



Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 30 April 2015 at 7.00 pm

Conference Hall - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,
Wembley, HA9 0FJ

Membership:

Members

Councillors:

A Choudry (Chair)
Colwill (Vice-Chair)
Allie
Daly
W Mitchell Murray
Oladapo
Shahzad
Southwood

Co-opted Members

Ms Christine Cargill
Mr Alloysius Frederick
Mrs Hawra Imame
Dr J Levison
Vacancy
Vacancy

Substitute Members

Councillors:

Agha, J Mitchell Murray, Nerva, RS Patel, Ketan Sheth,
Stopp and Thomas

Councillors:

Kansagra

Observers

Ms J Cooper
Mrs L Gouldbourne
Ms C Jolinon
Brent Youth Parliament representatives

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The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting

Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members.

Item	Page
1 Declarations of interests	
Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, any relevant financial or other interest in the items on this agenda.	
2 Deputations (if any)	
3 Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 10
4 Matters arising	
5 Future Commissioning intentions of Brent Clinical Commissioning Group	11 - 20
This report sets out the commissioning intentions of Brent Clinical Commissioning Group with regard to local primary care and acute service for the coming period.	
Members of the Scrutiny Committee are invited to comment on the CCG's commissioning intentions for 2015/16.	
6 Environmental Sustainability Agenda	21 - 28
This report provides Scrutiny Members with a summary of the work undertaken across key service areas to address the issue of sustainability.	
7 Use of Pupil Premium Grant Scrutiny Task group	29 - 76
The purpose of the Pupil Premium Scrutiny task group is to focus on analysing the current use of the Pupil Premium Grant, Understanding the attainment gaps, the outcomes which are being achieved in comparison with national performance and to promote best practice among Brent schools.	
8 Scrutiny Annual Report 2014/15	77 - 108
The Annual Scrutiny report is a summary of the work conducted by the	

Scrutiny function throughout the year. This includes task group work, questions and suggestions made by the committee. The 2014-15 report also provides an update on the impact made by the scrutiny task groups work in the previous and current year.

9 Equalities and HR Policies and Practices Review and draft Action Plan 109 - 138

The review was led by Cllr Michael Pavey, Deputy Leader of the Council and was undertaken between October 2014 and January 2015. The report is a wide ranging review of staffing matters and HR policies and practices within the Council. The methodology consisted of scrutinising documents and policies, discussions with managers and staff, and was supported by the Local Government Association and other external experts in order to ensure objectivity and fairness. The review is supported by a draft Action Plan which sets out the actions that the council will take to implement the findings.

10 Scrutiny Forward Plan 139 - 140

11 Any other urgent business

Notice of items to be raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Democratic Services Manager or his representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 64.

Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 16 June 2015



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- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public.



MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE Wednesday 11 March 2015 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor A Choudry (Chair), Councillor Colwill (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Allie, J Mitchell Murray, W Mitchell Murray, Shahzad and Southwood, together with Mr Alloysius Frederick and Dr J Levison, and appointed observer, Lesley Gouldbourne

Also Present: Councillors S Choudhary, Collier, Filson and McLennan (Lead Member for Regeneration and Housing)

Apologies were received from: Councillors Oladapo, Co-opted Member Ms Christine Cargill and appointed observers

1. Declarations of interests

None declared at this stage of the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 February 2015

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 February 2015 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters arising

None.

4. Update on Community Access Strategy

Margaret Read (Operational Director - Brent Customer Services, Regeneration and Growth) introduced the report and advised members that the Community Access Strategy had been agreed at Cabinet on 15 October 2014. She stated that the strategy recognised the significant challenges, including financial, that the council faced and it was not feasible for services to continue to be provided in the way they currently were. Members heard that the strategy focused on accessing services in different ways, such as increasing access through digital channels, whilst freeing up resources to target customers who needed a more personalised approach. Margaret Read then drew members' attention to the key principles underpinning the delivery of the Customer Access Strategy that supported the wider aims of the Brent Borough Plan, corporate strategic objectives and the Community Access Strategy.

Margaret Read informed the committee that the Community Access Strategy would be achieved through a programme of projects that were overseen by the One Council Board, with the four working streams in progress being:

- Improving telephony to ensure residents experience a consistently good response
- Channel shift – improving the digital offer to residents so that where they can self serve, it is easy and convenient to do so
- Modernising face to face contact to support changing access arrangements, in particular providing assistance to residents who may need help to self serve
- Thematic reviews – to redesign the way in which services, working with partners and the Voluntary and Community Sector and joining up service delivery so that individual and community needs are better met.

Margaret Read then provided members of an update on achievements and progress with each of the four working streams to date and in respect of channel shift, she advised that a new Customer Portal was due to go live in July 2015 that would include an increased number of services offered through this channel. She stated that it was recognised that some service areas needed to improve and it was important that services were joined up in a way that made sense to residents.

During members' discussions, the multicultural nature of the borough was highlighted and it was enquired whether this had been taken into account, particularly as English was not the first language for a number of residents. It was asked whether lessons had been learnt from previous changes to services, such as parking and what was the level of savings expected from delivering the strategy. A member commented that many residents had no access to a computer and preferred to use the telephone, however he asked what steps were being taken to prevent customers being misdirected to the wrong department. Another member commented on the importance of communicating to residents that services could be accessed in a number of different ways and enquired whether residents were advised about things such as creating and changing sound passwords and was their data protected. In addition, another member asked if the new Customer Portal offered a facility to create a new password when the current one had been forgotten. It was asked whether help and advice was available to older people to help them access and use services digitally.

A member enquired whether the new Customer Portal would be tested with a variety of residents, including those with disabilities, prior to its launch. Another member asked whether the testing would be undertaken borough wide. She commented that the triage system had worked well to date and asked whether there was training for staff in dealing with particularly complex issues. She also asked what would be ideal way in which residents would describe the service they had experienced as far as the council was concerned.

A member sought further information on what service areas had been underperforming and how was misdirecting of calls by the switchboard being monitored or picked up. In terms of calls reported as misdirected, he asked if this was formally recorded. He commented whether there a danger of making the council too remote from the community by shifting access via IT and telephony channels and removing opportunities for direct contact with residents. Another

member enquired how customer and staff feedback was followed up and she suggested that the committee receive an annual report on customer feedback and information on dropped and missed calls, as well as information on how the triage service was performing. A member asked what was the target for answering calls and also how long was information on customers kept and was it sold to external organisations. Another member stated that it was important to remove jargon to make it easier for residents to understand what was being offered and that there should also be consistency of language. It was also suggested that there needed to be better signage from the Civic Centre car park to the reception area.

With the approval of the Chair, Councillor S Choudhary addressed the committee. Councillor S Choudhary remarked that around 20% to 30% of telephone calls were dealt with by Serco on behalf of the council and that it was frustrating that the council was being blamed for misdirected or dropped calls when it was not necessarily handling them. The Chair also invited Councillor Collier to address the committee. Councillor Collier asked if there was information available on the increase in traffic to the council's website, the percentage of dropped calls and the average length of time before the call was dropped and how this compared with other local authorities and similar sized organisations.

In reply to the issues raised, Margaret Read emphasised that the purpose of the strategy was to shift more access online, however no other access channels would be closed down. In respect of the move to shift parking to a mainly online service, a number of lessons had been learnt and it had been recognised that the online service had not been sufficiently user friendly and lacked the ability to support and help customers. Margaret Read confirmed that the new Customer Portal would be tested with residents across the borough before it went live and the lessons learnt from previous initiatives would help to ensure that residents had a good experience in using it. The committee heard that there would initially be a 'soft' launch of the Customer Portal to allow time to ensure that everything was working properly, before a full public launch. In addition, workshops would be offered to residents on how to use the Customer Portal and there would also be information available at libraries and at Brent Connects Forums on it. Customer Services were also liaising with the Head of Equality to ensure that the Customer Portal would meet the needs of those with disabilities. Margaret Read advised that IT and specialist external organisations had assisted to ensure customer confidentiality and that a password reminder facility was available that would be securely supplied through a series of security questions and sent to the resident's e-mail address.

Turning to telephone calls, Margaret Read advised that the switchboard took around 20,000 call a month, with the vast majority of calls correctly routed. Misrouting was monitored through feedback from residents and staff and she encouraged members and customers to report any instances of misrouting so that the matter could be looked in to and corrected and there was also an e-mail address where complaints of this nature could be made. Members heard that there were occasions when calls had been routed correctly, but the relevant extension number had not been answered. Margaret Read informed the committee that Automated Call Distribution (ACD) had increased its call answering rate from 80% to 90% and was performing well, although non ACD call rates were around 60%. There were pockets of underperformance across the council in telephone responses and these were being looked at. The committee heard that Serco were contracted to operate some services on behalf of the council, however any

complaints should be directed to the council. Members noted that the Customer Promise set out specific targets in responding to telephone calls, e-mails and letters. Margaret Read agreed to provide figures on the percentage of calls dropped, the average time the call took before it was dropped and to provide comparisons with other organisations on this.

Margaret Read advised that the triage service had been in operation for around eight weeks and was staffed by seven officers who had received cross training to enable them to handle a range of enquiries concerning housing, council tax, benefits and employment. Margaret Read explained that objective of the strategy was to ensure that residents felt that they had received an excellent experience of the service they had received. She stated that the Customer Services Centre was having to deliver difficult messages about how the way services were changing, particularly in respect of housing. An action plan had also been put in place to ensure mutual respect between customers and staff and for staff to convey difficult messages and staff had benefitted from training involving actors and role play.

Margaret Read advised that under data protection laws, the council could not pass on customer information to external organisations. She advised that retention of customer information was subject to Information Commissioner standards, with the length of retention depending on the type of information held and she agreed to provide further information to Councillor Colwill on this matter. Margaret Read advised that future reports to the committee could include more details on feedback about services, including information received from Focus Group meetings, exit surveys and benchmarking and comparing residents' views on an annual basis. She also agreed to look at ways of improving signage from the Civic Centre car park to the reception.

A member expressed disappointment that the relevant Lead Member, or the Leader in their absence, had not attended to respond to questions from the committee on this item. Peter Gadsdon (Operational Director – ICT, Finance and IT) acknowledged this point and would ensure that the relevant lead members were invited for future meetings.

The Chair requested an update on this item for the December 2015 Scrutiny Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

that the progress being made in implementing the aims of the new Community Access Strategy be noted.

5. **Housing pressures in Brent**

Jon Lloyd-Owen (Operational Director – Housing and Employment, Regeneration and Growth) presented the report and began by highlighting the significant population growth in the borough between the 2001 and 2011 Census exercises, in line with other London boroughs. In particular, there had been a marked increase in average family size and the numbers of children and this had led an increase in demand for homes in Brent. The demand increase, coupled with rising rents and prices, meant that for many housing was becoming increasingly unaffordable in the borough. Jon Lloyd-Owen advised that there had also been a large increase in the

amount of housing that was privately rented, rising from just over 17% in 2001, to around 32% now, whilst the proportion of social housing had remained around the same. House prices in Brent had continued to rise between December 2013 and December 2014 and this had contributed to the decline in the number of owner occupiers in the borough.

Jon Lloyd-Owen advised that homelessness applications and acceptances had been rising across London and this was expected to continue, with Brent receiving around 50 applications a week and it was anticipated that there would be around 700 applications for the year. Due to the high levels of homelessness and limited social housing, Jon Lloyd-Owen advised that Brent had the highest number of households in temporary accommodation than any other authority. Furthermore, Housing Benefit restrictions and rising rents had limited the council's ability to secure temporary accommodation in the borough, meaning increased reliance to seek properties in other London boroughs or further afield. Whilst the private rented sector played an important role in providing accommodation, demand helped increase rents and there had been an increase in multiple occupation, overcrowding and in some cases residents living in "beds in sheds". Jon Lloyd-Owen advised that to address this, the council supported the use of voluntary accreditation schemes for landlords and agents, whilst an additional licensing scheme requiring all properties let as houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) to be licensed had been introduced on 1 January 2015.

Jon Lloyd-Owen informed members that the welfare reform had raised critical issues that had impacted significantly on Brent residents and drove a number of pressures in the housing market. The council had set up a joint team with staff from Housing Needs and Revenue and Benefits working with Job Centre Plus and Brent Citizens' Advice Bureau to provide early stage support to mitigate the impact of the welfare reforms on Brent households. Members heard that the Overall Benefit Cap had led to 1,173 live cases being affected by it as of the end of January 2015 and the average rent in the borough was significantly more than the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates for one, two, three and four bedroom properties. In order to tackle the housing issues, Jon Lloyd-Owen advised that local planning policy included plans for at least 22,000 homes between 2007 and 2026, of which 50% would be affordable housing. The Housing Strategy had also set a target of 5,000 affordable rent and low cost home ownership properties by 2019.

At this stage, Councillor Shahzad informed the committee that he managed two properties in the borough, however he did not regard this as a prejudicial interest and remained present to consider this item and participate in discussion.

During discussion, members welcomed the Lead Member for Regeneration and Housing in introducing the additional licensing scheme. A member expressed concerns about overcrowding and whether properties met Building Regulations and how was this checked. She also stressed the importance of communicating positive news about housing, such as the licensing scheme and publicising where enforcement had taken place. Another member also welcomed the licensing scheme and stated that the council and landlords should work together more closely to address homelessness and landlords should not be put off by what the council was trying to achieve. The committee asked how residents were informed about the licensing scheme and how many properties were available in the borough in the private rented sector. A member queried how many staff carried out

enforcement in respect of residential properties and welcomed the appointment of additional staff for this. He sought views on whether the LHA would reduce the choices and quality of accommodation of those on lower incomes or social housing tenants because of demand for private sector rented property. The member asked what the long term timeframe was for addressing this issue and were intermediate market rents helping. He also asked whether housing the less well off outside of the borough would risk changing the profile of Brent and by such action was the council failing this group. The committee queried who was responsible for land and property purchased outside the borough and what were the legal implications of this. It was asked what happened to the proceeds of any sale of property or land in Brent.

A member commented that there was a considerable amount of empty properties in the borough that could be obtained to help with housing, whilst there was also a number of pockets of land and sites available too, such as the Unisys building in Stonebridge Park, and more effort should be made to make use of these. He also stated that issue of extensions in rear gardens needed to be investigated more. Another member queried whether information held on landlords was confidential and commented that it was regretful that the large housing stock the council had in the 1980s had been eroded by selling a significant proportion to housing associations at lower cost over the past few decades. He added that he felt that the council's Pension Fund should invest more in housing.

With the approval of the Chair, Councillor Filson addressed the committee. Councillor Filson stated that the council was not receiving full value from the sales of the Right to Buy scheme because of the discounts that buyers were receiving. In respect of "beds in sheds", he commented that if this was not spotted earlier, it became increasingly difficult to take enforcement action the longer the building remained and he suspected that number of buildings of this type were growing in the borough.

In response to the issues raised, Jon Lloyd-Owen advised that overcrowding in the borough had increased as a result of the welfare reforms and some landlords had exploited the situation, particularly as some residents were keen to remain in Brent. Reports of overcrowding would be investigated and each licensed property would be inspected. Jon Lloyd-Owen advised that the last housing condition survey had been undertaken in 2008, however under the licensing scheme some 15,000 to 20,000 properties would be inspected. Members heard that the Enforcement Team was presently quite small with six members, however funding through the licensing scheme would allow for expansion of the team for around ten additional staff. Jon Lloyd-Owen advised that the council retained responsibility for residents who were provided temporary accommodation outside of the borough. With regard to new social housing that was acquired through capital purchases outside the borough, this would be subject to an access agreement between the hosting local authority and the council, whilst acquiring an existing site would be subject to agreement and negotiation.

Jon Lloyd-Owen advised that there was no timeframe in place yet in terms of addressing the housing issues the borough faced, however a key principle of the Asset Management Strategy was to consider investments and acquisitions opportunities and this would help provide more clarity over timing. He informed the committee that it was hoped funding would in place by May/June 2015 for the

Alperton regeneration scheme which would include increasing the amount of intermediate market rent properties. Jon Lloyd-Owen confirmed that information on landlords was confidential.

Councillor McLennan (Lead Member for Regeneration and Housing) stated that the licensing scheme was designed to enable the council to take action against rogue or criminal landlords and not to penalise good landlords. Members heard that the Private Sector Housing Forum met quarterly to help inform both landlords and tenants. Councillor McLennan acknowledged that the welfare reforms had led to residents having to leave the borough and this was also happening across other London boroughs. Although every effort was made to ensure residents could continue to live in Brent, there were occasions when this was not possible and this particularly affected young working families, which was an issue that needed to be addressed.

In respect of provision of social housing and for those on lower incomes in the future, Councillor McLennan stated that a strategy would need to be devised to provide a number of different types of housing and it was possible that land could be bought and assets created to reduce costs. The Asset Management Strategy would look at every asset the council had and consider what use could be made of it and Councillor McLennan stressed that a proactive approach would be needed. She confirmed that the proceeds of any sales would be reinvested in future developments. Councillor McLennan added that a large proportion of tenants who were evicted from properties were former looked after children and this was another issue that needed to be investigated.

The Chair requested an update on this item in six months' time, including details of the number of people who were leaving the borough.

RESOLVED:

that the report on housing pressures in Brent be noted.

6. Unemployment and Work Programme providers

The Chair introduced the item and expressed on behalf of the committee its disappointment that representatives from two of the Work Programme providers, Reed and CDG, had given their apologies for absence. He also added that not all the information requested by members on this item had been provided, particularly in relation to specific information on the most deprived areas of each ward. The Chair stated that he would write a letter to officers and Work Programme providers on behalf of the committee setting out what information they wanted.

The Chair then invited Lucy Carmichael (Operations Manager, Ingeus, a representative of one of the Work Programme providers, to give a presentation to members. Lucy Carmichael began by explaining that only non-confidential information could be provided at this time as a non disclosure agreement between the council and the Work Programme providers was yet to be agreed. Lucy Carmichael then gave a presentation to members setting out Ingeus' approach to the Work Programme and the initiatives it undertook to support a stronger community in Brent, including:

- Tackling unemployment
- Working with small and medium sized enterprises
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Partnership working

Lucy Carmichael informed members that Ingeus staff undertook a number of roles to help Brent residents, including employment advisers, administrators, group facilitators, physical health advisers, mental health advisers and employer partnership coordinators. Amongst the partners Ingeus worked with included Clarion, who helped support clients who are deaf or hard of hearing. Lucy Carmichael then explained how the service it offered worked from the beginning to the end of the process and around 70% of the income Ingeus received came from after clients had gained employment. Members were also informed about the Training, Knowledge and Opportunities (TKO) programme, an innovative initiative set up by Ingeus.

During members' discussion, the committee asked if Ingeus were successful in obtaining employment for its clients. A member requested that the success of the Work Programme providers be demonstrated in a measurable way and he asked in what ways could the council help in getting residents into long term employment. Another member, in noting that Ingeus worked with a number of colleges, asked why there appeared to be no links with secondary schools and could this be looked at and he also asked whether there was any support to develop 'soft skills.' A member queried what the biggest skills gap and mismatch in the borough were and were there efforts to achieve a balance between obtaining what would be perceived as good jobs for clients as opposed to jobs where there was a demand for them to be filled. She also asked whether any jobs were sub-contracted and to who and was there a working relationship with organisations in the community and voluntary sector.

A member commented that he had worked with voluntary organisations for a number of years and stated that he had observed that a number of children who had left school early or who had not performed well significantly lacked the skills and knowledge of what employers expected from them and would struggle with the "culture of work" concept. He also enquired whether any participants on the Work Programme were on zero hour contracts. Another member stated that the council did not support zero hours contracts and any instances of Work Programme clients being put on such a contract should be investigated. A member commented that there were a number of young people who needed help in acquiring the necessary skills for employment.

In reply to the issues raised, Lucy Carmichael advised that Ingeus had targets set for getting their clients into employment and that this was the only way it received income and this helped drive it to be successful in its objectives. She added that it was also important for her organisation to demonstrate its success for its own reputation. Members heard that staffs' emotional intelligence was also assessed so that they could manage complicated cases. Lucy Carmichael informed the committee that her organisation did teach soft skills, such as work etiquette and the expectations of employers, to clients, and in-house English language training was also available. Members noted that those under 18 year olds were not eligible for the Work Programme. Lucy Carmichael advised that sustainability was one area which needed strengthening in terms of employment and skills, however an

example of an emerging industry in the borough was the care industry which was also sustainable and this was an area where training was being focused. Members heard that personality skills in the care industry were more important than experience and this would help younger people find work in this area.

Lucy Carmichael stated that it was ultimately up to the individual as to what kind of work they wanted and an action plan would be tailored to their desires and needs. However, in some instances there may be a need to take a job as a stepping stone to their ultimately desired job. Members heard that there were some sub-contractors involved in the Work Programme who provided specialist provision and an example of this was Brent Mind. Some community and voluntary sector organisations were also involved in sign posting and helping clients gain confidence. The committee heard that it was likely that some clients may be on zero hours contracts and their employment advisers would be aware of this. Lucy Carmichael also welcomed members to visit Ingeus's offices if they felt this would be of benefit.

The Chair emphasised the importance of the non disclosure agreement being reached between the Work Programme providers and the council. He added that it would be useful if there could be more information on how the council could assist Work Programme providers and their clients and that there needed to be a more joined up approach. He requested that the committee receive updates on unemployment levels and Work Programme providers on a quarterly basis.

RESOLVED:

that the report on unemployment levels in Brent and the Work Programme be noted.

7. Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan

Members had before them the Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan. Councillor Colwill requested that the expansion of Byron Court Primary School and Uxendon Manor Primary School be added to the Forward Plan, in particular to consider their respective travel plans. There was also discussion amongst members about what officers would attend in respect of the equalities and HR practices report on 30 April and the committee would seek further advice in respect of this. A member also commented that members should be give more time to raise questions on agenda items rather than too much time being spent on the presenting of them.

The Chair welcomed members to send any other suggestions on the Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan to Cathy Tyson (Head of Policy and Scrutiny, Assistant Chief Executive's Service) or himself.

8. Any other urgent business

None.

The meeting closed at 9.35 pm

A CHOUDRY
Chair

Report to: Brent Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC)

Report from: NHS Brent CCG

Date of meeting: 30 April 2015

Re: **CCG Commissioning Intentions**

1. Purpose of the paper

1.1 The purpose of this briefing paper is to set out the CCG's commissioning intentions for 2015/16 within the context of the national and local planning environment that the CCG is operating within.

1.2 The report provides a summary of the commissioning intentions and the processes and engagement that has supported their development. A copy of the full commissioning intentions can be found at the CCG's website via the following link:

http://brentccg.nhs.uk/en/publications/cat_view/1-publications/12-plans-and-strategies/18-commissioning-intentions

2. The range of services provided

2.1 The CCG's statutory commissioning functions broadly include:

a) Commissioning community and secondary healthcare services (including mental health services) for:

- All patients registered with its Members; and
- All individuals who are resident within the London Borough of Brent who are not registered with a member GP practice of any Clinical Commissioning Group (e.g. unregistered);

b) Commissioning emergency care for anyone present in the London Borough of Brent

2.2 Brent CCG commissions a range of services to meet national performance requirements to provide equality and consistency of access to healthcare services in relation to key NHS Constitution pledges to improve:

- a) A&E waiting times to treatment (4 hours);
- b) Referral to treatment waiting times for non-urgent consultant led treatment (RRT);
- c) Cancer waits (2 weeks);
- d) Individual access to psychological therapies (IAPT);
- e) Dementia diagnosis;
- f) Diagnostics access/test waiting times;
- g) and a response to Winterbourne recommendations.

- 2.3 The commissioning intentions set out the CCG's intentions with regard to the range of services it has responsibility for commissioning across community and secondary care services, including:
- a) Urgent and emergency care including A&E, ambulance and out of hours
 - b) Healthcare services for people with mental health conditions including psychological therapies
 - c) Healthcare services for people with learning disabilities
 - d) Community health services
 - e) Maternity and newborn services (excluding neonatal intensive care)
 - f) Elective hospital care
 - g) Rehabilitation services
 - h) Speech and language therapy
 - i) Continence services
 - j) Older people's healthcare services
 - k) Healthcare services for children (mental and physical health)
 - l) Continuing healthcare
 - m) Abortion services
 - n) Infertility services
 - o) Wheelchair services
 - p) Home oxygen services
 - q) Treatment of infectious diseases
- 2.4 The intentions further set out how it will work collaboratively with NHS England to support improvements in primary care and ensure the continuous improvement of services it has responsibility for commissioning. Fundamentally, the CCG's commissioning intentions describe how it will achieve the shift of care to more community and out of hospital settings in line with its strategic aims.
- 2.5 Commissioning intentions serve as a notice to all providers of community and secondary about which services and the models of care that will be commissioned by NHS Brent CCG. The Commissioning Intentions provide a basis for robust engagement between NHS Brent CCG and its providers, and are intended to drive improved outcomes for patients, and transform the design and delivery of care, within the resources available.

3. Needs assessment informing Commissioning Intentions

- 3.1 Brent is the most densely populated outer London borough, with a population of 311,200 according to the 2011 census. The demographic is young and ethnically diverse, with 65% of its population from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds; being the most ethnically heterogeneous borough in the country. Over 65s are expected to grow at a faster pace than the population at large. Overall life expectancy is in line with the rest of London, though there are key health challenges within the borough as follows:
- a) Low birth weight in Brent in 2012 was (9%) which was worse than the national average (7.3%).
 - b) Poor oral health amongst children under five.
 - c) Childhood obesity: In Brent, 11% of reception year pupils were obese in 2012/13 and 24% of year 6 pupils were classified as obese. Childhood obesity is the single biggest predictor of adulthood obesity and can increase the risk factors for many clinical conditions throughout the person's whole life cycle.

- d) Adult obesity and diabetes: Obese and overweight adults put themselves at a greater risk of developing health conditions, such as type 2 Diabetes. Brent saw a 38% increase in the prevalence of diabetes between 2008/09 and 2012/13.
- e) Increasing rates of alcohol-related hospital admissions: Larger portion of the population in Brent are high risk drinkers (7.1%) compared to the national average (6.7%).
- f) Tuberculosis (TB): Rates in Brent are amongst the highest in the country. This represents a crude rate of 98.3 cases per 100,000/population compared to an England rate of 15.1 per 100,000/population.
- g) Cancer, Cardiovascular disease (CVD), and Chronic Respiratory Disease: These are the main causes of premature death in Brent but generally below the England average excepting CVD which also has a low prevalence which might indicate under diagnosis. These also reflect the variation in life expectancy across the borough.
- h) High levels of many long-term chronic conditions which are often related to poor lifestyles, relative deprivation and the ethnicity in the community.
- i) Mental Health: The prevalence of severe and enduring mental illness in Brent is 1.14% of the population which is above both the London and England average.
- j) Dementia: Projections suggest that there will be a 32% increase in the number of people over 65 with dementia. There are rising levels of dementia amongst older adults in line with the national trend.
- k) Adults with autism and learning disabilities: Between 2014 and 2030, the number of adults aged 18 to 64 with ASD in Brent is predicted to rise by 10%.
- l) Physical disability and impairment: By 2030, the number of people aged 18 to 64 who will have a moderate physical disability will increase by 12% from 2014.
- m) Hearing impairment: There are a high number of people living in Brent with hearing impairment under 75 and over 75. This is again prevalent in certain ethnicities and in areas of deprivation.

4. Financial planning and savings proposals

- 4.1 Our commissioning intentions take forward work progressed in 2014/15 and reflects how we will action proposals for priority areas within the context of the local health landscape we operate in. This includes a financially challenging health economy and a need to reshape provider settings of care to ensure delivery of sustainable, high quality services for the future, with less reliance on hospital care particularly for an ageing population with high prevalence of long term conditions.
- 4.2 To achieve this objective, Brent CCG will need to maintain and operate in a financially sustainable manner to plan and implement positive transformational health care for the local population, whilst retaining a beneficial financial balance that enables continued investment in local health services while ensuring local needs of the population are at the forefront of these planned changes.
- 4.3 QIPP is crucial to realising these intentions by sustaining a strong financial position in the medium term. We have ensured our initiatives are aligned to national and local priorities

as articulated within the development of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy and the overarching “Call to Action” for the NHS to make £30bn of efficiency savings by 2020/21, having a direct impact for the CCG at a local level with an underlying ‘flat-line’ in funding whilst demographic health pressures continue to rise.

- 4.4 Brent received the minimum level of growth awarded to CCGs in 14/15 (2.14%) and 15/16 (1.7%) due to being over the capitated target allocation level (i.e. assessed as 7.67% (£28m) over funded in 14/15).
- 4.5 The uplift of 2.14% in the 14/15 allocation and 1.7% in the 15/16 allocation will not keep pace with the estimated 3-4% per annum cost pressures that Brent CCG is expected to face due to local demand and cost growth. The impact of a reducing allocation (relative to demand) over the next few years needs to be mitigated through delivery of Out of Hospital strategies and the CCG’s savings and investment strategies.
- 4.6 As in previous years, the allocations guidance from NHS England confirms that commissioning organisations are required to set aside some of their funding for non-recurrent expenditure. NHS England has increased this requirement in 2014/15 to 2.5%, and it is envisaged that the Pan NWL-wide financial strategy will continue to support SaHF. In addition BHH collaborative financial arrangements are expected to continue.
- 4.7 Though Brent CCG is in a strong financial position during this period of substantial change, our intentions are to continue to invest in improving quality care and health outcomes for the population of Brent which is underpinned by the need to achieve year-on-year efficiency savings in areas of high spend and efficient use of services at a rate of 3% per annum to maintain a financial surplus that allows funding provision for care of individuals who need it most.
- 4.8 Target QIPP savings for 2015/16 include net efficiencies of £10.6m. Forecast modeling includes efficiencies from initiatives introduced in 2014/15 and brought forward to realise full year effect, in addition to new innovative schemes that are to be developed in the forthcoming financial year. QIPP schemes for 2015/16 are as follows:

2015/16 QIPP Schemes	
Planned Care	Outpatients at Lower Cost - Ophthalmology
	Outpatients at Lower Cost - Cardiology
	Gynaecology
	DMARD
	Endoscopy
	C2C Referral Management
	Circulation: BNP
	Referral Management
	Pathology - Diagnostics
	Acute Metrics
	Urology: Referral Criteria
	Spinal: Pathway Re-design
	Phlebotomy (2-12)
	Community ENT
	Ambulatory Care Pathways
Unscheduled Care	Whole Systems Phase 1 (BCF)
	Alcohol Admissions
	Anti-Coagulation
	Stroke: Early Supported Discharge

	Excess Bed Days
	Northwick Park Hospital UCC
	STARRS Stretch (BCF)
	Falls
	Delayed Transfers of Care (BCF)
	Mental Health Reduced Acute Admissions (BCF)
	NHS 111
Mental Health	Mental Health CNWL: Productivity
Continuing Healthcare	Mental Health Repatriation – Placement Efficiency Programme
	Continuing Healthcare: Review of cases
Community	Community ICO
Prescribing	Repeat Prescribing
	GP Prescribing
	Adult Malnutrition
Other	HIV: Review of Non-Secondary Care Services
	Commissioning Support

4.9 Recognising the financial challenge of our main local providers (LNWHT and Imperial) the CCG has reduced QIPP values and agreed additional funding to support transformational change to take place as part of 2015/16 contract negotiations.

