

## **Expanded Joint Statement**

### **Foreword by Mayor of Newham and the Chief Executive**

This final Action Plan, in response to the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge, forms a key part of the journey we started at the Council in 2018 to continually improve and learn, as we work hard to deliver the best outcomes for Newham residents.

Many residents in Newham face deep-rooted inequalities and challenges, and that's why we are building a fairer Newham because we want our people to thrive and have healthy, happy lives.

We know that Newham stands apart because of its people, who are dynamic, diverse, and determined. As a Council, we want to show excellence as we strive to best serve all our communities. So while we celebrate our strengths, we seize every opportunity to learn from our people and our partnerships.

The LGA Peer Challenge report highlighted the multiple examples of good services being delivered by the Council and other improvements being made.

They welcomed the turnaround in Children services from inadequate to good with outstanding leadership; commended our public health approach as well as the Council's ambitious housing plans where we are delivering homes our people can afford. They noted the doubling of recycling rates and reductions in reported fly-tipping; and the progress we are making in improving our parks and fixing our roads. They liked our commitment to People Powered Places through the largest participatory budget programme in the country where our residents are able to shape the neighbourhoods they live.

They commended the commitment across the board to the Council's bold and ambitious Building a Fairer Newham plans; but were concerned about the Council's ability to prioritise and told us this needed to change because of the financial challenges facing local government and the limited resources that Newham Council has.

That's why our Action Plan sets out how we are tackling this head on. We'll do it through focus, diligence and collaboration across the Council and with our residents and partners at the core.

Our Action Plan has collective ownership across the board; from elected members and officers alike and at every level of the Council. Over 800 members of our valued staff took part in developing our Action Plan, and are entrusted with leading the changes we intend to see. They'll be supported by the Council's corporate leadership team who fully embrace the accountability that they hold. Elected members have fully

embraced the Action Plan and are looking forward to supporting service excellence for our residents.

At the Council, we have made a start across all the areas identified by the LGA as requiring a different approach. For instance, we have:

- Rapidly commenced a refresh of our 2024/25 Departmental service plans, demonstrating our ability to programme and prioritise delivery of the Building a Fairer Newham corporate plan;
- Completed a review for a new Corporate Operating Model for the Council alongside a 3-year transformation plan;
- Developed a new Workforce strategy in collaboration with trade unions, senior officers and our staff team. This will be published by the end of May;
- Implemented and are working to our new Governance Framework which is strengthening accountability across the Council at every layer and span. This includes accelerating the current review of the Council's Constitution;
- Established a cross-party working group of elected members to support the positive development of culture and relationships;
- Actioned our new collaborative approach with Newham's place leaders from across the breadth of our strategic partnerships.

Our Action Plan will deliver key elements of our bold and transformative agenda to build a fairer Newham for our people and place. Our commitment to learning and improving who we are and how we work will ensure that we deliver sustainable improvements for our residents. They are our purpose, and that's why being a better Council is a must.

**Rokhsana Fiaz OBE**  
**Mayor of Newham**

**Abi Gbago**  
**Chief Executive**

### **Thank you to the LGA Peer Challenge team, colleagues and partners**

On behalf of the London Borough of Newham, we want to extend our sincere gratitude to the Local Government Association's (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge team, led by Paul Dennett, Mayor of Salford; and Andy Donald, Chief Executive of the London Borough of Haringey. Their diligence and support during their visit to Newham Council in November 2023 to assess Newham Council's performance and commitment to improvement are greatly appreciated. Their invaluable insights have guided our path forward. We also wish to express our deepest thanks to the myriad colleagues who participated in this Peer Challenge, including elected representatives, officers, and local partners from across our borough. Their engagement has been instrumental in shaping the narrative of our collective endeavour towards continuous improvement.