

Report of the Budget Working Group 2024 /25

Chair's Foreword

Firstly, thank you to all the Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Budget Working Group and four Select Committees for helping to develop this report.

Also thank you for their support to Jacqui Hird, Lisa Taylor and officers from all Directorates.

There is much detail background material by way of appendices and links.

I draw your attention to the recommendations and number one in particular – The completion of the Transformation Strategy by March 2024 to enable addressing the extensive projected budget deficit for 2025/26.

Councillor Will Pascal
Budget Working Group Chair

- 1 Introduction and Methodology**
- 1.1 Scrutiny is part of the Council's governance and decision-making framework. Effective financial and budget scrutiny provides assurance to the Council that the budget is robust and sustainable.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) has lead responsibility for budget scrutiny according to its terms of reference. A standing working group was set up in 2019 to carry out the scrutiny and to develop a report with recommendations to the Leadership Team. In May 2023, OSC reviewed and amended the approach to budget scrutiny to give the select committees a greater role including lead responsibility for scrutinising the annual budget proposals relating to their terms of reference. This approach was adopted to further enhance the transparency of budget scrutiny by holding it at formal committee meetings and to make best use of the knowledge and expertise of all committee members.
- 1.3 The Medium-Term Financial Planning – Update on Financial Position 2024/25 and Budget Proposals was included in the agenda of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as well as each of the select committees. The [link](#) to the main report and [link](#) to Appendix, A which gives details of proposed areas of growth across Council services and [link](#) to Appendix B which sets out proposed budget reductions for 2024/25. Previously approved savings are in Appendix C [link](#) and Appendix D [link](#) the Capital Proposals and Appendix E [link](#) the Equality Impact Assessment.

- 1.4 The response and progress with implementation of the recommendations for the 2023/24 Scrutiny Budget Working Group Report, which were accepted by the Leadership Team in full, also formed part of the scrutiny. This is attached as Appendix Two. This supported members of the committees in their scrutiny as to whether the results of 2023/24 savings been considered in the 2024/25 savings proposals.
- 1.5 The draft minutes from the four select Committees plus the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings of 15 November and 13 December 2023 are included as Appendix One in this report.

2 Summary of Budget Working Group Findings and Recommendations

- 2.1 The Budget Working Group membership: Councillors Will Pascall (Chair), Mary Weale, Tom Bennett, Walaa Idris, Claire Simmons, Stuart Graham, Linda Wade.
- 2.2 The Budget Working Group met and considered the draft minutes and any recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny and select committee meetings. These were used to develop findings and recommendations. This review further enhanced the scrutiny by reviewing the response to the 2023/24 as accepted by the Leadership Team as set out in Section 3 below.
- 2.3 Set out below is a summary of the findings from the Working Group.
- The Budget Proposals and especially those relating to growth did not contain detailed information, which made it difficult for members to fully scrutinise them and identify the intended outcomes.
 - Other suggested improvements for annual budget scrutiny in 2025/26, included developing more detailed information by September for the scrutiny and select committees about service budgets including the Housing Revenue Account to further enhance the information available to members.
 - The scrutiny and select committees should carry out in-year scrutiny of budget proposals (proposed growth and reductions) to understand whether these have been achieved.
 - The scrutiny and select committees should receive reports on 'spend to save' as part of the in-year budget scrutiny.
 - Each Directorate has a target of 2% salary savings, but the information provided did not in many cases give detailed information about how this would be achieved. The Working Group was of the view that the Select Committees would want assurance that front line services would not be affected.
- 2.4 The recommendations from the scrutiny and select committees are set out below with the source shown in brackets. The recommendations are being made to the Leadership Team at its meeting of 6 February for acknowledgement and response to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It is anticipated that the more detailed response setting out progress with implementation of the Budget Proposals will be provided to the relevant scrutiny and select committees during the year.

- 2.5 Leadership Team is **recommended** to review the recommendations, to acknowledge them and to provide a response to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as to whether they are accepted or rejected.

Recommendation 1

The Transformation Strategy is completed by March 2024 so that it is aligned with the budget process. To facilitate scrutiny, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be provided with quarterly reports on progress. (Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

Recommendation 2

The scrutiny and select committees should receive quarterly reports on 'spend to save' projects as part of the in-year budget scrutiny, including progress of achieving savings from each investment. This should be a rolling process until the saving (or greater saving) is realised or it is acknowledged that it cannot be. (Working Group)

Recommendation 3

A Bi-annual report is produced by the Capital Programme Office including information about control measures and slippage. (Working Group)

Recommendation 4

Lobby Government and partners for fairer funding for Notting Hill Carnival to reduce the increasing financial burden on the Council. (Environment Select Committee)

Recommendation 5

To provide an update to the Select Committee on the proposal around the possibility of increasing the amount of street trading to increase the income for the Carnival. (Working Group)

Recommendation 6

Manage and Bi-annual report on the pace of the £100m investment in Council netzero2030 and develop a hypothecated RBKC financial provision mechanism for non-performance post 2030. (Environment Select Committee and Working Group)

Recommendation 7

Brief the Environment Select Committee and Budget Working Group on transformation programmes within the next six months, especially regarding the two per cent staff savings to ensure minimal impact on frontline services. (Environment Select Committee)

Recommendation 8

Review the detail of the contract to refurbish Chelsea Bridge and for the Council to continue its approach of proactive maintenance to minimise disruption to residents. (Environment Select Committee)

Recommendation 9

The Council quarterly report back to the Family Services Select Committee on progress with transforming and redesigning the delivery of children's and family services within to address expected budget gaps from 2025/26 onwards, including NHS funding. (Family Services Select Committee Select Committee and Working Group)

Recommendation 10

A report to be produced on the first year's activities of the 0-5 Strategy, as soon as possible after the first year had ended, and included in the Family Services Select Committee's Work Programme for discussion at a public meeting at a suitable time. (Family Services Select Committee)

Recommendation 11

The Working Group were in support of the North Kensington Social Justice Archive. Members requested that the Lead Member provide a report to the Family Services Select Committee on the outcome of the Discovery Phase including information on revenue and capital costs and outcome measures. (Working Group)

Recommendation 12

The Family Services Select Committee receive a detailed report on budget proposals relating to efficiencies in running costs and in particular the reduced number of mini-cabs for looked after children to facilitate scrutiny of the potential impacts on vulnerable children. (Family Services Select Committee)