4.10 As the CCG's annual contracting round reaches a stage of formalising contracts, final figures in relation to contract values, QIPP and investment sums remain a work in progress and to be confirmed.

5. Commissioning principles and priorities 2015/16

5.1 Brent CCG is currently in a strong position to radically improve health care outcomes and build on our effective health and social care partnerships. Our strength is in our member practices who have demonstrated their ability to effectively respond to the wide system changes that clinical commissioning has brought about. Brent CCG commissioning principles for 2015/16 remain to:

- a) Ensure that we demonstrate and evidence equality and consistency in access to services across Brent that continues to reduce health inequalities and improve health outcomes.
- b) Work with other commissioners where integrated commissioning will deliver innovative and effective solutions in line with commissioning strategies.
- c) Improve the uptake of preventative services and promote self-care while reducing mortality and morbidity resulting from poor long-term condition management.
- d) Ensuring appropriate use of commissioned services so that Brent CCG manages activity within the available budget.
- e) Transform services where new designs are required to improve quality and value for money.
- f) Demonstrate full compliance with the principles of patient choice.

- g) Ensure patients receive the right care, in the right setting by the most appropriately skilled clinician, which will improve the quality of care patients receive and reduce dependency on acute care.
- h) Provide a proportion of outpatient appointments in community settings, rather than in acute settings, at lower cost and higher quality, where it is clinically safe and cost effective to do so.
- i) Providing services designed to minimise inappropriate A&E attendances and non-elective admissions including initiatives such as urgent care centres, access to community beds, additional GP appointments and extending the range of Ambulatory Care Pathways.
- j) Commission services in a manner that interfaces effectively with GP networks.
- k) Continue to deliver patient and public engagement that ensures meaningful public involvement in commissioning.
- l) Commission care in line with health needs as identified within the Joint Service Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Joint Health & Well Being Strategy.

5.2 Key commissioning priorities for 2015/16 are:

- a) 7 day working in primary and social care.
- b) Supporting the establishment of GP provider entities in the form of localities which have become four networks across Brent.
- c) Commissioning out of hospital contracts at locality level, replacing practice level local enhanced services and ensuring wider population coverage.
- d) Increased coverage of a single GP IT system, namely EMIS Web across Brent.
- e) Establishment of a whole systems integrated care service as an early adopter with a joint commissioning approach with a view to starting in 2015/16.
- f) Negotiating contracts with key providers that incentivise the transformation of services and the movement of services out of hospital.

5.3 In detail, Brent CCG will aim to work with our provider market to achieve outcomes across primary and secondary care to achieve the following key outcomes:

- a) Acute & Primary Care
 - Work with our Local Trusts to ensure the delivery of national standards i.e. Referral to Treatment in (RTT) 18 weeks, A&E 95% of patients seen in 4 hours and for Cancer meeting national access and treatment targets.
 - Develop and implement new referral pathways with a Brent wide peer review system to ensure referrals are appropriate and improve the referral pathway for patients in several specialities including ENT, Gastro, Urology, T&O and Spinal.

- Deliver the QIPP and Investment programme for 15/16 by collaborative working across the local health economy and with partners.
 - Promote integration across services and agencies to truly improve outcomes for Brent residents including delivery of the Better Care Fund Initiatives and Integrated Care (Unplanned Care).
 - Implement the recommendations from the Community Beds Review (Unplanned Care).
 - Review STARRS service to maximise productivity and reduce hospital attendances/admissions/readmission. Implement the recommendations following the Ealing ICO review to deliver productivity improvements.
 - Continue the work to improve the treatment of Long term conditions e.g. Diabetes, building on the development of Brent's Integrated Diabetes Service which was launched in 2014.
 - Delivery of the various Better Care Fund schemes to reduce emergency admissions and reliance on institutional care commissioned by Adult Social Care Services.
 - Whole Systems Integrated Care – implement in shadow form a new model of care delivered by multi agency partners forming a team around a cluster of GP practices.
 - Cancer – all providers will be expected to meet the NICE, National CWT and London Model of Care standards during 2015/16. This will include access to diagnostics and implementation of the new NICE initiatives for 2015/16.
- b) Mental Health
- Working with relevant stakeholders to continue to promote self-care and self-management of conditions.
 - Invest in Individual Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) to maintain achievement of the national performance access target of 15% and recovery target of 50%.
 - Delivery of Better Care Fund schemes to reduce the need for urgent care arising from mental health crisis episodes.
- c) Community Services
- Improve the productivity and efficiency of current community service providers to ensure better quality and more reliable service provision for patients.
 - Implement the findings from a review of services undertaken by Baker Tilly in 2014 to ensure that community provision provides value for money and costs are benchmarked across similar providers.

6. Changes to priorities

6.1 From 2015/16 onwards there is a continued requirement to achieve improved quality and access to healthcare services for the population of Brent as local demand and growth places further pressure on primary and secondary care. The strategic objective remains to increase Out of Hospital provision and reduce inappropriate admissions into acute settings. To achieve this outcome, Brent CCG will:

a) Acute

- continue to work with our two major local providers for acute activity: London North West Healthcare Trust and Imperial. The merger of NWLHT with Ealing Hospitals in 2014 will have an impact on our contracts for 2015/16. LNWHHT remains a financially challenged organisation;
- continue to work with a wide range of other acute providers, including specialist hospitals from across London and the South East to ensure equity in standards and quality of care for Brent patients;
- continue to focus on reducing the numbers of patients attending Accident and Emergency and the resulting emergency admissions. A number of our schemes are designed to support this;
- continue to focus on reducing referrals to outpatients and moving more activity to community settings as appropriate. This approach supports the delivery of the Out of Hospital Strategy.

b) Primary Care

- continue to align with the North West London Primary Care Transformation Programme that forms part of the Shaping a Healthier Future (SaHF) structure;
- continue to support the emerging GP networks to enable them to coordinate care and enhance services provided in primary care;
- continue to provide extended opening hours at the conveniently located hubs to offer greater choice and access for patients;
- continue to develop the GP networks to provide out of hospital services where appropriate.

c) Community Services

- work with our community nursing service to develop collaborative approaches to service delivery leading to a more integrated model of service delivery;
- redesign community services as appropriate to deliver our Out of Hospital strategy.

d) Mental Health

- seek to achieve the productivity levels identified by NHS England in regard to Improved Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) and deliver the 15% prevalence target;
- continue to ensure patients are treated in the most appropriate setting through the Shifting Settings of Care Programme;
- work with our partners across North West London CCGs to procure CAMHS service (including for Learning Disability) and agree a urgent care pathway.


e) Voluntary & Third Sector

- continue to work with the voluntary and community groups in Brent to support early identification of people who would benefit from care navigation, lifestyle coaching and with a particular emphasis on self-directed care across a range of mental health and long term conditions;
- ensure that the voluntary and community groups are integrated within the CCG commissioning strategy and work streams;
- ensure that the development of provider markets includes voluntary and community organisations to provide for the ethnically diverse population of Brent;
- make effective use of the voluntary sector to support access and engagement from the hard to reach or seldom heard communities.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 NHS Brent CCG's commissioning intentions for 2015/16 are a comprehensive set of improvement goals for community and secondary services, designed to align with our strategic aims and objectives.
- 7.2 The CCG would welcome comments and the identification of areas for improvement within the commissioning intentions from the Brent Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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 Brent	<p>Scrutiny Committee 30 April 2015</p> <p>Report from Operational Director Community Services</p>
For Information	
Sustainability	

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Scrutiny Members with a summary of the work undertaken across key service areas to address the issue of sustainability.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the progress that is being made with respect to these areas of work.

3.0 Detail

Sustainability is a key factor in the development and provision of all our services, particularly those universal services that are customer facing and which have an impact on the look, feel and condition of our public spaces. The council no longer has a single co-ordinating team or strategy with respect to sustainability. Work to achieve a more sustainable Brent sits largely with separate service areas who manage their own operations to achieve greener outcomes. This report will consider five key areas:

- Transport and Travel
- Air Quality
- In-house Carbon Management
- Street Lighting and Parking
- Public Realm and Waste
- Parks and Biodiversity

Transport and Travel

- 3.1 The council promotes a variety of sustainable transport initiatives to support all transport users in making smarter travel choices. The use of car clubs in Brent has increased over the past few years and regular meetings are held with the two car club operators in Brent (Zipcar and City Car) to discuss opportunities to further increase the use. The council has electric vehicle charging points in the borough and is considering joining the Source London

contract which will benefit electric vehicle drivers across London as all charging points will be compatible.

- 3.2 The council encourages everyone living, working or studying in Brent to try cycling. We offer free cycle training to schools, groups and individuals and have funding to install cycle parking on streets and on residential estates. We also organise Safe Urban Driving courses, cyclist awareness training for HGV drivers.
- 3.3 The council's current active travel project incorporates many activities to inspire more people to participate in cycling and walking activities, these include cycling events for community and faith groups, a feasibility study for a cycle hub and/or cycle hire scheme, promotional materials and signs for walking routes.
- 3.4 The council supports schools and businesses with their travel plans and encourages them all to promote sustainable travel to and from work/school and for business travel. WestTrans provide support with the monitoring of work place travel plans and a toolkit is currently being developed as part of the active travel project to signpost businesses to assistance and the services that are available to promote sustainable travel. In addition, personal travel planning training will be made available for those businesses with the highest potential for modal shift.
- 3.5 School travel plan support is provided by the Safety and Travel Planning Team and is assessed using Transport for London's (TfL's) STARS accreditation scheme. All schools are encouraged to develop a travel plan and to participate in the related activities including WoW (walk to school once a week), cycle training and park and stride.
- 3.6 The council supports the use of public transport (bus and rail) throughout the borough by lobbying TfL and other operators for service and infrastructure improvements, both in response to complaints by residents and proactively to support regeneration across the borough.

Air Quality

- 3.7 Brent has levels of air pollution that are occasionally in breach of National Air Quality Standards¹. The pollutants of concern are nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM₁₀ and P_{2.5}). Many parts of the UK do not meet the National Air Quality Standard set for NO₂, some do not meet this for PM₁₀.
- 3.8 Both pollutants primarily come from products of combustion such as burning of fuel for energy and to power vehicles. Vehicle exhausts, boilers and power plants are significant contributors to local pollutant emissions.
- 3.9 Because particulate matter is very fine it can travel great distances, so there will be sources outside of Brent that have an impact on the air we breathe. Particulate Matter is also a production of friction, and comes from tyres, brake linings and waste transfer sites.

- 3.10 We measure PM10 and PM 2.5, 24 hours a day with monitoring stations in Harlesden, Stonebridge, and Neasden. We also have a network of 27 diffusion tubes measuring levels of NO2 across the borough.
- 3.11 The Environmental Act 2005 requires local authorities to declare Air Quality Management Area(s) (AQMA) for any part of the borough in which it appears that air quality standards are not being met.
- 3.12 Brent first declared AQMAs in 2001 for the pollutants nitrogen dioxide and particulates. The AQMA areas were extended in 2006 and now broadly encompass about two-thirds of the borough - everywhere except areas in the north of the borough that are not near a major road and a small area in the far eastern fringes of the borough, including part of Northwick Park and Sudbury wards.
- 3.13 Recent monitoring shows NO2 continues to exceed the standard and AQMA designation is still required.
- 3.14 The Air Quality Action Plan is the council's public account of the state of air quality in the borough and a five year plan for improvement - or at least to stop further deterioration. The existing plan is currently being reviewed and proposals for an updated plan will be presented to Cabinet in Autumn 2015.
- 3.15 Since the last Air Quality Action Plan scientific understanding of air quality has significantly improved. We now better understand the impact on health of NO2 and particulate matter, and also better understand the types of places and activities that expose people to pollution.
- 3.16 These changes in scientific understanding are helping us to develop a revised Air Quality Action Plan that will not just try to reduce emissions of pollutants, but also help people and communities to understand how they can reduce the risk of exposure to protect their health. Diesel exhaust has become a particular concern and in 2012 was classified as a known carcinogen. The new Air Quality Action Plan is also likely to have a greater focus on seeking to drive down the use of diesel as a fuel for vehicles.

Carbon Management

- 3.17 The Council's Carbon Management Programme aims to reduce CO2 emissions from the operational estate (excluding schools, housing and commercial properties) by 15 per cent over a 4 year period from 2014/5 to 2017/8.
- 3.18 In 2013/4, half of these emissions came from buildings, just under half (44 per cent) from street lighting with a further 6 per cent from transport (pool vehicles and mileage claims). The annual energy spend relating to this scope is £3.5 million with a further £317,000 on CRC carbon tax.
- 3.19 Progress is good and when the proposed project to fit LED technology to Brent's street lights is delivered by 2018, it is likely that the council will exceed the target. The majority of the savings will come from the disposal of sites vacated by the consolidation of staff into the Civic Centre. Further financial and environmental savings could be secured through work to optimise the operation of the Civic Centre which is currently estimated to account for 17

per cent of CO2 from the programme scope (38 per cent of the CO2 from the buildings scope). Improvement here is necessary if the council intends to seek BREEAM in Use accreditation.

Street Lighting and Parking

- 3.20 On 14th April 2015, the Cabinet endorsed the replacement of the borough's existing street lamps with modern Light Emitting Diode (LED) luminaires. The decision also agreed investment in a Central Management System (CMS), seeking to 'future proof' the LED investment.
- 3.21 Aside from the long-term savings in energy costs, a significant reduction in carbon emissions also forms a key part of the business case. The project would make a one-third contribution of at least 5% towards the Council's overall target of a 15% reduction in carbon emissions before March 2018. It is hoped that the additional investment in CMS technology will enable an even more ambitious target to be set.
- 3.22 The report also proposes that the council develop a new lighting strategy, specifically facilitated by the deployment of CMS technology, which seeks further energy and carbon savings whilst meeting the long-term lighting needs of the changing borough.
- 3.23 On 11th August 2014, the Council introduced a revised schedule of residents' parking permit charges. These have been designed to 'nudge' residents towards lower emission vehicles. Vehicles whose emissions fall into the lowest band qualify for free permits. Permit costs rise steadily in proportion to carbon emissions, peaking at £218 p.a. for vehicles producing the highest level of emissions. In addition, the costs of permits for second and third vehicles are more expensive in each band than the cost of a permit for a single vehicle.

Public Realm and Waste

- 3.24 Through Public Realm Contract, we are committed to achieving five key objectives with respect to sustainability:
1. To record data that establishes the carbon footprint of our public realm services.
 2. To procure our public realm services in a way that gives proper consideration to sustainability and environmental impact.
 3. To ensure our vehicle movements are organised as efficiently as possible to minimise fuel use and CO2 emissions.
 4. To reduce carbon emissions from our grounds maintenance operations by better organising our grass mowing rounds to reduce fuel use and emissions.
 5. To consider new and innovative equipment through the life of the Public Realm that improves sustainability. All means of reducing fuel consumption and using cleaner fuels in vehicles will be considered.
- 3.25 Effective and sustainable waste management is the key to improving our public realm. In 2011 the government published its Review of Waste Policy in England. This outlined the need for better waste management and resource efficiency across local authority areas. The emphasis of the review was on

councils facilitating voluntary behaviour change so that more environmentally sustainable behaviour is an easy lifestyle choice for everyone.

- 3.26 Supporting the process of maximising sustainability in the delivery of waste services is a cornerstone the recent legislative revision of the Waste Framework Directive 2011. This requires all waste collectors to undertake an analysis of their services in relation to the collection of four key materials; paper, glass, plastic and metal. Analysis is required to identify if these materials are being processed in accordance with the waste hierarchy and are producing materials which are of the highest quality and quantity for end re-processors. We have undertaken our own assessment and an evaluation of our compliance and that will support the waste collection activities set out in Public Realm Contract. These will be revised whenever these services are changed. It is the aim of this authority to process materials as near to the top of the waste hierarchy as possible, which means ensuring that prevention of waste is prioritised, followed by a commitment to reuse and then recycle as much household waste as possible.
- 3.27 Our Household Waste Collection Strategy changed the focus of our waste management to rethinking our attitudes towards waste and emphasising the importance of creating less waste. We are working towards ensuring that as a community we embrace the concept of One Planet Living so that the damaging impacts of waste management on climate change are minimised. It also clearly describes how successful waste management in Brent can only be achieved through shared responsibility, partnership working and an absolute commitment to achieving better compliance with respect to the national waste hierarchy.
- 3.28 The purpose of the waste hierarchy is to establish the best possible solution for the management of waste. The prevention of waste is the most effective method. Responsibility for this mainly rests with those who manufacture goods, particularly in creating less packaging for products in the first instance. However a responsibility firmly sits with consumers to purchase fewer products, to also look at the packaging that covers the items that they buy and to make better-informed purchasing choices generally.
- 3.29 The majority of materials that are collected sustainably within Brent fall within the third band of the waste hierarchy, i.e. in the 'recycling' category.
- 3.30 Two of the four main Public Realm Contract targets relate directly to improved sustainability:
1. **Residual Waste tonnages**
The Contract has annual residual waste disposal targets. If the Contractor doesn't achieve the reductions in tonnes of residual waste they will pay the full disposal costs for every tonne above their target. If the contractor beats their target, Brent will share any saving. This incentivises the contractor to implement the interventions that are needed to divert waste from landfill.
 2. **Carbon Emission Reduction**
A deduction of £15 will be made for each tonne of carbon emitted above the contract target. If they exceed their targets, the contractor will receive an incentive payment.

Parks and Biodiversity

- 3.30 There are many parks in Brent and more than 1,000 acres of public open space including Fryent Country Park. We design, build, and maintain all the parks and their features and consult on nature conservation.
- 3.31 It is generally accepted that good quality parks and open spaces are important for enhancing the quality of urban life. Quality green spaces have been shown to support the local economy, enhance physical and mental health, benefit children and young people, reduce crime and fear of crime, support social cohesion, aid movement between spaces, and protect biodiversity and the environment (ODPM, 2005).
- 3.32 The Sustainable Communities Strategy for Brent and our Corporate Strategy both identify the parks in the borough as vital assets contributing to the health, wellbeing and overall quality of life of people living, working or studying in the borough. As part of the Council's vision for Brent as green place", our Corporate Strategy seeks to:
- Maintain the quality of parks and open spaces and upgrade the current range of facilities available within them, and
 - Develop a programme of green activities such as tree planting, developing pocket parks" and other open spaces to improve access to open space for residents
- 3.33 Green spaces are known to improve local biodiversity. They are vitally important in helping us adapt to climate change through the planting and conservation of trees that provide shade from the sun. Proper consideration must be given to the type of planting and of our maintenance regimes so that we conserve water and provide floodplains. We seek to use methods that increase areas of meadows and wild flowers and use machinery with reduced carbon emissions. We will also prioritise the composting of our park waste.
- 3.34 The three cemeteries in Brent and both our burial grounds are recognised by the GLA as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). Sensitive grounds maintenance work is undertaken in the care of our cemeteries. We are committed to employing greener grounds maintenance practices in our parks and our cemeteries. This includes minimising the use of herbicides/pesticides, recycling topsoil and old memorials, composting green waste and actively managing plant life and wildlife to maximise biodiversity.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The main financial benefits arise from reduced energy costs with respect to street lighting improvements and also from the commitment from Veolia through the Public Realm contract to reduce the volume and cost of waste disposal to landfill.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific legal implications

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 There are no specific diversity implications

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

7.1 There are no staffing implications.

Contact Officers

Chris Whyte
Operational Director, Community Services

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Scrutiny Committee
30 April 2015

Report from the Chief Operating Officer

Wards Affected:
ALL

**Covering Report for Scrutiny Task Group on
Use of the Pupil Premium in Brent**

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This task group has been requested by the Scrutiny Members in responses to borough priorities to improve attainment for disadvantaged pupils. This covering report focuses on the task group's findings and recommendations.
- 1.2 The purpose of the task group is to focus on analysing the current use of the Pupil Premium Grant, Understanding the attainment gaps, the outcomes which are being achieved in comparison with national performance and to promote best practice among Brent schools.
- 1.3 Making sure that all Brent schools are good quality and that all pupils achieve well is an objective within the Council's Borough Plan. Effective use of the pupil premium across Brent schools is one element within the context of good overall performance.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Committee consider the contents of the report.
- 2.2 The Scrutiny Committee approves the 16 recommendations made by the task group.

3.0 Detail

3.1 The key findings which have emerged from the task groups work focused on:

Data Analysis - Closing the attainment gap

The task group found that there are a number of influencing factors which contribute to the gap in attainment. It was clear that the gap became wider as children progressed through school and that early intervention is key to progress and closing the gap for all disadvantaged groups.

Setting the tone for Brent Schools – The Vision

The task group found that all children disadvantaged or not, are likely to do better in higher quality schools. One of Brent's priorities is improving school quality by raising overall achievement. Moreover, school improvement has a large role to play in narrowing the gap because the achievement gain in moving from an inadequate school to an outstanding school is bigger for those who are the most disadvantaged. Mitigating the effects of child poverty and reducing it are key drivers of improving children and families' health and wellbeing. Children and young people should be able to enjoy their education and achieve the best results they can. The council's vision is to raise educational standards at all key stages and close attainment gaps between groups.

Coordinated Schools Strategic Leadership: Sharing good practice, information, resources – including teaching staff and training – teachers and school governing bodies;

The task group found that to improve outcomes for all children requires good strategic partnership working, where schools take the lead. Good quality data provided centrally is also essential; schools can benchmark themselves against other schools locally and nationally. Schools should be in a position to network and use local support from the council and other partners to improve performance and attainment.

Improving outcomes for Looked After Children and Children Excluded from School

After analysing the data on Looked after Children (LAC) the task group felt that as corporate parents of LAC, we need to do a much better job; starting with achieving 100 percent of Personal Education Plans (PEPS) for Looked After Children are completed to the highest quality. The task group felt that further analysis is required for disadvantaged children who were excluded from school. Children, who are excluded for a fixed period, could also benefit from additional targeted support when attending PRUs.

Innovation and Advancement in Education

The task group found that Brent schools are already very innovative and creative with their interventions on closing the attainment gap. There were wonderful examples of Brent secondary and primary schools trying unconventional interventions and being able to show impact and improved outcomes for children. However advancements in education attainment is continuously evolving and to keep abreast of this, requires constant research and trials, which should be embedded as part of day to day life in schools.

What do our young people want?

The task group found that it is not just formal academic or vocational qualifications which hamper young people's chances of securing employment. National and regional research indicates a lack of 'employability' skills – for example, Basic English language and financial numeracy - as a significant barrier for employers looking to recruit. The consultation exercise conducted as part of the Employment & Enterprise strategy identified this as a significant issue in Brent, particularly amongst young people and those for whom English is a second language (EAL).

Supporting Parents and Building Self-Resilience

We found that identifying parents who need support early will be key to improving attainment and closing the gap. Data shows that the gap often occurs during early years, this is a time when parents need to have the parental skills to ensure that their child's progress is on track and they are not underperforming. The task group welcome the Early Years PPG (April 2015) and believe that work with early years setting will be essential to the grant being implemented and utilised effectively.

3.2 It is recommended that:

1. LB Brent and Brent Schools Partnership (BSP) support a borough wide approach for the use of PPG through the implementation of the Education Commission Action Plan – Ambitious for All. The Strategy is to be monitored by the Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership Board and should include:
 - networking & sharing good practice
 - the sharing of information
 - the sharing of resources
 - training for Teachers and additional support to School governing bodies

*This will require a clearly outlined and smooth transition of services currently being delivered by the LB Brent, School Effectiveness service.

2. The School Effectiveness Partnership Board promotes the benefits of BSP to the whole community of schools so all schools become members and benefit from its support and services.
3. BSP works proactively with the community of schools and holds a list of recommended and effective Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) services and providers, so schools are able to commission services individually or collectively with other schools. In time, BSP may wish to explore a shared staff resource for collating and distributing the latest evidence from organisations like the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and working with schools to tailor it to meet their specific needs.
4. Pupil Premium and PPG related updates are to be standing agenda items at the Brent Head Teachers and School Governors annual conferences.
5. BSP, Brent and Woodfield Teaching Schools Alliance (BTSA & WTSA) continue their work with schools to ensure high quality teaching across Brent's schools and that outstanding teachers and support staff are being attracted, retained and developed across the borough.
6. LB Brent develops specific targeted approaches to closing the attainment gap for Looked After Children (LAC) which are monitored regularly by the Corporate Parenting Committee. This should include:
 - Empowering foster carers to engage fully with schools.
 - Strengthening working relationships between foster carers, designated teachers and social workers to improve outcomes.
 - Ensure 100 percent of Personal Education Plans (PEPS) for Looked After Children are completed to the highest quality.

- Tracking the progress of Looked After Children, identifying and investing in successful interventions: - reporting and identifying impact.
7. During 2015 BSP along with the LB Brent begins scoping a borough wide project and applies to work with the Education Endowment Foundation. In particular projects which focus on the Transition between Primary and Secondary school, English as an Additional Language (EAL) and projects focusing on children arriving from Eastern Europe.
 8. The LB Brent in partnership with BSP encourages schools to find alternative methods for recording non academic/formative learning (e.g. music, sports, arts and social development) which support attainment and support schools to engage with Ofsted regarding the evaluation of these interventions.
 9. BSP to encourage schools to employ (and possibly share as a resource) Careers Advisors. This will provide a mechanism for increasing the numbers of available work experience opportunities and the participation of Brent's pupils in work-based skills development.
 10. An increased coordinated effort by the LB Brent, Community of Brent Schools, Brent Early Years Settings including Children Centres and parents in completing Free School Meal application forms. In particular, the task group would welcome efforts to remove the stigma from making applications and the promotion of the idea that extra funding will benefit all young people in the borough.
 11. Early Years Settings to identify eligible children at 3 and 4 years of age and promote the extra support available. This information should follow the child into school.
 12. LB Brent and BSP to continue to work within the Early Years Settings and build on the success of the 2015 Early Years (EYs) Conference, where PPG was an agenda item. The conference might follow up with case studies from the pilot authorities.
 13. Schools and the Early Years Settings increase their efforts with support of BSP (sharing effective practice) to empower and engage parents on ways to provide support to their children, including encouraging them to take up adult learning opportunities and access any additional support that the family requires.
 14. The LB Brent's Annual Review of Standards demonstrates closing the gap by finding and implementing practical and creative effective methods. The review should also include an analysis of pupil premium children's attainment compared to non pupil premium children's attainment with a breakdown by vulnerable groups such as:
 - Pupils excluded
 - Looked After Children
 - Children in Need and;
 - Ethnic minority and other groups being monitored for underachievement such as Somali, Black Caribbean, White boys.

*The Corporate Parenting Committee's Looked After Children's report should be presented at Full Council

15. LB Brent and BSP work with Early Years Settings and the community of Primary and Secondary Schools on a borough wide transfer policy which ensures successful intervention methods and information on PPG children is included, so that this information follows the child throughout their school life.

16. Further analysis is conducted by LB Brent and Schools into fixed term exclusions of PPG children and practical ways schools can continue to support PPG children if excluded to the borough's Pupil Referral Units (PRU).

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 The council has a legal obligation to eliminate discrimination, to which this work focuses on reducing the inequality of disadvantaged children.

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 The recommendations outlined in the report will have positive impacts on Brent's communities and drive services; which will improve the educational and life outcomes all Brent children.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

7.1 The following Brent services and partners would be affected by the recommendations made:

- Brent Schools Effectiveness
- Brent Children's Social Care (Looked after Children - LAC)
- Early Help and Education
- Inclusion and Alternative Education
- Brent Schools Partnership
- Brent Teaching Schools Alliance (BTSA)
- Woodfield Teaching Schools Alliance (WTSA)

Background Papers

[Interim Report - Use of the Pupil Premium Grant in Brent](#)

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Use of the Pupil Premium Grant in Brent

A Scrutiny Task Group Report

April 2015

Membership

Councillor Eleanor Southwood (Chair)
Ms Mary Arnold
Mr Alloysius Fredrick (Co-opted Member)
The Reverend Christine Cargill (Co-opted Member)
Councillor Lia Colacicco
Councillor Wilhelmina Mitchell Murray
Councillor Pat Harrison
Councillor Krupa Sheth

Contents

1. Chair’s Foreword.....	
2. Executive Summary.....	
3. Recommendations.....	
4. Introduction – Scope of the task group.....	
5. Task Group Membership.....	
6. Methodology.....	
7. Policy Context	
• Brent.....	
• London & National.....	
8. Key Findings	
8.1 Data Analysis - Closing the attainment Gap.....	
8.2 Setting the tone for Brent Schools – The Vision.....	
8.3 Coordinated Strategic Leadership	
• Sharing Good Practice.....	
• Sharing Information.....	
• Sharing Resources – including teaching staff.....	
• Provide Quality Training.....	
8.4 Improving outcomes for Looked After Children and Children Excluded from School.....	
8.5 Innovation and Advancement in Education	
8.6 What do our Young People Want?.....	
8.7 Supporting Parents and Building Self-Resilience.....	
9. Conclusion.....	
10. List of Participants, References and Appendices.....	

1. Chair's Foreword

The Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) is an additional funding allocated to young people who meet criteria that indicates a level of economic disadvantage. The money is given to schools directly and for children who are looked after by the Council a proportion is kept back to provide for local authority support. In 2014/15, 8,686 of Brent's children are eligible for the PPG, amounting to over £11m in funding.



The purpose of this task group was not to replicate the accountabilities that exist via Ofsted in terms of auditing how the money is spent. Instead, our aim was to identify where opportunities exist for a more joined-up, holistic and borough wide use of the PPG. We recognise that the PPG is a key mechanism for not only increasing educational attainment, but for offering our young people improved chances for living healthy and happy lives. Throughout our research, visits and meetings, the task group focused on how the PPG could further reduce the numbers of children living in poverty and the numbers of young people not in employment education or training across our borough.

It was timely to conduct this work now. The role of the local authority in relation to schools is changing and the Brent Schools Partnership is a fledgling organisation, whose success is vital for ensuring that information, practice and support is shared amongst Brent's family of schools. The PPG is being extended to children in early years education and the task group is keen that the experience of the PPG to date informs how this funding is used. The task group recognises that early intervention is the best way to give children a great start and we are excited about the difference that the Early Years PPG could make in Brent.

