

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
<p>REPORT TITLE</p> <p>King’s Speech: Implications for Camden</p>	
<p>REPORT OF</p> <p>Nick Kimber, Director of Corporate Strategy and Policy Design</p>	
<p>FOR SUBMISSION TO</p> <p>Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>DATE</p> <p>8 October 2024</p>
<p>STRATEGIC CONTEXT</p> <p>We Make Camden is our communities’ vision for Camden. It highlights the significant influence of national policy on the circumstances in which Camden residents live, on local public services, and therefore on the ambitions that Camden Council shares with Camden’s communities.</p> <p>We Make Camden articulates the change that Camden wants to see in the long-term and the action that the Council will take in the short and medium-term to effect that change in partnership with local organisations and communities. The extent to which these actions and approaches are suitable to the long-term ambitions of We Make Camden depends on the national policy landscape.</p>	
<p>SUMMARY OF REPORT</p> <p>This report sets out the legislative programme announced by the government at the King’s Speech, which took place on Wednesday 17 July 2024. It identifies implications that may arise for Camden from the announced legislation, including financial and resource implications, changes to statutory or regulatory frameworks within which Council services operate, and anticipated impacts on demand for Council services. There are also implications arising from announced legislation that may have significant implications for local government as a sector, and these are considered. The Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee is advised of specific pieces of announced legislation that may be worth remaining mindful and aware of if and when they become law.</p> <p>The Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider Camden’s strategic approach to working in partnership with the government, the local government sector, and the wider policymaking landscape in the context of the legislative agenda announced in the King’s Speech.</p>	

Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information

No documents have been used in the preparation of this report:

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RECOMMENDATIONS

For the Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee to note the contents of the report and to proffer any advice it thinks necessary to the Cabinet with regards to:

1. The contents of the King's Speech and their implications for Camden
2. Camden's approach to engagement with the new government

Signed:



Nick Kimber, Director of Corporate Strategy and Policy Design

Date: 25th September 2024

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The new government has committed to a series of national missions, to a programme of constitutional reform that includes devolution of powers, and to a set of fiscal rules. These commitments have provided the framework for the new government's policy priorities and positions to date. The contents of the King's Speech, which took place on Wednesday 17 July 2024, draw strongly on this framework.
- 1.2. The five national missions are both signalling and governing tools. They signal the government's diagnosis of the UK's major challenges, its priorities, and its favoured methods of delivery. At this point, the national approach to missions as governing tools is emerging, including the roles of local and regional government.
- 1.3. Camden has been pioneering this approach since 2022 following the completion of the Camden Renewal Commission and the adoption of We Make Camden, which includes four missions for Camden. The five national missions are:
 - 1.3.1. Kickstart economic growth to secure the highest sustained growth in the G7, with good jobs and productivity growth in every part of the country making everyone, not just a few, better off.
 - 1.3.2. Make Britain a clean energy superpower to create jobs, cut bills and boost energy security with zero-carbon electricity by 2030, accelerating to net zero.
 - 1.3.3. Take back our streets by halving serious violent crime and raising confidence in the police and criminal justice system to its highest levels.
 - 1.3.4. Break down the barriers to opportunity by reforming our childcare and education systems, to make sure there is no class ceiling on the ambitions of young people in Britain.
 - 1.3.5. Build an NHS fit for the future that is there when people need it; with fewer lives lost to the biggest killers; in a fairer Britain, where everyone lives well for longer.
- 1.4. It is important to note that the economic context within which the government is pursuing its policy agenda. HM Treasury published 'Fixing the foundations - Public spending audit 2024-25' on Monday 29 July 2024, which identifies a series of measures to tackle a £21.9bn gap in government spending plans. The government's first budget, which will take place on Wednesday 30 October 2024, and the Comprehensive Spending Review, which will conclude in spring 2025, will set the broad trajectory for public spending over the course of the current parliament. The government has made a commitment to establishing a new multi-year settlement for local government funding, but there is not clarity at this stage on the level of funding that will be set. It is expected that the multi-year settlement will begin in 2026, following the comprehensive spending review