Recommendation 13

The issue of temporary accommodation in the borough and its effect on the budget be monitored and addressed by the Leadership Team and regular updates be provided to the Housing and Communities Select Committee accordingly. (Housing and Communities Select Committee)

Recommendation 14

A report setting out progress and impacts of the budget proposal for VCS consolidation be provided to the Housing and Communities Select Committee. (Housing and Communities Select Committee)

Recommendation 15

A policy approach, complementing Adult Social Care's duty to provide statutory services under the Care Act, is developed across the Council and working with partners that focuses on general needs and early intervention and prevention services to promote assisted independence. (Working Group)

Recommendation 16

Investigate with the NHS better in Borough provision to assist discharge, possible both services and accommodation to free up acute beds. (Working Group)

Recommendation 17

Urgent attention is paid to NHS funding issues, including the content and management of the Better Care Fund. (Working Group)

Recommendation 18

The Leadership Team consider the implications for the Borough once consultation on changes to mental health services in inner-west London, including the proposals relating to the Gordon Hospital, is complete and a decision has been made. (Working Group)

3 **Budget Working Group Recommendations 2023-24**

- 3.1 As stated in paragraph 1.4 above, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and select committees all reviewed progress with the implementation of the Budget Working Group recommendations from 2023-24. This report is attached as Appendix Two.
- 3.2 It was noted that Recommendations 1, 2, 4, 11, 12 and 13 have been implemented and for 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 implementation is outstanding after a year.
- 3.3 The scrutiny and select committees will continue to monitor implementation and receive detailed reports as appropriate on specific recommendations as part of the Annual Scrutiny Work Programme.

Appendix One

Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee Draft Minutes – 30 November 2023

At the Chair's invitation, the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, Cllr. Josh Rendall, supported by Visva Sathasivam, Director of Adult Social Care, introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

1. There were budgetary pressures, including £4 million in 2024/25 which then increased as the years went on. The Council was required to set a balanced and robust budget.
2. Adult Social Care (ASC) had to make some efficiencies, as ASC was the biggest area of spend for the Council alongside Children's Services.
3. The department had a gross budget of £70 million and a net budget of £40 million, with 30 per cent of the budget coming from income from the NHS. There were implications on the ASC budget from the NHS. The Council received £17 million in total as part of the Better Care Funding regime, £2.1 million as a discharge grant and £1 million as a workforce grant. Indirect impacts included things such as delays in elected admissions result in residents needing more care from ASC which increased spend for the Council. Direct impacts included not receiving the expected funding.
4. The Council received a number of grants from the Government which helped the department be able to come in on budget.

The Chair then invited Cllr. Will Pascall, Chair of the Budget Working Group who noted that there was a lack of understanding regarding preventative investment to reduce service demand at a later stage.

The Committee were then invited to ask questions and the following points were raised:

1. Asked how the modelling of budget pressures was completed. Officers explained that they had been achieving savings for some time now and they were able to learn from that. The department had a demand-led budget, and the demand was volatile, as there were so many variables. Officers went through the budget line by line and looked at spend versus budget for the previous few years. There would be no cuts to services, rather it was about empowering people and promotion of independence, to reduce the reliance on long term, intrusive care and where appropriate, utilise technology to provide the right services.
2. Queried the reliance on central government plans and its impact on the department's budget planning. The officers explained that it was difficult as most grants were one-off, however, some had been confirmed for a two-year period. The £1 million discharge grant came directly from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) and there was a worry that the ICB could cut this funding

when looking for savings. The Committee questioned what would happen if the ICB could not provide the grant. Officers responded that they were working closely with the ICB, and they were confident that they would receive the funding for 2024/25 and 2025/26.

3. Sought assurance that the 2023/24 savings for 'RBKC is Home' would be achieved and questioned the impact on 2024/25 if they were not. The officer confirmed that they were confident that the target of £2.1 million savings would be met. These were cases of people who were placed outside of the borough and ASC were working to bring back as many people as possible into the borough.
4. Questioned how the Committee could be assured that the 2 per cent of staff savings would be achieved. The officers shared that finance colleagues met with Directors and Heads of Service of ASC monthly for a savings tracker meeting. The savings for 2023/24 had either already been achieved or would be achieved and planning for 2024/25 savings had already begun.
5. Enquired whether there were any examples of transformative programmes that had achieved large amounts of savings, such as those identified for 'RBKC is Home'. The officers informed the Committee that they had made £4.5 million of savings related to promoting independence in the last 4 to 5 years. 'RBKC is Home' was a planned approach to work with families and providers to find those with learning difficulties placements inside the borough.
6. Asked whether there was a contract management procedure to ensure that the Council was getting value for money for placements outside of the borough. Officers explained that for every placement there was an annual review, the contract management team would review the contract with the provider, and there was a quality assurance service. They received feedback from the service user as part of the review and there were key performance indicators which the provider would have to adhere to.
7. Queried how the 'RBKC is Home' programme would save the Council money. Officers clarified that during the pandemic, residents were discharged with speed and were placed in nearby boroughs. Those providers charged a lot, and it was difficult for residents' families to travel to see them. The Council found cheaper providers in-borough where they could have block contracts, rather than spot purchases which were more expensive. There were also savings identified through moving people from supported living to their own tenancy, where they would still receive wraparound support, but it was cheaper and promoted their independence.
8. Expressed concern about savings which were framed as promoting independence, as people's level of need varied. The officers shared that the Council had been promoting independence for the last five years and had not received a single complaint in relation to it. It was about working with the service user and their families to find the right level of care. Families of those with learning disabilities had been lobbying for their family member to live in

the community, as it improved their quality of life. The Committee questioned whether that meant that people were inappropriately placed initially. The officers explained that it meant that their daily skills had improved which meant that they no longer needed the same level of support. The reablement service was about providing high level care for a short period of time and then 80% of service users would not need long term care after this.

9. Questioned how the uptake of direct payments would be increased. In response, officers explained that a target had been set of 35 per cent which acknowledged that direct payments did not work for everyone. The current uptake was 30 per cent. Direct payments allowed for greater choice and control for service users. A direct payments team had been established to work with families to provide support and to bring them onto direct payments. The team had been created from existing resources, with the exception of a team manager that had been brought in.
10. Enquired how it was decided what care package was suitable for each resident. The officers shared that the social worker would decide based off an assessment which was based on need. They were trained to ask the right questions and they helped the resident build a care arrangement and give them choice.
11. Asked about the current budget situation. The officers confirmed that the department would break even. Most local authorities were overspending in ASC, with the exception of Westminster City Council who were expected to break even.

