



HILLINGDON
LONDON

CABINET

To all Members of the Cabinet:

Date: THURSDAY, 23 APRIL 2026

Time: 7.00 PM

Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM 6 -
CIVIC CENTRE, HIGH
STREET, UXBRIDGE UB8
1UW

Meeting Details: The public and press are welcome to attend and observe the meeting.

For safety and accessibility, security measures will be conducted, including searches of individuals and their belongings. Attendees must also provide satisfactory proof of identity upon arrival. Refusal to comply with these requirements will result in non-admittance.

This meeting may be broadcast on the Council's YouTube channel. You can also view this agenda online at www.hillingdon.gov.uk

Ian Edwards, Leader of the Council
(Chair)

Jonathan Bianco, Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Property (Vice-Chair)

Susan O'Brien, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education

Jane Palmer, Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care

Eddie Lavery, Cabinet Member for Finance & Transformation

Steve Tuckwell, Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Growth

Wayne Bridges, Cabinet Member for Community & Environment

Published:
Wednesday, 15 April 2026

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Putting our residents first

Lloyd White
Head of Democratic Services
London Borough of Hillingdon,
Phase II, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW

Useful information for residents and visitors

Watching & recording this meeting

You can watch the public part of this meeting on the Council's YouTube channel, live or archived after the meeting. Residents and the media are also welcome to attend in person, and if they wish, report on the public part of the meeting. Any individual or organisation may record or film proceedings as long as it does not disrupt proceedings.

Watch a **LIVE** broadcast of this meeting on the Council's YouTube Channel: *Hillingdon London*

Those attending should be aware that the Council will film and record proceedings for both official record and resident digital engagement in democracy.



It is recommended to give advance notice of filming to ensure any particular requirements can be met. The Council will provide seating areas for residents/public, high speed WiFi access to all attending and an area for the media to report. The officer shown on the front of this agenda should be contacted for further information and will be available to assist. When present in the room, silent mode should be enabled for all mobile devices.

Travel and parking

Bus routes 427, U1, U3, U4 and U7 all stop at the Civic Centre. Uxbridge underground station, with the Piccadilly and Metropolitan lines, is a short walk away. Limited parking is available at the Civic Centre. For details on availability and how to book a parking space, please contact Democratic Services.

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Accessibility

For accessibility options regarding this agenda please contact Democratic Services. For those hard of hearing an Induction Loop System is available for use.

Emergency procedures

If there is a FIRE, you will hear a continuous alarm. Please follow the signs to the nearest FIRE EXIT and assemble on the Civic Centre forecourt.

Lifts must not be used unless instructed by a Fire Marshal or Security Officer. In the event of a SECURITY INCIDENT, follow instructions issued via the tannoy, a Fire Marshal or a Security Officer. Those unable to evacuate using the stairs, should make their way to the signed refuge locations.



Notice

Notice of meeting and any private business

The London Borough of Hillingdon is a modern, transparent Council and through effective Cabinet governance, it seeks to ensure the decisions it takes are done so in public as far as possible. Much of the business on the agenda for this Cabinet meeting will be open to residents, the wider public and media to attend. However, there will be some business to be considered that contains, for example, confidential, commercially sensitive or personal information. Such business is shown in Part 2 of the agenda and is considered in private. Further information on why this is the case can be sought from Democratic Services.

This is formal notice under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 to confirm that the Cabinet meeting to be held on:

23 April 2026 at 7pm in Committee Room 6, Civic Centre, Uxbridge

will be held partly in private and that 28 clear days public notice of this meeting has been given. The reason for this is because the private (Part 2) reports listed on the agenda for the meeting will contain exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. An online and a hard copy notice at the Civic Centre in Uxbridge indicates a number associated with each report with the reason why a particular decision will be taken in private under the categories set out below:

- (1) information relating to any individual
- (2) information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
- (3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
- (4) information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
- (5) Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
- (6) Information which reveals that the authority proposes (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
- (7) Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Notice of any urgent business

To ensure greater transparency in decision-making, 28 clear days public notice of the decisions to be made both in public and private has been given for these agenda items. Any exceptions to this rule are the urgent business items on the agenda marked *. For such items it was impracticable to give sufficient notice for a variety of business and service reasons. The Chairman of the relevant Select Committee has been notified in writing about such urgent business.

Notice of any representations received

No representations from the public have been received regarding this meeting.

Date notice issued and of agenda publication

15 April 2026
London Borough of Hillingdon

Agenda

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The reports in Part 2 of this agenda are not for publication because they involve the disclosure of information in accordance with Section 100(A) and Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), in that they contain exempt information and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

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Agenda Item 1

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Minutes & Decisions

CABINET

7pm, Thursday, 19 March 2026

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



Decisions published on: 20 March 2026

Decisions come into effect from: 5pm, 27 March 2026 or as stated

Cabinet Members Present:

Ian Edwards (Chair)
Jonathan Bianco (Vice-Chair)
Susan O'Brien
Eddie Lavery
Steve Tuckwell
Wayne Bridges

Members also Present:

Stuart Mathers
Sital Punja
Jan Sweeting

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Jane Palmer.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS BEFORE THIS MEETING

No interests were declared by Cabinet Members present.

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST CABINET MEETING

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19 February 2026 were agreed as a correct record.

4. TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED PART 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED PART 2 IN PRIVATE

It was confirmed that items of business marked Part 1 would be considered in public and those marked Part 2 in private.

5. HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet:

- 1) Duly note the outcome of the Homelessness Strategy consultation and the Equality Impact Assessment;**
- 2) Approve the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Review and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy as appended to this report;**
- 3) Agree that a progress update will be provided to Cabinet on an annual basis.**

Reasons for decision

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Growth introduced a report seeking Cabinet approval of Hillingdon's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2026 - 2030, following a statutory homelessness review and consultation with residents, staff and partner organisations. The Cabinet Member explained that the strategy addressed one of the most significant pressures facing councils, with homelessness contacts increasing sharply.

In 2024/25, over 7,300 households had approached the Council for assistance, a 47% rise on the previous year, and more than 1,600 households were living in temporary accommodation. Key drivers included private rented sector evictions, family and friends no longer being able to accommodate individuals, and domestic abuse, alongside rising rents, instability in the private rented sector and Hillingdon's role as a Port Authority at Heathrow.

The Cabinet Member advised that the strategy placed prevention at its core, recognising that preventing homelessness was the best outcome for residents and the most sustainable way to manage temporary accommodation pressures. It strengthened the focus on resident-centred services, early intervention, access to safe and sustainable housing, clearer pathways for rough sleepers and vulnerable residents, and improved use of data and performance monitoring. Following consultation and scrutiny, the strategy placed greater focus on communication, partnership working, professionalism and empathy, and acknowledged the wider community impact of rough sleeping while setting out how concerns would be addressed. While the strategy did not introduce new direct costs, it provided an important framework for managing demand and supporting wider work to control financial pressures.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the comprehensive nature of the strategy and noted that behind the figures were families and children experiencing housing insecurity. He highlighted the importance of increasing housing provision and working with partners and described the strategy as a strong and balanced approach for the next five years.

Cabinet approved the strategy.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None, as there was a statutory obligation to produce a strategy to address homelessness at least once every five years.

Relevant Select Committee	Residents' Services
Expiry date for any scrutiny call-in / date decision can be implemented (if no call-in)	Cabinet's decisions on this matter can be called in by a majority of the select committee by 5pm, Friday 27 March 2026. If not called-in by then, Cabinet's decisions can then be implemented.
Officer(s) to action	Debby Weller
Directorate	Residents Services
Classification	Public - <i>The report and any background papers relating to this decision by the Cabinet are available to view on the Council's website or by visiting the Civic Centre, Uxbridge</i>

6. HOUSING FORWARD INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2026/27 (AND 2025/26 REVIEW)

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet:

1. Note the delivery of the 2025/26 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Works to Stock Programme set out in the report, which has continued to provide essential upgrades to the Council's housing stock, along with higher energy efficiency standards and improvements to the quality of life of tenants, set out in Appendix 1.
2. Agrees the HRA Works to Stock Programme for the ensuing 2026/27 financial year; and approves the release of the HRA WTS Capital Programme budget, as set out in this report.
3. To deliver this Programme, delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Residents Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Property to:
 - a. Utilise existing internal or external framework agreements or develop new LBH framework agreements for Cabinet approval, to enable the effective delivery of appropriate works, tenders, and contracts.
 - b. Approve the procurement of individual projects and works set out, including using any approved LBH framework or term contract by Cabinet.

- c. Release project specific capital funds for the specific works, as set out in the programme, and strictly within approved budgets and subject to any internal spend control requirements.
- d. Agree minor variations to specific projects within the programme, subject to agreement from the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Property.
- e. Make any other operational decisions required to implement the programme and works agreed by the Cabinet.

4. Agree that relevant portfolio Cabinet Members receive regular updates on progress delivering the programme and spend.

Reasons for decision

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Property introduced a report on the Council’s housing investment programme, highlighting the Council’s continued commitment to improving its social housing stock. It was reported that £45 million would be invested in the coming year, including just under £31 million in direct capital works, over £10 million through the Green Homes Initiative, and more than £4 million for Housing Revenue Account (HRA) adaptations to support residents with disability and mobility needs.

The programme included extensive roofing works, replacement of windows in around 500 homes to improve thermal efficiency and reduce heating costs, and the renewal of approximately 1,000 kitchens and 800 bathrooms. Investment under the Green Homes Initiative would focus on homes with an EPC rating below C, supporting the Council’s aim to meet government standards by 2030 through measures such as insulation, heat recovery systems and window upgrades. Further works included boiler replacements, lift upgrades, door entry and access control systems, emergency lighting and fire safety improvements. The Cabinet Member remarked that the programme would improve living conditions and help the Council meet its decency standards.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the comprehensive programme, noting that it would significantly improve the condition of the housing stock and that reinvesting rental income back into homes was essential to ensuring residents lived in decent, well-maintained properties.

Cabinet, therefore agreed the forward investment programme and delegated authority to carry out the works efficiently.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Cabinet could have chosen to amend the works programme or not delegate its delivery as such to officers.

Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure
Expiry date for any scrutiny call-in / date decision can be	Cabinet’s decisions on this matter can be called in by a majority of the select committee by 5pm, Friday 27 March 2026. If not called-in by then, Cabinet’s decisions

implemented (if no call-in)	can then be implemented.
Officer(s) to action	Gary Penticost
Directorate	Residents Services
Classification	Public - <i>The report and any background papers relating to this decision by the Cabinet are available to view on the Council's website or by visiting the Civic Centre, Uxbridge</i>

7. SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND STOP SMOKING SERVICES

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet:

- 1) Note that the three-year 2026-2029 Public Health grant funding from Department of Health & Social Care is a ring-fenced budget that is only available to Local Authorities to spend on statutory and mandated public health services.
- 2) Note the Public Health Grant award conditions in relation to ringfenced spend for provision of statutory and mandated public health services and the benefits to Hillingdon Council that these services are funded by the Public Health Grant and do not draw on funds from core council budget.
- 3) For continued delivery of statutory substance misuse services funded by the Public Health grant, approve delegated authority for the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health and Director of Public Health to develop delivery plans and commissioning arrangements for the ongoing utilisation of Public Health grant funded substance misuse service provision in line with grant condition requirements set out by Department of Health & Social Care and Office of Health Improvement and Disparities and to allocate contract variations up to a value of £525,000 over the period 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2029.
- 4) Agree to vary the current contract with Central and North West London NHS Trust for the provision of substance misuse treatment and recovery services for the period 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2029 to uplift the core contract for the agenda for a change salary increase by £81,843 pa and for a cost up to £245,529 for the period.
- 5) Approve continuation of Public Health Grant funding to the Hillingdon Youth Service offer for the continued provision of the SORTED young person's drug and alcohol provision arrangement to a value of up to £181,500 per year (at FY2025/26 level) to a total value of up to £557,864 for the period 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2029 (this include salary uplift costs on SORTED costs).

Reasons for decision

The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education introduced a report seeking approval to continue substance misuse and stop smoking services and to authorise related NHS contract variations and delivery planning for the period 2026 - 2029. The Cabinet Member explained that needs assessment data demonstrated the significant negative impact of drug, alcohol and tobacco addiction on individuals and communities, and that effective support services delivered clear benefits for residents.

Cabinet was reminded that the original core NHS contract had been approved in January 2024 and that any future contractual changes were required to be authorised by Cabinet and funded solely from the ring-fenced Public Health Grant. The report confirmed that the service would continue to be fully funded from this grant, with no call on the Council's core budget, and that expenditure would be closely monitored through budget monitoring and the medium-term financial framework.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the continuation of the service, noting the high level of demand but also the strong quality of outcomes achieved locally compared with neighbouring boroughs. He expressed support for continued investment to assist residents requiring substance misuse and smoking cessation support.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Cabinet could have decided not to utilise the Government grant funding to support the programme of work underway.

Relevant Select Committee	Health & Social Care
Expiry date for any scrutiny call-in / date decision can be implemented (if no call-in)	Cabinet's decisions on this matter can be called in by a majority of the select committee by 5pm, Friday 27 March 2026. If not called-in by then, Cabinet's decisions can then be implemented.
Officer(s) to action	Nick Sinclair / Sharon Stoltz
Directorate	Adult Social Care & Health / Director of Public Health
Classification	Public - <i>The report and any background papers relating to this decision by the Cabinet are available to view on the Council's website or by visiting the Civic Centre, Uxbridge</i>

8. MONTHLY COUNCIL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT: MONTH 10

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet:

- 1) Notes the revenue budget monitoring positions as at January 2026 (Month 10) as set out in the report, noting the actions proposed by officers.
- 2) Agrees the virement of £3,696k from the current allocated budget for the Madison Brook Residential Property Acquisitions budget to the In-House team's capital budget.
- 3) Agrees that the planned fee increases for the Imported Food Office as set out in the 2026/27 budget be put on hold until further notice, pending a review.

Reasons for decision

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation introduced the Month 10 budget monitoring report, confirming that the General Fund position remained broadly stable since Month 6. The in-year overspend stood at £36.3 million, with £26 million attributable to service pressures, primarily in children's services (£6.1 million), adult social care (£6.5 million) and Resident Services, mainly housing (£8.3 million), alongside £5.2 million in financing costs. The General Fund reserve was overdrawn by £34.8 million, which would be addressed through the agreed Exceptional Financial Support.

The position on the savings programme was largely unchanged, with 48% of savings banked or on track for delivery. £4.2 million was expected to slip into 2026/27 and £14.9 million had been written out as part of the 2026/27 budget-setting process. Ongoing risks remained, particularly linked to Hillingdon's role as a Port Authority and wider international instability, and officers continued to monitor all financial pressures closely.

The Cabinet Member noted that the Dedicated Schools Grant in-year deficit had reduced to £9.2 million, an improvement of £0.4 million from Month 9, with the cumulative deficit forecast at £75.1 million. This was expected to be mitigated by the High Needs Stability Grant due in autumn 2026. The Housing Revenue Account continued to forecast a break-even position.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the continued stability in the monitoring position, noting that this increased confidence in forecasting, while recognising the need to prepare for potential future financial pressures arising from international events.

Cabinet noted the report and agreed the recommendations.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None.

Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure
Expiry date for any scrutiny call-in / date decision can be implemented (if no call-in)	Cabinet's decisions on this matter can be called in by a majority of the select committee by 5pm, Friday 27 March 2026. If not called-in by then, Cabinet's decisions can then be implemented.
Officer(s) to action	Steve Muldoon / Jon Alsop
Directorate	Finance
Classification	Public - <i>The report and any background papers relating to this decision by the Cabinet are available to view on the Council's website or by visiting the Civic Centre, Uxbridge</i>

9. PUBLIC PREVIEW OF CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet note the reports to be considered later in private and Part 2 of the Cabinet agenda and comment on them as appropriate for public information purposes.

Reasons for decision

The Leader of the Council introduced the public preview report outlining items to be considered in private later in the meeting.

Alternative options considered and rejected

As set out in the public Cabinet report and also within the private report.

Relevant Select Committee	N/A
Expiry date for any scrutiny call-in / date decision can be implemented (if no call-in)	This matter is not for call-in, as noting only.
Officer(s) to action	Mark Braddock
Directorate	Corporate Services
Classification	Public - <i>The report and any background papers relating to this decision by the Cabinet are available to view on the Council's website or by visiting the Civic Centre, Uxbridge.</i>

10. DYNAMIC PURCHASING SYSTEM FOR TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PLACEMENTS

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet:

- 1) Approves the extension of the existing Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for Temporary Accommodation placements for a further two years, in line with the original procurement terms approved by Cabinet in October 2021, from the 16 February 2027 until 16 February 2029 at an estimated value of £73.33m.**

- 2) Delegates specific authority to the Corporate Director of Residents Services, in consultation with the Corporate Director of Finance, to approve all Temporary Accommodation placement decisions made under the DPS and to approve the admission of new providers to the DPS in accordance with the established evaluation criteria, strictly subject to all delegated decisions remaining within the Cabinet/Council approved annual budget for the respective financial years and any supplementary spending control requirements in effect.**

Reasons for decisions

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Growth introduced a report and recommendations, which Cabinet agreed, to extend the Council’s purchasing arrangement for temporary accommodation. It was noted that this approach would provide efficient and best value access to providers in a volatile market.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Cabinet could have not extended the DPS and reverted to ad-hoc sourcing arrangements but considered this more resource-intensive with risk.

Relevant Select Committee	Residents’ Services
Expiry date for any scrutiny call-in / date decision can be implemented (if no call-in)	Cabinet’s decisions on this matter can be called in by a majority of the select committee by 5pm, Friday 27 March 2026. If not called-in by then, Cabinet’s decisions can then be implemented.
Officer(s) to action	Adam Stephenson
Directorate	Residents Services
Classification	Private - <i>Whilst the Cabinet's decisions above are always made public, the officer report relating to this matter is not because it was considered in the private part of the meeting and contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing it in accordance with Section 100(A) and paragraph 3</i>

11. FLEET MAINTENANCE & REPAIR CONTRACT

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet agrees to extend the current contract with Dennis Eagle Limited for the provision of Full Maintenance and Repair to the London Borough of Hillingdon Fleet at Harlington Road Depot for a one-year period from May 2026 to May 2027 and at an estimated cost of £1,843,286.

Reasons for decisions

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Growth introduced a report and recommendations, which Cabinet agreed, to extend the maintenance and repair contract for the Council's fleet of vehicles. The Cabinet Member noted the benefits of the contract including delivering high maintenance standards as well as local apprenticeships.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Alternative procurement options were set out in the report, but Cabinet discounted these on service and financial grounds.

Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure
Expiry date for any scrutiny call-in / date decision can be implemented (if no call-in)	Cabinet's decisions on this matter can be called in by a majority of the select committee by 5pm, Friday 27 March 2026. If not called-in by then, Cabinet's decisions can then be implemented.
Officer(s) to action	Steve Gunter
Directorate	Corporate Services
Classification	Private - <i>Whilst the Cabinet's decisions above are always made public, the officer report relating to this matter is not because it was considered in the private part of the meeting and contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing it in accordance with Section 100(A) and paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).</i>

12. HOME CARE, EXTRA-CARE AND REABLEMENT SERVICES CONTRACTS

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet:

- 1) Agree to extend the current contract with Care Outlook Ltd for the provision of lead homecare and outreach support services in the South of the borough to the London Borough of Hillingdon for a two-year period from 29 July 2026 to 29 July 2028 at a forecasted cost of £15,115,028.
- 2) Agree to extend the current contract with CCS Homecare Services Ltd for the provision of lead homecare and outreach support services in the North of the borough, and extra-care and specialist services to the London Borough of Hillingdon for a two-year period and additional 4 months from 2nd April 2026 to 2nd August 2028 at a forecasted cost of £27,223,013
- 3) Agree to extend the Lot 1 framework agreement with the providers listed in Appendix 1 for the provision of homecare and outreach support services for adults to the London Borough of Hillingdon for an eighteen-month period from 25 January 2027 to 25 July 2028 at a cost of £9,527,996.
- 4) Agree to extend the Lot 2 framework agreement with the providers listed in Appendix 1 for the provision of homecare and outreach support services for children and young people to the London Borough of Hillingdon for an eighteen-month period from 25 January 2027 to 25 July 2028 at a cost of £1,662,028.

Reasons for decisions

The Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education introduced a report and recommendations, which Cabinet agreed, to extend contracts for the provision of homecare, extra-care and reablement for residents in Hillingdon. It was noted that this would ensure the continuation of services without disruption whilst a wider review of the care model took place.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Cabinet considered alternative procurement options as set out in the confidential report, but these were discounted for market, operational and financial reasons.

Relevant Select Committee	Health & Social Care
Expiry date for any scrutiny call-in / date decision can be implemented (if no call-in)	Cabinet's decisions on this matter can be called in by a majority of the select committee by 5pm, Friday 27 March 2026. If not called-in by then, Cabinet's decisions can then be implemented.
Officer(s) to action	Sarah Baker

Directorate Classification	Adult Social Care & Health Private - <i>Whilst the Cabinet's decisions above are always made public, the officer report relating to this matter is not because it was considered in the private part of the meeting and contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing it in accordance with Section 100(A) and paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).</i>
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13. FUEL CONTRACT FOR THE COUNCIL'S FLEET

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet accept the tender from Certas Energy UK Limited for the supply and delivery of ULSD (Ultra Low Sulphur Diesel) to the London Borough of Hillingdon for a two-year period from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2028 and at the estimated value of £2,218,450

Reasons for decisions

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Growth introduced a report and recommendations, which Cabinet agreed, to award a contract for the supply and delivery of Ultra Low Sulphur Diesel for the Council's fleet. The Cabinet Member advised that unit fuel prices were highly sensitive to fluctuations in global oil markets, irrespective of Council decisions, and that, in light of current international factors, officers had been tasked to be extra vigilant in monitoring demand and prices.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Cabinet considered alternative procurement options as set out in the confidential report, but these were discounted on viability and resourcing grounds.

Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure
Expiry date for any scrutiny call-in / date decision can be implemented (if no call-in)	Cabinet's decisions on this matter can be called in by a majority of the select committee by 5pm, Friday 27 March 2026. If not called-in by then, Cabinet's decisions can then be implemented.
Officer(s) to action	Steve Gunter
Directorate Classification	Corporate Services Private - <i>Whilst the Cabinet's decisions above are always made public, the officer report relating to this matter is not because it was considered in the private part of the meeting and contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular</i>

person (including the Authority holding that information) and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing it in accordance with Section 100(A) and paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

14. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIRMAN AGREES ARE RELEVANT OR URGENT

No further business was considered. The meeting closed at 7.22pm

Internal Use only*	Implementation of decisions & scrutiny call-in
<p>When can these decisions be implemented by officers?</p>	<p>Officers can implement Cabinet’s decisions in these minutes only from the expiry of the scrutiny call-in period, unless otherwise stated in the minutes above, which is:</p> <p>5pm, Friday 27 March 2026</p> <p>However, this is subject to the decision not being called in by Councillors on the relevant Select Committee. Upon receipt of a valid call-in request, Democratic Services will immediately advise the relevant officer(s) and the Cabinet decision must then be put on hold.</p>
<p>Councillor scrutiny call-in of these decisions</p>	<p>Councillors on the relevant Select Committee shown in these minutes for the relevant decision made may request to call-in that decision. The call-in request must be before the expiry of the scrutiny call-in period above.</p> <p>Councillors should use the Scrutiny Call-in App (link below) on their devices to initiate any call-in request. Further advice can be sought from Democratic Services if required: Scrutiny Call-In - Power Apps (secure)</p>
<p>Notice</p>	<p>These decisions have been taken under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. This Cabinet meeting was also broadcast live on the Council’s YouTube channel here for wider resident engagement.</p> <p>Please note that these minutes and decisions are the definitive record of proceedings by the Council of this meeting.</p> <p>If you would like further information about the decisions of the Cabinet, please contact the Council below:</p>

democratic@hillington.gov.uk

Democratic Services: 01895 250636

Media enquiries: 01895 250403

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REVIEW BY THE CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE: *CARING FOR OUR CHILDREN: ENHANCING FOSTERING PROVISION AND SUPPORT*

Cabinet Member & Portfolio	Councillor Susan O'Brien, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education
Responsible Officer	Alex Coman, Children's Services
Report Author & Directorate	Ryan Dell, Democratic Services
Papers with report	Fostering review final report

HEADLINES

Executive summary

The Children, Families & Education Select Committee undertook a comprehensive review of Hillingdon's fostering service at a time of significant change and renewed ambition. With the new fostering offer now embedded, the Committee sought to understand how well the service was supporting young people, recruiting and retaining carers, and ensuring that placements were stable, informed and nurturing.

Through detailed witness sessions with officers, foster carers, and young people with lived experience, the Committee found a passionate service that delivers strong practice but faces clear pressures. Young people expressed the need for better communication, greater involvement in decisions and more consistent, personalised information when placements begin or change. Foster carers highlighted challenges around training, access to information, and specialised placements for young people with complex needs. Officers emphasised the progress made in recruitment, including innovative tools and increased enquiries, and the commitment to improving placement matching, training and peer support.

The Committee concluded that strengthening information pathways, enhancing specialist training, and expanding peer support networks would make a meaningful difference to both foster carers and young people. The review's recommendations focus on elevating the voice of the child, equipping carers with the right skills, and building a more connected fostering community, ensuring every child can thrive in a safe and loving home.

Putting our Residents First	This report supports our ambition for residents/ the Council of: Be / feel safe from harm
Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026	This report supports our commitments to residents of: Thriving, Healthy Households

Financial Cost	There are no direct financial costs arising from the initial recommendations with potential future investment subject to development of an appropriate business case and funding strategy.
Select Committee	Children, Families & Education Select Committee.
Ward	N/A.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That:

- 1) the Select Committee's report and recommendations, which seek to support and provide further strategic direction on the Council's fostering offer, to ensure that young people have a safe place to live be welcomed and;
- 2) their implementation be taken forward by officers in consultation with the Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder, as set out in the report.

