



HILLINGDON
LONDON

Annual Report of the Select Committees

May 2026
Democratic Services



Scrutiny



Finance



Local Services



Health



Community Safety

Introduction

Select Committees are a vital pillar of Hillingdon Council’s governance framework. They play a central role in ensuring transparency, accountability and effective democratic oversight across the Council’s decision-making processes.

While the Cabinet is responsible for setting the policy direction of the Council and taking executive decisions on service delivery, Select Committees provide independent oversight and scrutiny of those decisions and services. Working alongside both, the Council’s Officer Directorates support Members with professional advice and are responsible for implementing agreed decisions. Together, these roles create a robust system of checks and balances that strengthens local democracy.

In particular, Hillingdon’s Select Committees are responsible for:

- Supporting the development and improvement of local policy;
- Questioning, challenging and evaluating the actions and decisions of the Cabinet, both before and after decisions are taken;
- Producing reports and recommendations to drive service improvement; and
- Scrutinising key external services, including local health services and crime and disorder reduction arrangements.

Discharging this function, the Council has four select committees along with a Corporate Parenting Panel and, if required a further Review Panel for cross cutting matters (see right).

Throughout the year, Councillors on these committees have continued to undertake their work with commitment and diligence, monitoring and

reviewing both Council services and external partners in the best interests of Hillingdon residents. The Committees’ policy reviews during 2025/26 have generated thoughtful and constructive recommendations, helping to shape future priorities and improve outcomes across the Borough. The quality of this work has been further enhanced by strong engagement from witnesses and subject matter experts, whose contributions have brought valuable insight and real-world experience into the scrutiny process.

This annual report highlights the breadth, depth and impact of overview and scrutiny activity in Hillingdon during the 2025/26 municipal year. With Borough elections taking place in 2026, this focus on robust, resident-focused scrutiny will no doubt continue into 2026/27. On behalf of the Select Committee Chairs, this report is commended to full Council.



How select committees work

Select committees play a key role in shaping the Council's future direction by monitoring performance, influencing policy development and making recommendations to the Cabinet across a wide range of service areas. They also hold the Cabinet to account through the statutory call-in power, providing further assurance that decisions are robust, well-evidenced and in the best interests of residents.



Pictured: Health & Social Care Select Committee

Beyond Council services, select committees have an important statutory external scrutiny role. They review and challenge the performance of other public bodies whose services significantly affect Hillingdon residents, most notably the local NHS and the Metropolitan Police / Safer Hillingdon Partnership. This ensures that public partners remain accountable and responsive to local needs.

Each committee delivers its work through a structured, four-year scrutiny work programme that deliberately extends beyond individual municipal years. This longer-term approach allows scrutiny activity to be planned around issues facing residents and communities, rather than being constrained by annual committee cycles. It enables committees to balance shorter, single-meeting reviews with more detailed, in-depth policy investigations that may need to be developed over time. Crucially, multi-year planning provides the space to engage meaningfully with residents, service users, voluntary and community organisations, and external specialists, ensuring that scrutiny is informed by lived experience, robust evidence, and professional expertise.

Committees may also commission information reports on emerging or ongoing issues of concern to residents, drawing on the local knowledge and experience of ward councillors to challenge and add value. In addition, select committees comment on reports due to be considered by Cabinet and play a key role in scrutinising and contributing to the development of the Council's budget and policy framework proposals before they are formally agreed by Council. Through this work, committees deliver an independent "health check" to help ensure that services continue to be high-quality, well-managed and deliver value for money, with residents firmly at the heart.

Corporate parenting is also a core and integral part of Hillingdon's overview and scrutiny arrangements. The Corporate Parenting Panel provides focused oversight of services for children in the Council's care and care-experienced young people, actively engaging with them to shape services and amplify their voices. This work is supported by a direct and clear link into the decision-making process, ensuring that the views and experiences of young people meaningfully influence decision-making at the highest level.

Checks and balances

Budget Scrutiny

From April 2025, all select committees began receiving regular monthly reports on budget expenditure and savings delivery.

This strengthened financial scrutiny across the Council, enabling Members to monitor performance against the approved 2025/26 budget and to investigate risks or emerging pressures at an early stage. More detail of the Committee's scrutiny of the budget is set out in their relevant sections below.



Financial Scrutiny Training

Members recognised the importance of having the right knowledge and skills to undertake their increased responsibilities for financial oversight over the year. Therefore, specialist financial scrutiny training was delivered by an expert external provider. The training strengthened Members' confidence and capability to challenge and contribute to financial discussions. Core areas covered included financial planning, the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), and the fundamentals of local government finance, supporting more informed and constructive scrutiny of financial decision-making.

Policy Framework consultees

In line with statutory requirements, select committees are formally consulted on all budget and policy framework documents prepared by the Cabinet for public consultation. During the year, all Committees considered and commented on the Cabinet's proposed budget for 2026/27, ensuring that a broad range of Member perspectives informed the final proposals presented to Council.

In addition, the Residents' Services Select Committee was consulted on three key policy framework documents as part of their development during 2025/26: the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy, West London Waste Plan and Community Safety Strategy. This reflected the Committee's role in shaping policy that has a direct impact on communities and residents.

Councillor Calls for Action

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enables Select Committees to consider Councillor Calls for Action, allowing Members to request a formal committee discussion on a local issue where all other resolution routes have been exhausted.

No Councillor Calls for Action were submitted or considered during the 2025/26 municipal year. This reflects, in part, the effectiveness of Hillingdon’s well-established resident petitions scheme, which continues to provide an accessible and proportionate alternative mechanism for raising and addressing local concerns directly with decision-makers.

Protocol on Scrutiny and Cabinet Relations

As advised by Statutory Guidance, the Council has in place a Protocol on Scrutiny and Cabinet Relations. The protocol sets out clear principles and expectations for how these two key elements of the Council’s governance framework operate constructively together. The Statutory Scrutiny Officer can report that there has been good compliance with the protocol throughout the 2025/26 municipal year, supporting effective working relationships while maintaining robust challenge and accountability.

Scrutiny Call-Ins

Select committees have a statutory role in scrutinising executive decisions that have been taken but not yet implemented. This ‘call-in’ power provides an important check and balance within the Council’s decision-making framework.