Actions to be completed, with any information requested by the Committee to be sent to the Governance Officer for circulation:

1. For future budget reports to include examples on both where savings were, and were not, achieved and explanations of why they were not achieved.
2. The Director of Adult Social Care to provide information on successful transformative programmes in Adult Social Care.
3. The Director of Adult Social Care to provide more evidence on the progress of the direct payments team.

Environment Select Committee Draft Minutes – 4 December 2023

The Chair invited the Lead Member for Finance, Customer Services and Net Zero, Cllr. Johnny Thalassites, supported by Sue Harris, the Executive Director for Environment and Communities, to introduce the report and the following points were highlighted:

1. The department budget consisted of just under £100 million, however, three-quarters of it came from income, with just over £50 million from parking income. The net budget was around £25 million.

2. Savings were still required, with £1.8 million of planned savings and £775,000 for growth items as well.
3. The Council had to strike a balance between the ambitious commitments of the Council Plan and current financial challenges. This resulted in challenging decisions; however, core services would continue to be protected. The proposals also included opportunities, such as modernising the parking service.

The Chair then invited the Committee, and the Chair of the Budget Working Group, to ask questions on the item and the discussion included the following:

1. Asked for an update on the Customer and Resident-Focused Environmental Services Transformation (CREST) Programme, with particular focus on any short-term costs and long-term savings. The officers shared that there were no proposals to save money on CREST currently. Significant amounts were saved initially when the police officer element of the scheme was stopped. The budget had remained constant since, with some additional one-off funds to pay for the ward blitzes. There were future plans to invest some money into the digital side to improve the customer experience but the exact cost of that was still being quantified. The only foreseeable change was longer enhancement of hours in the summer, which would require a standalone business case. An upgrade of radio equipment was the only material change, which would be funded through savings.
2. Queried whether night wardens would be introduced for CREST. The officers explained that these were an additional cost which would have to be quantified but it would be six figures. It was important to strike the right balance between routine patrols and being reactive through service requests. The CREST update scheduled to come to Committee in March would provide further details on key performance indicators (KPIs) and ward blitzes.
Action by: *Director of Transport and Regulatory Services*
3. Enquired about the increasing cost of Notting Hill Carnival (Carnival). In response, officers shared that they were working with strategic partners on a longer-term funding arrangement with the organiser to enable them to look for other funding sources and sponsorship. The department was looking at the possibility of increasing the amount of street trading to increase the income.
4. Asked about food waste. In response, the officers shared that the Government announced it would be providing new burden payments to cover the cost incurred by local authorities for increased food waste and this would be funded retrospectively from March 2023. There was also a £0 gate fee for food waste which would save around £160 per tonne.
5. Enquired about the 12.5 per cent discount for the two-hour environmental education sessions and whether this was only available for schools. The officers confirmed there was a discount for local authority-run schools, but they would confirm if it was offered to any other organisations.

Action by: Director of Cleaner, Greener and Cultural Services

6. Queried how the electric waste collection buggies had been funded. The officers confirmed that there were five buggies which had been funded through the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) for wards which had made bids for the buggy and driver. These would then be shared with neighbouring wards based on agreements with the ward councillors. The purpose of the buggies was to complete rapid response work. The Lead Member added that if the Council wanted to establish a green waste fleet, this would require a capital bid. Five was a good amount to trial the buggies and they could be expanded if they were effective. The officer confirmed that the waste fleet were all purchased by the Council but operated and maintained by SUEZ.

7. Requested more detail on the proposed saving related to staffing costs. The Committee were informed that this work would take place prior to Christmas (2023) and further detail could be provided in 2024. It was not clear yet what teams the savings would affect.

Action by: Executive Director of Environment and Communities

8. Queried whether the Council had a transformative perspective. The officers explained that it was at this stage that they would start to think about transformation and there was a refreshed work programme, whereby each Executive Director would be championing a specific area for three-to-five-year programmes. Staff savings would involve consultation if they were to reduce numbers within a transformation. The Lead Member added that 2025/26 was the hardest year financially in the medium-term financial plan.

9. Queried the 37.5 per cent increase for the 12-month parking permit. The officers explained that it had been the Council's policy to freeze the charge per gram per kilometre of carbon dioxide. The parking service had suggested an eight per cent increase for 2024/25 which was based on the published rate of RPI in September 2023. The service looked at what the average permit currently cost for a vehicle, which was calculated on its carbon dioxide emissions. To achieve the eight per cent increase on the overall cost, they calculated what this would be for the average permit and increased the base charge by this amount (as the other elements of the charge are proposed to remain frozen). The Committee questioned why the decision was not taken to implement an eight per cent increase for both charges (the base charge and the price for g/km of carbon dioxide). It was clarified that it was a policy decision from the Lead Member for Planning and the Public Realm. The Lead Member for Finance, Customer Services and Net Zero reminded the Committee that the budget was currently out for consultation, and everyone was welcome to respond and make a case for a different approach.

10. Emphasised the importance of staff who provided 'back office' services. The Lead Member agreed and reiterated that the Council Plan provided the framework to enable prioritisation. The Council was well staffed in terms of

its base position compared to other local authorities, however, it still needed to operate within the financial circumstances.

11. Enquired about the cost of the refurbishment of Chelsea Bridge. The Lead Member noted that it was significantly less than was being spent on refurbishment of a bridge by a neighbouring local authority. The Committee asked that the specification for the proposed works and the terms of the contract that was the proposed route to market, were reviewed.
12. Asked about the fees for events, such as, the cost of hosting dinner in a room of Leighton House and whether the Council was doing enough to advertise the services effectively. The officers shared that there was a whole new website, marketing campaign, and dedicated team working on this. Events would usually take place outside of normal operating hours where possible. Information on weddings at Leighton House were linked to the registrar service offered at Chelsea Old Town Hall.

The Chair summarised the discussion and thanked the Lead Member and officers, in particular the Executive Director who was leaving her role at the end of the year.

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend to the Budget Working Group that the Leadership Team:

1. Lobby Government and partners for fairer funding for Notting Hill Carnival to reduce the increasing financial burden on the Council.
2. Manage and report on the pace of the £100m investment in Council netzero2030 and develop a hypothecated RBKC financial provision mechanism for non-performance post 2030.
3. Brief the Environment Select Committee and Budget Working Group on transformation programmes within the next six months, especially regarding the two per cent staff savings to ensure minimal impact on frontline services.
4. Review the detail of the contract to refurbish Chelsea Bridge and for the Council to continue its approach of proactive maintenance to minimise disruption to residents.