Our ambition is that Brent schools are recognised for the creative and effective support they provide through the PPG and our work highlighted plenty of fantastic work. It also highlighted areas where we could do better, not least in supporting the children who are looked after by the authority.

We urge the council and all partners to implement our recommendations in full. The individual members of the task group are passionate about giving every child in Brent the best possible educational experience and the skills and confidence to fulfil their dreams.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in our work, including teachers, governing bodies, service providers, council officers, civil servants and experts. Most importantly, I want to thank the young people we have met in schools and through the Brent Youth Parliament. Their voice is at the heart of our recommendations and their enthusiasm and wisdom has been inspiring.

Thanks also to my task group colleagues – Mary Arnold, Alloysius Fredrick, The Reverend Christine Cargill and Cllrs Colacicco, Harrison, Mitchell Murray and Sheth. Their generosity of time, ideas and expertise was hugely valuable.

2. Executive Summary

There are over 1.4 million (21%) children aged 4-15 eligible for free school meals in England. National figures show that they often start primary school behind their better-off classmates - and that this attainment gap will increase throughout their schooling. The latest national figures show that just 37% of economically disadvantaged children achieved 5 good GCSEs, including English and Maths, compared to 63% of all other pupils. Figures also show that children from poorer backgrounds do worse on average than their wealthier classmates whichever type of school they are in and that young people with poor educational attainment are much more likely to end up not in education, employment or training (NEET).

It is for these reasons that members of the scrutiny function wanted to review the boroughs use of the Pupil Premium Grant, ensuring that the local authority and its partners are doing all they can to improve the educational and life chances for all our young people. The pupil premium grant (PPG) is additional funding given to publicly funded schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils from reception to year 11 and close the gap between them and their peers, the grant is allocated directly to schools. For children looked after by the council, a percentage is held back to provide for local authority support. A national fund of £625 million was introduced in April 2011 to give schools £400 per year for:

- Each child currently registered as eligible for free school meals.
- Children who have been looked after for 6 months or longer.
- Service Children (Children with parents in the armed forces).

In April 2012, pupil premium funding was also extended to all children eligible for free school meals at any point in the past 6 years.

In the current financial year (2014 to 2015) the pupil premium national funding was increased to £2.5 billion. The premium is broken down as follows:

- £1,300 per pupil of primary-school age.
- £935 per pupil of secondary-school age.
- £1,900 per pupil for looked-after children who:
 - have been looked after for 1 day or more
 - are adopted
 - leave care under a Special Guardianship Order or a Residence Order

The amount of pupil premium allocated to Brent schools for 2014 to 2015 is £11,139,121 (this includes academy funding for Looked After Children only). The total number of pupils eligible for PPG is 8,686 and is broken down as follows:

Pupils	Number
Free School Meals Ever 6 (measure)	8,445
Looked After Children (Inc. academies)	217
Post Looked After Children	22
Armed Services	2

Percentage of primary and secondary school pupils eligible for Pupil Premium (2013-14)

	Primary (%)	Secondary (%)
Brent	34.9	39.4
England	27.0	29.0
Outer London	28.9	33.8

School accountability

The pupil premium is paid to local authorities who pass the grant onto schools, who are best placed to assess what additional provision their pupils need. There is a requirement for schools to publish online how they are using the pupil premium and the impact it is having; the School Effectiveness Service monitors this. To the best of our knowledge all Brent schools are compliant with the reporting requirements. School Effectiveness Services (SES) has published a list for all governing bodies on what is expected on the school's website and guidance for the link advisers to share with head teachers.

Ofsted inspection reports and performance tables detail how the use of the funding affects the attainment of economically disadvantaged pupils. The areas of attainment which are considered are:

- The attainment of the pupils who attract the funding.
- The progress made by these pupils.
- The gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.

Pupil Premium Awards are given to schools whose use of the PPG has significantly closed the attainment gap.

In January 2015, the Minister of State for Schools, David Laws MP, wrote to six Brent primary schools to congratulate them on the improvement in the Key Stage 2 results of their disadvantaged pupils since 2011 and wrote to a further three primary schools, to congratulate them on the improvement since 2012.

Improvement since 2011	Improvement since 2012
Brentfield Primary School	Leopold Primary School
Elsley Primary School	St Joseph RC Junior School
Harlesden Primary School	Uxendon Manor Primary School
Mitchell Brook Primary School	
St Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School	
Wembley Primary School	

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. LB Brent and Brent Schools Partnership (BSP) support a borough wide approach for the use of PPG through the implementation of the Education Commission Action Plan – Ambitious for All. The Strategy is to be monitored by the Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership Board and should include:
 - networking & sharing good practice
 - the sharing of information
 - the sharing of resources
 - training for Teachers and additional support to School governing bodies

*This will require a clearly outlined and smooth transition of services currently being delivered by the LB Brent, School Effectiveness service.
2. The School Effectiveness Partnership Board promotes the benefits of BSP to the whole community of schools so all schools become members and benefit from its support and services.
3. BSP works proactively with the community of schools and holds a list of recommended and effective Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) services and providers, so schools are able to commission services individually or collectively with other schools. In time, BSP may wish to explore a shared staff resource for collating and distributing the latest evidence from organisations like the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and working with schools to tailor it to meet their specific needs.
4. Pupil Premium and PPG related updates are to be standing agenda items at the Brent Head Teachers and School Governors annual conferences.
5. BSP, Brent and Woodfield Teaching Schools Alliance (BTSA & WTSA) continue their work with schools to ensure high quality teaching across Brent's schools and that outstanding teachers and support staff are being attracted, retained and developed across the borough.
6. LB Brent develops specific targeted approaches to closing the attainment gap for Looked After Children (LAC) which are monitored regularly by the Corporate Parenting Committee. This should include:
 - Empowering foster carers to engage fully with schools.
 - Strengthening working relationships between foster carers, designated teachers and social workers to improve outcomes.
 - Ensure 100 percent of Personal Education Plans (PEPS) for Looked After Children are completed to the highest quality.
 - Tracking the progress of Looked After Children, identifying and investing in successful interventions: - reporting and identifying impact.
7. During 2015 BSP along with the LB Brent begins scoping a borough wide project and applies to work with the Education Endowment Foundation. In particular projects which

focus on the Transition between Primary and Secondary school, English as an Additional Language (EAL) and projects focusing on children arriving from Eastern Europe.

8. The LB Brent in partnership with BSP encourages schools to find alternative methods for recording non academic/formative learning (e.g. music, sports, arts and social development) which support attainment and support schools to engage with Ofsted regarding the evaluation of these interventions.
9. BSP to encourage schools to employ (and possibly share as a resource) Careers Advisors. This will provide a mechanism for increasing the numbers of available work experience opportunities and the participation of Brent's pupils in work-based skills development.
10. An increased coordinated effort by the LB Brent, Community of Brent Schools, Brent Early Years Settings including Children Centres and parents in completing Free School Meal application forms. In particular, the task group would welcome efforts to remove the stigma from making applications and the promotion of the idea that extra funding will benefit all young people in the borough.
11. Early Years Settings to identify eligible children at 3 and 4 years of age and promote the extra support available. This information should follow the child into school.
12. LB Brent and BSP to continue to work within the Early Years Settings and build on the success of the 2015 Early Years (EYs) Conference, where PPG was an agenda item. The conference might follow up with case studies from the pilot authorities.
13. Schools and the Early Years Settings increase their efforts with support of BSP (sharing effective practice) to empower and engage parents on ways to provide support to their children, including encouraging them to take up adult learning opportunities and access any additional support that the family requires.
14. The LB Brent's Annual Review of Standards demonstrates closing the gap by finding and implementing practical and creative effective methods. The review should also include an analysis of pupil premium children's attainment compared to non pupil premium children's attainment with a breakdown by vulnerable groups such as:
 - Pupils excluded
 - Looked After Children
 - Children in Need and;
 - Ethnic minority and other groups being monitored for underachievement such as Somali, Black Caribbean, White boys.

*The Corporate Parenting Committee's Looked After Children's report should be presented at Full Council

15. LB Brent and BSP work with Early Years Settings and the community of Primary and Secondary Schools on a borough wide transfer policy which ensures successful intervention methods and information on PPG children is included, so that this information follows the child throughout their school life.

16. Further analysis is conducted by LB Brent and Schools into fixed term exclusions of PPG children and practical ways schools can continue to support PPG children if excluded to the borough's Pupil Referral Units (PRU).

4. Introduction – Scope of the task groups work

What the review addresses

The review considered the following key areas:

- How the allocation of pupil premium is helping to narrow the attainment gap between those eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils in Brent.
- How schools in Brent have been spending, managing and monitoring the PPG
- Whether there is a relationship between schools with the highest proportion of eligible pupils and their use of the PPG.
- Where good practice in Brent schools, across the UK and learning from national organisations such as the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) can be enhanced .
- How schools in Brent could spend the premium more effectively to raise pupil attainment.
- How a wider range of educational input such as music, drama and sport, can be used to show how a holistic approach to education can increase attainment levels.
- What the future of Pupil Premium in Brent might look like - funding, changes from the 7th May 2015 onwards.

The objectives of the review

The aims of the review are set out below:

- To set out the shared expectations of how PPG is to be used and monitored in schools across Brent.
- Identify ways in which the local authority and other partners can effectively support Brent schools to increase attainment through use of the PPG.
- Influence school policies on effective management and monitoring of the PPG.
- Create a culture for schools to encourage and support each other for the long-term.
- Encourage further sharing of effective practice within Brent schools and nationally, with the aim that Brent schools are recognised for their effective use of the PPG.

5. Task Group Membership

Councillor Eleanor Southwood (Chair)
Ms Mary Arnold
Mr Alloysius Fredrick (Co-opted Member)
The Rev. Christine Cargill (Co-opted Member)
Councillor Lia Colacicco
Councillor Wilhelmina Mitchell Murray
Councillor Pat Harrison
Councillor Krupa Sheth

6. Methodology

As part of this review the task group invited relevant partners to contribute through workshops, discussion groups and one-to-one interviews.

Initially the task group gathered information about the national, regional and local picture on the use of pupil premium. This included meetings with the Operational Director of Brent's Early Help and Education team and Senior School effectiveness staff, as well as leading Government and Non Government organisations such as Department for Education (DfE), Achievement for All and the Education Endowment Foundation. Meetings also took place with the Brent Schools Partnership chair and co-ordinator and the Brent Schools Forum.

Given the focus on identifying good practice elsewhere, the group visited the LB Lambeth and met with a senior team, including the Director of Education. The next step of the task group's work was to visit a sample group of Brent schools and to consult with Brent stakeholders. There were discussion meetings with Brent School Governing Bodies, parent groups and the Brent Youth Parliament. A sample group of 6 Brent Primary and Secondary Schools were visited and the task group consulted with teaching staff, governing bodies and children from each of these schools.

Partners: Group 1

- Teaching staff (particularly schools with high levels of funding) via the Brent Schools Partnership.
- School Governing Bodies.
- Relevant local authority departments (Children & Young People).

Partners: Group 2

- Teachers & Support Staff.
- Mentoring Services/School Support Services.
- Interested Parents or Parent Groups via Early Years settings.
- Children & Young People (Youth Parliament).
- Advertised the task groups work to partner and community groups to get involved through:
 - Advert via Head Teacher Bulletin
 - Advert in the School Governors Bulletin
 - Agenda item at the Head Teachers/Governing Bodies termly meeting
- Visit a selection of Brent Schools receiving PPG.
- A small number of focused, one-to-one interviews with Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors.
- Meeting with the Education Endowment Foundation.
- Meeting with officers from the Department for Education.

*A full list of participants of the task group's work can be found in section 10 of this report.

7. Policy Context

Local Brent Facts

- In January 2015 the Department for Education published the GCSE Attainment statistics which showed that in 2014 58.9% of Brent pupils who are disadvantaged received 5 GCSEs, including English and Maths A*-C, compared with 75.8% of pupils who did not qualify.
- Brent is ranked the 9th highest London Borough on the Income Deprivation Affected Children Indices (IDACI) with 39.3% of children living in poverty. Stonebridge is ranked as the 12th most deprived affected children's ward in London.
- The population of Brent has grown and continues to grow with the birth rate increasing by approximately 8% per year; with some of our most deprived wards having some of the highest rates.

Brent Schools (Appendix 1)

Brent's School Effectiveness Service carried out data analysis and identified schools in Brent who have successfully narrowed the gap for pupils. A case study for each of these schools is currently being written with the view to disseminate good practice across Brent schools; these are:

- Wykeham
- Uxendon
- Chalkhill
- Furness
- Sudbury
- Mitchell Brook
- Wembley Primary
- St Gregory's
- Kingsbury High

The five primary schools with the highest proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium are:

- ARK Academy
- Braintcroft
- Mitchell Brook
- Wembley Primary
- Brentfield Primary

The three secondary schools with the highest proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium are:

- Preston Manor
- Kingsbury High
- Capital City

In December 2014 and January 2015 Wembley High Technology College and St Joseph

Roman Catholic Primary School was awarded A Pupil Premium Award in the KS4 and KS2 category, as one of the high achieving schools in the country in terms of attainment of disadvantaged pupils. (*Appendix 2 &3*). The school was also recognised for its excellent performance in the Phonics Check, scoring in the top 5% of schools in the country (*Appendix 4*).

National Context - Ofsted Reports

Pupil Premium, How the money is being spent (Appendix 5)

In September 2012 Ofsted published a report based on the views of 262 school leaders nationally, in 2013 Ofsted followed up the finding by visiting a range of primary and secondary schools to see how effectively the schools were spending the funding to maximise achievement. The report highlights where schools across England were less successful and shared some of these characteristics:

- Lack of clarity about the intended impact of the spending.
- Funding spent indiscriminately on additional teaching assistance, with little evidence of beneficial impact on attainment levels.
- Did not monitor the quality and the impact of the interventions well enough, even where other monitoring was effective.
- Did not have good performance management systems for teaching assistance and other support staff
- Did not have a clear audit trail where funding had been spent
- Planned the pupil spending in isolation from other planning e.g. school development plan
- Compared performance to local rather than national data, which suppressed expectations if they were in a low performing borough
- Did not have governing bodies involved in making decisions

The Pupil Premium: an update (Appendix 6)

Published in July 2014 Ofsted provided an update following the 2012 and 2013 reports. The update focuses on some of the more positive outcomes that are being achieved through use of the PPG. Ofsted state that the pupil premium is making a difference in many schools. Overall, school leaders are spending pupil premium funding more effectively, tracking the progress of eligible pupils more closely and reporting outcomes more precisely than before.

There are encouraging signs from inspection that the concerted efforts of good leaders and teachers are helping to increase outcomes for pupils eligible for the pupil premium. However, it will take time to establish whether this increased focus will lead to a narrowing in the attainment gap between those eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils.

The report concludes by stating that at this stage it is too early to determine the effectiveness of external reviews of the pupil premium in bringing about improvements. Ofsted will report on this in early 2015.

Government Policy

Year on year the funding provided for eligible pupils has increased and the looked after children category has become much wider; making more children eligible.

The introduction of the Early Years Pupil Premium for three and four year olds from April 2015 aims to support providers to bridge this gap with additional funding, approximately £300 for each eligible child. It will be a system in which money follows the child from the new two year old free entitlement right through to the school-age Pupil Premium. Early years providers have a key opportunity to maximise this additional funding to improve children's outcomes and to boost disadvantaged children's achievement – this throws up a recommendation that CCs and Early Years Providers aim to collaborate and track children's school readiness and progress once in reception classes

It is not known how long the Pupil Premium Grant will be available to disadvantaged pupils; with a general election in May 2015 its future is uncertain.

8. Key Findings and Recommendations

The key findings which emerged from consultation focus on:

- 1. Data Analysis - Closing the attainment gap**
- 2. Setting the tone for Brent Schools – The Vision**
- 3. Coordinated Schools Strategic Leadership:**
 - **Sharing Good Practice**
 - **Sharing Information**
 - **Sharing Resources – including teaching staff**
 - **Training – Teachers and School Governing Bodies**
- 4. Improving outcomes for Looked After Children and Children Excluded from School**
- 5. Innovation and Advancement in Education**
- 6. What do our young people want?**
- 7. Supporting Parents and Building Self-Resilience**

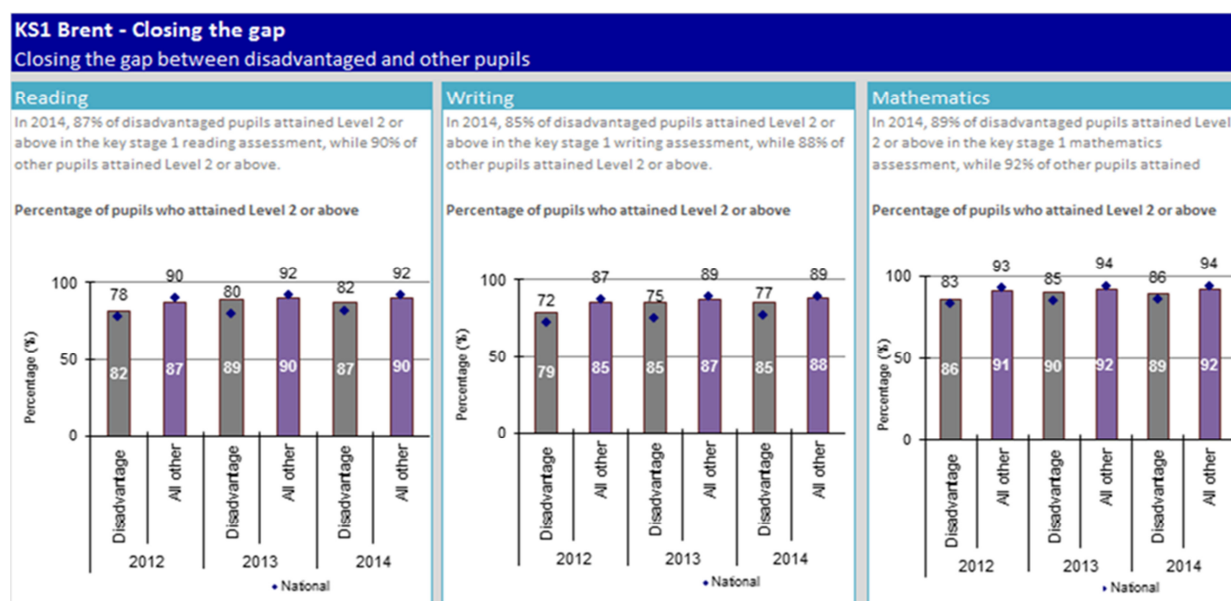
The task group set out to review the use of the Pupil Premium Grant in Brent and consulted with a wide range of Brent educational stakeholders. It was clear that there had previously been complex relationships between the local authority and some educational establishments and it was vital that the task group listened to the history as well as what was envisioned for the future. The relationships have since come a long way, although with the local authority budget cuts and more schools converting to academy status reported a little uncertainty about their current and future relationships with the local authority.

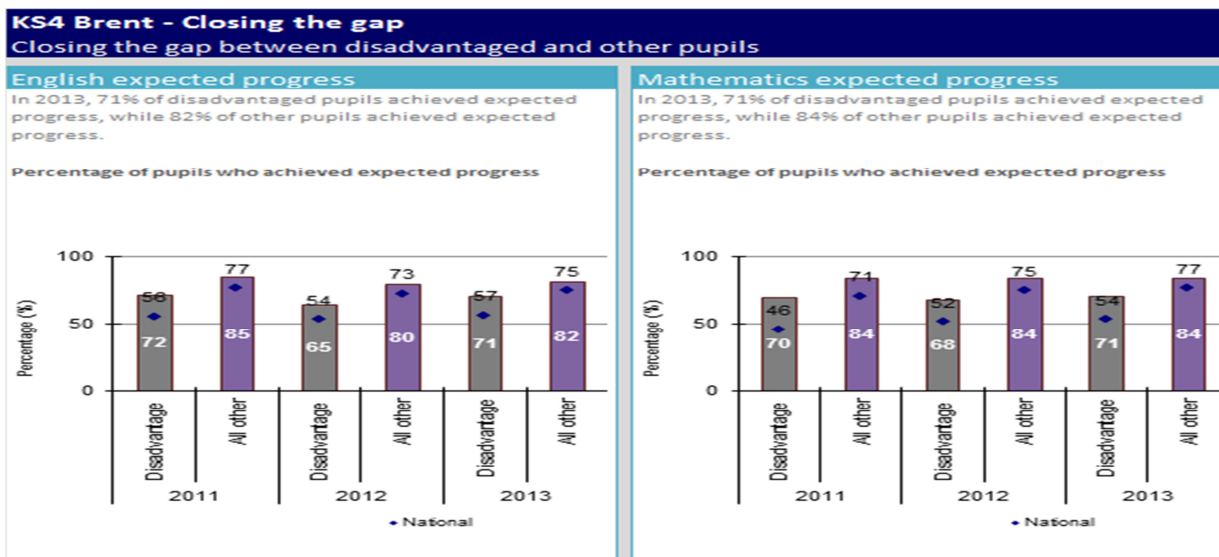
Prior to January 2015 Brent's School Improvement Service fulfilled a statutory role in holding schools to account for the standards they achieve and providing support and challenge where standards need to improve. The service works closely with the Brent Schools Partnership and other education partners to ensure schools are supported to improve and that school to school collaboration can benefit all schools in Brent. The Core Offer explains the support provided by the local authority to fulfil its statutory 'support and challenge' role. Alongside the support provided to all schools in Brent, the Core Offer also sets out the additional support provided to schools causing concern and the processes applied to engage schools in the improvement process.

From January 2015, the School Improvement Service became the School Effectiveness Service. The role of the service is now focused on the local authority's strategic responsibility to promote high educational standards for all children and young people. Where the local authority needs to intervene in schools to bring about rapid improvement, increasingly, it will commission and broker services from Brent's school-to-school support partners including the Teaching School Alliances and the Brent Schools Partnership (BSP). The Strategic Framework for School Effectiveness in Brent underpins the work of the new service. The framework draws on the findings and recommendations made in the Education Commission report, Ambitious for All: a shared responsibility, which was endorsed by elected members in June 2014.

8.1 Data Analysis – Closing the attainment gap (*Appendix 7*)

The most recent Brent data (Jan 2015) shows that Brent's disadvantaged pupil premium performance for KS1 in Reading, Writing and Maths is above the national averages for this group, but is still below that of their peers, who are not disadvantaged. The same can be said about KS2, and KS4, however at KS4 the gap becomes significantly wider. In 2014 the expected progress gap in English for KS4 was -10.3 %, in 2013 the gap was -11%, which was an improvement from 2012 where the gap of -15%. We are moving in the right direction and should be proud of progress made. However In 2014 the expected progress gap for KS4 Maths was -16.2%, in 2013 the gap was -13% which means that we have fallen back by 3.2% to progress levels of 2012 which were -16%.





The Department for Education (DfE) released the 2014 GCSE and equivalent results on 29 January 2015. This year's headline measures have been affected by a number of changes to the examination system and a change in the methodology used to calculate the indicators. This negates the validity of comparison with the results of previous years. Brent at -19.1% remains above national average of -27.5%, and has narrowed the gap below the London average. We must ensure that we are continuously making the best use of the PPG and support the fantastic work that our schools are doing, making bigger steps to close the attainment gaps.

Ethnic Groups

There are a number of Brent's ethnic groups that historically achieve below the national average, the Key Stage 2 table below shows that Black Caribbean, White British, White Irish, White and Black Caribbean children have underperformed from 2012 to present. Black Caribbean and White British children are also progressing under the national average, which indicates that performances will continue at the current level. Even with the introduction of pupil premium, there has been little to no progress in closing the gap for these groups of children.

Key Stage 2 Pupil Premium by Ethnicity

* Top 5 Ethnic Groups with Pupil Premium	No of Pupils			Level 4+ RWM			2 Levels of Progress						
	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014	Reading		Writing		Maths		
Any Other Asian Background	56	77	73	91	82	74	94	93	94	91	75	94	93
Any Other Black Background	38	55	53	87	62	70	76	94	80	90	89	84	94
Any Other Ethnic Group	151	179	179	70	66	80	86	94	92	94	85	89	97
Any Other Mixed Background	37	38	39	92	76	72	82	92	85	87	89	89	89
Any Other White Background	105	99	113	72	68	72	88	91	93	93	82	90	91
Bangladeshi	10	17	8	90	76	63	94	100	88	100	90	82	88
Black African	406	421	411	78	75	75	90	94	93	96	88	92	95
Black Caribbean	176	176	209	68	65	68	81	89	86	92	79	79	87
Chinese	2	~	1	100	~	100	~	100	~	100	100	~	100
Gypsy / Roma	1	2	1	100	50	100	50	100	100	100	100	100	100
Indian	32	30	31	88	73	94	90	94	97	94	76	97	97
Pakistani	49	78	84	76	74	82	86	96	95	96	80	89	95
Refused	6	4	3	67	25	67	75	100	25	100	100	75	100
Traveller of Irish Heritage	7	4	2	43	100	50	100	100	100	100	86	100	100
White British	76	77	77	71	66	66	84	86	87	91	82	86	89
White Irish	14	12	11	71	67	64	82	78	91	100	86	91	100
White and Asian	6	7	14	83	71	86	83	83	83	100	80	100	100
White and Black African	15	13	16	73	85	63	92	87	100	87	71	100	93
White and Black Caribbean	35	36	26	66	69	69	89	88	89	92	79	89	84
Somali	297	289	293	77	73	73	89	95	93	97	91	92	95
National				75	75	79	88	91	91	93	87	88	89

Data source* EPAS (2014 unvalidated)

Again very similar to the overall gap between pupil premium and their peers, by Key Stage 4 the performance significantly decreases and the gap becomes wider. Pakistani Children are the only ethnicity which achieves well across the board followed by Bangladeshi, White and Asian and Any Other Asian Background.

Key Stage 4 Pupil Premium by Ethnicity

* Top 5 Ethnic Groups with Pupil Premium	No of Pupils			GCSE's			3 Levels of Progress					
				5 A*-C Inc E&M			English			Maths		
	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014	2012	2013	2014
Any Other Asian Background	59	69	46	42	65	59	70	71	88	76	82	74
Any Other Black Background	43	45	38	37	49	39	50	63	55	52	70	53
Any Other Ethnic Group	149	151	161	53	57	50	76	82	84	76	80	62
Any Other Mixed Background	37	38	31	54	55	77	75	74	81	77	57	79
Any Other White Background	79	80	74	41	53	35	65	81	68	56	68	45
Bangladeshi	10	15	12	60	67	50	78	80	42	89	87	58
Black - African	326	331	385	47	50	47	67	71	76	75	76	68
Black Caribbean	129	125	122	40	38	47	57	58	64	52	50	53
Indian	50	39	46	66	67	70	80	78	91	91	92	77
Pakistani	56	61	55	41	57	45	71	83	65	67	71	56
Refused	8	6	3	25	17	0	67	33	0	33	40	67
Traveller of Irish Heritage	9	4	14	0	0	0	0	0	15	11	0	0
White - British	63	67	48	35	49	44	45	54	72	48	60	60
White - Irish	9	5	8	44	0	50	56	60	88	67	0	75
White and Asian	11	13	9	27	77	56	20	85	75	30	77	63
White and Black African	6	9	20	50	44	45	50	86	65	67	71	70
White and Black Caribbean	27	16	28	44	38	43	62	50	71	56	50	68
Somali	231	234	272	44	47	46	70	71	77	75	74	70
National				59	61	56	68	70	74	69	71	67

Data source* EPAS (2014 unvalidated)

All the tables (above) show that the achievement gap is well-established before children arrive at secondary school and that therefore the early and primary years have a key role to play in closing the achievement gap. The attainment gap is not just about pupils failing to get the top grades, but is also characterised by a long tail of low achievement. Where the progress levels for disadvantaged children remain the same or low, their peers will continue to improve, the gap will increase as evidenced in these tables. It is still however of the up most importance for secondary schools to work intensively with pupils who have fallen behind their peers as they move from primary school.

The task group believe that there are a number of influencing factors that contribute to low achievement and the continuous widening of the gap through secondary school, these include:

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

There are more than a million children between 5–18 years old in UK schools that speak in excess of 360 languages between them and are at varying stages in their learning of EAL, from newcomers to English to fluently bilingual students. In 2013 the attainment data showed an enduring difference in attainment between bilingual pupils and their English speaking peers. Whilst analysis shows that differences between the attainment of bilingual learners and mother tongue English speaking pupils have narrowed over time, the statistics also show very wide regional variations. Differences are largest in the Early Years Foundation Stage and narrow significantly by the end of Key Stage 4. Overall differences are smallest in inner and outer London.

Key Stage 2 - In 2013, the local and regional tables show that 73 per cent of EAL and bilingual pupils achieved the expected level (Level 4) in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 compared to 76 per cent of pupils whose first language is English.

Key Stage 4 - In 2013, the national figures show that 58.3 per cent of EAL and bilingual learners gained 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Mathematics compared to 60.9 per cent of English only students. This is a difference of 2.6 percentage points, almost unchanged from the 2.5 percentage point difference recorded in 2007

In May 2012 The Institute for Policy Studies in Education (IPSE) and London Metropolitan University conducted *The Language Diversity and Attainment in English Secondary Schools Review*. The review confirms that there is a strong relationship between stage of fluency in English and educational attainment. The results suggests that the percentage of pupils attaining level 4 or above at KS2 and 5+A*-C at GCSE increased as stage of proficiency in English increased. Pupils in the early stages of fluency performed at low levels, while EAL pupils who were fully fluent in English far outstripped those of pupils for whom English was their only language.

Other key findings from the report showed that:

- While other first language speakers and minority ethnic pupils in general, attain better results in London, there are still persistent gaps in attainment between English first language, and other first language speakers, nationally.
- Overall, many of the widest attainment gaps are present in local authorities with substantial Pakistani ethnic minority groups, who tend to speak Urdu, Punjabi or Mirpuri and experience economic disadvantage.
- There is clearly a need for further research into new ethnic communities from Eastern Europe, whom educational and language profile, and needs, tends to be obscured in the White, or White Other ethnic category.
- Similarly, Black African ethnic groups need to be specified in relation to language to gain a fuller picture of their educational achievements. In particular, more recent migratory flows from Eastern Europe and Central and East Africa (e.g. Congo, Angola, and Zimbabwe).
- There are also significant differences based on time of arrival to the education system. The later a child arrives, the greater the likelihood that child will find it difficult to catch up before they reach GCSE's. Brent has a trend of older children who arrive from overseas with little to no experience of education.