2. KING'S SPEECH

- 2.1 The King's Speech set out a legislative package of 40 bills that the government intends to pass into law in the course of the current parliamentary session. It has been noted that this is the highest number of bills set out in a King's or Queen's Speech since 2005.
- 2.2 Several of the bills in the King's Speech correspond to the government's missions, noted above. These include the Planning and Infrastructure Bill, the Great British Energy Bill, and the Crime and Policing Bill.
- 2.3 Two of the 40 bills have been carried over from the previous parliamentary session. These are the Holocaust Memorial bill, to allow for the building of a holocaust memorial and learning centre in Victoria Tower Gardens in Westminster, and the High Speed Rail (Crewe to Manchester) Bill. Four of the 40 bills were introduced by the previous government but were not carried over, meaning that the legislative process will begin again for these bills. These include the Football Governance Bill, to establish an independent football regulator, the Tobacco and Vapes Bill, to ban smoking for those born after 2008 and prevent the availability of vapes for children, the Renters' Rights Bill, to reform the rental market and abolish Section 21 'no fault' evictions, and the Arbitration Bill, to reform arbitration laws in England and Wales.
- 2.4 There is limited information available publicly about the detailed contents of the legislation proposed in the King's Speech. The government has published a briefing alongside the text of the King's Speech which summarises the main provisions of each bill. The information presented in this paper is drawn from that briefing and public remarks by Ministers. The detailed contents of each bill will become available when each is brought before parliament.
- 2.5 The full list of bills, with their main provisions and a summary of likely implications for Camden, is set out in Appendix 1. Drawing from this list, the bills with the most significant implications for Camden that the Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee may wish to remain aware of and discuss are set out below. It should be noted that the implications of most of these bills relate to Council services that come within the terms of reference of other scrutiny committees. However, the monitoring of legislative developments and development of Camden's approach to working in partnership with the government and the local government sector around them is a corporate function and one that is within the terms of reference of the Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee.
 - 2.5.1 The Planning and Infrastructure Bill. The purpose of this bill is to accelerate housebuilding and infrastructure delivery through reforms to the planning system. Provisions in the bill include simplification of the consenting process for major infrastructure, reforms to compulsory purchase compensation to facilitate regeneration and development, and establishment of financial mechanisms to fund nature recovery from the proceeds of development. This bill will have implications for Camden's Planning, Regeneration, and Development services. Some measures, including reform of compulsory purchase orders, may facilitate regeneration and development schemes. Other measures may

accelerate delivery of infrastructure and housing developments in Camden's planning pipeline.

- 2.5.2 The Employment Rights Bill. The purpose of this bill is to provide additional rights and protections to workers. Provisions include extension of rights to sick pay and flexible working, protection from unfair dismissal for all workers from the start of their employment, and protection from 'fire and rehire' practices. The bill will also provide for the banning of 'exploitative' zero hours contracts, the establishment of a Fair Work Agency to enforce employment rights, and the establishment of a fair pay agreement in the adult social care sector. The bill will likely have implications for Camden as an employer, particularly with regard to Adult Social Care staff who will be covered by the fair pay agreement.
- 2.5.3 The Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill. The purpose of this bill is to tackle organised immigration crime and address inefficiencies in the asylum and immigration systems. The main provisions include creation of a Border Security Command, clearing the backlog of asylum applications, and introducing new efficiencies in the asylum system. There may be implications for Camden associated with the government's intention to clear the backlog of asylum applications, wherein quick processing of claims may result in greater numbers of people who have been accommodated in the borough by the Home Office coming forward to the Council for housing advice. There may therefore be implications for Camden's Housing Options and Rough Sleeping services.
- 2.5.4 The Crime and Policing Bill. This purpose of this bill is to reform aspects of policing in alignment with the safety mission, noted at paragraph 1.3.3. The main provisions of the bill will be an increase in neighbourhood policing presence, an increase in capability within police forces to respond to domestic violence and abuse (DVA), rape, and other sexual offences, introduction of new 'Respect Orders' to tackle persistent anti-social behaviour, and creation of a new duty for local partners to co-operate to tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB). For Camden, a focus on tackling anti-social behaviour is likely to require closer working between the Metropolitan Police and Council services, while enforcement of Respect Orders may have consequences for community cohesion and perceptions of safety. An increase in capability within police forces to respond to DVA, rape, and other sexual offences may have implications for Camden's goals around tackling violence against women and girls.
- 2.5.5 The Children's Wellbeing Bill. The purpose of this bill is to establish a range of measures in alignment with the opportunity mission, noted at paragraph 1.3.4. These include establishment of breakfast clubs in every primary school, limiting the number of branded school uniform items that a school can require, creating duties for local authorities to have and maintain Children Not in School registers and provide appropriate support to home-schooling parents, requiring all schools to teach the national curriculum, and requiring all schools to cooperate with local authorities on school admissions, inclusion of pupils with special education needs and disabilities (SEND), and place planning.

New duties introduced in this bill are likely to require resources for Camden to deliver, while measures on breakfast clubs and school uniforms are likely to reduce the cost of living for families in Camden for whom these are cost pressures.