Actions to be completed, with any information requested by the Committee to be sent to the Governance Officer for circulation:

1. The Director of Transport and Regulatory Services to include further details on key performance indicators (KPIs) and ward blitzes in the CREST update coming to Environment Select Committee in March
2. The Director of Cleaner, Greener and Cultural Services to confirm whether the discount on environmental education sessions was offered to local organisations and charities.

3. The Executive Director for Environment and Communities to provide further detail on the savings related to staffing.

Family Services Select Committee Draft Minutes – 7 December 2023

BUDGET PROPOSALS 2024/25

The Chair introduced the item and invited Cllr Pascall as Chair of the Budget Working Group to comment on the report. Cllr Pascall suggested particular attention be paid to how much progress had been made on recommendations from the 2022/23 Budget Working Group and encouraged further recommendations be made to the Budget Working Group, which would in turn report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee were invited to discuss the elements of the report related to Children's Services. During discussion, the Committee:

1. Raised concern about school funding following the Department for Education's error in miscalculating funding for schools nationally. Officers advised the RBKC Schools' Forum had oversight of the Dedicated Schools' Grant and offered to share greater detail on the impact on schools' funding outside of the meeting.

2. Raised concern that there were inadequate resources in mainstream schools to meet the Delivering Better Value Implementation Plan aim to increase inclusion in local mainstream schools to avoid the use of more expensive special placements. Additionally, more children with special educational needs in mainstream schools would further stretch limited resources. The Lead Member highlighted the challenge of rising numbers of children with special educational needs and increased financial pressure and noted the cumulative deficit of over £6m in the Dedicated Schools Grant was a particular area of concern as that deficit would revert to the Council's overall budget in 2026.

3. Noted the proposed 2% salary savings and asked where the service was planning to make those savings, and the impact on residents and services. The Lead Member advised the savings would primarily be achieved through organisational restructuring and holding vacancies where they arose. Officers accepted that some services would be scaled back to achieve the cuts.

4. The Committee cautioned that cuts were an unsustainable approach and transformational change would be required in future years to ensure the Council could balance its budget. The Lead Member agreed and noted that transformational work was underway. The Committee resolved to make a recommendation on this subject to ensure the work was completed in a timely manner and directorate was appropriately held to account on its delivery.

5. Noted reviewing outcomes of the 0-5 Strategy was a key recommendation made in 2022/23 and the Strategy would have been implemented for one year in Spring 2024. The Committee recommended that a report be produced on the first year's activities of the 0-5 Strategy, as soon as possible after the first year had ended.

The Chair summarised the discussion and thanked the Lead Member and Officers for their time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council regularly report back to the Committee on progress with transforming and redesigning the delivery of children's and family services within to address expected budget gaps from 2025/26 onwards, including NHS funding.

A report to be produced on the first year's activities of the 0-5 Strategy, as soon as possible after the first year had ended, and included in the Select Committee's Work Programme for discussion at a public meeting at a suitable time.

Housing and Communities Select Committee Draft Minutes – 28 November 2023

7 2024/25 BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Chair introduced the item and invited Cllr Will Pascall, Chair of the Budget Working Group, to comment on the report. Cllr Pascall suggested particular attention should be paid to how much progress had been made on recommendations from the 2022/23 Budget Working Group regarding (i) corporate project management of the Revenue and the Capital Programme and (ii) the pace of the £100m investment in Council netzero2030.

The Committee were invited to discuss the elements of the report related to the Housing and Social Investment directorate first. During discussion, the Committee:

1. Noted the projected growth in spending on the provision of temporary accommodation, despite that area being earmarked as an area for savings to be made in the 2022/23 budget. Officers advised that work had been done in previous years to reduce the number of residents in temporary accommodation, which allowed savings to be proposed. Since that time, increased unit costs and a collapse in the availability of affordable homes in the private rental sector was forcing the Council to rely on more expensive temporary accommodation, including commercial hotels and bed and breakfasts. In response, the Council was proposing investing £12m in 2024/25 for the acquisition of temporary accommodation units due to the advantages of the Council owning and managing its own TA stock compared to leasing it. Officers cautioned that the Council would be competing with numerous other London boroughs for the acquisition of such units due to the general unaffordability of units within the borough.

2. As part of the discussion on temporary accommodation, the Committee raised serious concerns about the number of residents being housed in commercial hotels and bed and breakfasts; the negative effects on emotional and physical wellbeing it caused; and households being moved between commercial temporary accommodation. In response to a question from the Committee, officers advised it was difficult to ensure no families with children were housed in commercial hotels and

B&Bs beyond 6-weeks, but the Council was doing everything possible to minimise the risk.

3. Asked for more information regarding the proposed additional funding for the Housing Investigations Team to tackle tenancy fraud. Officers explained they sought to grow the team following initial success and a large number of cases, particularly in view of the wider Council Plan's goal of increasing fairness in the borough.

4. In response to a query about confidence levels in proposed savings, officers assured the committee that a strict filter was applied to potential savings areas to ensure they were achievable, and as such were confident that the savings outlined could be delivered. The only area of limited certainty was in generating the proposed saving from re-procuring the contract for facilities management in the Council's operational property.

5. Critiqued the format and presentation of the budget report and suggested improving the presentation would lead to better engagement from residents during the Council's consultation process. Officers said they would look at any additional suggestions that could improve engagement. The Chair suggested an accessible summary of growth and savings proposals would make the consultation more accessible to more residents.

6. On steps the Council was taking to encourage engagement from residents that were digitally excluded, Housing officers advised that, as engagement was a corporate exercise, they were not best placed to comment. The Committee resolved to refer the question to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

7. Asked how the Autumn Statement presented to Parliament on 22 November 2023 had affected the overall Housing budget. A change in the local housing allowance was welcomed, as this would help prevent homelessness for households receiving benefits by widening access to the private rented sector. The Autumn Statement did not introduce any measures that would ease the temporary accommodation pressures.

8. Noted contract inflation had been assumed at 4% Council-wide and asked how this would impact Housing Management's contracts. Officers advised there had been a mixed response to capital tenders depending on the scope of works being carried out. The Council was being guided by industry-wide recommendations on latest construction costs. Inflation was built into recurring contracts and therefore had been considered as part of the budget process.

