

Comments from Select Committees on Cabinet’s 2026/27 budget proposals

As part of the Constitution (Budget and Policy Framework Procedure), the Council’s select committees have a statutory role to review and comment on the Cabinet’s draft budget proposals before the final budget is recommended to full Council.

The budget proposals were set out by Cabinet on 23 December 2025 and at select committee meetings in January, consideration was given to the draft budget proposals relating to the remit of each committee.

The formal comments of the select committees, whether approved at the meeting or through delegated authority after the meeting as agreed by the Chair, in consultation with the Opposition Group Lead(s), are set out below. Cabinet is requested to duly consider these comments, alongside other consultation feedback on the budget:

Select Committee	Comments
<p>Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee [6 January 2026]</p>	<p>The Committee is grateful for all the hard work undertaken by both Councillors Goddard and more recently Lavery in their respective Cabinet roles, together with all the Finance Officers of the Council in whatever capacity.</p> <p>We recognise the exceptionally challenging climate that has pertained over the last several years which has impacted not only harsh conditions in which local authorities have to operate, but also the related but vital economic landscape in which partner businesses and services inhabit.</p> <p>All local authorities report significant challenges in operating in these conditions, some with far more issues than others. We in Hillingdon face particular problems associated with Heathrow, which historically and currently has never been financially addressed. This includes the pressures from asylum seekers, many of whom are unaccompanied children who generate immediate additional unrecoverable costs to our residents.</p> <p>It is of note that London councils are forecasting a multi-billion deficit in London-wide Council funding for at least 50% of boroughs in the Capital by the end of 2027 - this is unsustainable.</p> <p>The conditions under which Hillingdon is operating, with our additional pressures, are very significant. However as evidenced in the performance report, the Council has continued to provide good quality services at amongst the cheapest across London.</p> <p>We welcome all the efforts and proposals to ensure that the correct savings are made while keeping to the desire to maintain good services at reasonable costs to residents.</p>

<p>Children, Education & Families Select Committee [7 January 2026]</p>	<p>The Children, Families and Education Select Committee would like to thank officers for the significant work undertaken in developing these savings and growth proposals.</p> <p>Officers have provided the Committee with reassurance that the budget proposals have been subject to rigorous and robust testing to ensure realistic outcomes. An example of such outcomes is within the SEND service, which was recently recognised by the DfE for successfully providing a high-quality, financially efficient SEND service.</p> <p>The Committee welcomes longer-term funding certainty and budget growth identified to enable the Council to continue to improve outcomes for children and families. While progress has been made on addressing High Needs pressures, the Committee notes that the deficit remains and will require continued focus and innovative solutions. Strong governance arrangements to track and monitor the budget must remain a key priority.</p>
<p>Residents' Services Select Committee [8 January 2026]</p>	<p>The Residents' Services Select Committee has considered the Budget Proposals for 2026/27 insofar as they relate to services within its remit, alongside the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the wider financial context facing the Council.</p> <p>The Committee recognises the exceptionally challenging environment in which the budget has been prepared, including sustained demand pressures, inflation and reduced financial resilience following the use of reserves. These challenges are compounded by long-term underfunding from central government, resulting in an increasing gap between statutory responsibilities and available funding.</p> <p>Members highlight the significant financial pressures arising from national asylum and resettlement responsibilities, including costs associated with asylum presentations and the Chagos Islander settlement, for which the Council is not fully or sustainably reimbursed. These externally driven pressures continue to place a disproportionate burden on Residents' Services, particularly housing and temporary accommodation.</p> <p>The Committee notes that the proposed net increase of approximately £15.8m within Residents' Services is driven largely by unavoidable demand pressures, particularly homelessness. Members welcome the realistic approach taken, including the rebasing of undeliverable legacy targets and the focus on deliverable, officer-owned proposals.</p> <p>In relation to homelessness, the Committee acknowledges the scale of the challenge and notes positively the continued focus on controlling temporary accommodation costs, securing private rented sector supply and increasing the provision of social rented homes. The emphasis on prevention, move-on pathways and partnership working is welcomed, while recognising that many drivers of demand remain outside the</p>

	<p>Council's control.</p> <p>The Committee supports targeted budget growth where it protects statutory duties and reduces longer-term risk, including investment in areas such as tree inspection and maintenance. Members also note the proposed efficiencies and savings across Residents' Services and support the emphasis on service redesign, digital enablement and cross-service collaboration, with appropriate consideration of service impacts.</p> <p>With regard to fees and charges, the Committee notes the proposed increases to discretionary services and the assurance that the Council remains comparatively low-cost relative to neighbouring authorities. Members welcome the cautious approach to income assumptions and the use of contingencies to manage delivery risk.</p> <p>Overall, the Committee considers that the Budget Proposals within its remit are realistic and proportionate to the scale of the financial challenge faced, balancing demand-led pressures, protection of frontline services and the delivery of savings in the context of continued external funding pressures.</p>
<p>Health and Social Care Select Committee [20 January 2026]</p>	<p>The Health and Social Care Select Committee recognises that officers have worked hard to establish a credible base line, spending months working through the growth model for the next five years and evaluating the drivers for increased costs, which include the continued anticipated increase in demand and the exponential rise in the cost of care. The model had looked at many primary support reasons and focused on how costs and the market can expect to be managed over the next few years.</p> <p>Previous budgets have not provided accurate forecasting. The measures put in place to ensure that slippage was identified and addressed in a timely manner had not worked as well as intended. Ownership for spending and savings was not as clear as it should have been, which impacted on accountability for delivery. Members welcome the assurances they have been given that these issues have been recognised and systems put in place to improve accuracy and accountability, thus delivery.</p> <p>Insofar as anticipated costs based on forecasted demand and proposed savings are concerned, the modelled figures contained within the budget are based on stronger evidence compared with previous years. The savings proposals were discussed (and assumptions probed) at challenge sessions with Cabinet Members and Corporate Directors. Individuals have been identified to manage specific savings projects and measures have been put in place to monitor these projects to ensure that they stay on track, with the intention to improve accountability for delivering services within the proposed budget.</p> <p>Whilst the Committee welcome the detailed responses given by officers in the meeting and appreciate that there is additional information in the budget report that went to Cabinet, there is still a need for more detailed</p>

	narrative within the report in relation to the impact that savings proposals would have on staff or services. It is important that this narrative is provided to the Committee to enable them to effectively scrutinise performance during the next municipal year.
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BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Further detail of the broader discussion about the budget proposals from the select committees are set out in their minutes below:

- [Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee on Tuesday, 6th January, 2026](#)
- [Children, Families and Education Select Committee on Wednesday, 7th January, 2026](#)
- [Residents' Services Select Committee on Thursday, 8th January, 2026](#)
- [Health and Social Care Select Committee on Tuesday, 20th January, 2026](#)