



HILLINGDON
LONDON



Finance and Corporate Services Select Committee

Councillors on the Committee

Councillor John Riley (Chair)
Councillor Wayne Bridges (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Kaushik Banerjee
Councillor Kishan Bhatt
Councillor Narinder Garg
Councillor Raju Sansarpuri
Councillor Stuart Mathers (Opposition Lead)

Date: THURSDAY 11 JANUARY
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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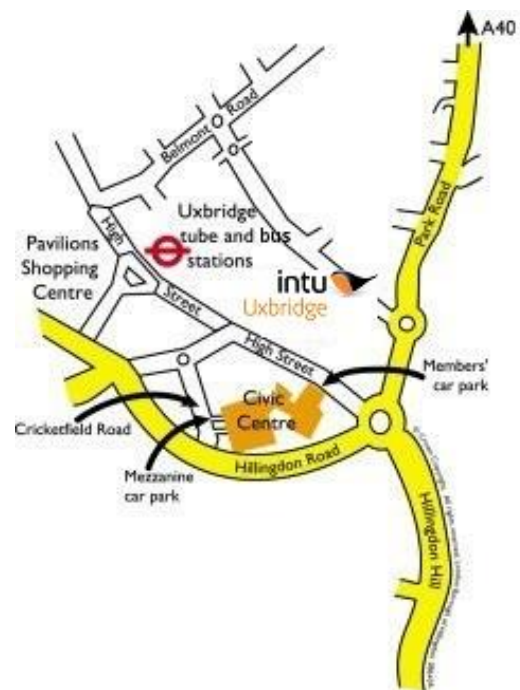
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Terms of Reference

Finance & Corporate Services Select Committee

Remit

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

Cabinet Member Portfolios	Leader of the Council Cabinet Member for Corporate Services Cabinet Member for Finance
Relevant service areas	Democratic Services Corporate Communications Corporate Finance Procurement Exchequer & Business Assurance Services ICT Legal Services Human Resources Business Administration Business Performance Customer Access Business Improvement Delivery (BID)

Cross cutting topics

This Committee will also act as lead select committee on the monitoring and review of the following cross-cutting topics:

- Resident Experience

Agenda

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of interest in matters coming before this meeting
- 3 Minutes of the previous meeting 1 - 4
- 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 Cabinet's budget proposals for next financial year 5 - 18
- 6 Review of the Council's Consultation Arrangements 19 - 28
- 7 Cabinet Forward Plan 29 - 34
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Minutes

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

22 November 2023



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors John Riley (Chairman), Wayne Bridges (Vice-Chairman), Kishan Bhatt, Narinder Garg, Raju Sansarpuri, Stuart Mathers (Opposition Lead) and Peter Smallwood (Reserve) (In place of Kaushik Banerjee)</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Mark Braddock (Democratic Services)</p>
41.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillor Banerjee, with Councillor Smallwood substituting.</p>
42.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>There were no interests declared.</p>
43.	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 October were agreed as a correct record.</p>
44.	<p>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 (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed all matters would be in public.</p>
45.	<p>FINAL REVIEW REPORT - PROCUREMENT IN HILLINGDON; SECURING VALUE FOR OUR RESIDENTS (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>The Chairman, Councillor Riley, introduced the final report on the Committee's review into procurement; securing value for our residents. The Committee had spent a great deal of time on this and had many sessions, all of which were deemed informative. The report with the recommendations discussed in the previous meeting was presented.</p> <p>The Chairman expressed satisfaction with the report, stating that it fulfilled the initial goal of ensuring the reports were relevant, focused, and useful for future endeavours. He emphasised the importance of avoiding reports that might be interesting but do not contribute to moving things forward.</p> <p>The Chairman then opened the floor for comments. Councillor Mathers responded,</p>

appreciating the depth of the report and expressing the need for context in procurement due to its complexities. He suggested that, in long-term procurement contracts, there should be a pathway toward transitioning to carbon neutrality and how this can be monitored. The Senior Democratic Services Manager proposed including within the proposed registry the tracking of top-level contracts' commitment to being carbon neutral by 2035.

Councillor Mathers raised concerns about setting unrealistic expectations and suggested wording that reflects the Council's commitment to net-zero without creating unattainable goals and referenced the wording in the Council motion on this.

The Senior Democratic Services Manager proposed adding the Council motion reference to the report's introductory section and possibly including within its recommendations the tracking of contract progress toward carbon neutrality. The Chairman agreed to the reference to the Council motion but opted not to include the tracking.

The Chairman then addressed the issue of companies establishing satellite entities in the borough due to positive procurement practices. He proposed mentioning this in the report's conclusion and highlighting as final thoughts in the report, the connection between the procurement review and other council services supporting businesses.

The Committee agreed to these points and commended the achievements of the review. The Chairman expressed his gratitude, particularly acknowledging the Head of Procurement for his extraordinary efforts supporting the Committee's review.

The Committee agreed to delegate the final wording changes to their report, before submission to Cabinet, to the Chairman and Labour Lead.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee delegate the final wording changes to their report, before submission to Cabinet, to the Chairman and Opposition Lead.

46. **MEMBERS' ENQUIRIES & SERVICES REQUESTS - FOLLOW UP INFORMATION FROM LAST MEETING** (*Agenda Item 6*)

The Senior Democratic Services Manager presented an update on Member Enquiry figures, responding to requests from the Committee's previous meeting in October. The transition from an old to a new Members' Enquiry system was highlighted and the data given provided details of Members' Enquiries over the last five years, broken down by directorate and specific services. The report also covered service requests, emphasising the challenges in categorising inquiries under "other services" and the difficulty in addressing the issue of duplication within the current system.

The Chairman expressed uncertainty about the significance of certain reported issues, such as "Members' fly-tipping," and acknowledged that some matters might be repetitive due to various factors. Councillor Smallwood raised concerns about the accuracy of the system's categorisations, suggesting that education on proper use might be necessary for Members. Councillor Bridges inquired about the high number of issues under "other services" and expressed concerns about its impact on Freedom of Information requests.

