

Minutes

RESIDENTS' SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

22 April 2026



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Peter Smallwood (Chair), Ekta Gohil (Vice-Chair), Darran Davies, Jas Dhot, Kamal Preet Kaur (Labour Lead), Elizabeth Garelick and Jagjit Singh</p> <p>Officers Present: Richard Webb (Director of Community Safety & Enforcement) Julia Johnson (Director of Planning and Sustainable Growth) Dan Kennedy (Corporate Director of Residents Services) Priscilla Simpson (Sport & Physical Activity Team Manager) Adam Stephenson (Assistant Director - Housing Needs & Homelessness) Debby Weller (Head of Housing Strategy and Policy) Michelle Greenidge (Private Sector Housing Manager) Stephanie Waterford (Head of Public Protection and Enforcement) Matt Davis (Director - Strategic & Operational Finance) Nish Narendran (Head of Service - Residents' Services) Kim Truelove (Senior Officer - Sport and Physical Activity) Mekaya Gittens (Sports and Physical Activity Officer) Liz Penny (Democratic Services Officer)</p>
157.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>There were no apologies for absence.</p>
158.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
159.	<p>TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting dated 10 March 2026 be agreed as an accurate record.</p>
160.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED AS PART I WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THOSE MARKED PART II WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items of business were in Part I and would be considered in public.</p>
161.	<p>BUDGET AND SPEND MONITORING (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>Dan Kennedy - Corporate Director of Residents Services, Matt Davis – Director of Strategic & Operational Finance and Nish Narendran – Head of Service for Residents Services were in attendance to respond to Members’ queries in relation to the Budget</p>

and Spend Monitoring report.

Members sought clarification regarding the reference to “favourable staffing movements” across green spaces, waste and planning and regeneration, asking whether this indicated the removal of staff or redundancies. Officers explained that this wording usually reflected assumptions made earlier in the financial forecast about potential recruitment or additional staffing which had ultimately not been required. It was stated that this could result from ongoing budget and staffing reviews, changes in working practices, efficiencies, or alternative funding arrangements, such as grant funding, which removed the need to use the general fund to support a role.

Councillors enquired whether “favourable staffing movements” could also refer to the addition of staff, rather than only the removal of staff from existing roles. It was confirmed that this was the case and, depending on how roles were funded - such as through special initiatives, partner funding, or Section 106 planning obligations - the terminology did not indicate any reduction in staffing levels.

Members sought further clarification regarding the statement that risks could not be quantified due to the costs of possible redundancies arising from savings. They asked whether the number of potential redundancies was known, how staff were being prepared for such eventualities, and what support was being provided.

In response, it was advised that any business case for service change was always supported by a thorough evaluation of roles. It was explained that the outcomes could not be confirmed until consultation processes had concluded and one-to-one discussions with staff had taken place. Officers noted that redundancy was always treated as a last resort and that efforts were consistently made to explore alternative options, including redeployment to other services. It was further stated that redundancy numbers and associated costs were therefore always sought to be kept to a minimum.

RESOLVED: That the Select Committee:

- 1. Noted the budget monitoring position as of January 2026 (Month 10) for the Council; and**
- 2. Noted the budget monitoring position as of January 2026 (Month 10) for the services within the remit of the Residents’ Services Select Committee.**

162. UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL'S LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (Agenda Item 6)

Dan Kennedy – Corporate Director for Residents Services, Julia Johnson – Director of Planning and Sustainable Growth, Richard Webb – Director of Community Safety & Enforcement, Stephanie Waterford – Head of Public Protection & Enforcement and Michelle Greenidge – Private Sector Housing Manager were in attendance to respond to Members’ questions in relation to the report on the Council’s Legal and Policy Framework for Houses in Multiple Occupation.

Members asked how successful enforcement action had been in addressing poorly managed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Officers advised that staffing challenges within the private sector housing team had limited the number of major prosecutions or enforcement cases. However, it was reported that a number of civil penalties had been issued to problem landlords. It was stated that increased use of civil penalties was anticipated as the team expanded, particularly due to the recruitment of

specialist officers with expertise in HMO enforcement. Members heard that, from 1 May, the introduction of the Renters' Rights Act placed a statutory duty on the Council to enforce, rather than rely on informal approaches, and that a significant increase in civil penalties was therefore expected.

The Committee enquired whether there was a defined timescale within which complaints had to be responded to. It was explained that response times depended on the nature of the complaint. Timeframes of between 7 and 21 days were generally applied, although urgent matters such as the absence of heating or hot water were expected to be resolved within 48 hours. Issues such as damp and mould were stated to require inspections and could therefore take longer to resolve.

