Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	CS - Democratic Services	Various		Public
<b>Cabinet meeting - Thursday 18 April 2024 (report deadline 1 April)</b>										
203	<b>Hillingdon Adoption Services</b>	Cabinet will consider a report regarding an extension of the services provided by the Regional Adoption Agency.	N/A		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education	Children, Families & Education	CS / P - Poppy Reddy / Sally Offin		NEW ITEM	Private (3)
137	<b>School Organisation Plan</b>	The School Organisation Plan, sets out how the London Borough of Hillingdon in accordance with its statutory duty, seeks to ensure there are sufficient primary, secondary and special school places to meet demand. Cabinet will be requested to approve it.	All		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education	Children, Families & Education	CS - Nav Minas / Abi Preston	Children, Families and Education Select Committee in March & Educational Stakeholders / Schools		Public
046	<b>Standards and quality of education in Hillingdon during 2022/23</b>	The Annual Report to Cabinet regarding children and young people's educational performance across Hillingdon schools.	All		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education	Children, Families & Education	CS - Abi Preston	Select Committee		Public
SI	<b>Public Preview of matters to be considered in private</b>	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	C - Democratic Services			Public
SI	<b>Reports from Select Committees</b>	Reports, findings and recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, when referred from the appropriate Committee.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public

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Ref	Scheduled Upcoming Decisions	Further details	Ward(s)	Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Relevant Select Committee	Directorate / Lead Officer	Consultation related to the decision	NEW ITEM	Public or Private (with reason)
SI = Standard Item each month/regularly Council Directorates: AS = Adult Services & Health P = Place C = Central Services R = Resources CS= Children's Services										
<b>Cabinet Member Decisions expected - April 2024</b>										
SI	Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member	Cabinet Members make a number of decisions each month on standard items - details of these standard items are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public
<b>Cabinet meeting - Thursday 23 May 2024 (report deadline 3 May)</b>										
SI	Public Preview of matters to be considered in private	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	C - Democratic Services			Public
<b>Cabinet Member Decisions expected - May 2024</b>										
SI	Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member	Cabinet Members make a number of decisions each month on standard items - details of these standard items are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public
<b>Cabinet meeting - 27 June 2024 (provisional)</b>										
SI	Public Preview of matters to be considered in private	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	C - Democratic Services			Public
<b>Cabinet Member Decisions expected - June 2024</b>										
SI	Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All		C - Democratic Services	Various		Public
<b>Cabinet meeting - Thursday 25 July 2024 (provisional)</b>										
SI	Public Preview of matters to be considered in private	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	C - Democratic Services			Public
SI	Reports from Select Committees	Reports, findings and recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, when referred from the appropriate Committee.	All		All	All	C - Democratic Services	TBC		Public
<b>Cabinet Member Decisions expected - July 2024</b>										
SI	Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All		C - Democratic Services	Various		Public

Ref	Scheduled Upcoming Decisions	Further details	Ward(s)	Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Relevant Select Committee	Directorate / Lead Officer	Consultation related to the decision	NEW ITEM	Public or Private (with reason)
SI = Standard Item each month/regularly Council Directorates: AS = Adult Services & Health P = Place C = Central Services R = Resources CS= Children's Services										
<b>AUGUST 2024 - NO CABINET MEETING</b>										
SI	<b>Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public
<b>Cabinet meeting - Thursday 12 September 2024 (provisional)</b>										
SI	<b>Public Preview of matters to be considered in private</b>	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	C - Democratic Services			Public
SI	<b>Reports from Select Committees</b>	Reports, findings and recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, when referred from the appropriate Committee.	All		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	TBC		Public
<b>Cabinet Member Decisions expected - September 2024</b>										
SI	<b>Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public
<b>Cabinet meeting - Thursday 10 October 2024 (provisional)</b>										
SI Page 44	<b>The Annual Report Of Adult and Child Safeguarding Arrangements</b>	This report provides the Cabinet with a summary of the activity undertaken by the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board and the Safeguarding Adults Board to address the identified local priorities. The Cabinet will consider this report and approve the activity and the local priorities for the two boards.	All		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education / Cllr Jane Palmer - Health & Social Care	Health & Social Care / Children, Families & Education	CS / AS - Alex Coman / Sandra Taylor	Select Committees		Public
SI	<b>Public Preview of matters to be considered in private</b>	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	C - Democratic Services			Public
<b>Cabinet Member Decisions expected - October 2024</b>										
SI	<b>Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public
<b>Cabinet meeting - Thursday 7 November 2024 (provisional)</b>										
SI	<b>Public Preview of matters to be considered in private</b>	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	C - Democratic Services			Public
SI	<b>Reports from Select Committees</b>	Reports, findings and recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, when referred from the appropriate Committee.	All		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	TBC		Public



# Scheduled Upcoming Decisions

Ref

Further details

Ward(s)

Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Relevant Select Committee	Directorate / Lead Officer	Consultation related to the decision	NEW ITEM	Public or Private (with reason)
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SI = Standard Item each month/regularly Council Directorates: AS = Adult Services & Health P = Place C = Central Services R = Resources CS= Children's Services

