SPENDING REVIEW:

Final Report

September 2026

Contents

Foreword

This administration inherited the largest government cuts, the largest projected overspending and the largest predicted budget gap in Wandsworth’s history.

When we published the Initial Report in July, the scale of the financial challenge was clear. This final report adds the additional demand and inflationary pressures facing the Council.

We have not merely sought efficiencies, but to change some of the fundamental ways in which the organisation functions, while stopping other, discretionary activities altogether. Sadly, despite many difficult decisions, a budget gap of this scale cannot be closed by savings and efficiencies alone.

Few would want to consider a substantial increase in council tax. For this administration, with a record of decades of careful financial management and our pride in Wandsworth's reputation for low tax, it is a last resort.

The Government can still reconsider its cuts to the Borough's funding. We are formally challenging our settlement and the limited transition. This Spending Review provides unequivocal evidence that the Council is being forced to increase tax and is a basis for change.

However, at the same time as challenging the cuts, we need to prepare residents for the potential increase to their bills in April 2027. We recognise the financial pressures that many households already experience and the extent to which they are already taxed, by other means. Higher council tax will not be easy or welcome.

For those on very low incomes, we plan to nearly double our support through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme next year, while ensuring that everyone of working age pays something. We will also expand eligibility for the scheme.

This administration committed to being honest and transparent about the Council’s finances. It also committed to fixing them.

If the Government refuses to act, a duty is placed on us. However difficult it may get, we will always choose to meet our responsibilities.

Cllr Peter Graham
Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance

Executive summary

The initial findings of the Council's Spending Review were reported to Cabinet in July 2026 in Paper No. 26-181, Update on the Spending Review. It set out the significant pressures threatening the Council's long-term financial sustainability and confirmed that the Review would examine all areas of spending and planned borrowing to identify how the Council could return to a sustainable financial position.

It established four principles for the Review: securing value for money; addressing demand pressures; implementing service efficiencies and improvements; and protecting core services. It also made clear that the response would need to combine immediate control of discretionary spending with longer-term reform, including greater use of technology, service redesign, prevention and demand management, income generation and more effective use of assets.

The first phase began that work. It introduced tighter controls over recruitment, agency appointments, contracts and communications spending; committed to more resources for cleaner streets and community safety; disbanded the Leader's Office and Delivery Unit; started the review of the Town Hall campus and wider operational estate; reviewed time-limited funding commitments and de-ringfenced reserves; removed unpopular and unviable schemes from the Council's housebuilding programme and launched a full review of the capital programme to reduce future borrowing. It also confirmed that some activity would need to stop or change so that limited resources could be focused on services that are affordable, sustainable and aligned with current priorities.

Spending Review: Final Report

This document is the next stage of that work. It sets out the full package of policy intentions and spending settlements arising from the Review, together with the approach to income, capital resources, borrowing and reserves. It shows how the Council will protect essential services and invest in priorities residents see and rely on, while reducing lower priority activity, reshaping services around prevention and early intervention, managing demand, embracing technology and requiring the Council itself to operate more efficiently.

The Review protects and invests in housing, adult and children's social care, cleaner streets, community safety and essential infrastructure. It includes additional visible policing and integrated enforcement, improvements to street cleansing and waste services, investment in housing quality, and reform of services where earlier intervention can improve outcomes and reduce future costs. The capital programme has also been reprioritised so that investment is focused on essential, affordable schemes and future borrowing costs are reduced.

The financial plan assumes £79m of ongoing savings by 2030/31. This comprises £59m identified through detailed diagnostic work of efficiency opportunities, £4m of immediate decisions that have or are being implemented and an additional £16m from further savings to be identified in later years. Strong programme oversight will therefore be required to ensure these savings are delivered in full and within the expected timeframes.

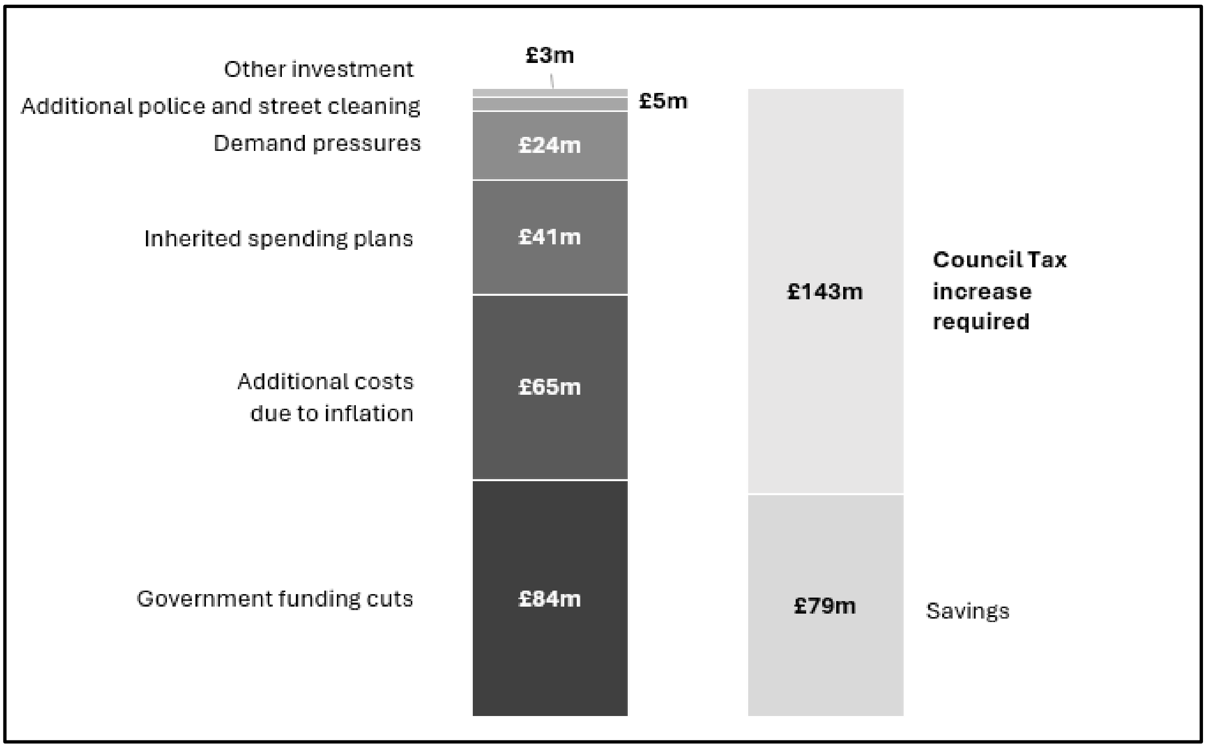
However, savings alone cannot close the projected budget gap. The Council continues to face substantial pressures from adult and children's social care, temporary accommodation and inflation. Reserves can support invest to save initiatives and manage the transition, but they are one off resources and cannot sustainably fund recurring expenditure. The Review therefore brings together savings, service reform, income generation, capital reprioritisation and the controlled use of reserves, alongside a council tax increase.

Taking these measures and risks together, the Council will plan on the basis of Wandsworth's share of council tax rising to £1,468 in 2027/28, equivalent to an increase of approximately 94% in the total Band D bill, bringing the indicative annual bill to approximately £1,978. This is the level required to restore financial stability by the end of the Medium Term Financial Strategy period while retaining a minimum level of financial resilience.

The final decision on council tax will be taken by Full Council in March 2027 as part of the statutory 2027/28 budget setting process.

Spending settlements

The Council faces a structural budget gap driven by an inherited budget gap, reduced government funding, rising demand in statutory services and inflation. The settlements therefore set out how each service area will contribute to restoring sustainability: protecting core and statutory services, investing where this reduces future cost or improves outcomes, reducing lower priority expenditure, reshaping services around prevention and demand management, and ensuring future spending is affordable within the Council's medium term financial plan. The overall position is summarised below.