- 2.5.6 The Renters' Right Bill. The purpose of this bill is to strengthen the rights of tenants in the private rented sector. The main provisions of the bill will be abolition of Section 21 'no fault' evictions, application of a decent homes standard to the private rented sector, introduction of new requirements for landlords to make properties safe when hazards are identified and strengthened investigatory and enforcement powers for local authorities. This package of measures may impact conditions in Camden's private rented sector and may alleviate pressure to some extent on Camden's homelessness prevention service.
- 2.5.7 The Mental Health Bill. The purpose of this bill is to improve autonomy and dignity for people detained under the Mental Health Act 1983. The main provisions of this bill will act to limit the conditions under which people may be detained or remain detained and to strengthen the voice of patients in decisions about their care. The bill will have implications for how Camden's safeguarding services and partner services' work with residents living with severe mental health conditions.
- 2.6 Other bills are likely to have significant implications for local government as a sector. These include:
 - 2.6.1 The Budget Responsibility Bill. This bill will introduce a 'fiscal lock' which will ensure any Government making significant tax and spending changes will be subject to an independent assessment by the Office for Budget Responsibility. This may have implications for the local government finance settlement or future spending commitments relevant to the sector.
 - 2.6.2 The English Devolution Bill. The purpose of this bill will be to establish a new framework for devolution in England, within which local leaders will have greater powers over levers of economic growth, including strategic planning, transport, skills, and employment support. The bill will simplify the process for securing these powers at a local level and require local authorities to produce Local Growth Plans.
- 2.7 The Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the contents of the King's Speech and their implications.

3. ENGAGEMENT WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

- 3.1 Camden has engaged constructively with national governments of all parties on issues relevant to and affecting Camden citizens, businesses and communities. We work closely with London Councils as the regional representative body for London Boroughs, with the Mayor and the Greater London Assembly (GLA) and with the Local Government Association as the national representative body, on issues relevant to both Camden and the sector.

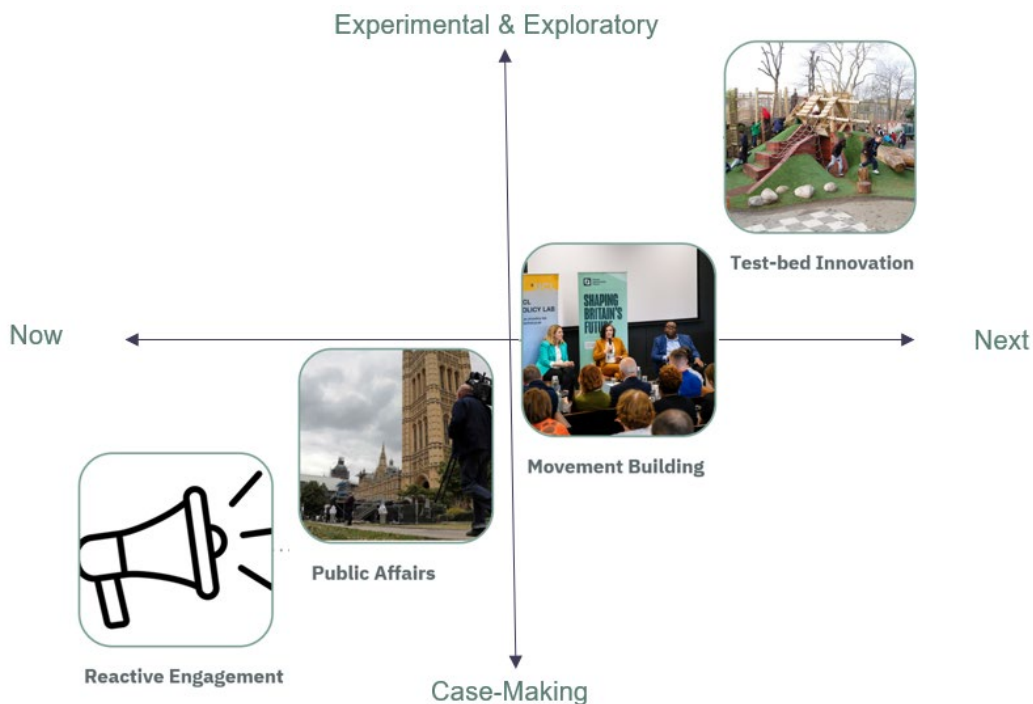
- 3.2 We have engaged with Government to provide Ministerial visits, briefings and insight on local delivery as necessary. Some examples of Camden engagement with Government include:
- Camden has worked with successive governments on plans for High Speed 2 (HS2) and Euston, engaging constructively to represent Camden residents, ensure that plans for HS2 and Euston are informed by a clear understanding of their potential impacts for Camden, and secure mitigations and redress for Camden residents affected by the scheme.
 - Through the Covid-19 pandemic, Camden worked with the Department for Health and Social Care and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC), and through 2021.
 - In 2022 Camden worked closely with the Home Office to ensure appropriate arrangements for accommodating refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine in Camden.
 - Camden has engaged constructively with DLUHC on plans to establish and operationalise an Office for Local Government
 - Camden has secured a position with the Department for Education (DfE) as a Sector-Led Improvement Partner for Children’s Social Care, and we have supported wide-ranging engagement with the DfE on our model of early years prevention and early intervention.
- 3.3 Successful engagement with national government has often been managed by Camden staff with extensive professional experience, expertise in the relevant subject matter, and dense networks within their sector. Camden also benefits from strong working relationships with the Local Government Association (LGA) and London Councils and an ability to draw on these organisations’ specialisms in methods of engagement such as parliamentary affairs.
- 3.4 The King’s Speech indicates that there is likely to be a significant amount of policy change over the next year at a national level, as new legislation is enacted. There will be value, in terms of the deliverability and impact of policy, in this change being informed by voices from local government.
- 3.5 The report of Camden’s Peer Review, undertaken in January 2020, noted Camden’s role in advocating for national policy change, drawing on the organisation’s insight into the challenges faced by Camden residents and those associated with public service delivery. The report noted that “the council is at the cutting edge of innovation” and recommended that it “could play a more visible role in developing answers to the wicked issues facing the public sector”.
- 3.6 Camden’s approach draws on insight gained about our services and our communities through means including the Insight, Learning and Impact reports, the most recent of which was presented to the Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee in July 2024, and work to build local partnerships and engage people who live and work in Camden in participatory activities such as citizen assemblies.
- 3.7 We have intentionally built relationships with policy actors to exercise influence more effectively, in partnership with organisations with