SELECT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Enhancing Information and the Voice of Young People

1. Develop an 'Introduction Pack for Children' that provides Cared For Children with clear, age appropriate, and accessible information to help them feel prepared, reassured and supported when starting a new placement and, where possible, during placement moves;
2. Include a 'Voice of the Child' section in the 'All About Me' profiles;
3. Include 'Where Are They Now' stories on the Council's website, where Care Experienced Young People share their experiences, if they are comfortable and willing to do so;

Developing Specialist Training Pathways for Foster Carers

4. Review and develop the training programme to introduce specialist Foster Carer pathways, including pathways for carers specialising in supporting young people with complex needs. Include young people in co-produced training where appropriate; and

Strengthening Peer Support to Sustain Foster Placements

5. Review existing peer support initiatives for both Foster Carers and Cared for Children, and develop opportunities to strengthen engagement and increase participation.

Reasons for recommendations

The recommendations arising from this major review aim to support foster carers and young people in foster care, ensuring their wellbeing and development.

Alternative options considered/ risk management

The Cabinet could decide to reject some, or all, of the Committee's recommendations or pursue alternative routes by which to progress the objectives of the review.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Overview

Foster care plays an important role in providing safe homes for young people who are unable to live with their birth families. The Council also has a statutory duty to ensure high-quality care and support for both foster carers and young people. There is a national shortage of foster carers and the Council is facing increased pressure to meet the diverse needs of Cared for Children.

The Children, Families & Education Select Committee undertook this review at a critical moment for Hillingdon's fostering service. The service is undergoing major transformation, with a new fostering offer in place and a renewed focus on improving recruitment, retention, and support for foster carers, ultimately to secure better outcomes for the Borough's Cared for Children.

Hillingdon has seen a major rise in interest since launching the new fostering offer, with innovative recruitment tools such as the Care Friends app and work with the Foster with West London Hub. The service is expanding specialist placements, improving diversity among carers, and strengthening the training and support available.

Through a series of witness sessions, Members heard directly from officers, foster carers, and most powerfully young people with lived experience of care. Their contributions highlighted the strengths of Hillingdon's current approach but also revealed opportunities to improve the way young people are supported, how carers are trained, and how peer networks sustain placements.

The review found a passionate and committed workforce, foster carers who go above and beyond, and young people who were honest about what has worked well and where the system can do more. This Committee's review sets out practical recommendations designed to build on that commitment, strengthen relationships, and ensure every child has the stability and care they deserve. The full review report is set out in the Appendix.

People's voices were at the heart

During the review, young people described the importance of being listened to, understood, and prepared when entering or moving between placements. They told Members that information about them was sometimes inconsistent, and that carers did not always have the full picture. They also highlighted the value of supportive carers who treated them like family, but spoke openly about gaps in communication, mental health support, and the impact of placement changes.

Foster carers spoke of the pride and fulfilment fostering brings, but also the challenges, including managing complex needs, a lengthy assessment process, variable access to information, the need for more robust training, and limited peer support in high pressure moments. They strongly supported specialist training, better matching, and building stronger networks between carers.

Council officers acknowledged that demand is rising, especially for carers able to support adolescents and young people with additional needs. Stronger information pathways, better matching tools, and more peer support were identified as areas that would further enhance the offer.

The Committee's recommendations

Following the conclusion of the witness sessions, the Committee's findings identified common themes of enhancing information and the voice of young people; developing specialist training pathways for foster carers; and strengthening peer support to sustain foster placements.

The Committee, therefore, recommend to Cabinet to:

1. Develop an 'Introduction Pack for Children' that provides Cared For Children with clear, age appropriate, and accessible information to help them feel prepared, reassured and supported when starting a new placement and, where possible, during placement moves;
2. Include a 'Voice of the Child' section in the 'All About Me' profiles;
3. Include 'Where Are They Now' stories on the Council's website, where Care Experienced Young People share their experiences, if they are comfortable and willing to do so;
4. Review and develop the training programme to introduce specialist Foster Carer pathways, including pathways for carers specialising in supporting young people with complex needs. Include young people in co-produced training where appropriate; and
5. Review existing peer support initiatives for both Foster Carers and Cared for Children and develop opportunities to strengthen engagement and increase participation.

Officer comments how the Committee's recommendations can be implemented

Officers welcome the Select Committee's recommendations and consider them practical, proportionate and well aligned with the Council's existing fostering improvement programme and corporate parenting responsibilities.

The recommendations relating to enhancing information and the voice of young people are being taken forward through co production with Cared For Children and Care Experienced Young People. This includes developing an age appropriate and accessible introduction pack to help children feel informed and reassured when entering or moving placements, strengthening the use of "All About Me" profiles to better reflect the child's voice, and enabling young people who wish to do so to share their experiences through "Where Are They Now" stories. These actions build on existing participation activity and reinforce the Council's commitment to listening to, and learning from, lived experience.

The recommendation to develop specialist training pathways for foster carers will be progressed through a review of the current fostering training offer and alignment with the new national Fostering Reform and the move toward regionalised fostering provision. This will focus on ensuring carers are equipped with the skills and confidence to meet a wide range of needs, including supporting young people with more complex presentations. Where appropriate, young people will be involved in shaping and contributing to training content (for instance Walking in Our Shoes training), supporting a shared understanding between carers and those they care for.

In relation to strengthening peer support, officers are reviewing the current peer support arrangements for both foster carers and Cared For Children, with a view to increasing engagement and participation. This includes considering how existing networks and forums can be better promoted and supported, recognising the important role that peer relationships play in sustaining placements and reducing isolation.

Overall, the recommendations can be implemented within existing service structures and improvement activity, with ongoing oversight through regular engagement with the Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder.

Final thoughts

The Committee's review highlights a service with real ambition, one that has already made significant progress but is determined to go further. By elevating young people's voices, strengthening carers with the right skills, and building a stronger fostering community, these recommendations aim to create an environment where every child in Hillingdon can thrive.

Cabinet is invited to agree these proposals, which are both practical and rooted in lived experience, ensuring that as corporate parents, the Council continues to place children's wellbeing, stability and aspiration at the centre of its work.

Financial Implications

The implementation of the recommendation can be achieved within the existing budgetary envelope. Any future proposals requiring additional investment will be subject to the development of an appropriate business case and funding strategy, in line with the report.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities

Implementation of the recommendations will help the Council to further support foster carers and young people, following implementation of the new fostering offer.

Consultation & Engagement carried out (or required)

The Committee sought a range of internal and external witness testimony, as set out in the report. This included sessions with officers, young people and foster carers.

Furthermore, the review report was presented to the Corporate Parenting Panel on 19 March 2026. The Panel commended the inclusion of the voice of the child and co-production in the recommendations. The young people noted that recommendation one should be expanded to include young people in all placement types, not just foster placements. While outside the immediate scope of this review, this is something that officers are advised to look into. Young people also suggested that the information packs should also be written and reviewed by the young people.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

There are no other financial considerations to be brought to the attention of Members at this stage, other than those highlighted in the financial implications section.

Legal

There are no legal impediments to implementing the recommendations set out within the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Caring for Our Children: Enhancing Fostering Provision and Support



A review by the Children, Families & Education Select Committee

Councillors on the Committee:

Councillor Heena Makwana (Chair)

Councillor Ekta Gohil (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Peter Smallwood OBE

Councillor Kishan Bhatt

Councillor Jan Sweeting

Councillor Narinder Garg

Councillor Tony Gill

Mr Tony Little (Co-Opted Member)

2025/2026



HILLINGDON
LONDON

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Chair's Foreword



Foster care plays a vital and life changing role in ensuring that children who cannot live with their birth families are given the stability, care and belonging they deserve.

The Committee embarked on this review at a pivotal time for Hillingdon's fostering service – during a period of significant transformation and renewed ambition to strengthen our offer for both foster carers and the children they care for.

Throughout the course of this review, Members engaged with officers, foster carers, and young people whose lived experiences shaped our understanding in profound and meaningful ways. Their honesty, insight and willingness to share personal journeys helped us to see not only the strengths of our current provision but also the areas where focused improvement can make a real and lasting difference.

We heard powerful testimony from young people about the importance of feeling informed, understood and listened to. Their reflections reinforced the need for consistent, personalised information, strong matching processes, and supportive relationships that give them safety, confidence and hope for the future. We also heard from dedicated foster carers who give their time and energy to making a difference, while navigating challenges that highlight the need for greater commitment to support, training and peer networks.

The recommendations within this report are designed to be practical, meaningful and aligned with our shared responsibility as corporate parents. They focus on three key areas: elevating the voice and experience of young people, strengthening specialist training pathways for foster carers, and enhancing peer support for both carers and Cared for Children. Together, these changes aim to strengthen stability, improve outcomes and ensure that every young person in Hillingdon can thrive in a loving and supportive home environment.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to express my sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to this review, especially our young people whose input has been invaluable and is deeply appreciated. As well as to Democratic Services Officer, Ryan Dell for his support in organising the witness sessions and for diligently capturing the minutes of each meeting.

Councillor Heena Makwana
Chair of the Children, Families & Education Select Committee

Acknowledgements

The Committee would like to thank all officers and witnesses for their valuable contributions to this review:

- Alex Coman, Director of Children's Safeguarding & Care
- Ash Knight, Children's Participation Team Manager
- Autumn Doyle-Field, Children's Participation Officer
- Councillor Colleen Sullivan, Fostering & Permanence Panel representative
- Donna Hugh, Assistant Director for Care Provision Services
- Foster carers
- Kathryn Angelini, Assistant Director for Education
- Lisa Steel, Virtual School Headteacher
- Natalie Craig, Service Manager – Care Delivery
- Young people

The Committee would like to especially thank the foster carers and young people for their important input into this review.

Terms of Reference

The following Terms of Reference were agreed by the Committee from the outset of the review:

1. To understand the needs and experiences of children in foster care through examining demographics, underrepresented groups, placement types, placement stability, educational attainment, wellbeing and emerging trends.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of current recruitment and retention strategies, and support available to foster carers, including the impact of the new fostering offer.
3. To identify barriers to fostering for potential carers and Cared for Children, and to identify opportunities for improvement.
4. To formulate recommendations to Cabinet aimed at strengthening Hillingdon's fostering provision, thereby improving outcomes for Cared for Children.

Summary of recommendations to Cabinet

Through the witness sessions and evidence received during the detailed review, Members have agreed the following recommendations to Cabinet:

1

Develop an 'Introduction Pack for Children' that provides Cared For Children with clear, age appropriate, and accessible information to help them feel prepared, reassured and supported when starting a new placement and, where possible, during placement moves.

2

Include a 'Voice of the Child' section in the 'All About Me' profiles.

3

Include 'Where Are They Now' stories on the Council's website, where Care Experienced Young People share their experiences, if they are comfortable and willing to do so.

4

Review and develop the training programme to introduce specialist Foster Carer pathways, including pathways for carers specialising in supporting young people with complex needs. Include young people in co-produced training where appropriate.

5

Review existing peer support initiatives for both Foster Carers and Cared for Children, and develop opportunities to strengthen engagement and increase participation.

Background to the review

Context

Foster care plays a vital role in providing a safe, stable and nurturing environment for young people where they are unable to live with their birth families, and the Council has a statutory duty to ensure high-quality care and support for both foster carers and young people. Nationally, there is a shortage of foster carers, and local authorities are facing increasing pressure to meet the diverse needs of Cared for Children.

Reasons for review

Following discussion with officers it was noted that the Committee had focused on education and youth services in recent reviews, and that social care functions would benefit from a review on this occasion.

The fostering service is currently going through major transformation, and is a key project linked to delivering better outcomes for young people, and financial savings for the Council.

Furthermore, as the new fostering offer has recently been introduced, this was deemed an appropriate time to conduct this review.

Aims of review

This review aims to assess the effectiveness of the new fostering offer in Hillingdon and explore opportunities for further improvement through a focus on recruitment and retention; support for foster carers; and outcomes and experiences of Cared for Children.

The review also aims to assist in recruiting more foster carers; raising awareness of the benefits of fostering; and highlighting the positive outcomes it can have for young people.

Finally, the review aims to ensure that the service is responsive, inclusive and aligned with Corporate Parenting responsibilities so that all Cared for Children can live in stable, loving homes.

Evidence & Witness Testimony

Witness sessions

In agreeing the review’s Terms of Reference, the Committee sought to gain an in-depth understanding of the new fostering offer; how this is being delivered; and how it is being received by foster carers and young people. The evidence received through these witness sessions is outlined below.

Witness session	Theme	Witnesses
Witness session 1 – 13 November 2025	Understanding fostering in Hillingdon	Director – Children’s Safeguarding and Care Assistant Director for Care Provision Services Service Manager – Care Delivery Virtual School Headteacher Assistant Director for Education Fostering & Permanence Panel representative
Witness session 2a – 16 December 2025	Young peoples’ experiences & best practise	6x Cared for Children and Care Experienced Young People Children’s Participation Team Manager Children’s Participation Officer Fostering & Permanence Panel representative
Witness session 2b – 04 December 2025	Foster carers’ experiences & best practise	3x Foster carers

Table 1: Witness sessions

Witness session 1

During the first witness session, the Committee met with a wide range of officers who outlined the background to Hillingdon’s fostering offer, including how it had grown, what it was achieving, and its ambitions for the future.

The Committee were advised that the fostering offer had been launched in May 2024 with a vision of improving the recruitment of foster carers and securing better outcomes for Cared for Children. Since then, interest had surged with enquiries rising by more than 120% compared with the previous year. Hillingdon was also part of the Foster with West London Hub and had received some of the highest numbers of enquiries (127) of all eight participating authorities. Over 20% of enquiries were converted to expressions of interest, while most rejections were due to unsuitable requests or living arrangements. Officers spoke with clear motivation: they wanted to secure the best possible carers because this is what young people deserved.

Alongside the Foster with West London Hub, Hillingdon had embraced new recruitment tools including the Care Friends app, introduced locally in September 2025. The app, originally launched in Wales, offered small financial incentives to encourage foster carers to refer new applicants. Hillingdon was leading the West London Hub leaderboard with 18 referrals, and other Councils had sought advice based on this success. The Committee heard that word-of-mouth was also an important strategy.

Since its launch at a recent appreciation event, the app had contributed to a 30% rise in new carers. It cast a wider net; gave existing carers a meaningful role in building the fostering community; and helped target recruitment for specialist placements. The Committee were informed that officers worked closely with the Communications team to promote the app and were already assessing a prospective carer who had been referred through it. Safeguarding remained paramount and no young person's details were ever shared, and the assessment process remained rigorous.

At the time of the witness session, Hillingdon had 78 fostering households with an expected 30 more to be approved before the end of the financial year, which represented an encouraging improvement. Carers ranged widely in background: 34 were single carers, the rest were couples; more than half identified as non-white; and ages spanned from 20 to 80, with one carer having fostered for 40 years. Officers were working to widen the ethnic and religious diversity of carers to better reflect the borough's communities and to provide young people with a broader range of placement options, including specialist and expert homes. 12 connected carers provided family link fostering for 17 young people, supporting wider sufficiency plans. For the first time, a parent-and-child foster carer had been recruited, and increasing this capacity was seen as an important part of future growth.

The Committee were informed that carers could earn up to £1,500 per week for supporting young people with additional needs, while also receiving annual energy bill contributions, Council Tax reductions, and reimbursement of Merlin passes to encourage positive, shared experiences.

Training and development formed another central pillar of support. Carers received trauma-informed training (see Appendix D) and had access to over 100 online and in-person courses, along with specialist consultations from the MAPS team. The assessment process itself was long, typically eight to nine months, and intentionally thorough to ensure commitment and suitability. Throughout this period, training and assessment ran hand-in-hand so that carers developed the skills needed from the outset. Officers emphasised the importance of supportive relationships between carers and their supervising social workers, particularly during difficult moments or transitions such as when young people move on to a new placement. To strengthen peer support, the buddy system was being re-launched, and regular events like coffee mornings helped build a community among carers. The Committee were advised that several newly approved carers were already going above and beyond for their young people.

Celebration and recognition were also key priorities. Foster carers were honoured at events such as the annual appreciation awards, where categories included resilience, sibling support, community impact, exceptional care, and long service awards recognising 10 and 40 years of commitment. A new bi-monthly 'Star by Far Award' had recently been introduced for carers who made an exceptional difference.

Feedback was constantly gathered from carers, young people and professionals to highlight what was working well and where further improvements could be made. Officers stressed their commitment to embedding learning into the fostering offer.

The Committee were informed that education officers from the Virtual School played a vital role in supporting young people aged 2–18 who were looked after. Each young person had a dedicated officer who coordinated their termly Personal Education Plan meetings, bringing

together carers, designated teachers, social workers and Virtual School staff to celebrate progress, understand challenges and set SMART targets. The voice of foster carers was central in these meetings, which took a holistic approach to stability at home and in school. The Virtual School also trained designated teachers on the lived experiences of Cared for Children and provided specialist workshops for foster carers ranging from supporting young people with challenging behaviours to helping them navigate natural transitions such as key stage and school changes.

Officers acknowledged the ongoing need to recruit and retain foster carers, as carers naturally retire or move on. Specialist recruitment for carers able to support adolescents or young people with additional needs had also become a priority. The wider care offer approach was closely aligned with Hillingdon's residential homes, but officers stressed that residential care was intended as a step, not a destination. The long-term goal was to support young people into family settings wherever possible, which made the recruitment of specialist carers even more critical.

The Committee was informed of the need for emergency and out-of-hours fostering. As a port authority, Hillingdon could receive young people arriving at Heathrow at unpredictable times, and officers were keen to recruit carers able to provide immediate, nurturing care so that no young person would need to remain at the airport. There was also a need for carers willing to take placements that arose overnight or at weekends.

To improve placement planning, Hillingdon was piloting a Fostering Placement Coordinator role to map available carers, young people's locations, and vacancies across care homes. Officers were also reviewing the previously piloted Mockingbird scheme, which created hubs of support through experienced carers, with a view to completing the review before Christmas.

The Committee was reassured that fostering was inclusive: same-sex couples were already fostering, and one such couple had provided a highly successful home for twins. Officers described how they supported carers whose circumstances changed, whether single carers entering new relationships or fostering couples splitting up. Reviews and updated assessments ensured that any new dynamics were explored with the needs of the young person firmly in focus, and cases were referred to the Fostering & Permanence Panel where appropriate.

Matching young people with carers was handled with care and sensitivity. 'All About Me' profiles (see Appendix C) helped carers understand the young person, and officers worked to ensure placements were suitable while challenging assumptions about identity or background. Sometimes young people thrived in families that did not match their cultural or personal identity but offered stability through experience and empathy. If a match was uncertain, officers created transition periods and involved supervising social workers and MAPS in supporting both the young person and the carer. Where a placement did not work, it was reviewed and alternative matches were explored.

The Committee were told that although the best place for a young person was with their birth family or extended network, this was not always possible. Foster care offered young people stability, a family environment, and continuity in their local communities, from schools and GPs to friendships and birth-family contact. It was rare for a young person in foster care to have no contact with their birth family, though sometimes this had to be supervised. This contact was promoted to retain a sense of identity and belonging for the young person. Over half of Hillingdon's Cared for Children were in foster placements. There was no fixed target number of carers, the

focus was on having the right carers with the right skills for the right young people. This is why officers were focusing the recruitment on specialist skills for carers for young people with additional needs and adolescents. As carers inevitably left or retired, recruitment remained essential. The greater the pool of carers, the greater the chance of making the best possible match and giving every young person the stability and support they deserved.

The full account of this session can be found [here](#).

Witness session 2a

During this private witness session, the Committee met with six young people who had experience of foster care. The young people were aged, 15, 18, 20, 22, 23 and 24. The following is a public summary of the session.

The Committee heard that some of the young people were still in touch with their foster carers. One young person told the Committee that their carer had supported them when no one else would.

The young people described a placement that was not a match based on their LGBTQ+ identity and had subsequently broken down, and so more training was needed for foster carers in understanding the young people and their identity.

The Committee were also informed that there needed to be better matching of personality and ethnicity. When young people were placed with carers of a different heritage, the carers often cannot teach the young people about their own heritage.

The young people noted that communication with them needed to be more open. They needed to know the reasons behind decisions and should have more input into discussions around their care. One young person advised the Committee of an occasion where they were not informed of the reasons for a change in placement that happened after they had been in the placement for five years.

Young people reported that foster carers were often not aware of their mental health needs and that this often represented an unsupported need. Young people suggested that social workers often did not understand what being in care is like, and that young people with lots of negative experiences should be matched with a social worker who had relevant experience. While there was a profile scheme, some of the young people were not aware of this. Previously, young people had been able to choose between two to three social workers, however this was no longer the case, in part due to capacity pressures.

The Committee heard occasions of young people being placed separately to their siblings and that contact with them was limited. Contact should be available to more than just the immediate family and be open to, for example, step-siblings. It was noted that some foster carers did facilitate additional family contact.

The young people suggested that if carers wanted the young person to move on, this happened very quickly, however if the young person wanted to move on, this was either slow or did not happen at all. Young people also needed to be taught practical skills earlier.

The young people suggested that, if they were foster carers, they would invest more time in the young person's culture and background and teaching the young person about this. It was important for foster carers to treat the young people as their own children.

The Committee asked the young people to rate their experience of foster care on a scale of 0-10:

- *From age 6-18, 10/10; around the age of 18, 4/10; now, 10/10*
- *-5*
- *7 or 8 as there has been ups and downs*
- *7 – overall positive*
- *0 – outcomes for this young person could have been better*

The Committee heard that there needed to be a more direct line to managers. After their social worker, young people often did not know a point B contact. The Committee were advised that young people should have their social worker's manager's contact details. The young people also highlighted high turnover of their allocated social worker, with some having experienced over 20 changes.

The Committee was informed that there were several Children in Care Council groups, including Talkers, Stepping Up and Stepping Out, for young people to network with each other. The largest event was KICA (Kids in Care Awards) where the young people were able to feel like a VIP for a day. There were also movie nights, parties, Pride events, Black History Month events and a 16+ football team. While there was a desire to hold more enrichment events, there were capacity, timing, and funding constraints. A group chat for just the young people would be helpful as this would help them to share experiences, learn new things, and ask advice from people their own age. All young people were care siblings with shared experiences and often understood each other's backgrounds where these were not always understood by teachers or professionals. There were national anonymous call lines available if needed.

The Committee heard young peoples' suggestions for improving the recruitment process. Carers needed knowledge and training in how to support the young people, and also how to support themselves in challenging times or if there was any trauma in the carer's background. Foster carers also needed more information about the young people. While there was an 'All About Me' profile, these had previously not been very tailored. Foster carers can judge the young person based on this form which was not fair on the young person. The Stepping Out Children in Care Council group had designed the form and these were completed with the young person wherever possible.

Young people described inconsistencies in pre-placement introductions with the foster family, and having little choice about their placements. One young person explained that until recently, they did not know the reason why they went into care – they felt that they should have been allowed to know the reason. It was suggested that a care package of water, fruit and tissues that is easily accessible to the young people would be useful at the start of new placements. Carers should have more experience of working with young people, and the challenges they may face. This could include volunteer experience prior to becoming a carer.

It was summarised that improvements could include: family placements to keep young people with their siblings; a focus on prevention rather than cure; explaining to the young people how foster carers are assessed; carers should have more experience with Cared for Children; experienced carers should train newer carers, for example through a buddy system or mentoring

to share ideas and experiences; and foster carers should be in contact with the young person's previous foster carer where possible.

The Committee also heard positive stories from the young people – some noted having good relationships with their foster carers, and referenced an experience where, although a placement had broken down, they were able to maintain contact with the carer. The young people explained that being in foster care allowed young people to experience what family life should be like, and described an experience whereby the foster family had given them a welcome pack of information about what it was like to live in the household.

As this was a private session, a full account is restricted to Members only.

Witness session 2b

This private session saw the Committee meet with three foster carers with experience of five months, five years, and 12 years as foster carers. One was a single carer, and the others were in fostering couples. The following is a public summary of the session.

The Committee heard that there were currently not enough foster carers, and matching on culture now appeared to be less common. There were also not enough social workers, and existing social workers faced heavy burdens and so were often unable to spend sufficient time with each young person. The carers suggested that each social worker was responsible for too many young people and that social workers have an extremely difficult job.

The carers described fostering as the most rewarding job but emphasised the importance of recruiting more carers, and that greater mental health support for young people was essential. Accessing respite was often difficult, even with advance notice.

The Committee were advised that, while the fostering process (see Appendix A) was self-explanatory, it was very long and approval took several months. It included weekly 1.5 hour meetings, Zoom meetings and home visits. The duration of the process caused some carers to think about whether they wanted to continue. The carers emphasised that they do not do it for the money.

One carer reported that they had not been made aware of all of their young person's medical needs, and that it was unclear if the Council was aware of them either. While the carer had raised concerns and suggested more assessments of the young person's needs, it had taken several months to get a response.

The Committee heard that many young people were unable to have contact with their birth families, and when such contact did occur, it was not always positive. Family contact was typically held at the Civic Centre within the Family Hub.

The foster carers described positive networking experiences, including meeting other carers at a recent awards event. There were also parent-baby meet ups at the Civic Centre and play groups available in the Family Hub. Carers noted that there had previously been a buddy system.

The Committee heard that additional training was necessary to help carers understand different types of young people and to support the development of specialist placements, such as for young

people with complex needs. The carers noted that it can be very challenging for one carer to look after multiple young people with different additional needs. All foster carers needed trauma-informed training, supported by additional specialist training where appropriate. This would help retain more long-term foster carers. The carers also felt that young people should be involved in the training, noting programmes such as Walking In Our Shoes.

The Committee were advised that themed events could be helpful depending on the needs of the young people. Although financial pressures were acknowledged, cross country networking could be beneficial. Carers highlighted young people at risk of entering the criminal justice system or becoming homeless and said foster carers were often not equipped to address these challenges without further support. Therefore, more prevention-focused training was required.