Graph 1: Costs and Income to meet the budget gap 2030/31

REVENUE

General Fund				
£Million	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Base Service Expenditure	**313**	**311**	**311**	**311**
Exclude Previously Assumed Savings	13	13	13	13
Add Inflation	31	47	63	79
Total	**357**	**371**	**387**	**403**
Non Service Specific Grants	-5	-5	-5	-5
Planned Use of Balances and Reserves	-2	0	0	0
Collection Fund surplus	-4	-2	-2	-2
Retained Business Rates	-68	-69	-69	-69
Revenue Support Grant	-97	-66	-66	-66
Fair Funding Transitional Protection	-8	-7	0	0
Total After Funding	**173**	**222**	**245**	**261**
Current Council Tax Income	-77	-77	-77	-77
Previous Budget Gap	**96**	**145**	**168**	**184**
Service Priorities	6	6	6	6
Demographic Pressures	16	20	22	24
Invest to save	49	7	7	3
Additional Inflation	1	1	2	6
Revised Budget Gap	**168**	**179**	**205**	**223**
Total Spending Review Savings	-27	-43	-69	-79
Additional Council Tax Income	-132	-135	-138	-143
Budget Gap	**9**	**1**	**-2**	**0**

REVENUE

General Fund				
£Million	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Children's Services	108	112	115	120
Adult Social Care	164	165	166	173
Public Health	6	5	5	5
Housing	42	42	37	34
Regeneration	2	2	2	3
Environment	56	55	56	59
Transport	-3	-3	-5	-5
Community Safety	11	11	11	11
Finance	9	8	7	7
Corporate Services	36	-6	-9	-13
Public Health Grant	-30	-30	-30	-30
Total	**402**	**361**	**354**	**362**
Non Service Specific Grants	-5	-5	-5	-5
Planned Use of Balances and Reserves	-2	0	0	0
Collection Fund surplus	-4	-2	-2	-2
Retained Business Rates	-68	-69	-69	-69
Revenue Support Grant	-97	-66	-66	-66
Fair Funding Transitional Protection	-8	-7	0	0
Total After Funding	**218**	**213**	**213**	**220**
Current Council Tax Income	-77	-77	-77	-77
Additional Council Tax Income	-132	-135	-138	-143
Budget Gap	**9**	**1**	**-2**	**0**

The spending settlements set out here reflect the Council's policy intentions. These intentions will be developed into full policy and brought forward through the Council's decision making process for scrutiny and approval. Equality Impact Needs Assessments will be conducted on individual items to inform decision making as and when needed.

Children’s Services

REVENUE

Children's Services				
£Million	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Original Budget	101.1	101.7	101.7	101.7
Inflation	9.1	13.6	18.4	24.1
Spending Review:				
Prevention and Demand Reduction	-1.5	-2.6	-3.7	-3.7
Third Party Spend Review	-1.1	-1.1	-1.1	-1.1
Establishment (Efficiencies & Productivity)	-1.6	-2.3	-2.3	-2.3
Other	0.0	0.0	-1.6	-2.8
Income Generation	-0.6	-0.7	-0.9	-0.9
Demographic Pressures	3.0	3.0	4.0	5.0
Total	**108.5**	**111.7**	**114.6**	**120.0**

CAPITAL

Children's						
£Million	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**	**TOTAL**
February 2026 Programme	32.8	18.7				51.5
Slippage	1.8					1.8
Spending Review:						
Other	-0.2	-0.6				-0.8
Investment:						
Other	2.4					2.4
Total	**36.8**	**18.1**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**54.9**

- **Protecting strong performing children’s services** while managing rising demand and cost pressures.
- **Investing earlier** through prevention, implementing Family First reforms, reforming SEND support and more family-based care.
- **Targeting resources better** through stronger data, commissioning and spending controls.
- **Refocusing capital** on priority schemes, including essential playground improvements, while releasing lower-priority and uncommitted funding.

The Council is committed to maintaining strong performing Children's Services and will take decisions related to the care of vulnerable children with the appropriate sensitivity. As the Initial Spending Review set out, Children’s Services is one of the areas seeing considerable demand-led budget pressures. The Council will take action to address these, and make the investment required to provide more cost-efficient and more effective care.

This includes work to reduce the number of children entering care and increase the number “stepped down” from care, through taking a strengthened early intervention approach and increasing the use of family-based settings such as kinship care and foster care. This leads to better outcomes for children and reduces the likelihood that more intensive and costlier interventions are needed later down the line. The Council will also improve how it commissions placements for children, particularly residential care, to bring down unit costs.

This work will support the implementation of the broader reforms underway in Children’s Social Care including the Family First programme which aims to move towards a prevention-based model, where multi-disciplinary teams based in family hubs take a whole family approach to family support. This will reduce duplication in support being offered to families and ensure issues are resolved sooner, reducing the risk of escalation.

The Council will also move towards a model of early intervention within services for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. This will support the move to a graduated support model within a single inclusive system, which makes greater use of mainstream settings and reduces the need for high-cost specialist provision. The Council will also take steps to reduce the demand and costs of SEND transport services by increasing independent travel training, making better use of public transport or shared transport options, optimising routes taken, and improving commissioning.

The Council will develop its use of data to support greater use of predictive data analytics to identify where to target interventions and proactive support where it is most needed. It will also undertake more sophisticated modelling of future demand for services to allow it to make more effective plans and investment, while monitoring the effectiveness of the measures to reduce demand outlined above.

The service will also strengthen controls over delegated spending, including discretionary support and procurement within children’s centres. This will help reduce duplication and inefficiency, ensuring resources are targeted where they deliver the greatest value for money.

Following the roll-out of the national school breakfast club scheme, the Council will phase out its local provision and support schools to join the national programme. To prevent families being affected by any delays in implementation to the national programme, the Council will ensure temporary transitional support is in place.

The Council has introduced a new innovative approach to school uniform support for low-income families that reduces both waste and cost. Working with local partners, it has replaced vouchers with the distribution of donated surplus stock. In the first year, the Council secured £150,000 of new, unbranded school uniform items, distributed through Family Hubs to families receiving Free School Meals. More than 1,400 children received uniforms during the initial phase of the scheme.

The Council has repurposed the Youth Bus programme for targeted youth activities with young people and redirected resources to the borough's youth centres, with outreach activity delivered through Family Hubs. This will reduce costs while allowing resources to be deployed more flexibly, helping the Council respond to emerging local needs and strengthen links between outreach, youth clubs, Family Hubs and wider support services.

The Council will not extend the contract for additional school-based spiritual health support, reflecting its view that this provision should be funded by the Integrated Care Board and/or individual schools rather than the Council.

The Council will reduce the budget for adaptations to foster carers' homes, while retaining funding for works where they are needed. Any proposed work will be supported by a business case and reviewed through the appropriate approval process.

As part of its wider review of communications activity, the Council will stop producing paper copies of Headstart magazine. This reflects feedback from schools that they prefer an electronic version to hard copies.

As part of the Spending Review, the Council has reviewed the planned capital programme, including schemes due to be funded from Neighbourhood and Strategic Community Infrastructure Levies. It will release unallocated capital previously ring-fenced within the Play Strategy for youth provision improvements within charity and VCS youth organisations, and funds allocated for upgrades to play equipment. Funding previously earmarked for improvements to a family centre on the Doddington and Rollo Estate and for Heathbrook Youth Centre will also be released.

The Council will continue to deliver playground improvement schemes including at Bramford Gardens, Tooting Triangle, Furzedown Rec, Garratt Green and Fountain Road, but will look to reduce scheme costs where possible. On the Doddington and Rollo Estate it will also continue refurbishment and installation of new equipment for Lucas/Russell Court playground and improvements to the younger children's playgrounds at Landseer House and Bolton House Park.

Adult Social Care

REVENUE

Adult Social Care				
£Million	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Original Budget	149.5	148.5	148.5	148.5
Inflation	13.4	20.0	27.1	35.4
Spending Review:				
Prevention and Demand Reduction	-4.6	-10.1	-14.2	-15.2
Third Party Spend Review	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
Establishment (Efficiencies & Productivity)	-1.8	-2.9	-3.8	-3.8
Other	0.0	0.0	-0.8	-1.4
Income Generation	-1.3	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4
Demographic Pressures	9.0	11.0	11.0	11.0
Total	**164.0**	**165.0**	**166.2**	**172.9**

CAPITAL

Adult Social Care						
£Million	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**	**TOTAL**
February 2026 Programme	1.9	1.4	1.2	1.1		5.7
Slippage	1.7					1.7
Investment:						
Other					0.7	0.7
Total	**3.6**	**1.4**	**1.2**	**1.1**	**0.7**	**8.1**

- **Maintaining quality adult social care** while addressing rising demand and statutory pressures.
- **Supporting independence earlier** through moving to neighbourhood health provision, enhancing reablement and prevention, and increased use of technology.
- **Commissioning care more effectively** so residents get the right support in the right setting at a sustainable cost.
- **Strengthening financial sustainability** through fair charging, improved practice and better use of resources.

The Council recognises the importance of providing quality adult social care that protects dignity, promotes independence and supports residents with the greatest needs. Demand for adult social care has grown significantly in recent years, placing increasing pressure on budgets, and is projected to grow further if no action is taken. The majority of services provided by Adult Social Care form part of the Council's statutory duties. The Council will act to manage demand pressures within these services while ensuring decisions are made with appropriate regard to the needs of adult social care users.

The Council will implement a series of programmes to empower residents to stay independent for longer and reduce or delay the need for care. This includes adopting a neighbourhood health model, which provides person-centred health and care closer to residents, tailoring services to the needs of each neighbourhood and better integrating Council and NHS services. This will support more proactive care management, reduce avoidable hospital and care home admissions, and minimise duplication.