Transition from primary to secondary school

In the 2008 The Department for Children, Schools and Families it was found that the move to secondary school means a number of major changes for all children. Most children will cope with these and feel accustomed to the changes by the end of the first couple of weeks. In contrast a disadvantaged child may take much longer to learn to navigate their way around the school and may require ongoing support throughout their school days to allow them to fully access the curriculum. If there has been little preparation for the huge changes that occur between primary and secondary school, this leaves children floundering and results in

difficulties for the child to access the curriculum and makes it much harder for them to progress at the same level as their peers. The first few weeks are crucial in developing the new peer group and poor preparation can result in lasting damage throughout the secondary school days. Low SES (socio-economic status) has been found to have an association with less positive transitions for children.

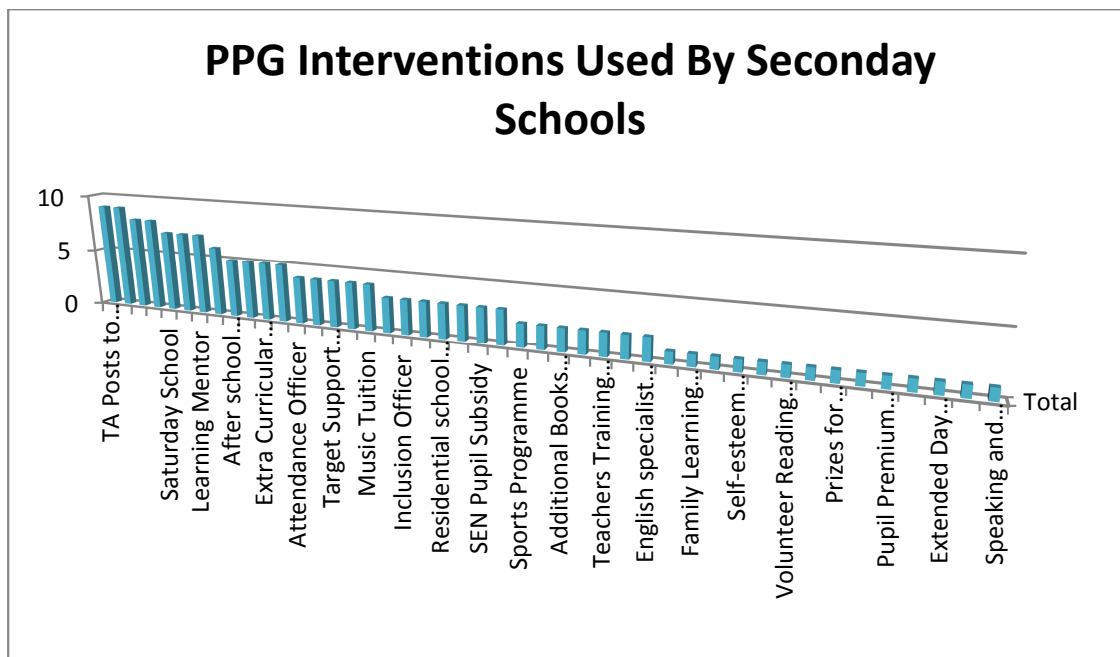
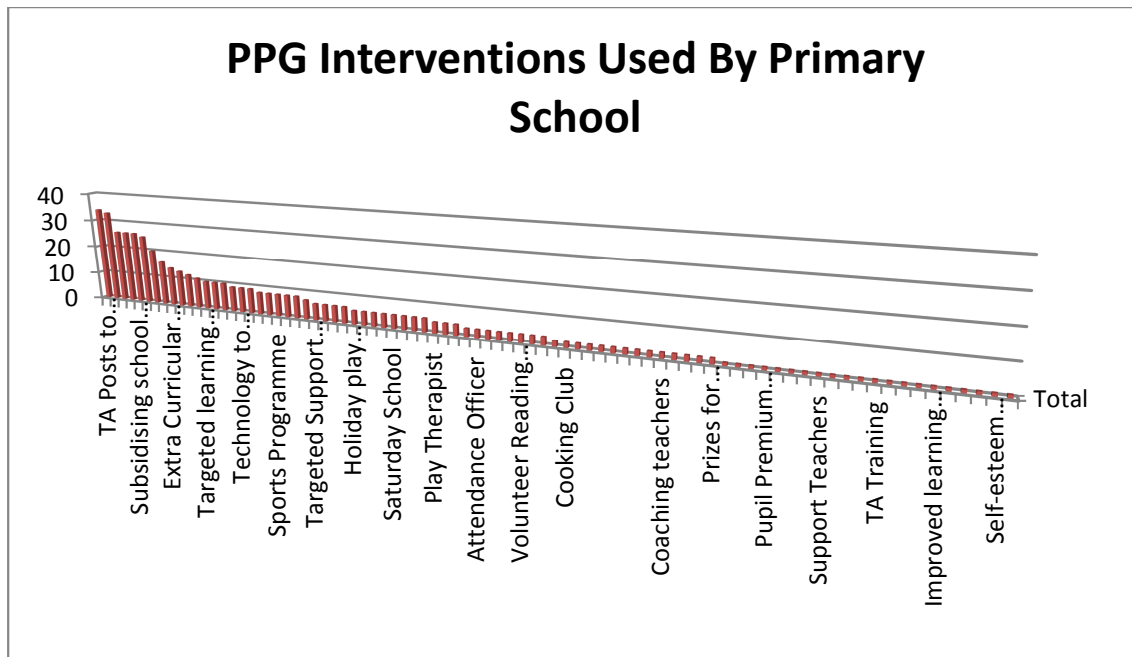
Change in the school environment can make children very anxious. Anxiety about lack of control of their environment can lead to the individual feeling panicky all of the time and this has a knock-on effect on their performance. Children may lash out at others or withdraw into themselves in a form of self-protection. Secondary schools are places of change. This causes additional strains on children who are also trying to cope with underlying difficulties and now has more problems layered on top. This can result in a breakdown in the child's mechanisms for coping and is why we sometimes see secondary school being a crisis time, after a child has seemingly been able to cope in primary school. Research suggests there is a need to help children develop their social and personal skills (friendships, self-esteem and confidence) for successful transition.

Parental Support

In 2012 The Joseph Rowntree Foundation conducted a review '*Can Changing Aspiration and Attitudes Impact on Educational Attainment?*' Promising interventions appeared to involve the provision of information (about effective home learning techniques for parents, about what higher education actually involves, or about one's own progress through better academic mentoring, for example) or improved opportunities for learning (in academically related clubs, through skills developed within peer education, or about how to support one's child at school, for example). These interventions may improve attainment directly by changing behaviours (such as parents spending more time talking to their children about attending school) or they may work indirectly by affecting attitudes. Further research in parental involvement interventions might be advised to look at the merits of a direct focus on actions vs a more indirect focus on attitude change. Also of use would be research that addresses how initial high aspirations adapt to constrained opportunities in the dynamic between parents, pupils and teachers.

PPG Interventions

The task group undertook an extensive look at the different types of Pupil Premium interventions used in Brent schools. The data showed that the Brent schools which were successful in closing the gap invested the majority of their PPG in teaching resources for the whole school; with additional targeted interventions such as boosters and specific English and Maths support. It was also noted that schools who had large cohorts and more PPG funding, were able to provide a wider range of interventions.



Key Learning and Insight:

The task group found that there are a number of influencing factors which contribute to the gap in attainment. It was clear that the gap became wider as children progressed through school and that early intervention is key to progress and closing the gap for all disadvantaged groups.

Linked Recommendations:

Recommendation 3

BSP works proactively with the community of schools and holds a list of recommended and effective PPG services and providers, so schools are able to commission services individually or collectively with other schools. In time, BSP may wish to explore a shared staff resource for collating and distributing the latest evidence from organisations like the EEF and working with schools to tailor it to meet their specific needs

Recommendation 14

The LB Brent's Annual Review of Standards demonstrates closing the gap by finding and implementing practical and creative effective methods. The review should also include an analysis of pupil premium children's attainment compared to non pupil premium children's attainment with a breakdown by vulnerable groups such as:

- ***Pupils excluded***
- ***Looked After Children***
- ***Children in Need and;***
- ***Ethnic minority and other groups being monitored for underachievement such as Somali, Black Caribbean, White boys.***

****The Corporate Parenting Committee's Looked After Children's report should be presented at Full Council***

Recommendation 15

LB Brent and BSP work with Early Years Settings and the community of Primary and Secondary Schools on a borough wide transfer policy which ensures successful intervention methods and information on PPG children is included, so that this information follows the child throughout their school life.

8.2 Setting the tone for Brent Schools – The Vision

The task group wanted to be clear about the local authority and the borough's intentions and set the tone for education in Brent. The local authority's impending Borough Plan correlates the task group's findings with direct or indirect links to all of the three priorities. Under 'Better lives' there are a number of direct promises and aims which will support the recommendations made by the task group.

Brent Borough Plan Priorities (Appendix 8)

- Better lives
- Better place
- Better locally

Borough Plan Themes	Borough Plan Aims	Task Groups Findings
Better lives	Making sure that local people have the best possible life chances, regardless of their starting position	Children have the best starts for better life chances
	Supporting local enterprise, generating jobs for local people, helping people into work and promoting fair pay	Preparing children for the work place, by providing careers advice and local work experience
	Making sure that our schools are amongst the best and that our children and young people achieve to their potential	Making sure that our schools are amongst the best and that our children and young people achieve to their potential Ensuring that all schools in the borough make effective use of PPG so that disadvantaged children are supported to achieve their potential, closing the gap with non-PP children
	Supporting vulnerable people and families when they need it	Supporting parents and Children Reviewing the impact of PPG strategies on vulnerable groups of children and on their family/parents engagement and the associated benefits
Better place	Supporting good quality, accessible arts and leisure facilities	PPG is used to support activities which further social and health and wellbeing outcomes.– new school buildings should be designed to offer access to arts and some leisure facilities
Better locally	Building resilience and promoting citizenship, fairness and responsibility amongst local people and strengthening the sense of community amongst the people who live and work here	Engaging and empowering parents to take more responsibility for their children's education and children becoming responsible young citizens
	Making sure that everyone has a fair say in the way that services are delivered, that they are listened to and taken seriously	Communicating with parents about PPG, what interventions are planned for their child, the impact and how parents can provide support to their child's

		progress
	Making sure that inequalities in the quality of life in different parts of the borough are tackled by a stronger focus on local needs	Child poverty affects the lives of many young people, education is a means to escape poverty and ensuring children achieve well in school is vital. PPG is funding for pupils from poorer backgrounds aiming to address inequalities and schools can be encouraged to tailor its use to meeting local needs and measuring impact
	Building partnership – between local service providers and between local services and residents – to find new ways of providing services that are more finely tailored to individual, community and local needs	Promoting and supporting Brent School Partnership to lead Brent schools strategically

Brent Education Commission Plan (Appendix 9)

The local authority is ambitious for change and key local stakeholders agree on the need for a new approach that responds to the changing educational landscape. The Education Commission Report outlined the need to develop education strategy and leadership in Brent so it better fits the changing landscape. It also identified five areas where change is necessary and suggested areas for development in:

- Improving Strategic Leadership of Education across the Borough
- Planning school places
- Knowing Brent schools
- Promoting and supporting school –to-school networks Meeting
- Providing challenge to address weaknesses
- Improving school governance

A high level action plan has been prepared, in consultation with representatives of the Brent Schools Partnership, to take forward recommendations of the Brent Education Commission. Further engagement with schools, both head teachers and governing bodies, will take place over coming months to ensure wider understanding of the implications of the Education Commission findings and the virtues of a partnership and school-to-school approach to addressing the issues.

More detailed managerial implementation plans are being developed for each priority area. A number of activities are already completed or underway in order to ensure appropriate pace and impact on outcomes.

Brent School Effectiveness Strategy (Appendix 10)

The local authority has a statutory duty ‘to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential in schools so that all children and young people benefit from at least a good education’ (The Education Act 2011). The framework sets out the local authority’s role working in partnership with local schools and other maintained settings to ensure that all schools in the borough are judged as good or better within three years.

The framework stresses the importance of school-led and collaborative solutions and the concept of a self-improving school system alongside the statutory role of the local authority in relation to monitoring, challenge, support and intervention. The framework builds on the work already undertaken to develop school-led partnerships and school-to-school support. The strategy is designed to establish a shared responsibility for school improvement and effectiveness.

The strategic framework draws on the findings and recommendations made in the recent Education Commission report, *Ambitious for All: a shared responsibility*, which was endorsed by elected members in June 2014. The framework reflects the emphasis placed by the commission on the responsibility of the wider education community for the education of all children and for school effectiveness, fulfilling an objective in the Education Commission’s Action Plan.

The principles underpinning the *School Effectiveness Framework* have been agreed with all framework partners and are embodied in the ‘memorandum of understanding’ agreed between the Brent School Partnership (BSP), teaching school alliances and the local authority.

- Every school is an improving school
- Underperformance is identified at an early stage, robustly challenged and concerns are addressed
- All schools in the borough have shared ownership for the education of all children in every Brent school, and successful schools support lower performing schools
- The local authority acts as a champion for children and young people by holding schools to account for the standards they achieve
- School-led and collaborative approaches to school effectiveness are supported by schools through the active participation of local schools, including with the local authority, brokering, commissioning and quality assuring provision.
- All education partners work to build the capacity and effectiveness of the BSP and teaching school alliances
- Schools that are struggling draw on the wider capacity and expertise of other Brent schools
- Governing bodies are recognised as an important force for support, challenge and improvement which require support and investment in their development

- The quality of education is the main priority for determining decisions about school expansion, and providing sufficient school places of good quality is the responsibility of the entire educational community in Brent.

Child Poverty Strategy

The strategy sets out 6 key priorities to reduce and mitigate the levels of poverty in Brent over the next ten years. The strategy also demonstrates at which point in a child's lifecycle certain actions should be taken. A comprehensive review of the strategy will take place every three years until 2021 to allow sufficient time for any subsequent changes to be made and also factor in any further changes such as the impact of welfare reforms.

Our Priorities:

- Priority 1 Reduce poverty levels of children living in low income households
- Priority 2 Supporting troubled families
- Priority 3 Reduction in the NEET group
- Priority 4 Improve financial capacity of parents
- Priority 5 Support Looked after Children & Children at the edge of care
- Priority 6 Improve the health and wellbeing of children with a focus on reducing obesity, tooth decay and poor mental health

Our Vision

Our vision is that Brent is recognised as a centre of excellence in the effective use of the Pupil Premium. In Brent Schools and settings Pupil Premium is used to have the greatest impact; and contributes to raising attainment and achieving wider borough objectives.

Key Learning and Insight:

The task group believe that all children disadvantaged or not, are likely to do better in higher quality schools. One of Brent's priorities is improving school quality by raising overall achievement. Moreover, school improvement has a large role to play in narrowing the gap because the achievement gain in moving from an inadequate school to an outstanding school is bigger for those who are the most disadvantaged. Mitigating the effects of child poverty and reducing it are key drivers of improving children and families' health and wellbeing. Children and young people should be able to enjoy their education and achieve the best results they can. We will raise educational standards at all key stages and close attainment gaps between groups.

Linked Recommendations:

Recommendation 1

LB Brent and Brent Schools Partnership develop a borough wide strategy for the use of PPG through the implementation of the Education Commission Action Plan – Ambitious for All. The Strategy is to be monitored by the Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership Board and should include:

- ***networking & sharing good practice***
- ***the sharing of information***
- ***the sharing of resources***
- ***training for Teachers and additional support to School Governing Bodies***

****This will require a clearly outlined and smooth transition of services currently being delivered by the LB Brent, School Effectiveness service.***

8.3 Coordinated Schools Strategic Leadership

There are a number of groups working in Brent to improve educational and life outcomes for young people. These groups often work in partnership and the task group want to encourage and support this to happen in a much more strategic and coordinated manner. These groups include:

The Brent Schools Partnership

The Brent Schools Partnership (BSP) is a network of schools which have come together with the common aim of securing the best possible outcomes for children and young people in the London Borough of Brent. The aim of BSP is to support each other to provide high quality educational opportunities in all Brent schools and colleges.

As part of the partnership agreement, BSP will:

- Provide support for school improvement.
- Establish on-going business support for schools.
- Develop a network of Specialist Centres.
- Establish the Brent Improving Schools Consortium (BISC).
- Facilitate and provide staff training opportunities.
- Develop a network of communication and improved school collaboration.

On more than one occasion it was mentioned by schools that they were not members of BSP or had not renewed their membership because of cost. One school stated that because of its small size surely a reduced rate could be sought.

72 Brent schools signed up to BSP in 2013-14 and the task group recognises that this represents a high proportion of schools. However, on more than one occasion it was mentioned by schools that they were not members of BSP or had not renewed their membership because of cost. One school stated that because of its small size surely a reduced rate could be sought.

The task group recognises that sustainable funding arrangements are important for the BSP's continued evolution and so that it can increase the value it adds across the Borough. BSP has moved to a new charging structure this year which is designed to ensure that they are able to provide ever improving support and develop the infrastructure for growth. The task group believes that the BSP is vital as a vehicle for schools to network, share effective practice and support one another. We therefore urge BSP and schools to continue to work together to find innovative and creative ways which will enable all schools to take advantage of support from BSP and from one another.

Brent Teaching School Alliance (BTSA)

The Brent Teaching School Alliance is a cross phase strategic partnership group, accredited by National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) and led by Byron Court Outstanding

School. Their mission is to ensure that through collaboration, innovation, engagement and excellence that standards of teaching and learning are raised, resulting in improved pupil progress and attainment for every pupil in Brent and beyond.

Byron Court is the lead school for the Brent Teaching School Alliance with 9 strategic partners: the Institute of Education, Claremont High School Academy, Oliver Goldsmith Primary School, Sudbury Primary School, Mount Stewart Junior School, Uxendon Primary School, Wembley Learning Zone, the Gateway Teaching School Alliance and the Brent Schools Partnership (BSP).

BTSA are working in the following key areas: Initial Teacher Training, NQT Induction, CPD and Leadership Development, Research and Development, School to School Support (SLEs and NLEs) and Professional Learning Networks.

Woodfield Teaching School Alliance

The Woodfield Teaching School Alliance (WTSA) has been established as a National College Teaching School for three years. Its focus is on 'Exploring New Educational Landscapes' leading the way to success through quality and research. WTSA recruits trainee teachers, who are based at schools in its alliance. There is a comprehensive portfolio of professional training courses suitable for all professionals from teaching assistants to senior leaders.

WTSA supports other schools, to improve the learning and achievement of their pupils. Research into effective practice and Quality Assurance underpin its development. Alongside its Outstanding and Teaching School status, it meets the Institute of Education's professional development Gold quality mark, its highest level.

Brent Schools Forum

The Schools Forum is not a Committee of the Local Authority, it is a separate statutory body set up to provide a formal mechanism for schools' views on funding and other issues to be brought to the attention of the Local Authority (local authority) under the Schools Forum (England) Regulations 2012. Members of the Forum are representing the interests of their sectors rather than their individual school and consist of a mix of secondary, primary and early years Head teachers, governing bodies and non school members.

The Forum can consider and make recommendations to the local authority on the following issues:

- The Schools Budget
- The Scheme of Delegation and any proposed changes to it
- The funding formula and any proposed changes to it
- Arrangements for Special Educational Needs within the Schools Budget
- Arrangements for the Pupil Referral Units and out of school education
- Arrangements for early years education
- School related insurance
- Administrative arrangements for grants paid via the local authority
- The funding of Free School Meals
- Service contracts to be let by the local authority where the contract is paid or will be paid from the Authority's schools budget

- The schools' Asset Management Plan
- Any other financial issues affecting schools

London Borough of Lambeth – Case study and example of competence

As part of the research element of the review, the task group visited the London Borough of Lambeth and met with the Director of Education, Learning and Skills. The task group found that Lambeth has narrowed the gap between its pupil premium pupils at key stage 2 and at key stage 4 between 2011 and 2013. At KS4 the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers closed by 9.6 percentage points and 60.5% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the benchmark, 19.6ppt above the national average. At KS2 the gap in FSM pupils' achievement of mathematics at L4 closed by 9ppt in the same time period and 88% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the benchmark, 11ppt above the national average

Summary of the local authority's key features contributing to its success:

- The local authority provides an effective school improvement service with the credibility to support and challenge. Since 2010 the local authority has focused more on facilitating, convening and leading to support schools in becoming more sustainable.
- The local authority gives a strong and consistent message to its schools on the performance of disadvantaged pupils.
- The local authority has encouraged federation, teaching schools (there are 2 in the borough) and sharing of good practice.
- There is a strong cluster structure with families of schools. The focus of the clusters is to narrow the gap for all underachieving groups and to accelerate high achievers. The clusters involve a number of different networks such as those for head teachers, business managers and outreach workers. These are all school-led.
- The lead head in each cluster attends a Head Teacher Council Executive meeting which meets with senior officers 6 times a year and gives schools direct access to the Director of Education, Learning and Skills
- There is a collaborative culture amongst schools promoted by the cluster structure. One example of this partnership working is the cluster based on Woodman Sterne Primary School, which works with local schools to share Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provision. The cluster also shares in the provision of an education welfare officer. Clusters develop inter-school working parties to support their work such as improving their early years foundation stage and Special educational needs and disability provision.
- The local authority has built a strong data and research base on which to build effective practice and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- The head of the local authority's Virtual School is treated in the same way as any other head teacher and has an attached school improvement adviser.

Specific actions:

- At the beginning of the autumn term the local authority distributes a thorough data pack to all its schools which is used by schools and their school improvement advisers (SIA) as it gives a detailed profile for each institution and compares each school with other schools in the local authority and those nationally

- The local authority used Ofsted's February 2013 report on the pupil premium to develop a series of questions for schools to ask themselves about improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- The local authority takes a strategic look at the performance of all its pupils every term, using the schools' data across all year groups not just those at the end of key stages.
- The local authority encourages all their teachers to know who their disadvantaged pupils are and suggests evaluation of specific classroom interventions
- SIAs look at the quality of teaching on each termly visit.
- The local authority brokers specific CPD provision, which has been particularly effective in phonics for example. The local authority also checks the quality of the training and assesses its impact. Secondary CPD is focussed on specific school need as part of local authority action plans to support for example Requires Improvement (RI) schools. *This targeted intervention on for example more able pupils in mathematics has been very effective.*
- SIAs work with schools to carry out a detailed evaluation of their strategies and interventions.

There is scope for Brent Schools Partnership to coordinate their efforts further and share more with other schools:

- **Share Good Practice**
Build on established networks to share teaching practices that improve outcomes for children and establish itself as a centre of excellence.
- **Share Information**
Share data and information which will help schools to identify trends, make informed decisions and planning for their future needs.
- **Share Resources – including teaching staff**
Schools could benefit from sharing and pooling their resources e.g. commissioning in PPG services (economies of scale). Share specialist teaching staff and develop a strategy for retaining good and outstanding teachers.
- **Providing Quality Training for Teachers and School Governing Bodies**
Provide high quality training to Brent Teachers and School Governing bodies, so that all of our schools are of the highest quality and the attainment needs of all of our children (disadvantaged or non disadvantaged) are met.

Key Learning and Insight:

The task group learned that to improve outcomes for all children requires good strategic partnership working, where schools take the lead. Good quality data provided centrally is also essential; schools can benchmark themselves against other schools locally and nationally. Schools should be in a position to network and use local support from the council and other partners to improve performance and attainment.

Linked Recommendations:

Recommendation 2

The School Effectiveness Partnership Board promotes the benefits of BSP to the whole community of schools so all schools become members and benefit from its support and services.

Recommendation 4

Pupil Premium and PPG related updates are to be standing agenda items at the Brent Head Teachers and School Governors annual conferences.

Recommendation 5

BSP, Brent and Woodfield Teaching Schools Alliance (BTSA & WTSA) continue their work with schools to ensure high quality teaching across Brent's schools and that outstanding teachers and support staff are being attracted, retained and developed across the borough.

8.4 Looked After Children and Children Excluded From School

Looked After Children

In 2014-15 there were several changes to the Pupil Premium grant which is now called the Pupil Premium plus Grant for looked after children. There are also changes to how it is distributed to schools. For the 2014-15 financial years, there is a notional allocation for looked after children of £1900, an increase of £1000 per pupil. This funding is available for all children looked after who have been in care for at least one day in year groups R-11. As the local authority that looks after the child we will continue to be responsible for distributing the Pupil Premium Plus payments to schools and academies. This will mean that the schools who have children on roll looked after by other local authorities will receive the funding from the 'corporate parent' authority for the child.

The biggest change in the allocation of the funding is that the Virtual School Head Teacher has responsibility and accountability for making sure that there are effective arrangements in place for allocating Pupil Premium Plus funding to benefit children looked after by their authority. Each Virtual Head must develop a policy for allocation of the funding for the local authority. The grant must be managed by the Virtual School and used to improve outcomes and "narrow the gap" as identified in the Personal Education Plan (PEP) in consultation with the Designated Teacher for the school. How the funding is to be spent will be discussed during the child's Personal Education Planning meeting but must be used efficiently and effectively. As a result, the Personal Education Plan (PEP) will need to be monitored even more closely by the Designated Teacher, the Virtual School team, the Social Worker, Team Leaders and Independent Reviewing Officers. The PEP will now be required to be reviewed on a termly basis.

In Brent, the policy is to allocate a fixed amount of £1300 to schools to support financial planning and the different support needs of the child. The Personal Education Plan (PEP) needs to be agreed by the Virtual Head, Designated Teacher and child's Social Worker. The remaining £600 for each child will be retained centrally and has been arranged to be spent on career guidance and interventions projects delivered during school holidays. Schools and Virtual Heads are mindful that any centrally held grant cannot be carried forward into a new financial year, and unspent grant will be recovered by the DfE after 31 March 2015.

The DfE have also introduced a new category of Pupil Premium Plus that will be paid separately to schools for children who are 'Post-LAC'. These are children who have left care under a Special Guardianship Order, a Residence Order or as a result of Adoption from care. Schools attract £1900 for every child identified as being adopted from care/post-LAC on the

January School Census. This is additional funding given to schools to improve the educational and personal outcomes for pupils who have been adopted from care, including (but not limited to) their attainment.

Children adopted from care and post-LAC are no longer looked after and Virtual School Heads do not have a role in promoting their achievement. Individual schools are responsible for the educational outcomes of children adopted from care/post-LAC on roll and therefore are best placed to decide how to use the Pupil Premium to support these pupils. Schools may wish to discuss the measures they are putting in place with the parents and guardians of the pupils concerned.

It is unfortunate that the national picture for improving the attainment gap for Looked after Children is poor and is on a downward trend. Brent's LAC Key stage 4 attainment figures fell by 10% to 9% in 2013-14 academic year, compared to the national average of 20%. Brent's LAC attainment is also below that of its statistical neighbours. As corporate parents it is the direct responsibility of the local authority to ensure that we are doing our very best to improve the outcomes for LAC Children; there must be improvements. Member challenge is provided through the Corporate Parenting Committee which scrutinised the LAC education attainment report at its meeting in December 2014. After discussions with Brent's Virtual Head teacher it was highlighted that there is scope for more cohesive working between LAC Children Social workers and the Inclusion and Alternative Education team.

Key Stage 4 Outcomes			
	Brent Average 2012/13	LAC 2012/13 (Cohort of 43)	LAC 2013/14 (Cohort of 33)
5A* - C	81%	19%	9%
5 A* - C (incl. English & Maths)	62%	19%	9%
5 A* - G	98%	60%	39%
1 A* - G	98%	77%	85%

*NB the turnover of LAC entering and leaving care means that the figures produced in any report can only provide a snapshot of the cohort at that that particular period of time; therefore outcomes can fluctuate from year to year (*Appendix 11*)

The Corporate Parenting committee should be checking that PEPS completed and monitored. The figure was 85.51% in 2013/14. The impact should be reported in the same way as schools have to monitor and report PPG impact. As members and the council are corporate parents, they would want to know the impact, just as parents in a school do or again OFSTED formally requests. Listening to what the children have to say (their voice) about their educational experience is important and perhaps the Corporate Parenting Committee provide a summary of this, as this is in their remit – for the Annual report, the Celebrating Achievement Event and other appropriate places.

The percentage of LAC children in residential, special schools and Alternative Education Provision is significant, 66.6% have special educational needs and their emotional and behavioural health is often a cause for concern. However, despite poor outcomes, overall there have been year on year improvements for most measures.

As children only spend 13% of their time at school and the majority of their time at home with family, their parents or foster carers in this case plays a large part in supporting children, both

academically and emotionally. Ensuring foster carers are well informed and equipped to empower and encourage children to do well is vital. The annual Celebrating Achievement event referred to is a good place to recognise the joint work between schools, foster carers, social workers and the Virtual School team/support and to promote the success of PPG for LAC more informally. Corporate parents should be encouraged to attend and hear their children's outcomes.

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

March 2015 NHS England published the 'Future in Mind: Children and Young People's Mental Wellbeing' report which stated that many schools already support their pupils' mental health. But there is more that can be done to help schools develop knowledge about mental health, identify issues when they arise and offer early support. The NHS and Department for Health taskforce are developing work which supports teaching mental health with the PSHE Association, and are developing a new strategy to encourage more and better use of counselling in schools.

One in ten children needs support or treatment for mental health problems. These range from short spells of depression or anxiety through to severe and persistent conditions that can isolate, disrupt and frighten those who experience them. Mental health problems in young people can result in lower educational attainment (for example, children with conduct disorder are twice as likely as other children to leave school with no qualifications) and are strongly associated with behaviours that pose a risk to their health, such as smoking, drug and alcohol abuse and risky sexual behaviour.

Teachers and other people who work in schools, should understand emotional and mental health in children and young people, and know what to do and where to go if they are worried about you or those who care for you. Delivering this means making some real changes across the whole system. It means the NHS, public health, local authorities, social care, schools and youth justice sectors working together to:

- Place the emphasis on building resilience, promoting good mental health, prevention and early intervention
- Improving communications, referrals and access to support through every area having named points of contact in specialist mental health services and schools. This would include integrating mental health specialists directly into schools and GP practices.
- Encouraging schools to continue to develop whole school approaches to promoting mental health and wellbeing through a new counselling strategy for schools, alongside the Department for Education's other work on character and resilience and PSHE.

The Department for Education (DfE) is leading work to improve the quality of teaching about mental health in Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) lessons in schools, and is developing an evidence-based schools counselling strategy to encourage more and better use of counsellors in schools. In addition, DfE has invested £36 million to develop and sustain evidence-based interventions for children in care, on the edge of care or custody and adopted children and their families, such as multisystemic therapy.

Excluded Children

When disadvantaged pupils face fixed term exclusions (maximum of 45 days in any one school year), the PPG money allocated to that child stays with the school and is not transferred or shared with the Pupil referral Unit (PRU). A child, who spent the maximum nine weeks away from mainstream education, would miss out on specifically allocated funds that

would aid in their attainment. If a child is permanently excluded then the money is to follow the child, however there is no set timeframe as to how long the transfer will take.