	<p>The discussion also touched upon the challenges of comparing figures from different years, considering changes in the number of Councillors. Councillor Smallwood and Councillor Bridges suggested reviewing and clarifying the names of certain categories, such as waste and noise. The Chairman and Councillor Mathers emphasised the importance of understanding the system's methodology and data cleansing processes.</p> <p>Councillor Garg raised concerns about the disproportionate increase in certain service requests, prompting a discussion on possible reasons for the rise. The Chairman proposed that Committee Members email the Senior Democratic Services Manager with specific questions, allowing for a more detailed exploration of the data.</p> <p>Councillor Mathers highlighted the need to focus on improving the system's user experience and usability, expressing a preference for a system that is effective for both residents and Councillors.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Committee note the information.</p>
47.	<p>CABINET FORWARD PLAN (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the Cabinet Forward Plan, and the Senior Democratic Services Manager presented the report. He mentioned that the Council would soon publish a December or January version of the plan, with some items expected to be confirmed or moved to later Cabinet meetings, especially contractual ones.</p> <p>The Senior Democratic Services Manager drew attention to items under the Committee's remit, with a particular emphasis on the upcoming budget discussion scheduled for January. The Chairman invited any comments or observations from the Committee members regarding the Forward Plan.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Committee considered the Cabinet Forward Plan.</p>
48.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME (<i>Agenda Item 8</i>)</p> <p>The Committee discussed their work program. The Senior Democratic Services Manager informed the Committee that the mini-consultation review, scheduled after the Council motion, would be moved to the January meeting due to officer commitments. The January meeting would also involve a witness session, and the Senior Democratic Services Manager encouraged Members to provide any additional information or data on consultations for inclusion in the report.</p> <p>The upcoming schedule was outlined, including the February 2024 meeting, which would cover Members' Enquiries / the Council's digital journey where the relevant senior officer would be invited. In March, the Committee aimed to keep track of transformation work, and the Senior Democratic Services Manager mentioned discussions on providing the committee with a high-level overview of transformation work. Additionally, the predecessor Committee's review into performance monitoring was also highlighted as an area to keep track on, with an update on the new regime expected to enhance the monitoring of council services.</p>

	<p>The Chairman acknowledged the importance of performance monitoring and congratulated colleagues in Children Services on their recent outstanding Ofsted Inspection rating. Councillor Mathers suggested including an information item on Communications on the work programme, covering both internal and external aspects, to understand the corporate communications strategy and the various channels used by the team. The Chairman agreed that it could be a valuable item, similar to the consultation session held previously.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Committee considers the Multi-Year Work Programme attached and agrees any amendments.</p>
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 7.44 pm.</p>

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact on . Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.

2024/25 BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR SERVICES WITHIN THE REMIT OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

Committee name	Finance and Corporate Services Select Committee
Officer reporting	Andy Goodwin & Marie Stokes, Finance
Papers with report	N/A
Ward	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 Finance & Corporate Services 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 Finance and Corporate Services Cabinet Portfolios, but within the corporate context and the constraints applying as a result of the aggregate financial position of the authority.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4. **It is recommended that the Committee notes the budget projections contained in the report and comments as appropriate on the combined budget proposals affecting the relevant service areas within the Finance and Corporate Services Cabinet Portfolios, within the context of the corporate budgetary position.**

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 £736k favourable 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
Finance	Expenditure	140,708	140,493	(215)	(304)	89
	Income	(106,809)	(107,297)	(488)	(399)	(89)
	Subtotal	33,899	33,196	(703)	(703)	0
Corporate Services	Expenditure	26,632	26,818	186	159	27
	Income	(2,053)	(2,272)	(219)	(192)	(27)
	Subtotal	24,579	24,546	(33)	(33)	0
Total Services Within the Remit of This Committee	Expenditure	167,340	167,311	(29)	(145)	116
	Income	(108,862)	(109,569)	(707)	(591)	(116)
	Subtotal	58,478	57,742	(736)	(736)	0
Services within the remit of other committees	Expenditure	324,658	326,485	1,827	781	1,046
	Income	(122,369)	(123,462)	(1,093)	(47)	(1,046)
	Subtotal	202,289	203,023	734	734	0
Total Service Operating Budgets		260,767	260,765	(2)	(2)	0

9. With the following narrative setting out the variances and movement from Month 6 on an exception basis:
- Finance** – A net underspend of £703k is reported at Month 7, representing no movement from Month 6, with this position being driven by a reduction in the Council’s energy requirements, this is being compounded by a number of small overachievements against income targets, with additional grant funding being provided to support Homes for Ukraine provided in the borough and a favourable variance against investment income as a result of high interest rates.
 - Corporate Services** – a net underspend of £33k is reported, representing no movement from Month 6, with the underspend being driven by a number of small variances, with the staffing position forecast to deliver this underspend across the various services within the Corporate Services portfolio, with this position compounded by additional grant funding to support Ukrainian refugees.
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 are 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 Finance	(100)	0	(17)	0	0	(117)
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services	(721)	(515)	(198)	(50)	0	(1,484)
Total Services within the remit of this Committee	(821)	(515)	(215)	(50)	0	(1,601)
Services within the remit of other committees	(6,163)	(9,031)	(417)	(2,360)	(242)	(18,211)
Cross-Cutting	(500)	0	(500)	(1,950)	0	(2,950)
Total 2022/23 Savings Programme	(7,484) 33.0%	(9,545) 42.0%	(1,132) 5.0%	(4,360) 19.0%	(242) 1.0%	(22,762) 100.0%

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.