The Council recognises the important contribution that unpaid carers make to supporting residents and reduce demand for formal care services. The Council has an extensive package of support for carers, which will be reviewed to identify opportunities to maintain effective support while maximising value for money.

The Council will continue its adoption of digital care technology to reduce costs and free up officer time on tasks that cannot be completed by technology. It will also review and enhance the reablement model to improve efficiency and efficacy and introduce an online self-assessment platform for occupational therapy, providing faster access to measures which maximise independence.

The Council will review its operations to place greater emphasis on person-centred care, improve efficiency and strengthen practice, so residents receive timely, high-quality and proportionate support. This will include reviewing policies, procedures and practice tools to ensure care planning focuses more strongly on prevention, community-based support and regular reviews of care packages against assessed outcomes. The review will also identify opportunities to better promote independence for people with learning disabilities. Customer journey mapping will be used to understand how residents access and move through care services, and to identify opportunities for greater digital automation. The findings will inform an updated operating model for the department.

The Council will strengthen its commissioning approach by redesigning service acquisition and brokerage processes, helping to secure affordable and sustainable care costs and helping people access the right care in the right setting. It will also develop more innovative and collaborative commissioning models, working more closely with providers to reduce spot spend and support demand management.

The Council will review charging policies and practices to support a financially sustainable approach to care costs and delivery models. This will include applying the charging policy to residents discharged from hospital to a care home and using financial assessment reviews to apply fairer charging for nil-cost payers.

The Council will also review telecare charging arrangements following improvements to charging and income recovery processes. This review will be informed by a national benchmarking exercise to ensure the charging model supports appropriate and sustainable income maximisation.

It will introduce a proportionate annual administration charge to recover the costs of appointeeship, where the Council supports adults who cannot manage their own financial affairs and no suitable alternative representative is available. The department will also provide training and support to social workers and practitioners to improve understanding and application of Section 22 of the Care Act. This will help identify where health needs may fall within NHS funding responsibilities and ensure costs are borne by the most appropriate organisation.

The Council is proud of its history of providing a home for refugees and those on formal resettlement schemes, stretching from the Huguenots in the 17th Century, whose contribution is still reflected in the borough's crest and the friezes decorating the Town Hall, through to the recent Homes for Ukraine scheme which has supported over 1,400 Ukrainians arriving in Wandsworth since 2022. However, the Council will end the wider "Borough of Sanctuary" programme, including the Wandsworth Migration Board and the linked grant scheme, which is discretionary and goes beyond what is required by Government. Funds will instead be refocused on providing statutory services which support all residents in need.

Public Health

REVENUE

Public Health				
£Million	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Original Budget	6.1	5.1	5.1	5.1
Spending Review:				
Establishment (Efficiencies & Productivity)	-0.3	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2
Total	**5.8**	**4.9**	**4.9**	**4.9**

CAPITAL

Public Health						
£Million	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**	**TOTAL**
February 2026 Programme	4.5	1.4	1.4	1.0		8.3
Slippage	2.0					2.0
Spending Review:						
Wandsworth Environment and Sustainability Strategy Unallocated	-4.4	-1.4	-1.4	-1.0		-8.2
Total	**2.1**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**2.1**

- **Maintaining essential public health services** while strengthening commissioning to secure better value for money and outcomes.
- **Targeting employment and skills support** on helping residents access good local jobs, including through Work Match.
- **Focusing climate action** on practical measures that improve resilience and adaptation, reduce risk and deliver value for money.
- **Reviewing discretionary programmes and funding commitments** to ensure resources are focused on priorities and supported by external funding wherever possible.

The public health budget grouping includes elements of Council expenditure covering core public health activity, climate change response, and employment and skills support.

The Council will carry out a review of its climate change programme to ensure it is focussed on aspects that have a meaningful impact and provide value for money. Through the review, the Council will consider how greater emphasis can be placed on adaptation and resilience. The review will also consider opportunities to lever in greater external funding to support this work. The Council will release unallocated funds previously earmarked for the delivery of the decarbonisation and environment and sustainability strategies, with funds to be reinvested in bringing the Council's housing stock up to a decent, energy efficient standard in response to the C3 rating.

The Council will review the use of the adult education budget, ensuring it is focussed on supporting residents into local, good jobs. The Council will invest in its Work Match job brokerage service to support businesses employ more local residents.

The Council's core public health programme is funded via a ringfenced public health grant. The Council will review and strengthen its approach to commissioning services that form part of the public health programme, including the mental health and sexual health contracts.

Housing

REVENUE

Housing				
£Million	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Original Budget	38.0	38.6	38.6	38.6
Inflation	3.4	5.1	6.9	9.0
Spending Review:				
Prevention and Demand Reduction	-2.7	-6.1	-14.2	-20.0
Establishment (Efficiencies & Productivity)	-0.6	-1.2	-1.4	-1.4
Other	0.0	0.0	-0.2	-0.4
Demographic Pressures	4.0	6.0	7.0	8.0
Total	**42.2**	**42.5**	**36.7**	**33.9**

CAPITAL

Housing						
£Million	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**	**TOTAL**
February 2026 Programme	6.7	14.8	11.7	2.3		35.4
Slippage	0.4					0.4
Spending Review:						
Alton Estate Renewal - Portswood Place		-1.1	-8.4			-9.5
Other	-0.1					-0.1
Investment:						
Other					1.5	1.5
Total	**7.0**	**13.7**	**3.3**	**2.3**	**1.5**	**27.7**

REVENUE

Housing Revenue Account				
£Million	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Housing (HRA) Expenditure	193.0	208.3	219.4	229.0
Housing (HRA) Income	-202.9	-209.8	-215.7	-222.9
Housing (HRA) Net Budget	-9.9	-1.5	3.7	6.1
Spending Review:				
Reduced Capital Financing Costs	0.0	0.0	-1.3	-2.6
Income - Rent Convergence	-0.5	-1.6	-2.6	-3.5
Service Priorities - Capital Investment	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Other	-1.3	-3.7	0.0	0.3
Total	**-1.8**	**3.2**	**9.7**	**10.3**

CAPITAL

Housing Revenue Account						
£Million	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	TOTAL
February 2026 Programme	88.8	105.5	108.0	47.5	50.2	400.0
Slippage	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
Investment	0.0	0.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	15.0
Reprofiling	-34.5	-15.6	27.4	22.9	0.0	0.1
Total	**54.5**	**89.8**	**140.3**	**75.4**	**55.2**	**415.3**

- **Improving housing services and investing in existing homes** to address regulatory failings, raise standards and deliver better outcomes for tenants and leaseholders.
- **Supporting home ownership, unlocking new housing delivery and strengthening accountability** for housing providers across the borough.
- **Reducing homelessness and temporary accommodation costs** through earlier intervention, stronger prevention and a more effective homelessness pathway.
- **Prioritising housing investment and reducing borrowing** by focusing capital resources on essential, deliverable schemes which are supported by residents.

Supporting residents to have access to a decent, secure home is central to the administration's priorities. Through the Spending Review, the Council has identified actions and investments to improve housing services for both tenants and leaseholders, unlock the construction of new homes, support home ownership, and reduce homelessness related costs.

In 2025, the Regulator of Social Housing gave the Council a C3 rating for its housing services, noting serious failings in how these were delivered. The Council aims to urgently correct these failings and secure a C1 rating for its housing services as soon as possible. To support this goal, the Council intends to reestablish a dedicated housing directorate, led by an Executive Director of Housing, to deliver a wider improvement plan. This will include reviewing the findings of the full stock condition survey currently underway, and make the investment needed to return the existing stock to a decent standard, in part enabled through funds released from the review of the existing capital programme. It will address damp and mould in the housing stock, and take action to reduce graffiti, fly-tipping, and anti-social behaviour across estates.

The strengthened housing service will also provide greater support to leaseholders, including strengthening their voice within the housing engagement framework. The Council will review and improve the repayment terms for major works for owner-occupier leaseholders and explore opportunities to offer leaseholders the right to manage and purchase freeholds for their developments. The Council will also provide increased service charge transparency for both leaseholders and council tenants so they can see how their service charge payments are being used.

The Council will take steps to enable home ownership and increase the construction of new homes across the borough. It will work collaboratively with developers to bring forward sites which deliver a mix of tenures which meet the needs of Wandsworth residents. To support this, it will review the affordable housing targets to ensure they are realistic and reflect market conditions. It will also review the House Purchase Grant scheme, to support more residents into home ownership. The Council will also strengthen its Housing Enabling Team, to help affordable housing residents hold their housing associations to account and ensure they provide decent service to their tenants.

Where new homes for social rent are delivered, it will ensure they are prioritised for Wandsworth residents and bring to an end the practice of using them for temporary accommodation.

The Council will review the private sector landlord licensing scheme to ensure it is proportionate. The review will examine how a more targeted approach could support private renters whilst minimising the burden on private landlords.