The task group spoke with a Brent PRU Manager, who stated that it sometimes takes quite a while for funds to be transferred for permanently excluded children. For children who are excluded for a fixed term period, if some funds were transferred this could aid in their support while they are at the PRU. This would however need to be looked at on a case by case basis.

Exclusions in LB Brent Schools, by exclusion type & year						
<i>The data covers all exclusions at Brent schools & PRUs from 31/8/10 through to 31/12/13.</i>						
ACADEMIC YEAR	EXCLUSION TYPE					
	<i>FIXED-TERM</i>		<i>PERMANENT</i>		<i>TOTAL</i>	
	Exclusions	Pupils	Exclusions	Pupils	Exclusions	Pupils
2010-11	2100	1297	45	45	2145	1305
2011-12	2068	1272	31	31	2099	1276
2012-13	1599	996	24	24	1623	999
Term 1, 2013-14	521	412	15	15	536	413

The exclusion trends for Brent seem to be decreasing but we still record the highest LAC exclusions of all our statistical neighbours. Unfortunately data on Brent children who are excluded from school and who are in receipt of PPG is not readily available. This unfortunately begs the question if we are unable identify these children and are unaware of the numbers; how do we ensure this group receives the support it needs and does not slip through the net?

Key Learning and Insight:

After analysing the data on Looked after Children (LAC) the task group felt that as corporate parents of LAC, we need to do a much better job; starting with achieving 100 percent of Personal Education Plans (PEPS) for Looked After Children are completed to the highest quality. The task group felt that further analysis is required for disadvantaged children who were excluded from school. Children, who are excluded for a fixed period, could also benefit from additional targeted support when attending PRUs.

Linked Recommendations:

Recommendation 6

LB Brent develops specific targeted approaches to closing the attainment gap for Looked After Children (LAC) which are monitored regularly by the Corporate Parenting Committee. This should include:

- ***Empowering foster carers to engage fully with schools.***
- ***Strengthening working relationships between foster carers, designated teachers and social workers.***
- ***Ensure 100 percent of Personal Education Plans (PEPS) for Looked After Children are completed to the highest quality.***

- ***Tracking the progress of Looked After Children, identifying and investing in successful interventions: - reporting and identifying impact.***

Recommendation 16

Further analysis is conducted by LB Brent and Schools into fixed term exclusions of PPG children and practical ways schools can continue to support PPG children if excluded to the borough's Pupil Referral Units (PRU).

8.5 Innovation and Advancement of Education

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) is an independent grant-making charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and educational achievement, ensuring that children from all backgrounds can fulfil their potential and make the most of their talents.

The EEF believes that the use of evidence can make a real difference by helping schools spend money more effectively to improve the teaching and learning of children from low-income families and is why the EEF invests in evidence-based projects which focus on tackling the attainment gap. The ideas are tested rigorously and everything is independently evaluated by top research institutions. The vast majority of the projects that the EEF fund are run as randomised controlled trials, while the rest use evaluative designs or are developmental pilot projects.

The EEF publicly report all the results of these independent evaluations. These could be included in a Teaching and Learning Toolkit so that schools have the best possible evidence on which to base their own professional judgements. Those interventions which are shown to be most effective could be extended. When the task group met with the EEF there appeared to be a number of projects that Brent schools could get involved with either individually or borough wide and it is suggested that the Brent Schools Partnership and the LB Brent enter in to discussions with the EEF.

The EEF also encourages schools to conduct its own evaluation and has produced a guide to help schools run their own small projects. The DIY Evaluation Guide is a resource for teachers and schools which introduces the key principles of educational evaluation and provides practical advice on designing and carrying out small-scale evaluations in schools. The aim of the DIY Evaluation Guide is not to replace evidence from large-scale evaluations such as those conducted by the EEF, but is intended to help teachers and schools understand whether a particular intervention is effective within their own school context.

The findings from the task group's review found that many schools had invested their PPG money in non academic interventions and programmes which enrich the lives of children. However schools found it challenging to directly link those interventions to impacts, where children were more confident or showed behavioural improvements. Schools believe that there is not enough recognition from central government or Ofsted of the importance on providing a holistic educational experience that supports children not just to achieve academically; but also emotionally and socially.

The Kingsbury Guarantee (Appendix 12)

Whilst visiting Kingsbury secondary school the task group came across a very good example of where a holistic education experience was being provided. Students in years seven are expected to complete a portfolio of their experiences which is called "The Kingsbury

Guarantee.” All of this culminates in a graduation ceremony at the end of Year 8 when students and parents come together to celebrate the successes of the first two years. The hope is this firm foundation will enable students to accelerate in Year 9 and go on to examination success at the end of Year 11.

The Kingsbury Guarantee is a series of experiences which the school guarantees to its students. These experiences will help to show the full range of the student’s talents and abilities.

The Guarantee includes:

- Personal development such as being able to show good manners
- Performance such as presentation skills
- Enrichment opportunities such as residential experience.
- The curriculum such as extended homework projects
- Contribution to society such as community work
- Involvement in the wider life of the school such as contributing to organising/running a school event.

To graduate from the Kingsbury Curriculum, students will need to have fulfilled the Kingsbury Guarantee with the portfolio showing their success over the two years.

Students will also need to:

- Make good progress in their subjects compared with the levels the students came to the school with.
- Show they work in class without disrupting those around them.
- Achieve a good level of attendance and punctuality.

All the schools consulted by the task group used both whole school and targeted interventions with allocated PPG money. Many schools recognise that not all pupils who are academically or socially disadvantaged are registered for free school meals, and as such reserved the right to allocate Pupil Premium funding to support any pupil, or group of pupils, identified by the school as being at a significant disadvantage.

Use of Pupil premium at Christ Church C of E Primary School Brent

Last year in line with a range of research findings, which suggest that music has many benefits including improving memory and increasing attention, the school decided to use some of their pupil premium funding to facilitate music tuition for 20 students, 10 of who were pupil premium children. All of the pupil premium children made expected or above expected progress in the core curriculum subjects Reading (90% above) Writing and Mathematics (70% above). It was also very noticeable that the confidence of these children had increased alongside their academic progress. This was demonstrated during their performances at assemblies and at the schools musical recital. In addition it was noted that the behaviour of some children had noticeably improved with a reduction in the number of white slips (behavioural warnings) issued. The success of these pupils was inspirational.

As a result of this success, the school have now widened access to music to all of their children. Brent Music service currently delivers instrumental tuition to years 2 – 6.



Key Learning and Insight:

The task group recognised that Brent schools are already very innovative and creative with their interventions on closing the attainment gap. There were wonderful examples of Brent secondary and primary schools trying unconventional interventions and being able to show impact and improved outcomes for children. However advancements in education attainment are continuously evolving and to keep abreast of this, requires constant research and trials, which should be embedded as part of day to day life in schools.

Linked Recommendations:

Recommendation 7

During 2015 BSP along with the LB Brent begins scoping a borough wide project and applies to work with the Education Endowment Foundation. In particular projects which focus on the Transition between Primary and Secondary school, English as an Additional Language (EAL) and projects focusing on children arriving from Eastern Europe.

Recommendation 8

The LB Brent in partnership with BSP encourages schools to find alternative methods for recording non academic/formative learning (e.g. music, sports, arts and social development) which support attainment and support schools to engage with Ofsted regarding the evaluation of these interventions.

8.6 What do our young people want?

Listening to the voices of young people is vital to ensuring an approach that includes both educational attainment and achieving aspirational goals. The task group consulted with Brent's young people, through the Brent Youth Parliament and through visits to primary and Secondary schools. The task group spoke with young people from years 3-11 (ages 4-16). Their comments varied across the age ranges with younger children wanting more creative activities like trips and excursions.

Our young people really enjoy learning and gave lots of praise to their teacher's, but wished there was more support in the class room and more teachers who inspired them to learn.

"I really enjoyed going on the team building day, I got to go canoeing. I was really scared that I was going to fall in and I started to cry, but the teacher and my friends reassured me. I felt better and I gave it a go, I was really proud of myself. "

"I like going to Yoga club, it's fun and it's good exercise"

"My teacher is very nice; she helps me when I get stuck with my work. My friends also help me in the classroom."

"My family moved out of the borough and I have to travel two hours to school, the school got me an iPad so that I can revise and do some of my homework on the train."

"We really need career advice, so that we can pick the right subject and be prepared for when we leave school. We don't get to do work experience anymore; employers want you to have work experience."

Older children who the task group consulted with stated that they wanted more support preparing for the work place once they leave school, specifically careers advice. The council's impending Employment and Enterprise Strategy incorporates outcomes for improving employment chances for young people.

Employment and Enterprise strategy

The Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy for Brent sets out how Brent aims to capitalise on these growth opportunities, by ensuring that the new investment brings new jobs as well as new homes and by making sure that the Borough's established businesses and residents are able to benefit first hand from the new opportunities created. It sets out how local partners from across the public, private and voluntary sectors aim to work together to ensure that both existing and future generations of Brent residents are best positioned to capitalise on London's growth.

The Role of Partnership

The success of this strategy will be wholly dependent on the strength and commitment of the partnerships that oversee and deliver it. Brent Council will make full use of its existing powers, influence and leverage to support business and promote growth and employment, but the vast majority of resources and skills necessary to achieve the outcomes set out in this strategy reside in other organisations – the private sector who provide the jobs, the community and voluntary sector who are closest to local people, the schools and college who educate our young people and the national organisations who deliver the mainstream employment programmes. For its part, the Council will endeavour to bring together the right partners in the right places and the right time to deliver meaningful interventions and will continue to play a role in working with the Mayor of London, the London Enterprise Panel and other local authorities to make the case for a greater devolution of powers and resources in relation to skills and employment.

In order to address structural employment issues in the Borough, it is critical that our young people leave school with the qualifications, skills and ambitions necessary to compete successfully in the labour market. Brent's 14-19 Partnership oversees this work. The partnership's existing statement of priorities (2010-2014) seeks to ensure that young people from all Brent's communities are engaged in high quality education and training that:

- Is tailored to meet their needs, abilities and aspirations;
- Develops their skills for employment, lifelong-learning and active participation in the local community and wider society; and
- Celebrates the diversity, vibrancy and uniqueness of this borough.

It goes on to state that:

The Partnership will take collective responsibility to provide exceptional opportunities for all our young people to follow academic, vocational and work-based routes that ensure:

- Participation of all 14-19 year olds in education and training;
- Improved attainment including high value-added and retention;
- Breadth of choice at each transition stage;
- Clear progression pathways and increased participation at Level 4;
- Impartial advice and guidance for young people and their parents;
- Targeted support to raise the achievement of under-performing groups;
- Enhanced support for young people with learning difficulties and learning disabilities;
- Early identification and intervention for young people at risk before and during the 14-19 phase; and
- The needs of local communities and the local economy are met.

As a new partnership statement is agreed in the coming year, there will be continual synergies with this Strategy.

Strategic Objective & Outcomes for Young People

The Council will work with developers to ensure that new jobs are a critical part of growth in the Borough's growth areas and in particular in Wembley and Park Royal. Developers themselves will be expected to directly provide local employment and apprenticeship

opportunities during the construction phases of their schemes. They will also be encouraged to work with local schools to help raise the knowledge and aspirations of the world of work to the Borough's young people. The Council will use its planning powers to facilitate this and will work with partners to ensure that there is a supply of local jobseekers ready to take up the opportunities.

By 2020 there will be a close partnership between local schools and businesses. All young people will leave education with the skills and attitudes needed to compete successfully in the labour market. The key local vehicle for driving up educational achievement in Brent at Key Stages 4 and 5 is the Borough's 14-19 Partnership. The work of this partnership will be fundamental to young people leaving school and college with the academic foundations and qualifications that will prepare them for the world of work. It is not the purpose of the Employment, Skills and Enterprise strategy to replicate the priorities of the 14-19 Partnership.

However, it remains the case that there are still too many young people leaving school ill-equipped to actively engage in the labour market. Consultation with local businesses suggests that too many young people are still lacking the 'employability' skills needed to be successful in the work place. As the demands of the labour market evolve it will be increasingly important that Brent's young people achieve their maximum potential academically – increasingly for example those people without a higher level qualification will find it far more difficult to compete in the high value London labour market. It will be important that the local education community responds to these challenges.

Across the Borough the relationship between the education and business communities is fragmented and often weak. The business community stresses the importance of strengthening this relationship in order to help prepare young people for work. It will therefore be important to build this relationship in a structured way – ensuring that young people are given early access to the opportunities, rigours and requirements of the world of work through work experience, visits and collaborative projects. More formally, there is scope locally to better promote traineeships as a pathway to employment, and apprenticeships as a pathway to a fulfilling and successful career for young people.

Key Learning and Insight:

The task group found that it is not just formal academic or vocational qualifications which hamper young people's chances of securing employment. National and regional research indicates a lack of 'employability' skills – for example, Basic English language and financial numeracy - as a significant barrier for employers looking to recruit. The consultation exercise conducted as part of the Employment & Enterprise strategy identified this as a significant issue in Brent, particularly amongst young people and those for whom English is a second language (EAL).

Linked Recommendations:

Recommendation 9

BSP to encourage schools to employ (and possibly share as a resource) Careers Advisors. This will provide a mechanism for increasing the numbers of available work experience opportunities and the participation of Brent's pupils in work-based skills development.

8.7 Supporting Parents and Building Self-Resilience

During the task group's consultation with schools, early years settings and local authority officers, it was stated from a number of sources that parents needed additional support. Services for children need to consider how to engage further with parents and empower them to support the progress of their child by:

- Understanding what is happening with their child at school.
- Encouraging study and attainment to reinforce messages in the school environment.
- Filling in forms for free school meals etc.
- Co-operating with teachers and schools.
- Understanding the areas where their child needs to make progress and the standards that are expected.

This may mean undertaking training, courses on effective home learning techniques for parents; changing mind set and learning skills that parents need to grow aspiration and become role models for their children. Parents should be encouraged to draw on various resources such as parental engagement and involvement in schools e.g. attending parents evenings and meetings regarding school curriculum, children's homework, teaching maths, using tablets and computers with their child etc.

- Parents' attending local children's centres and Parents Forums (parent voice).
- Adult learning through Brent Start, schools and children's centres.
- Voluntary and community groups – support and volunteering.
- Website information and newsletters (school).
- School liaison officer if available

Employment & Training

Disadvantaged families will be able to benefit from the focused employment and training work taking place in the borough. The Employment & Enterprise Strategy states that by 2020, the gap in employment levels between priority neighbourhoods and communities and the borough as a whole will be halved. The Brent Regeneration Strategy identifies the priority neighbourhoods as Stonebridge, Harlesden, South Kilburn, St Raphael's Estate, Chalkhill and Church End. This outcome is specifically focussed on breaking the cycle of worklessness and poverty in these areas.

The proposed solution is to work with local communities to develop tailored approaches to addressing the particular issues faced in each neighbourhood. The essence of the approach is to support a local infrastructure that brings together the local knowledge and expertise of voluntary and community organisations on the ground with the resources and access to jobs of the mainstream employment services. This partnership will then seek to identify every workless resident in an area and support them into employment. It will also seek to work with young people in the neighbourhoods to prevent them falling into unemployment. The approach has been developed through the Whole Place Community Budget programme in St Raphaels, but is also well advanced in Harlesden.

Free School Meals

There has been a significant drop in the number of eligible pupils and The Brent Admissions Policy and Appeals Team have undertaken a programme to promote take up of Free School Meals (FSM) as it is the gateway benefit for the pupil premium. This was particularly aimed at KS1 pupils last year who became eligible for a meal whether they applied or not. A poster (*Appendix 13*) was sent to every school for your information. The team will be revising this for the next academic year. The team also worked with schools and early years setting's to promote take up. The poster and the form (*Appendix 14*) was sense checked by two Brent Head Teachers before it was published, and an advert was placed in the Brent Magazine before the summer holidays last year.

The Department for Work and Pensions portal is used to verify eligibility and parents are not required to re-apply annually, the team simply check their continuing eligibility. Many schools are making the completion of the FSM form a part of the admissions process to ensure parents understand the importance and the benefit for their child. The Brent Admissions Policy and Appeals Team are aware that we need to keep reinforcing the message and has begun analysing trends around take up numbers.

From an administrative point of view, many families in Brent are not eligible for FSM because they are now working part time (16 hours) which makes them ineligible. This could be a direct impact of the Welfare Reform and the Local Housing Allowance cap. In broad terms, finding employment is the most direct way for households to mitigate the impact of welfare reform and there is big push from the council to increase employment in the borough. To date, 351 of the councils 966 welfare reform cases have been resolved with employment.

Another significant factor is that many of the newly arrived children from overseas are from working families on low incomes. The fall in PPG eligibility numbers unfortunately co-insides with an overall growth in pupil numbers.

Number of children eligible for FSM from the last 3 years of the census:

	January 2013	January 2014	January 2015
No of children eligible for FSM	11254	8890	7495

Key Learning and Insight:

Identifying parents who need support early will be key to improving attainment and closing the gap. Data shows that the gap often occur during early years, this is a time when parents need to have the parental skills to ensure that their child's progress is on track and they are not underperforming. The task group welcome the Early Years PPG (April 2015) and believe that work with early years setting will be essential to the grant being implemented and utilised effectively.

Linked Recommendations:

Recommendation 10

An increased coordinated effort by the LB Brent, Community of Brent Schools, Brent Early Years Settings including Children Centres and parents in completing Free School

Meal application forms. In particular, the task group would welcome efforts to remove the stigma from making applications and the promotion of the idea that extra funding will benefit all young people in the borough.

Recommendation 11

Early Years Settings to identify eligible children at 3 and 4 years of age and promote the extra support available. This information should follow the child into school.

Recommendation 12

LB Brent and BSP to continue to work within the Early Years Settings and build on the success of the 2015 Early Years (EYs) Conference, where PPG was an agenda item. The conference might follow up with case studies from the pilot authorities.

Recommendation 13

Schools and the Early Years Settings increase their efforts with support of BSP (sharing effective practice) to empower and engage parents on ways to provide support to their children, including encouraging them to take up adult learning opportunities and access any additional support that the family requires.

9. Conclusion

The task group has sought to make this report as comprehensive as possible given the time and resources available. It makes a range of significant recommendations which, when implemented, are likely to lead to improved outcomes for disadvantaged children in Brent. All of the schools involved in the consultation are striving for outstanding, not only for their own performances, but for the educational experience and outcomes for their pupils. The report sets out ways in which by working strategically with our partners, government and non government organisations, the Brent family of schools, Brent Schools Partnership and the local authority can make a difference to our young people. The task group want to highlight the negative impacts that poor attainment and low achievement have on young people, their futures and the boroughs worklessness and poverty. All the members of the task group are passionate advocates for the improvement of educational attainment for Brent children and will continue to highlight it at every possible opportunity.

10. Participants, References and List of Appendix

Participants:

London Borough of Brent:	Strategic Director Children's Services
	Operational Director Early Help and Education
	Head of Inclusion and Alternative Education
	School Improvement Lead -Secondary/14-19
	Strategic Coordinator for School Improvement
	Head of Early Years and Family Support
Brent Schools & Governing Bodies:	St Gregory's Catholic School
	Alperton Community School
	Kingsbury High School
	Wembley Primary School
	Mitchell Brook Primary School
	Christ Church Primary School
	Wykeham Primary School
	Stag Lane Pupil Referral Unit
	Christ Church C of E Primary
Children Centres:	Wembley Children's Centre
	Church Lane Children's Centre
Brent Education Partners	Brent Schools Partnership
	Brent Schools Forum
Government Departments	Department for Education (DfE)
Non Government Organisations	Education Endowment Foundation
	Achievement for All
	Capita Sims
	Explore Learning
	Turnabout Programme
Other Local Authorities	London Borough of Lambeth

References:


The task group referred to a number of reports in the course of its work. Key documents include:

1. What Makes a Successful Transition from Primary to Secondary School? *The Department for Children, Schools and Families 2008.*
2. Closing the achievement gap in England's Secondary schools *Save the Children 2012.*
3. Engaging parents in raising attainment *The Department for Children, Schools and Families 2008.*
4. Can Changing Aspiration and Attitudes Impact on Educational Attainment? *The Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2012.*

5. Language Diversity and Attainment in English Secondary Schools: *The Institute for Policy Studies in Education (IPSE) London Metropolitan University May 2012.*
6. Future in Mind: Children and Young People’s Mental Wellbeing *NHS England March 2015*

Table of Appendix

	Appendices
1	Brent Schools Analysis – Narrowing the Gap
2	St Joseph Roman Catholic Primary School Pupil Premium Award Letter
3	Wembley High Technical College Pupil Premium Award Letter
4	St Joseph Roman Catholic Primary School Phonics Check Congratulations Letter
5	Ofsted - Pupil Premium, How the money is being spent
6	Ofsted - The Pupil Premium: an update
7	Brent Data Analysis – Closing the attainment gap
8	Brent Borough Plan Priorities
9	Brent Education Commission Plan
10	Brent School Effectiveness Framework
11	2013-2014 LAC Outcomes Annual Report
12	The Kingsbury Guarantee
13	Free School Meal Poster
14	Free School Meal Application Form

 Brent	<p style="text-align: center;">Scrutiny Committee 30 April 2015</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Chief Operating Officer</p>
For Information	Wards Affected: ALL
2014-15 Annual Scrutiny Report	

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The Annual Scrutiny report is a summary of the work conducted by the Scrutiny function throughout the year. This includes task group work, questions and suggestions made by the committee. The 2014-15 report also provides an update on the impact made by the scrutiny task groups work in the previous and current year.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Scrutiny Committee notes the content of the report.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Section One
This section focuses on the background of the scrutiny function within Brent; what is scrutiny, the principles of scrutiny within Brent and the structure that Brent Scrutiny Committee operates.
- 3.2 Section Two
The second section summarises the various task group work that the scrutiny committee has undertaken through out the year. It also provides an update on the impact of the recommendations made by Scrutiny committee in the previous year.
- 3.3 Section Three
The final section of the report focuses on the scrutiny committee meetings, highlighting the topics raised, invited guests and the comments and decisions

made by the committee. This section also summaries the Call In's heard by the committee.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 None

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 None

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

7.1 None

Contact Officers

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**SCRUTINY
ANNUAL REPORT
2014 – 15**

Contents

INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR OF SCRUTINY	1
SECTION ONE: THE BACKGROUND	3
WHAT IS SCRUTINY	3
Brent's Scrutiny Principles	3
THE SCRUTINY STRUCTURE AND PROCESS IN BRENT	4
A New Structure	4
How We Work	4
Scrutiny Forward Plan and work programme	4
Developing Scrutiny Protocols	5
SECTION TWO: TASK GROUP REVIEWS	6
IMPLEMENTING TASK GROUP REVIEWS FROM 2013-14	6
A Review of Gangs in Brent and the Development of Services for Prevention, Intervention and Exiting	6
Tackling Violence against women and girls	9
TASK GROUP REVIEWS 2014-15	11
Promoting Electoral Registration	11
The Budget Panel 2015-16	13
The Use of the Pupil Premium Grant in Brent	15
TASK GROUP REVIEWS 2015-16	17
Access to Extended GP Services and Primary Care under the Shaping a Healthier Future Proposals	17
NORTH WEST LONDON JOINT HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – SHAPING A HEALTHIER FUTURE	19
SECTION THREE: THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	21
Call In	25
THE FUTURE	27
CONTACT US	28

INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR OF SCRUTINY

This has been an exciting and challenging year for scrutiny in Brent. In May 2014 we introduced a new structure for our Scrutiny function with a single Committee responsible for co-ordinating an integrated work programme and establishing time limited tasks groups. The council wanted to ensure a stronger, more joined-up approach to scrutiny which could have more impact on the quality of life of Brent residents. This has ensured greater focus by leading and coordinating scrutiny of all areas that affect the quality of life of local people

During the past year this Committee has explored a wide range of issues related to the performance of council and partner agencies services, as well also key community concerns raised by residents. The Scrutiny Committee has actively monitored the implementation of previous scrutiny task groups and focused on ensuring that scrutiny is able to add value to policy development within the council and with partners through its findings.

The financial environment for local government and public services more generally continues to be very challenging. This has meant big cuts in the council's budgets with £54 million needing to be saved over the next two years and the council has been forced to make difficult decisions. We must find new, smarter, more efficient ways of delivering services at reduced cost at the same time that our population continues to grow and to make increasing demand for services - older more vulnerable people require support, more school places are needed to educate our growing school-age population and we must find more homes for the increasing number of people living in the borough. It is in this context that scrutiny has continued to operate. Our role as critical friend and as a source of evidence to support decision-making is a key part of ensuring changes to services are being made in the most appropriate way.

But we too must find ways to work more efficiently and to ensure that reduced resources are used to consider the most important issues faced by our local population.

Since our last annual report we have considered a range of important issues through our task group reviews:

In 2014 – 15:

- Individual Voter Registration
- Budget Panel
- Use of the Pupil Premium Grant

And in 2015 – 16

- Access to Extended GP Services and Primary Care under the Shaping a Healthier Future Proposals

We have also supported the implementation of reviews undertaken during the later part of 2013 – 14 to ensure the agreed recommendations have been adopted. These are:

- Gangs in Brent
- Tackling Violence against women and girls

Section Two below gives more information on why we investigated these issues, what we found and what has changed as a result of our recommendations.

We have participated in the NW London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny committee which considered the implications of the Shaping a Healthier Future proposals designed to radically change hospital services across North West London.

This report also outlines the work we have undertaken via the regular meetings of the Scrutiny Committee and more detail on our committee deliberations can be found in Section Three.

As Chair of the Scrutiny Committee I have also welcomed the opportunity to participate in the London Scrutiny Network. This group collaborates on the design and deliver of a pan London scrutiny development programme and sharing of best practice.

I would like to thank my fellow councillors for the contribution they have made to the continuing effectiveness of scrutiny. Without their on-going support and participation within task groups Scrutiny would not be able to address local issues. I would also like to thank the officers who have supported our investigations, from the services across the council and from our partner organisations.

But most of all I would like to thank residents of the borough, the evidence you bring to our deliberations and your continuing engagement with us means that we will continue to try and improve the services which we provide, representing your concerns to local decision makers. In particular. I would like to thank the following organisations and people for their support:

- Brent Youth Parliament who engaged with us on our work to consider the Pupil Premium.
- Brent Schools Partnership who also worked with us on the Pupil Premium task group
- Residents who engaged with us via Brent Connects consultation events and forums
- The various voluntary sector, faith and community groups that have met with Members of the Scrutiny committee to provide they views and experiences of Brent which inform our work.



***Cllr M Aslam Choudry
Chair of the Scrutiny Committee***

SECTION ONE: THE BACKGROUND

WHAT IS SCRUTINY

The purpose of the Scrutiny Committee and the activities that it undertakes, is to enable all members who are not part of the Cabinet to engage with and influence the policy development and decision-making of the council. This is achieved through scrutiny of the council's decisions, contributing to the development of strategies and policies, member-led investigations of local issues or community concerns and the scrutiny of other public agencies services. The findings from scrutiny work are reported to the Cabinet for their consideration and response.

Scrutiny acts as a check and balance to the Cabinet and also seeks to involve the public to provide of a voice for local people on the local issues which are of concern to them.

Scrutiny provides members with the opportunity to question Cabinet members, senior officers and other statutory partners in order to gain knowledge around an issue and make effective, evidenced-based recommendations. It also enables members to represent the views of their constituents and provide community leadership on local priorities such as health services and policing.

Brent's Scrutiny Principles

In Brent we have adopted the following principles for effective scrutiny:

- **Being Member-led**

The Scrutiny Committee determines its own programme of work and decides which issues to explore and what evidence to seek. Members take an active role in the scrutiny process, for example by going on visits, taking part in consultation activities with service users, residents and discussions with local organisations.

- **Taking a consensual approach**

Effective scrutiny works towards developing a consensus-based view of the service or issue under consideration, focused on the needs of service users and residents.

- **Being evidence based**

Scrutiny should take evidence from a wide and balanced range of sources in order to develop a rounded view of the issues under consideration. Recommendations made by scrutiny should be supported by the evidence gathered and be informed by the views and experience of the local community.

- **Providing constructive challenges**

Good scrutiny should foster a style of constructive challenge with officers, partner agencies and other witnesses, enabling sharing of views in an open and positive manner to improve public services and outcomes.

THE SCRUTINY STRUCTURE AND PROCESS IN BRENT

A New Structure

Following the local election in 2014, the council wanted to ensure a stronger, more joined-up approach to scrutiny which could have more impact on the quality of life of Brent residents. It therefore established a single Scrutiny Committee. This has ensured greater focus by leading and coordinating scrutiny of all areas that affect the quality of life of local people.

As Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, along with my fellow members, I have extensive experience in community engagement. This ensures that the scrutiny committee focuses consistently on the issues that matter most to Brent. As a Committee we meet ten times a year and consists of 14 members comprising eight councillors, four voting education co-opted members and two non-voting co-opted members.

How We Work

The Scrutiny Committee:

- Holds the Cabinet to account for its decisions.
- Supports policy development through commissioning member-led investigations of issues affecting the community or borough.
- Provides scrutiny of external public bodies and services, including education, health and other partners as specified by the Localism Act, 2011.
- Coordinates activities with other local bodies charged with scrutiny functions, for example, Healthwatch, tenant scrutiny and Brent's Safer Neighborhood Board.
- Reviews and monitors performance to ensure continuous improvement.
- Receives call-in of Cabinet decisions, public petitions and community calls to action.
- Commissions in-depth reviews to be carried out by task and finish groups and to be brought back to the committee for consideration
- Produces an annual report on its work showing, in particular, the impact of the work of the committee in improving outcomes for local people
- Brings different agencies together to broker solutions to seemingly intractable problems.

In addition to its work as a committee, the Scrutiny Committee commissions more detailed investigations of particularly complex issues to be considered by time-limited task groups. Recommendations from these groups' investigations are presented back to the Scrutiny Committee on completion and, if agreed, these recommendations are then submitted to the council's Cabinet for consideration.

Scrutiny Forward Plan and work programme

It is important that scrutiny focuses resources on key issues for the council and residents. In order to enable this during May 2014, Members were consulted to identify the priority issues for consideration for the Scrutiny Committee forward plan and subjects for task group investigation. The list of suggested topics derived from this exercise was reviewed and prioritised at the scrutiny members' programme of work meeting in June. A draft programme of work was then prepared by officers and reviewed by the scrutiny committee in early July, this informed the Scrutiny Committee's Forward Plan 2014-15.

The Forward Plan is a working document, considered at each meeting of the committee. As issues emerge throughout the year, members can request that priority items be added and heard by the Scrutiny Committee.