During a five-working-day period after an executive decision is taken, the relevant select committee may request that the decision be called in for further consideration. In 2025/26, this process continued to operate through the Council’s digital *Scrutiny Call-In App*, accessible on both desktop and mobile devices. The system enables committee members to initiate a call-in request electronically, with automated notifications sent to other Members to record their support or otherwise. Where a majority of Committee Members support a request within the call-in period, the decision is automatically placed on hold and referred to the select committee for consideration. If required, the decision may then be referred back to the Cabinet or Cabinet Member for reconsideration.

During 2025/26, six call-in requests were initiated by Councillors, following Cabinet or Cabinet Member decisions, as set out below:

Date of call-in request	Councillor initiating	Select Committee	Cabinet / Cabinet Member decision
4 June 2025	Cllr Farley	Residents’ Services	A Cabinet Member decision on the introduction of charging for Garden Waste collections.
30 June 2025 / 1 July 2025	Cllr Punja / Cllr Farley	Health & Social Care Select Committee / Residents’ Services	A Cabinet decision on the closure of Retail Operations and Review of the Support Services from The Rural Activities Garden Centre
18 September 2025	Cllr Sweeting	Children, Families & Education	Cabinet decision on the amalgamation of Harefield Infant and Junior Schools
21 November 2025	Cllr Kaur	Residents’ Services	Cabinet Member decision on a review of the Out of Hours Noise Service
29 January 2026	Cllr Punja	Health & Social Care	Cabinet Member decision on the Rural Activities Garden Centre.

In all cases, call-in requests did not secure majority support within the scrutiny call-in period. As a result, the decisions made by the Cabinet or Cabinet Members were implemented.

Urgent Decisions

Select Committee Chairs have a constitutional role in determining whether the usual pre-decision publication and/or post-decision call-in periods should be waived where a decision is considered urgent by the Cabinet or the Leader of the Council.

Such waivers are exceptional and subject to strict tests set out in the Constitution. The relevant Chair must agree that the matter cannot reasonably be deferred, and that delay would prejudice the Council's or the public's interests or increase the risk of harm to people or property.

When approved, this allows decisions to be implemented more quickly, ensuring the Council can respond promptly where necessary in residents' or services' best interests. These decisions are formally categorised as 'urgency' or 'special urgency' decisions, depending on the circumstances. During 2025/26, and as of 30 April 2026, there were **13** Cabinet or Cabinet Member decisions where a Select Committee Chair exercised this constitutional prerogative. All such decisions are reported to full Council in accordance with statutory requirements.

Accessible, Open and Transparent Scrutiny

Select committee meetings are held in public and published on the Council's online meetings calendar. Agendas, reports and minutes are publicly available on the Council's website, providing comprehensive information on Committee discussions and recommendations. These can be viewed [here](#). To further increase transparency and public engagement, all Select Committee meetings are broadcast live on the Council's YouTube channel [here](#).



The year has continued to see strong engagement from external witnesses, residents and service users, who have contributed evidence, shared lived experience and provided valuable insight to inform scrutiny discussions.

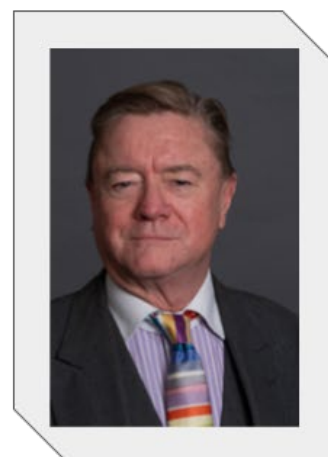
Select Committees have also undertaken site visits across the Borough during the year. These visits help Members to better understand front-line service delivery and inform future monitoring and review work. Details of any site visits are included in this annual report.

Democratic Services Officers provide continued to provide their professional advice, research and operational support to Members before, during and after meetings to ensure scrutiny activity is well-informed and effective.

Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee

- Cllr Bennett (Vice-Chair)
- Cllr Banerjee
- Cllr Choubedar
- Cllr Mathers (Opposition Lead to July 2025)
- Cllr Mand (Opposition Lead from July 2025)
- Cllr Garelick (to July 2025)
- Cllr Islam (from July 2025)
- Cllr Garg (to November 2025)
- Cllr Farley (from November 2025)

Lead Scrutiny Officer: Anisha Teji



Cllr John Riley
(Chair)

Overview

The Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee provides overview and scrutiny of a wide range of Council services. This includes internal functions such as finance, procurement, transformation, human resources, legal services and digital, as well as infrastructure-related services covering highways, assets and property. The Committee also considers cross-cutting themes, including resident experience and strategic partnerships.

Throughout the year, the Committee maintained a proactively managed and well-balanced work programme, designed to bring together standing scrutiny responsibilities with focused review work and strategic updates. This approach enabled Members to consider core areas such as finance, performance and the Forward Plan alongside a wide range of targeted topics, including the maximisation of Council spaces, cycling infrastructure, estate regeneration, digital transformation and residential property acquisitions.

The work programme remained flexible and responsive, allowing the Committee to address emerging issues while maintaining oversight of longer-term priorities. This ensured that scrutiny activity was joined-up, forward-looking and aligned with both Borough-wide challenges and residents' interests.

Review: Maximising Council spaces

Over the past year, the Committee has continued its review into *Maximising Council Spaces: A Review of Business and Private Hire Opportunities*, first launched in February 2025. The review was initiated in response to Members' concerns that a number of Council-owned halls, rooms and smaller buildings were underused and not consistently promoted, limiting their potential community value as well as opportunities for income generation.

Members recognised that the Council holds a diverse estate of spaces that, if managed more strategically, could better support residents, voluntary and community groups, and local businesses. Given Hillingdon's strategic location and strong transport links, the Committee was keen to explore how improved utilisation of these assets could both enhance community access and contribute positively to the Council's financial sustainability.

Evidence received from officers highlighted several systemic challenges, including the absence of a single, comprehensive and digitised register of hireable spaces, fragmented booking arrangements across services, and inconsistent pricing and promotion. Members also considered the limitations this created for residents and businesses seeking to hire Council spaces, as well as for the Council's ability to understand and manage its estate effectively.

The Committee supported the emerging direction of travel towards a more coordinated, corporate landlord approach. This was seen as key to improving estate intelligence, strengthening governance arrangements and enabling more informed decisions about investment, maintenance and use of Council-owned assets. Early pilot initiatives, particularly within library buildings, demonstrated the potential benefits of clearer marketing and online booking systems, with evidence of increased take-up. However, the Committee also noted that wider integration of systems and processes would be essential to realise these benefits consistently across the estate.