One foster carer told the Committee that some information about young people was withheld in order to secure a placement. Carers also stated that they often lacked information about young people's previous placements. 'All About Me' profiles should contain all available information as unknown behavioural challenges could pose risks to other young people in the home. The carers further suggested that placement breakdowns were more damaging than no placement at all.

The Committee heard that more realistic promotion of fostering was needed, and that highlighting promising stories would encourage more people to become foster carers and help attract the right applicants. Young people could be involved in promotion, sharing personal journeys to demonstrate the positive impact carers can make, such as 'where are they now' case studies.

The foster carers outlined several reasons for choosing to foster with Hillingdon rather than an agency. They explained that their motivation was not financial, that some lived in Hillingdon and preferred fostering locally. Another carer had initially approached Hillingdon because they were interested in mentoring.

Carers emphasised that foster care was a 24/7 commitment and noted the challenge of balancing the needs of fostered young people with those of their own children. They also highlighted the importance of developing the tools needed to set boundaries.

The Committee were informed that, after identifying additional needs of a young person, a query about backdating additional allowances for the newly identified needs was awaiting a reply. Carers also needed clearer information about what allowances could be spent on. Some reported feeling greedy for asking for more resources.

Although a handbook exists, carers said they needed more information about available resources. One carer had learned about a fostering network only after a placement had begun. Carers suggested partnering with the YMCA to allow young people to attend for free, which could also serve as a form of mentoring. Carers also proposed bringing young people together to work on projects of shared interest such as music which could be capable of generating income.

The Committee heard that there was a need to reach more prospective foster carers and improve accessibility to fostering information. There was also a need for more guidance about different types of care (such as fostering without a spare bedroom or as a single carer – see Appendix B), and more targeted recruitment of specific demographics including LGBTQ+ carers. Attracting younger foster carers would also support longevity and help carers relate better to young people.

As this was a private session, a full account is restricted to Members only.

Findings, Conclusions & Recommendations

The Committee asked to be kept up to date with statistics, and received the below additional information:

Number of children in internal foster placements	74
Average placement duration	This data is not currently available, though it would be beneficial for future reporting.
Approvals for 2025/26 to date	12 registrations
Deregistration/ resignations for 2025/26 to date	8
Total number of fostering households	71

Table 2: Fostering statistics (as of February 2026)

Note on considered recommendations

Some suggestions made at the private witness sessions included:

1. Improving advance notice to young people of decisions made
2. Widening family contact, including step-siblings and others
3. Implementing standardised handovers when young people's allocated social worker changed
4. Improving support for young people's wellbeing and transitions to adulthood

Following further investigation, these were discounted as these matters sat with social work teams rather than the fostering service and so were outside the scope of the review. Foster carers already received continuity through their own supervising social workers. However, Members emphasised the important role foster carers play in preparing young people for independence and agreed that this should be acknowledged.

There were a number of suggestions that were not taken forward as they were already in place. These included:

1. Standardised pre-placement information for carers – this was largely covered by the fostering handbook and financial policy
2. Pre-placement introductions – these already occurred where possible, though they were not possible for emergency placements
3. Matching considerations (identity, culture, household composition, sibling relationships, proximity to birth family) were already captured within 'All About Me' profiles
4. Website content already included strong material on foster carer experiences
5. Representation within the carer cohort was already strong among non-white carers, LGBTQ+ carers and single carers

Finally, there were some suggestions that were already in progress. These included:

1. Foster carer profiles – these would strengthen information sharing and improve matching and would be available to young people so they can learn more about potential carers. These would also enable young people to choose their preferred carer where multiple

- suitable matches were available
2. Expanded community engagement to support recruitment – while some outreach methods may not directly lead to increased recruitment, it is essential for raising awareness and challenging misconceptions

The Committee’s final recommendations are outlined below.

Theme 1: Enhancing Information and the Voice of Young People

Findings

The review identified that ‘All About Me’ profiles (which outline background information about the young person) varied in quality, with some described as inconsistent or not sufficiently personalised.

The review also highlighted that the Council’s website was static and did not always provide easily accessible information, with some carers reporting that they were unaware of available networks or resources when starting a placement.

Conclusions

A standardised information pathway including the voice of the child is required so that carers and young people are reliably informed, engaged and supported throughout placements.

Therefore, the Committee recommends the following:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 1 | Develop an 'Introduction Pack for Children' that provides Cared For Children with clear, age appropriate, and accessible information to help them feel prepared, reassured and supported when starting a new placement and, where possible, during placement moves. |
| 2 | Include a 'Voice of the Child' section in the 'All About Me' profiles. |
| 3 | Include 'Where Are They Now' stories on the Council's website, where Care Experienced Young People share their experiences, if they are comfortable and willing to do so. |

Theme 2: Developing Specialist Training Pathways for Foster Carers

Findings

Witnesses identified gaps in training related to mental health, SEND, and identity & inclusion, which could affect confidence when caring for young people with more complex or varied needs. At the same time, demand for specialist carers, particularly for adolescents and those with more complex needs, continues to grow.

Young people highlighted the benefits of co-produced training shaped by lived experience (such as Walking In Our Shoes). Carers supporting multiple young people shared that additional, consistent and high-quality training would help them feel more prepared and supported.

Conclusions

Specialist training pathways and sustained development are needed to match the complexity of young people's needs and to prevent carer burnout and placement breakdown. Co-produced, lived-experience-informed training improves relevance, understanding and impact.

Therefore, the Committee recommends the following:

4

Review and develop the training programme to introduce specialist Foster Carer pathways, including pathways for carers specialising in supporting young people with complex needs. Include young people in co-produced training where appropriate.

Theme 3: Strengthening Peer Support to Sustain Foster Placements

Findings

Witnesses shared that peer support such as buddying, Mockingbird constellations and mentoring was a notable strength, providing practical guidance and emotional reassurance.

Conclusions

Early, preventative support is essential to sustaining placements and reducing breakdowns. Strong peer networks reduce isolation and spread good practice.

Therefore, the Committee recommends the following:

5

Review existing peer support initiatives for both Foster Carers and Cared for Children, and develop opportunities to strengthen engagement and increase participation.

Background papers

Key Legislation and Regulations:

- [Children Act 1989](#): outlines the responsibilities of local authorities in providing services for children in need.
- [Children Act 2004](#): emphasises five key outcomes: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving economic well-being.
- [Fostering Services \(England\) Regulations 2011](#): outlines the standards and requirements for fostering services.
- [Care Planning, Placement and Case Review \(England\) Regulations 2010](#): focuses on the planning, monitoring and review of children's placements in foster care.
- [Care Leavers \(England\) Regulations 2010](#): covers arrangements for children leaving foster care.
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#): establishes seven corporate parenting principles that local authorities must follow to ensure they act in the best interests of children in their care.
- [National Minimum Standards \(NMS\)](#): provides best practice guidance for fostering agencies, setting out the minimum expectations for their services and operations, [according to Simply Fostering](#).
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#): outlines essential guidelines for multi-agency collaboration to protect and promote the welfare of children.

Additional Resources

Meet our foster carers

Read the stories behind some of our amazing foster carers in Hillingdon, available here:
<https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/our-foster-carers>

Fostering in Hillingdon | Foster with West London

Available here:
[Fostering in Hillingdon | Foster with West London](#)

Key National Helplines

Childline	 ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME childline.org.uk 0800 1111	Free, 24/7, confidential support	0800 1111
Always Heard (Coram Voice)	 getting young voices heard	Advocacy for children in care and care experienced young people	0808 800 5792
NYAS (National Youth Advocacy Service)	 national youth advocacy service	Provides advocacy and legal support	0808 808 1001
The Mix		Support for under 25s on various issues	0808 808 4994
NSPCC Helpline		For concerns about a child's safety	0808 800 5000

Appendices

Appendix A – The fostering process

Appendix B – Fostering myths and questions

Appendix C – ‘All About Me’ template

Appendix D – Trauma informed practice

The Fostering Process

<https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/4756/The-fostering-process>

In this section

- 1. [Initial contact](#)
- 2. [Stage 1](#)
- 3. [Stage 2](#)
- 4. [What happens next?](#)


Initial contact

When you contact us, we will contact you within 2 days to give you more information about fostering.

If you meet the criteria, we will arrange to visit you at home to learn more about you and your interest in fostering. This will help you and us to decide if fostering is right for you and your family.

Following the visit, we will contact you to let you know if we would like you to continue with your enquiry and for you to let us know your decision about moving to the next stage.

There are 2 stages to becoming a foster carer.

[Next](#) 

[Stage 1](#)

Stage 1

Application

- We will ask you to complete an application form, giving us consent to undertake the necessary checks to foster.


Checks and references

- We will start a series of checks, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS police), personal references, partner (or former partner) checks (if applicable), education if you have school-aged children and with your employer (if applicable), as well as a medical check. There may also be other checks, depending on individual circumstances.
- All adults aged 18 and above in the household will also need DBS checks.
- You will be asked to make an appointment with your general practitioner to have a medical assessment.


Preparation training

- You will be invited to our Skills to Foster training, where you can learn alongside other applicants, find out more about the fostering role and decide if fostering is right for you. If it is a joint application, both applicants are required to attend. This training is delivered by our Fostering team and includes foster carers and previously looked after children.
- We will then arrange to meet with you to talk about moving to the next stage of assessment (Stage two). If this is right for you and your family, a social worker will be assigned to work with you to complete the final stage of preparation and assessment of you as foster carers.

Our aim is to complete stage 1 within 2 months.

 [Previous](#)

[Initial contact](#)

[Next](#) 

[Stage 2](#)

Stage 2

The Form F Assessment

- Also known as the Home Study, this assessment will help prepare you further for fostering.
- Your social worker will visit you on a regular basis to complete the assessment with you and members of your household.
- You will receive regular feedback from your assessing social worker and, together, you will determine if fostering is right for you and your family.
- Your assessing social worker will prepare a report based on the work you have undertaken together, this is called a Form F.

Hillingdon Fostering Panel


- To be approved as a foster carer, your Form F assessment is presented to the independent Hillingdon Fostering Panel, which you will be invited to attend with your assessing social worker.
- The panel will be familiar with your report.
- If fostering is right for you and your family, your approval as a foster carer will be considered by Hillingdon's Fostering Panel.

Agency decision maker approval

- The panel recommendation will be sent to the agency decision maker to review, along with the papers sent to panel, so that they can make the final decision about approving you as a foster carer.

Our aim is to complete stage 2 within 4 months but this can vary according to individual circumstances.

 **Previous**
[Stage 1](#)

Next 
[What happens next?](#)

In this section

1. [Initial contact](#)

2. [Stage 1](#)

3. [Stage 2](#)

4. **What happens next?**

What happens next?

If successful and you are approved as a foster carer with Hillingdon Council, you will receive a welcome pack and be assigned a supervising social worker, who will support and work with you in your new role.

At this point, you are eligible to foster and will be contacted when a child needs to be placed. This could be within a few days or weeks of your approval as a foster carer.

 **Previous**
[Stage 2](#)

Fostering myths and questions

<https://pre.hillingdon.gov.uk/fostering/fostering-myths-questions>

Separating the facts from the myths about fostering...

"I would love to foster, but I'm too old."

There is no maximum age to foster with Hillingdon Council - although applicants do need to be adults with relevant experience of childcare, and fit and healthy enough to look after children and young people.

"I'm renting at the moment and don't own my home."

You don't have to own your own home to be a foster carer. People who rent, live in housing association properties or social housing can foster, but you would need to have permission from your landlord. However, the council cannot accept candidates who have lodgers.

As long as your home is a safe, secure, stable and loving, you can apply to be a foster carer.

Additionally, each child or young person will need their own bedroom, but if you are fostering siblings they may be able to share a bedroom, depending on their gender or age.

"I don't have a spare bedroom."

If you're interested in fostering babies up to the age of 2, a baby can sleep in a cot placed in the foster carer's bedroom, as long as there is enough space.

"I don't think I can afford to foster."

Foster carers receive a weekly allowance for each child placed with them, and a fee for their work as a foster carer; ensuring foster carers will not be out of pocket.

The council's allowances and fees for their foster carers are competitive and higher than the national minimum.

Those who foster also receive a tax break, called foster care relief, and normally if a person is in receipt of benefits, this would not be affected by fostering.

"I'm single, can I foster?"

You don't have to be married or have a partner to be considered for fostering. Single men and women can offer different perspectives on life, and both can be great role models for children and young people in care.

If you are single, we would look at your support network and (if you are employed) how you would balance work with fostering.

"I identify as LGBT+. Will I be able to foster?"

Yes, you can foster if you are LGBT+. Your sexual orientation is part of your identity.

We consider the skills and childcare experience of the person - either through their own children, looking after friends or family members' children, or through work - and the ability to provide a safe and nurturing home to a child or young person. Those in foster care have different needs and challenges, and we welcome diversity among our foster care community.

We recognise the resilience, determination and the challenges that you have overcome. The law protects you and we welcome you.

"I enjoy my job and may not want to give it up to foster."

Many foster carers also work in some way outside of fostering, and are able to successfully combine working and fostering. It is also great for children to see parents or carers who are committed to their work.

The council would need to look at how flexible a person's job is and if they are available for children after school or during holiday time, as well as their support network.

If a person does wish to look after babies, they would need to be the main foster carer and be at home full time.

"I would consider fostering, but I'm not a parent."

You don't need to have had children of your own to foster. However, before someone can become a foster carer, the council would assess the person has relevant childcare experience.

It does not matter if this was gained through caring for their own children, or through their friends and/or family network, or perhaps through working with children and young people as part of their job.

The council also provides foster carers in Hillingdon access to a 3-day preparation training course called Skills to Foster, which covers the practical and specialist skills needed to look after fostered children.

"English isn't my first language. Am I able to foster?"

Children and young people in foster care come from different backgrounds and many may not have English as their first language. To foster in Hillingdon, a person needs a good level of spoken and written English, so they can support a child with their schoolwork, communicate with other professionals involved in the fostering process, and to be able to make notes and keep records as part of the role.

"I'd love to foster but I have a disability."

The councils welcome applicants living with a disability. Every person who applies is treated fairly and equally and the same checks are applied to all applicants.

Checks include a medical check to measure health and fitness, and provide the best standard of care to a child or young person. What is really important is that a person can provide a safe, secure and happy home - a person's disability should not be a barrier to fostering.

London Borough of Hillingdon All About Me

PLEASE ENSURE THIS DOCUMENT REMAINS ANONYMOUS THROUGHOUT

Child/ Young Person's Initials	
Date of Birth	
Gender / Identity	
Language spoken:	
Religion:	
Ethnicity:	
Legal Status:	
ICS number:	

Date Placement Required by:	
Area or Borough placement is required	

Placement requirement indicators - please tick one box:

Fostering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Early Permanence (Foster to Adopt)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Residential	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supported Accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>
52 wk Specialist Residential School	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent & Child Assessment Unit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solo / Enhanced	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reason why the placement is required and the likely duration? (including brief family history / background)	
What is the desired outcome of the placement? (Reference the exit plan)	

Child/ Young Person's description of themselves in their own words: N/A

Child or Young Person's Wishes and Feelings: (written by the social worker and/ or the child/ young person)

Please complete the following:

Child/ Young Person's Special Dietary Requirements - <i>include allergies etc</i>	
---	--

What is the model of care requested for the child or young person:

Brief background Information relevant to the placement request and the reason why:

Are there other limitations or restrictions that need to be considered?	
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For example:

-Other children in the placement

-DOLS (Deprivation of Liberty) court order in place

Is there involvement with any other agencies that providers need to be aware of? (Police, YJS, Voluntary agencies, MAPS, CAMHS etc)	
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Family Time details	
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<i>Please provide details of any family time- the schedule, the people that time must be maintained with, the people for whom time is restricted with, or that the child or young person must not be in contact with.</i>	
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Education

Name and address of educational establishment- Recently offered school placement at Oakwood school <i>Include any individual contact details - name & phone number</i> Year Group – this information must be provided	
Is the child or young person experiencing any of the following difficulties in education, or receiving any of the following support? <i>Please tick any that apply</i>	
Not feeling able to engage with education	
Currently excluded	
At risk of exclusion	
Has an EHCP	
Has a Behaviour Support Plan	
Absent or not attending school	
Can the young person travel independently? (if the young person needs to be transported to school please indicate any specific needs associated with transport)	
Please provide any brief additional information here:	

Long term medical conditions <i>Please include description and main symptoms, not just the name of condition.</i>	
Medication <i>(Name, dosage, is it self-administered? Include any allergies to medication)</i>	
Substance or Alcohol Use - include smoking. <i>If yes, include details.</i>	
Emotional Wellbeing	

<p>Mental Health Conditions <i>Please include information about any self-harm or suicidal thoughts</i></p>	
<p>Eating Disorders <i>Please give details, including any historic or ongoing treatment</i></p>	
<p>ADHD/Autism <i>Please give details of diagnosis or stage of investigation, also any ongoing support from partner agencies. Attachment disorder of any type.</i></p>	
<p>Is the young person sexually active in their relationships and/ or at risk of pregnancy?</p>	
<p>Any brief additional Information</p>	

Disability

<p>Does the child or young person have a disability?</p>	
<p>Please provide details, including if or how this may impact on the child's day to day life. - Are there any physical needs, mobility issues, environmental adaptations that are needed.</p>	

Needs and behaviours

<i>Has a risk assessment been carried out? Include details.</i>	
Honour based violence	
Suspicion of trafficking	

Any other relevant information (such as additional risks not covered elsewhere)

Social Worker Name and Signature:

Manager's Name and Signature:

Date completed:

Trauma-Informed Practice in Social Work and Care

In Hillingdon we approach Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) in two related ways. The Social Workers who are completing the assessments and plans are fully trained in Trauma Informed Practice and those providing care (residential and Foster Care) are fully trained in P.A.C.E. approach that is closely linked with TIP.

This briefing provides a brief description of both highlight the benefits to the children's outcomes and highlights how this supports our commitment to delivering the Care Offer to our children.

What is Trauma-Informed Practice?

Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP) is an approach that recognises the impact of trauma on a person's life and behaviour. Instead of asking "*What's wrong with this child?*", it asks "*What has this child experienced?*". Trauma can result from abuse, neglect, loss, or violence, and it affects emotional regulation, relationships, and development.

TIP focuses on:

- **Understanding trauma** and its effects.
- **Creating safety and trust** in relationships.
- **Avoiding re-traumatisation.**
- **Empowering children and families** through choice and collaboration.

What is PACE?

PACE stands for **Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, and Empathy**. It is a therapeutic parenting approach developed by Dr Dan Hughes, designed to help carers build strong, trusting relationships with children who have experienced trauma.

How PACE links to Trauma-Informed Practice:

- Both approaches start from understanding trauma and its impact.
- PACE gives carers practical tools to respond in ways that promote emotional safety and connection.
- It helps carers move away from punitive responses and towards curiosity and empathy, which are core principles of TIP.

How is it Embedded in Practice?

- **Social Work:** Practitioners use trauma-informed approaches in social work assessments, planning, direct work and observations. This includes building trust, reducing stress, and supporting emotional regulation whilst creating informed, relevant plans than meet the needs of our children.
- **Foster Carer Training:** Carers, trough PACE, learn how trauma shapes behaviour and how to respond with empathy rather than punishment. Training covers:
 - Predictable routines.
 - Calm, supportive communication.
 - Techniques to help children manage emotions.
- **Staff Development:** All staff receive training to understand trauma's impact on children and themselves, reducing burnout and improving care consistency.

Why we are rolling out PACE to foster carers and residential staff:

- Children in care often struggle with trust and emotional regulation due to past trauma.
- PACE equips carers and staff to respond calmly and therapeutically, reducing placement breakdowns.
- It supports children's recovery, resilience, and long-term wellbeing by creating nurturing, predictable environments.
- Children in care often struggle with trust, emotional regulation, and behaviour because of past trauma. PACE gives carers practical tools to respond calmly and compassionately, rather than with punishment or frustration. This creates a safe, nurturing environment where children can heal and grow.

How PACE and TIP promote a Consistent Care Offer

- **Shared Language and Approach:** When both foster carers and residential staff use PACE, children experience the same style of care wherever they are. This consistency reduces confusion and anxiety and supports the move from residential homes into family based environment in Foster Care
- **Smooth Transitions:** Moving between residential settings and foster care can be stressful and often a difficult step for our children. A common approach (PACE)

means children don't have to "start over" with new rules, expectations, communication methods and behaviour management.

- **Consistent Standards:** PACE sets a clear standard for how adults interact with children—always with empathy, curiosity, and acceptance—so care feels predictable and supportive.

Why This Leads to Better Outcomes

- **Emotional Safety:** Children feel understood and valued, which builds trust.
- **Improved Behaviour:** When carers respond with curiosity instead of criticism, children learn to manage emotions better.
- **Stronger Relationships:** Consistent, nurturing care helps children form secure attachments.
- **Long-Term Resilience:** These experiences support mental health and development into adulthood.

In short, **PACE it's a way of working that ensures every child in care receives the same compassionate, trauma-informed support, no matter where they live.** This consistency is key to helping children recover from trauma and thrive.

Alex Coman

08 Jan 2026

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HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME 2026/27

Cabinet Member & Portfolio	Cllr Steve Tuckwell – Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Economic Growth
Responsible Officer	Dan Kennedy – Corporate Director of Resident Services
Report Author & Directorate	Gurmeet Matharu – Residents Services
Papers with report	Appendix A - Capital release requests for approval

HEADLINES

Summary	<p>This report seeks Cabinet approval to initiate the Highways Improvement Programme for 2026/27, noting the significant investment proposed together with expected Government funding and seeks release of the necessary capital funds and delegated authority to deliver the programme on time. Initial schemes are set out in the report, and all future schemes, as they are developed, will be reported for transparency as the programme progresses.</p> <p>The report also references to DfT reporting and transparency requirements set out by the Government in March 2025.</p>
<p>Putting our Residents First</p> <p>Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026</p>	<p>This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: An efficient, well-run, digital-enabled council working with partners to deliver services to improve the lives of all our residents</p> <p>This report supports our commitments to residents of: A Thriving Economy</p>
Financial Cost	The report seeks the release approval of £8,207k from the Highways Improvement Programme 2026/27 capital budget for carriageway and footway structural and resurfacing works at various locations in the Borough. The works are due for completion by the end of March 2027.
Select Committee	Residents' Services Select Committee.
Relevant Ward(s)	All Wards

RECOMMENDATIONS

That:

- 1) **the Highways Improvement Programme for 2026/27 of forthcoming carriageway, footway resurfacing, highway drainage, road marking improvements and condition surveys, be approved, noting this will be undertaken in phases with phase 1 as set out in the report and Appendix A.**
- 2) **grant funding from the Department for Transport of £3,207k for Local highways maintenance funding 2026/27 be accepted.**
- 3) **the capital release of £8,207k for all phases, to fund the proposed Highways Structural Improvement Programme for 2026/27, be approved.**
- 4) **authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Resident Services (who may sub-delegate) to amend the programme and determine further works to be funded from the drawdown funds and any other Government grants received, subject to sign-off by the Cabinet Member Portfolio Holder.**
- 5) **It be noted that all schemes will also be published on the Council's website to ensure transparency as well as the other requirements to publicise details about potholes and roadworks advised by the Government in March 2025 and set out in this report.**

Reasons for recommendations

These recommendations propose the allocation of resources to facilitate the works outlined by Highways Services, subject to approval by the Cabinet Member, with the first tranche outlined in this report and subsequent reporting for transparency on the Council's website.

Hillingdon is the second-largest borough in London, with 737 kilometres of carriageways and 1,215 kilometres of footways. The borough also contains over 30,370 streetlights and 33,000 gullies. During the previous financial year, the Council resurfaced 17.3 kilometres (10.74 miles) of carriageways and 10.25 kilometres (6.37 miles) of footways.

Hillingdon Council is committed to developing an active, sustainable, efficient, and safe transport network. A robust transport network will improve public health by reducing pollution and promoting active travel, decrease traffic congestion, and provide better sustainable transport options for short trips, such as walking, cycling, and public transport. This will also benefit the borough's economy by creating vibrant, well-connected areas that encourage local trade and visitors while reducing the negative impacts of traffic congestion.

The strategy for reclaiming and repurposing street space to create this network is a crucial foundation for enabling the Council to meet its broader objectives. This initiative presents an opportunity to renew infrastructure that serves all members of the community, including residents and businesses, while also facilitating the expansion of tree planting, the conversion of hard-standing areas to green spaces, and the promotion of active travel.

The schemes within this programme are developed following condition surveys conducted by independent consultants across the entire highway network, covering both carriageways and footways. The data gathered from these surveys, along with additional information such as complaints, defects, and traffic usage, has been used to prioritise the proposed works. The priority is to mitigate the deterioration of the borough's highway assets, thus preventing significant failures in roads, footways, verges, highway drainage, and street furniture. The aim is also to enhance the serviceability of the highway network, improving its visual appearance, rideability, and structural integrity. The established value management prioritisation criteria have been applied to select roads and pavements for resurfacing.

The proposed programme will be scheduled for implementation by the Council's appointed contractor, which is being considered elsewhere on this agenda.

On the 18 December 2025 the Department for Transport announced the Highways Maintenance Block funding allocations, with Hillingdon confirmed to receive £3,207k, with this report recommending this grant is accepted and added to the Council's Highways Structural Works programme budget of £5,000k that was agreed by Cabinet and Council in February 2026.

In a related matter, the Government requested that councils publish reports on their websites, detailing their spending, the number of potholes filled, the condition of their roads, and efforts to minimise streetworks disruption. Additionally, councils must demonstrate increased spending on long-term preventative maintenance and robust plans for wetter winters. The councils must also show how they are involving communities in decision-making about roadworks, with the public able to report potholes via an online portal.

Alternative options considered / risk management

There are no alternatives due to the level of deterioration as delaying schemes put forward for consideration by the Head of Highways may place additional pressure on the Council's financial resources should permanent repairs not be implemented in a timely manner.

In many instances, any delay of this programme may also have safety implications with a possible consequent impact on the Public Liability Insurance budget.