Developing Scrutiny Protocols

As the new Scrutiny Committee has become established, new ways of working have developed and we have produced a range of documents and processes to underpin the scrutiny arrangements. Amongst these are: protocols for recording, collecting and circulating data and information requested during scrutiny meetings from officers and partner agencies. We have also focused on greater engagement with local people and service users through our task group work, while refreshing our scrutiny webpages and producing a public leaflet on the role of scrutiny.

SECTION TWO: TASK GROUP REVIEWS

One of the most powerful forms of investigation available to scrutiny is the task group, through which councillors can give detailed consideration to specific issues over a longer time frame. In this section, we summarise the work of task groups and the impact that their work has had.

This section covers two periods:-

- Task groups who reported at the end of 2013/14 and therefore their implementation and impact of their work took place in 2014/15.
- Task groups that commenced during the period 2014/15.

If you would like to read the formal report of any of these task groups please visit the scrutiny web site <http://brent.gov.uk/your-council/democracy-in-brent/local-democracy/scrutiny/scrutiny-task-group-reports/> or click [here](#)

IMPLEMENTING TASK GROUP REVIEWS FROM 2013-14

A Review of Gangs in Brent and the Development of Services for Prevention, Intervention and Exiting

Chair: Cllr Zaffar Kan Kalwala

Why we investigated this

The task group was established in response to public concerns that gangs in Brent were proliferating and the number and severity of gang-related violence was also rising. The project sought to develop a clear understanding of the extent of the gangs problem and undertake research in areas where little has previously been known, such as the makeup and extent of girl gangs and sexual exploitation of vulnerable young women by gang members. Brent required a strategy to deal with gangs and the capacity to ensure those who wish to exit the gang involvement were supported into more positive pathways.

What we found

Defining 'gang' and developing a strategy

From the many ways to define what a gang is and how it is organised, the task group discovered that there was no one agreed definition and that it needed to develop an overarching strategy which clearly defined what a gang was and the nature of gang involvement.

Key risk factors for gang membership

Brent is a young borough; the 2011 census data showed that roughly 25% of the total population in Brent is less than 19 years old. This meant that this issue, if not dealt with effectively, could leave many more young people in Brent at risk. Research on the drivers of gang members and youth violence pointed to a number of risk factors which are most common to this group.

The following were revealed as drivers of gang membership in Brent:

- Being young and male;
- Being a victim of bullying or violence;
- Discrimination and stereotyping;
- Having a member of the family or friends circle who is a gang member;
- Family breakdown and dysfunction (including domestic violence);
- A lack of positive role models (including an absent father);
- Poor educational attainment;
- Having a drug or alcohol misuse problem;
- Mental and emotional health problems;
- An absence of aspirations;
- Having a perceived need for protection;
- Unemployment or underemployment and the need for money;
- Living in a culture that strongly identifies success with material wealth; and
- Poverty or growing up in social housing.

Girls in gangs

This was an area that the task group were keen to investigate. Although there was little evidence to suggest that Brent had a girl gang problem, there was anecdotal evidence that there was a developing problem, across London, of sexual exploitation of young women by males associated with gangs.

Gangs in Brent

Brent is one of 19 priority boroughs the Met identified as a 'Trident borough'. There are 15 recognised gangs in Brent; these gangs are most commonly geographically located on or near social housing estates and in areas of relative deprivation. Based on arrests and convictions, the main types of offences committed by Brent's street gangs were: firearms offences, drug dealing, robbery burglary, violence and anti-social behaviour.



Police statistics also highlighted that despite London-wide reductions in gun crime, Brent saw a 10.8% increase and is also experienced increases in knife crime, well above the London-wide figures.

Prevention, intervention and exit services

The task group found that more prevention work was needed, particularly in schools and Pupil Referral Units to educate young people on making healthier life choices and rejecting gang membership. Robust intervention services also needed to be developed; these programmes would offer gang-involved young people a clear alternative which allowed them to stop offending and choose a more positive lifestyle. Exit services, similar to interventions, were required for high risk gang members who could not simply quit their gang because of an imminent danger to their own lives or to their close family.

What has changed

Using the task groups recommendations, Brent's Ending Gang and Youth Violence Strategy and its accompanying action plan was developed by scrutiny officers in partnership with Brent's Community Safety team. The strategy was approved by Brent's Corporate Management Team and the Safer Brent Partnership; with the agreement that a Borough

Gangs Delivery Group owned the document, oversaw its implementation, where responsible for its delivery.

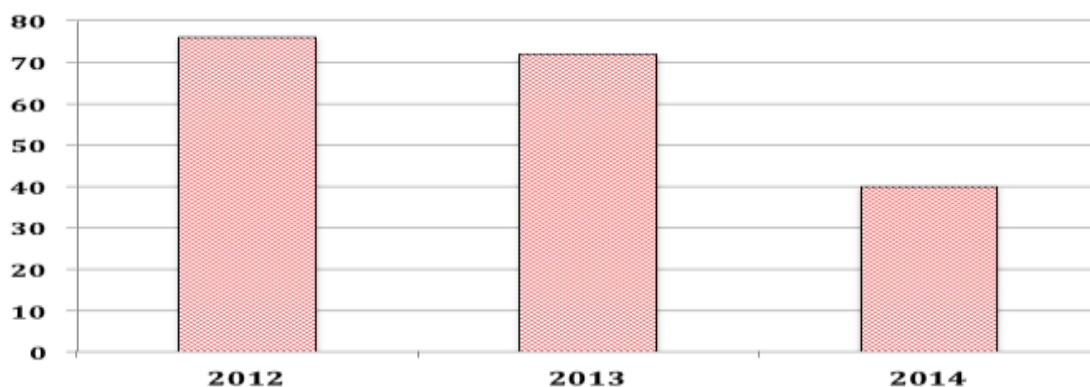
The Borough Gang Delivery Group members approved the strategy and the plan; it also suggested additional activities for inclusion within the action plan. Members of the group include Brent Council: Community Safety, Children’s Services, Safeguarding, Housing, Youth Offending and Public Health. Our partners include: the Police, Probation Services, NHS, College of North West London and Coram’s Children Charity.

Gangs and serious youth violence was made a borough priority. The gangs strategy provided a clearer vision and governance structure, this was supported by a delivery plan which set out both ownership and detail on how the strategy was communicated across the partnership and communities. Brent is working with other local authorities such as Westminster sharing information and building cross border relationships. The partnerships have maximised the use of data from all agencies, including the voluntary and community sector, and Safer Brent Partnership have been able to develop a partnership response based on well-informed profile of gangs, girls in gangs and sexual exploitation.

Community safety partners have made excellent progress in delivering objectives set out in the strategy and now have delivery structures which are fit for purpose. Partners have worked hard to maintain robust multi-agency identification, assessment and risk management processes with clear referral pathways. This has improved the management of risk, threat and harm to victims and high risk gang members. Outcomes have improved in relation to targeted interventions e.g. prevention, diversion, gang-exit programmes, resettlement and reduced re-offending for gang members. Brent has strengthened the links with custodial estates and developed rehabilitative programmes for individuals that provide appropriate support in education, training and employment.

Brent and its partners have built and continued to maintain community trust and support by engaging with community members in resident forums in Harlesden, and via our invitation to the Home Officer to compete a Local Assessment Feb 2015, to speak to peers and community members, as well as young people, regarding the gang problems in Brent. The community has also been involved in the Gang Call Ins work and will continue to be a vital part of ending gangs and youth violence in Brent.

As part of the action plan under Stronger Local Leadership partnership key Performance indicators were established to measure and track performance, performance is now measured every quarter. The below bar chart shows the number of recorded Gang Flagged Crime reports in Brent each year between 2012 – 2014 -



In 2014 there were 40 Gang Flagged Crime reports, which was a 44% year on year decrease from the 2013 figure and a 47% decrease on the 2012 figure. This indicates that gang related offences are significantly down.

The Gangs task group provided a strategy which was the platform for understanding and tackling serious youth violence and gangs, the original strategy is currently being reviewed and will be refreshed in May 2015; where it will address the changing profiles of gangs.

Tackling Violence against women and girls

Chair: Cllr Ann John OBE

Why we investigated this

Violence against women is an illegal, intolerable act and is a human rights violation. Brent is recognised as one of the most ethnically diverse population in the country and a significant proportion of these communities have religious and cultural ties to areas of the world where the harmful practices of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Honour Base Violence (HBV) and Forced Marriages (FM) are prevalent. In 2012 the Home Office reclassified Domestic Violence to include HBV and the government decided to make FM a criminal offence. This led members of the previous Scrutiny Committee to express an interest in forming a task group to look further into the possible evidence of harmful practices in Brent; focusing on FGM, HBV and FM.

What we found

The scale and nature of Harmful Practices in Brent

The task group wanted to establish the prevalence of harmful practices in Brent. We found that there was very little data held and the data that was held by the organisations we contacted was not shared between partners. We met with a number of community groups to gather anecdotal evidence based on their experiences and talked to national and local charities with expertise in this area. While we couldn't be certain about the extent of these practices within Brent we believed that they were significant enough to recommend that a mapping exercise was undertaken to establish the number of women and girls at risk and that this work should be coordinated with partners and specialist charities.

Awareness, Knowledge and Criminality

The task group believed that there was a worrying lack of knowledge and understanding in Brent about harmful practices, the impact they have and the legislation relating to them. All of the women's groups we met with agreed that raising awareness within affected communities was key to tackling harmful practices. The task group recognised the important role that schools have in raising awareness and safeguarding. We undertook research with school governors and whilst 64% of our respondents were aware of all three offences, only 21% said that they were covered as part of existing safeguarding training.

Partnership working including referral processes and pathways

The task group found that while there were many organisations currently working with women and girls affected by harmful practices, there was frequently a lack of coordination between partners and a lack of clarity about referral pathways. This contributed to the negative experience of many of the women we talked to. The task group therefore recommended that a harmful practices strategy was developed within the wider Violence against Women and Girls Strategy which provided a clear framework for partners to work

within. We also recommended that all key staff from relevant agencies undertake training to ensure a better understanding of the issues, identification of those at risk and establishing referral pathways.

Services and accessing available funding

It was clear that for better more coordinated services to be available voluntary and statutory agencies need to work together. This would not only enable organisations within Brent to pursue all avenues of available funding but ensure that services that are commissioned have a real and lasting impact.



What has changed

The task group identified 12 recommendations, which were reported to the council's Cabinet in March 2014. Recommendation two of the task group report states: That work in relation to the implementation of the Harmful Practices Strategy is the responsibility of:

- The Local Children's Safeguarding Board
- The Health and Wellbeing Board
- Safer Brent Partnership

In accepting and welcoming the report, Cabinet asked that the Policy and Scrutiny Team-coordinate the development of an action plan to tackle the issues identified in the scrutiny report. In order to produce a multi-agency action plan, a partnership group was formed to identify and evaluate the actions required to implement the recommendations. The group consisted of representatives from across the following partners:

- Brent Adult Social Care
- Brent Children's Social Care
- Brent Local Children's safeguarding
- Brent Public Health
- Brent Community Safety
- Brent Equalities
- Brent Geographical Information Service
- Brent Police
- Brent Multi-Agency Front Door
- Brent CVS
- Brent Schools Partnership
- ADVANCE/Hestia Housing
- Clinical Commissioning Group
- North West London Hospital Trust

Brent and its partners were already delivering pockets of excellent service and we needed to identify this work, and opportunities to build on it, across Brent. The action plan brought together and co-ordinated existing work already planned and being delivered across the borough and identified a number of new priorities and actions, all designed to address the twelve recommendations made by the scrutiny task group. Some actions within the plan require ongoing work and this was expected if we were to successfully imbed these actions and processes into future service delivery and commissioning.

The governing boards acknowledged and agreed to the content of the action plan for implementation. They agreed to continue to support the work and activities taking place as part of the action plan and encourage the actions to be imbedded in the future planning of services. The work outlined in the action plan has had positive impacts on Brent's communities and drove services to improve the rights and outcomes for women and girls.

Tackling Violence against Women and Girls is a borough priority and this reflected in the borough plan and the 2015 VAWG strategy. Tackling VAWG is now reviewed annually by the Health and Wellbeing, Children's Safeguarding, Adults Safeguarding and the Safer Brent Partnership.

We have continued to raise awareness in communities and schools through an ongoing robust training and awareness programme. The council has been recognised nationally as leading on tackling VAWG and council officers have spoken at a number of conferences on the strategy and action plan.

Brent and its partners, which include many of the third sector VAWG and voluntary organisations are continuing to work closely through the borough wide VAWG forums and are currently devising protocols to share more information. As a result services have become more accessible and responsive to the needs of vulnerable women and girls in Brent.

TASK GROUP REVIEWS 2014-15

Promoting Electoral Registration

Chair: Cllr Neil Nerva

Why we investigated this

The task group was established in response to the challenges posed by the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration (IER), the most significant change in the electoral system for 100 years. The right to vote is fundamental to democracy and it is for this reason that Brent Council's new administration made the issue a corporate priority. Brent has always had a significant level of under-registration. However, the transition to IER presented an opportunity to better understand how significant the problem was, and more importantly, offer practical proposals as to how Brent, and our partners, could improve registration.

What we found

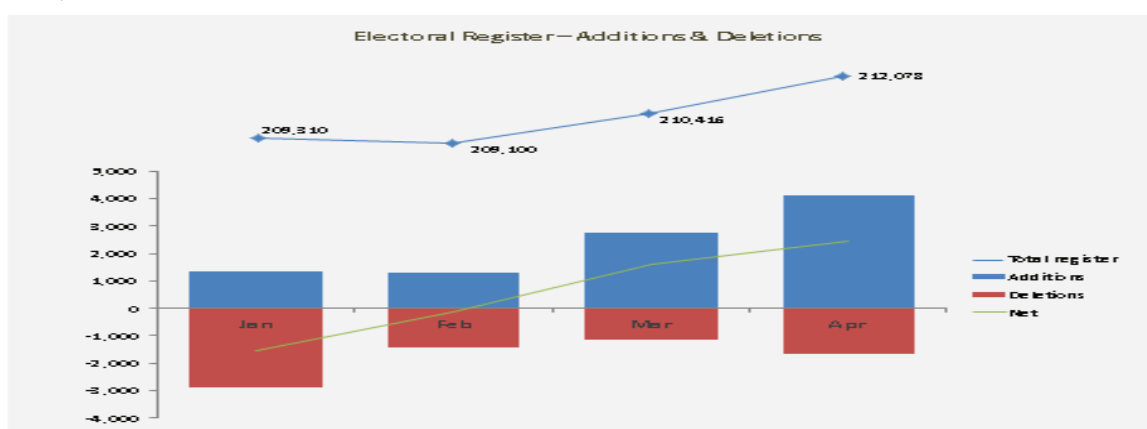
There was a lack of clarity around e-registration and the potential for registration fraud and identity theft. The national matching exercise, where existing electors whose details were matched on the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Customer Information Systems (CIS) revealed, 79% Green matches, 3% Amber and 18% Red. Overall 67.6% of electors in Brent were successfully matched, just under the London average of 68%. Brent is an incredibly diverse borough and no two wards are the same, large numbers of Brent's residents speak English only as a second language; something which further highlighted the need for a bespoke approach to engaging with key community groups and areas. The task group felt that there is a need for greater engagement with vulnerable residents and their representative groups (VCS organisations). Similarly, there was a need to increase engagement on civic participation in the borough, particularly amongst Brent's young people and minority ethnic groups.

The task group concluded that the Electoral Commission’s (statutory) registration form was not as clear as it could have been and important information was missing, there were a number of internal and external partners within the housing sector and higher education that were ideally placed to feed into the strategy and to help with voter registration. 32% of Brent’s residents are now living in the Private Rented Sector which is characterised by short-term tenancies and, therefore, were at an increased risk of not registering. We also found that there were a number of negative consequences of being removed from the electoral register besides not being able to vote, of which residents did not know and need to be made aware of; e.g. unable to undergo a credit reference checks.

What has changed

The task group report was presented to the Scrutiny Committee in November 2014, which endorsed the recommendations. Since the report was agreed by service areas, the Programme Management Office (PMO) has been tasked with developing a project to support the implementation of the recommendations made by the task group. The Project started in January 2015 with an advertising campaign, which included adverts on Gumtree, local buses and tube station and social media. The team have completed promotional activities and are now focusing on outreach and community engagement activities. They have also been consulting with local faith groups and residents forums.

As part of the ongoing project, the Business Intelligence team produces a monthly IER tracker which monitors the progress of the electoral register additions and deletions, the tracker also monitors the number of returned and outstanding Household Enquiry Forms (HEFs).



Using Mosaic, the team are able to track demographic trend and focus efforts where it is most needed. Since the beginning of the project voter registration has increased by 2768.

The Budget Panel 2015-16

Chair: Cllr M Aslam Choudry

Why we investigated this

The Budget task group was set-up to enable scrutiny members to undertake more detailed discussion and exploration of the council's financial position, current budget pressures and the emerging budget proposals for 2015 – 2017. This included examining the main issues, risks and impacts arising from changes to the local population and legislation, while considering the actions being taken by the council to minimise the negative consequences of budget reductions.

The task group's remit covered:

- Contributing to the budget setting process through discussions with Cabinet Members and Strategic Directors.
- Considering the budget strategy and proposals within the context of the objectives set out with the Borough Plan and the aims of the Administration.
- Supporting the longer term service planning of the council by focusing its discussions on the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the principles for budget setting, the robustness of the budget and the ability to deliver savings, and possible risks to the Council.

What we found

Developing the Council's budget for the period 2015/16 and 2016/17 was the most challenging that the council has ever faced and the scrutiny task group appreciated the difficult decisions that the Administration was required to make to set a balanced budget. Since the election of the current coalition government, there has been a focus on reducing the national deficit within a tight-time table. This has resulted in very substantial reductions to the grant funding available to local authorities and radical changes to the way in which this is allocated across the country. The impact of policy reform across a range of areas and unprecedented macro economic circumstances have had a fundamental impact on Brent's residents and therefore on their expectations of what the council should do to help meet their needs.

At the same time wider changes in society have forced local authorities across the country to rethink the way in which they commission and provide services to meet local needs and aspirations. People are, on the whole, living longer lives, with increasing consequences for the way in which they need to access care services, and the length of time they continue to need such services. In Brent, the number of people aged over 80 years is up by 24% and the number aged over 65 years by more than 10%. This has obvious implications for the council's cost base, driving up the number of vulnerable adults that the council may need to support, the level of their needs and the length of time for which those needs may need to be met. Local authorities have responded to these pressures by redefining models of care provision, increasing the emphasis on programmes designed to enable vulnerable residents to live their own lives without support and where this is not possible to exercise greater choice about how their needs are met.

In addition to very specific comments on the budget, the panel made a number of broad observations on the budget impact on local communities:

- Members of the task group expressed their concern regarding the problems faced by the most vulnerable residents in Brent as a result of the continued government reductions in public spending. This was not just in relation to council cuts to expenditure but the combined impact of the benefit cap, the introduction of Universal Credit and rising living costs. Residents are being affected by an 'accumulation' of factors, which are national, local and economic. Changes to local services need to be assessed in relation to the combined impact across a number of services which could impact disproportionately on groups who use a number of services, provided by a range of public agencies, not just the council. This should be reflected in the equality assessments that support the transformation and budget process.
- Given the future outlook for public expenditure levels, it is vital that actions and services to promote long-term community resilience and independence are prioritised. The voluntary sector is vital to achieving greater community resilience and members of the task group asked for reassurance that the structures and capacity is in place to take this agenda forward.
- During the public consultation for the Borough Plan, residents found it difficult to identify areas for budget reductions. Communications on the budget need to clearly articulate the reality that not all the required savings can be achieved by 'efficiency' measures. Some services will need to be reduced to a statutory level, with a focus on those most in need or in some cases stopped entirely to achieve a balanced budget.
- More effective management of current and future demand is a critical lever in reducing the council's costs. Behaviour change is central to this, whether this is more recycling or helping to reduce the need for children's social care. The task group would like more information on the programmes that will prevent future need for more intensive, higher cost services and will be looking at proposed savings in this context.
- Recent data from the Residents Attitude Survey has suggested that many people are capable and happy to access services digitally. This needs to be a central focus of the Community Access Strategy and service delivery in the future.
- A pressing concern for many residents is the high cost and availability of decent housing. Creative working with partners to secure more and better provision of all types of housing tenures within the borough should be a future priority to support stable local communities.
- It is vital during this period that the Council maintains a focus on attracting economic investment to the borough, supporting growth and fair employment for local people.

What has changed

The Cabinet responded positively to the concerns raised and the debates held by the Budget Panel Task Group of the Scrutiny Committee. The recommendations made by the panel were inline with the Cabinets views and provided valuable support to the decisions required to be made. The Budget Panel's report and recommendations were included as part of the Final Budget Report which was agreed by the meeting of Full Council in March 2015.

The Use of the Pupil Premium Grant in Brent

Chair: Cllr Eleanor Southwood

Why we investigated this

The purpose of this task group was to identify where opportunities exist for a more joined-up, holistic and borough wide use of the PPG. We recognise that the PPG is a key mechanism for not only increasing educational attainment, but for offering our young people improved chances for living healthy and happy lives. Throughout our research, visits and meetings, the task group focused on how the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) could further reduce the numbers of children living in poverty and the numbers of young people not in employment education or training across our borough.

The role of the local authority in relation to schools is changing and the Brent Schools Partnership is a fledgling organisation, whose success is vital for ensuring that information, practice and support is shared amongst Brent's family of schools. The PPG is being extended to children in early year's education and the task group was keen that the experience of the PPG to date informs how this funding is used. The task group recognised that early intervention is the best way to give children a great start and we are excited about the difference that the Early Years PPG could make in Brent.

What we found

Data Analysis - Closing the attainment gap

The task group found that there are a number of influencing factors which contribute to the gap in attainment. It was clear that the gap became wider as children progressed through school and that early intervention is key to progress and closing the gap for all disadvantaged groups.

Setting the tone for Brent Schools – The Vision

The task group found that all children disadvantaged or not, are likely to do better in higher quality schools. One of Brent's priorities is improving school quality by raising overall achievement. Moreover, school improvement has a large role to play in narrowing the gap because the achievement gain in moving from an inadequate school to an outstanding school is bigger for those who are the most disadvantaged. Mitigating the effects of child poverty and reducing it are key drivers of improving children and families' health and wellbeing. Children and young people should be able to enjoy their education and achieve the best results they can. The council's vision is to raise educational standards at all key stages and close attainment gaps between groups.

Coordinated Schools Strategic Leadership: Sharing good practice, information, resources – including teaching staff and training – teachers and school governing bodies;

The task group found that to improve outcomes for all children requires good strategic partnership working, where schools take the lead. Good quality data provided centrally is also essential; schools can benchmark themselves against other schools locally and nationally. Schools should be in a position to network and use local support from the council and other partners to improve performance and attainment.

Improving outcomes for Looked After Children and Children Excluded from School

After analysing the data on Looked after Children (LAC) the task group felt that as corporate parents of LAC, we need to do a much better job; starting with achieving 100 percent of Personal Education Plans (PEPS) for Looked After Children are completed to the highest quality. The task group felt that further analysis is required for disadvantaged children who

were excluded from school. Children, who are excluded for a fixed period, could also benefit from additional targeted support when attending PRUs.

Innovation and Advancement in Education

The task group found that Brent schools are already very innovative and creative with their interventions on closing the attainment gap. There were wonderful examples of Brent secondary and primary schools trying unconventional interventions and being able to show impact and improved outcomes for children. However advancements in education attainment is continuously evolving and to keep abreast of this, requires constant research and trials, which should be embedded as part of day to day life in schools.

What do our young people want?

The task group found that it is not just formal academic or vocational qualifications which hamper young people's chances of securing employment. National and regional research indicates a lack of 'employability' skills – for example, Basic English language and financial numeracy - as a significant barrier for employers looking to recruit. The consultation exercise conducted as part of the Employment & Enterprise strategy identified this as a significant issue in Brent, particularly amongst young people and those for whom English is a second language (EAL).

Supporting Parents and Building Self-Resilience

We found that identifying parents who need support early will be key to improving attainment and closing the gap. Data shows that the gap often occurs during early years, this is a time when parents need to have the parental skills to ensure that their child's progress is on track and they are not underperforming. The task group welcome the Early Years PPG (April 2015) and believe that work with early years setting will be essential to the grant being implemented and utilised effectively.

What has changed

The work of the task group will be completed and formally reported in April 2015. The impact of our investigation will be reported in the 2015 – 16 annual report.

TASK GROUP REVIEWS 2015-16

Access to Extended GP Services and Primary Care under the Shaping a Healthier Future Proposals

Chair: Cllr Reg Colwill

Why we are investigating this

Brent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and North West London Hospitals Trust (NWLHT) plan to transform the way health care is provided in Brent through three major transformational programmes:

- Shaping a healthier future – the reconfiguration of hospital services, and in particular developing the long term future of Central Middlesex Hospital;
- Primary Care Transformation – making it easier to see your GP and making more treatments available in a community setting; and
- Whole systems integrated care – joining together health and social care to provide more integrated health services to patients

It intends to deliver care at a reduced cost while still achieving better patient outcomes. These plans are reflected in the CCG's five year draft strategy and is a direct response to the Shaping a Healthier Future proposals for West London. SaHF is the regional reconfiguration of hospital services, which is intended to put in place more integrated and locally available services and reduce dependence on acute hospital services.

However, in order for these changes to hospital services to be implemented successfully it is critical that primary care, particularly access to extended GP's services through locality networks is in place and operating effectively. The intention of this scrutiny taskgroup is to review the current implementation of the primary care element of the CCG's transformation programme.



What we will consider

This task group is currently running and will conclude its investigation in June 2015; however the task group intends to review the following areas:-

- There are currently 67 GP practices in Brent. These are formed into four networks for the provision of primary care and as the basis for extended services. The review will assess the sufficiency of the range of services provided from these four GP networks, opening hours, waiting times for appointments and the numbers of patients served by each network in relation to the current and future needs of the population. This will include meeting the target for urgent appointments seen within 24 hours. The long term aim is that by 2017 urgent appointments should be seen within four hours and other appointments within 48 hours. The task group will consider the feasibility of achieving these targets within the planned investment programme.
- Geographical location of GP's, public transport access to GP's and the physical condition and suitability of GP premises to provide additional primary care services.

- A £10m fund has been established to facilitate the creation of GP networks and in particular make it easier for patients to see a GP through improvements to technology and information sharing across GP networks. The task group will explore how this fund has been used to improve patient access, especially in relation to extended opening hours and weekend opening across GP networks and the sharing of patient records.
- It is proposed that extended GP networks should provide more diagnostic services, clinics and support for management of long term health conditions. The review will assess how these programmes are being developed and the timeframes in relation to the timetable for changes to hospital provision and reconfiguration.
- Closure of the A&E facility at Central Middlesex hospital has already taken place in September 2014. This review will look at any resulting impact in terms of increased demand for GP services, including whether the GP networks are sufficiently developed to deal with the anticipated patient shift from A&E to local primary care providers. Conversely it will also assess if problems in accessing GP appointments are leading to avoidable attendances at A&E facilities.
- The planned changes to the configuration of services at Central Middlesex Hospital includes the creation of a 'Hub Plus' at the site which will provide an extended range of primary care services including GP access and out-patient services. The task group should review the set of proposals, the number of intended patients and how people will access this care.
- Under the future 'whole systems integrated care model', GP's are expected to undertake a key role in the co-ordinating of care plans, sign-posting to additional care services and providing primary care support that enables people to more effectively self-manage long term conditions and avoid admissions to hospitals. The taskgroup should examine the extent to which GP networks have the necessary capacity to take on these roles and the investment that is required to make the integrated care model work effectively.
- The task group will consider the communications strategy for encouraging people to use GP services effectively, particularly for those residents who may not be registered with a GP and rely on A&E hospital services. This should include consideration of messaging to residents on when not to request a GP appointment for minor ailments and more effective management of demand.
- The taskgroup should particularly focus on the needs of vulnerable groups in terms of accessing GP services such as people with a learning difficulty, the elderly, people with limited mobility, the homeless, recently arrived residents and people with limited English language skills.
- To consider the capacity of GP's to take on the role of care coordinators and support the planned integration of health and social care provision

What has changed

This task group is currently underway and will conclude in June 2015, a further update on the impact of this investigation will be included in the annual report for 2015/16

NORTH WEST LONDON JOINT HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – SHAPING A HEALTHIER FUTURE

Background

The North West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) was formed by ten (mainly) North West London boroughs at the request of NHS North West London as part of the statutory consultation process for Shaping a Healthier Future (SaHF). It comprises representatives from the boroughs of Brent, Camden, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea, Richmond, Wandsworth and Westminster. It meets with representatives of NHS inner North West London to consider matters concerning health care subject to consultation. Brent continues to be an active participant in the JHOSC and it is represented on the Committee by Cllr Aslam Choudry and Cllr Mary Daly.

The JHOSC held its first meeting in July 2012 and completed its review of the hospital reconfiguration consultation in November 2012 with the submission of its final report to the NHS.



This submission completed the JHOSC's statutory role in the reconfiguration process.

In November 2013, following the final decision on the structure of the reconfiguration setting out which hospitals would be developed as major and local hospitals, the North West London Collaboration of Clinical Commissioning Groups requested that the JHOSC continued to provide a forum where issues relating to SaHF, which cross borough boundaries, could be scrutinised and discussed. This was agreed.

Role

The stated purpose of the JHOSC since November 2012 has been to consider issues with cross-borough implications arising as a result of the Shaping a Healthier Future reconfiguration of health services, taking a wider view across North West London than might normally be taken by individual Local Authorities. Specifically

1. To scrutinise the 'Shaping a Healthier Future' reconfiguration of health services in North West London; in particular the implementation plans and actions by the North West London Collaboration of Clinical Commissioning Groups (NWL CCGs), focussing on aspects with cross borough implications.
2. To make recommendations to NWL CCGs, NHS England, or any other appropriate outside body in relation to the 'Shaping a Healthier Future' plans for North West London; and to monitor the outcomes of these recommendations where appropriate.
3. To require the provision of information from, and attendance before the committee by, any such person or organisation under a statutory duty to comply with the scrutiny function of health services in North West London.

Individual local authority members of the JHOSC will continue their own scrutiny of health services in, or affecting, their individual areas (including those under 'Shaping a Healthier Future'). Participation in the JHOSC will not preclude any scrutiny or right of response by individual boroughs.