Through witness sessions and evidence gathering, Members increasingly recognised that the review extended beyond property management alone. The issues identified cut across commercial opportunity, marketing and resident experience. Key considerations included the need to address underused or poorly maintained assets, ensure greater consistency and transparency in fees and charges, and strike an appropriate balance between income generation and the protection of valued community spaces.

To maintain momentum and inform executive consideration at an early stage, the Committee agreed to submit an interim summary letter to the Cabinet Member. This set out emerging findings and initial recommendations, including undertaking a corporate audit of hireable spaces, establishing cross-Council working arrangements, introducing a unified and accessible booking system, and reviewing fees and charging structures to ensure consistency and fairness.

The Committee's review remains "in play", should it be progressed post-election, with the aim of delivering a set of clear, practical and deliverable recommendations to Cabinet.

Budget Scrutiny

As the Council's lead scrutiny committee for finance, the Committee placed sustained emphasis on budget oversight throughout the year. Members scrutinised the draft 2026/27 budget proposals alongside regular monthly budget and spend monitoring reports, supporting continuous accountability and a clear understanding of the Council's financial position as it evolved.

In reviewing the draft budget, the Committee explored the significant financial challenges facing the Council, including increasing demand pressures, inflation and constraints on government funding. Members examined the proposed approach to achieving a balanced budget, including efficiency measures arising from digital transformation, service reviews, the planned use of reserves and the consultation process across the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme. Throughout these discussions, Members emphasised the importance of strong leadership, financial

capability and consistent management across officer directorates, while recognising the efforts of officers operating in a highly constrained environment.

A recurring theme in financial scrutiny was the deliverability of savings. Members consistently tested assumptions, timescales and accountability arrangements. In response, officers outlined strengthened financial governance arrangements, including enhanced spend controls, the operation of a corporate Spend Control Panel, clearer delivery milestones for major savings and improved monitoring through data-led approaches. The Committee was clear that ambitious savings targets must be matched by robust delivery planning and active oversight.

The Committee also considered broader issues of financial resilience, including the Council's reliance on Exceptional Financial Support, London-wide funding pressures and local impacts associated with Heathrow Airport. While acknowledging the severity of these challenges, Members noted that Hillingdon continued to deliver services at comparatively low cost.

Performance and Resident Experience

The Committee reviewed both the six-month performance update for 2025/26 and the Annual Performance Report for 2024–25, providing assurance on service delivery, value for money and organisational accountability. Members were informed that the Council continued to perform strongly compared with other local authorities, maintaining low net expenditure in London while retaining a Good CQC rating for adult social care. While overall performance was positive, areas of challenge, particularly around homelessness and accommodation, were appropriately acknowledged.

The Annual Performance Report confirmed that performance governance arrangements were robust, with performance monitored at all levels and aligned to the corporate strategy and emerging national outcomes framework. Members noted strong performance in areas such as counter-fraud, housing repairs, highways maintenance, digital services and cyber security, supported by targeted investment, new technology including AI, and partnership working.

The Committee also considered the Annual Complaints and Service Monitoring Report for 2024–25. Members heard how revised national complaint-handling arrangements had contributed to an increase in formal complaints, alongside a reduction in service requests. Ombudsman complaints remained stable, with relatively few upheld cases. The Committee explored themes emerging from complaints data, learning from upheld Ombudsman decisions and the use of analytics to identify hotspots and inform service improvement. Overall, Members were assured that complaint levels remained low relative to the size of the Borough and welcomed the continued focus on early resolution and organisational learning.

Thematic Service Scrutiny

A substantial element of the Committee's work during the year focused on detailed scrutiny of service programmes and thematic areas that cut across multiple services and have a direct bearing on residents' quality of life. These sessions enabled Members to assess not only progress against plans, but also how policy intent translated into delivery, outcomes and resident experience.

The Committee reviewed progress on delivery of the **Hillingdon Cycle Strategy**, considering both operational activity and early indicators of impact. Members examined delivery to date, including cycle training, doctor bike sessions, improved crossings and junction layouts, towpath works, school cycle

parking grants and new cycling facilities in town centres. The Committee also scrutinised partnership working with Transport for London and the successful securing of external funding. Importantly, Members noted that borough-wide cycling levels had not yet demonstrated a measurable increase. This allowed for a balanced and realistic discussion about timescales, behavioural change and the need for future reporting to focus on emerging outcomes as well as completed activity.

Major place-based regeneration remained a priority through the Committee's consideration of the **Hayes Estate regeneration** programme. Members were updated on completed and near-completed phases, planning progress on future phases and options to accelerate delivery. Scrutiny extended beyond construction milestones to examine issues such as resident engagement, management of antisocial behaviour during redevelopment, housing quality standards, landscaping and play provision, and monitoring of social value commitments. This enabled the Committee to consider the long-term impact of regeneration on communities as well as the pace and quality of delivery.

Digital transformation was a recurring theme throughout the year. The Committee considered progress on the Digital Strategy, receiving updates on the launch of the new Council website, expansion of business intelligence dashboards, infrastructure modernisation, cyber security improvements, digital inclusion initiatives and the use of technology-enabled care. Members tested whether the organisation's systems, workforce capability and culture were aligned to its digital ambitions, emphasising that transformation must improve service resilience and resident access rather than be pursued for its own sake.

The Committee also scrutinised **building safety and fire safety**, reflecting the importance of this agenda nationally and locally. Members reviewed the updated Fire Safety Policy, considering such governance arrangements, risk-based inspection regimes, assurance mechanisms and resident engagement. The Committee received assurance that fire risks were being systematically assessed and managed across housing, operational and commercial buildings, including enhanced arrangements for higher-risk and leasehold properties. Members also explored the implications of forthcoming regulatory changes, noting the potential for increased capital investment requirements and the need for careful financial planning. As well as looking at the Council's social housing stock, the committee also scrutinised fire safety standards in the private sector.

Scrutiny of housing supply and investment featured prominently through examination of the Council's **Right to Buy buy-back programme**. Members reviewed performance across different acquisition routes, including the in-house team and external arrangements, and closely challenged value-for-money considerations, particularly relating to refurbishment costs. The Committee reviewed how lessons were being learned from cost differentials and sought assurance that the programme was contributing effectively to rebuilding social rented stock. Members also noted the successful securing of GLA grant funding and the focus on acquiring former local authority properties to increase the stock.