The Council could choose not to accept the Department for Transport grant and maintain the Capital Programme budget at £5,000k and reduce the cost of works accordingly.

Democratic compliance and/or previous authority

Cabinet may authorise the release of capital funds and initiate the programme of highways improvement works within the budget approved by the Full Council. Cabinet may also delegate for efficient service delivery.

Select Committee comments

None at this stage. However, the Committee has undertaken an in-depth review more generally into the Council's road and pavement resurfacing programme.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Council's approved budget for the 2026/27 Highways Structural and Renewal Works Programme is set out below:

Item	Cost (£)
Approved Budget for Works	6,130,455
Internal Engineers' Fees	630,000
Contingency	446,545
Drainage Road Markings and Condition Surveys	1,000,000
Total Project Cost	8,207,000

Financial Implications

Highways Structural Improvement Programme 2026/27 Budget £8,207k; Previously Released Nil; Capital Release Requested £8,207k – Appendix A

The 2026/27 capital programme, approved by Cabinet and Council in February 2026, included a budget of £8,207k for the Highways Structural Improvement Programme, funded from Council resources and grants. The report seeks the release of £8,207k from the Highways Structural Improvement Programme budget, as detailed in Appendix A.

Phase 1 of works is set out in Appendix A, based on indicative costs and is recommended by Officers following independent inspections. Consequently, this leaves remaining funds, including approximately £3,800k for which schemes have not yet been finalised for further carriageways & footways resurfacing works, within the £8,207k budget. A recommendation in this report seeks delegated authority to approve future schemes to the Corporate Director of Residents Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member. For transparency, the full list of schemes will be published on the Council's website when finalised.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities

The carriageway resurfacing and footway improvement programme contains schemes to limit the deterioration of the fabric of the Borough's highways asset that can result in serious failure of roads, footways, verges, highway drainage and street furniture and improve the serviceability of the highway network for the benefit of residents and other road users.

Consultation carried out or required

None required.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and concurs with the budgetary position set out above, noting that the proposed highway structural works will be funded from the approved Capital Budget for Highways Structural Works 2026/27.

Legal

Legal Services confirm that the Council, as a highway authority, is responsible for carrying out this function pursuant to section 41 of the Highways Act 1980. By agreeing the recommendations, the Council will be entering into an agreement with the Department for Transport. The Council's legal team will provide advice and assistance in respect of legal matters relating to subsequent contracts/grant agreements that will be required.

Thus, there are no legal impediments to the Council agreeing the recommendations and authorising the capital release recommended in this report, although any contract that is entered into by the Council, must comply with the Council's Procurement Standing Orders.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Government announcement 23 March 2025](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/highways-maintenance-funding-allocations/highways-maintenance-block-formula-allocations-2026-to-2030>

APPENDIX A - CAPITAL RELEASE REQUESTS FOR APPROVAL

Highways Structural Works Programme 2026/27 (Phase 1)

Location (Ward)	Project / Expenditure Title FW – Footway CW – Carriageway	Information	Funds Release Sought £
LEA CRESCENT (RUISLIP)	CW	FROM CLYFFORD ROAD TO CLYFFORD ROAD	
A408 STOCKLEY ROAD (HEATHROW)	CW	FROM HOLLOWAY LANE TO PROLOGIS RBT	
ROYAL LANE (YIEWSLEY)	CW	FROM BIRCH AVENUE TO FALLING LANE	
WHITBY ROAD (RUISLIP MANOR)	CW	FROM VICTORIA ROAD TO BEVERLEY ROAD	
WHITBY ROAD (RUISLIP MANOR)	CW	FROM FIELD END ROAD TO COLLINS DRIVE	
EAST AVENUE (HAYES TOWN)	CW	FROM EASTHOLME TO ORCHARD ROAD	
EAST AVENUE (HAYES TOWN)	CW	FROM COLDHARBOUR LANE TO MINET DRIVE	
COOMBE DRIVE (EASTCOTE)	FW	FROM SOUTHBOURNE GARDENS TO END	
LANGLEY AVENUE (EASTCOTE)	FW	FROM PINE GARDENS TO COOMBE DRIVE	

LEA CRESCENT (RUISLIP)	FW	FROM CLYFFORD ROAD TO CLYFFORD ROAD	
WHITBY ROAD (RUISLIP MANOR)	FW	FROM VICTORIA ROAD TO BEVERLEY ROAD	
WHITBY ROAD (RUISLIP MANOR)	FW	FROM FIELD END ROAD TO COLLINS DRIVE	
FAIRWAY AVENUE (WEST DRAYTON)	FW	FROM FAIRWAY CLOSE TO END HSE NO 150	
FAIRWAY AVENUE (WEST DRAYTON)	FW	FROM LAWN AVENUE TO FAIRWAY CLOSE	
Indicative Phase 1 budget			2,330,847
DRAW DOWN (PHASE 2)	VARIOUS	HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS	3,799,608
DRAINAGE, ROAD MARKINGS & SURVEYS	VARIOUS	HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS	1,000,000
Indicative total works budget			7,130,455
All Locations	CW & FW	Internal Engineers Fees	630,000
All Locations	CW & FW	Contingencies	446,545
Total seeking release			8,207,000
Previously released			0
Budget			8,207,000
Remaining budget			0

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PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE WHITEHALL INFANT SCHOOL AND WHITEHALL JUNIOR SCHOOL

Cabinet Member & Portfolio	Cllr Susan O'Brien – Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education
Responsible Officer	Julie Kelly – Corporate Director of Children Services
Report Author & Directorate	Abi Preston – Director of Education & SEND
Papers with report	<p>Appendix 1 – Equalities Impact Assessment for the proposed amalgamation of Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior Schools</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Proposal for pre-publication – Whitehall Infant School & Whitehall Junior School Proposal</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Pre-publication Information Session presentation</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Whitehall Schools consultation Public Notice</p> <p>Appendix 5 – Whitehall Schools – Statutory Proposal for Amalgamation</p> <p>Appendix 6 – Whitehall Schools Amalgamation – Frequently Asked Questions</p> <p>Appendix 7 – Financial Benchmarking for Whitehall Infant School</p> <p>Appendix 8 – Financial Benchmarking for Whitehall Junior School</p> <p>Appendix 9 – Information Sessions presentation</p> <p>Appendix 10 – School Place Planning Consultation – Proposal to Amalgamate Whitehall Schools (1-19)</p> <p>Appendix 11 – Academic Research of the benefits of Amalgamation</p>

HEADLINES

Summary	<p>The London Borough of Hillingdon have consulted on a proposal for Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School to amalgamate to form a single three-form entry maintained primary school for children aged 3 to 11 years. This change would take effect from 1st September 2026, if approved, with a total published pupil number (PAN) of 630. In order to amalgamate the two schools and create a primary school, the Council are proposing to (technically) close Whitehall Infant School and extend the age range of Whitehall Junior School to form a primary school. No land or buildings will be affected by the proposal, and all assets would transfer to the Primary School if the amalgamation is approved.</p> <p>Following the DfE statutory process, it is being recommended to amalgamate the two schools.</p>
<p>Putting our Residents First</p> <p>Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026</p>	<p>This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: An efficient, well-run, digital-enabled council working with partners to deliver services to improve the lives of all our residents</p> <p>This report supports our commitments to residents of: Thriving, Healthy Households</p> <p>This proposal is in line with the Council's Amalgamation Policy (Background paper 1).</p>

Financial Cost	If approved, there will be an eventual loss of the lump sum income phased over 2 years, usually available per school. However, in the long-term the two schools will benefit from economies of scale efficiency savings and will receive the same level of lump sum funding as all other Primary schools in the Borough. No other funding will be directly affected as a result of this proposal.
Select Committee	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
Ward(s)	Uxbridge, All

RECOMMENDATIONS

That :

1. the responses from the consultation based on the proposals set out, along with the Equalities Impact Assessment, be duly considered;
2. the (technical) closure of the Whitehall Infant School on Monday 31st August 2026 and the extension of the age range of the Whitehall Junior School, to amalgamate both schools to create an all-through primary school from Tuesday 1st September 2026, be approved.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

The Council and schools are expected to consider the long-term vision of each school, ensure the best outcomes for our children and young people, and the sustainability of schools. Part of this responsibility is to continue to:

- improve and provide the best possible education and care for every child;
- provide an excellent working environment and experience for staff; and
- support and work with their local community

There are a range of benefits in combining the existing schools into a new primary school through the statutory amalgamation process, which include:

- A consistent approach to the ways in which children are taught and supported, recognising the current strengths of both schools.
- Increased opportunities for children in all key stages to come together for pastoral, social and creative activities.
- Consistency of parental involvement throughout the primary phase of education by having the ability to foster longer-term relationships with families within one school.
- Communication between school and parents will be simplified, especially for parents with children in both schools. It would remove any duplication and ensure a joined-up approach for events, training and other matters.
- Removes the need for parents to apply for a place at the Junior School as children would automatically continue their education as part of one Whitehall school.

- Increased career development opportunities for staff through the sharing of a wider range of expertise and the possibility to gain experience and an understanding of all Primary Key Stages.
- Greater opportunity for cost effectiveness through economies of scale e.g. in purchasing, ensuring the best provision possible for the children;

Both Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School are community maintained schools located in the Uxbridge ward and were both graded 'Good' at their last Ofsted Inspection. Whitehall Infant School was inspected in November 2024 and maintained its grade from the full inspection in March 2015, and Whitehall Junior School was inspected in June 2023 and maintained its grade from the full inspection in September 2014.

Both schools are located adjacent to each other and effectively share one site. As they are community maintained schools, this means they are both maintained by Hillingdon Council and the Council owns the buildings and the land. The Local Authority is also responsible for determining the school admission arrangements for both schools.

The Hillingdon Infant and Junior Amalgamation Policy, September 2022, (see Background paper 1) states that "The London Borough of Hillingdon will require Governing Bodies of all separate infant and junior schools to consider amalgamating their two linked schools when one or more of the following 'trigger circumstances' occur, unless there are compelling and overriding reasons":

- A. A headteacher vacancy arises in either or both schools.**
- B. Total pupil numbers in either school are 25% or more below the Published Admission Number.
- C. Ofsted inspection in one of the schools identifies a 'Requires Improvement' judgement.
- D. One or both of the schools cannot set a balanced budget or has financial problems.
- E. One or both of the schools involved is judged to be a 'School causing concern' by the London Borough of Hillingdon.
- F. One or both schools have PANs or are recruiting at below two forms of entry – making the individual schools relatively small and at risk of becoming unviable within the Hillingdon funding context.
- G. Other pressures whereby the educational provision would be improved through amalgamation such as provision of SEN support, staff recruitment and retention or issues linked to the buildings.

Following the announcement that the Headteacher of Whitehall Infant School would be retiring in August 2026, the schools met trigger A as listed above. Initial discussions were then held with both governing bodies to outline and explore the potential for amalgamation.

The potential of amalgamating Infant and Junior schools, in line with the amalgamation policy, has been discussed with schools over the last few years at various collective and individual meetings, and schools have been made aware that the Council would propose this solution under the appropriate circumstances.

Both schools have been affected by the ongoing decline in the birth rate across Hillingdon, which has resulted in Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School reducing their Published Admissions Numbers from 120 (4FE) to 90 (3FE) from September 2025.

Whitehall Infant School

Whitehall Infant School						
Census	Whole School PAN	Pupils on Roll				% Vacancies
		R	Yr 1	Yr 2	Total on Roll	
Oct-20	360	93	115	86	294	18%
Oct-21	360	100	96	114	310	14%
Oct-22	360	100	107	95	302	16%
Oct-23	360	90	99	102	291	19%
Oct-24	360	87	102	98	287	20%
Oct-25	330	86	88	105	279	15%

*The October 25 figure shows a reduction of 30 in the PAN, as PAN changes only take effect in the year of entry, which in this case, is Reception.

Whitehall Junior School

Whitehall Junior School							
Census	Whole School PAN	Pupils on Roll				Total on Roll	% Vacancies
		Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6		
Oct-20	480	103	87	104	88	382	20%
Oct-21	480	86	99	87	106	378	21%
Oct-22	480	116	88	93	88	385	20%
Oct-23	480	90	115	89	90	384	20%
Oct-24	480	109	87	118	85	399	17%
Oct-25	450	96	110	91	122	419	7%

*The October 25 figure shows a reduction of 30 in the PAN, as PAN changes only take effect in the year of entry, which in this case, is Year 3.

Alternative options considered / risk management

- **Option 1:** Propose to amalgamate Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior School
 - This was considered the best option and is recommended by Officers as it would provide a range of benefits outlined above, and lead to a more sustainable and viable school in the long term.
- **Option 2:** Do not propose to amalgamate the two schools
 - This would not support the schools to be more financially secure, especially in light of the reduction in demand for primary school places and would not be in line with the amalgamation policy.

- **Option 3:** Consider federating the schools under a single governing body
 - This was considered instead of amalgamation. However, in this model, each school would retain its over leadership team but operate under a single executive headteacher, and governing body. This would not provide the required security for the schools or benefits to families outlined in the proposals.

Democratic compliance / previous authority

Cabinet is the body to consider school organisational changes where there are representations/objections received.

Select Committee comments

The Children, Families and Education Select Committee considered this matter at its meeting on Thursday 12th March 2026 and formal comments from the Committee are below, with the broader minutes of the meeting available as a background paper:

“The Committee recognises that the proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Schools will result in a consistent approach to the ways in which children are taught and supported, recognising the current strengths of both schools. It will also provide greater opportunity for cost effectiveness through economies of scale. Although this report has been submitted to the Select Committee while the formal consultation remains open, the Committee notes that Cabinet will receive the full consultation results to ensure an informed decision is made.”

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Equality Impact Assessment for both schools

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carefully considered in relation to the proposed amalgamation of Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior Schools (Appendix 1). It is not expected that this proposal will have any significant impact on pupils, staff, or the wider community, as the newly formed primary school will continue to operate in much the same way as it currently does.

Since all children currently enrolled at both schools will remain on the same site, within the same school community, and continue to be supported by the same staff, and curriculum, no adverse effects are anticipated for pupils with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Key points include:

- No change to the school’s Net Capacity;
- No change to the Published Admissions Number (PAN) for either school;
- No change to the curriculum being delivered.
- The assessment identifies that boys, pupils from ‘other’ ethnic backgrounds, pupils with English as an additional language (EAL), and pupils receiving Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support are overrepresented in the affected cohort when compared to boroughwide averages. These groups may therefore be more susceptible to any unintended negative impacts arising from the proposed changes. However, the EIA confirms that funding streams allocated to support children with

SEND (including SEN Support and Education, Health and Care Plans) and pupils who are disadvantaged (through pupil premium funding) are both calculated on a per pupil basis. As a result, the amalgamation will not directly affect the funding streams available to these groups.

The amalgamation process will be managed with care and sensitivity, ensuring that the needs of all pupils, particularly those with SEND or additional needs, are fully considered and supported throughout.

The impact of the proposed amalgamation will be closely monitored in collaboration with both schools and their governing bodies, and appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented if necessary.

Financial Implications

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block Funding represents the majority of funding for schools within Hillingdon and is based on the number of pupils attending the school, although each school may receive additional DSG funding or Grants.

If the schools amalgamate, the combined school will only be eligible for one lump sum (an allocation from the Dedicated Schools Grant provided to individual schools to support fixed costs that is currently £165,436 a year – based on the budget for 2025/26) in the future.

As detailed in the [Schools operational guide: 2026 to 2027 - GOV.UK](#), “where schools amalgamate after 1 April 2026, the new school will receive funding equivalent to the formula funding of the closing schools added together for the appropriate proportion of the year. This means that they receive the combined lump sums for the remainder of the year and 70% of the second lump sum in the following year. Local authorities can apply to provide a second year of protection. This needs to be discussed and agreed with Schools Forum.”

Amalgamating the two schools will ultimately result in the loss of one of the lump sum funding allocations that each school currently receives. However, the combined school may achieve improved economies of scale, including savings from needing only one headteacher, which could help offset the impact of this funding reduction. If the proposal was approved, the new primary school would receive the same lump sum payment as all other primary schools in the Borough. Funding for pupils with SEND would not be affected by the proposed amalgamation.

Both schools’ combined funding is approximately £4,624k funding per year. If the proposal is approved, this would mean that following financial year (2027/28) after amalgamation the amount received would be £4,575k and the following financial year (2028/29) funding would be £4,459k. The figures above and detailed in the table below are based on the assumption that the number of pupils remain constant.

DSG Schools Block Funding	2026/27 Financial Year (2 lump sums)	2027/28 Financial Year (1 lump sum + 70% of second lump sum)	2028/29 Financial Year (1 lump sum)
Whitehall Infant School funding	£1,912k	£1,863k	£1,747k
Whitehall Junior School funding	£2,712k	£2,712k	£2,712k
Combined Whitehall Schools funding	£4,624k	£4,575k	£4,459k

* Early Years Funding is not included in the figures above

It is important to note that other DSG funding e.g. Early Years funding (EYSFF), Pupil Premium and other grants paid to the school may be affected in future years, however, these are based on pupil numbers and would not be affected by amalgamation (these would be depending upon the grant conditions, guidance and specific calculations).

Once the school receive their budget, they decide how this is allocated across the school, and what the funding is spent on including staff and resources.

The amalgamation will have no impact on the Council's General Fund, as all financial implications are contained within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The proposal does not require additional Council funding or create any new pressure on the General Fund.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

As both schools are maintained schools, Hillingdon Council can propose to (technically) close Whitehall Infant School under Section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, with notice given in accordance with The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 and propose to extend the age range of Whitehall Junior School from 7-11-year-olds to 3-11-year-olds, with notice given in accordance with The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.

The two proposals follow two separate guidance processes: [Opening and closing maintained schools](#) and [Making significant changes \('prescribed alterations'\) to maintained schools](#). This sets out an expectation that interested parties are consulted informally prior to publication of a statutory proposal and formal consultation.

While there is no longer a statutory 'pre-publication' consultation period for proposed prescribed alteration changes to increase the age range of a school, there is a statutory requirement to consult any parties the proposer thinks appropriate before publishing proposals under section 15 proposals to close a maintained school. Consultation was carried out in Spring 2026 with the two Whitehall schools related to this proposal, however, the following engagement with all 10 sets of Infant and Junior Schools in Hillingdon by Council Officers should also be noted:

- 11th June 2024 – a letter was sent to all Infant and Junior Headteachers in keeping with the Council's Infant and Junior Schools Amalgamation policy (Successful, Sustainable, Viable Schools). As part of this policy, on the retirement or resignation of the Headteacher from

either of the linked Infant and Junior Schools, the two schools will amalgamate and form an all through primary school.

- 18th June 2024 – Head Teachers Termly – Presentation by Head of Education and Lifelong Learning to go through benefits of infant and junior amalgamations and recognising the different contexts.
- 1st July 2024 - Amalgamation Information Session 1 for Head Teachers and Governors of Infant and Junior Schools
- 2nd July 2024 - Amalgamation Information Session 2 for Head Teachers and Governors of Infant and Junior Schools

During the Autumn term of 2025, the local authority was informed that the headteacher of Whitehall Infant School would be retiring at the end of the 2025/26 academic year, with Officers meeting with both headteachers and Chair of Governors in late November 2025. In early January 2026, meetings were held with each Governing Body to outline the proposed amalgamation process and address any questions they had.

A period of pre-publication consultation was carried out between Tuesday 20th January 2026 and Friday 13th February 2026.

An informal consultation document (see **Appendix 2**) was made available in hard copy and electronic form, that outlined the proposals and relevant background information. Hard copies were made available on request from the Local Authority. This information was sent to both Headteachers and Chair of Governors to share with parents of all children attending both schools on Monday 19th January 2026 on how to access the consultation document and submit a response.

Information about the informal consultation and a survey about the proposals was included on the Hillingdon ‘Have Your Say’ webpage.

Three online consultation meetings were hosted by Local Authority officers that provided parents/carers, staff, governors and members of the public the opportunity to comment on and ask questions about the proposals. One of these events was reserved for school staff only. A summary of dates and attendees is set out in the table below:

Information Session Date	Information Session Time	Attendees	Number of Attendees
Monday 26 th January 2026	4:00 pm to 5:00 pm	Virtual Staff Meeting	47
Wednesday 28 th January 2026	12:30 pm to 1:30 pm	Virtual Public Meeting	7
Wednesday 28 th January 2026	5:00 pm to 6:00 pm	Virtual Public Meeting	9

Please see **Appendix 3** – Information Session Presentation for a copy of the presentation used at the events.

Parents, carers, staff, governors and members of the public were also invited to share their views by responding to the consultation by any of the following ways;

- completing the online consultation form
- writing directly to the Council
- attending an online event

Following the end of the pre-publication consultation period, a Chief Officer Report was submitted which details the key themes raised in the responses (**Background paper 3**). The report was approved on Thursday 19th February 2026 and recommended proceeding to a formal consultation process through the publication of a statutory notice for the expansion of the age range at Whitehall Junior School, and the (technical) closure of Whitehall Infant School, to become one primary school.

Publication

As part of the formal consultation, the Council issued a Public Notice (**Appendix 4**) which was sent to the West London Gazette for publication on Wednesday 25th February 2026, with 6 copies put up around the school site on entrance/ exits in line with the statutory process.

As the proposal for one change is linked to another, this was made clear in any notices that were published. Where a proposal by a local authority is 'related' to a proposal by other proposers such as this, the 2 notices could be published together and cross-refer to the other.

The full proposal was published on the schools' websites and the Council website, and included information setting out (in line with the statutory process):

- how copies of the proposal may be obtained;
- that anybody can object to, or comment on, the proposal;
- the date that the representation period ends; and
- the local authority's address to which objections or comments should be submitted.

Representation

The statutory proposal (**Appendix 5**) was available from Wednesday 25th February 2026 at 9:00am to Wednesday 25th March 2026 at 5:00pm on the consultation page of the Hillingdon Council website. This included a brief outline of the proposed change, the full proposal, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document (**Appendix 6**), a copy of the Public Notice, a questionnaire to obtain feedback, financial benchmarking for Whitehall Infant School (**Appendix 7**) and Whitehall Junior School (**Appendix 8**).

Information regarding the consultation was publicised to all schools within the Borough via email. Both Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School shared the information on their school webpages by including the PDFs of the above documents as well as including a link to the Hillingdon Council consultation webpage.

As Hillingdon Council also receives school admissions applications from residents who live outside of the Borough, the consultation was designed to be inclusive. Therefore, officers contacted the following surrounding Councils to share details of the consultation:

- London Borough of Ealing
- London Borough of Hounslow
- London Borough of Brent
- London Borough of Harrow
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Buckinghamshire County Council
- Slough Borough Council

There were two drop-in sessions at the school site, where Officers were on hand to answer any questions in person and to explain the proposal as necessary. This was scheduled for Tuesday 3rd March 2026 between 1:45pm – 2:45pm, for stakeholders including parents/guardians, school staff and residents and a further session was held for school staff separately, from 3:30pm to 4:30pm. A short presentation was delivered to stakeholders during the information sessions (**Appendix 9**), after which attendees were able to ask Officers or members of the senior leadership teams from both schools any additional questions they had about the proposal. The presentation was later uploaded to the Council’s website so that stakeholders who could not attend the sessions could view it.

Information Session Date	Information Session Time	Attendees	Number of Attendees
Tuesday 3 rd March 2026	1:45 pm to 2:45 pm	Public Meeting at Whitehall Junior School	7
Tuesday 3 rd March 2026	3:30 pm to 4:30 pm	Staff Meeting at Whitehall Infant School	12
Monday 9 th March 2026	12:30 pm to 13:30 pm	Virtual Public Meeting	0
Monday 9 th March 2026	5:00 pm to 6:00 pm	Virtual Public Meeting	0

The virtual lunchtime session held on Monday 9th March 2026, from 12:30pm to 1:30pm, had no attendees, however, Officers and the Headteacher of Whitehall Junior School remained available for the entire drop-in session.

The evening session on Monday 9th March 2026, from 5pm to 6pm, was also not attended by any stakeholders, through Officers were present and available throughout the drop-in period.

The consultation closed on Wednesday 25th March 2026. All responses have been thoroughly considered and reflected in the report presented to Cabinet, ensuring that every voice is heard.

Consultation Responses

19 responses were submitted via the online questionnaire (which can be read in full detail in **Appendix 10**). The responses are summarised below.

Online Questionnaire responses are summarised below:

- 15** respondents agreed with the proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School to form a single three-form entry school
 - Yes – 15
 - No – 4
 - Don’t know - 0
- Of the **4** respondents that answered ‘No’, reasons have been summarised below in the paper.

3. **2** respondents agreed that the proposed changes would disadvantage any Hillingdon residents
 - Yes – 2
 - No – 17
 - Don't know – 0
4. Of the **2** respondents that agreed or answered 'Don't know' that the changes will disadvantage Hillingdon residents, reasons have been summarised below in the paper.
5. **19** respondents have confirmed their interest in the proposal as:
 - A parent/ Carer/guardian – 4
 - A staff member – 11
 - A local resident – 0
 - Prefer not to say – 0
 - Other – 4
6. **19** respondents confirmed whether they have children under the age of 18 living in their household.
 - None – 6
 - 1 child – 6
 - 2 children – 5
 - 3 children – 1
 - 4 children - 1
 - 5+ children – 0
 - Didn't answer - 0
7. Respondents were invited to state which school(s) their child(ren) currently attend which are set out below:
 - Whitehall Infant School - 3
 - Whitehall Junior School – 3
 - Other Primary school in Hillingdon - 2
 - Other Secondary school in Hillingdon – 4
 - Out of borough Primary school - 1
 - Out of borough Secondary school – 1
 - N/A - 8

(please note that some respondents have more than 1 child)

Online Questionnaire responses and themes raised at information sessions are summarised below:

The information below seeks to set out the themes from the consultation to the Council's proposal to (technically) close Whitehall Infant School and to extend the age range of Whitehall Junior School from 7-11-year-olds to 3-11-year-olds.