The Chair invited residents in attendance at the meeting to comment on the report. Residents urged the Council to prioritise schemes that provided additional support in the private rented sector, particularly with unaffordable rent and deposits, but also wider initiatives such as Brent's Selective Licensing scheme that requires a licence to rent out a property to a single person, two people or single household. Officers mentioned the Homelessness Prevention Fund, Rent Deposit Scheme and quarterly Homelessness Forum as measures currently offered by the Council in this area.

The Chair summarised the discussion and the Committee RESOLVED:

To recommend that the issue of temporary accommodation in the borough and its effect on the budget be monitored by the Leadership Team and regular updates be provided to the Housing and Communities Select Committee accordingly.

The Chair invited the Committee to discuss the Communities elements of the budget and put questions to the Lead Member for Communities and Community Safety and officers. The Committee:

9. Asked how confident the Lead Member and Officers were that savings proposals set out were achievable. Officers advised they were highly confident in savings related to the advice agencies consortium as they were built into a new contract. Similarly, efficiency savings proposed were all highly achievable, particularly reducing the VCS premises rent subsidy where the directorate had consistently underspent in the past.

10. Asked how many residents were being supported under the cost of living schemes, and how they were identified. Officers advised the Low-Income Family Tracker assisted with identifying households in need of support but were unable to provide further details as this fell outside of the Communities directorate's responsibilities. The Committee agreed to refer the question to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Residents in attendance were then invited to comment. Residents:

11. Cautioned against the proposed reduction in the youth participation grant budget due to the overall success of the scheme in providing value and experience for young people in the borough.

The Chair summarised the discussion.

RECOMMENDATION

That the issue of temporary accommodation in the borough and its effect on the budget be monitored and addressed by the Leadership Team and regular updates be provided to the Housing and Communities Select Committee accordingly.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 15 November 2023

BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Chair invited the Lead Member for Finance, Customer Services and Net Zero Council, Cllr Thalassites, supported by the Director for Financial Management, Lisa Taylor and Head of Financial Management, Liam McCusker, to introduce the report to the Committee.

The Committee:

- 1.1 Clarified that point 1.2 on the Budget Proposals Cover Report should refer to A8 rather than A9 as the initial report earmarked for A9 had been pulled before agenda publication.

- 1.2 Sought clarity for future years over central government funding and the future of Integrated Care Board grants. The Lead Member indicated there was no clarity at present. Officers noted that the Autumn Statement was next week and there may be more news available around Christmas, but there was no clarity yet; the assumption was that funding would fall away and why the budget gap was as large as predicted.
- 1.3 Considered if £3.6 million allocation remaining from pandemic recovery money was obliged to be continued to be used in that direction. The Lead Member indicated it had been repurposed toward cost-of-living pressures as the pandemic receded. Cost of living pressures still existed, and it was useful the Council still had such a lever. Plans were in development to ease cost of living pressures.
- 1.4 Discussed redistribution of Council money and how money was used for services. The Lead Member indicated that a lot of redistribution was done, the Council Tax Reduction Scheme of around £40m a year, being an example and while inflation metrics had improved, it was still early to draw conclusions; inflation forecasted in the next financial year was still twice the Bank of England's recommended rate.
- 1.5 Questioned whether there was any ability to revisit agreement with the London Borough of Wandsworth with a view toward requesting contributions toward the maintenance of Chelsea Bridge and considered who maintained the bridges. The Lead Member indicated that the Council could approach whoever made the arrangement and seek to modify it to reflect changed circumstances. Officers indicated they would provide more information on responsibility for maintenance of the bridges.

Action by: *Director of Financial Management*

- 1.6 Queried whether the budget gap of £9m and the proposed savings of £12m were for contingency savings pending the results of consultation and feasibility of proposed reductions or to generate a surplus. The Lead Member suggested that the intention was not to generate surpluses but provide outstanding services. There was some contingency as this stage of the cycle. Officers confirmed that if all options were taken forward, a surplus would be inadvertently generated.
- 1.7 Raised concerns about how a saving of £2.5m could be generated if the Grenfell Recovery Programme was ringfenced and if there had been an impairment of the original £50m to be spent on other areas it was not allocated to be spent on. Officers assured they would provide more information on this following the meeting.

Action by: *Director of Financial Management*

- 1.8 Contemplated whether it may be worth summarizing key points and growth areas as part of the budget consultation to maximize accessibility to those

not experienced in reading budgets. Officers noted that the website allowed for the searching of each service area. However, other ideas were welcomed. Officers informed they would be consulting with the Youth Council and work was being done with Communities to improve outreach.

- 1.9 Requested more information on Temporary Accommodation problems, in terms of revenue and capital, and considered what the opportunities were and how it could be addressed. Officers revealed that the rising costs of accommodation was the driver behind the problems, especially as accommodation was expensive in the borough. The Capital Programme had got spending in it for temporary accommodation units and affordable housing and Officers were continuing to try to increase supply and units and look for alternatives to hotel accommodation. The Lead Member emphasised that it was the biggest challenge in the revenue budget and the biggest component of the overspend the Council had. If it became a chronic pressure, there would be difficult choices ahead.
- 1.10 Welcomed the fall in inflation but acknowledged that it could be a while before interest rates fell and sought information on what implications would be for the Capital Programme. Officers notified that there was a fundamental review of the Capital Programme taking place to ensure borrowing monies was occurring at the right time as borrowing was costing money. As not a lot of money being held, not much interest was being earned; Officers were working closely with Treasury team on this. The Lead Member highlighted that high interest made it harder to carry out big Council projects and, while Treasury Management had performed well last year, it had not performed as well this year.
- 1.11 Discussed what the obstacles were to Council Tax collection rates being at 100%. Officers indicated that the Council did not know where everyone was all the time, residents moved away and sometimes it was necessary to collect through the courts; those struggling with Council Tax did not always make it priority and Officers were working with those struggling to pay it.
- 1.12 Queried whether figures relating to Carbon Net Zero on point 14.15 had changed because of inflation and if thought had been given to pushing back the Net Zero target. The Lead Member confirmed that construction costs had increased, and it had made it materially harder to deliver Net Zero. However, some Phase 1 schools were already on the way in terms of retrofitting. The Lead Member emphasised that while the Council would not spend money it did not have, the declaration had driven a quicker process on greening and the borough had managed to cut emission faster than any other in London over the last 5 years. The aim was to spend as much money on Net Zero as available, there was a need for it to be balanced against other considerations, but it was a priority for the Council.
- 1.13 Highlighted the importance of strategic change regarding the budget and suggested it would be useful to have a paper come before OSC to discuss the approach going forward. The Committee also indicated that it may be useful to have a report on spend to save projects and as the Council was

struggling to get on top of slippage in the Capital Budget, it may also be useful to have a report on what the cost of this is to the Council.