Updates on **electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure**, following a previous scrutiny review, allowed the Committee to scrutinise delivery of the Council's climate and transport ambitions. Members noted completion of phase one, delivery of 46 operational charging points, progress on phase two and the securing of further external funding through the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles and a multi-borough partnership. The Committee examined issues such as grid capacity constraints, variation in charging speeds, resident concerns about on-street parking and the exploration of alternative solutions including lamppost charging and cable gullies. The need to future-proof infrastructure and consider charging costs and maintenance arrangements was also discussed.

The Committee considered **fleet management and future plans**, reviewing vehicle replacement strategies, emissions compliance, damage costs and driver performance. Members scrutinised the challenges of transitioning away from diesel vehicles, including the high cost of electrification and limited charging infrastructure. While welcoming positive operational results from electric vehicle trials, Members recognised the continued short-term reliance on diesel vehicles and associated ULEZ and maintenance costs. The introduction of damage cost recharging to services and rollout of vehicle tracking were noted as measures to strengthen accountability and efficiency.

Finally, Members examined **Council Tax banding arrangements**, focusing on the reassessment of properties following significant development. The Committee explored how Building Control information was used to identify cases, the role of the Valuation Office Agency, and the limitations of current legislation, including delays linked to property transactions. Members received assurance that monitoring arrangements were robust and that the Council had contributed to a national consultation calling for reform of the existing system.

Beyond the Committee Room

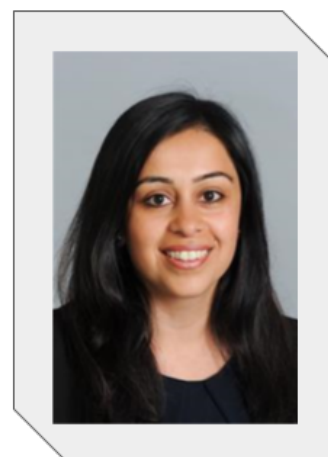
The Committee also made use of site visits to support its scrutiny work. Members visited the Platinum Jubilee Leisure Centre in West Drayton ahead of its completion and welcomed the opportunity to see the scale and quality of the development first-hand. Members commended officers for successfully delivering the project following the collapse of the original contractor and recognised the centre as a significant new asset for the Borough.



Children, Families & Education Select Committee

- Cllr Gohil (Vice-Chair)
- Cllr Smallwood OBE
- Cllr Bhatt
- Cllr Sweeting (Opposition Lead)
- Cllr Garg
- Cllr Gill
- Mr Little (Education Co-opted Member)

Corporate Parenting Panel



Cllr Heena Makwana
(Chair)

Lead Scrutiny Officer: Ryan Dell

Overview

The Children, Families & Education Select Committee plays a central role in the Council's governance arrangements, providing oversight and scrutiny of services that support children, young people and families across the Borough. The Committee's remit spans Children's Services (including Corporate Parenting), Children's Safeguarding, Education, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and wider children and family development.

During 2025/26, the Committee maintained a varied and demanding work programme. Alongside routine performance monitoring and budget scrutiny, Members considered a wide range of strategic and statutory matters and undertook an in-depth review of the Council's fostering offer. Throughout the year, scrutiny focused on service quality, safeguarding assurance, financial sustainability and outcomes for children and young people, particularly those with the greatest levels of need. On a number of matters considered below, the Committee reported its views to Cabinet on a regular basis, supporting sound decision-making.

Corporate Parenting

Corporate Parenting remained a core focus of the Committee's work throughout the year. All councillors are 'Corporate Parents' and share responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing, aspirations and life chances of Cared for Children and Care Experienced Young People. This duty is additionally delivered through the Corporate Parenting Panel, which reports directly to the Select Committee and provides a dedicated forum for engagement and oversight. The Panel comprises Councillors Nick Denys (Chair), Heena Makwana (Vice-Chair) and Jan Sweeting, alongside young people who act as co-chairs, officers from Children's Services, health partners and representatives from the Virtual School.

This year, the Panel continued to strengthen the integration of Corporate Parenting within the Council's democratic governance arrangements, ensuring that the voices and experiences of young people inform decision-making. Its work programme addressed key thematic areas including safeguarding, health and wellbeing, and education and opportunity. During the year, the Panel considered a range of assurance and information reports, including annual reports from the Independent Reviewing Officer, the Cared for Children Health Team and the Virtual School. Young people also contributed directly to the Panel's work, providing insight and feedback, including reflections on the Kids in Care Awards and a year-end presentation highlighting priorities and lived experience. This direct engagement reinforced the Panel's focus on aspiration, stability and meaningful participation.

Review: Fostering

A key strand of the Committee's work during the year was an in-depth review of Hillingdon's fostering offer. Fostering is a vital, life-changing service, providing stability, care and belonging for children who are unable to live with their birth families.

The review examined the implementation and early impact of the Council's new fostering offer and sought to understand how it was being experienced by foster carers and young people. Evidence was gathered from officers, foster carers and young people with lived experience of foster care, enabling Members to develop a rounded and informed understanding of the service.

Scrutiny focused on placement stability, matching processes, communication between professionals, carers and young people, and the adequacy of training and support. The Committee recognised the positive impact of the new offer, including a significant increase in enquiries and the recruitment of new fostering households. Members also welcomed improvements in promotional materials, a strengthened recruitment approach and the development of specialist fostering pathways to support children with complex needs.

The Committee placed particular emphasis on the voice of the child and on the importance of broadening the diversity of foster carers to better reflect the Borough's communities and improve matching outcomes. Following completion of the review, a series of recommendations were agreed, including improving information for young people entering placements, strengthening visibility of the child's voice, developing clearer specialist training pathways for carers, and reviewing peer support networks for both carers and young people. The review was presented to Cabinet in April 2026, warmly welcomed and approved.

Budget Scrutiny

Budget scrutiny formed an increasingly significant part of the Committee's work during 2025/26, reflecting the scale and persistence of financial pressures within Children's Services and Education. Members maintained regular oversight of financial performance, with particular focus on children's placements, accommodation costs and pressures linked to SEND.

The Committee examined the wider financial context, including ongoing challenges arising from the Dedicated Schools Grant, especially the High Needs Block, and the impact of rising demand and structural pressures across the system. Members consistently tested the sustainability of current service models and emphasised the importance of early intervention, inclusion and demand management in reducing long-term costs. Throughout the year, the Committee sought assurance that cost control measures did not compromise safeguarding responsibilities, service quality or outcomes for vulnerable children. Regular monthly monitoring and challenge was essential to ensure financial

decision-making remained aligned with strategic priorities while keeping children’s welfare at the forefront.