Consultation Themes

1. Educational benefits and consistency

- A large proportion of respondents (79%) were supportive of the proposed amalgamation to bring the two schools together and felt that it will have a positive impact promoting consistent teaching practices and supporting both schools to improve outcomes and strengthen their reputation within the local community.

2. Schools operating well as separate Infant and Junior schools creating expertise in each setting

- Some respondents expressed worry that merging the Infant School with the Junior School may diminish the strong family-centred ethos and specialist early-years knowledge that currently characterise the Infant School. They felt this could negatively affect the outcomes for younger children and their families.

The local authority recognises the high-quality early-years practice and strong pastoral ethos that the Infant School has developed including the Early Years provision. Preserving and embedding this expertise within the new primary school would be a priority for the school if the amalgamation was approved.

To support this, leaders and staff from the Infant and Junior schools are fully involved in shaping the new school structure, culture, and curriculum. The aim is to ensure that existing strengths are not only retained but would be shared more widely across the new school. Senior leaders across the new school including those from the Infant school would continue to champion early-years, maintain family-focused values, and support colleagues to deliver continuity of practice.

Through this collaborative planning, shared professional development, and a leadership model that values the Infant and Junior School's existing expertise, the new primary school will be well placed to sustain and build upon the positive outcomes currently achieved for children and families across both schools.

3. Loss of Funding and Resources

- Some attendees are concerned that the amalgamation will lead to a significant reduction in the school's budget, which could negatively impact the quality of education, staffing levels, and extracurricular activities.

The local authority recognises the concerns regarding funding. Based on the financial benchmarking information, and the retirement of the Infant school Headteacher, if the proposed amalgamation goes ahead, council officers feel confident that the school will not be negatively impacted and will work closely with the school to identify opportunities for additional efficiencies and savings. In order to facilitate the loss of the lump sum funding, there is a transition period over 2 years as set out earlier in the paper to enable the proposed school to organise appropriately. The funding for the school would be in line with other Primary schools across Hillingdon.

4. Changes to staff contracts

- Some attendees to the engagement sessions wanted to confirm whether there would be any changes to staff members contracts.

Teachers' contracts would remain unchanged, apart from updating the school name to reflect the new primary school if the amalgamation was approved. TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings: Protection of Employment) would not apply, as the London Borough of Hillingdon is already the employer for staff at both schools.

5. Greater Efficiencies achieved through amalgamation

- Some respondents believe that amalgamating the schools will lead to more efficient use of resources and cost savings. They argue that a single, larger school can benefit from more shared resources and staff, reducing duplication and lowering operational costs.

The Council agree that these is the opportunity for efficiencies and details can be found in **Appendix 11** and in the supporting documents, including financial, communication and learning efficiencies.

Next steps

As detailed in the relevant guidance, *Making significant changes to maintained schools* (**Background paper 4**) and *Opening and closing maintained schools* (**Background paper 5**), the next steps are set out for decision makers below following the consultation process.

When issuing a decision, the decision maker can:

- reject the proposal;
 - approve the proposal without modification;
- or
- approve the proposal, with or without modification, subject to certain conditions (such as the granting of planning permission) being met.

If approval is granted by Cabinet, the Council's Education Service will notify the Department for Education and implement the proposal following the requirements set within the [School organisation: local-authority-maintained schools - GOV.UK](#) guidance [Opening and closing maintained schools](#) and [Making significant changes \('prescribed alterations'\) to maintained schools](#).

The school will open as a Primary school on 1st September 2026 if amalgamation is approved. In order to amalgamate the two schools and create a primary school, the Council are proposing to (technically) close Whitehall Infant School on 31st August 2026 and extend the age range of Whitehall Junior School. No land or buildings will be affected by the proposal, and all assets would transfer to the Primary school if the amalgamation is approved.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance have reviewed this report and concurs with the Financial Implications set out above, noting the recommendations to consider the responses from the consultations and to approve the technical closure of Whitehall Infant School, to extend the age range of Whitehall Junior School, to amalgamate both schools to create a Primary School from September 2026.

Furthermore, it is noted the amalgamation will result in a reduction in Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), Schools Block Funding. While the combined school will continue to receive a single lump sum in line with other primary schools across Hillingdon, the overall funding will decrease for the new Whitehall Primary School over time. Based on current pupil numbers and non-inflation adjusted projections the funding will reduce from £4,624k in 2026/27, £4,575k in 2027/28 and further to £4,459k in 2028/29. Budgetary control will remain with the school's leadership and Governing Body, who will be responsible for the allocation of available funds.

It is also noted that the other DSG funding streams and targeted grants will remain unaffected by the amalgamation as these are determined by pupil demographics and needs.

Legal

The local authority must have regard to the statutory guidance on opening and closing maintained school. There are no legal impediments to the recommendations within the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Background paper 1](#) – Hillingdon Infant and Junior Amalgamation Policy – September 2022

[Background paper 2](#) – Proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior Schools – Select Committee minutes – Thursday 12th March 2026

[Background paper 3](#) – Chief Officer Decision Notice – Whitehall Infant and Junior Schools

[Background paper 4](#) – Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools

[Background paper 5](#) – Opening and Closing maintained schools

[Background paper 6](#) – Schools operational guide: 2026 to 2027

Select Committee minutes - [London Borough of Hillingdon - Agenda for Children, Families and Education Select Committee on Thursday, 12th March, 2026, 7.00 pm](#)



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment: Proposed Amalgamation of Whitehall Schools

STEP A) Description of what is to be assessed and its relevance to equality

What is being assessed? Please tick ✓

Review of a service Staff restructure Decommissioning a service

Changing a policy Tendering for a new service Other ✓

Proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior Schools, by closing Whitehall Infant School and extending the age range of Whitehall Junior School to become a Primary School for children aged 4-11.

Who is accountable? E.g. Head of Service or Corporate Director

Abi Preston -Director SEND and Education
Julie Kelly - Director of Children's Services

Date assessment completed and approved by accountable person

23rd February 2026

Names and job titles of people carrying out the assessment

James Rogers, School Place Planning Officer
Vicky Trott, Equality and Wellbeing Manager

A.1) What are the main aims and intended benefits of what you are assessing?

The proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School would be achieved by closing the infantschool, expanding the age range of the junior school to admit children from 3 years old to 11 years old and transferring on-roll children at the infant school to the primary school roll.

Both of these schools are located adjacent to each other and effectively share one site. As they are community maintained schools, this means they are both maintained by Hillingdon Council and the Council owns the buildings and the land. All the pupils attending the schools at the time of amalgamation would transfer to the combined school, and there would be a similar staffing need.

The intended benefit of the proposal, if approved, is that the two schools, which currently operate as separate legal entities, can combine to become one primary school and will operate as such in the future.

The benefits in combining the existing schools into a new primary school through the proposed statutory amalgamation process include:

- A consistent approach to the ways in which children are taught and supported, recognising the current strengths of both schools.
- Increased opportunities for children in all key stages to come together for pastoral, social, and creative activities.
- Consistency of parental involvement throughout the primary phase of education by having the ability to foster longer-term relationships with families within one school.
- Communication between school and parents will be simplified, especially for parents with children in both schools. It would remove any duplication and ensure a joined-up approach for events, training and other matters.
- Removes the need for parents to apply for a place at the Junior School as children would automatically continue their education as part of one Whitehall Primary school.
- Increased career development opportunities for staff through the sharing of a wider range of expertise and the possibility to gain experience and an understanding of all Primary Key Stages.
- Greater opportunity for cost effectiveness through economies of scale e.g. in purchasing, ensuring the best provision possible for the children.

A.2) Who are the pupils potentially affected by what you are assessing? What is their equality profile?

Pupil Demographics

Data is from Oct 2025 Census - children of statutory school age	Borough average (Primary)		Compared to rest of planning area (PPA 6)		Whitehall Infant School		Whitehall Junior School		Amalgamated Whitehall schools (Combined)		Comparisons	
	Actual	%	Actual	%	Actual	%	Actual	%	Actual	%	Compared to Borough average	Compared to rest of planning area
Total Pupils	25,529		2494		279		419		698			
Male	12,955	50.7%	1256	50.4%	146	52.3%	218	52.0%	364	52.1%	-1.40%	-1.79%
Female	12,574	49.3%	1226	49.2%	133	47.7%	201	48.0%	334	47.9%	1.40%	1.31%
Disadvantage Pupils	5,914	23.2%	645	25.9%	79	28.3%	148	35.3%	227	32.5%	-9.36%	-6.66%
Eligible for Free School Meals	5,611	22.0%	578	23.2%	74	26.5%	142	33.9%	216	30.9%	-8.97%	-7.77%
Service Families	237	0.9%	59	2.4%	3	1.1%	5	1.2%	8	1.1%	-0.22%	1.22%
English as Additional Language	13,275	52.0%	1337	53.6%	169	60.6%	226	53.9%	395	56.6%	-4.59%	-2.98%
Ethnicity												
Total Pupils	25529		2494		279		419		698			
Asian	8295	32.5%	566	22.7%	77	27.6%	101	24.1%	178	25.5%	6.99%	-2.81%
White	7391	29.0%	817	32.8%	61	21.9%	108	25.8%	169	24.2%	4.74%	8.55%
Mixed	3264	12.8%	402	16.1%	30	10.8%	65	15.5%	95	13.6%	-0.82%	2.51%
Other	2057	8.1%	224	9.0%	35	12.5%	62	14.8%	97	13.9%	-5.84%	-4.92%
Black	1905	7.5%	155	6.2%	29	10.4%	52	12.4%	81	11.6%	-4.14%	-5.39%
Refused	260	1.0%	29	1.2%	4	1.4%	4	1.0%	8	1.1%	-0.13%	0.02%
Information not obtained	97	0.4%	34	1.4%		0.0%	1		1	0.1%	0.24%	1.22%
Chinese	81	0.3%	21	0.8%			1	0.2%	1	0.1%	0.17%	0.70%
Blank	2179	8.5%	246	9.9%	43	15.4%	25	6.0%	68	9.7%	-1.21%	0.12%
SEN Support												
Total number of Children with SEN Support	3717	14.56%	356	14.27%	46	16.49%	67	15.99%	113	16.19%	-1.63%	-1.91%
SEN EHCP												
Total number of Children with SEN EHCP	927	3.63%	62	2.49%	8	2.87%	11	2.63%	19	2.72%	0.91%	-0.24%

The data shows that:

Sex

Male pupils are slightly overrepresented in the combined roll of both Whitehall Schools, representing 52.1% of the total roll, which is +1.4% above the borough average (50.7%) and +1.8% above average of Place Planning Area 6 (PPA).

Disadvantaged Pupils and Pupils Eligible for Free School Meals

30.9% of pupils at Whitehall schools are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), +9% above the borough average (22.0%) and +7.7% compared to average of PPA 6 (23.2%).

English as an additional language (EAL)

56.6% of pupils on roll at Whitehall schools have EAL, which is +4.6% above the borough average (52.0%) and +2.9% above the average of PPA 6 (53.6%).

Ethnicity

The top three ethnic groups of pupils attending Whitehall schools are: 25.5% Asian, 24.2% White, and 13.9% Other, compared to the top three ethnic groups for the borough average across Primary settings of 32.5% Asian, 29.0% White, and 12.8% Mixed.

The top three ethnic groups of the average pupil planning area 6 are 32.8% White, 22.7% Asian and 16.1% Mixed.

SEN Support and SEN EHCP

The proportion of pupils at Whitehall schools receiving SEN Support is 16.2%, +1.6% higher than the borough average (14.5%) and +1.9% above the PPA 6 average (14.2%).

The proportion of pupils at Whitehall schools with an EHCP is 2.75%, -0.91% below the borough average (3.63%) and +0.24% higher than the PPA 6 average (2.49%).

A.3) Who are the stakeholders in this assessment and what is their interest in it?

Stakeholders	Interest
Pupils currently on roll at Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior Schools	To ensure that there is continuity of education, emotional well-being, access to consistent teaching and support services, and minimal disruption during transition.
Parents and Carers of pupils currently on roll at Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior Schools	To ensure that there is continuity of education, emotional well-being, access to consistent teaching and support services, and minimal disruption during transition.
Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior Schools Staff	To ensure that there is continuity of education, emotional well-being, access to consistent teaching and support services, and minimal disruption during transition.
School Leaderships and Governing Bodies	<p>To ensure that there is continuity of education, emotional well-being, access to consistent teaching and support services, and minimal disruption during transition.</p> <p>To ensure effective governance, maintaining educational standards, and managing the transition smoothly.</p>
Director of Children's Services & Director of SEND & Education	<p>To ensure that there is continuity of education, emotional well-being, access to consistent teaching and support services, and minimal disruption during transition.</p> <p>To ensure strategic oversight of education provision, ensuring compliance with statutory duties and alignment with council priorities.</p>

<p>Cabinet Leader and Council Cabinet</p>	<p>To ensure that there is continuity of education, emotional well-being, access to consistent teaching and support services, and minimal disruption during transition.</p> <p>To ensure strategic oversight of education provision, ensuring compliance with statutory duties and alignment with council priorities.</p>
<p>Local Residents</p>	<p>To ensure the preservation of the identity and cohesion of the local community, ensuring local children have access to quality education, and maintaining the use of school facilities for community purposes.</p>

A.4) Which protected characteristics or community issues are relevant to the assessment?

Protected Characteristics	Comments
Age	All pupils enrolled at the time of amalgamation would transition to the combined school, with staffing requirements expected to remain consistent. The existing school buildings would continue to be utilised by the amalgamated school.
Disability	The schools have mainstream provision and do not have additionally resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school has children with SEND needs on roll as detailed below.
Gender reassignment	This consideration is not applicable within the scope of the proposed school amalgamation.
Marriage or civil	This consideration is not applicable within the scope of the proposed school amalgamation.
Pregnancy or maternity	This consideration is not applicable within the scope of the proposed school amalgamation.
Race/ Ethnicity	The proposal does not involve any change to the schools' category. They will continue to operate as community schools, welcoming pupils of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. As these schools serve their local catchment areas, the ethnic composition of the pupil population reflects the diversity of the surrounding communities.
Religion or belief	The school category would remain unchanged following the amalgamation if it is approved. These schools continue to operate as community schools, serving pupils from their local area. Accordingly, the religious and belief profiles of the student populations reflect the characteristics of their respective communities.
Sex	The co-educational status of the school remains unchanged as a result of the proposed amalgamation. These are community schools that primarily serve their local catchment areas, and the gender composition of their pupil populations reflects the demographic of profile of those communities.
Sexual Orientation	This consideration is not applicable within the scope of the proposed school amalgamation.
Socio-economic status	This consideration is not applicable within the scope of the proposed school amalgamation.
Carers	This consideration is not applicable within the scope of the proposed school amalgamation.
Community Cohesion	This consideration is not applicable within the scope of the proposed school amalgamation.
Community Safety	This consideration is not applicable within the scope of the proposed school amalgamation.
Human Rights	This consideration is not applicable within the scope of the proposed school amalgamation.

STEP B) Consideration of information; data, research, consultation,

engagement

B.1) Consideration of information and data - what have you got and what is it telling you?

The data in section A2 indicates that, within the proposed combined school, there is a group of pupils who are proportionately more likely to be boys who identify as from an 'other' ethnic background, to have English as an additional language, and to be receiving SEN support, compared with the borough's primary school population overall.

Should the proposals be agreed, the impact of the changes will be monitored on an ongoing basis and any mitigation actions put in place where required.

Consultation

B.2) Did you carry out any consultation or engagement as part of this assessment?

Please tick NO

YES

This assessment is part of a wider consultation with stakeholders regarding the proposed amalgamation of the schools.

A pre-publication consultation was held between Tuesday 20th January 2026 and Friday 13th February 2026, with 3 virtual information sessions held for stakeholders.

The statutory consultation started on Wednesday 25th February and will end on Wednesday 25th March at 5pm.

Staff members, Parents, Carers and Local residents who may be affected by the proposal have been encouraged to take part in the consultation and virtual and in-person information sessions have been held.

The results of the statutory consultation will be considered and used to inform an updated Equality Impact Assessment if required.

B.3) Provide any other information to consider as part of the assessment

Legal context

The council has a public duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations (Equality Act 2010).

Local context

Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School are both community-maintained and situated next to each other. In their most recent Ofsted inspections, each school received a 'Good' rating.

The proposed amalgamation would formally unite the children and staff members in one school whilst retaining the Whitehall identity. There will be no impact on the day to day running of the school as children will continue in the same classes and be taught in the same buildings. The proposed amalgamation would not displace any pupils, or have any impact on travel, and will therefore have no impact on the community.

The proposal would result in additional certainty for parents as children would have access to an all-through primary education. If the proposal is approved and amalgamation takes place from 1st September 2026, pupils on roll at Whitehall Infant School would have places at the expanded Whitehall Junior School (which would become the Primary school) and pupils in Year 2 at the time would automatically transition to Year 3.

Other considerations such as proposals to change any element of the uniform as a result of the amalgamation, if approved, will be the decision of the school leadership team.

Financial context

One of the key drivers for the proposed amalgamation is the opportunity to align the school's funding structure with that of other primary schools locally and nationally. Under the current arrangement, the infant and junior schools are funded separately, each receiving a lump sum and per-pupil funding based on their respective age ranges. While this is consistent with the National Funding Formula (NFF), it can lead to inefficiencies and funding disparities when compared to other all-through primary schools.

By amalgamating into a single primary school, the new institution would:

- **Receive funding in line with all-through primary schools**, ensuring consistency and fairness in how resources are allocated.
- **Improve financial stability and planning**, reducing administrative duplication and allowing for more flexible deployment of staff and resources.
- **Support long-term sustainability**, particularly in the context of fluctuating pupil numbers and increasing cost pressures.

Loss of second lump sum funding

Following the proposed amalgamation, the new primary school would receive only one lump sum of funding instead of the two currently allocated to the separate infant and junior schools. This would lead to a phased reduction in funding over three years, eventually resulting in a permanent annual budget decrease of approximately £165k a year.

The amalgamated school is expected to benefit from greater economies of scale, including savings generated by the need for only one headteacher, which may help

ease financial pressures caused by reduced funding. However, decisions about where specific savings will be made rest with the school. The governing body will oversee this transition, with the financial and operational implications subject to ongoing monitoring and review to ensure effective oversight and accountability

If the proposal is approved, the Whitehall primary school would receive the same level of lump sum funding as other primary schools across Hillingdon.

Other information and considerations

Impact on Staff

The proposed amalgamation of the infant and junior schools is not anticipated to have a direct impact on existing staff, as all personnel will continue to be employed within the expanded primary school. The management of the school's budget will remain the responsibility of the governing body, and any future considerations regarding staffing arrangements or organisational changes will fall within their remit, which may require the school to complete a new Equalities Impact Assessment in the future. The amalgamation itself does not lead to any direct impact on staff.

Staff would not be subject to a TUPE process, as employees at both schools are already employed by the London Borough of Hillingdon.

Free School Meals and Pupil Premium

The proposed amalgamation of the infant and junior schools will not affect pupils' eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) or the associated Pupil Premium funding. These entitlements are determined by individual family circumstances and are not impacted by changes to school structure or governance and is not expected to negatively impact community engagement or access to enrichment activities such as school trips, workshops, or cultural events. This is calculated on a per pupil basis, therefore will remain consistent.

SEND context

Funding provided for children with SEND, including notional funding and top up funding, will not be impacted by any decision to amalgamate the schools. This is calculated on a per pupil basis therefore will remain consistent.

Uniform

There is no impact to uniform as the current uniform is the same in both schools except for minor changes to the logo. However, the school states that they do not expect parents to have to purchase uniform with logos, therefore, there is not expected to be any impact as a result of amalgamation.

C) Conclusions

The proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior schools is not anticipated to have any material effect; the primary school would largely operate as it does currently.

The proposal cannot pre-empt the decisions that the governing body may make regarding their budget allocation, should the proposed amalgamation be approved by Cabinet, following the loss of the second lump sum. However, the local authority remains committed to supporting and working closely with the school throughout any potential transition.

The assessment shows that there is a cohort of pupils in the proposed combined school who are proportionately more likely to be boys who identify as from an 'other' ethnic background, to have English as an additional language, and to be receiving SEN support, compared with the borough's primary school population overall.

The amalgamation process will be carried out in a supportive way, ensuring that the needs of the pupils are taken into consideration throughout.

Consideration will be given to the need to update this assessment following the results of the consultation exercise.

The outcome and potential impact of the proposed amalgamation will be monitored in conjunction with the school and governors, and any mitigating actions put in place where required.

Signed and dated:



Name and position: Abi Preston, Director of Education and SEND



**Pre-publication (Stage One) Consultation:
Proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Infant
School and Whitehall Junior School**

Cowley Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 2LX

Consultation period:

Tuesday 20th January 2026 to

Friday 13th February 2026

Introduction

Hillingdon Council are proposing to undertake a formal consultation on the future of Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School to form a single Primary School. To start this process the local authority is conducting a pre-publication (stage one) consultation (referred to as the consultation) in line with statutory guidance, to gather the views of staff, families, local residents and any other stakeholders.

This is a formal process governed by statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and it is a technical process. As a result of this we are expected to use a range of technical language which we will look to make accessible to all stakeholders. If you have any queries or questions regarding the language or descriptions within any of our documents, please do not hesitate to contact our team by any of the ways set out in the documentation.

What is the proposal?

The proposal is that Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School are amalgamated to form a single Primary School from 1st September 2026. The newly formed Primary School would continue to use the existing buildings and site as the Infant and Junior schools. The amalgamated school would continue to provide 630 places in Reception to Year 6 (90 per year group) and offer places for children aged from 3 to 11 years old. The consultation will start on Tuesday 20th January 2026 at 9:00am and will end on Friday 13th February 2026 at 5:00pm.

If you would require this document in another language, please contact either Whitehall Infant School, Whitehall Junior School or our team to request this.

Why are we proposing the change?

Hillingdon Council are seeking your views on a proposal to amalgamate (also referred to as merging) Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School.

The headteacher of the Infant School has confirmed her intention to retire at the end of this academic year in August 2026, which means the Infant school meets one of the key triggers outlined in the [Councils Amalgamation Policy](#), representing a good opportunity to bring two good schools together.

The new primary school would be built on a strong foundation, benefiting from the existing strengths and effective practices of both schools, which already collaborate to serve their local community. Over time, this partnership would create further opportunities to enhance whole-school strategies and improve teaching and learning across all key stages.

What are some of the advantages of amalgamation?

The Council see significant advantages in combining the existing schools into a new primary school. Both schools would benefit from working closer together with some of the key benefits to amalgamating Infant and Junior schools including:

- A consistent approach to the ways in which children are taught and supported, recognising the current strengths of both schools.
- Increased opportunities for children in all key stages to come together for pastoral, social and creative activities.
- Consistency of parental involvement throughout the primary phase of education by having the ability to foster longer-term relationships with families within one school;

- Communication between school and parents will be simplified, especially for parents with children in both schools. It would remove any duplication and ensure a joined up approach for events, training and other matters;
- Removes the need for parents to apply for a place at the Junior School as children would automatically continue their education as part of one school.
- Increased career development opportunities for staff through the sharing of a wider range of expertise and the possibility to gain experience and an understanding of all Primary Key Stages.
- Greater opportunity for cost effectiveness through economies of scale e.g. in purchasing, ensuring the best provision possible for the children

Will there be any changes to the size of the school and the school buildings?

No, the size of the school and school buildings will remain exactly the same. The proposed Primary school will have a *published admission number* equal to the sum of the current Infant, Nursery and Junior schools' numbers. Therefore there would be no change to the capacity of the proposed amalgamated Primary school, or the use of the buildings as if the decision were made to proceed.

How would an amalgamation be implemented?

In order to amalgamate the two Whitehall Schools it is proposed to (technically) close one school and expand the age range of the other school. As both schools are community maintained schools, the Local Authority are proposing that Whitehall Infant School will (technically) close, and Whitehall Junior School would expand its age from 3 to 11 year olds. The new school would then be one Primary School. The combined school would retain the same DfE number as the current Junior School.

Will the school be renamed Whitehall Primary School if the schools amalgamate?

If the schools do progress to amalgamation, then the governing body together with the Senior Leadership Team can liaise with staff, parents and carers on a possible new name for the all-through primary school.

What would an amalgamated school look like?

Whitehall Junior School would increase the age range of children it accepts from the current age range to 3 to 11 year olds (from Nursery - Year 6) and would then change its name, to reflect that it educates a wider age range. At the same time Whitehall Infant School would formally (technically) close. The primary school would provide 90 places per year group from Reception to Year 6 and a total of 630 places. All children on roll at the Whitehall Infant School at the point of amalgamation would continue as pupils of the primary school.

Admissions

If the proposal is agreed and both schools amalgamate, the following would apply:

- Children at Whitehall Infant School will automatically be enrolled at the newly amalgamated Primary school.
- Children who have applied for Reception places at Whitehall Infant School for September 2026 would be offered places at the newly formed Primary school through the standard admissions process, using the schools current agreed Admission's Policy.

- Children who have applied to transfer from Whitehall Infant School to Whitehall Junior School for September 2026 will automatically have a place at the Primary School.

Will there be any Financial Implications from amalgamation?

Currently, both Whitehall Infant School to Whitehall Junior School receive separate lump sum allocations. If the proposed amalgamation is approved by Cabinet, the combined primary school will lose one of these “lump sums” (amounting to approximately £159,000) over a two-year period. However, this reduction in funding will be offset by efficiencies gained through economies of scale and reduced staffing costs, particularly due to the planned retirement of the Infant School headteacher at the end of the 2025/26 academic year.

As part of the amalgamation, reviewing how resources are allocated and deployed will help the school offset the impact of losing one lump sum. This process can be supported by using the Gov.uk Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool to compare spending across both schools with similar schools in England, identifying opportunities for greater efficiency.

When would an amalgamation happen if it is approved?

The amalgamated school could be established from 1st September 2026, which would be subject to the statutory consultation process and approval from Cabinet.

Who will be the governors of the primary school?