The Spending Review has examined the existing capital programme of works across the Council's housing estates and considered which it is appropriate to continue. It will continue to deliver improvements to community centres including the Penfold Community Centre on the Arndale estate, the Venue clubroom garden on the Doddington estate, and the Tooting Grove clubroom. However, it will not proceed with plans for improvements to the Doddington and Rollo Community centre, and the Henry Prince clubroom refurbishment. It will not take forward estate environmental improvements including projects related to Alton, Bellamy House, Ethelburga, Surrey Lane and Wimbledon Park estates.

The Council will implement the Government's policy on social rent convergence, which was announced in 2025, increasing the Council's rental income. This allows the Council to increase the rents for properties currently below formula rent over and above the standard CPI+1% limit until they are in line with formula rents. The Government has permitted local authorities to charge an additional £1 a week in rent in 2027/28, and £2 a week in 2028/29. The additional income generated will be reinvested to improve the quality, safety and reliability of homes and services for tenants.

The review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme, including elements within the Regeneration category below, has removed £80m of schemes that would otherwise have required future borrowing. This will also deliver £3.9m in revenue savings over the next four years by avoiding associated debt servicing costs.

The Council's housing responsibilities extend beyond the management and improvement of its own homes. It is also committed to preventing homelessness, reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation and shortening the time they spend there.

Rising demand for and costs of providing homelessness services is a substantial budget pressure. The Council will take action to address this by moving towards a model of earlier intervention, improved homelessness pathway and reduced reliance on temporary accommodation.

The Council will make better use of data and other sources of information including landlord engagement to identify earlier residents at risk of homelessness and implement cross-service support to prevent these households entering the statutory homelessness system.

Where households do enter the system, the Council will increase provision so more residents are assessed for prevention support at first contact and can be helped under the prevention duty. It will also improve the effectiveness of prevention support, reducing the number of households that escalate to the relief duty. The Council will reduce the time households spend in temporary accommodation by making greater use of private rented sector offers to discharge the housing duty, alongside out-of-borough placements where appropriate. The Council will also review its Housing Allocations Scheme to ensure it supports the wider goal of reducing the use of temporary accommodation, including removing disincentives to taking up private rented accommodation, bringing the local residency criteria into line with local benchmarks, and updating local connection requirements.

The Council will strengthen the commissioning of temporary accommodation placements, reducing reliance on paid-nightly accommodation and lowering placement costs more broadly.

Regeneration

REVENUE

Regeneration				
£Million	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Original Budget	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.5
Inflation	0.3	0.5	0.7	0.9
Spending Review:				
Third Party Spend Review	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
Establishment (Efficiencies & Productivity)	-0.6	-0.6	-0.6	-0.6
Total	**2.2**	**2.2**	**2.4**	**2.6**

CAPITAL

Regeneration						
£Million	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**	**TOTAL**
February 2026 Programme	13.6	5.8				19.3
Slippage	2.1					2.1
Total	**15.7**	**5.8**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**21.5**

CAPITAL

Housing Revenue Account						
£Million	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**	**TOTAL**
February 2026 Programme	165.6	150.9	182.7	119.8	113.9	732.9
Slippage	19.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	19.1
Spending Review:						0.0
Removal of schemes	0.0	0.0	-20.0	-20.0	-20.0	-60.0
Reprofiling	-87.6	71.4	193.6	129.4	-6.2	300.5
Total	**97.2**	**222.3**	**356.2**	**229.1**	**87.7**	**992.6**

- **Reviewing major regeneration programmes** to ensure they remain financially sustainable and aligned with current priorities.
- **Making better use of Council land and buildings** through estate rationalisation and more effective asset management.
- **Unlocking capital receipts and reducing borrowing** through the disposal of surplus and underused assets.
- **Supporting high streets and town centres** by focusing business support, working with partners and bringing empty commercial premises back into use where possible.

The Regeneration budget grouping covers Council spending on its land and buildings, including housing estates, as well as programmes that support economic growth, such as high street investment.

Initial outcomes of the review of regeneration capital programmes were announced as part of the initial Spending Review. This included confirmation that the Council would not proceed with planned new build housing developments at five sites. This includes plans for the Ashburton and Lennox estates which were not supported by local residents, as well as schemes at the Fitzhugh Estate, Tyneham Close and Lavender Hill which are not viable due to technical difficulties with the sites. Following the full capital programme review, the Council will not proceed with converting the Morella Road site into self-contained units and will consider alternative uses for the site, including disposal.

The initial Spending Review also confirmed that the Council will continue to deliver a scheme on Block A of the Alton estate and will review the remainder of the scheme to ensure it maximises value for residents and minimises council borrowing costs.

The Winstanley/York Road regeneration programme is undergoing an options analysis to update the masterplan to reflect legislative and planning changes since the original scheme was designed.

The Council will review its operational (i.e. non-housing) estate to identify opportunities to rationalise by consolidating services across fewer sites and disposing of surplus assets. This will be supported by a formal divestment framework, improved asset data and valuations, and assessment of associated costs, including maintenance, decarbonisation and other liabilities. The disposal of surplus sites will generate capital receipts which can be reinvested into priority services and outcomes. This will lead to a more efficient and financially sustainable estate, with lower running costs, maximises the use of retained buildings, and enhances alignment of assets with the Council's priorities and service needs.

An initial priority for the review of the Council's estate will be the Town Hall campus. Previous plans to renovate the Town Hall and make it the main base for Council staff will be revisited, preserving an important part of the borough's civic heritage and securing the long-term use of a key anchor building in Wandsworth town centre. The renovation will also release nearby Council owned sites for alternative uses.

The Council will closely look at its assets to create a more efficient and financially sustainable property estate over-time. It will rationalise the Council estate by identifying surplus and under-utilised buildings which can be disposed of, including the opportunities for consolidating staff into fewer offices. It will create a formal divestment framework and methodology to identify opportunities, supported by improved asset data, valuations, and assessment of associated costs such as maintenance, decarbonisation and liabilities.

The Council will revise its approach managing the properties for which it is landlord. It will introduce a new centralised, evidence-based approach to managing the portfolio, bringing together oversight of assets and facilities to reduce duplication, improve cost control, and ensure assets are used effectively to support service delivery.

Support for Wandsworth's high streets and businesses underpins the Council's ambition to drive growth across the borough. Following the Government's withdrawal of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the Council will review how it delivers business support, including seeking contributions to programme costs from participants. It will also explore new approaches to supporting town centres, including closer collaboration with Business Improvement Districts and better use of new powers to bring empty commercial units back into use. Following the NCIL programme review, the Council will withdraw funding previously allocated to enable a property partnership to purchase a vacant pub on Wandsworth High Street for community use.

As the Nine Elms regeneration programme matures, the Council will consider the most effective model for providing ongoing support to the borough's newest town centre.

Environment

REVENUE

Environment				
£Million	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Original Budget	52.9	51.1	51.1	51.1
Inflation	4.9	7.3	9.9	13.0
Spending Review:				
Third Party Spend Review	-0.5	-2.0	-2.0	-2.0
Establishment (Efficiencies & Productivity)	-0.6	-0.8	-1.0	-1.0
Other	0.0	0.0	-0.2	-0.3
Income Generation	-1.2	-1.6	-2.8	-2.8
Service Priorities - Street Cleaning	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Total	**56.2**	**54.8**	**55.9**	**58.7**

CAPITAL

Environment						
£Million	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**	**TOTAL**
February 2026 Programme	34.6	13.9	5.0	3.5		56.9
Slippage	9.0					9.0
Spending Review:						
Oasis Park	-1.0	-0.5				-1.5
Parklets and Pocket Parks Extension	-0.2	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4		-1.4
Springfield Park 3G Sports Pitch	-0.1	-1.2				-1.3
Other	-0.1					-0.1
Total	**42.3**	**11.7**	**4.6**	**3.1**	**0.0**	**61.7**

- **Investing in cleaner, safer streets** through enhanced cleansing, graffiti removal, fly-tip enforcement and improved street lighting.
- **Improving waste reliability** through stronger contract management, better performance standards and future retendering.
- **Protecting parks, leisure and culture** while focusing activity on what residents value most and what can be delivered sustainably.
- **Refocusing capital** on priority environmental, parks and leisure schemes while releasing uncommitted funding.

The quality of the urban realm and public street scene is one of the most visible and immediate ways residents experience the Council's services. Well managed waste services, clean and welcoming streets, high quality parks and commons, and a strong leisure and cultural offer are among the everyday services residents notice and value most. For that reason, the Council will prioritise these services as part of its commitment to delivering better basics: improving the reliability and responsiveness of waste and street cleansing services; protecting and enhancing parks, open spaces and sports facilities; and reviewing how leisure and cultural services are delivered so they remain high-quality, financially sustainable and focused on what residents' value most.