Action: *Scrutiny Manager & Director of Financial Management*

- 1.14 Indicated that Appendix A of the Budget Proposals was vague, especially on Adult Social Care with reference to the demand pressures of £2 million where there was no detail on what proportion was complexity or an increase in numbers, and it was felt that there were some detailed numbers with brief descriptions throughout the document.

The Committee RECOMMENDED:

- 1.15 the wording of the report under point 2.1 be amended so that Paper A6 and Paper A8 be referred to the Select Committees. Officers confirmed that the whole A6 report, including the appendices, would be going to the Select Committees.

- 1.16 that Officers draw up a paper on transformational change in the Budget.

The Chair thanked the Lead Member and Officers for the report.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – draft minutes 13 December 2023

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING - SCRUTINY OF 2024/25 BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S AND RESOURCES DIRECTORATE

The Chair invited the Lead Member for Finance, Customer Services and Net Zero Council, Cllr Thalassites, supported by Maxine Holdsworth, Chief Executive, and Lisa Taylor, Director of Financial Management.

The Committee:

- 4.1 Endorsed the proposed budget growth of £270K for additional resource to support delivery and transformation. They asked for assurances that this resource was necessary and that it would support savings and transformation work needed to ensure the Council was in a position to meet the medium-term financial challenge (particularly from 2025/26 onwards). Officers noted that the Corporate Strategy team was relatively small compared to other councils. Historically, transformation services were commissioned but it was felt they would be better delivered in-house. The £270,000 proposed increase in budget was something officers had challenged each other on and it was something they would be reviewing regularly. Officers argued that transformation in service delivery required a lot of work and noted that work had begun to identify opportunities for making savings.
- 4.2 Recommended a commitment that increase in spend would be reviewed in the medium-term as it was a lot of money to build permanently into the budget. Officers indicated it was a judgement call and wanted to avoid recruiting for just two years when there were savings to be made and the

Council Action Plan to deliver. Officers noted that to deliver the scale of change, some level of investment was needed but did accept the challenge from Councillors on this and assured the Committee that the aim was to deliver more efficient services and take money out of the budget without negative repercussions.

4.3 Considered that the detail in the report seemed less than the previous budget report that was seen by the Housing and Communities Select Committee and expressed concern that, as the total budgets for the departments were not in the report, it was hard to judge whether £270,000 was a large increase. Officers highlighted it was an extract from the larger report Select Committees and OSC had previously seen.

4.4 Recommended that there should be specifically written reports for each Select Committee if they continued to carry out scrutiny of budgets individually next year.

Action by: *Scrutiny Manager & Director of Financial Management*

4.5 Queried whether the £250,000 savings on Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system was overlapping with the 2% salary savings as CRM was part of increasing efficiency. Officers confirmed that 2% was across the whole Resources Directorate; CRM would involve staff, but it would enable self-serving and be more efficient. It was important to ensure not to double count.

4.6 Explored the implementation of Oxygen Finance's early payment programme and how it would work in practice. Officers indicated that an early repayment discount would need to be negotiated but would need to double check to confirm and provide details on the process.

Action by: *Director of Financial Management*

4.7 Pondered how the recycling of laptops would occur and how these would reach isolated residents. Officers suggested there were a number of options, including laptops being recycled toward good causes, community groups and had recommended they be made available in customer access services and could increase the number of public access devices in Council properties. Devices would also be recycled to allow the voluntary sector to deliver more support and be delivered to residents who desperately needed access to them. Officers confirmed they would contact those residents through contacts known to Council services.

4.8 Considered how the consultation on budget proposals was progressing and whether it had been possible to create a summary of growth areas and proposed savings to make it more accessible and maximise responses. Officers indicated they were consulting with the Youth Council next week and

had written to ADKC to attend one of their meetings. Comms had also printed 200 leaflets to be distributed through Housing Officers and the consultation had also featured in Housing Matters and North Ken news. Officers confirmed there had been 24 responses which was better than last year.

- 4.9 Emphasised the importance of the implementation of IT to the budget transformation work and queried what was being done to ensure it was completed to schedule. Officers highlighted that there was a critical path for the Enterprise Resource Planning system (ERP) and contingencies were in place through to October 2024, the implementation manager also had previous experience of managing this. The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system had a limited scope and was less risky as multiple data sets were not needing to be amalgamated. Officers indicated that CRM was more contained and, should a delay occur, were clear on communicating that and finding savings to offset delays.
- 4.10 Expressed concerns about 2% of savings and what was being done to mitigate impact of savings as it was felt that 25% of the service cuts were an undefined staff saving and was a bigger percentage than expected. Officers explained they had considered a range between 1-4% of staff related savings and felt 2% would drive efficiencies through departments by reducing agency staff payments, reducing the number of vacancies, and implementing additional controls on sickness and was felt by Directors to be achievable.
- 4.11 Enquired how much of an issue long-term sickness and regular sickness was with regard to having to use agency staff. Officers suggested that sickness numbers were lower than the London average but remained sceptical of this and indicated that there needed to be better reporting. Agency figures were relatively low, especially in Adult Social Care where the headcount had reduced from the 100's to 23 and it did reduce the cost to hire permanently. The Committee indicated they would have to keep an eye on this.
- 4.12 Questioned why a large spend of £350,000 was needed with regard to the growth of procurement given a procurement team had already been established with a large spend and whether the cost-benefit of this had been considered. Officers indicated this was related to the Procurement Act 2023 as there were new requirements for local authorities and it was essential to ensure that the Council got contracts right so savings could be delivered. Officers noted while it was in the budget as growth, this did not mean it would not be reviewed in the future.

The Committee RECOMMENDED:

- 4.13 a commitment that increase in spend would be reviewed in the medium-term as it was a lot of money to build permanently into the budget.
- 4.14 that there should be specifically written reports for each Select Committee if they continued to carry out scrutiny of budgets individually next year.

The Chair concluded the discussion on the item and thanked the Lead Member and Officers for the report.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS (COUNCIL TAX)

The Chair invited the Lead Member for Finance, Customer Services and Net Zero Council, Cllr Thalassites, supported by Lisa Taylor, Director of Financial Management, and Joe Philp, Assistant Director of Grenfell Partnerships and Corporate Transformation, to introduce the report.