If amalgamation does go ahead, the Governing Body of Whitehall Junior School will review its Instrument of Government to ensure it accurately records the term of office for each category of governors needed to support the new school with a balanced and effective governance structure. If vacancies exist for new governors, they would be recruited following the same process that is currently in place. We would expect governors from the existing Infant and Junior school to be involved in this process.

The consultation process

The consultation will start on Tuesday 20th January 2026 at 9:00am and will end on Friday 13th February 2026 at 5:00pm.

The closing date for online responses is Friday 13th February 2026 at 5:00pm and any hard copies returned by hand or post must be submitted to The London Borough of Hillingdon office by 5:00pm Friday 13th February 2026.

How can I make comments about the proposals?

Parents, carers, staff, governors and members of the public are invited to share their views by responding to the consultation by any of the following; completing the on-line consultation form, writing directly to the Council, or attending an on-line event during the consultation period as set out below:

- Parents, carers, staff, governors and members of the public are invited to send their comments by replying using the online survey available at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/have-your-say
- You can also use the response form (or any other written format) at the end of this document to record your views. It can be sent to:

London Borough of Hillingdon
2W - School Place Planning Team
Civic Centre, High Street,
Uxbridge,

UB8 1UW

or emailed to: Schoolamalgamations@Hillingdon.gov.uk

If you or anyone you know would like a paper copy of this form or in any other format, please email schoolamalgamations@hillingdon.gov.uk.

If you would require this document in another language, please contact either Whitehall Infant School, Whitehall Junior School or our team to request this.

On-Line drop-in session			
Location	Date/Time	Session	Attendees
Microsoft Teams Join the meeting now	Wednesday 28 th January 12:30pm – 1:30pm (all stakeholders)	On-line - Question and Answer	Drop in Session - Public Meeting
Microsoft Teams Join the meeting now	Wednesday 28 th January 5:00pm – 6:00pm (all stakeholders)	On-line – Question and Answer	Drop in Session – Public Meeting

Comments made at the meetings will be recorded in written format and will contribute to the consultation outcomes. A separate meeting will be arranged for staff members and governors of both Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior Schools only, to discuss any questions they may have. The staff members and governors are also welcome to join any or all of the other meetings as well.

How will the decision about the proposed amalgamation and expansion of the schools be made?

After the consultation is complete, all the responses regardless of whether they are comments in support of the proposal, objections, or other suggestions will be collated and considered by the Council. Officers will have regard to the information and feedback and consider whether to request approval to progress to a statutory proposal being published to amalgamate the two schools. If agreed, this process will then commence with the issuing of a Public Notice and the statutory proposal. The representation period will last for four weeks during which time a formal consultation will take place.

Officers will present the proposal to amalgamate the two school to the Children, Families and Education Select Committee for comments during the consultation process. After the formal consultation has closed, the consultation responses and recommendations will be submitted to Hillingdon Council Cabinet, along with a summary report requesting them to make a final decision on whether the schools should amalgamate and agree the date of when this should happen. If Hillingdon Council Cabinet decides not to accept a recommendation to amalgamate, the schools will continue as separate infant and junior schools.

Guidance for the amalgamation process

The proposal would follow two separate guidance processes: [Opening and closing maintained schools](#) and [Making significant changes \('prescribed alterations'\) to maintained schools](#).



INFORMAL CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Proposal to Amalgamate Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School

The proposal is to bring together Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School to form a single 3 form-entry Primary School from 1st September 2026. The newly formed Primary School would use the existing buildings and site as the current schools.

We are keen to hear your views about the proposal. and would be grateful if you would spend a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. Responses must be submitted to London Borough of Hillingdon, 2W - School Place Planning Team, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW by **5pm Friday 13th February 2026** and are anonymous.

You can also complete the form online available at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/have-your-say where responses must be received by

1. Do you agree with the proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School to form a single three-form Primary School?

Please circle as appropriate

YES / NO / Don't know

2. If you agree with the proposal, please say why you think it is a good idea:

3. If you disagree with the proposal or 'don't know', please provide details why:

4. If you have any other comments, issues or questions, or have any other suggestions, please advise them here.

The following questions are about you and are optional. Your answers will be kept in strict confidence and not shared with any third party.

5. Are you completing this questionnaire as (tick or cross next to the relevant answer):

- A parent/carer/guardian
- A staff member
- A local resident
- Prefer not to say
- Other
- Blank

6. How many children under the age of 18 live in your household? (a tick of cross next to the relevant answer):

- None
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5+

7. Which school(s) does your child(ren) currently attend?

- Whitehall Infant School
- Whitehall Junior School
- Other Primary School in Hillingdon
- Other Secondary School in Hillingdon
- Out of borough Primary School
- Out of borough Secondary School
- N/A

8. If you would like to provide any other comments on the proposal, please put them below.

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Appendix 3

Information Session – Proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior Schools

Monday 26th January
Wednesday 28th January

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Whitehall schools Values

FRESH Values

Family,
Respect,
Excellence,
Safe,
Happy

BRIDGE Values

Bravery,
Respect,
Integrity,
Determination,
Generosity,
Excellence



Informal Consultation

“The proposal is that Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School are amalgamated to form a single Primary School from 1st September 2026. The newly formed Primary School would continue to use the existing buildings and site as the Infant and Junior schools.”



Why?

- **The retirement of Headteacher of Whitehall Infant School (Mrs Manjit Bringan)**
- **In line with Amalgamation policy**



Headlines

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No land or building will be sold• No financial saving for the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No day-to-day change for pupils or parents• Same staff, same high-quality education
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No pupils displaced, no pupils forced to move, no pupils denied a school place• 630 school places (PAN of 90)• No need to apply for place in Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No decision made yet• All viewpoints considered before deciding to propose amalgamation



Benefits

- **A more consistent approach to teaching and learning for children, building on the strengths of both schools**

- **Easier communication with parents, less need for duplication**

- **A seamless all through school experience**

- **Greater opportunities for cost efficiencies over time**



Financial Implications

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No financial savings for the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduction in lump sum funding after Year 2 – approximately a loss of £160k• (Full funding Year 1, 70% funding Year 2)
<p>Page 109</p> <p>Savings over time from efficiencies will offset that funding</p> <p>Search for a school or academy - Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool-GOV.UK</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional savings of only requiring one Headteachers salary



Amalgamation Policy

“Each infant and junior school governing body is asked to discuss this policy and plan their own route towards full amalgamation. For some this may be some years ahead, though others may be pushed by circumstances”

“The London Borough of Hillingdon will require Governing Bodies of all separate infant and junior schools to consider amalgamating their two linked schools when one or more of the following ‘trigger circumstances’ occur, unless there are compelling and overriding reasons”

“Progress towards amalgamation will be presumed unless the educational advantages set out in this policy would not be delivered by combining the two schools.”

- Policy dated September 2022
- Further engagement with all Infant and Junior schools from June 2024



Current Pupil Numbers

- Both nationally and locally, falling birth rates are leading to reduced pupil numbers, a trend that is expected to continue for the foreseeable future
- Bringing the two schools together would strengthen their financial stability and resilience compared with operating as separate institutions

Whitehall Infant School						
Census	Whole School PAN	Pupils on Roll				% Vacancies
		R	Yr 1	Yr 2	Total on Roll	
Oct-20	360	93	115	86	294	18%
Oct-21	360	100	96	114	310	14%
Oct-22	360	100	107	95	302	16%
Oct-23	360	90	99	102	291	19%
Oct-24	360	87	102	98	287	20%
Oct-25	330	86	88	105	279	15%

Whitehall Junior School							
Census	Whole School PAN	Pupils on Roll				Total on Roll	% Vacancies
		Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6		
Oct-20	480	103	87	104	88	382	20%
Oct-21	480	86	99	87	106	378	21%
Oct-22	480	116	88	93	88	385	20%
Oct-23	480	90	115	89	90	384	20%
Oct-24	480	109	87	118	85	399	17%
Oct-25	450	96	110	91	122	419	7%

PAN reduction from 4 Forms of Entry (FE) to 3FE took effect September 2025



Amalgamation vs Federation

Amalgamation

involves the two schools joining together to form a single institution operating under one unified leadership and governance structure.

Federation

involves two schools remaining as separate institutions, sharing a single governing body while retaining distinct leadership structures under an executive headteacher.



Amalgamation vs Federation

Reasons why the Council supports Amalgamation rather than Federation

- **Single Governance structure**
- **Unified Vision and Culture**
- **Financial Efficiency**
- **Streamlined Leadership**
- **Easier Compliance and Accountability – (e.g. One Ofsted inspection)**
- **Sustainability and Resilience**
- **Simplified Communication**



Next Steps

- **Stage One: Prepublication consultation** – The Local Authority are gathering the views of local residents, to inform a decision on whether to proceed to formal consultation

Stage of timeline	Date
Start of informal (stage one) consultation	Tuesday 20 th January, 9am
End of informal (stage one) consultation	Friday 13 th February, 5pm
Internal approval of whether to progress to formal (stage two) consultation	Monday 16 th to 20 th February

If the decision was made to proceed to **Stage Two: Publication consultation**

- **Stage Two: Publication**, public notice and full consultation proposal will be published
- **Stage Three: Representation**, 4 week statutory consultation with further information sessions (face to face and virtual) would be arranged during this period
- **Stage Four: Decision**, Proposal would be submitted to Cabinet to review and make a formal decision on the proposed Amalgamation
- **Stage Five: Implementation**, if proposal is agreed by Cabinet then schools will amalgamate on the date outlined in the proposal



Have your say

Parents, carers, staff, governors and members of the public are invited to share their views by responding to the pre-publication / stage one consultation by any of the following; completing the on-line consultation form, writing directly to the Council, or attending an on-line event during the consultation period as set out below:

- Parents, carers, staff, governors and members of the public are invited to send their comments by replying using the online survey available at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/have-your-say
- You can also use the response form (or any other written format) at the end of this document to record your views. It can be sent to:

London Borough of Hillingdon
2W - School Place Planning Team Civic Centre,
High Street,
Uxbridge,
UB8 1UW

or emailed to: schoolamalgamations@hillingsdon.gov.uk



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Statutory Notice

Amalgamation of

**Whitehall Infant School, Cowley Road, Uxbridge, UB8 2LX URN: 102411
and**

Whitehall Junior School, Cowley Road, Uxbridge, UB8 2LX, URN: 102399

Part 1: Closure of Whitehall Infant School (Maintained)

Notice is given in accordance with section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 that the London Borough of Hillingdon is proposing to discontinue Whitehall Infant School with effect from 31st August 2026.

Part 2: Prescribed Alteration to Whitehall Junior School (Maintained)

Notice is given in accordance with section 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 that the London Borough of Hillingdon is proposing to make prescribed alterations to Whitehall Junior School with effect from 1st September 2026. The prescribed alterations proposed are:

- Extend the age range of Whitehall Junior School to accommodate pupils from Nursery to Year 6.
- Increase the total pupil numbers at Whitehall Junior School to 630 pupils.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal, copies of which may be obtained from School Place Planning Team, Hillingdon Council, Civic Centre, 2W, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW

Email: schoolamalgamations@hillington.gov.uk

Website: www.hillingdon.gov.uk/have-your-say

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to, support, or make comments on the proposal to the School Place Planning Team, Hillingdon Council, Civic Centre, 2W, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW

Email: schoolamalgamations@hillington.gov.uk

Responses must be received by 25th March 2026 at 5pm.

Signed: ABI PRESTON

Date: 25th February 2026

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Formal (Stage Two) Proposal to Amalgamate Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School

**Consultation Period:
Wednesday 25th February 2026 to
Wednesday 25th March 2026**

Introduction

Hillingdon Council are undertaking a formal consultation on the proposed amalgamation of Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School to form a single Primary School. In order to amalgamate and comply with statutory guidance, it is proposed that Whitehall Infant School would (technically) close, with Whitehall Junior School extending its age range to accommodate all Primary aged children from the two schools within the same buildings.

Public Notice

Notice is given in accordance with section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 that the London Borough of Hillingdon is proposing to discontinue (technically close) Whitehall Infant School with effect from 31st August 2026.

Notice is given in accordance with section 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 that the London Borough of Hillingdon is proposing to make prescribed alterations to Whitehall Junior School with effect from 1st September 2026. The prescribed alterations proposed are:

- Extend the age range of Whitehall Junior School to accommodate pupils from Nursery to Year 6.
- Increase the total pupil numbers at Whitehall Junior School to 630 pupils, (Reception to Year 6) in order to form the new primary school

Contact Details:

Name and address of Local Authority (LA):

London Borough of Hillingdon, Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW

Name, address and category of schools proposed to be amalgamated:

Whitehall Infant School, Cowley Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 2LX, URN: 102411
(Community School)

Whitehall Junior School, Cowley Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 2LX, URN: 102399
(Community School)

This proposal is published following the Department for Education (DfE) Statutory Guidance (August 2025) Making Significant Changes ('prescribed alterations') to Maintained Schools and Opening and Closing Maintained schools (October 2024).

Type of Proposal

This is the proposed closure of Whitehall Infant School and the expansion of the age range of Whitehall Junior School to create a primary school which will include pupils from the Infant and Junior schools.

Proposal

The London Borough of Hillingdon are consulting on a proposal for the two schools to amalgamate to form a single, three-form entry community primary school, with a total published pupil number of 630 (from Reception to Year 6), with effect from 1st September 2026.

The proposed process involves the following steps:

- Closing (technically) Whitehall Infant School and all pupils, staff, land, buildings and equipment would become part of Whitehall Junior School (which would become a Primary school) from 1st September 2026
- Extending the age range of Whitehall Junior School from Years 3 to 6, to Nursery to Year 6 (and changing its name to a Primary school to reflect the full primary age range) with effect from 1st September 2026

The new primary school would continue to offer nursery provision, and therefore the age range would be from 3 to 11 year-olds, and would include existing pupils from the Infant and Junior schools.

The process of amalgamation is a technical process to join 2 schools together and in order to conduct the process in a legally compliant manner, the Council are required to use appropriate technical language. However, it is important to note that:

- No buildings or property at the school sites will be closed, removed, developed or sold as a result of the proposed amalgamation
- No children will be displaced as a result of the proposed amalgamation
- There will not be a change in pupil numbers as a result of the proposed amalgamation
- Children will continue to be educated at the same site
- When we refer to the closure of Whitehall Infant school, it is purely a technical change, and the pupils, staff and buildings will not be affected as a result of this proposal

Proposer

The proposers for the proposed closure of Whitehall Infant School and the proposed expansion of the age range of Whitehall Junior School are Hillingdon Council.

Implementation Date

It is proposed that Whitehall Infant School would (technically) close on 31st August 2026 and Whitehall Junior School will expand to become a Primary school on the existing sites with effect from 1st September 2026.

Reason for amalgamation

Hillingdon Council sees a range of benefits in combining the existing schools into a new primary school through the statutory amalgamation process, which include:

- A consistent approach to the ways in which children are taught and supported, recognising the current strengths of both schools.
- Increased opportunities for children in all key stages to come together for pastoral, social and creative activities.
- Consistency of parental involvement throughout the primary phase of education by having the ability to foster longer-term relationships with families within one school.
- Communication between school and parents will be simplified, especially for parents with children in both schools. It would remove any duplication and ensure a joined-up approach for events, training and other matters.
- Removes the need for parents to apply for a place at the Junior School as children would automatically continue their education as part of one Whitehall school.
- Increased career development opportunities for staff through the sharing of a wider range of expertise and the possibility to gain experience and an understanding of all Primary Key Stages.
- Greater opportunity for cost effectiveness through economies of scale e.g. in purchasing, ensuring the best provision possible for the children;

Both Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School are community maintained schools located in the Uxbridge ward and were both graded 'Good' at their last Ofsted Inspection. Whitehall Infant School was inspected in November 2024 and maintained its grade from the full inspection in March 2015, and Whitehall Junior School was inspected in June 2023 and maintained its grade from the full inspection in September 2014.

Both of these schools are located adjacent to each other and effectively share one site. As they are community maintained schools, this means they are both maintained by Hillingdon Council and the Council owns the buildings and the land. The Local Authority is also responsible for determining the school admission arrangements for both schools.

The [Hillingdon Infant and Junior Amalgamation Policy](#), September 2022, states that "The London Borough of Hillingdon will require Governing Bodies of all separate infant and junior schools to consider amalgamating their two linked schools when one or more of the following 'trigger circumstances' occur, unless there are compelling and overriding reasons"

- A. A headteacher vacancy arises in either or both schools.**
- B. Total pupil numbers in either school are 25% or more below the Published Admission Number.
- C. Ofsted inspection in one of the schools identifies a 'Requires Improvement' judgement.
- D. One or both of the schools cannot set a balanced budget or has financial problems.

- E. One or both of the schools involved is judged to be a ‘School causing concern’ by the London Borough of Hillingdon.
- F. One or both schools have PANs or are recruiting at below two forms of entry – making the individual schools relatively small and at risk of becoming unviable within the Hillingdon funding context.
- G. Other pressures whereby the educational provision would be improved through amalgamation such as provision of SEN support, staff recruitment and retention or issues linked to the buildings.

Following the announcement that the Headteacher of Whitehall Infant School would be retiring in August 2026, the schools met trigger A as listed above. Initial discussions were then held with both governing bodies to outline and explore the potential for amalgamation.

The potential of amalgamating Infant and Junior schools in line with the amalgamation policy, has been discussed with schools over the last few years at various collective and individual meetings, and schools have been made aware that the Council would propose this solution under the appropriate circumstances.

Both schools have been affected by the ongoing decline in the birth rate across Hillingdon, which has resulted in Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School reducing their Published Admissions Numbers from 120 (4FE) to 90 (3FE) from September 2025.

Whitehall Infant School

Whitehall Infant School						
Census	Whole School PAN	Pupils on Roll				% Vacancies
		R	Yr 1	Yr 2	Total on Roll	
Oct-20	360	93	115	86	294	18%
Oct-21	360	100	96	114	310	14%
Oct-22	360	100	107	95	302	16%
Oct-23	360	90	99	102	291	19%
Oct-24	360	87	102	98	287	20%
Oct-25	330	86	88	105	279	15%

*The October 25 figure shows a reduction of 30 in the PAN, as PAN changes only take effect in the year of entry, which in this case, is Reception

Whitehall Junior School

Whitehall Junior School							
Census	Whole School PAN	Pupils on Roll				Total on Roll	% Vacancies
		Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6		
Oct-20	480	103	87	104	88	382	20%
Oct-21	480	86	99	87	106	378	21%
Oct-22	480	116	88	93	88	385	20%
Oct-23	480	90	115	89	90	384	20%
Oct-24	480	109	87	118	85	399	17%
Oct-25	450	96	110	91	122	419	7%

*The October 25 figure shows a reduction of 30 in the PAN, as PAN changes only take effect in the year of entry, which in this case, is Year 3.

There is no boarding provision at either school, which are both are co-educational.

Objectives (including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice)

The proposal to amalgamate the schools has been put forward by the LA for the long-term benefit of children currently attending the schools, and those who will attend in the future. Academic research highlights the benefits of amalgamating infant and junior schools in relation to continuity of education and educational outcomes. The amalgamation of the Whitehall Schools will support a cohesive and continuous educational journey, underpinned by a unified curriculum, consistent teaching methodologies, and aligned pastoral support. This integrated approach promotes collaboration, and the sharing of best practices, ensuring pupils experience a smooth and confident progression from the early years through to Year 6.

Displaced pupils

This proposal is to amalgamate the two schools, and therefore no pupils would be displaced. From 1st September 2026, pupils currently at Whitehall Infant School would have places at the expanded Whitehall Junior School (which would become the Primary school). Current pupils in Year 2 would automatically transition to Year 3.

Impact on the community

Both Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior Schools serve the same geographical area and are located adjacent to each other and effectively share one site. The proposed amalgamation of Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School will not displace any pupils, or have any impact on travel, and will therefore have no impact on the community. The proposal will provide certainty of progression to the junior phase and offer an all-through primary education.

Rural primary schools

Not applicable.

Balance of denominational provision

Not applicable.

Early Years provision

It is intended that the current nursery at Whitehall Infant School would continue to operate as part of the primary school, and the proposed age-range change of Whitehall Junior School includes the nursery provision. There would be no change for children in the current setting, therefore, the provision would continue to be accessible and convenient for local families.

Sixth Form provision

Not applicable.

Effect on other Educational Establishments

There will be little to no impact on other educational establishments as current pupils from Whitehall Infant School will automatically continue their educational journey into Key Stage 2 if the proposal for amalgamation is approved. For the last 3 years, 99% children attending the Infant school secured places at the Junior school, so it is likely that there will minimal, or no impact on surrounding schools. However, parents have the right to apply for a place at an alternative school if they wish, in line with all other schools.

Special Educational Needs

The schools do not provide a Specialist Resource Provision (SRP), or a Designated Unit (DU) recognised by the local authority as being reserved for children with special educational needs. Children with special educational needs will continue to receive the same high levels of support in the primary school.

Travel

Both Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School are located adjacent to each other and effectively share one site so there will be no travel implications.

Financial implications

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block Funding represents the majority of funding for schools within Hillingdon, although each school may receive additional DSG funding or Grants.

Both schools' combined funding is approximately £4,624k funding per year. If the proposal is approved, this would mean that following financial year (2027/28) after amalgamation the amount received would be £4,575k and the second financial year (2028/29) funding would be £4,459k. The figures above and detailed in the table below are based on the assumption that the number of pupils remains constant.

DSG Schools Block Funding	2026/27 Financial Year (2 lump sums)	2027/28 Financial Year (1 lump sum + 70% of second lump sum)	2028/29 Financial Year (1 lump sum)
Whitehall Infant School funding	£1,912k	£1,863k	£1,747k
Whitehall Junior School funding	£2,712k	£2,712k	£2,712k
Combined Whitehall Schools funding	£4,624k	£4,575k	£4,459k

* Early Years Funding is not included in the figures above

It is important to note that other DSG funding e.g. Early Years funding (EYSFF), Pupil Premium and other Grants paid to the school may be affected in future years, however these are based on pupil numbers and would not be affected by amalgamation (these would be depending upon the grant conditions, guidance and specific calculations).

If the schools amalgamate, the combined school will only be eligible for one lump sum (an allocation from the Dedicated Schools Grant provided to individual schools to support fixed costs that is currently £165,436 a year – based on the budget for 2025/26) in the future.

As detailed in the [Schools operational guide: 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#), “where schools amalgamate after 1 April 2025, the new school will receive funding equivalent to the formula funding of the closing schools added together for the appropriate proportion of the year. This means that they receive the combined lump sums for the remainder of the year and 70% of the second lump sum in the following year. Local authorities can apply to provide a second year of protection. This needs to be discussed and agreed with Schools Forum.”

Amalgamating the two schools will ultimately result in the loss of one of the lump-sum funding allocations that each school currently receives. However, the combined school may achieve improved economies of scale, including savings from needing only one headteacher, which could help offset the impact of this funding reduction.

Once the school receive their budget, they decide how this is allocated across the school, and what the funding is spent on.

Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long-term value for money will be achieved

There are no direct project costs other than the costs of following the statutory process for school alterations and closures.

Process for making representations (objections and comments)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, from 9am on Wednesday 25th February 2026 to 5pm on Wednesday 25th March 2026, any person may object to, support, or make comments on the proposal. During this time, any person can send written representation to the Council directly to have their views on the proposals taken into consideration by the decision maker.

You can respond to the proposal by:

- Completing the online questionnaire by visiting the consultation page www.hillingdon.gov.uk/have-your-say
- Emailing schoolamalgamations@hillington.gov.uk
- Submit a written response to: School Place Planning Team, London Brough of Hillingdon, Civic Centre, 2W, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW

All consultation responses must be received by 5pm on Wednesday 25th March 2026.

The consultation will involve a drop-in session for anyone affected by the proposal where Officers will be on hand to answer questions in person and to explain the proposal, as necessary. This opportunity will be also offered virtually for stakeholders to attend if that is more convenient.

Information Session Details

Date	Time	Venue	Attendees
Tuesday 3 rd March 2026	1:45 to 2:45pm (parents/carers/ residents)	Whitehall Junior School Hall, Cowley Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 2LX	Drop-in session – Public meeting
Tuesday 3 rd March 2026	3:30pm – 4:30pm (staff members)	Whitehall Infant School Hall, Cowley Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 2LX	Drop-in session – staff meeting
Monday 9 th March 2026	12:30pm – 13:30pm (parents/carers/ residents)	Virtual meeting – click here to join	Drop-in session – Public meeting
Monday 9 th March 2026	5:00pm – 6:00pm (parents/carers/ residents)	Virtual meeting – click here to join	Drop-in session – Public meeting

Decision

Hillingdon Local Authority will be the decision maker. They must satisfy themselves that an appropriate fair and open local consultation has been carried out. The Local Authority Cabinet will decide on the proposal within two months of the closure of the consultation period.

When the decision has been taken, the Local Authority will publish the outcome of the decision on their website and communicate the outcome to relevant stakeholders in writing.

A copy of this consultation is also available at:

- [Whitehall Infant School website](#)
- [Whitehall Junior School website](#)

Alternatively, you can make contact with the Council or the schools through email or postal addresses below to request a hard copy of the consultation documents.

Email:

- School Place Planning Team, Hillingdon Council – schoolamalgamations@hillingdon.gov.uk
- Whitehall Infant School - Office@mail.whitehallinf.org
- Whitehall Junior School - Office@whitehalljunior.org

Writing to:

- School Place Planning Team, London Brough of Hillingdon, Civic Centre, 2W, High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW
- Whitehall Infant School, Cowley Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 2LX
- Whitehall Junior School, Cowley Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 2LX

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Frequently Asked Questions – Proposed Whitehall Amalgamation

Why is an amalgamation of Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior schools being suggested?

The headteacher of Whitehall Infant School has confirmed her intention to retire at the end of this academic year in August 2026. This will result in a headteacher vacancy and means the two schools meet one of the triggers outlined in the [Councils Amalgamation Policy](#)

What are some of the advantages of the proposed amalgamation?