Performance Monitoring

Through its annual and bi-annual performance reports, the Committee reviewed a broad range of performance indicators, including safeguarding activity, child protection measures, workforce stability, early help interventions and youth justice outcomes. Members welcomed increased confidence in the quality, consistency and accessibility of performance data, supported by improvements to dashboard reporting systems. Scrutiny discussions allowed for early identification of emerging risks and trends, such as fluctuations in referral rates and increasing complexity of need, enabling timely challenge and informed assurance. The Committee recognised that robust and well-understood performance information was essential to effective governance and service improvement. Regular monitoring strengthened transparency, supported proactive responses to risk and ensured that performance oversight remained firmly aligned to safeguarding responsibilities and positive outcomes for children and young people.

Thematic Service Scrutiny

Alongside its major review work and budget scrutiny, the Committee undertook extensive thematic monitoring across the breadth of Children, Families and Education services. This enabled Members to track performance, scrutinise policy development and assess the delivery and impact of strategic change across a wide and complex service landscape.

A significant strand of scrutiny focused on **education sufficiency and school organisation**, reflecting falling pupil numbers across the Borough and the financial pressures this placed on schools. The Committee reviewed a range of proposals, including changes to Published Admission Numbers, school amalgamations and adjustments to age ranges. In considering proposals such as the amalgamations of Harefield Infant and Junior Schools and Whitehall Infant and Junior Schools, Members examined consultation feedback, leadership arrangements, educational continuity and financial modelling. Scrutiny sought to ensure that decisions were evidence-based, educationally sound and capable of supporting long-term sustainability, while maintaining stability for pupils and families.

The Committee also considered proposals to lower the age range of Whiteheath Infant and Nursery School to include two-year-olds, as part of the expansion of early years provision. Members explored the differing perspectives of parents and providers, and the potential benefits for disadvantaged children and working families, before providing comments to Cabinet. In parallel, scrutiny of **school admissions data** enabled the Committee to examine patterns in parental preference, in-year admissions and differences between primary and secondary phases, reinforcing the importance of clear communication with families and realistic application guidance.

A further area of sustained focus was **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**. The Committee monitored progress against the SEND & Alternative Provision Strategy 2023–2028, which brought together delivery of the SEND improvement plan and former DfE Safety Valve commitments within a single, coherent framework. Members examined how the strategy aimed to support children successfully in mainstream education where appropriate, whilst ensuring specialist provision for those with the highest levels of need. Scrutiny also considered alignment with emerging national reforms and examined the Dedicated Schools Grant position, particularly the High Needs Block. Members welcomed improvements in the in-year position and recognition from the Department for Education of

progress made in financial efficiency and outcomes, while remaining clear that cost controls must be underpinned by strong inclusion practice and improved educational provision.

The Committee continued to scrutinise **attendance and inclusion**, concluding its review into persistent absenteeism earlier in the year. Members recognised the ongoing impact of post-pandemic challenges, including mental health pressures and wider family circumstances, and emphasised the need for partnership-based approaches rather than punitive responses. The Committee reinforced the importance of early identification, targeted interventions and alignment with safeguarding and family support services. This thematic focus reflected the Committee's broader emphasis on prevention and long-term outcomes.



Care and safeguarding remained central to the Committee's work. Scrutiny of the Care Strategy for Cared for Children and Care Experienced Young People allowed Members to assess how the Council's approach was shifting towards more aspirational, strengths-based and relationship-centred practice. Members welcomed the co-production of the strategy and examined how it would support education, employment, housing stability and emotional wellbeing, while emphasising the importance of sustained support beyond statutory thresholds.

The Committee also monitored implementation of the **Family First reforms**, which represent significant structural and cultural change across children's services. Members examined progress towards locality-based, multi-disciplinary teams and greater integration between family help and social work functions. Scrutiny focused on prevention, relational practice and reducing repeat removals of children, testing workforce readiness and the strength of partnership engagement.

Within **youth justice**, the Committee reviewed delivery of the Hillingdon Youth Justice Strategy 2024–2029, that it had previously been involved in shaping. Members welcomed reductions in first-time entrants to the justice system, improved engagement with education, training and employment, and a continued focus on early intervention and restorative approaches. The development of disproportionality action plans and multi-agency high-risk panels was noted as strengthening preventative work and partnership responses.

The Committee also considered the role of **adult learning and skills** through scrutiny of Learn Hillingdon's annual self-assessment. Members noted strong retention, achievement and pass rates, alongside positive Ofsted feedback, and examined outreach to under-represented groups and harder-to-reach communities. While welcoming the service's contribution to employment and lifelong learning, Members also discussed ongoing funding pressures and the importance of maintaining accessibility.

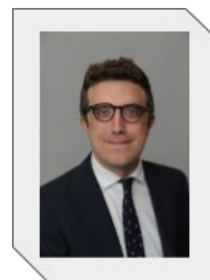
Finally, the Committee received updates on the evolving **School Organisation Plan**, recognising its growing importance as a strategic planning tool in the context of falling rolls and SEND reform. Members were advised of work underway to strengthen forward planning with schools, explore creative uses of surplus space, and improve strategic coverage of early years and SEND provision, supporting a more resilient and sustainable education system.

Residents' Services Select Committee

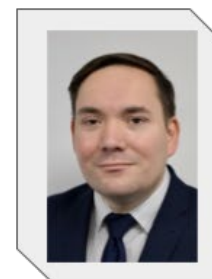
(incl. statutory crime & disorder scrutiny)

- Cllr Gohil (Vice-Chair from November 2025)
- Cllr Davies
- Cllr Dhot (from November 2025)
- Cllr Farley (Opposition Lead to November 2025)
- Cllr Kaur (Opposition Lead from November 2025)
- Cllr Gardner (to July 2025)
- Cllr Garelick (from July 2025)
- Cllr Singh (from November 2025)

Lead Scrutiny Officer: Liz Penny



**Cllr Peter
Smallwood OBE**
(Vice-Chair and then
Chair from
November 2025)



**Cllr Wayne
Bridges**
(Chair to
November 2025)

Overview

The Residents' Services Select Committee is responsible for the overview and scrutiny of a wide and diverse portfolio of Council services that directly affect residents' daily lives and the character of the Borough. Its remit includes housing and homelessness, planning and regeneration, waste and recycling, green spaces, parking and enforcement, licensing, leisure, environmental services and community safety.