complementary skills, capabilities, relationships, and public voice. Camden has particularly strong relationships with University College London (UCL) and with Leeds City Council, with whom Camden has worked closely for several years.

- 3.8 As a Sector-Led Improvement Partner for children's social care, Camden also has national reach in terms of influence on practice in children's services. This is complemented and strengthened Camden's long-term commitment to early intervention and prevention and the recent establishment of the organisation's Centre for Relational Practice.
- 3.9 Camden also has regional and national reach through officers' positions in professional networks. These include the Chief Executive's position on London Councils' Self-Improvement Board and as welfare policy lead for CELC (Chief Executives of London Councils), the Executive Director of Adults and Health's position as Vice President of the Association of Directors of Adults Social Services, and the Executive Director of Corporate Services' lead roles on the climate emergency and violence against women and girls with London Councils and position as Vice Chair of the Society of London Treasurers' London Financial Advisory Committee.
- 3.10 The framework for considering engagement opportunities in Camden has two parts: engagement for 'now' and engagement for 'next'. Engagement for 'now' encompasses immediate asks that address or relate to immediate pressures and issues that may impact Camden services and residents. Activity to develop and communicate positions on HS2, local government finance, and the housing crisis are examples of how we might seek to shape our current operating context. Approaches for this kind of influencing include:
- Reactive engagement Opportunity-led communication of specific agreed asks to government, for instance via consultation responses or in collaboration with sector bodies such as the LGA or London Councils.
 - Public affairs: Pro-actively seeking to shape and lead opinion on policy challenges and public service reform via public communications, working with other local authorities and partners;
- 3.11 Engagement for 'next' encompasses long-term cases for systemic reform. Approaches for this kind of influencing include:
- Network building: Building relationships and pro-actively seeking and securing opportunities to work with influential organisations, including think tanks, charities, and other local authorities.
 - Test-bed Innovation: Building strategic cases for change by exploring how system changes could produce more effective public services and better outcomes for communities. Working in partnership with previous governments, Camden has been a test bed for innovation initiatives in areas including homelessness and education.



3.12 The chart below illustrates the ‘engagement for now’ and ‘engagement for next’ framework. It plots the four approaches noted above against an axis of ‘case-making’ to ‘experimental and exploratory’. This axis can be understood as different modes of engagement, ranging from making cases for clearly defined asks to building evidence for new approaches through experimentation. The chart demonstrates how the four approaches may support Camden to engage in ways that range across this axis, with the ‘reactive engagement’ and ‘public affairs’ approaches having a bias towards engagement for now and ‘movement building’ and ‘test-bed innovation’ having a bias towards engagement for next.



3.13 The Resources and Corporate Performance Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider Camden’s strategic approach to engaging the government working with the wider local government sector, and the wider policymaking landscape in the context of the announcements made at the King’s Speech.

4. LEGAL COMMENTS OF THE BOROUGH SOLICITOR

4.1. This report sets out a summary of the legislative programme announced by the government at the King’s Speech. A Bill is a proposal for a new law, or a proposal to change an existing law, presented for debate before Parliament. A Bill can start in the Commons or the Lords and must be approved in the same form by both Houses before becoming an Act of Parliament. It will be

necessary to track the Bills through the parliamentary process and any amendments thereto to ascertain their precise impact and what legislation is ultimately passed.

5. FINANCE COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

- 5.1. The Director of Finance has been consulted on this report and has no additional comments.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are no proposals with environmental implications made in this report.

REPORT ENDS