



Performance and Finance Select Committee

Wednesday 14 April 2010 at 7.30 pm

Committee Room 4, Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane
Wembley HA9 9HD

Membership:

Members

Councillors:

Dunn (Chair)
H B Patel (Vice-Chair)
Bessong
Butt
Mendoza
Pagnamenta
Van Kalwala

First alternates

Councillors:

Corcoran
H M Patel
Green
John
Baker
Motley
Jones

Second alternates

Councillors:

V Brown
Kansagra
C J Patel
Coughlin
Mistry
Jackson
Long

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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 Personal and Prejudicial 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	
3 Minutes of the Last Meeting	1 - 8
The minutes are attached.	
4 Matters Arising	
5 Revenues Performance	9 - 16
This report outlines performance in relation to Revenues collection (Council Tax and NNDR) collection for the financial year 2009-10.	
6 Staff Survey 2009/10 - Main findings and actions to date	17 - 24
This report is to update members of the Performance and Finance Committee the main findings from the 2009/10 Brent council staff satisfaction survey and actions to date.	
7 Effectively Curbing Anti-Social Behaviour in Brent	25 - 30
This report provides an overview of Anti-Social Behaviour in Brent.	
8 Performance and Finance Select Committee Work Programme 2009/10	
Members are asked to consider future topics to be included in the Select Committee's Work Programme for 2009/10.	

9 Items requested onto the Overview and Scrutiny Agenda

10 Recommendations from the Executive for items to be considered by the Performance and Finance Select Committee

11 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Performance and Finance Select Committee will be confirmed at the annual meeting of Full Council in May.

12 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 No 64.



Please remember to **SWITCH OFF** your mobile phone during the meeting.

- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public.
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- A public telephone is located in the foyer on the ground floor, opposite the Porters' Lodge

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LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE SELECT COMMITTEE

Tuesday 16 February 2010 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Dunn (Chair), Councillor H B Patel (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Bessong, Butt, Mendoza, Pagnamenta and Van Kalwala

1. **Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

None declared.

2. **Deputations**

None received.

3. **Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 9 December 2009**

RESOLVED:

that, subject to correcting the name of the Interim Head of Community Safety to Genny Renard on pages 2 to 5, the minutes of the last meeting, held on 9 December 2009, be agreed as an accurate record.

4. **Matters Arising**

None raised.

5. **Waste Contract Performance**

Chris Whyte (Head of Environment Management) introduced the report and answered questions from Councillors on the performance of the Council's Waste Services Contract with Veolia, specifically with respect to waste and recycling, street cleansing, missed collections and complaints. Data to the end of December 2009 showed a recycling rate of 30.69%, an increase of 1.5% on the same period in the previous year. The main feature had been a significant reduction in waste and in landfill waste in particular. This was part of a wider UK and West London pattern, and had led to savings in the cost of disposal. Performance on street cleansing showed that the good performance of the previous year had been maintained, although there had been some concerns about the level of detritus in the first set of scores. Missed collections – attributed to snow and ice – had peaked around Christmas and the New Year. The situation had been rectified promptly, and the number of missed collections was now at an acceptable level. In general performance had been good, and the number of complaints was the lowest since the start of the current contract.

Asked what proportion of properties in the borough had access to recycling, Chris Whyte informed the Committee that 105,000 properties had recycling collections, 80,000 had green box collections, and 60,000 had green bins. The remainder had access to sack-based collections, with a good number of flats served by mini 'bring' sites. The Council had achieved its target of 30% recycling, and the current waste strategy review was part of the Council's improvement and efficiency strategy.

In answer to a question about the sweeping of streets after waste collections, Chris Whyte reported that, if crews did not clear up litter created as part of the process of waste collection, then that was a failure on their part, as they were equipped to do this. Street cleansing was part of the review process, and Chris Whyte agreed to take this issue into account when reviewing Veolia's performance.

Asked what Brent Council had done to promote a Bottle Bill, a scheme to impose refundable deposits on drinks containers, Chris Whyte informed the Committee that the idea of deposits was in its infancy in the UK, and that Brent watched developments with interest. He added that the Council's review would be considering a number of options.