The Council will enhance street cleaning by increasing the frequency of cleansing on the busiest streets, expanding jet washing at major transport hubs, installing additional litter bins and rolling out the same day sweep model boroughwide, helping ensure residents can take pride in Wandsworth's streets. The Council will also step up measures to tackle the blight of fly tipping, creating a fly tip hit squad and increasing enforcement activity against those who fly tip.

To fund these measures the Council will review the current activity intended to reduce fly tipping to ensure resources are focussed on the measures most effective. A review of the bulky waste service has found that removing the charge for resident's first two bulky waste collections each year has not contributed to a reduction in fly tipping but has instead subsidised some users who would previously have paid for the service. The Council will reintroduce charges for bulky waste collection, set in line with charges for neighbouring boroughs. The Council will also redesign the mega-skip programme to ensure it is delivered within budget, offering a greater diversity of locations so it can reach a greater number of residents whilst reducing the overall frequency, and ending the costly use of leaflets to promote the service.

Alongside this, the Council will deliver other activity which improve Wandsworth's streets in the most cost-effective way. It will increase the base budget for graffiti removal, and aim to increase the borough's tree canopy cover by planting 1,000 trees a year. It will end the practice of replacing street-signs on demand, instead focusing replacements where existing signs have failed. This will release money which can be better invested in upgrading street lighting columns – improving efficiency by converting units to LED, allowing lighting to be dimmed where it is safe to do so, and supporting the installation of additional electric vehicle charging points.

The Council will protect services that help reduce disruption and other issues that negatively affect residents' quality of life. It will continue work to improve air quality through the Air Quality Action Plan and maintain its noise and nuisance service. It will review discretionary activity such as pest control to assess whether it is the best placed to provide the service.

The Council will take action to improve the reliability of the borough's waste and recycling collections. It will enforce tougher action against contractors where there are missed collections and audit the recent waste and recycling contractual changes to identify opportunities to cut costs and improve performance. In the longer-term the Council will look to retender the contracts to achieve better value for money, higher standards and improved accountability.

The Council will protect and invest in its parks, working with Friend groups and Management advisory committees, so they remain treasured amenities for residents. We will ensure any use of parks for events is proportionate, and balances the opportunity to generate income with preserving community benefit.

The Council will invest in priority parks improvements across the borough, including carrying out repairs to Wandsworth Common's boardwalk, work to reduce flooding on Tooting Common, and improvements to Putney Park Lane. Within Battersea Park, it will undertake urgent safety repairs to the London Peace Pagoda and work with partners to identify sources of external funding for its wider restoration. The Council will also complete upgrades to the all weather pitch, to the Millennium Arena athletics track, undertake repairs to Pear Tree café, and invest in additional toilets for the park. As part of this prioritisation, uncommitted funding previously set aside for further improvements at Oasis greenspace and the pocket park programme will be released.

The Council values Wandsworth's extensive and well used library network and will ensure it continues to serve residents effectively. It will retain the existing network of library sites.

Ahead of the current library contract ending in 2028, the Council will review potential delivery models and opportunities to make efficiencies, while maintaining the same level of provision. Reflecting the Council's commitment to preserving the civic heritage of the borough, the Council will refurbish and replace Battersea Library's listed roof and glass dome, and complete improvements to Balham library's facilities.

The Council will review the current level of service and delivery across the Council's existing network of leisure centre sites. It will make investments in sport facilities across the borough, including to Wandle Recreation Centre, Barn Elms sports pitches, and multi use games areas in Heathbrook Park and Dunstan Road. It will deliver capital improvements as part of the new leisure contract, but will ensure measures reflect users' priorities. The Council will also examine where there are opportunities to generate additional revenue from Council leisure sites.

The Council will introduce a new concessions scheme to replace Access for All, focussed on leisure and culture services. As Access for All was funded from a limited, ringfenced reserve there was no budget identified for its ongoing provision. The new concessions scheme will reduce reliance on reserves, target support at residents with evidenced need and align with wider fees and charges updates. The Council will also use revenue released from the former Access for All reserve to fund a targeted water safety programme for Wandsworth children and young people. This will provide water safety awareness training and free swimming lessons for pupils in Years 2 to 11 who cannot swim 25 metres.

Following Wandsworth's year as London Borough of Culture, the Council will review the most effective long-term model for arts services. The future approach will place greater emphasis on securing external funding and sponsorship, and on using strategic partnerships to support delivery of discretionary cultural programmes. The Council will not proceed with the Winstanley Cultural Trail project or the planned Alton Arts and Events programme. This prioritises investment in essential estate infrastructure and housing quality over broader cultural and engagement activity.

Transport

REVENUE

Transport				
£Million	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Original Budget	1.4	2.6	2.6	2.6
Spending Review:				
Third Party Spend Review	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
Establishment (Efficiencies & Productivity)	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
Other	0.0	0.0	-0.2	-0.3
Income Generation	-3.9	-5.1	-7.1	-7.2
Total	**-2.6**	**-2.6**	**-4.8**	**-5.0**

CAPITAL

Transport						
£Million	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**	**TOTAL**
February 2026 Programme	38.5	63.1	15.0	12.5		129.0
Slippage	11.4	-0.2				11.2
Spending Review:						
Wandsworth Town Centre Transformation Scheme		-18.0				-18.0
Tooting Town Centre Improvement Fund	-2.2					-2.2
Street Lighting Columns & Luminaires				-2.0		-2.0
Queenstown Road (South of Battersea Park Road)		-0.6	-1.0			-1.6
Riverwalk	-1.2					-1.2
Bike Hangars Expansion	-0.5	-0.5				-1.0
Other	-1.8	-0.1	-0.6	-0.4		-2.8
Investment:						
Putney High Street	0.6					0.6
Other	0.7					0.7
Total	**45.5**	**43.7**	**13.4**	**10.1**	**0.0**	**112.8**

- **Keeping Wandsworth moving** by focusing investment on roads, bridges and transport schemes that have the greatest impact for residents.
- **Delivering targeted improvements to town centres and key routes while prioritising investment on schemes that provide the greatest benefit for residents.**
- **Reducing disruption and congestion** through stronger roadworks management, lane rental and targeted enforcement.
- **Refocusing capital** on priority transport improvements while releasing or pausing lower priority schemes.

The Council will keep Wandsworth moving by ensuring the borough's roads and transport network work effectively for residents, rather than acting as a barrier. In light of limited resources, the transport programme has been reviewed to focus investment on the interventions most closely aligned with these priorities.

On active travel, the Council will release uncommitted funding from the quiet cycle route programme and will not proceed with the Albert Bridge cycling and walking feasibility study or further works on the Falcon Road corridor. It will complete the Wandsworth Bridge cycling and walking scheme, widening pavements and adding cycle tracks while carrying out essential maintenance to extend the life of the bridge and keep it open to two-way traffic.

Improvements to the Queenstown Road corridor will continue, but with some elements scaled back. The Council will complete the current programme of improvements to the riverwalk in Nine Elms, but review plans for further improvements. The Council will continue to expand the bike hangar programme, while ensuring that it is aligned with resident demand.

In the borough's town centres, the Council will complete improvements to Old York Road in Wandsworth Town, review wider plans for Wandsworth and Tooting town centres, and deliver urgent measures to reduce congestion on Putney High Street.

Parking charges in the borough have remained unchanged since 2024, which has reduced the level of resource available for road improvement measures. The Council will increase parking charges, allocating the additional income to measures which improve the flow of traffic and contribute to air quality improvements.

The Council will deliver road crossing improvements, including additional zebra crossings and dropped kerbs for pedestrians, while prioritising schemes more carefully within a reduced budget.

The Council will work with partners including TfL and Network Rail to ensure they fund the programmes and infrastructure for which they are responsible, withdrawing or reducing earmarked Council funding where costs should properly be met by other organisations. This includes works to Tooting Common bridges underpasses and funding allocated for measures to prevent vehicle incursions on railways. The Council will review TfL's proposals for works to East Putney Station and Upper Richmond Road to ensure any Council contribution delivers value for money.

The Council will strengthen its approach to ensuring roadworks by utility providers and contractors minimise disruption to residents. It will introduce a lane rental scheme, allowing the Council to charge utilities and contractors for occupying the busiest roads at peak times, incentivising works to be carried out at non-peak times and resulting in less congestion on Borough roads. Income from the lane rental scheme will be ring-fenced for highways works or measures which reduce disruption from street works.

The Council will take a stronger approach to tackling poor driving and parking, helping to reduce congestion and improve road safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Following a review of key locations, it will introduce camera-based enforcement at 13 priority sites.