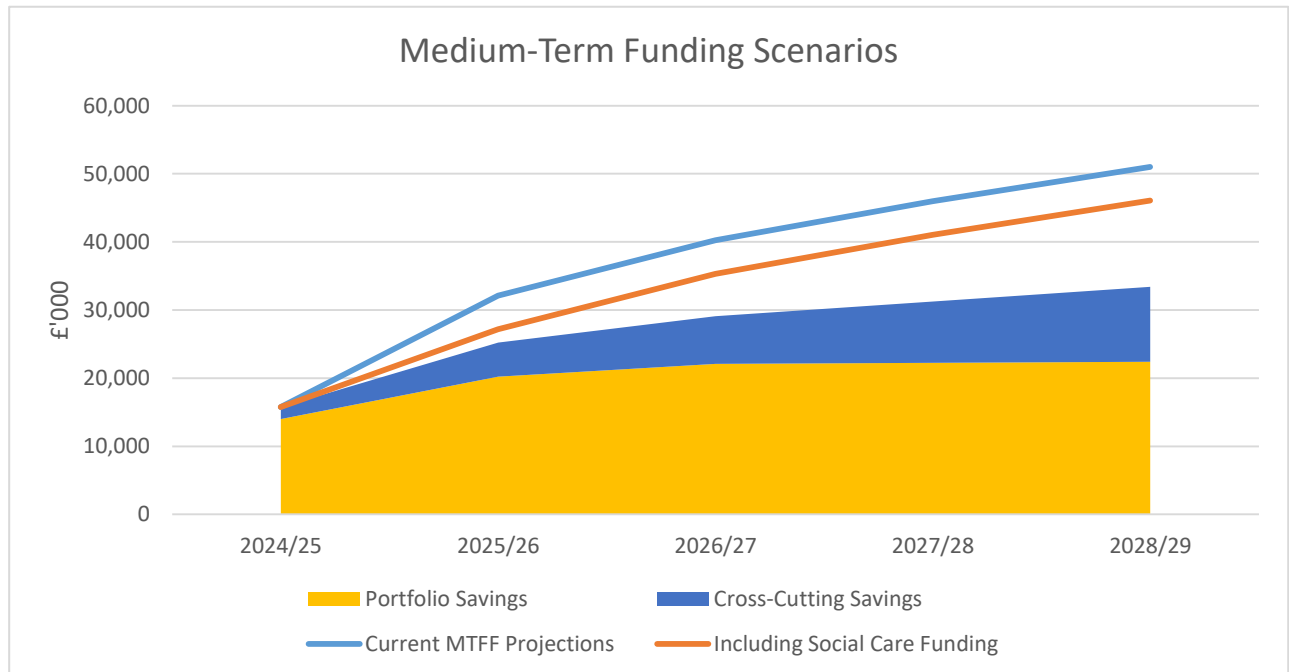
Table 3: Budget Strategy

	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
Cumulative Budget Gap	0	0	(6,889)	(11,141)	(14,718)	(17,579)
<u>Of which, Service Expenditure in the remit of this committee:</u>						
Finance	33,213	38,514	42,677	47,289	47,575	48,062
Corporate Services	24,893	24,166	23,760	22,915	23,474	24,045
Total Services within the remit of this Committee	58,106	62,680	66,437	70,204	71,049	72,107
Services within the remit of other committees	205,794	220,125	226,166	235,337	244,978	254,914
Corporate Budgets	(622)	(2,093)	(5,252)	(7,155)	(9,056)	(10,955)
Total	263,278	280,712	287,351	298,386	306,971	316,066

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 MTFP. 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 Finance & Corporate Services 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
Finance	33,213	(389)	240	6,037	(587)	38,514
Corporate Services	24,893	1,623	0	0	(2,350)	24,166
Total Services within the remit of this Committee	58,106	1,234	240	6,037	(2,937)	62,680
Services within the remit of other committees	205,794	15,146	10,214	36	(11,065)	220,125
Corporate Budgets & Cross-Cutting Initiatives	(622)	0	0	0	0	(622)
Total Service Expenditure	263,278	16,659	10,454	6,073	(15,752)	280,712

33. Inflation: Cost pressures of £1,234k are projected against 2023/24 expenditure going into 2024/25, with material uplifts in relation to workforce budgets, contracted expenditure and energy costs. In line with wider MTFF 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 £240k of the £23,950k increase across the Council over the life of the budget strategy to 2028/29, with a breakdown of these items presented below.
35. Following the London Mayor's rollout of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) expansion into Outer London Boroughs, the Council is required to create a budget to fund the Council's own ULEZ charges, this budget therefore includes a proposal to create a £240k budget to fund these charges.
36. Corporate Items: budget movements within the remit of this Select Committee account for £6,037k 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.
37. Capital investment plans set out within this budget will require £74,076k borrowing over the period to 2028/29, the servicing and repayment of which will add £6,975k to the capital financing budgets over this period. In addition, the planned switch of funding from capital to revenue for the Council's embedded transformation resources will contribute a further £989k to service expenditure between 2024/25 and 2025/26.

38. With the Council Tax Older People's Discount Scheme closed to new entrants, the cost of providing this discount is expected to decline over the medium-term, albeit that this will no longer be financed from £1,422k Earmarked Reserves from 2024/25 onwards, resulting in a net £1,047k addition to service expenditure as this sum is offset by anticipated reductions in spend over the MTF period.
39. The consequential impacts of reduced tube and bus usage by those residents making use of the Freedom Pass both during, and after, the pandemic has led to reductions in the Council's Concessionary Fares levy from Transport for London with the position presented above reflecting the return to pre-pandemic levels of demand, with this position compounded by inflationary pressures on the sector, requiring total funding of £4,937k over the budget strategy. The combination of migration of claimants to Universal Credit and real time information sharing with the Department for Work and Pensions are expected to result in a £500k reduction in income recouped through the Housing Benefit Subsidy System by 2027/28. In addition, legacy added years pension payments are projected to decline by £125k over the same period.
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 £2,937k 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. Finance: Significant transformation continues within the Finance portfolio with the planned implementation of new ERP/EPM system in early 2024/25 enabling a streamlining of back office financial processes, improved reporting & analysis capabilities and self-service for internal managers & external suppliers / customers. This digital investment will facilitate a streamlining of business processes, enabling efficiency savings of £600k to be realised on the new model achieving maturity in 2025/26, with a part-year benefit of £300k in 2024/25. Looking beyond this initial implementation, savings of £100k per annum are anticipated from 2026/27 through leveraging wider efficiencies from this investment on an ongoing basis.
43. Revenues & Benefits Operating Model: Savings of £420k are expected to be delivered through the reconfiguration of back-office functions to coincide with the termination of the current outsourced contract in June 2024. Savings of £120k are badged against the 2024/25

financial year with a further £300k to be delivered across the three-year period 2026/27 through to 2028/29 from the increased use of self-service technology.