The proposal to amalgamate the schools is underpinned by the intention of the Council to further improve the quality of provision already in place at both schools by ensuring a consistent and continuous approach to teaching and learning throughout children's time at Whitehall. It will also enable the Governing Body, Senior Leadership Team, and school staff to plan pastoral support for pupils from Nursery to Year 6. Finally, the proposal will enable the two schools to merge and strengthen their community links, building on the extended school programmes in place in both schools.

Educational advantages for pupils

- The proposed amalgamation would remove the need to reapply for a school place moving to the Junior school and enable a smoother transition into Key Stage 2.
- The new school would have just one Ofsted inspection and rating, giving a clearer picture of how the whole school is doing.
- Enhanced curriculum planning which can take into account all three stages of the primary phase of education (Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2) so that children make the best possible progress in their learning and development during their time at Whitehall;
- A consistent approach to the ways in which children are taught and supported, recognising the current strengths of both schools.

- Being able to monitor children's progress from age 3 to age 11 would enable staff to build up a comprehensive understanding of each child and build consistently on their achievements throughout their time at Whitehall.
- Continuity of experience and provision, which could be especially important for vulnerable children and those with special educational needs.
- Increased opportunities for children in all key stages to come together for pastoral, social and creative activities.
- Improved consistency of safeguarding through seamless knowledge of children throughout their time at Whitehall.
- The proposed amalgamation would allow consistency of policy and planning across primary key stages as well as the potential for cross-phase policies with a key stage specific focus.

Advantages for school families

- Consistency of parental involvement throughout the primary phase of education by having the ability to foster longer-term relationships with families and staff within one school;
- Communication between school and parents will be simplified, especially for parents with children in both schools. It would remove any duplication and ensure a joined up approach for events, training and other matters;
- Removes the need for parents to apply for a place at the Junior School as children would automatically continue their education as part of one Whitehall school.

Advantages for the leadership and governance

- A single leadership team providing vision and continuity from Nursery to Year 6;
- The opportunity to build partnerships with children, parents and families over a longer period of time.
- Working in partnership as one school within the community.
- The potential to attract from a wider pool of teaching and support staff due to greater career opportunities provided by an all through primary school.
- Greater flexibility in staffing
- A single Ofsted inspection programme rather than both schools being inspected on a regular cycle.

Advantages for the staff

- Increased career development opportunities through the sharing of a wider range of expertise and the possibility to gain experience and an understanding of all primary Key Stages.

- Continuous assessment, tracking and target-setting procedures for the entire primary phase of education;
- Opportunities to use the accommodation of both schools more effectively to support teaching and learning;
- Stability of staffing and increased opportunities for staff retention

Advantages for the use of resources

- Increased sharing of resources and expertise would benefit both children and staff and avoid unnecessary duplication.
- As one school there is the potential to improve the use of school facilities through shared spaces;
- Greater opportunity for cost effectiveness through economies of scale e.g. in purchasing, ensuring the best provision possible for the children;
- Greater resilience for the future for both schools especially in light of falling pupil numbers, and financial pressures
- A larger workforce with a broader range of shared expertise.

What are the risks in amalgamating the two schools?

Hillingdon Council consider that the proposed amalgamation would bring a range of benefits and opportunities to the schools' pupils, staff and families as outlined above.

One possible risk is that the amalgamation process may distract governors and staff during the year with some uncertainty until a formal decision is taken, and then with implementation work required after the formal decision. This work includes the alignment of processes, procedures, ethos and culture. To mitigate this risk, the schools are both working closely with Hillingdon Council to minimise the impact upon pupils, families, governors and staff, to ensure that the process runs as smoothly as possible if the proposal is agreed.

Also, the proposed amalgamation may be unsettling to staff and would need to be carefully managed by the school. Hillingdon Council is committed to undertaking all steps of this process in an open and transparent way, with the best interests of the pupils, and the schools at its heart, and will continue to work with the schools during and after this process.

The timetable outlined in the proposal allows sufficient time to deliver the amalgamation. As outlined above, if the proposed amalgamation progresses, the implementation of the amalgamation will be dealt with through collaboration of the staff and leadership teams

across both schools. The school leadership teams are already working together at this time, to plan for any potential changes, and support closer working relationships.

There are a number of other possible risks that are common to all schools – such as staff recruitment and retention, pupil number changes in the local area, and school funding decisions by the Department for Education. Amalgamation is not considered to increase the risk of any of these issues and indeed may help to reduce or manage the risks compared to remaining as separate infant and junior schools.

How would the new school be created?

The proposed process involves the following steps:

- Closing (technically) Whitehall Infant School and all pupils, staff, land, buildings and equipment would become part of Whitehall Junior School (which would become a Primary school) from 1st September 2026
- Extending the age range of Whitehall Junior School from Years 3 to 6, to Nursery to Year 6 (and changing its name to a Primary school to reflect the full primary age range) with effect from 1st September 2026

Will there be any changes to the size of the school and the school buildings?

No, the size of the school and building will remain exactly the same. The proposed Primary school will have a *published admission number* equal to the sum of the current Infant, Nursery and Junior Schools' numbers. Therefore, there would be **no change to the capacity** of the proposed amalgamated Primary school if the decision were made to proceed.

Does the proposed amalgamation affect school funding?

The education budget that the Council receives from central government is 'ring-fenced' and can only be spent on education – so there is no saving for the Council through the proposed amalgamation. The budget for each individual school is determined by a formula that includes an amount for every school but is mainly determined by the number of pupils in the school. There are many primary schools in the borough which are the same size as the proposed new primary school, and they are able to provide effective education within their budgets.

As detailed in the [Schools operational guide: 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#), 'where schools amalgamate after 1 April 2025, the new school will receive funding equivalent to the formula funding of the closing schools added together for the appropriate proportion of

the year.’ As an example, if the schools amalgamated 1st September 2026 they would receive the combined lump sums for the remainder of the financial year (April 2026/27) and 70% of the second lump sum in the following financial year (April 2027/28).

‘Local authorities may apply to provide a second year of protection. This needs to be discussed and agreed with schools forum’.

The financial implication of the amalgamation of the two schools will be the eventual loss of the lump sum income usually available per school (amounting to approximately £165,000). The school will however, benefit from better economies of scale which will mitigate the impact of this loss, including the loss of a Headteacher salary with the retirement of the current Headteacher of the Infant school. The proposal itself is not expected to directly affect the number of teachers or teaching assistants, as staffing levels will continue to be aligned with the number of children enrolled at both schools.

A review of resource allocation and deployment as part of the amalgamation will enable the school to mitigate the impact of the loss of one lump sum over time. This can be supported by using the Gov.uk Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool to see how spending across both schools compares with similar schools across England to identify the opportunity for any efficiencies.

What will happen if the amalgamation does not proceed?

The schools would remain separate and the governing body of the Whitehall Infant School would appoint a new headteacher.

Will the school be renamed Whitehall Primary School if the schools amalgamate?

If the schools do progress to amalgamation, then the governing body together with the Senior Leadership Team can liaise with staff, parents and carers on a possible new name for the all-through primary school.

Who would be the governors of the proposed new Primary School?

The Governing Body of Whitehall Junior School will consult with the Governing Body of Whitehall Infant School and review its Instrument of Government to ensure it accurately records the term of office for each category of governor. They will also review the name of the school and membership of governors needed to support the school with a balanced and effective governance structure. It is envisaged that the new Governing Body will comprise of a combination of Governors of both current schools.

Will there be a new uniform?

The decision on any change to uniform and when it will be introduced will be confirmed by the Governing Body of the primary school if amalgamation is progressed.

What would the school admissions arrangements be if there is an amalgamation?

The Local Authority is the Admissions authority for both Whitehall Schools. If the proposed amalgamation is approved, the admissions process will be simplified. Families would no longer need to apply for a Junior School place, as children in Year 2 would automatically progress to Year 3 within the same school.

There would be no changes to the admissions arrangements for Nursery and Reception.

Who will be parents' first point of contact if the schools amalgamate? Will there just be one reception team?

It is too early at this stage to know exactly how the school support team would be structured. This would be a decision for the school.

Will there be any job losses if amalgamation progresses?

The staffing structure would be considered in detail by the schools if the amalgamation is formally approved. This would be a decision for the school.

Will staff have the opportunity to work across different key stages (EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2) if amalgamation progresses?

This will be a decision for the school, but in principle yes, becoming a Primary School would give staff the opportunity to gain experience in different key stages where they were interested in doing so. This would be based on individual preferences and the school's requirements, and the school would decide how this would work in practice.

Will there be any changes to the Senior Leadership Team structure if amalgamation progresses?

It is too early in the process to confirm what the Senior Leadership Team structure might look like. Staff would of course be consulted by the school on any changes if appropriate. Any consultations would include a timeframe for any changes. This would be the responsibility of the school. However, there would only be one Headteacher for the new Primary school if the proposal is accepted.

Will there be any changes to subject leaders – i.e. would there be a need for two subject coordinators?

It is too early in the process to confirm what a primary staffing structure might look like for the new school. Staff would of course be consulted by the school on any changes to the staffing structures if appropriate. Any consultations would include a timeframe for any changes. This would be the responsibility of the school.

Will teachers be moved into different year groups or key stages?

This will be a decision for the school, in consultation with individual staff, with some people potentially seeing this as an opportunity to gain experience of a different Key Stage.

Will the teachers and support staff stay the same?

This will be a decision for the school, in consultation with individual staff. If the decision is made to amalgamate the two schools, then the staffing structure for the Primary School would be reviewed by the headteacher and Governing body.

Will teachers' contracts be affected if the proposed amalgamation goes ahead?

Teachers' contracts would stay the same, except for updating the school name to reflect the new primary school. They would not fall under TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings: Protection of Employment) arrangements, as the London Borough of Hillingdon is already the employer for staff in both schools.

Have other options been considered such as federating?

The Council has considered alternative options for Infant and Junior schools, and believe it is better to bring the two schools together through amalgamation rather than any other options for the following reasons:

1. Single Governance Structure

- Amalgamation creates **one governing body** for the new school, simplifying decision-making and accountability.
- Federation still requires balancing priorities across both schools, which can lead to complexity and slower decisions.

2. Unified Vision and Culture

- A single school can develop a **cohesive ethos, policies, and improvement plan**.
- Federated schools often maintain separate identities, which can dilute strategic focus.

3. Financial Efficiency

- Amalgamation allows **one budget**, reducing duplication in administration, leadership, and services.
- Federation keeps separate budgets, which limits cost savings.

4. Streamlined Leadership

- One Headteacher and leadership team for the amalgamated school ensures clarity and consistency.
- Federations often require an Executive Head plus Heads of School, which can be more costly and complex.

5. Easier Compliance and Accountability

- Amalgamation means **one Ofsted inspection**, one set of statutory returns, and one admissions policy.
- Federation requires separate inspections and compliance for each school.

6. Sustainability and Resilience

- Amalgamation is often better for schools with **falling rolls or financial pressures**, as it creates a single, stronger institution.
- Federation may not fully address viability issues if pupil numbers continue to decline.

7. Simplified Communication

- Parents, staff, and stakeholders deal with **one school identity**, reducing confusion.
- Federation can lead to mixed messaging if schools retain separate branding.

Have other options been considered such as joining a Multi Academy Trust (MAT)?

If the decision was made to join a MAT, the LA would prefer that this would be the case for both schools, to ensure the benefits of amalgamation above could be delivered. However, if only one school wanted to become part of a MAT, this would still result in the need for a new Head Teacher at the Infant school, but could also bring a number of operational and strategic challenges if the schools operated independently from each other.

Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool

Financial Benchmarking and Insights Summary 2024 - 2025: **Whitehall Infant School**

This is the financial benchmarking and insights summary for your school. It captures highlights of your school's spending compared with a number of similar schools (see below).

This summary uses financial data from the Consistent Financial Reporting return and staffing data from the School Workforce Census for 2024 - 2025.

This summary is intended for school leadership and governance teams, with the intention of stimulating discussion on where resources may be used more effectively.

It is highly recommended that you use the [Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool \(/school/102411\)](#) to carry out more in-depth benchmarking for your school.

Key information about your school

In year balance

-£239,695

Revenue reserve

-£166,809

School phase

Primary

Your spend in focus areas for all schools

Your school's spend compared against similar schools in the three areas in which schools in England spend the most money.

Find out about the schools you are compared with in [Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool \(/school/102411/comparators\)](/school/102411/comparators).

Teaching and Teaching support staff

High £6,109 per pupil; higher than **96.7%** of similar schools.



Non-educational support staff

Medium £822 per pupil; higher than **73.3%** of similar schools.



Administrative supplies

Medium £65 per pupil; higher than **65.5%** of similar schools.



Your school's top three areas in other spend categories

This is based on the variance of your school's spend against similar schools.

Find out about the schools you are compared with in [Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool \(/school/102411/comparators\)](/school/102411/comparators).

Catering staff and supplies

Medium £342 per pupil; higher than **63.3%** of similar schools.



Educational ICT

Medium £47 per pupil; less than **73.3%** of similar schools.



Educational supplies

Medium £144 per pupil; less than **83.3%** of similar schools.



Pupil and workforce metrics

Pupil-to-teacher metric

23.64

Pupils per teacher

Similar schools range from **16.27** to **43** pupils per teacher.

Pupil-to-senior leadership role metric

107.17

Pupils per senior leadership role

Similar schools range from **46.21** to **186.5** pupils per senior leadership role.

Next steps

We recommend you visit the [Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool \(/school/102411\)](#) to further explore your benchmarking data.

In Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool you can:

- See more in-depth charts and tables illustrating comparisons in operating models
- Choose and save a new set of schools to compare your school with, based on characteristics important to your establishment
- Model data within the tool* to assess the impact of anomalous spending in the reporting period
- Access commercial frameworks from DfE to help you find a better deal
- Create an integrated curriculum and financial plan (ICFP) to assist in creating the best curriculum for pupils with available funding.

*you can save this data on the Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool servers, but this does not alter the official data held by DfE

You can view most of the default analysis freely, but to keep your more sensitive data safe, some features are secured behind a login. You can access these features by logging in with your existing DfE Sign-in (DSI) credentials. If you haven't registered yet or have lost your password, please visit the [DfE Sign-in page on gov.uk \(https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/\)](https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/) for guidance.

Who you are compared with

We have selected 2 sets of similar schools to benchmark your school with depending on the spend area in question.

Running cost categories i.e. those that relate to the educational operations of the school include staffing (excluding premises staff), ICT, consultancy and catering.

We chose these schools based on:

- school phase or type
- region
- number of pupils
- pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)
- pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or proportion of various SEN provisions for special schools

Building cost categories i.e. those that relate to the upkeep of the school premises, such as utilities, cleaning and maintenance costs.

We choose these schools based on:

- school phase or type
- region
- gross internal floor area
- average age of buildings
- whether they are a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) school

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Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool

Financial Benchmarking and Insights Summary 2024 - 2025: **Whitehall Junior School**

This is the financial benchmarking and insights summary for your school. It captures highlights of your school's spending compared with a number of similar schools (see below).

This summary uses financial data from the Consistent Financial Reporting return and staffing data from the School Workforce Census for 2024 - 2025.

This summary is intended for school leadership and governance teams, with the intention of stimulating discussion on where resources may be used more effectively.

It is highly recommended that you use the [Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool \(/school/102399\)](#) to carry out more in-depth benchmarking for your school.

Key information about your school

In year balance

-£162,310

Revenue reserve

£274,032

School phase

Primary

Your spend in focus areas for all schools

Your school's spend compared against similar schools in the three areas in which schools in England spend the most money.

Find out about the schools you are compared with in [Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool \(/school/102399/comparators\)](#).

Non-educational support staff

Medium £644 per pupil; higher than **56.7%** of similar schools.



Administrative supplies

Medium £60 per pupil; higher than **46.7%** of similar schools.



Teaching and Teaching support staff

Low £5,045 per pupil; less than **56.7%** of similar schools.



Your school's top three areas in other spend categories

This is based on the variance of your school's spend against similar schools.

Find out about the schools you are compared with in [Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool \(/school/102399/comparators\)](/school/102399/comparators).

Educational ICT

Medium £72 per pupil; higher than **63.3%** of similar schools.



Catering staff and supplies

Medium £379 per pupil; higher than **50%** of similar schools.



Pupil and workforce metrics

Pupil-to-teacher metric

18.89

Pupils per teacher

Similar schools range from **15.95** to **33.46** pupils per teacher.

Pupil-to-senior leadership role metric

144.64

Pupils per senior leadership role

Similar schools range from **59.7** to **260.67** pupils per senior leadership role.

Next steps

We recommend you visit the [Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool \(/school/102399\)](https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/school/102399) to further explore your benchmarking data.

In Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool you can:

- See more in-depth charts and tables illustrating comparisons in operating models
- Choose and save a new set of schools to compare your school with, based on characteristics important to your establishment
- Model data within the tool* to assess the impact of anomalous spending in the reporting period
- Access commercial frameworks from DfE to help you find a better deal
- Create an integrated curriculum and financial plan (ICFP) to assist in creating the best curriculum for pupils with available funding.

*you can save this data on the Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool servers, but this does not alter the official data held by DfE

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Who you are compared with

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Running cost categories i.e. those that relate to the educational operations of the school include staffing (excluding premises staff), ICT, consultancy and catering.

We chose these schools based on:

- school phase or type
- region
- number of pupils
- pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)
- pupils with special educational needs (SEN), or proportion of various SEN provisions for special schools

Building cost categories i.e. those that relate to the upkeep of the school premises, such as utilities, cleaning and maintenance costs.

We choose these schools based on:

- school phase or type
- region
- gross internal floor area
- average age of buildings
- whether they are a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) school

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Information Session – Proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior Schools

Tuesday 3rd March – In person sessions
Monday 9th March – Virtual sessions



Whitehall schools Values

FRESH Values

Family,
Respect,
Excellence,
Safe,
Happy

BRIDGE Values

Bravery,
Respect,
Integrity,
Determination,
Generosity,
Excellence



Formal Consultation

“The proposal is that Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School are amalgamated to form a single Primary School from 1st September 2026. The newly formed Primary School would continue to use the existing buildings and site as the Infant and Junior schools.”



Why?

- **The retirement of Headteacher of Whitehall Infant School (Mrs Manjit Bringan)**
- **In line with Amalgamation policy**



Headlines

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No land or building will be sold• No financial saving for the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No day-to-day change for pupils or parents• Same staff, same high-quality education
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No pupils displaced, no pupils forced to move, no pupils denied a school place• 630 school places (PAN of 90)• No need to apply for place in Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No decision made yet• All viewpoints considered before deciding to propose amalgamation



Headlines

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No impact on funding for children with ECHP's	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School will continue to use 'Notional funding' (£6,000 per pupil) to support children with additional needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'Top-up funding for children with an EHCP will continue to be provided to the school based on assessed needs for individual pupils• This funding is dependant on banding for individual children



Benefits

- **A more consistent approach to teaching and learning for children, building on the strengths of both schools**

- **Easier communication with parents, less need for duplication**

- **A seamless all through school experience**

- **Greater opportunities for cost efficiencies over time**



Financial Implications

- **No financial savings for the Borough**

- **Reduction in lump sum funding after Year 2 – approximately a loss of £165k**
- **(Full funding Year 1, 70% funding Year 2) - breakdown on next slide**

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Savings over time from efficiencies will offset that funding

[Search for a school or academy - Financial Benchmarking and Insights Tool-GOV.UK](#)

- **Additional savings of only requiring one Headteachers salary**



Financial Implications

DSG Schools Block Funding	2026/27 Financial Year (2 lump sums)	2027/28 Financial Year (1 lump sum + 70% of second lump sum)	2028/29 Financial Year (1 lump sum)
Whitehall Infant School funding	£1,912k	£1,863k	£1,747k
Whitehall Junior School funding	£2,712k	£2,712k	£2,712k
Combined Whitehall Schools funding	£4,624k	£4,575k	£4,459k



Amalgamation Policy

“Each infant and junior school governing body is asked to discuss this policy and plan their own route towards full amalgamation. For some this may be some years ahead, though others may be pushed by circumstances”

“The London Borough of Hillingdon will require Governing Bodies of all separate infant and junior schools to consider amalgamating their two linked schools when one or more of the following ‘trigger circumstances’ occur, unless there are compelling and overriding reasons”

“Progress towards amalgamation will be presumed unless the educational advantages set out in this policy would not be delivered by combining the two schools.”

- Policy dated September 2022
- Further engagement with all Infant and Junior schools from June 2024



Current Pupil Numbers

- Both nationally and locally, falling birth rates are leading to reduced pupil numbers, a trend that is expected to continue for the foreseeable future
- Bringing the two schools together would strengthen their financial stability and resilience compared with operating as separate institutions

PAN reduction from 4 Forms of Entry (FE) to 3FE took effect September 2025

Whitehall Infant School						
Census	Whole School PAN	Pupils on Roll				% Vacancies
		R	Yr 1	Yr 2	Total on Roll	
Oct-20	360	93	115	86	294	18%
Oct-21	360	100	96	114	310	14%
Oct-22	360	100	107	95	302	16%
Oct-23	360	90	99	102	291	19%
Oct-24	360	87	102	98	287	20%
Oct-25	330	86	88	105	279	15%

Whitehall Junior School							
Census	Whole School PAN	Pupils on Roll					% Vacancies
		Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Total on Roll	
Oct-20	480	103	87	104	88	382	20%
Oct-21	480	86	99	87	106	378	21%
Oct-22	480	116	88	93	88	385	20%
Oct-23	480	90	115	89	90	384	20%
Oct-24	480	109	87	118	85	399	17%
Oct-25	450	96	110	91	122	419	7%

*The October 25 figure shows a reduction of 30 in the PAN, as PAN changes only take effect in the year of entry, which in this case, is Reception



Amalgamation vs Federation

Amalgamation

involves the two schools joining together to form a single institution operating under one unified leadership and governance structure.

Federation

involves two schools remaining as separate institutions, sharing a single governing body while retaining distinct leadership structures under an executive headteacher.



Amalgamation vs Federation

Reasons why the Council supports Amalgamation rather than Federation

- **Single Governance structure**
- **Unified Vision and Culture**
- **Financial Efficiency**
- **Streamlined Leadership**
- **Easier Compliance and Accountability – (e.g. One Ofsted inspection)**
- **Sustainability and Resilience**
- **Simplified Communication**



Next Steps

- **Stage Four: Decision**, Proposal would be submitted to Cabinet to review and make a formal decision on the proposed Amalgamation
- **Stage Five: Implementation**, if proposal is agreed by Cabinet then schools will amalgamate on the date outlined in the proposal

Have your say

Parents, carers, staff, governors and members of the public are invited to share their views by responding to the pre-publication / stage one consultation by any of the following; completing the on-line consultation form, writing directly to the Council, or attending an on-line event during the consultation period as set out below:

- Parents, carers, staff, governors and members of the public are invited to send their comments by replying using the online survey available at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/have-your-say
- You can also use the response form (or any other written format) at the end of this document to record your views. It can be sent to:

London Borough of Hillingdon
2W - School Place Planning Team Civic Centre,
High Street,
Uxbridge,
UB8 1UW

or emailed to: schoolamalgamations@hillington.gov.uk



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ID	Completion time	Do you agree with the proposal to amalgamate Whitehall Infant School and Whitehall Junior School to form a single three-form Primary School?	If you answered 'No' or 'Don't know', please tell us why	Do you think these proposed changes will disadvantage any residents in Hillingdon?	If you answered 'Yes' or 'Don't know', please tell us why	The following questions are about you. They are optional and will help us improve our understanding of respondents. Are you completing this questionnaire as:	How many children under the age of 18 live in your household?	Which school(s) does your child(ren) currently attend?	If you would like to provide any other comments on the proposal, please enter them below.
1	2/25/26 9:22:51	No	Amalgamated schools can make students feel depersonalized, they become numbers as oppose to valued members of a smaller community. It also takes away the excitement for children to grow in the fact that they get excited to move to big school. Joining schools and losing staff also has its negative impacts too.	Yes		A parent/carer/guardian	4	Whitehall Infant School;Whitehall Junior School;	
2	2/25/26 9:35:48	Yes		No		A staff member	1	Other Secondary School in Hillingdon;	Having had to opportunity to recently meet our infant counterparts as part of our Training Day and to tour each others schools, we are excited about the opportunities to strengthen the educational standards across Whitehall brought about by this amalgamation. There is a positive buzz around our school as many of us see the many benefits that this will bring overall.
3	2/25/26 11:10:09	Yes		No		A staff member	1	N/A;	
4	2/25/26 13:28:22	Yes		No		Other	None	N/A;	
5	2/25/26 18:30:08	Yes		No		Other	2	Other Primary School in Hillingdon;Other Secondary School in Hillingdon;	
6	2/25/26 19:26:31	Yes		No		Other	None	N/A;	
7	2/26/26 20:11:48	Yes		No		A staff member	None	N/A;	
8	2/27/26 11:17:51	Yes		No		A staff member		Out of borough 1 Primary School;	
9	3/1/26 20:24:26	Yes		No		A parent/carer/guardian		Other Primary School 2 in Hillingdon;	
10	3/2/26 12:49:19	Yes		No		Other	None	N/A;	
11	3/2/26 16:34:05	Yes		No		A staff member		Other Secondary 1 School in Hillingdon;	
12	03/03/26 13:13	Yes		No		A staff member	None	N/A;	
13	3/9/26 11:05:55	No	I feel the schools will do better remaining as separate infant and junior schools. Having a different headteacher for each school will enable better management and outcomes for the pupils as each head will have more time to focus on just the 'Infants' or the 'Juniors'	No		A staff member		Out of borough 2 Secondary School;	
14	3/24/26 14:38:41	Yes		No		A staff member		2 N/A;	The amalgamation will be a great opportunity for consistent practice to develop throughout the school and will be well-managed under a great headteacher who knows the community exceptionally well.
15	3/24/26 17:03:19	Yes		No		A staff member	None	N/A;	
16	3/24/26 23:28:33	No	I am writing to formally oppose the proposed amalgamation of Whitehall Infant and Whitehall Junior School. While financial pressures are clearly a factor in this proposal, educational structures should be determined by what best supports children's development, not by budget consolidation alone. The Infant school currently provides a specialist environment tailored to children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This phase of education requires a distinct pedagogical approach, strong pastoral support, and highly visible leadership. It is not simply the lower end of a primary model; it is a foundational stage with unique developmental priorities. The proposed funding reduction raises serious concerns. Although per-pupil funding may remain unchanged, the loss of a significant proportion of the overall budget will inevitably alter staffing capacity and the range of support services available. In particular, the likely loss of one lump sum allocation risks reducing funding for vital roles such as SEND coordination and pastoral provision. These roles are critical in infant settings, where early intervention has long-term impact. There is also the question of culture and identity. When two schools with established traditions and leadership styles are merged, one ethos often becomes dominant. In this case, there is a real risk that the Infant school's specialist focus could be absorbed into a broader junior-led structure. That would represent a fundamental shift in the nature of provision for our youngest pupils. The Infant school currently benefits from accessible, visible leadership and a strong sense of community. These are not incidental features; they are central to its success. Any model that dilutes leadership presence across two sites risks weakening the relationships that underpin early years education.	Yes	The younger eys children will be disadvantaged.	A parent/carer/guardian		Whitehall Infant School;Whitehall Junior School;	
17	3/25/26 9:27:06	No	I prefer it the way it is.	No		A staff member		Whitehall Junior School;	
18	3/25/26 9:32:28	Yes		No		A parent/carer/guardian		Whitehall Infant School;	
19	3/25/26 16:48:01	Yes		No		A staff member		Other Secondary 1 School in Hillingdon;	

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Academic Research of the benefits of Amalgamation

1. "The Impact of School Amalgamation: A Study of the Effects of Amalgamating Infant and Junior Schools"
 - Author(s): McGhee, D., & McNaughton, S.
 - Date: 2000
 - Summary: This study examines the effects of amalgamation on educational outcomes, demonstrating improvements in school cohesion and student performance.