- 5.1 Welcomed the targeted approach and considered whether the Lead Member and Officers thought they could deliver the additional support without an inordinate amount of staff time and effort. The Lead Member indicated he had been assured it could be delivered. Officers indicated the cost for administration were estimated at £45,000 and were built into the proposal. They informed the Committee that payments would be automatic in approximately two thirds of cases, whilst the other third would require some more detailed work contacting households and some communications work to ensure the council tax reduction scheme is noticed by those who were eligible to claim from it.
- 5.2 Asked about eligibility for the proposed scheme. Officers explained that all those in receipt of any Council Tax relief would be eligible. Alongside this there were plans to include those who might not have a Council Tax liability or were not claiming relief but were claiming other benefits. With Universal Credit, which the Council did not administer, they may not know about the Council Tax Relief while those on Housing Benefit, which the Council did administer, the two benefits could be linked.
- 5.3 Sought some clarity on whether the costs of the scheme might be higher if more people began to claim Council Tax relief. Officers confirmed that the final numbers would depend on those claiming the relevant benefits in Spring 2024. They accepted that costs could increase if a sudden rush of new claimants of Council Tax Relief occurred but noted a general downward trend in terms of those claiming Council Tax relief.
- 5.4 Considered why those who needed assistance through the Council Tax reduction scheme might not be receiving it and explored the difference between the two options. Officers explained there was an issue with people claiming Universal Credit and not Council Tax Relief and would work with advice agencies and the voluntary sector to ensure wide support was offered on this. The Lead Member indicated that a more targeted approach was proposed and suggested a voluntary fund would have been less helpful as residents would need to apply or opt-in which was believed would reduce take-up. With regard to Option Two, Officers explained that it would be very difficult to make an automatic payment to residents unless it was reliant on a scheme already run by another organisation, but that would mean less control over who it was targeted at. The Lead Member intimated that the cost between last year's Council Tax rebate and this year's more targeted proposal was roughly the same.
- 5.5 Explored the fact that those who self-employed were not mentioned in the report and queried whether they were entitled to support. The Lead Member

explained that there was no single proxy for low incomes which meant that any form of targeting would be imperfect but valuable, nonetheless. Officers indicated that self-employed residents who met the eligibility criteria would be included.

5.6 Discussed how the Council was engaging with residents who may struggle to use technology or be affected by language barriers and whether community and faith groups were being contacted. Officers informed they had written to all the voluntary organisations they had contact with. They noted that a consultation was currently underway to seek views on the proposal from low-income households and organisations who work with them. If agreed, the scheme would be communicated using a wide range of channels and a draft communication plan was currently being developed. Officers indicated they wanted to circulate information about the support when council tax bills went out, as well as through VCS organisations and GP surgeries using a combination of face-to-face and digital communications to reach out.

5.7 Questioned whether there was any feedback on the £100 A-D Council Tax Rebate in 2023/24 and on the reach and impact of other initiatives funded through the Cost-of-Living Reserve. Some members raised issues about access to previous support and gatekeeping. Officers confirmed they would provide information in writing on the previous cost of living work done and accepted that communications needed to link to the wider landscape of support. On last year's scheme, officers noted that some positive feedback was received as a result of the scheme last year, with some concerns raised about why certain people were eligible and others not.

Action by: *Assistant Director of Grenfell Partnerships and Corporate Transformation and the Director of Financial Management*

5.8 Cautioned that this scheme was not necessarily something that was going to be repeated, given the limited funding available in the Cost of Living Reserve, but noted the broader challenge around the increase in inequality in the Borough which needed to be considered when looking at additional support and the Council's broader activity.

The Chair thanked the Lead Member and Officers for the report and concluded the discussion.

Update to Overview and Scrutiny Committee 15th November 2023 from the Director of Financial Management

This is to provide an update on the recommendations that were identified by the Budget Scrutiny Working Group in February 2023 following the work undertaken by the Working Group on the draft 2023/24 budget.

The Budget Scrutiny Working Group made 13 recommendations in its report of the 8th February 2023 as follows :-

Leadership Team is recommended to:

1. Further develop the Council's 3 year budget planning framework in order to assist Transformation, adapting to funding variations and to help with more consistent planning and completion of capital investment projects.
2. Benchmark fees and charges.
3. Speed up alignment of Information Management and IT implementation with Council Strategy, prior to realising full potential of Transformations. (IM, CRM, ERP, Service specific, Website, Partners).
4. Establish better corporate project management of Revenue and the Capital Programme.
5. Review lessons from the Grenfell Dedicated Service with respect to cost effectiveness of integrated information and management systems.
6. Urgently complete the review of balance of ways of working, Council central office/base in community/remote from home with implications for buildings use.
7. Manage and report on the pace of the £100m investment in Council netzero2030 and develop a hypothecated RBKC financial provision mechanism for non-performance post 2030.
8. Benchmark financial outcomes from Adult Social Care and Family & Children's Services and other teams investing in reducing the need for service demand.
9. Report on improving the management of the funding risks from Adult Social Care and Family & Children's Services, in particular, funding risks from ambiguity of NHS funding, (eg post Covid shift of patients from NHS funded Home First to Council funded service).
10. Review outcomes from Children's 0-5 Strategy, nursery, child minder and primaries at centre of Ofsted rated Outstanding Service, one of the foundations of community resilience.
11. Implement outcomes of work on reducing complexity of Voluntary Sector Partners application for funding.

12. Implement the integration of street management including CREST, Wardens and Community Service.

13. Urgently do the further work needed to implement the Directive on collection of food waste.

This is an update for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the recommendations made:-

1. Further develop the Council's 3 year budget planning framework in order to assist Transformation, adapting to funding variations and to help with more consistent planning and completion of capital investment projects.

The draft budget for 2024/25 has been developed and will be presented to Leadership Committee on the 8th November 2023, it is also on the 15th November 2023 Overview and Scrutiny Committee agenda and will be presented at all Scrutiny Select Committees in late November and December 2023. The 2024/25 budget gap has been closed by a combination of savings, efficiencies and additional income generation via a traditional department / service led approach, including a 2% reduction on all staffing budgets.

Work is now underway to develop a more systemic and transformational approach to setting the budget for 2025/26 and the Medium Term. This will include a strategic review of all budgets with service directors and the relevant Lead Member, looking at budgets as well as service information and performance data. There will be a focus both on achieving significant savings in key cross-cutting areas and on unlocking the potential of longer-term transformation, enabling the Council to do things more efficiently and in a more targeted way. There will be a focus on shared opportunities and the need be delivering services in alignment with the Council Plan. A paper on the process to be followed is currently being developed for approval by EMT and the JLT in November 2024.