44. Energy Consumption & Review of Civic Centre Opening Times: Following unprecedented levels of inflationary price increases for energy during 2023/24 due to market pressures arising from geopolitical events, suppliers are forecasting price reductions for 2024/25 following a period of comparatively stable prices – albeit at a level which remains over and above the lower average price trends in previous years. Further savings for 2024/25 are expected to be driven by a continuation of the current year reduction in consumption levels facilitated by the implementation of carbon reduction measures across the Civic Centre and Council Car Parks (Cedars and Granges) as examples. Additional reductions in consumption are expected to arise through the continued rationalisation of Council assets including a review of opening hours for the Civic Centre.
45. The level of savings to be delivered will be contingent upon the final energy price for 2024/25 confirmed by Suppliers towards the end of March 2024 and the continued pace of both the Carbon Reduction and Asset Utilisation strategy implementation. Any short-term spikes in energy prices and / or slower than expected progress in the implementation of Carbon Reduction will impact on savings delivery.
46. Further savings of £277k are expected to be delivered in 2024/25 through a review of vacant posts.
47. Corporate Services: Service redesign, commercialisation of services and better use of technology will enable £5,523k of savings from Corporate Services across the MTF, with the breakdown of savings provided below.
48. Review of Human Resources: £150k is expected to be delivered in 2024/25 through the conclusion of wider HR transformation, with efficiencies relating to contract management, systems and resources.
49. Customer Engagement: £50k is expected to be delivered in 2024/25 from initiatives related to the redesign of Hillingdon Card for residents.
50. Review of Legal Services: Review undertaken to ensure that the Service operating model remains fit for purpose to meet requirements across the Council while also continuing to provide best value for Residents. Savings of £700k are expected to be delivered for 2024/25 with £130k for 2025/26 - £830k in total across the MTF through the modernisation and reshaping of the service offer, and delivery model including the reduction of external spend.
51. Commercialisation of Filming Income: Continued commercialisation of the Council's filming offer is expected to generate additional revenue income for future years based on expanding the provision of a range of services for film and television productions, including increased access to council land or buildings for film locations, space for support vehicles and buildings, road closures, parking dispensations and traffic management and general advice. Additional income of £20k is to be delivered for 2025/26 with further income streams to be identified as the business model evolves.

52. Commercialisation of Mortuary Training Offer: Maximisation of opportunities for income generation through training provision at the Mortuary is expected to deliver £30k initially - £10k for 2024/25 with a further £20k to be delivered for 25/26. Income streams are expected to increase beyond these levels for future years as provision of this initiative is embedded.
53. Digital Road Map: Savings of £500k are expected to be delivered in 2024/25 with a further £3.7m to be delivered from 2025/26 onwards. Focussed on the three strategic programmes of Automation and Integration, Business Intelligence and Customer Experience, the digital road map seeks to deliver total savings of £4.2m through leveraging digital, data and technology to deliver transformational change in service delivery models as part of end-to-end service redesign to ensure cost effective and efficient ways of working. The implementation of a new data platform to enhance organisational analytic capability and strategic data driven decision making, and the utilisation of AI to drive efficiencies in council processes are examples.
54. Vacancy Management: Further savings of £404k are expected to be delivered in 2024/25 through vacancy management across the Portfolio.

Capital Proposals

55. 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	Programme of Works	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Total Capital Programme	88,800	128,972	217,772
<u>Of which, Service Expenditure in the remit of this committee:</u>			
Finance	11,000	1,945	12,945
Corporate Services	0	12,816	12,816
Total Services within the remit of this Committee	11,000	14,761	25,761
Services within the remit of other committees	77,800	114,211	192,011
Total	88,800	128,972	217,772

56. Further to the overview presented above, the below section sets out the Capital Proposals within the remit of this Select Committee.

57. **Finance** – the £11,000k budget under Major Projects relates to capitalisation support to cover costs of transformation (£3,000k in 2024/25) and the DSG recovery plan (£8,000k in total over two years). These costs require to be financed by capital receipts which have been included in the capital financing budget. Under Programmes of Works, the budget of £1,945k focuses upon the programmed renewal of the Council's vehicle fleet.
58. **Corporate Services** – The portfolio includes an investment of £11,816k in Corporate Technology and Innovation, with this investment driving the Digital Savings included in the Council's saving programme commented on above, the remaining £1,000k investment is for the older people's initiatives.

Implications on related Council policies

Select Committees are at the heart of how the Council shapes policy at Member level.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

Select Committees directly engage residents in shaping policy and recommendations from 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

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

Review of the Council's Consultation Arrangements

Committee name	Finance and Corporate Services Select Committee
Officer reporting	Anisha Teji, Democratic Services
Papers with report	Minutes from the meeting on 19 October 2023

HEADLINES

This item will encompass the witness session regarding the Committee's review into the Council's Consultation Arrangements.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Finance and Corporate Services Select Committee:

- 1. notes the evidence heard at the witness session.**
- 2. considers any findings that it may wish to present to Cabinet.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

At the Committee meeting held on 19 October 2023, Members discussed a motion referral from the Full Council in September 2023 asking the Committee to review the Council's consultation arrangements, focusing on how the Council engaged with diverse communities and ensured geographical parity:

Motion approved: on 28/09/23 "That this Council regrets a low response rate to its public consultations and asks the Finance and Corporate Services Select Committee to review the Council's consultation process to ensure the voices of our diverse communities are heard, working towards geographical parity."

The Committee heard from the Council's Customer Engagement Manager who provided an outline of the Council's consultation arrangements. Members were interested in analysing response rates and comparing them with similar demographics in neighbouring rates.