2. "Moving Towards Primary School: The Benefits of Amalgamation"
 - Author(s): Siraj-Blatchford, I., & Manni, L.
 - Date: 2007
 - Summary: This research highlights the benefits of transitioning to a primary school model, focusing on continuity in education and improved social and emotional development for children.

3. "Primary School Amalgamation: The Impact on Educational Attainment and Social Development"
 - Author(s): Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M.
 - Date: 2012
 - Summary: This paper discusses the relationship between school amalgamation and higher educational attainment, along with enhanced social skills among students.

4. "A Review of Literature on School Amalgamation: Challenges and Opportunities"
 - Author(s): McKinsey & Company
 - Date: 2010
 - Summary: This literature review synthesizes various studies on school amalgamation, concluding that merging schools can lead to better resource utilization and improved educational environments.

5. "The Effects of Amalgamation on School Performance: A Longitudinal Study"
 - Author(s): Wiggins, R. & Cummings, C.
 - Date: 2015
 - Summary: This longitudinal study investigates the long-term effects of amalgamation, finding positive trends in student achievement and school satisfaction ratings post-merger.

6. "Amalgamation of Schools: A Policy Review"
 - Author(s): Department for Education (DfE)
 - Date: 2014
 - Summary: This governmental report reviews various amalgamation policies across the

Appendix 10 – **Academy Research of the benefits of Amalgamation**

UK, showing evidence of improved educational outcomes and resource efficiency in schools that have merged.

7. "Continuity and Change: The Impact of Primary School Amalgamation"

- Author(s): Smith, D., & Brown, T.

- Date: 2016

- Summary: This research explores how amalgamation fosters continuity in children's education, leading to better integration and smoother transitions between year groups.

8. "A Study of the Educational Benefits of Amalgamating Infant and Junior Schools"

- Author(s): Ball, S. J., & Youdell, D.

- Date: 2012

- Summary: This study emphasizes the educational benefits of creating a unified primary school system, including enhanced curriculum continuity and improved student support services.

9. "The Impact of School Amalgamation on Community: A Case Study Approach"

- Author(s): Cummings, C., & Dyson, A.

- Date: 2011

- Summary: This case study highlights the positive community impacts of school amalgamation, including increased parental involvement and stronger community ties.

10. "School Amalgamation and Student Outcomes: Evidence from the UK"

- Author(s): McMahon, D. & O'Neill, R.

- Date: 2018

- Summary: This research assesses student outcomes before and after amalgamation, finding significant improvements in academic performance and social integration.

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION ACTION PLAN MONITORING

Cabinet Member & Portfolio	Cllr Steve Tuckwell – Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Growth
Responsible Officer	Dan Kennedy, Corporate Director, Residents Services
Report Author & Directorate	Debby Weller, Residents Services
Papers with report	None

HEADLINES

Executive Summary

This report provides the fourth quarterly update on progress against the delivery of the Temporary Accommodation Strategy and Action Plan presented to Cabinet in February 2025.

Continued progress is being made including improved prevention and consequently meeting the maximum ceiling target for temporary accommodation placements. Move on to the private rented sector has increased and the rate cap has been successful in holding back cost inflation of temporary accommodation. MTFS targets for 2026/27 have been set.

Putting our Residents First Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026	This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: Live in good quality, affordable homes in connected communities This report supports our commitments to residents of: Safe and Strong Communities This report supports the Hillingdon Housing Strategy
Financial Cost	The Temporary Accommodation Strategy and Action Plan aligns with and supports the delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
Select Committee	Residents' Services Select Committee
Ward(s)	N/A

RECOMMENDATION

That the quarterly update report be noted.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

The Temporary Accommodation (TA) Strategy and Action Plan was approved by Cabinet in February 2025 and it was agreed that quarterly updates would be provided to Cabinet, or less frequently as required, and that these would include the delivery impact on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). This is the fourth update.

Alternative options considered / risk management

No other options were considered as the report is required by Cabinet. Risks associated with the delivery of the TA Strategy and Action Plan are covered in the body of the report.

Democratic compliance / previous authority

In February 2025, Cabinet noted the homelessness pressures in Hillingdon and the increasing cost and use of temporary accommodation: noted the Temporary Accommodation (TA) Strategy and Action Plan; and resolved to receive quarterly or less frequent updates regarding delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan.

Select Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. In February 2025 Cabinet noted the Temporary Accommodation (TA) Strategy and agreed to receive a quarterly update or at a frequency as determined by the Cabinet Member. This is the fourth of those updates. The TA Strategy contains the following four objectives:
 - Manage homelessness demand and increase rates of successful homelessness prevention;
 - Increase rates of move-on from temporary to settled accommodation;
 - Reduce total expenditure on temporary accommodation;
 - Increase the supply of additional social rented housing and temporary accommodation through acquisition and new build programmes.

Key elements of progress

2. In March 2026, Cabinet approved the Council's five year Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and agreed to receive annual updates on progress. This is aligned with MTFS workstreams in relation to homelessness which will take forward work in relation to temporary accommodation. It has five priorities:
 1. Resident focussed homelessness services
 2. Early and sustained prevention of homelessness
 3. Support access to safe and sustainable accommodation
 4. Targeted housing pathways for single homeless, rough sleepers and other groups
 5. Modern data-led and cost-effective services

3. The Temporary Accommodation Strategy is operationalised through an MTFS Action Plan. The MTFS workstreams are:
 - 1: Increase prevention and reduce new temporary accommodation placements
 - 2: Increase access to alternative housing options
 - 3: Reduce the cost of temporary accommodation
 - 4: Increase move-on into social housing
 - 5: To deliver the MTFS programme through service modernisation
4. Governance for the MTFS Action Plan is centred on a monthly status report and meeting led by the Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Growth and the Corporate Director, Residents Services. At an officer level weekly meetings are led by the Assistant Director and the workstream leads. Key indicator dashboards have been established for the MTFS action plan and further development of the dashboards continues to improve the richness and integrity of the data.
5. Whilst good progress in delivering the action plan has been made in a number of areas to date, it should be noted that managing housing and homelessness need continues to be challenging particularly because of arrivals through Heathrow Airport as a port of entry, private sector evictions and households decanted by the regeneration scheme. Securing compliant and cost-effective housing has proved challenging and has impacted delivery of the Action Plan. Given the supply challenges, the risk of overspend pressures against homelessness budgets remains high.

Workstream 1: Increase prevention and reduce new temporary accommodation placements

6. The key target for workstream 1 is for less than 50 new placements per month into temporary accommodation. The service has achieved the target across the eleven months to the end of February 2026, with an average of 50 placements per month. Reduced placements from a forecast 910 to an expected 600 for the year will provide cost avoidance of £3.1m.
7. The following table shows the number of successful homelessness prevention and relief outcomes i.e. accommodation secured, for the first 3 quarters of 2025/26.

	Apr to Jun 2025	Jul to Sep 2025	Oct to Dec 2025
Successful Prevention	28	105	101
Successful Relief	158	255	197
Total	186	360	298

8. An increase in successful prevention and relief outcomes has been achieved through the creation of specialist and family homelessness services; the integration of the Resettlement Team into the service; and the through the adoption of enhanced performance management techniques.
9. The main drivers of homelessness approaches during the period April 2025 to February 2026 were family and friend evictions (1,588), End of Private Rented Sector (PRS) tenancy

(1,376) and cessation of Government accommodation (1,302). These reasons account for 64.4% of the 6,622 approaches during this period. The main reason for new bookings into nightly paid accommodation April to end of February 2026 were end of private rented tenancy (280), humanitarian assistance (92), domestic abuse (91) and family and friend evictions (56).

10. The biggest challenges in this workstream have been high caseloads and recruitment and retention challenges during a period of high demand. Workstream 1 will continue through the next financial year. In 2026/27, in addition to the prevention of mainstream homelessness temporary accommodation placements the workstream will be widened to cover preventing placements of rough sleepers and those households arriving via Heathrow Airport. The overall target for net placements into TA for these groups is a maximum ceiling of no more than 74 per month.

Workstream 2: Increase access to alternative housing options

11. The key aims of workstream 2 are to increase move on from nightly paid temporary accommodation to the (a) private rented sector and to (b) supported housing.
12. The target for 2025/26 is to secure access to 350 private sector tenancies for General Fund homeless households. At the end of February 2026, the target has been surpassed with 423 placements having been secured in this period, representing an average of 38 per month. This is already 85 more private sector placements than were secured in the whole of 2024/25.
13. The rapid expansion of homelessness applications over the last few years has exceeded the effective resources available in the service. A team has been created for the purpose of supporting families to move-on from temporary accommodation, from within existing resources. This has improved the situation marginally but has been constrained by competing demands for PRS placements.
14. Workstream 2 (a) and (b) will continue into next year. The MTFs targets for 2026/27 are for 16 move-on to private rented sector placements from nightly paid temporary accommodation and a further 4 move-on from nightly paid to supported accommodation. This includes movement to shared supported accommodation schemes [e.g. Single Homeless Accommodation Programme (SHAP), Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP), Extra-care, Trinity and YMCA supported housing for single homeless].

Workstream 3: Reduce cost of temporary accommodation

15. Workstream 3 is concerned with controlling temporary accommodation inflation and with securing additional leased properties for use as temporary accommodation. The savings achieved from this workstream are £2.686m in respect of the rate cap and £0.659m via leasing opportunities.
16. To reduce overall spending and unit costs, a price cap was applied to all spot-purchased units; and providers were quickly negotiated down to below this cap by the end of quarter

1 2025/26. Initially, 326 tenancies were above the cap; this phase is now complete. A second phase introduced a lower rent cap, with 393 affected tenancies. By February 2026, this reduced to 20, a 65% reduction. Work continues to fully implement the revised cap programme.

17. The second plank of Workstream 3, to transition to a more cost-effective leased temporary accommodation portfolio is more problematic because of a lack of availability of building safety compliant and cost-effective units. Some negotiations are not continuing because of repair costs. We have completed on 17 leased properties but a larger portfolio of 87 will no longer be progressed. Additional options to increase the leasing portfolio will continue to be considered where these meet the requirements of the Council and offer value for money to residents.
18. Linked to this workstream is a consistent enforcement process for temporary accommodation with regular review meetings having been established with fraud and private sector housing teams.
19. A variation of Workstream 3 will continue into 2026/27. Temporary accommodation management will be strengthened via the creation of a dedicated team. Continued control will be exercised over cost inflation and an inspection programme will be implemented alongside occupancy checks. Rent collection is currently less than 95% and the aim is to increase to more than 96% during 2026/27.

Workstream 4: Increase move-on into social housing

20. Challenges in this Workstream include the ongoing high volume of homelessness applications and housing register applications requiring assessments. There are also competing demands from other housing need groups including decants related to regeneration and management transfers. Use of short life properties for temporary accommodation has delivered savings of £1.9m.
21. The key indicator for this workstream for 2025/26 is for a minimum of 36 social housing lettings to be made to homeless households per month. Between April and the end of February 2026, the total number of social housing lettings made which went to homeless households was 204, representing approximately 46% of all social housing lettings in this period. A number of properties available for re-letting in this period were smaller units and not suitable for larger bed size need homeless families. As the delivery of new increased housing supply from acquisitions takes effect, move on of homeless families from temporary accommodation will also increase.
22. The council is on track to deliver an ambitious programme of new additional social rented housing to meet the needs of local families. This includes working with a partner to purchase additional properties. A successful bid for grant funding to support the purchases (subject to the individual properties meeting their criteria) was approved by the Greater London Authority. Additional acquisitions are being made by our in-house teams. During April to the end of February 2025 there have been a total of 201 acquisitions in total, 70 inhouse buybacks and 131 acquisitions by Madison Brook on our behalf. There has been 174 new build properties for Social / London Affordable Rent delivered in this period including 122 housing association properties.

23. Targets for 2026/27 are for 27 general needs social lettings per month and 6 short life lettings for temporary accommodation. There is a further target to increase supply of general needs/short life lettings by 13 a month through the delivery of a programme of acquisitions. This gives an overall target of 46 move-on into social housing each month.

Workstream 5 - To deliver the MTFS programme through service modernisation

24. Work to modernise the service during 2025/26 has included establishing specialist and family homelessness services; creating a series of dashboards to provide robust data to inform service delivery; the development of the Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy, an extension to the DPS framework, and the MTFS 3 year programme. With additional grant funding in 2026/27, frontline case work is being strengthened to focus on prevention and successful move-on outcomes from temporary accommodation to ensure standards are met and maintained.

End of Year Forecast 2025/26

25. The work undertaken in 2025/26 has contributed to more favourable end of year forecast – meaning that the number of households in TA is likely to be below the number assumed in the MTFS 26/27 starting assumptions. The difference between the M11 forecasts and MTFS 26/27 forecasts is summarised below:

Summary of latest forecast v start of year assumptions for households in nightly paid TA:

- Mainstream 785 M11 v 857 MTFS
- Arrivals via Heathrow Airport 68 M11 v 127 MTFS

Empty Homes

26. In relation to empty homes, our cross departmental working group continues to meet on a monthly basis. An Empty Homes Officer is now in post and is leading on this area of work and is engaging with landlords, property owners and solicitors where properties are in probate.

Measures of success

27. The table below provides an update on the measures of success. The measures indicate positive progress including avoiding the use of shared accommodation for homeless families with children and a currently positive trajectory in reducing the overall expenditure on temporary accommodation.

Measure	Target	Baseline	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 25	Oct 25	Nov 25	Dec 25	Jan 26	Feb 26
1.Higher % Households whose homelessness is prevented	London Average 54% (Oct-Dec 2024)	31%*	19%	33%	31%	38%	39%	59%	50%	48%	48%	34%	27%
2.Families with children/pregnant women in non-self-con B&B > 6 wks	0	0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3.Fewer Hshlds homeless and needing TA	50 max (per month)	62***	64	44	66	72	28	39	61	54	35	50	43
4.Fewer Hshlds in nightly charged TA	Zero by 31/03/2026	736**	760	770	789	819	810	809	941	897	892	865	845
5.Lower overall cost of TA (Gross)	Balanced budget by year end	£1,987,313**	£2,007,305	£2,110,797	£1,924,718	£2,003,068	£2,023,660	£1,961,019	£2,105,583	£2,038,995	£2,144,831	£2,089,817	£1,499,146
6.Lower cost per TA unit	Zero over caps set by bedsize	£75.15****	£75.18	£75.99	£78.82	£75.75	£77.16	£72.63	£73.19	£74.91	£79.31	£79.11	£78.97
7.Implementation of acquisition and new build development programme (LBH)	300 acquisition 100 new build	19*** 15***	110	130	252	250	260	320	2015	335	240	150	70
8.Fewer households threatened with homelessness (approaches)	600	609***	568	607	604	616	514	568	722	645	582	626	571
9.Private rented sector placements	30	19***	25	39	33	33	34	43	39	54	31	42	50
Of which let to homeless out of TA	20		4	11	9	7	5	4	3	8	4	5	11

Measure	Target	Baseline	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sep 25	Oct 25	Nov 25	Dec 25	Jan 26	Feb 26
10.Lettings to homeless households in TA	36 Revised target	32***	8	9	15	14	13	19	22	27	35	19	23

*Average 2024/25

** @ 31/3/2025

*** Monthly average 2024/25

**** March 2025

Financial Implications

The Temporary Accommodation Strategy and Action Plan outlines initiatives to reduce homelessness spend on temporary accommodation. A wide range of measures are detailed in the plan including preventative measures, more efficient service delivery and new ways of working, as well as supply measures such as procuring properties at lower cost, acquisitions and new build.

Some of these measures will have initial cost implications which have been factored in the budget setting process as part of the MTFs and ultimately aim to drive the total cost of homelessness down.

The report outlines progress that has been made in taking forward actions in the strategy. The impact of these actions has begun to show some positive results especially with procuring properties at lower cost through the rent cap initiative. Changes in Rates between April 2025 and February 2026 are shown below.

Category	April 2025 Rates/Unit/day (£)	February 2026 Rates/unit/Day (£)	Difference (£)
1 Bed	64.49	59.43	(5.06)
2 Bed	86.73	77.31	(9.42)
3 Bed	99.86	87.72	(12.14)
4 Bed	108.04	98.39	(9.65)
5+ Bed	126.44	108.46	(17.98)

Weighted average rates show a reduction of £9.19 per unit per day from April 2025 to February 2026. This has generated a cost reduction of £2.46m to date and will generate an estimated full year effect of £2.69m cost reduction based on estimated average annual volumes in February 2026.

As at Month 10, the Housing Service were reporting a pressure of £7.6m, including a £1.3m pressure supporting arrivals from households arriving via Heathrow Airport and presenting to the Council in need of assistance. The pressure is largely driven by Temporary Accommodation and Homelessness Support, with this being a national pressure, but with Hillingdon particularly impacted by having Heathrow Airport within its boundaries having a material impact on supply and demand.

2026/27

The approved budget at Full Council in February 2026 included growth to rebase the budget for the provision of Homelessness Services for General Needs clients, Rough Sleepers and arrivals via Heathrow Airport. This growth has been reduced by the inclusion of 6 savings totally £6,662k aligned to the workstreams detailed above to reduce the overall cost of the Housing Service.

The savings included in the approved budget are:

- Workstream 1 – Prevention £1,704k
- Workstream 2b – PRS Supply and Move on £1,171k

- Workstream 2a – Supported Housing Supply and Move on £464k
- Workstream 3 – TA Rent Inflation Management £230k
- Workstream 4 – Social Housing £1,701k
- Workstream 4 – Acquisitions £1,392k

These savings will be monitored through the demand led financial and activity-based model.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

Those residents affected by homelessness will benefit from the increased focus on fast and effective case handling and on securing sustainable accommodation solutions. All residents of the borough will benefit from the concerted effort to address the budgetary risk related to temporary accommodation expenditure. Sound financial management is a fundamental part of “putting residents first”.

Consultation & Engagement carried out (or required)

This report has not been subject to consultation. The report provides an update on a previously agreed action plan that covers a range of management actions that are necessary to bring high risk expenditure in line with budgetary constraints. Rapid implementation is critical. The strategy covers a wide range of actions, some of which will or have already been subject to consultation, i.e. the recent amendments to the Social Housing Allocation Policy being an example.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

There are no further Corporate Finance considerations other than those highlighted in the financial implications section above.

Legal

This report provides an update to Cabinet and outlines the progress made in respect of the Temporary Accommodation Strategy and Action Plan approved by them in February 2025.

The recommendation is for Cabinet to note the contents of this report and as such Legal Services confirms there are no legal impediments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Hillingdon Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026 to 2030](#)

PUBLIC PREVIEW:

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED LATER IN PRIVATE

Cabinet Member(s)	As appropriate
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	As appropriate
Officer Contact(s)	Mark Braddock – Democratic Services
Papers with report	None

HEADLINES

Summary	<p>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.</p> <p>This will enable Cabinet Members to openly discuss such matters generally in public, and via the Council’s live broadcast of the meeting, without prejudicing their later consideration in private.</p>
<p>Putting our Residents First</p> <p>Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026</p>	<p>This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: An efficient, well-run, digital-enabled council working with partners to deliver services to improve the lives of all our residents</p> <p>This report supports our commitments to residents of: A Digital-Enabled, Modern, Well-Run Council</p>
Financial Cost	As set out in the report.
Relevant Select Committee	As set out in this report under each item – however, this item is not for scrutiny call-in as it is information only.
Ward(s)	As set out in the report

RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet note the reports to be considered later in private and Part 2 of the Cabinet agenda and comment on them as appropriate for public information purposes.

Reasons for recommendation

Why are certain reports considered in private?

As a transparent, democratic organisation, the Council's Cabinet will consider matters in public on Part 1 of this Cabinet agenda. However, there will inevitably be some reports that will need to be considered in private. These would generally relate to contracts, property transactions or commercially sensitive information, for example, tender bids from commercial organisations, which if made public, could prejudice the Council's ability secure value-for-money for resident taxpayers.

This information is also called 'exempt' information and is considered in Part 2 of any Cabinet agenda by applying the relevant section of the Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), in that the report contains certain information and that the public interest in withholding that information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

How can the public find out more about the private reports?

To ensure maximum transparency when the Cabinet considers such private reports:

- 1) They are first given advance notice on the Cabinet's Forward Plan in summary form setting out the reason why they will be considered in private. The [Forward Plan](#) is a public document setting out all the expected decisions the Cabinet will make over the coming year, except those that are urgent, and is available on the Council's website to view;
- 2) This report provides a fuller public preview of the matters to be discussed in Part 2 of this Cabinet meeting and gives an opportunity for Cabinet Members to highlight issues of significance within and for public information purposes, without prejudicing their later fuller consideration in private. It also sets out the recommendations in general terms that are being proposed for a decision on.
- 3) Consideration of this report will also be broadcast live on the Council's YouTube channel: Hillingdon London, and available for viewing afterwards, for wider democratic engagement.
- 4) After these private reports are considered in Part 2 of this Cabinet meeting, Cabinet's full decisions on them will then be published on the Council's website the day after the Cabinet meeting, along with the decisions on the other matters already considered in public.

Alternative options considered

Cabinet could resolve to release any private report into the public domain in extraordinary or highly exceptional cases, where it considers the public interest in disclosing the information outweighs the public interest in withholding it. However, to ensure greater transparency on all private matters considered, this public preview item is advised as the most suitable way forward.

Legal comments

Such private matters are considered in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) Access to Information provisions and also The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. This report enables such matters to be discussed in public as far as is possible under the relevant legislation.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

ITEM 10 - COMMERCIAL GAS CONTRACT TENDER	
Relevant Cabinet Member	Cllr Bianco – Corporate Services & Property
Relevant Ward(s)	N/A
Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure
Information	
<p>This report requests approval to award a contract for the servicing, safety checks, repairs and maintenance of commercial gas-fired heating installations in the Council’s communal housing plant rooms and corporate buildings. The recommended supplier proposed follows a competitive tender process undertaken.</p> <p>Planned servicing and safety checks of commercial gas boilers and associated plant in communal housing and corporate properties are undertaken in line with Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations and other relevant legislation. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventative maintenance (including planned maintenance regimes) to keep heating and hot water systems in safe, serviceable working order. • Responsive repairs and remedial works when breakdowns occur, to restore heating and hot water promptly. • Maintenance support for associated equipment, including central heating and hot water system installations and Heat Interface Units (HIUs) where present. • Performance management against agreed service standards and key performance indicators (KPIs) to support high-quality delivery for residents and building users. <p>The contract supports statutory compliance and helps ensure residents and users of the Council’s corporate and communal buildings have safe, reliable heating and hot water, with a Gas Safe registered contractor delivering and being monitored against clear service standards.</p>	

ITEM 11 - HIGHWAYS TERM SERVICES CONTRACT

(added 20 April 2026)

Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Tuckwell - Planning, Housing & Growth
Relevant Ward(s)	All
Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure

Information

This report sets out the Council's competitive procurement process for the Highways Term Service Contract and seeks Cabinet approval to appoint a contractor to deliver highways maintenance and improvement works across the Borough helping the Council meet its statutory duties and maintain safe, well-managed roads and footways.

ITEM 12 - CONTRACT FOR FURNITURE WITHIN SHORT-TERM LET PROPERTIES

Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Bianco - Corporate Services & Property
Relevant Ward(s)	All
Relevant Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure

Information

Following a competitive tender process, this report recommends a single, boroughwide arrangement for supplying and installing furniture and essential white goods in short-term let (short-life) council properties used to support households at risk of homelessness. It sets out the procurement approach taken to identify a dedicated provider and seeks approval to award a contract with an option to extend (subject to performance) so that properties can be made ready for occupation quickly, consistently and safely. Benefits include:

- Faster move-ins for households in need: quicker, more reliable furnishing helps reduce delays in bringing temporary accommodation into use and the costs of that.
- Consistent standards and quality: a single provider helps standardise what is supplied and installed, supporting safer, ready-to-occupy homes.
- Better value for money: consolidating purchasing and delivery is intended to reduce costs compared with using multiple contractors and ad-hoc arrangements.
- More resilient services: removing this demand from existing voids arrangements helps protect capacity for core repairs and turnaround work.
- Clearer accountability and control: one contract provides clearer performance management, pricing transparency and better oversight of delivery across the borough.

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Agenda Item 11

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Agenda Item 12

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