In addition to its council scrutiny role, the Committee has a significant outward-facing responsibility through its statutory oversight of the Crime and Disorder Partnership. Through regular engagement with the Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade and others in the Safer Hillingdon Partnership, the Committee ensures that the Council effectively discharges its duties under the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009.

During the municipal year, the Committee maintained a proactive and evolving work programme, using it not only as a scheduling tool but as a means of directing scrutiny activity toward issues of greatest relevance and impact. Members revisited priority areas, incorporated emerging topics and commissioned further investigation where appropriate. This included focused scrutiny of waste services, climate and flood risk, enforcement activity and housing pressures. Formal meetings were complemented by site visits and engagement with frontline services, ensuring scrutiny was informed by both strategic reporting and operational experience.

Review: Homelessness Prevention & Customer Journey

An initial piece of work during 2025/26 was finalising the Committee's in-depth review of Homelessness Prevention and the Customer Journey in Hillingdon. The review reflected the Committee's commitment to improving outcomes and experiences for vulnerable residents at a time of significant housing pressure.

Across four detailed witness sessions, Members heard evidence from Council officers, voluntary sector partners and frontline practitioners. Scrutiny covered the full homelessness pathway, including prevention activity, access to temporary accommodation, rough sleeping, and support for residents experiencing domestic abuse. To support the review, Members undertook site visits to the Council's Housing Reception Centre and customer contact centre and visited bed and breakfast properties used to accommodate local residents on a temporary basis. Evidence gathered during the review highlighted the importance of clear communication, trauma-informed practice and consistent quality of service, particularly at first points of contact. Members also considered how digital tools could support earlier intervention, improve access to information and reduce repeat approaches, while recognising the need to maintain face-to-face support for residents with complex needs.

The review concluded with a series of practical, resident-focused recommendations, including improvements to the physical environment of the Housing Reception Centre, managing people's expectations, clearer explanations of processes, enhanced use of digital channels, and stronger feedback and quality-assurance arrangements. The Committee's review was approved by Cabinet in June 2026, after which the Committee continued to monitor progress in delivering its findings in 2026.

Budget Scrutiny

Throughout the municipal year, the Committee maintained regular oversight of budget and financial performance, reflecting the pressures facing a number of resident-facing services and the need for effective financial control. Scrutiny focused in particular on housing, waste services and environmental operations, where rising demand, operational challenges and cost pressures required close and ongoing examination.

Members reviewed monthly budget monitoring reports, savings proposals and service pressures alongside the practical impact on service delivery. This allowed the Committee to test whether financial decisions were realistic, deliverable and aligned with agreed service priorities. Officers provided monthly updates on financial performance, including explanations of variances, management actions to address pressures, and assumptions underpinning future financial planning.

The Committee was advised that the Housing Revenue Account remained balanced, providing assurance that housing finances were being managed within available resources despite wider financial pressures. Regular consideration of these reports enabled Members to undertake more detailed challenge on income assumptions, savings delivery and the main cost drivers affecting services. This consistent scrutiny helped ensure that financial risks were understood at an early stage and that emerging pressures were transparent, supporting more robust financial management across the Committee's areas of responsibility.

Performance Monitoring

Alongside budget scrutiny, the Committee undertook its annual and bi-annual performance monitoring, reviewing delivery against targets, particularly around housing delivery, waste and recycling services and planning. Members were informed of actions being taken to strengthen reporting and analysis, and improve data quality, including investment in new equipment and the development of improved reporting systems to enhance transparency and accessibility for both Members and residents.

Overall performance was generally positive, and Members sought further clarification on several key indicators to better understand trends and outcomes. These included housing delivery, recycling rates, homelessness pressures and re-letting times. Officers explained how different measures and

timeframes were applied and confirmed that further detail would continue to be provided through future performance reports where appropriate.

Thematic Service Scrutiny

As a primary strand of activity this year, the Committee undertook extensive thematic monitoring across a broad range of services, enabling Members to track performance, scrutinise emerging issues and assess how policy and operational decisions translated into resident experience.

Housing, homelessness and resident experience remained a consistent focus throughout the year. Members scrutinised the Council's response to increasing demand for temporary accommodation, the challenges of securing suitable placements, and rising costs within the private rented sector. In reviewing the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy before Cabinet approval, the Committee examined how prevention, partnership working and targeted interventions would be delivered within financial constraints, while maintaining a strong focus on outcomes for residents.

As part of its statutory responsibilities, the Committee scrutinised **community safety and crime and disorder**, engaging with the Safer Hillingdon Partnership, the Metropolitan Police and London Fire Brigade. Members examined crime trends, noting reductions in more serious offences alongside continued concern about low-level crime, antisocial behaviour and reporting levels. Scrutiny emphasised partnership working, visible policing and community engagement as essential to maintaining public confidence.

The Committee also scrutinised the Council's relationship with **Heathrow Airport**, examining community engagement, mitigation of environmental impacts, resilience planning and investment in skills, employment and apprenticeships. Members raised issues including parking pressures, enforcement, air quality, noise and future expansion, and sought assurance that community concerns were reflected in ongoing partnership arrangements.

A number of service-specific areas were examined in detail, including **parking services and enforcement**, the draft Parking Annual Report, and the Council's approach to fairness, compliance and customer service. Scrutiny covered enforcement activity, officer safety, data presentation, contractor management and opportunities to strengthen reporting and transparency.

The Committee also carried out targeted scrutiny in specific service and policy areas within its remit. This included detailed consideration of the **Empty Homes Council Tax Premium**, where Members examined how the policy was being applied in practice, the clarity of information provided to residents, and the governance arrangements supporting decision-making.

The Committee also scrutinised **animal welfare and licensing services**, focusing on enforcement capacity, how cases are managed in partnership with other agencies, and readiness to respond to serious or high-risk welfare incidents.

Planning and regeneration formed an important strand of the Committee's monitoring during the year. Members received updates on the development and delivery of town centre strategies, including the **Uxbridge Town Centre Vision**, and examined how regeneration initiatives were progressing across the Borough.

Scrutiny of **allotments management** tested allocation processes, waiting lists, inspections and governance across Council-managed and self-managed sites, with Members seeking assurance that service improvements would support fair access, effective oversight and better use of green space assets. The Committee also considered the draft **Statement of Licensing Policy**, welcoming its modernisation and alignment with wider Council strategies.