The Committee agreed to hold a single meeting review on this area where further information could be provided, and suitable findings could be recommended to Cabinet.

At this January witness session, Members will hear from the Council Customer Engagement Manager and other possible witnesses who will provide details requested at the October meeting and answer any questions. A presentation will also be provided at the Committee meeting in support of the review.

Further information may also follow and a copy of the minutes of the October meeting are attached for background.

Terms of Reference for review

1. To investigate the Council's Consultation Arrangements as requested by the Council motion; and
2. To review how the voices of our diverse communities are heard, working towards geographical parity.
3. To make any necessary recommendations to Cabinet based on the Committee's findings.

Possible Lines of Enquiry

1. How does Hillingdon compare with other similar boroughs on response rates?
2. Analysis of key universal consultations to understand the overall response rates (the demographics and sex of who responds).
3. Innovative approaches for universal consultations that the Council and other public bodies have conducted.

Implications on related Council policies

Select Committees are integral to how the Council shapes policy, making recommendations to the decision-making Cabinet.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

The review will seek to ensure that the Council's consultation arrangements engage satisfactorily with residents prior to making decisions.

Financial Implications

None at this stage.

Legal Implications

None at this stage.

Minutes

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

19 October 2023



Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors John Riley (Chairman), Wayne Bridges (Vice-Chairman), Kaushik Banerjee, Kishan Bhatt, Narinder Garg, Raju Sansarpuri and Stuart Mathers (Opposition Lead)</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Mark Braddock (Democratic Services); Ian Anderson, James Lake, Marion Finney, James Wright</p>
30.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>All Members were present.</p>
31.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>No interests were declared by Members present.</p>
32.	<p>TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 6 SEPTEMBER 2023 (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting held on 6 September 2023 were approved.</p>
33.	<p>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 (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed all matters were to be considered in public.</p>
34.	<p>FIRST AID AWARENESS AND TRAINING, HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICES (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p> <p>The Committee received a report, requested at the last meeting, regarding health and safety, specifically focusing on first aid awareness and training within the Council.</p> <p>James Wright, Manager of the Council's Health and Safety Team, outlined the services' responsibilities, including maintaining health and safety management systems, collaborating with other departments, and delivering training programs. He explained their focus on first aid awareness and training within the Council and also for other organisations such as schools.</p> <p>Councillors raised their thoughts about the availability and visibility of first aid equipment, especially defibrillators as raised by the Chairman, in public areas and committee rooms. They stressed the importance of clear signage and awareness campaigns to ensure that staff, and third-party users of council buildings, were aware</p>

of the location of first aid equipment and how to use it effectively.

Furthermore, Councillors sought clarification about the accessibility of the building for individuals with disabilities. They inquired about evacuation procedures and the availability of facilities like chairs for stairs. Councillor Mathers then discussed the need for consistent practices across different council sites and affiliated groups, highlighting the importance of standardised first aid arrangements.

Councillor Bridges specifically asked about incidents being logged on Council premises and whether these incidents were reviewed to enhance safety measures. Mr Wright confirmed that all staff members are required to report incidents, which are then centrally monitored. Work-related incidents are closely monitored and analysed for trends to improve safety protocols.

Councillor Bhatt inquired about mental health training courses, considering the rising prevalence of mental health issues in the workplace. Mr Wright mentioned that there was a separate team handling mental health first aid training. Although he was not directly involved, he acknowledged the availability of courses and ongoing discussions about mental health awareness training.

A discussion ensued regarding the need for more obvious signage and information for visitors, particularly in areas where vulnerable individuals, like the homeless, seek assistance. Councillors emphasised the necessity of providing clear guidance on first aid arrangements to staff, visitors, and members of the public in various scenarios.

A point was raised about the inconsistency in knowledge and equipment among staff members who were first aiders working from home versus those in the office. Mr Wright explained the ongoing efforts to monitor staff members' designated roles, even when working remotely, to ensure effective first aid coverage.

The item concluded with a commitment to look into the points raised by the Committee. Councillors thanked Mr Wright for attending and acknowledged the importance of these discussions in enhancing safety protocols and agreed to revisit the topic at a future meeting to track progress.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note the contents of the report and provide any comments to officers as appropriate.

35. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT** (*Agenda Item 7*)

The Committee received an overview of Treasury Management within the Council. James Lake, Director of Pensions, Treasury and Statutory Accounts explained the importance of treasury management as the backbone of the Council's finances. He explained that Treasury functions are regulated by statute and guidelines from public sector accounting body CIPFA.

The overview highlighted several key points:

1. Definition of Treasury Management: Treasury management involved overseeing the Council's bank accounts, cash flow monitoring, investment, borrowing, and risk management. It was essential for controlling the movement of millions of

pounds daily.

2. Regulations and Practices: Treasury Management Practices are governed by CIPFA guidance. The Council follows specific codes of practice, focusing on risk management, security, liquidity, and yield when investing funds.
3. Capital Financing Requirement (CFR): The concept of CFR was likened to a household mortgage, where the Council's need to borrow is offset by existing reserves and other funding sources. This ensured prudent borrowing and responsible financial management.
4. Borrowing and Investments: The Council primarily borrowed from the Government's Public Works Loan Board due to its cost-effectiveness and flexibility. Investments were diversified but focused on secure and low-risk options. The Council employed a mix of fixed and variable rate debt to manage interest rate risks.
5. Reporting and Monitoring: The treasury team conducted daily, weekly, and monthly reports to monitor the Council's financial position. These reports underwent multiple checks and approvals, ensuring careful decision-making and adherence to regulations.
6. Challenges and Risks: Despite stringent regulations, Treasury management was not entirely risk-free. Economic fluctuations and unforeseen events could impact investments and borrowing decisions, requiring constant vigilance and prudent financial strategies.

Mr Lake provides reassurances about the cautious approach taken by the Council in managing its finances, even within the established regulations and guidelines.