A further question was raised regarding apparent inconsistencies within the report, which stated both that HMOs were dispersed across all wards and that there were notable concentrations in central, western and southern areas. Clarification was sought as to the policy premise being applied, and whether figures such as the estimate that 30% of HMOs contained serious hazards were based on modelling or inspection data. In response, it was confirmed that the comments were drawn from a tenure assessment and Borough-wide modelling, which identified higher concentrations in certain areas, but also confirmed the presence of HMOs across the whole Borough. It was stated that this evidence supported the application of additional licensing across the entire Borough. Officers further confirmed that the data on housing conditions was modelled using factors such as property age and size and was supported by robust external research, rather than direct inspection data.

Councillors enquired whether the figure of 3,850 anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents linked to HMOs related only to registered HMOs and whether any of these properties had been used for Council placements. Officers responded that the figure had been taken directly from the Council's ASB service data and complaints records, rather than modelling. It was stated that the data did not drill down to the level of identifying tenant status or Council placements.

Members asked how cases would be prioritised in practice, given the anticipated increase in regulatory scope and finite capacity. It was explained that responsibilities within the service had been separated, with distinct HMO and disrepair teams established. It was stated that disrepair officers would focus on complaint investigations, inspections and formal enforcement, while HMO officers would primarily manage regulatory functions, with some overlap into enforcement where necessary.

The Committee sought further clarification as to when measurable improvements in housing conditions and neighbourhood impacts were expected to be seen. Officers advised that some impacts would be immediate, particularly where enforcement action was required, but that broader change would occur over a longer period. On the planning side, it was reported that since the introduction of Article 4 directions, 35 applications for small HMOs had been received, of which approximately 73% of determined applications had been refused. It was explained that these properties would previously have benefited from permitted development rights, demonstrating the policy's impact. Officers also highlighted the deterrent effect of the new regime and advised that longer-term improvements would be evidenced through future housing tenure surveys, which were undertaken every four to five years.

A question was then asked regarding licensing timescales, noting that affected landlords were expected to apply between May and August, and querying how quickly

applications would be determined. It was confirmed that no enforcement action would be taken while an application was in progress. It was explained that applications received within the designated period were expected to be determined within approximately three to six months. Officers further advised that a taskforce had been established to identify and investigate properties where no application had been submitted by the August deadline, supported by mechanisms for public reporting.

A question was raised on whether intelligence gathered from neighbours would lead to random or scheduled visits, or to surveillance activity. Officers confirmed that intelligence-led visits could be undertaken and that such approaches were used by other authorities, although staffing levels had previously limited this work. It was clarified that the use of surveillance powers by local authorities was highly restricted and not routinely undertaken, with intelligence instead being gathered through community engagement and complaint data.

Councillors enquired whether refused planning applications related to retrospective or new HMOs, and whether enforcement action would follow refusals of retrospective applications. It was confirmed that some retrospective applications had been identified and that internal processes ensured these cases were automatically referred to the enforcement team.

In response to further questions from the Committee, it was explained that forthcoming changes under the Renters' Rights Act, including the ban on no-fault evictions, could make it more difficult for landlords to address problematic tenant behaviour, potentially impacting neighbours. It was acknowledged that despite strengthened tools through Article 4, additional licensing and workforce expansion, challenging cases would remain, particularly where tenant behaviour was linked to wider issues. It was stated that such cases would require joint working between housing enforcement, landlords and anti-social behaviour services.

The Chair thanked Members for their questions and officers for their work, noting that enforcement activity appeared to be moving in the right direction and offered reassurance to residents. Officers were commended for the progress made, particularly in comparison with other authorities that had scaled back similar schemes.

RESOLVED: That the Select Committee:

- 1. Noted the information provided on housing tenure and HMOs in the Borough and the legal and policy framework applying to HMOs;**
- 2. Noted the implementation of additional controls on HMOs in the Borough by the Council; and**
- 3. Asked questions to clarify any matters of interest.**

163. SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (*Agenda Item 7*)

Priscilla Simpson – Sport & Physical Activity Team Manager, Mekaya Gittens – Sports & Physical Activity Officer and Kim Truelove – Senior Officer – Sport & Physical Activity were in attendance to respond to Members' questions in relation to the Sport and Physical Activity for Young People report.

Members made a proposal following the recent Planning Committee approval of the new Hillingdon Outdoor Activity Centre (HOAC). It was suggested that consideration be given to introducing a Hillingdon resident discount, potentially targeted at children or

residents more broadly, to encourage greater participation in outdoor activities once the Centre became operational. Officers welcomed the suggestion and advised that the site had previously been visited in anticipation of positive developments. It was confirmed that the proposal would be taken away for consideration.