The Committee examined **infrastructure funding** through the Infrastructure Funding Statement, testing how Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy contributions were secured, monitored and spent, with a focus on transparency, timeliness and demonstrating local benefit. Members also scrutinised the draft **Community Safety Strategy**, exploring governance, delivery arrangements and partnership accountability, particularly in relation to antisocial behaviour and repeat offending.

Environmental enforcement, including **antisocial behaviour, fly-tipping and abandoned vehicles**, was a key theme. Members examined service demand, operational responsiveness, under-reporting and the development of improved case-management systems, emphasising visible enforcement and better communication with residents to protect the quality of the local environment.

The Committee also reviewed progress on **climate change, sustainability and flood risk**, examining delivery against environmental objectives, funding challenges and resilience planning. Scrutiny of a Section 19 Flood Investigation report enabled Members to examine causes and impacts of flooding events and to seek assurance on mitigation and communication with affected residents.

Waste services remained a priority, with scrutiny of collection arrangements, recycling performance, food waste expansion and commercial waste services. Members explored how waste reduction and income-generating services could support both environmental objectives and financial sustainability, alongside consideration of the draft **West London Waste Plan** and its wider strategic implications.

Community cohesion also featured prominently, with the Committee hearing from voluntary and community organisations supporting residents experiencing hardship, domestic abuse and integration challenges. Members noted rising demand and pressures on resources, emphasising the importance of secure funding, strong partnerships and continued collaboration to support community resilience.

At the Committee's last meeting in April, Members scrutinised an update on the Council's enhanced legal and policy framework for tackling **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)**, examining regulatory arrangements, enforcement activity and the Council's approach to maintaining housing standards and resident safety. The Committee also considered **sport and physical activity** provision for young people, exploring how services support health, wellbeing and inclusion, particularly for younger residents, and how delivery aligns with wider preventative and community objectives. An update on its previous **Homelessness Prevention Review** enabled Members to monitor progress against earlier recommendations, testing how changes were improving the customer journey and resident experience, and identifying areas for further improvement.

Beyond the Committee Room

To strengthen its scrutiny work, the Committee undertook site visits that provided valuable insight into service delivery beyond formal committee meetings. In summer 2025, Members visited the Platinum Jubilee Leisure Centre, gaining first-hand understanding of the scale, quality and operational considerations associated with the facility. This was followed by a further site visit in March 2026 with the waste collection team. Members found this particularly informative, gaining direct insight into frontline operational challenges, efficiency measures and health and safety considerations.



Health & Social Care Select Committee

(incl. statutory health scrutiny)

- Cllr Reeta Chamdal (Vice-Chair)
- Cllr Martin
- Cllr Haggar
- Cllr Punja (Opposition Lead)
- Cllr Burles
- Cllr Nelson (to November 2025)
- Cllr Basit (from November 2025)

Lead Scrutiny Officer: Nikki O'Halloran



Cllr Nick Denys
(Chair)

Overview

The Health and Social Care Select Committee provides overview and scrutiny of a wide range of Council services and partnerships that support the health, wellbeing and independence of residents. Its remit includes adult social work and safeguarding, social care commissioning, public health, and the voluntary and community sector. Importantly, the Committee also undertakes the Council's statutory health scrutiny role under the Health and Social Care Act 2001, working closely with NHS organisations and wider health partners to scrutinise services, system change and outcomes for local people. In addition, the Committee holds a cross-cutting responsibility for scrutiny of domestic abuse services and support, recognising the importance of coordinated, multi-agency responses to protect and support vulnerable residents.

Throughout the year, the Committee operated a responsive and actively managed work programme. Standing scrutiny items such as the Cabinet Forward Plan and budget monitoring were balanced with in-depth reviews, performance updates and wider reports on health system delivery. The programme was deliberately flexible, allowing additional evidence sessions to be introduced where required, including further witnesses for the adult social care early intervention and prevention review, a single-meeting review of GP coverage and the Hillingdon Health and Care Partners place-based transformation update. This approach ensured scrutiny remained structured, relevant and responsive to emerging issues.

Review: Adult Social Care Early Intervention and Prevention

During the year, the Committee undertook a major review into early intervention and prevention in Adult Social Care, recognising this as a critical area for improving resident outcomes and supporting the long-term sustainability of health and social care services.

The first witness session provided a positive and informative foundation for the review, with evidence from senior officers including the Director of Public Health. Members explored the role of prevention across the health and care system, including tackling hypertension, reducing avoidable hospital admissions and supporting unpaid carers. The Committee was encouraged by investment in preventative services, improvements to contract arrangements and a strengthened emphasis on co-producing services with communities.



Members also examined how the Council was responding to the needs of vulnerable groups, including autistic adults, older residents and people with long-term conditions, whilst contributing to the creation of healthier, more age-friendly environments across the Borough. Members raised concerns around accessibility, communication and the need to retain local expertise as new service models and providers are introduced. Officers confirmed that performance would be closely monitored and that engagement with providers and residents would continue as the review progressed.

Further evidence sessions later in the year strengthened the Committee's understanding of prevention as both a resident outcome priority and a financial sustainability issue, providing a growing evidence base to inform future recommendations. The Committee has finalised its review and it will be reported to Cabinet in due course.

Budget Scrutiny

Financial scrutiny became an increasingly central element of the Committee's work, particularly in the context of rising demand, inflationary pressures and growing complexity within adult social care. This was evident during the Committee's scrutiny of the Budget Setting Report for 2026/27, where Members tested whether the proposed budget genuinely reflected need and whether the underpinning assumptions were robust. Officers explained that the budget had been informed by a detailed five-year growth model, including rebasing where historic costs had not previously been fully reflected, and that it accounted for both demand growth and significant increases in the cost of care.

Members examined pressures across different client groups, noting downward pressure in some older people's placements alongside increasing demand from younger adults with SEND transitioning into adult social care. Scrutiny also focused on accountability for savings delivery, with Members seeking assurance that individual projects had clear ownership, monitoring arrangements and delivery plans.

Alongside budget setting, the Committee maintained regular monthly oversight of in-year financial performance. Members were advised that overspends were driven primarily by demand growth and savings slippage, but that actions were underway to stabilise the position. Officers also outlined benchmarking work, which showed Hillingdon to be comparatively low-cost and good value relative to other London councils, despite facing similar demand and inflation pressures. Particular concern was expressed around placements, the impact of increased National Insurance costs on contracts, and funding imbalances relating to Section 117 and the North West London Integrated Care Board. This ensured scrutiny addressed not just headline variances, but the structural drivers behind them.