## Cabinet Member Decisions expected - November 2024

SI	<b>Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public
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## CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS: Standard Items (SI) that may be considered each month

SI	<b>Urgent Cabinet-level decisions &amp; interim decision-making (including emergency decisions)</b>	The Leader of the Council has the necessary authority to make decisions that would otherwise be reserved to the Cabinet, in the absence of a Cabinet meeting or in urgent circumstances. Any such decisions will be published in the usual way and reported to a subsequent Cabinet meeting for ratification. The Leader may also take emergency decisions without notice, in particular in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, which will be ratified at a later Cabinet meeting.	Various		Cllr Ian Edwards - Leader of the Council	TBC	C - Democratic Services	TBC		Public / Private
SI	<b>School Governing Bodies, Instruments of Government and Governors / Authorising Academy Appointments</b>	To approve appointments, nominate appointments and make reappointments of local authority governors and to approve any changes to school governing body constitutions. To also authorise any Member to be a Governor or Director of an Academy.	N/A		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education	Children, Families & Education	CS - Julie Kelly / CS - Democratic Services			Public
SI	<b>Release of Capital Funds</b>	The release of all capital monies requires formal Member approval, unless otherwise determined either by the Cabinet or the Leader. Batches of monthly reports (as well as occasional individual reports) to determine the release of capital for any schemes already agreed in the capital budget and previously approved by Cabinet or Cabinet Members	TBC		Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance (in conjunction with relevant Cabinet Member)	All - TBC by decision made	various	Corporate Finance		Public but some Private (1,2,3)
SI	<b>Petitions about matters under the control of the Cabinet</b>	Cabinet Members will consider a number of petitions received by local residents and organisations and decide on future action. These will be arranged as Petition Hearings.	TBC		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services			Public
SI	<b>To approve compensation payments</b>	To approve compensation payments in relation to any complaint to the Council in excess of £1000.	n/a		All	TBC	R - Iain Watters			Private (1,2,3)

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# Scheduled Upcoming Decisions

Ref

Further details

Ward(s)

Final  
decision by  
Full Council

Cabinet  
Member(s)  
Responsible

Relevant  
Select  
Committee

Directorate /  
Lead Officer

Consultation related  
to the decision

**NEW  
ITEM**

Public or  
Private  
(with  
reason)

SI = Standard Item each month/regularly Council Directorates: AS = Adult Services & Health P = Place C = Central Services R = Resources CS= Children's Services

Ref	Decisions	Further details	Ward(s)	Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Relevant Select Committee	Directorate / Lead Officer	Consultation related to the decision	NEW ITEM	Public or Private (with reason)
SI	<b>Acceptance of Tenders</b>	To accept quotations, tenders, contract extensions and contract variations valued between £50k and £500k in their Portfolio Area where funding is previously included in Council budgets.	n/a		Cllr Ian Edwards - Leader of the Council OR Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance / in conjunction with relevant Cabinet Member	TBC	various			Private (3)
SI	<b>All Delegated Decisions by Cabinet to Cabinet Members, including tender and property decisions</b>	Where previously delegated by Cabinet, to make any necessary decisions, accept tenders, bids and authorise property decisions / transactions in accordance with the Procurement and Contract Standing Orders.	TBC		All	TBC	various			Public / Private (1,2,3)
SI	<b>School Redundancy Payments</b>	To consider requests for School Redundancy Payments and decide whether to approve them on behalf of the Local Authority	TBC		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education	Children, Families & Education	CS - Julie Kelly / Abi Preston			Private (1,3,4)
SI	<b>External funding bids</b>	To authorise the making of bids for external funding where there is no requirement for a financial commitment from the Council.	n/a		All	TBC	various			Public
SI	<b>Response to key consultations that may impact upon the Borough</b>	A standard item to capture any emerging consultations from Government, the GLA or other public bodies and institutions that will impact upon the Borough. Where the deadline to respond cannot be met by the date of the Cabinet meeting, the Constitution allows the Cabinet Member to sign-off the response.	TBC		All	TBC	various			Public

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## WORK PROGRAMME

<b>Committee name</b>	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
<b>Officer reporting</b>	Ryan Dell, Democratic Services
<b>Papers with report</b>	Appendix A – Work Programme
<b>Ward</b>	All

## HEADLINES

To enable the Committee to note future meeting dates and to forward plan its work for the current municipal year.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**That the Children, Families and Education Select Committee considers the report and agrees any amendments.**

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. The Committee's meetings will start at 7pm and the witnesses attending each of the meetings may include representatives from external organisations, some of whom travel from outside of the Borough. Forthcoming meeting dates are as follows:

Meeting Date	Room
14 March 2024	CR6
18 April 2024	CR5
18 June 2024	TBC
17 July 2024	TBC

## Implications on related Council policies

The role of the Select Committees is to make recommendations on service changes and improvements to the Cabinet, who are responsible for the Council's policy and direction.

## How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

Select Committees directly engage residents in shaping policy and recommendations and the Committees seek to improve the way the Council provides services to residents.

## Financial Implications

None at this stage.

## Legal Implications

None at this stage.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NIL.



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