Councillor Mathers asked about the agility and strategies employed to cushion unexpected changes, particularly regarding interest rates and inflation. He inquired about lessons learned from recent volatility and how it impacts local government treasury. Mr Lake explained the risk associated with inflation was the erosion of capital value and managing investment returns to offset higher inflation. He mentioned daily monitoring of cash flow, forecasting, and engagement with various departments to ensure cash flows are understood and funds are managed effectively.

Councillor Banerjee inquired about active management of working capital, including accounts payable, accounts receivable, and inventory and asked if the Council actively interacted with departments to optimise working capital. Mr Lake clarified the minimal inventory the Council holds and explained standard payment procedures and highlighted the focus on ensuring the Council receives what was committed in terms of revenue. He advised that the Treasury function did not directly manage debt collection, but instead monitored actual cashflows with forecasts. Cashflow modelling would be adjusted where necessary.

Councillor Bhatt raised questions about investment strategies considering economic volatility, the frequency of investment reviews, and the use of external advisors. Also, he inquired about the Council's approach to ethical and sustainable investing, especially concerning fossil fuels. Mr Lake explained the constant evaluation of market conditions, credit ratings, and buffer analysis to ensure safety in investments. He referred to the Council's focus on ethical investments, being predominantly in the

separate pensions arena. However, the Council does ensure treasury counterparties align with relevant ethical codes.

Councillor Sansarpuri asked about the Council's policy on investing in foreign banks and whether there was a shift in strategy. Mr Lake explained that investing in foreign banks was currently not worth the risk due to low interest rates and increased credit risk and hence the preference for investing in the UK Government.

Councillor Banerjee asked about the possibility of collaboration with other councils to obtain more favourable interest rates and discussed the challenges faced in such collaborations. Mr Lake discussed the challenges related to legal complexities and costs associated with collaborative ventures among local authorities.

The Chairman thanked Mr Lake for the comprehensive report and the insightful discussion.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note the contents of the report and provide any comments to officers as appropriate.

36. **UPDATE ON THE NEW MEMBER'S ENQUIRY PROCESS** (*Agenda Item 5*)

Ian Anderson, Complaints and Members' Enquiries Manager, provided an update on the Members' Enquiries system used by Councillors. He shared data indicating that between 1 November 2022 and 15 September 2023, there were a total of 3,872 Members' Enquiries and 3,450 service requests. Out of these, 3,242 inquiries were from Councillors, while 630 were from Members of Parliament. Mr Anderson compared these figures to the previous year's data, highlighting a similar pattern.

During the discussion, Mr Anderson outlined the ongoing efforts to improve the system. He explained the importance of making changes that were both cost-effective and valuable for the organisation. One significant proposal came from Councillor Bennett, who had presented icons designed for service requests. These icons aimed to simplify the identification of various types of issues, making it easier for Councillors to navigate and address residents' concerns. The Committee were asked to endorse them, recognising their potential to enhance user experience.

Councillor Mathers expressed concerns about the system's effectiveness, particularly regarding the challenges faced by elected members in efficiently resolving residents' issues. He pointed out that councillors were spending significant amounts of time completing service requests on the current portal, often facing complexities and inefficiencies in the process. Councillor Mathers stressed the need for a more streamlined and user-friendly system, expressing worry that the current challenges might tarnish the Council's reputation.

Councillor Riley intervened stating that a comprehensive review to address the issues raised during the meeting may be a way forward and acknowledged the frustration faced by councillors and agreed on the necessity of finding practical solutions to enhance the system's functionality.

Councillor Mathers asked that it be put on the record that the Opposition felt that they

had not been able to fully discuss what they had wished to during the item that evening.

The discussion continued with matters raised by other Committee Members.

Councillor Banerjee sought information on the breakdown of specific issues over the years and whether there were recurring patterns. He questioned whether the council was addressing these problems strategically or merely plugging holes as they emerged. Mr Anderson acknowledged that certain issues like waste and housing consistently appeared in inquiries, and he agreed to provide detailed data for further analysis.

The Chairman inquired about the progress of the sharing option, emphasising the need for a coordinated approach among councillors to avoid duplicate efforts. Mr Anderson explained that the functionality was under development, acknowledging the frustration faced by councillors in such situations. He mentioned the ongoing work to enhance search functionality, making it easier for councillors to identify and address specific inquiries within the system.

Councillor Garg raised the issue of duplicates within wards and suggested that analysing this data could offer valuable insights. Mr Anderson agreed to explore this analysis further, indicating the willingness to provide the necessary information.

Councillor Bridges sought clarification on sharing resident details in Member Enquiries, especially concerning GDPR regulations. He pointed out that similar platforms like Fix My Street allowed easy access to shared data and requested a review of this aspect for service requests. Mr Anderson acknowledged this as part of the system functionality. The Chairman indicated that this was a decision made at a more senior level to determine whether that progresses or not. Mr Anderson was thanked for his presence at the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

- 1) Note the contents of the report and provide any comments to officers as appropriate and;**
- 2) Endorses the change to the look and feel of the Service Request page by adding in icons set out in Appendix B.**

37. REFERRAL FROM FULL COUNCIL: THE COUNCIL'S CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS *(Agenda Item 8)*

The Committee discussed a referral from the Full Council regarding the Council's consultation arrangements, focusing on how the Council engaged with diverse communities and ensured geographical parity.

Marion Finney, Customer Engagement Manager, outlined the Council's consultation arrangements. She mentioned that her team coordinated consultation events, engagement activities, and housing estate-based initiatives. Marion highlighted that some consultations were statutory, and they had specific demographic targets. She discussed the development of a resident engagement strategy and emphasised the importance of partnerships with other organisations.

The Chairman, Councillor Riley, stressed the need for a clear understanding of the target audience and the challenges in engaging various communities. He suggested analysing response rates and comparing them with similar demographics in neighbouring areas. He also proposed leveraging the Mayor's involvement to encourage participation in consultations.

Councillor Bridges expressed concerns about low response rates in broader consultations, such as those related to the Budget, SEND strategy and Libraries. He requested a detailed report on previous consultations, including response rates and demographic data, to understand engagement trends better.