Community Safety

REVENUE

Community Safety				
£Million	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Original Budget	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3
Inflation	0.5	0.7	1.0	1.3
Spending Review:				
Third Party Spend Review	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
Establishment (Efficiencies & Productivity)	0.0	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
Other	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.1
Service Priorities - Police	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9
Total	**10.5**	**10.8**	**10.9**	**11.2**

- **Investing in visible community safety** through the direct funding of 25 additional Metropolitan Police officers dedicated to Wandsworth.
- **Strengthening local enforcement** with a new integrated Council-led model focused on the issues residents raise most.
- **Protecting work on violence against women and girls** while targeting resources where they have greatest impact.
- **Using technology and CCTV better** to support prevention, detection and safer neighbourhoods.

Ensuring residents are and feel safe in their communities is central to the Council's intention to invest in the core neighbourhood services that matter most to our residents.

This is reflected in the Council's early announcement that it will enter into an agreement with the Met Police to fund an additional 25 Metropolitan Police officers for Wandsworth. The team of three sergeants and 22 police constables will provide additional, dedicated and visible policing across the borough. They will have full police powers and sit under the Met's command, but their work will be informed by local priorities set out in a partnership agreement with the Council. These priorities include addressing anti-social behaviour, drug-related harm, e-bike misuse, violence against women and girls, and other matters affecting residents' sense of safety.

To maximise the impact of additional police investment, the Council will adopt a stronger Council-led approach to enforcement and establish a new integrated enforcement team. This will bring together and enhance enforcement functions from across the Council, supported by additional investment, and align them with the new police team. The team will be more visible in local areas, use information from residents and partners to target problems, and work with the police to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour, fly-tipping and other issues that affect people's daily lives. The aim is to create a coherent, responsive model that can address multiple local issues at once while reducing the overall cost of enforcement currently spread across teams and functions.

The Council will also continue investment in the borough's CCTV to support the wider focus on enhanced community safety and enforcement. It will also explore options for how new technologies can improve the effectiveness of the council's CCTV in detecting and preventing crime.

The Council will review the animal welfare service budget to ensure resources are focused on statutory responsibilities and activity that provides the greatest value for residents.

The Council will continue to prioritise work to prevent violence against women and girls, building on the recommendations of the recent cross-party task and finish group. It will protect investment in Independent Domestic Violence Advisors, support for the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference, and public-facing prevention work. Efficiencies will be made where budgets are underspent, activity can be delivered differently, or alternative funding is available. The service will also reduce contract costs by using existing secure information-sharing and case management arrangements with partners, removing the need for a standalone system. This will allow existing project budgets to be reinvested in the enhanced enforcement model described above.

Finance

REVENUE

Finance				
£Million	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Original Budget	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3
Inflation	0.6	1.0	1.3	1.7
Spending Review:				
Establishment (Efficiencies & Productivity)	-0.1	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8
Other - Reduced Capital Financing Costs	-0.3	-0.8	-1.4	-1.6
Income Generation	0.0	0.0	-0.9	-0.9
Total	**8.6**	**7.8**	**6.6**	**6.8**

- **Strengthening financial control** through tighter budget management, better insight and stronger grip on spending.
- **Getting better value for money** through improved procurement, contract management and third party spend controls.
- **Growing income responsibly** through a more consistent approach to fees, charges, debt recovery and commercial opportunities.
- **Refocusing support for low income households** through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme review, a longer term anti-poverty approach and targeted crisis support that is affordable and focused on those most in need.
- **Reducing future borrowing** by removing lower priority capital schemes and avoiding unnecessary debt costs.

The Council will strengthen its procurement and contract management practices, returning to a strong guiding focus on value for money whilst providing quality services. The Council will continue to meet the requirements in Government procurement policy to include a 10% weighting for social value, but will reduce the use of KPIs and monitoring arrangements related to social value to ensure that procurement resource is focussed on supporting departments to procure services at the lowest cost to taxpayers.

The Council will introduce tighter budget management and financial insight, including internal improvements to budget monitoring, benchmarking and analysis; and improved control and value for money from third-party spend. In addition, it will adopt a more consistent approach to income maximisation and debt collection across council tax, rent, business rates and other fees and charges.

The Council will become more financially resilient and commercially mature by developing new revenue streams and expanding existing ones, reducing pressure on core budgets and helping offset lost government funding.

This will include taking a more commercial approach to services where there is a clear case for growth, trading or charging, as well as pursuing alternative sources of external funding and appropriate sponsorship opportunities.

In line with the Council's wider programme to improve its digital platforms and make it easier for residents to self-serve, the Council will review the existing online parking permit system to ensure it enhances the user experience by providing better flexibility and value for money for residents. The review will improve customer experience and ease frustrations with the current process, and also support the introduction of virtual parking permits.

The Government has replaced previous local welfare funding with a reduced Crisis and Resilience Fund allocation. The Council has therefore reviewed the support previously provided through the Cost of Living Programme to bring it within the new funding envelope, including the measures agreed by Cabinet in July in relation to the Wandsworth Discretionary Social Fund. It will also move away from short term cost of living support towards a longer term anti-poverty approach, supported by a new anti-poverty strategy.

The Council Tax Reduction Scheme will be used to ease the transition towards higher council tax for those on very low incomes, while being expanded to help those currently just outside the qualifying income threshold. Support will be applied more consistently and fairly across eligible households and everyone of working age will be expected to make a contribution. The review will take account of the impact of any council tax increase, the cost of the scheme across both pensioner and working age households, and the need to align support with the Council's wider anti-poverty approach. Any proposed changes will be subject to consultation and the appropriate decision making process.

Through the Spending Review, the administration has reviewed the planned capital programme to remove schemes which do not provide value for money or are no longer viable to progress. This has removed the need for £39m of future General Fund borrowing, which would have cost £2.3m over the next four years to service.

Corporate Services

REVENUE

Corporate Services				
£Million	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**
Original Budget	-9.7	-9.5	-9.5	-9.5
Spending Review:				
Third Party Spend Review	-1.2	-1.4	-1.3	-1.3
Establishment (Efficiencies & Productivity)	-0.9	-1.5	-3.6	-3.6
Other	0.0	0.0	-0.5	-0.8
Income Generation	-0.6	-0.6	-0.6	-0.6
Growth	-0.2	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5
Invest to save	48.8	7.2	7.4	2.8
Total	**36.2**	**-6.1**	**-8.5**	**-13.5**

CAPITAL

Corporate Services						
£Million	**2026/27**	**2027/28**	**2028/29**	**2029/30**	**2030/31**	**TOTAL**
February 2026 Programme	18.5	8.1	8.9	8.6		44.1
Slippage	1.4					1.4
Spending Review:						
Net Zero Decarbonisation Strategy	-3.3	-3.3	-6.8	-6.8		-20.0
Town Hall Annex - Great Employer Investment	-5.5					-5.5
Other	-0.8	-0.0				-0.8
Investment:						
Other	0.3					0.3
Total	**10.7**	**4.9**	**2.1**	**1.9**	**0.0**	**19.5**

- **Making the Council more efficient** by reducing duplication within enabling functions, strengthening governance and focusing resources on core delivery.
- **Supporting a stronger workforce** through clearer expectations, skills training, better HR support and more visible in-person working.
- **Reducing avoidable cost** by limiting agency use, reviewing communications and stopping activity that does not support financial sustainability.
- **Using data and technology better** to improve resident access, automate routine work and support more targeted service intervention.

In addition to the changes to frontline services described above, the Council will also review and adjust how it operates to ensure that it is best placed to cut waste, operate efficiently, makes the best use of new technologies and delivers high quality services to residents.

The Council will set clear expectations for in-person working, with staff expected to spend at least three days a week in the office or out in our communities. This will provide visible reassurance to residents that officers are there to serve them, make it easier for services to collaborate. It will also support staff development, particularly for early-career staff who benefit from informal mentoring and learning from colleagues, and wellbeing by strengthening connections between colleagues, reducing isolation and creating more opportunities for informal support. The Council recognises that its workforce is central to serving residents and that the changes proposed will create uncertainty for some staff. It will support staff welfare through clear and timely communication, effective management support and access to appropriate resources. Spending at least three days a week together in the office or in the community will form part of this approach, strengthening connections between colleagues, reducing isolation and creating more opportunities for informal support.

As a major employer, the Council also has an important role in supporting the Wandsworth Town economy. A strong in-person working culture will help sustain local businesses, including the established commercial centres of Southside and Old York Road, and newer developments at the Ram Brewery and New Acres.

The Council will end the use of agency staff except where they are needed for essential frontline roles such as social care. Over reliance on agency staff increases costs, weakens continuity, and can reduce accountability for long term service improvement.

The Council will restructure how its core services operate, ensuring they are best able to meet the needs of the organisation. This will remove duplication, improve coordination of services and create stronger governance, which in turn will reduce waste and better serve frontline services. As an initial step, the Council has disbanded the Leader's Office and Delivery Unit to reduce cost and improve accountability for delivery within directorates.

The Council will invest in its workforce so staff have the skills and tools needed to navigate change and deliver modern services. HR support to services will be improved, so they are better able to support service redesigns and the organisation through change, and organisational design outcomes improved.