2014-15 Overview

Three meetings were held during 2014-15

6th August 2014 to consider:

- Shaping a Healthier Future - Programme overview briefing
- Briefing on Accident & Emergency Unit reconfiguration
- NWL JHOSC - Next meeting and future arrangements

16th October 2014 to consider:

- Terms of Reference of the North West London Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- Shaping a Healthier Future SH - A&E, Maternity and Paediatrics Update
- Work Programme

3rd March 2015

- London Ambulance Service update
- Travel Advisory Group
- Shaping a Healthier Future update
- Healthcare Commission verbal update

The planned implementation timeframe for SaHF runs up to 2018. It is proposed that the JHOSC operates alongside the implementation programme up to 2018 with its duration expanded should the SaHF programme run beyond this date. Future annual reports will continue to summarise the activities of the JHOSC.

A number of west London boroughs have, due to continued concerns regarding the planning and implementation of the SaHF programme, now established an independent Healthcare Commission chaired by Michael Mansfield QC. Evidence considered by the Scrutiny Committee, from its role on the JHOSC, task groups and the main Committee contributed to the evidence submission made by the Council to the Commission. The west London Healthcare Commission will publish its findings in July 2015.

SECTION THREE: THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The committee held 10 scheduled meetings in 2014 – 15, two of which were dedicated to planning the work programme and briefings on the legal and statutory responsibilities of the Scrutiny Committee.

As outlined in the introduction to this report, we have changed the structure of our scrutiny function to provide a more targeted approach to the committee's work. Scrutiny now meets as a single committee which covers both the council's statutory responsibilities with regard to health services and community safety as well as a cross cutting agenda looking at local service issues. The reports and issues that the committee considered during the year are set out in the following section.

Full details of issues considered and minutes of the meetings can be found by visiting <http://democracy.brent.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=444> or by clicking [here](#)

Health issues and reconfiguration of health services has constituted a significant proportion of the agenda of the scrutiny committee this year as Shaping a Healthier Future proposals, the performance of A&E at Northwick Park Hospital, changes at Central Middlesex and to maternity services impact on our local community. These are critical issues for local residents and the scrutiny committee has been active in exploring the planned changes and their consequences.

- In **August** and on **9th September 2014**, the committee discussed the proposals for the **closure of A&E at Central Middlesex hospital** and questioned the effectiveness of plans to deliver this closure and the impact on the A&E Unit at Northwick Park. In particular in September 2014 the committee challenged the proposals in the context of the Care Quality Commission findings with regard to the need for improvement in general at Northwick Park hospital and the ongoing concerns about waiting times at A&E in Northwick Park. The committee remained concerned about the implications of closure of CMH A&E on the overall emergency capacity available to Brent residents and the committee will continue to monitor the impact of changes. The committee has continued to review the performance at A&E at Northwick Park which has declined since the closure at Central Middlesex and has made known its concerns to NWLHT and the CCG.
- The **August 2014**, the committee was also appraised of plans to **transform healthcare in Brent** through Safeguarding a Healthier Future, primary care transformation and improved access to GP services. The committee was concerned about the level of support for GPs to carry out their additional functions and discussed in more detail the relocation of mental health services to Central Middlesex Hospital. As a result further detailed work on access to GP services is being undertaken by a Scrutiny task group which will report in June 2015. The committee agreed to continue to monitor the changes during its work programme in 2015.

- In **October 2014**, the committee received a report outlining how NW London Hospital NHS Trust plans to respond to **the Care Quality Commission's** findings from the inspection they undertook in May 2014. The results of this inspection were of considerable concern to the committee, suggesting that many services at the Northwick Park Hospital 'require improvement'. Councillors were briefed on the outcomes of the Quality Summit, chaired by the Care Quality Commission, which had developed an action plan in response to the weaknesses identified. On **26th November 2014** the committee received a further report on progress and members were able to raise their concerns re the implementation of the action plan in the context of continuing concerns about the performance of A&E at Northwick Park and the availability of beds for the emergency care pathway.

The committee will continue to monitor progress on the delivery of this action plan.

- On **26th November 2014**, the committee considered the impact of **changes to maternity, neonatal, paediatric and gynaecology services at Ealing Hospital**. The committee was advised that the services at Ealing are not sustainable without significant investment and that the majority of Brent women chose to use services at Northwick Park or Imperial Healthcare Trust. Whilst accepting these points, the committee is keen to ensure that Northwick Park Hospital has the capacity to cope with these changes, particularly in the context of the Care Quality Commission inspection report and as such we will continue to monitor this issue.
- On **26th November**, the committee was also briefed on the process for deciding the **new configuration of services at Central Middlesex Hospital**. Members were advised that it is proposed that services will include 24/7 Urgent Care Centre, Primary Care Hub, elective orthopaedics, mental health inpatient services and genetics laboratory. The committee was concerned to receive further information regarding costs and investment and also the impact of the shift of rehabilitation beds from Willesden Hospital to Central Middlesex Hospital.
- In **February 2015**, the committee was updated on the work of the **Systems Resilience Group** and specifically its work on winter pressures. Given the increasing demand for healthcare in the winter months, the committee was glad to be reassured about the preparedness of services to safeguard the health of residence particularly in the context of the ongoing pressures on emergency services at Northwick Park Hospital. The committee will continue to monitor this.

The Scrutiny Committee has also considered a wide range of important issues with regard to council services:

- On **9th September** we received a report on **parking services issues** and an update on the initial problems which had been experienced with regard to the introduction of online parking permits. Members had been particularly concerned about the impact of the changes on elderly residents and were pleased to hear that the Equalities Impact Assessment was to be reconsidered. They also expressed concerns about the issuing of visitor permits using the new system and also the use of CCTV to issue parking tickets. The Committee asked that Cabinet reappraise arrangements for issuing visitor parking permits and welcomed the arrangements made to respond to their concerns.

- In **October 2014**, we received the **Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report**, which provided the committee with an update of performance of children's safeguarding services against key priorities which have been identified either locally or nationally. We identified a number of gaps in the information provided including information regarding child welfare and safety in Brent, the use of food banks, child suicides and children at risk.

- The **October** meeting also considered the **draft school places strategy** and was briefed about the challenges confronting the borough with regard to the increasing demand for places – there has been a 38% increase in under-fives in the last ten years. The committee noted the detailed proposals in place to increase the number of primary and secondary school places and will continue to monitor this issue.

- On **3rd November 2014**, the draft **Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy** was presented to the committee. This strategy, designed to promote economic growth in the borough is set in the context of 18% rise in the working age population, a significant skills/qualifications mismatch and low earnings. The committee commented in the draft strategy which is due to go out to be finalised by the Cabinet in 2015. The committee has asked for further progress reports.

- The **3rd November 2014** meeting also received information about the **impact of the benefit cap** on Brent residents. We were advised about the number of residents now subject to the cap, their profile and the work the council is doing to alleviate difficulties they are facing and support local people into employment.

- In **January 2015**, the **Safer Brent Partnership** presented its annual report to the committee. Having outlined performance against existing priorities, the report summarised priorities for 2014 – 2017:
 - Violence against women and girls
 - Gang related offending
 - Anti social behaviour
 - Reducing re-offending

The committee welcomed the progress made in reducing the overall level of crime in the borough and also the innovative work that has been undertaken on reducing gang involvement. However members expressed concern at the high level of violent crime and particularly domestic violence. The committee has requested an update, and sight of the need analysis which drives the strategy in six months time.

- In **February 2015**, the committee received two education reports:
 - 6 month update on the implementation of the **Brent Education Commission** action plan
 - **Annual Report of the Academic Year**, setting out the standards and achievements of Brent schools in 2013 – 2014

The committee welcomed the continued improvement in education achievement but also noted that this was not consistent across all schools or groups of pupils. The committee was attended by a number of Brent Head Teachers who are part of the Schools Partnership.

- In **March 2015**, the committee received an update on the **Community Access Strategy** and the projects designed to deliver the strategy:
 - Improved telephony
 - Channel shift
 - Modernising face-to-face communication
 - Joining up service delivery with partners

The committee voiced concerns regarding how the projects were addressing the diversity of the borough, and in particular the needs of residents whose first language isn't English. We also asked that learning from other change projects is considered in the context of the access projects, particularly the learning from the parking project for the transition to online services. This issue will be considered further in December 2015

- The **March** meeting also considered **housing pressures** in the borough, particularly homelessness and housing supply and demand. The committee investigated the impact of welfare reform, the use of empty properties, overcrowding and the potential for inspecting licenced properties. The committee will receive a further report in six months.
- The **March** meeting also received information on the '**Work Programme Scheme**' which has been established to tackle unemployment in the borough and to improve health and well being by working with small and medium enterprises. The committee noted the work on this issue.

Call In

In some circumstances, the Scrutiny Committee will hold a 'call-in' meeting. The purpose of a call-in meeting is for non-executive members to examine and consider the decision made by the Cabinet and for members of the committee to make suggestions and recommendations they consider appropriate. The Scrutiny Committee provides an opportunity for members to seek clarification of the methodology used in enabling a decision to be made, as well as explore work undertaken by officers culminating in the matter coming before the Cabinet.

There was one call in heard by the scrutiny committee during 2014-15. In August decisions made by the Cabinet on 21 July 2014 in respect of the Changes to Recycling and Green Waste Collections report were called in for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with Standing Order 20. The reasons for the call in were whilst not opposing the principle of charging for garden waste, members consider that the system proposed could be improved on. There were also concerns at the absence of crucial information in the report

It was resolved:

- That the decisions made by the Cabinet on 21 July 2014 regarding changes to recycling and green waste collections be noted;
- That a review be held following a period of 9 months after implementation;
- That efforts should be made to ensure the removal of the green waste bins be as close as possible to 1 March 2015 to minimise inconvenience to residents.

Scrutiny Committee Membership

The Scrutiny Committee comprises the following councillors and co-optees:

- Councillor M Aslam Choudry (Chair)
- Councillor Reg Colwill (Vice-Chair)
- Councillor James Allie
- Councillor Mary Daly
- Councillor Wilhelmina Mitchell Murray
- Councillor Tayo Oladapo
- Councillor Ahmad Shahzad OBE
- Councillor Eleanor Southwood
- **Substitute Members**
- Councillor Joshua Mitchell Murray
- Councillor Neil Nerva
- Cllr Ramash Patel
- **Co-opted Members**
- Ms Christine Cargill
- Mr Alloysius Frederick
- Mrs Hawa Imame
- Dr J Levison

Throughout the year, the Scrutiny Committee has been assisted in its deliberations by officers from the council and from our partner organisations. These officers have made a significant contribution to the work of the committee and the committee is grateful for the time they have made available.

- Chief Executive, NW London Hospital Trust
- Dep Chief Executive NW London Hospital Trust
- Chief Operating Officer London NW Healthcare Trust
- Dep Chief Executive London NW Healthcare Trust
- Programme Medical Director Shaping A Healthier Future
- Chair Brent Clinical Commissioning Group
- Chief Operating Officer Brent Clinical Commissioning Group
- Clinical Lead Brent Clinical Commissioning Group
- Chief Operating Officer Brent, Harrow and Hillingdon CCGs
- Director of Quality Brent, Harrow and Hillingdon CCGs
- Chief Nurse London NW Healthcare Trust
- Independent Chair Local Safeguarding Children Board
- Chief Executive Brent Citizens' Advice Bureau
- Strategic Director Adult Social Services
- Operational Director Environment and Protection
- Strategic Director Children and Young People
- Operational Director Help and Education, Children and Young People
- Operational Director Housing and Employment, Regeneration and Growth
- Head of Employment and Enterprise, Regeneration and Growth
- Operational Director, Customer Service and Benefits, Regeneration and Growth
- Operational Manager, Ingeus

THE FUTURE

Scrutiny in Brent will continued to deliver constructive and positive challenge to support the delivery of services to the people of the borough and provide a focus for the voice of local communities. During the past year Scrutiny members have tackled difficult and complex issues within an environment where the council and other public services are faced with hard financial choices and decisions. Scrutiny's role in informing policy development, raising concerns and promoting debate will continue to be vital to our local democracy.

The specific content of our work programme for 2015/16 is still to be determined but we will complete the outstanding projects from this year:

- Use of the Pupil Premium Grant in Brent
- Access to Extended GP Services and Primary Care

It has not been possible to look at all the issues that have been brought to our attention during this year but we will be developing our work programme for 2015/16 in the next few weeks and this will include:-

- Access to affordable childcare in the borough.
- The performance of Brent Housing Partnership
- Priorities for Public Health.
- Licencing procedures and licenced premises
- Responding to Audit Findings

We will also be looking at how we can develop our approach to more detailed budget scrutiny and the delivery of the council's budget savings. Through our involvement in the London Scrutiny Network and collaboration with the Centre for Public Scrutiny the council will continue to learn from best practice and innovative approaches to public scrutiny. This will enable us to provide Members with the best training and development opportunities to support their scrutiny activities.

Brent will continue to contribute to the West London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee considering Shaping A Healthier Future developments and the recommendations that arise from the North West London Healthcare Commission.

It is indeed probable that the continuing reconfiguration in provision of healthcare will mean that health issues remain a regular feature on our committee's agenda, we look forward to working with health colleagues to ensure Brent residents receive the highest quality healthcare in these challenging times.

The potential changes in national government policy may also bring with it emerging issues for our work programme and we look forward to working with colleagues to examine the impact of these on the borough and local people.

Cllr Aslam Choudry
Chair of Scrutiny Committee

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 Brent	<p style="text-align: center;">Scrutiny Committee 30 April 2015</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Chief Executive</p>
<p>For Information Wards Affected: ALL</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Review of Equalities and HR Policies and Practice</p>	

1.0 Summary

1.1 This covering report accompanies the attached Review of Equalities and HR Policies and Practices in Brent. The review was led by Cllr Michael Pavey, Deputy Leader of the Council and was undertaken between October 2014 and January 2015. The report is a wide ranging review of staffing matters and HR policies and practices within the Council. The methodology consisted of scrutinising documents and policies, discussions with managers and staff, and was supported by the Local Government Association and other external experts in order to ensure objectivity and fairness. The review is supported by a draft Action Plan which sets out the actions that the council will take to implement the findings. The Scrutiny Committee's views and comments are sought on the actions detailed in the draft action plan.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members of the Scrutiny Committee's views and comments are sought on the actions detailed in the draft plan in Appendix 1 to support the implementation of the review's findings.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Overall, the HR policies were found to be sound, but the report acknowledges that people do not necessarily always apply them consistently. As a result the published report details 31 specific recommendations for improvement. The review states that Brent has the highest proportion of black and minority ethnic (BAME) staff amongst London boroughs and the proportion of BAME top earners is in the top quartile of London boroughs.

3.2 However, it also acknowledges that there is a real challenge in ensuring that people from BAME backgrounds are represented within the senior management team, a

problem that is replicated in organisations across the country. Much of the review focuses on how this challenge will be met including recommendations around developing talent within the council to ensure progression opportunities, implementing a mentoring system to nurture the talent of underrepresented groups and introducing compulsory 'unconscious bias' training for all managers and recruiters.

3.3 The plan sits within the Council's broader planning framework and in particular:

- the Corporate Plan
- the Equality Strategy Action Plan
- the HR Strategy and Action Plan.

3.4 The chief executive has overall responsibility for the successful implementation of the Plan and Members of Corporate Management Team have specific oversight of each of the themes. The Director HR and Administration will provide support to the chief executive and will ensure that monitoring reports are produced within deadlines. The plan will be monitored at officer level through the Corporate Management Team (CMT), the HR Improvement Group (HRIG) and the Diversity Reference Group (DRG). At Member level, progress will be monitored by the General Purposes Committee though there is likely to be some overlap with the Equalities Committee due to be established in May.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None directly arising from this report

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 None directly arising from this report

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 The review of Equalities and HR Policies and Practices and the draft action plan, attached as Appendix 1, recommends changes which aim to systematically embed best practice across the Council with regard to equality and diversity to ensure that all staff are treated with dignity and respect.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

7.1 The council aims to encourage, develop and support all staff and grow talent from underrepresented groups. The intention of the review and action plan is to ensure these HR policies are applied consistently across the council.

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Review of equalities and HR policies and practice at Brent Council

Foreword

Two core values underpin this review:

Every Brent Council employee deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

Every employee deserves the opportunity to rise within Brent Council, regardless of their background. Indeed, the Council benefits enormously from the diversity of its workforce, and would be enhanced further by greater diversity in senior management.

This review finds that Brent is generally a happy and inclusive place to work. But there is plenty we can do better.

Policies are mostly sound. But policies are implemented by people and we need to do more to ensure that they are consistently applied. When this does not happen we need to work harder to ensure that the whole Council learns the lessons.

This review recommends changes which aim to systematically embed best practice across the Council, to ensure that treating one another with dignity and respect is at the very heart of everything we do.

Two-thirds of Brent Council employees are from Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic communities. This makes us the most diverse Council in London and probably in the world. Everyone in Brent should be immensely proud of this. But we should also be immensely disappointed that only 14% of our most senior staff are from BAME communities. It is even more disappointing that this meagre figure is actually one of the very best in London!

Underrepresentation of BAME groups in senior management was identified by all participants in this review as a critical challenge. This isn't just a Brent problem – it is a serious issue across the whole country. Shockingly, the percentage of public appointments made to BAME people has virtually halved in the last five years.

The moral case against this is crystal clear. But the fact that underrepresentation is actually worsening shows that, sadly, the moral case alone is insufficient. Fortunately there is an equally strong business case. Analysis by McKinsey into private sector boardrooms shows that diverse boards generate far bigger profits than ethnically narrow boards.

This is hugely relevant for Brent Council. We are facing immensely difficult times with plummeting budgets and escalating costs. We simply cannot afford to waste talent: we need the very best people in management. Greater diversity in senior management will broaden our perspectives, maximise the potential for creative ideas and increase our understanding of the

communities we serve.

There is a long history of well-meaning attempts to improve diversity at the top, but ultimately they have achieved very little. All participants in this review rejected anything which smacks of tokenism. Consequently the review makes recommendations which seek to draw upon the unique diversity of Brent to produce a bespoke model for real change.

We want to encourage, develop and support our best talent from underrepresented groups. But at the same time we want to grapple with the uncomfortable truths around unconscious bias. We want to maximise opportunities for all Brent Council staff to rise within the organisation, regardless of background. But it is not simply a lack of talent or ambition amongst BAME communities which makes senior management overwhelmingly white - and we want to challenge everyone at the top to recognise this.

BAME underrepresentation in management is a major national problem. It will take time for Brent to change. But change is exactly what this report attempts to achieve. We want Brent Council to become a trailblazer, so that in years to come we can all be as proud of our diverse management as we are of our diverse workforce and our diverse community.

I'd like to thank everyone who helped to produce this report: all the staff who shared their thoughts with me, face to face and in writing; all the elected Members who contributed such rich ideas; the Trade Unions and all the external partners who offered their invaluable expertise.

Every one of us has a vital role to play in making the recommendations in this report a reality. Let's work together to make it happen.

Cllr Michael Pavey
Deputy Leader of Brent Council
December 2014

1. Purpose of the Review

Brent Council is deeply committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. This review was established to ensure that our HR and Equalities policies and practices reflect this commitment.

The Terms of Reference set out the areas that the review would cover:

- surveying a comprehensive suite of policies to identify those which need detailed consideration
- reviewing those which need detailed consideration
- reviewing staff knowledge, understanding and practice
- reviewing progress towards the Gold standard in Investors in People
- reviewing progress towards the Excellence Standard in the Equality

Framework for Local Government

- ensuring that diversity underpins all aspects of the review, including BAME involvement.

Methods included:

- analysis and scrutiny of written reports and documentation
- discussion with staff
- discussion with Members
- advice from external experts
- use of staff focus groups
- best practice comparison with other local authorities.

The review was specifically tasked with making recommendations for improvement where appropriate.

The review therefore focused on the policies and practice of the organisation. There was a specific emphasis on making recommendations to ensure that the diversity of staff reflects the diversity of the borough, at all levels, and that working practices and organisational culture enable this outcome. Analysis of HR policies and processes formed a significant part of the review, as these are a key mechanism for enacting our organisational objectives and values with our personnel.

It is important to note that the review was not a review of our HR department. It is about the role each person has to play in making Brent Council the best possible place to work. There are clear recommendations in relation to employment policies and practice, and these require the action of the entire organisation and crucially managers at all levels.

2. Methodology

The review considered a range of information sources and commissioned work-streams:

- LGA review of policies: The LGA reviewed the Council's relevant employment policies – the scope and recommendations are set out in appendix one at the end of this report.
- Focus groups with staff: these were facilitated by a new Operational Director. Participants were randomly selected from payroll records¹ to enable two general staff focus groups and one for middle managers. Participants were asked to comment on management engagement and to share their experience at the Council before contributing ideas for improvement.
- Roundtables with external stakeholders, examining:

¹ For general staff focus groups, each 66th employee on the payroll list was selected; for managers, each 28th. Each group was widely representative both of ethnicity and of pay scale.

- Increasing the number of BAME staff in senior positions
- Ensuring that the culture of the organisation is an open and positive one

Stakeholders included a range of skilled professionals with a wealth of experience across staff management and equalities practice within the public, private, advisory and not-for-profit sectors. They were:

- Dr Doyin Atewologun, Queen Mary University
 - Peter Hall, Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion
 - Vernal Scott, Marshall ACM
 - Diane Rutherford, BRAP equalities charity
 - Stephen Shashoua, Three Faiths Forum
 - Matthew Critchlow, Thrive Training
- Drop-in sessions to provide the opportunity for any member of staff to provide views.
 - Opportunities for staff to provide views anonymously.
 - Discussions with Trade Unions and written submissions from UNISON the GMB, the NUT and Unite.
 - The Council's Investors in People (IIP) Adviser, accompanied by a BAME adviser new to the Borough, reviewed progress towards the Gold standard. This involved discussions with a number of focus groups with participants selected randomly from payroll records.¹
 - Additional external oversight was provided by Charles Obazuaye, Director of Human Resources at the London Borough of Bromley. Mr Obazuaye provided expert advice at the start of the review and commented in detail on the draft report.
 - A review of equalities data – encompassing recruitment, retention, progress across the equality characteristics. The Brent Diversity Profile is attached to this report as Appendix 2.
 - Meetings were held with the HR Departmental Management Team and the Diversity Reference Group- in order to assess staff knowledge, understanding and practice of policies, and to suggest improvements.

3. Current status and recent achievements

Over recent years, Brent has taken a much more systematic approach to policies, practice and evaluation, in keeping with best practice. As the IIP assessor wrote, 'Leadership is strong, embraces the critical role of people management and exemplifies a willingness to improve and develop.'

Notable improvements include:

- The modernisation of staff management policies and procedures.

- Achievement of the Investors in People (IIP) Silver standard – an achievement made by a handful of employers.
- Committing to the Excellence in Equality Framework for Local Government, one of a small minority of local authorities to do so.
- Re-accredited as a “Two Ticks” employer (*‘positive about disabled people’*).
- A methodical approach to equalities monitoring and undertaking equality analysis on employment policies and procedures
- Establishment of the Diversity Reference Group, chaired by the Chief Executive, to assess and improve practice across services – addressing both internal and external (resident service) issues to underpin equality.
- Joined Stonewall’s Diversity Champions Programme to strengthen sexual orientation equality in the workplace.
- A more systematic approach to consultation with staff on HR policies, procedures and practice through the Trade Unions and HR Improvement Group.

Improvement plans include:

- Working towards Excellence in the Equality Framework for Local Government, which replaced the Equality Standard for Local Government in 2009, under which the Council had received an ‘adequate’ rating.
- Working towards the IIP Gold standard.
- Joining Race for Opportunity, the race campaign from Business in the Community, designed to improve employment opportunities for BAME people and to increase raise diversity at Board, senior executive and management level.
- Joining the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index.
- An equal pay audit to identify and eliminate any unjustifiable pay gaps.

In terms of practice, the Council has:

- Rolled out flexible working across the organisation.
- Established a programme to recruit 100 apprentices over the next three years, with 20 per cent of places reserved for Brent Looked After Children.
- Addressed income inequality directly by becoming a Living Wage employer.
- Established a learning development programme which encompasses skills and technical development.

What does the data tell us?

Brent’s workforce equalities report, covering the period from April 2013 to March 2014 shows that:

- The ethnic diversity of the workforce closely reflects the community it serves; Brent has the highest proportion of BAME staff amongst

London boroughs and the proportion of BAME top earners is in the top quartile of London boroughs.

- Brent has excellent retention rates for disabled staff – in fact, the number of disabled employees increased at a time of reducing staff levels, meaning either that staff feel more confident to disclose that they have a disability or that the proportion of disabled staff is now higher.
- Brent achieves strong rates of retention for staff returning from maternity leave, a reflection of the emphasis that has been placed on flexible working.

However:

- Though the Council tends to outperform its peers in local government, BAME, disabled and female members of staff are under-represented at senior management level, compared to the overall workforce – this is examined in more detail in the findings section of this report below.
- The proportion of Asian, disabled, Hindu and Muslim job applicants fell at each stage of the recruitment process.

4. Findings

It was very welcome to see a number of Council staff provide input into the review. Some of these submissions related to particular policies and policy changes. Each of these issues was investigated as part of this review.

Two staff workshops indicated some gaps in management practice. The overwhelming majority of attendees had regular team meetings and one-to-ones with their managers, but at the two non-management workshops 45% and 30% respectively said they had not had an appraisal in the last twelve months. More than half at each session had not seen a copy of their team or service plan.

Overall, feedback from across workstreams of this review indicates good policy and practice. Staff and manager focus groups noted the positive impact of being co-located at the Civic Centre, good provision of training and development, and the commitment to flexible working. The lIP interim assessment commissioned to inform this review shows that the foundations are in place to achieve more, noting that the organisation is 'ahead of the game' in its approach to leadership, management and people issues. The assessment cites the positive impacts of policies and systems, as well as leadership, both managerial and political.

However, as the data shows, there are long standing inconsistencies regarding the representation of employees from different backgrounds at the highest tiers of the organisation. Brent achieves better than the majority of its peers in relation to diversity, but the baseline for comparison is disappointingly low, so that comparisons are an ineffective measure of good practice. Engagement across the workstreams that informed this review shows that, unsurprisingly, this gap is recognised by staff, management and stakeholders alike as stated via the different engagement mechanisms.

This is a serious national issue. Underrepresentation of BAME communities in leadership positions in the UK is actually worsening. In 2001/2, 8.6% of public appointments and reappointments went to members of BAME communities. This figure peaked at 9.2% in 2006/7 before trending downwards to just 5.5% in 2012/13.

It would be easy for Brent Council to hide behind this national picture but we are adamant that our residents deserve the very best, and we believe that diverse leadership is a significant step towards achieving this.

It is incredibly important to the political and managerial leadership of the Council that the organisation is an inclusive, equal opportunities employer. The workforce – at all levels – should reflect the community it serves, one of the most diverse in the UK. The Council is an organisation that draws its legitimacy from its community and it is therefore only right that its political representatives and its officers reflect that community. Within focus groups, staff and managers all cited diversity within both the community and the organisation as a key attraction to working for Brent Council, and this has been reiterated by individual anonymous submissions.

Being inclusive and reflecting diversity is not only an expression of our values, it is a matter of good business sense. There is now abundant evidence that organisational diversity is directly linked to performance. Research by McKinsey² into private sector boardrooms has found that diverse boards generate 66% better average returns on equity than narrowly comprised boards. In the public sector, Roger Kline³ has drawn upon comprehensive research to show five ways in which NHS organisations lose out through a lack of diversity:

- a. Patients may be prevented from getting the best clinicians and support staff if candidates' ethnicity unfairly influences recruitment and promotion or leads to BAME staff being unfairly treated in the disciplinary process or in other aspects of their working life.
- b. If BAME staff are treated unfairly then that is likely to have an impact on morale, absenteeism, productivity, and turnover. It will also lead to the loss of time and money through grievances, employment tribunals and reputational damage.
- c. There is an established link between the treatment of BAME staff and the care that patients receive. Research shows the workplace treatment of BAME staff is a very good barometer of the climate of respect and care for all within NHS trusts and correlates with patient experience.
- d. There is evidence of a link between diversity in teams (at every level including Boards) and innovation. At a time when the NHS needs to

² Thomas Barta, Markus Kleiner & Tilo Neumann, 'Is there a payoff from top-team diversity?' McKinsey Quarterly, April, 2012.

³ Roger Kline, 'The 'snowy white peaks' of the NHS: a survey of discrimination in governance and leadership and the potential impact on patient care in London and England.' Middlesex University Research Repository, 2014.

transform its care, lack of diversity may carry a cost in patient care for everyone

- e. Leadership bodies which are significantly unrepresentative of their local communities, such as NHS Trust Boards, will have more difficulty ensuring that care is genuinely patient centred – with resultant failings in the provision or quality of services to specific local communities that have particular health needs, including BAME communities and patients.

Although local government differs from the private sector and from the NHS, facing its own challenges and idiosyncrasies, diversity at all levels is equally important and equally valuable from a business point of view. By accurately representing our community and by drawing on the talents of the widest variety of people, we can operate more effectively, efficiently and innovatively.

There was a broad consensus from all the people contributing views about the need to address this issue within the organisation, using the diverse talent that already exists, and this is reflected within the recommendations.

In terms of the culture of the organisation, the consensus is that it is open and inclusive. However, it needs to take practical steps to translate values into competency and practice. A key theme across workstreams has been that policies are implemented by people, so we need to ensure consistency in applying those policies. This has been highlighted by staff, HR professionals, the LGA, Investor in People (IiP) assessors and the trade unions alike.

The Council has successfully delivered intense change at a time of significant challenge. Change management skills, including the ability to support staff appropriately, are increasingly important.

On a functional level, the review has provided the opportunity to assess the detail of policy and practice and this is reflected in the findings set out below.

5. Overall issues

5.1 Finding: There has been significant modernisation and improvement of management policies and practice. This has been recognised in focus groups and the Council is well on track to achieve gold status in IiP this year. This is impressive and only achieved by two per cent of organisations.

- The Council needs to continue on its improvement journey, using external assessment and internal engagement to measure progress and inform improvements.
- The move to a single location has provided for great opportunities in terms of shared learning and culture, which may not have been fully realised.

- Flexible working is appreciated and cited as a positive aspect of working at the Council, but focus groups suggest that there may be inconsistencies in application by managers, which should be addressed.
- The Council has benefitted from experienced and skilled interim appointments during a time of unprecedented change. The Council is now very well placed to move forward with permanent appointments and build on recent successes noted in the review process.

5.2 Finding: Diversity is celebrated and prioritised, but the senior management of the Council is not representative of the community it services, nor of the diversity of the wider workforce.