The Chair suggested that the Council consider the use of bye laws to get retailers to provide waste recycling facilities.

RESOLVED:

that the report and members' comments be noted.

6. **Winter Maintenance 2009/10**

Chris Whyte (Head of Environment Management) introduced the report and answered questions from Councillors on how the Council had dealt with the severe weather conditions in December and January. Chris Whyte reported that Brent had an arrangement with the London Borough of Harrow to store and purchase salt. Brent had abided by government guidelines to store sufficient grit for six nights of heavy gritting. However, this reserve had been used up rapidly in the heavy snow before Christmas. Further supplies had been on order, but the weather became so severe that national supplies became scarce. Suppliers prioritised authorities in need, as a result of which some authorities in London also started to run out. The London Local Authorities Control Centre took on the role of distributing grit to those in greatest need, and Brent received 150 tonnes from Ealing and 141 tonnes from TfL. Further heavy snow fell on 7 January 2010, persisting for a number of days. Much of the remaining salt was used up, and Brent started rationing the stock going into the weekend of 9/10 January. The decision was taken to reduce the priority network. There was further heavy snow on 13 January, and Brent's stock was reduced to the lowest level so far – 19 tonnes. In response to the widening concern over salt supplies, the government convened the Salt Cell, which sought to co-ordinate and prioritise the distribution of salt. Brent was allocated 500 tonnes, which did not arrive. Veolia had to collect this, and was able to collect 315 tonnes. Currently around 430 tonnes were in stock, which Chris Whyte reported was sufficient to last the rest of the winter. Along with a number of other councils, Brent

had run very low on grit and had had to take decisions to ration it and reduce the priority network. Residents had been dissatisfied with the state of many residential roads, and these expectations needed to be managed. The situation had been very difficult, and a package of measures would be developed after a review of what had happened.

Asked why some roads thawed more quickly than others, and whether the Council could be more flexible in gritting residential roads, Chris Whyte reported that thawing depended on topography, the shape of buildings, the road surface and the presence of residual grit, and that the Council was willing to turn attention to non-priority roads if time and stocks allowed.

During a discussion of the Council's communication strategy during the severe weather, the Chair commended the fact that he had found more information on Brent's website than on those of other West London boroughs he had visited. However, it was recognised that some people, particularly elderly people, did not use the internet as much as others. Chris Whyte acknowledged this, but reported that the internet was the best way of getting information out quickly.

In answer to a question about the Council's legal obligations, Chris Whyte informed the Committee that the Council was required to treat its resilience network of priority roads. Given the opportunity, it could extend gritting to other areas. For example, in Brent hilly streets were treated. Pavements did not fall within the legal requirements. Responding to a comment that the area around Preston Road station had not been gritted well, Chris Whyte accepted that the Council had not been able to do some things quickly enough. Asked about the possibility of including, for example, access roads to housing estates in the priority network, Chris Whyte reported that the network could be revised as a result of the review of the Council's response. However, there would necessarily be cost implications. He added that there had been a number of complaints about the gritting, and these had been dealt with by explaining the situation.

The Committee discussed whether residents should be encouraged to clear their own pavements of snow, and Chris Whyte reported that the Council would welcome this. The Chair asked that the legal situation be clarified, and that the government be encouraged to include such an obligation in any future legislation. Chris Whyte also agreed to take up with Veolia the possibility of using lawn fertiliser spreaders as an effective means of distributing grit.

The Committee agreed a vote of thanks for the work that StreetCare and Veolia staff had carried out in very difficult circumstances.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the report and members' comments be noted;
- (ii) that the Committee's thanks be conveyed to StreetCare and Veolia staff for their work in maintaining the Council's roads in the very severe weather.