Performance Monitoring

The Committee strengthened its approach to performance scrutiny during the year, including consideration of a six-month performance monitoring report and the annual performance report. In scrutinising performance, Members challenged how resident satisfaction could be improved, explored data quality and comparability, and examined the relationship between demand, cost and outcomes. Officers highlighted high levels of safeguarding activity, sustained demand within learning disability and mental health services, stabilisation in some older people's services, and the contribution of reablement in avoiding higher-cost interventions. The development of performance dashboards and data tools was welcomed, enabling more informed oversight and clearer links between service activity, quality and value for money. This reflected the Committee's focus on using performance information not in isolation, but as a tool to support effective governance and improvement.

Thematic Scrutiny

Alongside its reviews, budget and performance work, the Committee undertook a wide range of thematic scrutiny across health and social care services and the wider system.

Hillingdon Hospital redevelopment remained a key area of focus. The Committee monitored progress following confirmation that Hillingdon was included in wave one of the New Hospitals Programme. Members scrutinised the impact of national design requirements under the Hospital 2.0 standard, the need to refresh planning and engagement processes, and the revised timetable for the Outline and Full Business Cases. While questioning the realism and vulnerability of long-term delivery in a changing national context, Members emphasised the importance of maintaining momentum given the strategic significance of the project.

The Committee also delivered a **single-meeting review of GP coverage**, examining access, consistency and capacity across the Borough. Evidence from The Confederation Hillingdon CIC, Healthwatch Hillingdon and North West London partners highlighted the role of Primary Care Networks in widening support through multi-disciplinary teams. Members explored variation in enhanced services, the contribution of Pharmacy First and the accessibility of primary care and community pharmacy provision. The Committee's findings and recommendations were considered and approved by Cabinet in November 2025, and then issued to relevant partner organisations.

An **autism update** enabled Members to scrutinise the sharp rise in the number of autistic adults supported by adult social care, reflecting increased diagnosis and awareness. Members examined service design, cost pressures, transition from children's services and the development of a specialist autism function. The Committee agreed that a draft Autism Strategy should return for further consultation, recognising autism as an emerging strategic priority.

The Committee received a **Hillingdon Health and Care Partners (HHCP) transformation update**, providing system-wide insight into place-based integration. Members heard evidence of early impact, including reductions in emergency demand, improved emergency department performance, fewer delays for people with no criteria to reside, and reduced emergency admissions for residents with severe frailty. This allowed scrutiny of both aspiration and early delivery evidence.

Finally, **Healthwatch Hillingdon** played a consistent role within the Committee's work, contributing resident insight during the GP coverage review and through dedicated health update agendas, reinforcing the importance of patient and resident voice within statutory health scrutiny.

Evidence, Insight & Engagement

Select Committees routinely draw on evidence and insight from within but importantly beyond the Council, involving residents, interest groups, subject-matter experts, and a range of public and private sector organisations in their scrutiny and policy work. The evidence provided through witness sessions plays an important role in shaping committee conclusions and strengthens the recommendations reported to Cabinet by ensuring they are well-informed and evidence-based.

This year was no exception, with the following organisations, groups, services, Cabinet Members and individual witnesses contributing directly to this key element of Hillingdon's scrutiny and governance arrangements:



Corporate Services & Infrastructure Select Committee

Supporting Council teams

Corporate Directors
Communications and Engagement
Human Resources
Legal Services
Capital Programme
Major Construction Projects
Property, Building Safety
Facilities Management
Repairs
Engineering
Highways
Transportation
Fleet Management
Finance, Statutory Accounting
Investments and Pensions
Procurement and Commissioning
Counter Fraud
Internal Audit and Risk Assurance
Technology
Business Intelligence
Customer Experience
Complaints, and Emergency Response

Children, Families & Education Select Committee

External Witnesses and Organisations

Foster carers
Foster children
Children in the Council's Care/Care Leavers
Central and Northwest London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL)
NHS North West London ICB

Cabinet Members attending

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

Supporting Council teams

Corporate Director
Care Delivery
Care Provision Services
Care, Support & Transition
Children & Family Support Services
Children in Care Councils & Hillingdon Youth Council
Children Safeguarding & Care
Children's Rights & Participation Team
Children's Services
Children's Social Care
Contextual Safeguarding

Corporate Parenting and Fostering
Education
Education & Lifelong Learning
Education & SEND
Finance
Independent Reviewing Officer
Learn Hillingdon Adult Community Education
Prevention and Youth Justice
Safeguarding
Safeguarding & Quality Assurance
School Place Planning
School Placement & Admissions
SEND & Inclusion
Social Care Delivery Transformation
Strategic & Operational Finance
Strategic Finance
Stronger Families & Protection
Virtual School
Youth and Adolescent Services

Residents' Services Select Committee

External Witnesses and Organisations

APCOA Parking Ltd
Bell Farm Christian Centre
Heathrow Airport Ltd
Hillingdon Women's Centre
Metropolitan Police
London Fire Brigade

Cabinet Members attending

Councillor Wayne Bridges, Cabinet Member for
Community & Environment

Supporting Council teams

Corporate Directors
Planning and Sustainable Growth
Parking Representations and Appeals Team
Community Safety & Enforcement
Licensing Team
Environment Team
Strategic and Operational Finance
Antisocial Behaviour Team
Safer Communities & Vulnerabilities Team
Public Protection & Enforcement
Operational Assets
Environmental Specialists
Waste & Green Spaces

Housing Needs and Homelessness
Housing Strategy and Policy

Health & Social Care Select Committee

External witnesses and organisations

Age UK Hillingdon, Harrow and Brent
Alzheimer's Society
Carers Trust Hillingdon & Ealing
Central and North West London NHS Foundation
Trust
Give Space
Harlington Hospice
Healthwatch Hillingdon
Hillingdon Health and Care Partners
Hillingdon Mind
North West London Integrated Care Board
Nucleus Legal Advice Centre
Royal Brompton & Harefield Hospitals - Guy's and
St. Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
The Confederation, Hillingdon CIC
The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Cabinet Members attending

Councillor Jane Palmer, Cabinet Member for Health
and Social Care

Supporting Council teams

Corporate Director
Health and Social Care Integration Manager
Immediate Response Service
Finance
Public Health
Adult Social Work
Adult Safeguarding
Adult Learning Disabilities and Mental Health
Domestic Abuse Team

Democratic Services
London Borough of Hillingdon
Council AGM - May 2026

Annual Report supported by Democratic Services Apprentice: Mr Naveed Ali