- We are not reflecting the diversity of our population at senior levels, nor tapping sufficiently into the talent of our entire workforce.
- There is a lack of progression for BAME staff, resulting in a deficit in representation at senior levels. Whilst we can demonstrate better performance than the majority of our local government peers, our performance is not good enough. There is a clear drop-off in progression for BAME staff from grade PO3 to PO6, becoming even more pronounced at higher grades⁴, thus indicating barriers to the progression of staff from these backgrounds:

Grade	SC3-6	S1-P2	P3-6	P7-8	HAY
% BAME staff	69	68	52	32	14

- As the table above shows, whilst the proportion of BAME staff at Scales 3-6 and SO1 – PO2 are at 69 per cent and 68 per cent respectively, the proportion drops to 32 per cent at grades PO7-PO8 and to just 14 per cent for Hay graded staff.
- Breaking down the HAY grade further, 10.1% of the 14% BAME figure are Asian, and only 2.5% are Black. Within the PO grades, the equivalent figures are 21% Asian and 29% Black, whilst across the organisation as a whole 26% are Asian and 31% are Black. So in addition to the general underrepresentation of BAME communities in management positions, there appears to be a further issue of underrepresentation of the Black community in the most senior positions.
- It will take time to change this picture. This report makes a series of recommendations which hopefully will lead to change, however it is important to manage expectations about the timescale entailed for them to take effect. It is also important to recognise that not everyone wants to be a manager. But it is essential to ensure that those who do wish to manage should be able to rise through the system solely on the

⁴ Brent Diversity Profile 2013-14

basis of their ability and work. Equally importantly, everyone in the organisation, manager or otherwise, deserves to be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

- In terms of disabled staff, there is uneven distribution across grades, but there does not appear to be an issue regarding progression. We should, however, be mindful that employees may become disabled during the course of their employment at the council: we should therefore ensure that managers are aware of the need to provide reasonable adaptations for staff affected in this way.
- As regards female staff, whilst there appears to be a drop-off at higher grades, this appears to be a function of the higher proportion of women within the workforce at lower grades than is the case in the local population; thus the proportion of women at higher grades has a greater correlation with the general population than at lower tiers. The equality delivered via single status is likely to reinforce our attractiveness as an employer, and we should continue to ensure that our practice remains consistent with our values.
- Attempts specifically to address deficits in progression across equality characteristics do not appear to be effective; whilst BAME staff are more likely to undertake training opportunities, this is not resulting in the same career progression enjoyed by non BAME staff. A systematic approach that achieves positive change is required.
- Across the different engagement mechanisms, notably the staff focus groups and stakeholder roundtables, there was a clear rejection of initiatives that are perceived to be tokenistic and superficial. It is of course desirable that posts offered externally result in greater diversity at senior levels, but there is clear support for approaches that enable us to 'grow our own'. Such an approach has the advantage of being more sustainable, by providing a supply of skilled senior managers who reflect the borough's diversity and by demonstrating that equality is embedded at all levels. However, this too should be embedded in good leadership and management at all levels.
- An innovative mentoring programme to support the development of underrepresented groups would certainly be positive. However this must be a bespoke offer, reflecting the uniqueness of Brent and the challenges faced by our communities. An 'off the shelf' initiative would be a wasted opportunity. Instead, we should work with Brent employees to design a programme reflecting the unique makeup of Brent and the specific challenges faced by our communities. In establishing this programme, the Council should consider options such as increasing opportunities for secondment within the organisation and actively encouraging staff from one department to undertake projects in another. The Cabinet in Brent reflects the diversity of the borough well and more could be made of this in support of the council's leadership and management programmes. Indeed, interaction with elected

members, more generally, could do much to increase understanding of diversity and equalities in Brent. A new development programme offers the opportunity to widen access to these experiences.

- The Council must be honest and acknowledge national research which shows that well-meaning development initiatives alone are insufficient. We are all at risk of unconscious bias⁵ so the Council should explore robust interventions such as reverse mentoring⁶ of senior management.
- Overall, it was considered that learning and development has improved over the past year, for example, staff reported within the liP interim assessment that 'Training and development are now very proactive'. However, we need to strengthen our approach to succession planning, talent management and progression, beyond those schemes operating at entry level (apprenticeships and graduate schemes). We lack consistency across the organisation in encouraging talent and ensuring progression – addressing this would represent an opportunity to promote consistent representation of all equality characteristics at different levels within the organisation – and perhaps begin to tackle the BAME deficit at the top tiers of the Council.
- Whilst the local apprenticeship scheme enjoys high levels of inclusion for BAME staff, the intake for graduates from the National Graduate Development Programme is less diverse. This might be expected given that the national diversity profile is much lower than that of Brent. There may be opportunities to be more inclusive by placing a greater emphasis on local recruitment or by introducing an in-house management training scheme. Indeed, staff groups suggested that this could be a way to increase diversity at senior levels.
- Guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC 2012) states: "Because the general equality duty requires you to analyse the effect of your organisation's functions on all protected groups, public authorities will not be able to meet the duty unless they have enough usable information." Brent collates a good range of data which is presented in an accessible manner (see appendix 2.) This data should be shared widely and used as the benchmark from which to build progress. However, there are areas where data collection could be improved, and thus services enhanced. In general terms, better recording of the reasons for decisions at each stage of the recruitment and selection process would increase understanding and perhaps point to the actions necessary for improvement. More specifically the Council should collect equalities data on all shortlisted candidates. In the case of existing employees, the Council is highly

⁵ Embedded 'people preferences', formed by our environment, experiences and other peoples' views about other groups of people, which may affect our attitude to people based on their personal characteristics or background

⁶ 'Reverse mentoring' refers to an initiative whereby a more senior executive is paired with a more junior employee, in order to offer insight and experience into aspects of working life the executive may not have had exposure to, with regards to, for example, age, gender, ethnicity, or technological knowledge.

dependent upon self-declaration. Participation rates are improving but the transfer of data to Oracle presented problems as staff had to re-enter data. According to the most recent intranet message, 94% of staff have yet to fill out their equality data on Oracle. It is understandable that completion of equality forms often feels like additional bureaucracy, but efforts must be made to show staff that submitting their equalities information is actually a vital step to gradually addressing the challenges faced by underrepresented groups.

- Recruitment data should be supplemented with qualitative information, so the Council should consider setting up a focus group of randomly selected new-starters to test their experience of our recruitment and selection processes.
- In terms of service delivery for the Brent community, the Council should consider updating the categories it uses when collecting data to reflect the changing profile of Brent. Specific categories for the Somali, Eastern European and Latin communities would enhance the quality of data collected.

Issues regarding policies

5.3 Finding: There have been significant improvements to the Council's policies. However, further revisions to those policies are required in order to ensure robustness and ongoing adherence to best practice.

- The independent LGA review was generally positive about the core policies but identified some improvements in key policies, which would strengthen our framework.
- Feedback received from the GMB union suggests support for the majority of changes suggested by the LGA, as well as support for the Council's overall approach to the issues examined by this review.
- The NUT has separately requested that the Council clarifies the difference between sickness absence and medical appointments for disabled staff.

Issues regarding practice

5.4 Finding: Generally, feedback from staff themselves suggests that practice is good; however, improvements can and should be made to employee management practice to achieve a more collaborative and inclusive culture.

- Engagement with staff suggests inconsistent application of policies and procedures, including as regards flexible working. There has clearly been great progress in implementing good management practice, but the Council should also seek to ensure that internal communications

explain expected practice, underpinned by a clear explication of staff and manager competencies and behaviours.

- At present, there are few reported incidents of bullying and harassment. The Council has an emphasis on informal resolution: according to the LGA this represents good practice. Consideration should be given to ensuring consistency, support and follow up within the informal resolution framework.
- The Council lacks a systematic Council-wide approach to learning from HR and legal processes when complaints are raised; whilst this is not uncommon, we have an opportunity to make improvements. In addition, this may give rise to inconsistent management responses. Thus, though HR takes the lead, individual managers are responsible for learning from ETs and grievances, and reviews take place with HR and within departments. Improvements should be made in terms of cross-organisational learning, peer review and Council-wide improvements.
- The Code of Conduct does not at present adequately articulate the behaviours and practice expected of managers and staff. Such behaviours should be clearly articulated, communicated and reflected in:
 - recruitment and selection processes
 - ongoing team and line management
 - appraisal processes
 - learning development processes and interventions.

Addressing this presents an opportunity to emphasise the significant priority the Council attaches to valuing diversity.

- Evaluation of practice and understanding of staff experience should be regular and Council-wide.
- Internal communications should be strengthened to become a two-way flow of information. It is critical for senior management to be able to communicate values and good practice to the wider workforce. But it is equally important that communications enables the wider workforce to articulate their experiences to senior management. In two staff focus groups, more than half had not seen a copy of their service or team plan and participants suggested that improvements could be made to internal communications, including the ability for greater staff engagement and management visibility, for example through senior managers attending team meetings. This is increasingly important given the scale and pace of change. Managers themselves need to be supported to communicate effectively, but must also play the key role in staff engagement. Given the current and future constraints on funding, it is important that central advice and strategy is complemented by good practice within departments.

In summary, the four key issues are:

1. **There has been significant modernisation and improvement of management policies and practice. This has been recognised in focus groups and the Council is well on track to achieve gold status in liP this year. This is impressive and only achieved by two per cent of organisations.**
2. **Diversity is celebrated and prioritised, but the senior management of the Council is not representative of the community it services, nor of the diversity of the wider workforce.**
3. **There have been significant improvements to the Council's policies. However, further revisions to those policies are required in order to ensure robustness and ongoing adherence to best practice.**
4. **Generally, feedback from staff themselves suggests that practice is good; however, improvements can and should be made to employee management practice to achieve a more collaborative and inclusive culture.**

Section 6 below sets out recommendations to address these.

6. Recommendations

It should be noted that recommendations do not seek to impose a prescriptive approach, but to provide a framework and support to address the issues identified. We should ensure that clear expectations are set for all staff and managers regarding objectives and behaviours, provide the support to meet those expectations – and trust them to deliver. Evaluating success in delivery and ensuring consistency of outcomes must also be a key element within our approach. **Officers should be charged with producing an action responding to the recommendations set out below.**

6.1 Achieving consistency in staff progression and diversity at management levels

The Council needs to ensure that senior staff recruitment achieves greater diversity, when it recruits staff externally and by being more successful in promoting internal talent from our diverse workforce. A systematic approach to progression is likely to assist in addressing specific recruitment and retention issues, such as in Children's Services, by 'growing our own'.

- a. The Council should consider how to have a more systematic and successful approach to the progression of its own staff to more senior positions. There should be an expectation of all managers to recognise and nurture talent, supported by appropriate organisational inputs, such as providing opportunities to experience new responsibilities and for involvement in projects to develop experience and skills, support for development and qualifications, mentoring and coaching. This expectation should be clearly articulated in the Council's competency

framework. Talent should be identified within all sections of the Council, not merely from the professions from which those at the top table are traditionally drawn. There is a need to accelerate plans to support the career progression of high-potential staff from groups currently under-represented – this review notes the importance of this being a Council-wide responsibility and an integral part of managing people. **Council officers are therefore asked to prepare a report establishing how we can identify talent internally in a more structured way, supporting managers to ensure that staff are linked into and benefit from development opportunities and the support required to progress.**

- b. The Council should devise an **innovative mentoring programme** to support the development of underrepresented groups. This must be a bespoke offer, reflecting the uniqueness of Brent and the challenges faced by our communities, and the challenges faced by members of those communities hoping to build a management career in Brent. Brent employees should be actively involved in developing this scheme.
- c. The Council should set up a **‘reverse mentoring’ programme** to broaden managers’ understanding of staff experiences and barriers to progression for staff from groups underrepresented at management level.
- d. The Council should audit its provision of **unconscious bias training** and ensure that every employee and, indeed, every elected member undertaking recruitment and selection has undertaken this training.
- e. **There should be a process for ensuring that training meets both organisational and personal professional development objectives.**
- f. **Recruitment, appraisal and progression should be competency based**, thus reducing factors that may have counted against diversity by replicating historical barriers for under-represented groups, such as educational attainment. This does not imply compromising quality, on the contrary, it emphasises the skills and behaviours required to do the job.
- g. **Any member of staff or elected member involved in recruitment and selection must have been trained in the process.** At the same time, there needs to be more **comprehensive recording of the decisions made at different stages of the recruitment and selection process** with regular summary reports considered by the HR Improvement Group.
- h. The Council **should review the success both of its apprenticeship programme and its participation in the National Graduate Development Programme for Local Government.** Participants on

both schemes should be asked about their experiences and if the schemes can be improved.

- i. **The Council should introduce a local graduate development programme to complement the national scheme**, enabling access to our talented local graduates who come from one of the most diverse and exciting places in the UK.
- j. **The Council should undertake research with applicants to understand the reasons behind the attrition rate for Asian, disabled, Hindu and Muslim job applicants within the recruitment process, in order to inform improvements in the process.**
- k. When undertaking recruitment **the Council should aim to collect equalities data on all shortlisted candidates**. The Council should undertake a corporate push with senior leadership encouraging **all employees to update their individual equalities profile on Oracle**. The Council should also considering **updating the categories it uses when collecting data** from Brent residents to specifically identify the Somali, Eastern European and Latin communities.
- l. The Council should **analyse the recruitment diversity statistics by pay grade** to establish if there are differences in recruitment patterns for different types of role.
- m. The Council should **set up a focus group of randomly selected new-starters to “test” their experience of our recruitment and selection processes**.
- n. The Council should have an open discussion at senior levels, and across officers and elected members, on whether to **consider setting indicative, non-binding targets for recruitment of BAME staff to senior management posts**.

6.2 Achieving excellence in employment policies

- a. **The Council should devise an action plan with suitable timelines for implementing the recommendations of the LGA review of employment policies**. Where recommendations are not implemented as part of this plan, a written explanation should be provided. A full list of recommendations is attached at Appendix 1.

6.3 Achieving excellence in employment and management practice

- a. **The Council should implement a systematic approach to learning from internal grievance and legal processes (tribunals) when complaints are raised and upheld**. The Council currently undertakes reviews following such processes, but these are undertaken within the Department involved. There should be a process for ensuring organisational learning, peer review and a process for making

improvements that goes beyond the department affected, thus avoiding inconsistent management responses and ensuring that the opportunity for organisational improvement is taken. In addition, the Council should monitor the level of internal and external processes, regardless of the outcome, in order to understand staff perceptions and respond as appropriate.

- b. The Council **should establish a more corporate approach to learning from grievances and tribunals**. This should include an annual report summarising the number of grievances and tribunals raised against the Council (all cases anonymized), breaking these down by service area and issue. The Council should similarly produce an anonymised summary of the findings of exit interviews conducted over each year.
- c. Policies are only valid if they are articulated within a clear framework and are applied in a consistent manner. Staff and manager focus groups emphasised the need for a 'one council' approach, with greater collaboration between different parts of the organisation. **The Council should ensure that it has a clear competency framework, developed in collaboration with staff**, which includes expected behaviours, in order to ensure a supportive and inclusive working culture. The framework should make specific references to celebrating our diversity, working well with a diverse range of people and managing in an inclusive manner. It should also underline the importance of the appraisal process and ensuring that all employees not only regularly see their team or service plans, but feel an integral part in their delivery. This is crucial to removing barriers to progression, and ensuring that managers demonstrate the appropriate skills and attitudes. **This framework should be developed in consultation with staff and unions and should be reflected in the Code of Conduct and reinforced through internal communications**. It should inform recruitment, progression, appraisal, conduct and capability processes.
- d. **There should be a regular (biennial) staff survey to measure staff perceptions and employee management practice**. This should be conducted independently, with the results anonymised and provided to staff. There should be a focused Council-wide action plan to respond to the findings, with each Director responsible for responding to issues specific to their areas of responsibility.
- e. **Regular focus groups should be held with different staff groups** such as BAME staff, disabled staff, women and LGBT staff. Their views should inform planning to achieve the Excellence Standard in the Equality Framework for local Government.
- f. **The Diversity Reference Group should continue to meet regularly and to assess and advise on responses to equalities data,**

examine progress on the action plan resulting from this review and any issues raised by staff.

- g. **Each Departmental Management Team should consider equalities issues relevant to its Department and its workforce on a quarterly basis.**
- h. **The Council should internally review its approach to bullying and harassment.** The LGA agrees that the Council's emphasis on informal resolution is good practice. However, it is important that adequate systems are in place regarding incidents which are informally resolved. Whilst respecting individual sensitivities, the Council must ensure that it can monitor trends and corporately learn lessons where appropriate.
- i. The Council should develop a policy or guidance on reasonable adjustments to **assist managers to support staff who acquire a disability** while working for Brent.
- j. **Equality of status and pay delivered via 'single status' is likely to reinforce our attractiveness as an employer, and we should continue to ensure that our practice remains consistent with our values in this regard.**
- k. Officers are asked to examine and **clarify the Council's approach to medical appointments for disabled staff** as distinct from sickness absence.

6.4 Communications

- a. **This review should be published on the staff intranet.**
- b. **The action plan produced in response to this report should be shared widely. A report of progress against that plan should be produced at six monthly intervals** and reported to the committee noted in 5a). This review of progress should also be published on the staff intranet.
- c. There should be a **review of internal communications**, ensuring that members of staff have the opportunity to engage with career opportunities, and that communication is a two-way process. It is noted that in order to be truly effective, there must be effective local implementation by managers.

6.5 Member involvement

- a. **The Council should establish a committee of elected Members to oversee progress towards the Excellence Standard in the Equalities Framework for Local Government.** This would involve both support for development and close scrutiny of the Council's

approach to equalities, including monitoring the progress of the action plan responding to the recommendations of this review.

- b. The Council Scrutiny Committee may wish to consider this review.** The production of the report of progress, referred to in 4b) above, may be an opportune moment.

Appendices

1. LGA Review of Policies: recommendations
2. Brent Diversity Profile

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Action Plan: Draft for Scrutiny Committee

1	ACHIEVING CONSISTENCY IN STAFF PROGRESSION AND DIVERSITY AT MANAGEMENT LEVELS CMT Lead, Andy Donald, Strategic Director, Regeneration & Growth		
Objective	Key Activities	Progress Milestones	Success criteria
To ensure best practice in implementing recruitment policies and procedures	Train all managers and elected members who participate in recruitment and selection, incorporating unconscious bias into training	Members of the Senior Staff Appointments Sub Committee to be trained by end April 2015. Unconscious bias training for these Members undertaken by end of April 2015. Build from, training on unconscious bias and recruitment and selection into annual Member development programme, May 2015 New e-learning module on recruitment including unconscious bias training to be developed by end of April 2015 and rolled out to all managers by the end of June 2015.	100% managers and Members involved in recruitment and selection to be trained so unconscious bias does not impact on recruitment and selection decisions. 90% good or excellent satisfaction levels on training
	Ensure decisions made at each stage of the recruitment and selection process are properly recorded	Recruiting managers issued with advice note and pro-forma amended by end of April 2015. Quarterly reporting on recruitment and selection to HRIG from September 2015.	100% managers involved in recruitment and selection are trained
	Collect and report on equalities data at all stages of the recruitment process. Analyse recruitment diversity statistics by pay grades	Implement recommendations in current annual equalities report throughout 2015 Equalities data for all stages of the recruitment process to be included in the Annual Equalities Workforce report 14/15, by June 2015. Incorporate new reporting requirements in the annual Equalities Workforce report by April 2016.	Robust data collection and analysis. Corporate HR KPIs demonstrate a positive direction of travel to demonstrate diversity at all levels of the workforce.

<p>To ensure best practice in implementing HR polices</p>	<p>Ensure consistent application of HR policies and procedures and adherence to them by managers.</p>	<p>Guidance on the role of DMTs in respect of workforce and equalities to be developed by end of April.</p> <p>Quarterly reporting to DMTs on departmental compliance with HR policies and procedures commencing May 2015.</p> <p>Annual report with recommendations for improvement produced in October 2015 and reported to HRIG.</p> <p>Review of progress to achieve liP Gold to CMT April 2015 Achievement of IIP Gold level December 2015.</p> <p>Monthly case management reviews with HR and Legal April 2015 onwards.</p> <p>As routine, meetings with relevant strategic and operational directors, HR Director and legal to consider all complex employee relations cases and potential employment tribunals</p>	<p>Achievement of liP Gold level</p> <p>Low level of tribunals and success in defending them</p> <p>Evidence of monthly case management meetings</p> <p>Evidence of senior management engagement in employment tribunal cases and other complex employee relations cases</p>
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<p>To ensure there is a creative approach to the development of talent & leadership</p>	<p>Develop a leadership development programme for staff from under-represented groups to support promotion into senior manager posts</p> <p>Prepare a report establishing how to identify talent internally in a structured way.</p>	<p>Programme developed by May 2015 and agreed by HRIG, TUs and CMT by June 2015.</p> <p>Participants identified and programme rolled out between September 2015 and March 2016. Programme evaluated April 2016. Report prepared for December 2015, incorporating feedback from liP Gold Assessment</p> <p>Recommendations rolled out by April 2016.</p>	<p>Minimum of 90% satisfaction rating from all participants.</p> <p>Increasing proportion of: BAME senior managers; 1 female senior managers; disabled senior managers.</p> <p>Managers are supported in ensuring that staff are linked to and benefit from development opportunities and support required to progress.</p>
<p>To support the development of under represented groups</p>	<p>Introduce innovative coaching and mentoring arrangements, including a diversity mentoring programme to support under-represented groups and reverse mentoring arrangements</p>	<p>New programme developed and agreed by HRIG, TUS and CMT by May 2015.</p> <p>New policy rolled out by from June 2015.</p> <p>Build diversity mentoring and coaching arrangements into the BAME senior management development programme from September 2015</p> <p>Pilot reverse mentoring scheme from September 2015 and review in July 2016</p>	<p>100% new senior managers have mentors</p> <p>100% apprentices and national graduates have mentors</p> <p>Staff participate in reverse mentoring and the pilot is well reviewed.</p> <p>Upper quartile staff satisfaction levels on staff and management development in staff survey</p>

To review and refresh the apprenticeship and graduate schemes so they are high quality programmes leading to employment	Evaluate the effectiveness of the current apprentice programme establish improvements	External review of apprentice programme undertaken by end of April 2015 and recommendations implemented by June 2015. Review to incorporate focus group with apprentices to capture views about programme and opportunities for them to continue their career within Brent.	Internal schemes to grow our own future workforce are solid and effective. Brent in top quartile for number of apprentices in London Councils.
	Review and improve the internal arrangements in place for the management of the National Graduate Development Programme for Local Government.	Review and agree changes to the Graduate Programme by June 2015. Roll out improved internal management arrangements of programme in advance of new intake in September 2015.	Support to reduced unemployment within the borough. 95% satisfaction with Brent graduate programme. 95% graduates get jobs in Brent
	Introduce a local graduate development programme to complement the national scheme.	Proposals considered and agreed by October 2015 and rolled out in January to attract graduates graduating in June 2016.	Graduates more reflective of the community
To engage council staff in developing workforce strength and diversity.	Ensure all staff have updated their equalities profile on Oracle. Review equality reporting categories.	Ongoing campaign to encourage staff and managers to update equality profile on Oracle to increase reporting levels for all equalities reporting data. DRIG to monitor quarterly.	100% equalities profile reporting on Oracle
	Consider implementing indicative, non binding targets for recruitment under-representative groups at senior levels.	Review KPIs for recruitment of under-represented groups at a senior level by June 2015. Consider report at CMT by October and then at GP Committee by December 2015.	Achievement of corporate KPIs for recruitment to under represented areas at a senior level.
	Collect feedback during Induction regarding experience of recruitment process.	Feedback reported quarterly to CMT from July 2015. Annual report on recruitment incorporates experience of new employees, from September 2015 .	

2	ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN EMPLOYMENT POLICIES CMT Lead, Cara Davani, Director of HR and Administration		
Objective	Key Activities	Progress Milestones	Success criteria
<p>To ensure Brent's Human Resources policies and procedures reflect best practice so managers are supported well in leading and managing their teams.</p>	<p>Review and update policies in accordance with LGA feedback</p> <p>Review the equality analyses of HR policies every three years</p>	<p>Consider and make minor policy changes by the middle of March 2015. Revise Code of Conduct by end of April 2015. Provide a written explanation where an LGA recommendation is not being implemented by the end of April 2015. Consult with trade unions and HRIG on proposed changes by end of March 2015. Agree minor policy changes with CMT & Lead Member by end of April 2015.</p> <p>Revise the recruitment policy by end of April 2015 to stipulate all managers must be trained before interviewing.</p> <p>Publish revised policies on intranet by end of April 2015. Communicate changes to policies to staff and managers by end of April 2015.</p> <p>First review to be undertaken in June 2015</p>	<p>100% managers complete Brent Manager Essential training</p> <p>100% managers who undertake investigations are trained in disciplinary and grievance investigations</p> <p>Number of employment tribunals is low against benchmarked councils (benchmarks TBA) and ET cases are successfully defended</p> <p>HR KPIs achieved</p> <p>100 % Adherence to procedures and timelines in HR policies</p>

3	ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE IN EMPLOYMENT AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICE		
CMT Lead, Phil Porter, Strategic Director, Adult and Social Care			
Objective	Key Activities	Progress Milestones	Success criteria
To establish a more coherent competency framework for the Council which defines clearly different behaviours and personal skills that determine how all staff should do their jobs.	Produce a new competency framework and embed it in the work of the Council	<p>Develop a framework setting out a set of revised staff competencies by July 2015.</p> <p>Review our approach to bullying and harassment and ensure best practice is captured in the revised competencies.</p> <p>Ensure relevant policies recognise the requirement to be competency based by September 2015.</p> <p>Devise a training programme that supports the framework for implementation from July 2015.</p>	<p>All recruitment and selection reflects the competencies framework.</p> <p>100% appraisals reflects the competencies</p>
To ensure the views of staff are used to shape the development of the Council	Establish bi-annual staff survey	<p>Staff survey designed and undertaken by March 2016.</p> <p>Results analysed and fed into the new Corporate Plan</p>	
	Organise a series of regular focus groups with different staff groups.	<p>Programme of focus groups for BAME staff, disabled staff, women and LGBT staff agreed by DRG by June 2015</p> <p>Focus group on recruitment and selection arrangements undertaken by June 2015 and any recommendations incorporated into annual report to CMT in September 2015.</p> <p>Other focus groups underway by September 2015 and outcomes reported to DRG on a quarterly basis from December 2015.</p>	
To ensure excellence in our approach to disabled staff	Develop guidance for managers on reasonable	Guidance for managers on reasonable adjustments agreed by DRG, HRIG and TUs and rolled out by June 2015.	

	adjustments for disabled staff.	Clarify the Council's approach to medical appointments for disabled staff by end of April 2015	
To achieve excellence in employment and management practice	Undertake an Equal pay audit	Equal pay audit undertaken by end of March 2015 and recommendations reported to DRG by April 2015 with any agreed action underway by May 2015	100% staff are being paid equal pay for work of equal value
	CMT & DMTs to consider equalities and workforce issues on a more regular basis.	Quarterly equalities and HR updates to CMT and DMTs commencing in May 2015.	
	Review equalities data on a regular basis and oversee implementation of HR and equalities action plan.	Quarterly reporting to DRG on a core set of equalities data from September 2015. Quarterly monitoring of the roll out of the HR and equalities action plan by DRG and HRIG, commencing in May 2015. Member monitoring of the Plan through GP Committee beginning September 2015.	
To ensure learning from practice is used to improve performance	Implement a systematic approach to learning from internal discipline, grievance (including bullying and harassment), capability procedures and employment tribunals.	Process for review developed and agreed by HRIG by end of March 2015 and CMT in April. Roll out new review arrangements from May 2015. Monthly case management meetings with HR and Legal commencing April 2015 Ad hoc meetings with relevant director, HR and Legal on Employment Tribunals, commencing April 2015 Regular reports to CMT beginning May 2015	Number of employment and tribunals low against comparator boroughs and success high in employment tribunal outcomes.
	Develop an annual report highlighting the learning from the implementation of the Council's policies on discipline, grievance and capability as well as the learning from employment tribunals	Report on progress quarterly to CMT commencing in May as part of the HR report, including systematic 'by exception' reporting on compliance with policies. Annual analysis on findings of exit interviews to be considered by HRIG in April 2015 and incorporated into HR annual report 2016.	Better employee management practice and stronger understanding of employee perceptions

4	SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE BY BETTER COMMUNICATION AND BY INVOLVEMENT OF ELECTED MEMBERS CMT Lead, Lorraine Langham, Chief Operating Officer		
Objective	Key activities	Progress Milestones	Success criteria
To ensure staff and elected members are aware of the outcomes of the HR and equalities policy review	Review Council's approach to internal communications.	Review of internal communication arrangements undertaken by June 2015 and new strategy implemented from July 2015	Upper quartile satisfaction rates on internal communication in the staff survey.
	Communicate outcome of review and action plan to staff and Members.	Publish action plan on intranet by beginning of May 2015, with references made too in various internal publications such as the Chief Executive's Blog, eSight lite. Action plan on HR and Equalities review to be considered by Scrutiny Committee end of April 2015. Six monthly reporting of progress reported to CMT and GP Committee commencing September 2015.	100% of actions in action plan delivered on time
	Establish a committee of elected members to oversee progress towards the Excellent Standard in the Equalities Framework for Local Government	Establish a committee in May 2015 to review progress towards Excellent in the Equalities Framework for Local Government Meetings held quarterly, commencing in June 2015. Action plan on HR and Equalities review to be considered by Scrutiny Committee end of April 2015.	

**Scrutiny Committee
Forward Plan 2015/16**

Date of Committee	Agenda items	Responsible officers
Thursday 30 April 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability agenda – Recycling, CO2 emissions, cycling, congestion and air quality. • Clinical Commissioning Group – Future Commissioning Intentions • Report from the Pupil Premium Task Group • Annual report of Scrutiny Committee • Equalities and HR practices 	<p>Chief Operating Officer</p> <p>CCG – Sarah Mansuralli, Chief Operating Officer</p> <p>Cathy Tyson, Head of Policy and Scrutiny</p> <p>Christine Gilbert, Chief Executive Cara Davani, Director of HR</p>

Date of Committee	Agenda items	Responsible officers
Tuesday 16 June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to affordable childcare. • Paediatric Services in Brent. • Public Health – priorities and progress. • Report from the Access to GP services task group 	<p>Sara Williams, Operational Director Early Help and Education.</p> <p>Northwest London Hospitals Trust, Brent Clinical Commissioning Group. Melanie Smith, Director of Public Health</p> <p>Chair of Task Group</p>
Wednesday 8 July 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licencing procedures including licenced premises and betting shops. • Local Government ombudsman complaints and corporate complaints. • Up-date on performance of Brent Housing Partnership 	<p>Andy Donald, Strategic Director Regeneration and Growth Cathy Tyson, Head of Policy and Scrutiny</p> <p>Tom Bremner, Managing Director Brent Housing Partnership. Andy Donald, Strategic Director Regeneration and Growth</p>