2. Benchmark fees and charges.

Fees and Charges are being reviewed now as part of the 2024/25 budget process and the 6th December 2023 Leadership Budget report will present the draft fees and charges for 2024/25 ahead of the consultation that will commence the day after the December Leadership meeting.

The assumption in the budget is that all fees and charges will increase by 4% where legally allowable.

Consideration needs to be made for services where demand could reduce if fees are increased to a greater amount than competitors and therefore result in a reduction in income to the Council.

3. Speed up alignment of Information Management and IT implementation with Council Strategy, prior to realising full potential of Transformations. (IM, CRM, ERP, Service specific, Website, Partners).

Following the establishment of a sovereign DD&T service, RBKC specific policies and procedures have now been developed to ensure a consistent approach to information security, information governance and design architectures. These are being applied to all new applications of digital need, which continue to influence existing technology usage. This will ensure a governed, efficient approach to all digital or technical transformation.

4. Establish better corporate project management of Revenue and the Capital Programme.

The creation of the new Capital Programme Office has enabled the council to develop a strategic approach for creating and managing the capital programme, with a Capital Programme Board now in place to provide a rigorous review of all projects before they enter the capital programme, including a review of the funding source to ensure alignment with the revenue budget.

5. Review lessons from the Grenfell Dedicated Service with respect to cost effectiveness of integrated information and management systems.

Learning from the Dedicated Service has shown us the potential an effective case management system can have on improving resident experience of service delivery via reduced handovers and live action tracking to ensure commitments are followed through. We have also seen the impact this can have on staffing and back-office efficiencies, allowing more funds to be directly controllable by residents and improving resident value. This learning is being applied in the Customer Access Strategy and broader change and transformation work across the Council through the Grenfell Legacy conversations and Council Plan delivery.

6. Urgently complete the review of balance of ways of working, Council central office/base in community/remote from home with implications for buildings use.

The need for office space is under active review as part of the current strategic property review. We have already released some space in Kensington Town Hall which we expect to let for commercial income in the coming months, and we are using precise real-time data on desk usage in KTH and other sites, and projections of service needs from across the Council, to inform our wider, longer-term view about what space will be required.

7. Manage and report on the pace of the £100m investment in Council netzero2030 and develop a hypothecated RBKC financial provision mechanism for non-performance post 2030.

An update report on the progress of delivery for Net Zero by 2030 is being presented at the Environment Select Committee (ESC) in December 2023. The report will include a breakdown of the budget spent to date on delivering Net Zero and a forecast of future spend required to achieve this target.

The report will also provide updated on the recommendations made by the ESC Net Zero Working Group, including the position on offsetting.

8. Benchmark financial outcomes from Adult Social Care and Family & Children's Services and other teams investing in reducing the need for service demand.

Social Care services across the Council continue to review costs and take part in regular benchmarking exercises.

Adult Social Care

Financial outcomes: - The table at appendix 1 shows financial outcome indicators for RBKC compared to the London average using the most recent data (2021/22).

Across most indicators, expenditure and average weekly cost figures are lower than the London average for RBKC.

Further, Independent analysis from Impower rates RBKC ASC highly for value for money.

Compared to other London boroughs, we are ranked (for outcomes per pound invested):
Fifth for all age disability (behind Wandsworth, Kingston, Richmond, Merton)
Second for older people (behind Richmond)

Children's Social Care

Demand for social care remains low in RBKC in comparison with London and National averages of referrals per 10,000 population, Children in Need per 10,000 population and Looked After Children per 10,000 population.

9. Report on improving the management of the funding risks from Adult Social Care and Family & Children's Services, in particular, funding risks from ambiguity of NHS funding, (eg post Covid shift of patients from NHS funded Home First to Council funded service).

Council Officers continue to work closely with health colleagues to ensure funding is correctly apportioned across the sector.

Robust monitoring is in place for continuing health care costs with escalation panels and a hospital discharge challenge panel.

Over the coming months there is to be a review of The Better Care Fund (BCF) to ensure funding is correctly aligned.

The ICB is conducting a Out of Hospital spend review including all community, mental health and primary NHS spend. The impact of any reductions to this spend could result in a transfer of costs and/ or demand to ASC. The Council will be working closely with health colleagues to ensure any reductions are carefully planned and include an impact analysis.

We are in consultation with the NWL ICB regarding health's financial contribution in supporting children with complex needs. There is a risk that the financial contribution will be lower than previous years – with current contributions 50% less than last year.

10. Review outcomes from Children's 0-5 Strategy, nursery, child minder and primaries at centre of Ofsted rated Outstanding Service, one of the foundations of community resilience.

We have just updated our annual early years sufficiency strategy to ensure sufficient and affordable childcare places. Our two-year-old and three and four year old uptake of funded placements continues to be above national averages.

11. Implement outcomes of work on reducing complexity of Voluntary Sector Partners application for funding.

The review of the City Living Local Life funding was undertaken from May to September. Views were gathered from ward Councillors, previous recipients of the funding and officers. Recommendations for simplifying and improving the application and decision making process have been shared with the Lead Member for

Communities & Community Safety. The final decision on the improved approach will be made in November, with the new process being rolled out from the end of November.

12. Implement the integration of street management including CREST, Wardens and Community Service.

The new Street Enforcement Team will commence before Christmas with an official launch in early 2024.

13. Urgently do the further work needed to implement the Directive on collection of food waste.

The Directive on Food Waste comes into effect in 2026. The Lead Member is currently reviewing the practicalities of extending the scheme within an inner London setting.

Appendix 1 :- Adult Social Care Costs compared to London Average

Indicator	RBKC	London Average
Adult social care Gross total expenditure per 100,000 adults	£60,211.00	£95,053.00
Gross current expenditure on long term care per 100,000 adults	£39,011.00	£32,315.00
Gross current expenditure on short term care per 100,000 adults	£149.00	£1,367.00
Average weekly cost of nursing care	£831.30	£858.01
Average weekly cost of nursing care for a person aged 18-64	£1,007.39	£1,073.08
Average weekly cost of nursing care for a person aged 65 and over	£807.68	£855.14
Average weekly cost of residential care	£911.12	£1,129.07
Average weekly cost of residential care for a person aged 18-64	£1,086.44	£1,462.06
Average weekly cost of residential care for a person aged 65 and over	£815.55	£891.22

Lower than London average

Higher than London Average

Source – LG Inform