Councillor Mathers emphasised the importance of reflecting on response quantity and demographics. He raised concerns about the lack of diverse voices in consultations and suggested exploring innovative approaches to encourage participation.

Marion Finney responded, acknowledging the challenges and the consistent demographic patterns observed in responses. She highlighted efforts to adapt consultation methods, such as utilising digital platforms and diverse communication formats. She also welcomed feedback from Councillors to improve engagement strategies.

The Chairman agreed with the points raised by Councillors and emphasized the role of Councillors in encouraging participation. The Committee supported a single meeting review on this at a subsequent meeting and the Chairman asked Councillors to submit their ideas and areas of interest so officers could draft a suitable report, to be discussed further. Marion Finney was thanked for her presence at the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

- 1. Note the contents of the report and provide any seek clarification from officers as appropriate.**
- 2. Agree to consider a single meeting review on the matter and for officers to prepare a report accordingly.**

38.

REVIEW FINDINGS - PROCUREMENT IN HILLINGDON: SECURING VALUE FOR OUR RESIDENTS (*Agenda Item 9*)

The Committee focused on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations regarding their review into Procurement. The Chairman expressed the importance of the practicality of the proposed recommendations. He stressed the need for suggestions that wouldn't just gather dust on a shelf but would be actively implemented by the Cabinet. One new recommendation put forward by the Chairman was the introduction of a mandatory review for contracts that had been running for a decade. This suggestion aimed to ensure that contracts, even ones with a successful history, underwent a rigorous evaluation to confirm their ongoing suitability and effectiveness.

Councillor Mathers discussed supporting local businesses and potential barriers within contracts that could discourage local businesses from participating. Cllr Mathers highlighted the need for a conscious effort to remove these barriers, ensuring that local enterprises had equal opportunities in the procurement process. He also referenced

	<p>the impact of long-term contracts on the Council's goal of transitioning to Net Zero by 2035.</p> <p>The management of subcontractors within contracts was raised. There was a call for consistency in how subcontractors were handled, including the importance of maintaining the quality of service for residents. The Committee recognised the complexity of managing contracts, especially those involving subcontractors, and ways to standardise practices across the Council.</p> <p>The Senior Democratic Services Manager advised a minor change to one recommendation to take into account Councillor Mathers' point about reducing barriers to local businesses which was supported by the Committee. He also advised that a change to the Constitution would be required regarding the proposed 10-year contract review process by Cabinet. He proposed incorporating a monetary threshold to capture contracts of significant value, thereby preventing an overload of minor contracts flooding the Cabinet. The Chairman supported this idea and suggested Cabinet Member and Officer discussion to set the monetary limit.</p> <p>The Committee agreed the final recommendations, as amended, for their upcoming report to be presented to the Cabinet, aiming for a practical and effective support to the Council's procurement strategies going forward.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Agree the final findings, conclusions, and recommendations to Cabinet on their procurement review; and 2) Delegate authority to the Democratic Services Officer, to complete the final review report for submission to Cabinet with the agreement of the Chairman, and in consultation with the Opposition Lead, noting that all Committee Members will also receive a copy for any final feedback (or bring back to the subsequent meeting for approval).
39.	<p>CABINET FORWARD PLAN (<i>Agenda Item 10</i>)</p> <p>The Committee noted the Cabinet Forward Plan.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Committee considers the Cabinet Forward Plan.</p>
40.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME (<i>Agenda Item 11</i>)</p> <p>The Senior Democratic Services Manager presented the Committee's proposals for their work programme and next major review topics. The options discussed included HR practices, digital transformation and the user experience, particularly concerning Members' Enquiries.</p> <p>The Chairman expressed gratitude for the insights gained from the recent visit to the Contact Centre, explaining the importance of understanding digital communication. Councillor Mathers reiterated his thanks to the staff in the Contact Centre for his recent</p>

visit with Councillor Garg. He highlighted the need to focus on the user experience related to digitalisation and Members' Enquiries. Others in the committee echoed these sentiments, agreeing that digital transformation, especially concerning Members' Enquiries, should be a priority due to the challenges faced.

There was a consensus that the HR-related review could wait, given the HR department's clearer direction and the need to delve into digital transformation challenges. The Committee Members expressed the importance of understanding the current digital landscape, including the immediate plans and challenges faced.

The Committee discussed the need to consult with the Council's new Chief Digital and Information Officer and suggested outlining specific steps and potential ways to approach the review. The Chairman encouraged Members to share their thoughts and ideas with Democratic Services to further develop the plan for the digital transformation review.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee considers the Multi-Year Work Programme, agreed changes and that Resident/Member user experience in the Council's digital journey should be explored as their next major review.

The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 9.28 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Email: democratic@hillington.gov.uk on . Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.

CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Committee name	Finance and Corporate Services Select Committee
Officer reporting	Anisha Teji, Democratic Services
Papers with report	Appendix A – Latest Forward Plan
Ward	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 Committee considers 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:

	Committee action	When	How
1	To provide specific comments to be included in a future Cabinet or Cabinet Member report on matters within its remit.	<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	To request further information on future reports listed under its remit.	<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	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.	<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	To identify a forthcoming report that may merit a post-decision review at a later Select Committee meeting	<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>

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

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										
Cabinet meeting - Thursday 11 January 2024 (report deadline 11 December 2023)										
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	TBC	C - Democratic Services	TBC		Public
Cabinet Member Decisions expected - January 2024										
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	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public
Cabinet meeting - Thursday 15 February 2024 (report deadline 29 January)										
158	Counter-fraud and corporate related investigative policies	Cabinet will consider a suite of policies for the next 3 years relating to the investigative framework used by the Council for counter-fraud related purposes.	All		Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance	Finance & Corporate Services	R - Alex Brown			Public
184	Device refresh	Cabinet will consider the contract and capital release for the upcoming refresh of the Council's computer / laptop and related devices used across the organisation for work productivity to deliver services, access systems and importantly to collaborate, engage and communicate with residents and colleagues in a modern way.	N/A		Cllr Douglas Mills - Corporate Services	Finance & Corporate Services	Matthew Wallbridge / Dale Gordon			Private (3)
156	Occupational Health (OH) Services and Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) Contract Award	Cabinet will consider new contracting arrangements for Occupational Health (OH) and Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) services managed by HR. These services are available to all Council employees and where applicable contractors, delivered by suitably qualified medical professionals including but not limited to; pre-employment health reviews, assessments for safety critical posts, in-service referrals as a result of accident/injury at work, referral to other specialist medical practitioners, medical advice for managers related to employee ill health, ill-health retirement and confidential employee support services. Prevention, advice and trend forecasting is also provided to support and improve the health and productivity of the workforce.	All		Cllr Douglas Mills	Finance & Corporate Services	C - Suzie Horn			Private (3)