7. **Waste Collection Strategy**

Chris Whyte (Head of Environment Management) introduced the report and answered questions from Councillors on the development of a revised Waste Collection Strategy for Brent. Chris Whyte reported that the review of the strategy was part of the wider review of waste and recycling, a gold project in the Council's Improvement and Efficiency Strategy. The aim was to submit a draft strategy to the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) in May and to the first available Executive meeting for decision. A period of consultation with the local community and other stakeholders would then start, and a revised strategy would be submitted for approval by Councillors towards the end of 2010, with a view to implementation in April 2011. Chris Whyte informed the Committee that David Pietropaoli (Waste Policy Manager), also present at the meeting, was developing the business plan, a key element of which had been a waste collection workshop with key advisers. The outcome had been a number of options carried forward for further appraisal. Consultants had been engaged to carry out this study, and were due to conclude by mid-March. The consultants' conclusions would form the basis of the report to CMT and the Executive. Everything was on track for implementation in April 2011.

Asked about the diversity of collection systems used by local authorities, Chris Whyte informed the Committee that there were many ways of collecting waste, and there was no consistent national approach. It was clear in Brent that the current system of the green box was no longer adequate, in view of the need for more recycling capacity, to which Brent was committed.

In response to a suggestion that residents should be consulted at an earlier stage in the process, Chris Whyte told the Committee that the current stage was one of building up a clear knowledge base of best practice in order to be able to deliver a set of proposals for CMT and the Council's Executive to offer to the public and other stakeholders. Cathy Tyson (Assistant Director – Policy) added that, in addition to the desirability of options to residents, the Council needed to balance methods of collection and disposal, and there were cost implications. Solutions might not necessarily be the same for all properties, although the aim was for the methods to be easy to use and value for money.

Asked about cross-boundary work with other boroughs, Chris Whyte reported that Brent was reliant on the West London Waste Authority, within which a programme of waste reduction and reuse was being co-ordinated across six London boroughs.

Chris Whyte told the Committee that fundamental changes in the strategy would be needed in order to generate the required £1.2m efficiency savings, and that many alternatives would be considered. Asked whether incentives would be provided for residents, Chris Whyte reported that he was confident that there would be policies on this. Responding to a question on compulsory recycling, Chris Whyte informed the Committee that the Council had been satisfied with its effectiveness and had not so far felt the need to prosecute anyone for failure to comply. He agreed that the message about compulsory recycling needed to be refreshed regularly, and that it needed to be clear that prosecution could be used as a last resort. The Council needed to be prepared to use this, but the experience so far had been that

providing the message had been sufficient to ensure compliance. Asked how new residents gained information about compulsory recycling, Chris Whyte told the Committee that information was supplied by estate agents, as well as being included in Council Tax information sent to residents.

Responding to a question about recycling in schools, Chris Whyte reported that a good number of schools were set up for recycling. There was an active programme in schools, with two officers going into schools to encourage recycling and carry out waste audits.

The Committee asked that in future it be made clear in the titles of reports that the strategy applied to domestic waste, and that commercial waste was a completely separate issue.

RESOLVED:

that the report and members' comments be noted.

8. **Performance and Finance Review 2009/10 - Quarter 3**

Cathy Tyson (Assistant Director – Policy) presented the report and answered questions from Councillors on the Council's spending, activity and performance in Quarter 3 of the financial year 2009/10. In general the Council had made progress towards delivering the key objectives in the Corporate and Community Strategies, with the majority of Vital Signs indicators – considered critical to the success of the Council – performing broadly in line with the targets set. A total of 53% were on or just below target, but 25% were well below target. One issue affecting the reporting of performance had been missing or delayed data. This had led to delays in reporting, and was being addressed internally.

Performance relating to the theme of 'a great place' was best, with 47% of targets regarded as low risk, and 35% as high risk. There was concern that recycling had missed its target slightly, also that there had been a slight increase in gun and knife crime, against the background of a longer-term downward trend. The level of sports participation by young people was below target, largely because of seasonal variation and the severe weather.

Performance around the theme of 'a borough of opportunity' had been affected particularly badly by a total of 27% missing data, which would be chased. Some of the missing data related to Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets on social care and the performance of the Primary Care Trust (PCT). The Council was continuing to focus on increasing the level of self-directed support to social care clients and, although the target had not been achieved, there had been a large number of new direct payments made to people with mental health needs. There had also been good performance on reducing delayed discharges from hospital.