The Council has reviewed elements included within the previous administration's Change Programme and released funding earmarked for projects which do not support the improved efficiency or financial sustainability of the Council. This includes funds allocated for a management development programme, consultant support for staffing restructuring programme, communications and engagement activity linked to the enhanced apprenticeship offer, the Alton Mobilisation and Delivery Plan, the People and Place mobilisation, and business partnership plans. The released funding will instead be invested in measures that genuinely deliver change and improved financial resilience.

The Council recognises the part that the voluntary and community sector plays in supporting residents. However, due to the financial situation, the Council is in a position where previous commitments, including the additional funding towards a Community Infrastructure Support Partnership, cannot be taken forward. The Council will continue to work with the voluntary and community sector and other statutory partners to enable the sector to become sustainable and less reliant on grant funding.

Following the NCIL programme review, the Council will withdraw funding previously allocated to the community groups where funding had been provisionally allocated but no funding agreement was in place.

When the administration took office in May 2026, it paused applications to the Wandsworth Grants Fund whilst the Spending Review took place. Due to the extent of the financial challenges facing the Council, the grants fund will be suspended for a four year period. This will be kept under review and grants will be reinstated sooner should the Council's financial circumstances allow.

The Council will review its approach and spend on communications ensuring that residents are kept up to date on the key developments they need to know, and made aware of support that is available to them while focussing resources on core service delivery rather than publicity. It will continue to consult and engage residents on developments that affect them, ensuring this activity is targeted, meaningful and proportionate.

The Council will also invest in its data and technology, making sure it has the tools and capabilities needed to be a modern Council. This will support the measures described in other sections to take a more data driven and targeted approach to service intervention as part of demand management work. It will also help free up officer time to focus on aspects of service delivery that cannot be handled by agentic or generative artificial intelligence. For example, the Council will implement automation within the Council Tax service which will release officer time to be spent on better managing accounts via debt recovery, tackling a backlog of debts and increasing income to the Council.

The Council will review and rationalise the number of IT applications it uses, reducing costs of licenses and making it simpler to bring together data to enable better insights. It will also support the Council's ambition to make it simpler for residents to deal with the Council by creating a single digital access point for key services, through which residents can raise and monitor service requests. Throughout this work, the Council's approach will be to enhance the digital option, without making it mandatory, recognising that some residents prefer to use other channels to contact the Council.

The scale of change being proposed across the Council will require upfront investment in the next two years in order to deliver significant cost benefits, efficiencies and growth and demand mitigations. Reserves will need to be deployed in the short term as a result, with balances being protected over future years as cost savings accrue.

Capital Investment

General Fund Capital Programme

£Million	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	Total
Total General Fund Capital Programme	163.7	99.2	24.7	18.4	2.2	308.2
Capital Programme Financed By:						
Grants & Contributions	15.4	4.8	2.2	2.2	2.2	26.8
S106 & Neighbourhood CIL	40.3	23.8	0.3	0.6	0.0	64.9
Strategic CIL	42.6	13.6	5.3	5.1	0.0	66.6
Nine Elms CIL	3.3	19.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	22.9
Earmarked Reserves	3.7	0.9	0.3	0.0	0.0	4.9
Revenue Funding	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.0	2.0
Capital Receipts	3.3	4.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	7.6
Borrowing	54.7	32.2	15.5	10.1	0.0	112.5
Total Financing of General Fund Capital Programme	**163.7**	**99.2**	**24.7**	**18.4**	**2.2**	**308.2**

Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme

£Million	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	TOTAL
Total HRA Capital Expenditure	**151.7**	**270.1**	**175.2**	**66.0**	**0.0**	**663.0**
Capital Programme Financed By:						
Capital Receipts inc RTB 1-4-1	2.0	1.5	1.5	1.5	0.0	**6.5**
Section 106 Receipts & Capital Grant	64.2	42.9	17.0	16.9	0.0	**141.1**
Leaseholder Major Works Charges	6.1	9.1	14.9	10.7	0.0	**40.8**
Revenue Contribution to Capital	15.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	0.0	**45.0**
Borrowing	39.3	181.1	105.5	0.0	0.0	**326.0**
Major Repairs Reserve	25.1	25.6	26.2	26.9	0.0	**103.7**
Total HRA Capital Financing	**151.7**	**270.1**	**175.2**	**66.0**	**0.0**	**663.0**

- **Focusing capital on current priorities** by redirecting investment to schemes that are affordable, deliverable and provide clear benefit for residents.
- **Releasing lower-priority commitments** by stopping, reducing or reshaping schemes that are no longer viable, good value for money or aligned with the Council’s current financial position.
- **Using developer contributions more effectively** by refocusing CIL, NCIL and section 106 funding on eligible, deliverable infrastructure with practical community benefit.
- **Reducing future borrowing costs** by removing £119m of planned borrowing across the General Fund and HRA, avoiding an estimated £6.2m of revenue debt servicing costs over four years.

The Spending Review has included a comprehensive review of the capital programme to ensure that investment is focused on the Council's current priorities and on schemes that remain affordable and deliverable. As part of this process, uncommitted allocations have been released and schemes that no longer represent good value for money, are no longer viable, or have become lower priority in the current financial context have been stopped, reduced or reshaped. This has enabled the Council to redirect capital resources towards essential investment and projects that deliver the greatest benefit for residents, while reducing reliance on future borrowing and the associated revenue costs of debt financing.

The Council will dispose of surplus or underused assets where this supports a more efficient estate and represents value for money. Capital receipts will be used to reduce the need for new borrowing where possible.

Community Infrastructure Levy, Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy and section 106 contributions will continue to fund eligible infrastructure and local priorities. The use of Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy has been refocused so that available funding is directed to priority local infrastructure, deliverable schemes and projects that provide clear community benefit. This includes continuing essential playground improvements, parks and transport schemes, while releasing funding from lower priority or less deliverable schemes, including unallocated play and youth provision funding, proposed contributions to some community and cultural projects and the previous proposal to support the purchase of a vacant pub on Wandsworth High Street for community use. This ensures developer contributions are used where they can have the greatest practical impact for residents and reduces the need for additional borrowing or future revenue commitments.

Borrowing

The administration considers the Council's previously planned level of borrowing to be financially unsustainable and has committed to reducing it. The Spending Review has removed £119m of planned schemes which would have needed borrowing to fund them. In the General Fund, £39m of future borrowing has been removed and is expected to avoid £2.3m of revenue debt servicing costs over the next four years. The Housing Revenue Account review has removed £80m of schemes that would otherwise have required borrowing, avoiding a further £3.9m of revenue costs over four years.

The Council is also committed to reducing the current level of assumed borrowing over the long term. As at May 2026, actual borrowing stood at £184m and was projected to increase over the 30 year period to £1.14 billion. The identification of further opportunities to increase capital receipts in order to offset borrowing requirements and continued scrutiny of the capital programme will reduce borrowing below £1 billion. This will bring borrowing down to a more sustainable level while still supporting essential investment in housing, assets, infrastructure and services residents rely on.

Income

The Council funds its general services through a combination of council tax, retained business rates, government grants, fees and charges, and other service income. Capital investment is funded separately through capital receipts, developer contributions, grants and borrowing. The Spending Review has considered each of these sources alongside expenditure reductions, service reform and demand management.

Government funding and business rates

Under the Government's revised funding settlement Wandsworth will lose £84m a year of core government funding by 2030, a reduction of around 40%. The Council will continue to make the case that authorities which have historically kept council tax low should not be penalised through changes to national funding formulae in this way. The Council will use all available routes to challenge the impact of the funding settlement and make the case for a fairer approach, including submitting representations to the Treasury through the Budget process and, subject to resident support, bringing forward a proposal under the Sustainable Communities Act.

The business rates reset and 2026 revaluation have now taken effect and the Government's forward position is that final allocations for the next two years will be confirmed through the annual settlement process. For the Council, the key issue is now how business rates growth, reliefs, revaluation appeals, collection performance and any further national policy changes affect the tax base and retained income over the rest of the MTFS period. These assumptions will therefore need to be kept under review and updated through future budget and settlement reports.

Fees, charges and other income

The Council will take a more consistent approach to income maximisation and debt collection across council tax, business rates, rents and other fees and charges. It will develop new income streams and expand existing ones where there is a clear and proportionate case for growth, trading or charging, while pursuing external funding and appropriate sponsorship opportunities. Charges will be reviewed against the cost of providing services, local benchmarks and the impact on residents. Any proposals will follow the appropriate decision making and equality assessment processes.

The Spending Review includes specific income measures within service plans. These include changes to parking and bulky waste charges, reviews of adult social care and Telecare charging, income from leisure facilities, lane rental and enforcement, and the implementation of social rent convergence. Where income is ringfenced, it will continue to be used for the purpose for which it is raised.