Councillors enquired why physical activity and inactivity rates over recent academic years had not improved and what challenges were being faced. Officers advised that the impact of COVID-19, particularly on young people, had been a significant factor and that the local data broadly reflected regional and national trends. It was explained that disruption during formative years had affected different age groups differently and that a period of catch-up was required. Officers noted positively that girls' activity levels were closely aligning with London trends. It was stated that schools had been making strong efforts to promote activity through initiatives such as the Daily Mile, enhanced physical education provision, competitive sport, the London Youth Games and events such as the mini-marathon. It was noted that improvements depended on confidence, physical literacy and wider parental engagement, and that provision was being designed to be free, accessible and located within communities.

In response to further questions from the Committee regarding London Youth Games participation, officers confirmed that there had not been a drop in participation, citing attendance figures for trials and training. It was explained that minor reductions were attributable to the inability to enter certain sports, such as sailing, due to external facility issues. Overall, it was reported that participation levels had increased and that efforts were being made to engage young people not already involved in club sport, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, by promoting trials and training as entry points rather than focusing solely on competitive pathways.

Members expressed concern that the report made limited reference to Better and GLL, given the Borough's significant investment in leisure facilities, including the athletics track and the Platinum Jubilee Leisure Centre. It was questioned why these assets were not being utilised more fully and whether informal, free initiatives could be introduced to encourage family participation. Officers agreed that this was a timely observation and advised that discussions with GLL were planned to maximise the use of facilities, particularly the new leisure centre. It was explained that existing engagement had focused on pitches and halls, alongside provision for disabled children and young people. Officers acknowledged cost implications and advised that future priorities included co-designing programmes with GLL to strengthen community-based provision and better integration of resources.

Further concerns were raised regarding the availability of GLL community grants and the potential to expand initiatives beyond the Daily Mile, such as a comparable swimming initiative. Officers advised that existing athlete grant schemes were already promoted to clubs and that links had been established between London Youth Games celebrations and GLL's grant programme. It was stated that national initiatives were promoted where available and that GLL had appointed a new community engagement officer, with whom closer working arrangements were developing.

Councillors asked how Active Lives data was used and how it influenced service and funding decisions. In response, it was explained that participation in the Active Lives survey was voluntary and that it was the only standardised national measure available for children, young people and adults. It was outlined that this Sport England led survey captured self-reported activity, engagement and wellbeing data and produced borough-level headline outputs. Officers advised that the data was used to monitor

trends rather than allocate funding directly and that schools retained discretion over how data informed use of Sport Pupil Premium and Healthy Schools London priorities. It was emphasised that the data indicated the need to do more and informed closer working with schools, school games organisers and the leisure operator, while ensuring provision remained local, free and accessible.

Councillors suggested extending promotion of physical activity beyond schools to GP surgeries, through information displays or materials highlighting local opportunities. Officers welcomed the suggestion and advised that an “active practice” model had previously been trialled with some GP practices, dependent on staff engagement and understanding of the role of physical activity in managing long-term conditions. It was confirmed that several GP practices had recently approached the Council, enabling tailored, locality-based information to be developed, and that this approach aligned with integrated neighbourhood working with health partners.

An additional suggestion was made to explore potential funding support through Heathrow Airport Limited’s community funding schemes to address barriers to participation, particularly for children, possibly in partnership with GLL. Officers confirmed that discussions with other partners would be progressed.

Members enquired how far public health had been embedded across all policy areas and what improvements were needed. It was explained that public health was delivered through partnership and co-production across council services and health colleagues, focusing on wider determinants such as housing and education, as well as with Children’s Social Care and Adult Social Care and health. It was stated that prevention and early intervention for long-term conditions remained central, that leadership within public health reinforced this approach, and that further strengthening of cross-council collaboration was under discussion.

The Committee sought further clarification regarding the continued availability of the GP referral scheme. It was confirmed that the scheme remained in place through GLL under their “Healthwise” offer. Officers advised that this was focused on adults and that the criteria could be explored with GLL as part of forthcoming discussions, noting a positive shift within GLL towards community-focused provision.

Concerns were raised about reduced ticket uptake for Fiesta events, with a suggestion that traditional advertising methods were no longer effective for young people. Officers advised that responsibility for this programme sat with Youth Services and undertook to redirect the feedback accordingly.

Members asked whether parents could be encouraged through schools to engage in physical activity with their children. In response, it was advised that initiatives such as the Daily Mile had been used to engage schools, children and parents together through incentive schemes and challenges, which had demonstrated positive impacts on family conversations about health. It was reported that Junior Parkrun and programmes such as Free Parks Tennis had been introduced to provide free, structured community activities encouraging family participation, and that these approaches were intended to be expanded.

Members were informed that the mini-marathon was scheduled to take place on the forthcoming Saturday, with participation from under-12, under-13, under-15 and under-18 age groups. It was highlighted that this would be the first experience of a major event for the under-12 participants, and Members were encouraged to follow the

event. It was further reported that Hillingdon had achieved a top-six position nationally, with representation across every school. It was explained that the event comprised an elite-level race followed by participation from schools nationwide, within which Hillingdon had performed particularly strongly.