Performance on the theme of 'one community', affected by missing data on 24% of targets, showed 39% of targets as low risk. The main concerns were Special Educational Needs assessments and the provision of local foster care placements.

Cathy Tyson reported that, although the number of looked after children was stable, the lack of in-borough foster placements meant that children were being placed with independent carers at a higher cost.

Also on the theme of 'one community', increased awareness of the MEND (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition, Do it!) programme, aimed at reducing child obesity, meant that this target had been achieved. While the slowdown in the housing market had proved a challenge to achieving the target of increasing the number of affordable homes, there were some housing schemes due for completion soon. There had also been good progress on reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation.

Duncan McLeod (Director of Finance and Corporate Resources) informed the Committee that there had been three main areas of overspend. One was children's services, partly as a result of the large increase in referrals following the Baby Peter case. The second aspect was the recession, which had affected income from parking and land charges, for example. In addition, there had been an increase in demand for services. However, the forecast underspend to be carried forward to the financial year 2010/2011 was currently around £1.4m. In terms of capital income and expenditure, the Council had received relatively generous amounts of resources for schools and it needed to be mindful of the work and delays involved in spending the money and engaging in dialogue with schools. Asked whether some projects could be fast-tracked, Duncan McLeod informed the Committee that the Council was looking at how it managed all its projects, and that the large regeneration projects involved a range of areas, such as interaction with schools, that needed improving.

The Committee noted that it had not seen performance data on Quarter 2, as this had been delayed, but it was reviewing Quarter 3 before the Council's Executive did so.

RESOLVED:

that the report be noted.

9. Community Use of Council Owned Buildings Task Group Feedback

James Young (Deputy Head of Property and Asset Management) introduced the report and answered questions from Councillors on the work of the group set up to look at use by the community of Council-owned buildings. Two meetings had been held, and it had been agreed that bimonthly meetings would take place in future. The process had been a learning experience for everyone involved, especially the issue of identifying the service departments responsible for monitoring the outputs of community groups, and the community engagement aspect was complex. Officers now understood which buildings were involved, although there were grey areas around community buildings and commercial operations. The Council wanted to establish a market rent for each building, with the rent abated in line with outputs measured against agreed criteria. At the next meeting, in March 2010, it was hoped to establish the abatement criteria. There were still issues to work through, for

example, that of responsibility for external maintenance, for which the Council had no budget.

Duncan McLeod (Director of Finance and Corporate Resources) informed the Committee that this was an evolving process, and was not easy. The recession had affected many of the community organisations involved, and this was not a good time for them to cope with change. The March 2010 meeting would be crucial in setting the abatement criteria and, while progress had been made with community organisations, much of what needed to be done required a budget that did not necessarily exist. The work of the task group was very helpful, but delivery was challenging.

The Committee noted that it would be monitoring the progress of work in the future as part of its work programme.

RESOLVED:

that the report be noted.

10. Performance and Finance Select Committee Work Programme 2009/10

The Committee agreed to add to the work programme:

- (i) the issue of planning enforcement relating to Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- (ii) the successes of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the impediments to its work.

11. Items requested onto the Overview and Scrutiny Agenda

None.

12. Recommendations from the Executive for items to be considered by the Performance and Finance Select Committee

None.


13. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting of the Performance and Finance Select Committee was scheduled for Wednesday 14 April 2010.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm

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Chair

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	<p>Performance and Finance Select Committee 14th April 2010</p> <p>Report from the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources</p>
For Information	Wards Affected: ALL
<p>Revenues Performance</p>	

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines performance in relation to Revenues collection (Council Tax and NNDR) collection for the financial year 2009-10.
- 1.2 Council Tax performance is shown as at 31st March 2010 for the 2009-10 year.
- 1.3 NNDR performance is shown as at 26th March 2010 for the 2009-10 year.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note collection levels for Council Tax and NNDR in 2009-10.
- 2.2 Members are asked to note progress on the tender of Revenues contract