Council tax

Council tax income retained by Wandsworth is currently £77m per year and current modelling with risk based assumptions applied suggests that, to address the structural budget gap within this MTFS period, this will need to rise by £143m by 2030/31.

The Government has granted Wandsworth council tax flexibility for 2027/28 and 2028/29 in recognition that its revised funding settlement assumes the Council will raise significantly more local income locally to offset the loss of core government funding. In ensuring ongoing financial sustainability the Council has worked hard to minimise the burden on council taxpayers by taking difficult decisions, maximising savings, reforming services, reviewing income, reprioritising capital and using reserves appropriately.

Wandsworth's total Band D council tax bill is currently £1,020. Half of this is retained by the Council to fund local services, with the remainder relating to the Greater London Authority (GLA) precept. To generate the required level of council tax income, the Council's share would need to increase from £510 to £1,468 in 2027/28. Including the GLA precept, the total Band D bill would be £1,978, an increase of £958, or 94%, on the current total bill. The final amount will depend on the GLA precept set for 2027/28.

The modelling assumes that the increase is made in 2027/28, with no further increase in the Council's share in the following three years. This rebases the Council's recurring income while retaining flexibility to respond if savings are not delivered in full or cost pressures are greater than forecast.

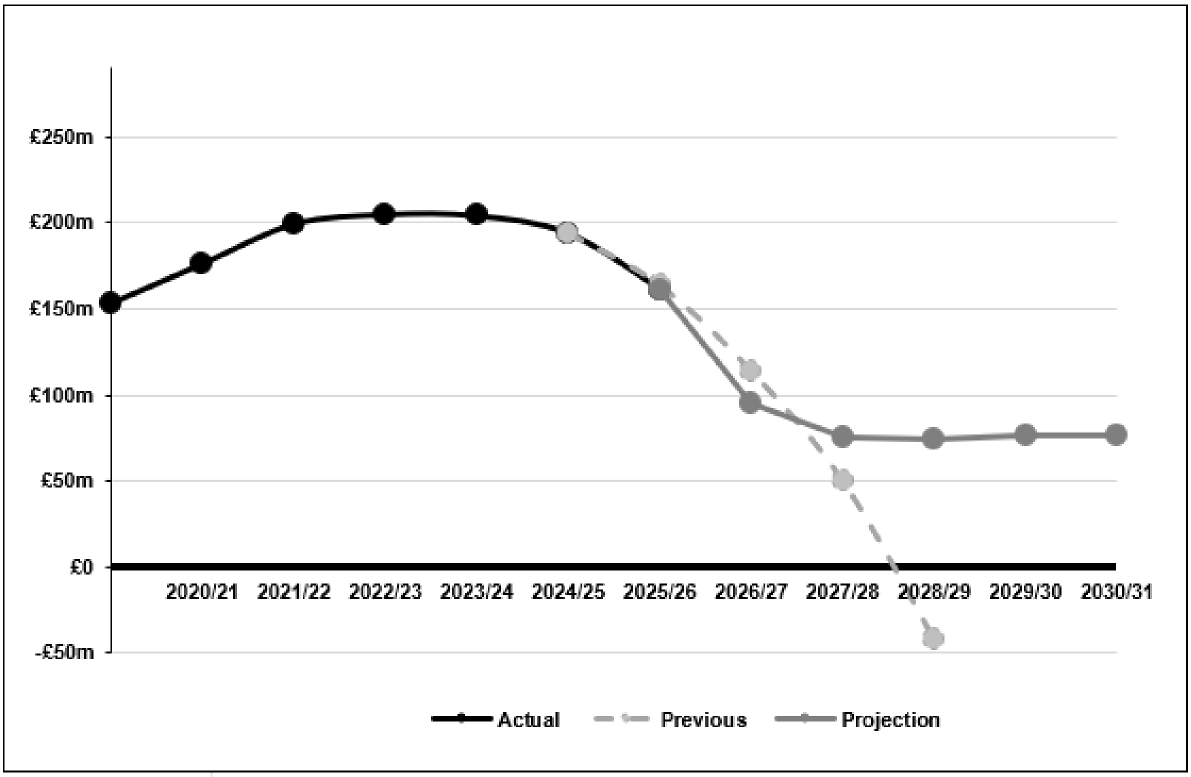
The final legal decision on council tax will be taken by Full Council in March 2027 as part of the annual budget setting process.

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

The Council recognises that a substantial council tax increase will be difficult for many households, particularly those least able to absorb a higher bill. It will therefore maintain a generous Council Tax Reduction Scheme, with proposals to provide continued support of up to around 50% for eligible working age households, alongside continued support for pensioners. The proposed approach will broaden the reach of the scheme by expanding income bands so that more low income working households can receive support as council tax rises and will apply support more consistently and fairly across eligible households. The introduction of a multi-year taper is also proposed so any reduction in support is gradual.

More than 15,000 or 10% of households are expected to receive assistance, and the cost of the scheme is forecast to rise from £11.1m to £16.2m by 2030/31 as the Council protects those most affected while keeping the scheme affordable and fair.

Reserves



Reserves are one off resources and cannot provide a permanent solution to an ongoing budget gap. They can, however, be used in a controlled way to manage the transition to a sustainable budget, fund transformation and phase the implementation of difficult decisions.

The scale of change proposed within this Spending Review will require significant upfront investment, with up to £30m needed to support delivery of the savings and efficiencies. This investment will be used for a mix of internal capacity and external specialist support, including programme management, service redesign, digital and data capability, demand management and implementation support. It is important that this funding is treated as investment rather than as additional recurring spend: proposals will need to demonstrate a clear return on investment, a credible payback period and a direct link to the delivery of recurring savings or demand reductions.

The Dedicated Schools Budget (DSB) deficit creates an additional risk to the Council's financial position. The deficit has built up over a number of years because the national funding provided for high needs has not kept pace with the increasing number and rising cost of children requiring specialist support. The Government's proposed High Needs Stability Grant is expected to cover 90% of the cumulative deficit at 31st March 2026, leaving the Council exposed to the remaining 10%. The position beyond that date is not yet clear. The ongoing issue is that, unless demand and placement costs are brought back into line with future funding, further overspends could arise and place additional pressure on General Fund reserves. This risk will continue to be closely monitored.

Reserve balances have dropped from a high of £205m in 2023 to a current balance of £162m and a projected balance at the end of the year below £100m. Over the period of the MTFS this is expected to fall further to deal with the structural budget gap, the DSB overspend and the funding of invest to save initiatives referenced above. The current modelling indicates that, even with the rebasing of council tax income, balances could reduce to around £76m over the four year period.

Given risks around the timing and achievement of efficiency savings, maintaining an adequate level of reserves is an important part of sound financial management. These minimal reserves provide protection against unexpected pressures or events, allow the Council to manage risk and can support one off investment where this helps reduce future costs. Planning to reduce reserves below this level when setting the framework for the next four years would leave the Council financially exposed and significantly reduce its ability to adjust to any change in circumstances.

Conclusion

This Spending Review sets out a comprehensive response to the Council's financial position. It protects priority services and invests in visible improvements for residents, including housing, community safety, cleaner streets and essential infrastructure. At the same time, it reduces or stops lower priority activity, reshapes services around prevention and early intervention, reviews the capital programme to reduce borrowing and requires the Council itself to operate more efficiently.

The Council faces continuing pressure from growth in adult and children's social care and temporary accommodation, as well as pay, inflation and the cost of providing high needs support in schools.

The plan assumes £79m of ongoing savings by 2030/31. This is an ambitious savings target and later year assumptions in particular carry higher delivery risk, however the Council is committed to doing as much as it possibly can to reduce its cost base whilst protecting and improving those services residents value the most whilst keeping council tax as low as possible.

These pressures mean that savings and income generation alone will not close the budget gap. A recurring increase in council tax is therefore required to avoid relying on reserves to fund ongoing costs which is not financially sustainable.

A range of council tax increases against different assumptions for demand, savings and reserves use have been modelled. Taking those risks together, this Spending Review concludes that the Council should plan on the basis of its share of the charge increasing from £510 to £1,468 in 2027/28. This is the level required to put the budget on a sustainable footing by the end of the Medium Term Financial Strategy period while retaining a minimum level of financial resilience.

On the assumptions above, the total Band D bill would be £1,978 which is considerably lower than the current year national average charge of £2,392.

The Council believes it is important to be open and transparent about the financial challenges it is facing and what this may mean for household budgets. Although the council tax increase will not come into effect until April 2027, its scale means the Council will write to residents now to give as much notice as possible so they can plan ahead.

The Council is committed to pursuing all options to cut waste, deliver savings and efficiencies, stand up for residents, fight Government cuts, including through the Sustainable Communities Act and Budget submission.

The financial position remains sensitive to the pace of savings delivery, service demand, inflation, collection rates and government policy. The Council will maintain strong financial and programme oversight, update the Medium Term Financial Strategy as assumptions change, and take further action where required to protect services.