Members were thanked for their engagement, and officers were commended for their passion and commitment, which was noted as consistently evident during their attendance.

RESOLVED: That the Select Committee:

- 1. Noted the provision of current delivery within the Council’s Public Health team; and**
- 2. Noted the Public Health review of the sport and physical activity model that uses a whole systems approach to programme delivery.**

164. **UPDATE ON HOMELESS PREVENTION REVIEW** (*Agenda Item 8*)

Dan Kennedy – Corporate Director of Residents’ Services, Adam Stephenson – Assistant Director – Housing Needs & Homelessness and Debby Weller – Head of Housing Strategy & Policy were in attendance to respond to Members’ questions in relation to the Homeless Prevention Review update report.

Members raised concerns regarding the implementation of the Renters’ Rights Act on 1 May and recent media reporting suggesting that landlords were exiting the private rented sector, potentially increasing pressures on tenants and homelessness services. They asked whether any such impacts had been observed locally and what mitigation measures were in place to address a possible rise in homelessness.

In response, officers advised that the introduction of the Act had been anticipated for some time and that evictions from the private rented sector had already been a significant driver of homelessness for a prolonged period. Members heard that, while landlord exit from the market had been widely discussed, the causes were complex and not attributable solely to the legislation. It was reported that nationally there were indications that private sector evictions and property sales were beginning to slow as the Act came into force, and it was hoped that a similar pattern would be seen locally. It was further stated that some properties sold had not necessarily left the private rented sector but had transferred from smaller landlords to more institutional landlords. Officers therefore advised that the situation required continued monitoring but was not considered as severe as initially feared. It was also confirmed that a cross-departmental working group had been established to oversee implementation of the Act, ensure staff awareness of the changes, and monitor impacts on enforcement and housing services.

Members enquired about homelessness prevention activity and the most common reasons for prevention attempts failing. Officers explained that residents approached the service for a range of reasons and that the principal drivers of homelessness in the Borough included private sector evictions, family exclusion, domestic abuse and households leaving Home Office accommodation. In some circumstances, such as domestic abuse or family exclusion, prevention was not always viable as households were already homeless, and support was instead focused on planned rehousing. In relation to preventing private rented sector evictions, it was stated that prevention could be unsuccessful due to factors such as rental inflation driven by interest rates and

wider market pressures, leading to rent levels becoming unaffordable. Internal factors, including staff confidence and training, were also identified, with improvements expected through forthcoming service restructuring and training.

The Committee welcomed the improved ability to forecast the use of nightly-paid temporary accommodation and asked whether empty Council-owned properties, which were incurring council tax charges, could be better utilised to reduce reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation. It was confirmed that maximising use of all available accommodation was a priority. It was explained that some Council-owned properties required significant refurbishment before use, while others formed part of regeneration or disposal programmes and could only be used temporarily. Officers advised that opportunities to use such properties as temporary accommodation were taken wherever feasible, subject to condition and safety requirements.

Councillors observed that homelessness data should be presented alongside comparative figures from neighbouring boroughs to provide broader context. Officers welcomed the suggestion and agreed to take it into account going forward.

Clarification was sought on timescales for improving case management processes and avoiding delays, as referenced in the report. It was explained that processing targets had been introduced for key statutory assessments, supported by training and performance data, and that improvements had already been achieved. It was noted that a new IT system was being implemented and would be configured to support further efficiency improvements. Officers advised that system design work was underway and expected to continue until approximately November, with implementation anticipated in the latter part of the financial year or early in the following year.

RESOLVED: That the Select Committee: Noted the progress in implementing the Committee's recommendations relating to the major Homeless Prevention and Customer Journey Review.

165. **FORWARD PLAN** (*Agenda Item 9*)

RESOLVED: That the Residents' Services Select Committee noted the Cabinet Forward Plan.

166. **WORK PROGRAMME** (*Agenda Item 10*)

Members noted with regret the announcement that former Councillor Alan Chapman had passed away. It was recorded that condolences and sympathies were extended to his family, recognising his long service as an Elected Member.

The Chair paid tribute to Councillor Chapman, describing him as a hard-working and diligent Councillor who had worked constructively on a cross-party basis and was widely respected by both Members and officers. It was stated that formal tributes would be arranged in accordance with protocol, and that he remained in the thoughts of the wider Hillingdon family.

Before concluding, the Chair thanked Members for their work over the past year and expressed appreciation to officers for their attendance and support. Particular thanks were given to Liz Penny, Democratic Services Officer, for her diligence and professionalism in supporting the Committee, especially in managing complex

	agendas, changes to Committee business, and responding promptly to Members. RESOLVED: That the Residents' Services Select Committee noted the Work Programme.
	The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 8.15 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Liz Penny, Democratic Services Officer on democratic@hillingdon.gov.uk. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, officers, the press and members of the public.