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										
110a	The Council's Budget - Medium Term Financial Forecast 2024/25 - 2028/29 (BUDGET FRAMEWORK)	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
045	The Schools Budget 2024/25	Cabinet will asked to agree the Schools Budget for the next financial year, following a recommendation from the Schools Forum.	All		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education / Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance	Finance & Corporate Services	R - Sheilender Pathak	Schools Forum		Public
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	CS - Democratic Services			Public
SI	Monthly Council Budget - monitoring report	The Cabinet receives a monthly report setting out in detail the Council's revenue and capital position and other key financial decisions required.	All		Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance	Finance & Corporate Services	R - Andy Evans			Public
SI	Reports from Select Committees	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										
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	TBC	CS - Democratic Services	Various		Public
Cabinet meeting - Thursday 21 March 2024 (report deadline 4 March)										
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	CS - Democratic Services			Public
SI	Monthly Council Budget - monitoring report	The Cabinet receives a monthly report setting out in detail the Council's revenue and capital position and other key financial decisions required. Cabinet will also consider the fees related to the summer activity offer for children.	All		Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance	Finance & Corporate Services	R - Andy Evans			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										
SI	Reports from Select Committees	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 - March 2024										
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	TBC	CS - Democratic Services	Various		Public
Cabinet meeting - Thursday 18 April 2024 (report deadline 1 April)										
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	Monthly Council Budget - monitoring report	The Cabinet receives a monthly report setting out in detail the Council's revenue and capital position.	All		Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance	Finance & Corporate Services	R - Andy Evans			Public
SI	Reports from Select Committees	Reports, findings and recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, when referred from the appropriate Committee.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public
Cabinet Member Decisions expected - April 2024										
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
Cabinet meeting - Thursday 23 May 2024 (report deadline 3 May)										
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
Cabinet Member Decisions expected - May 2024										
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
Cabinet meeting - June 2024 (date TBC)										
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

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)
Ref										
SI = Standard Item each month/regularly Council Directorates: AS = Adult Services & Health P = Place C = Central Services R = Resources CS= Children's Services										
SI	Budget Outturn 2023/24	Cabinet will review the Council's budget outturn position for the previous financial year.	All		Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance	Finance & Corporate Services	R - Andy Evans			Public
Cabinet Member Decisions expected - June 2023										
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
CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS: Standard Items (SI) that may be considered each month										
SI	Ward Budget Initiative	To approve the spending of Ward Budgets following applications from Ward Councillors - this will be done on a monthly or regular cycle.	All		Cllr Douglas Mills - Corporate Services / Cllr Ian Edwards - Leader of the Council (if in Ruislip Manor ward)	Finance and Corporate Services	P - Helena Webster	Local consultation within the Ward undertaken by Ward Councillors		Public
SI	Release of Capital Funds	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	To approve debt / write offs	To approve individual case of debt / write offs that are in excess of £5000 but under £50,000.	n/a		Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance	Finance & Corporate Services	various			Private (1,2,3)
SI	Appeals in relation to business rates (NNDR)	To determine appeals in relation to business rates following a decision by the Council.	TBC		Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance	Finance & Corporate Services	R - Iain Watters			Private (1,2,3)

WORK PROGRAMME

Committee name	Finance and Corporate Services Select Committee
Officer reporting	Anisha Teji– Democratic Services
Papers with report	Appendix A – Work Programme
Ward	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 Committee considers the Multi-Year Work Programme attached and agrees any amendments.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

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
8 February 2024	CR6
5 March 2024	CR5
17 April 2024	CR5

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.

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Multi Year Work Programme 2022 - 2026

2023/24

Finance & Corporate Services Select Committee	May No meeting	June 14	July 18	September 6	October 19	November 22	January 11	February 8	March 5	April 17
Review A: Procurement in Hillingdon Topic selection / scoping stage Witness / evidence / consultation stage Findings, conclusions and recommendations Final review report agreement Target Cabinet reporting					Findings	Final Report				
Review B: Council's consultation arrangements Topic selection / scoping stage Witness / evidence / consultation stage Findings, conclusions and recommendations Final review report agreement Target Cabinet reporting					Introduction		Witness Findings		Report	
Regular service & performance monitoring Quarterly Performance Monitoring (timeline TBC) Mid year Budget Update Annual complaints & service update report Cabinet's budget proposals for next financial year Cabinet Forward Plan Monthly Monitoring				X X	X	X	X	X	X	X
One-off information items Scrutiny Introduction (Democratic Services) Policy Review Discussion & Guidance Council Strategy 2022-2026 consultation Update on the work of the Council's Counter Fraud Team Update on the new Member's Enquiry Process Human Resources - digitalisation of processes Customer Service, Contact Centre & transition to digital Staff Skills, learning and development Transformation work to deliver savings Treasury Management Update on the Member's Portal and New Member Enquiry Process internal/external comms update First Aid Awareness and Training The Council's digital journey & resident/member experience (possible review)			X X	X	X X X X			X		X
Past review delivery Performance Monitoring & Reporting Review 2021/22								X		X
Internal use only Date deadline confirmed to report authors Report deadline Agenda published										

*for Cttee to discuss post-December Cabinet

Committee Site Visits
Contact Centre visit (provisional date of 16 October 2023 at 10am)

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