3.0 Council Tax Collection

3.1 2009-10 Collection

- 3.1.1 Council Tax in year collection reached 94.96% at the end of 2009-10 and exceeded collection for 2008-09 by 0.29%. This is the highest ever level of Council Tax collected in Brent and continues the year on year improvements achieved since 2003.
- 3.1.2 Details of the performance across all London Boroughs and nationally, is not yet available and thus it is not possible to say how Brent's performance compares across other London Authorities. At the time of writing 23 of the 33 London authorities had shared collection details for the end of February 2010. As a whole across those Authorities' collection remained very similar to last year's levels with an average

increase of 0.04%. Full details of national and London league tables will be shared with Members once available.

3.1.3 Table 1 below contains details of the monthly collection for 2009-10 in comparison to 2008-09 collection excluding summons costs collected.

Table 1 – 2009-10 collection

Contractual Target 94.00%

Non contractual target 94.80%

2009/2010 Target (Less Costs)	15.14	24.26	32.64	41.29	49.39	58.25	66.79	74.97	83.36	90.78	92.72	94.80
Month on month %		9.12	8.38	8.65	8.10	8.86	8.54	8.18	8.39	7.42	1.94	2.08
2009/2010 Actual	15.45	23.91	32.73	41.23	49.41	57.80	66.61	75.18	83.58	91.13	93.01	94.96

Variance on last year	0.31	-0.35	0.09	-0.06	0.03	-0.42	-0.13	0.27	0.29	0.43	0.38	0.29
Variance on target	0.31	-0.35	0.09	-0.06	0.02	-0.45	-0.18	0.21	0.22	0.35	0.29	0.16
Month on Month %		8.46	8.82	8.50	8.18	8.39	8.81	8.57	8.40	7.55	1.88	1.95

3.2 Council Tax Arrears Collection

3.2.1 As previously reported to Committee, arrears collection has remained an issue throughout the year. As such arrears targets were not achieved for any of the years from 2003 to 2008.

3.2.2 Table 1 outlines the percentage and monetary value of the shortfall for each year.

Table 1: Arrears collection at 31st March 2009

	2008-09	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05	2003-04
Target	96.25	96.75	97.00	97.25	97.25	97.5
Collection	96.11	96.69	96.8	96.63	96.56	95.56
Shortfall %	0.14%	0.06%	0.20%	0.62%	0.69%	1.94%
Shortfall £	£142,932	£58,335.55	£185,089.29	£541,642.65	£577,029.55	£1,519,092.23

3.2.3 Details of initiatives that are underway to improve arrears collection, including the implementation of the recovery policy and the handling of telephone contact from those who are in arrears are outlined in section four.

3.2.4 2008-09 year

The collection target for the 2008-09 year is 96.25%. At 31st March 2010 collection for this year was 96.11%, leaving 0.14% or £143k to reach target. During the period April 2009 to March 2010 1.4% or £1.4m was collected for arrears in this year.

3.2.5 2007-08 year

Collection for 2007-08 was better than that for other years. However, the collection target of 96.75% for the 2007-08 year was not achieved. At the 31st March 2010 collection for this year was 96.69%, leaving a shortfall of 0.06% or £58k. During the period April 2009 to March 2010 0.44% was collected for arrears in this year, this equated to £426k.

3.2.6 2006-07 year

At the end of March 2010 a collection rate of 96.8% was achieved leaving 0.2% or £185k outstanding to achieve the target of 97%. During the period April 2009 to March 2010 0.22% or £200k was collected for arrears in this year.

3.2.7 2005-06 year

The end of year target for 2005-06 is 97.25%. At 31st March 2010, the collection rate was 96.63%, this leaves 0.62% or £542k to be collected to achieve the target. During the period April 2009 to March 2010 0.16% or £138k was collected for arrears in this year.

3.2.8 2004-05 year

The target for this year is 97.25% with 96.56% collected at 31st March 2010. This leaves 0.69% to be collected to achieve target, equating to £577k. During the period April 2009 to March 2010 0.12% or £101k was collected for arrears in this year.

3.2.9 2003-04 year

The target for this year is 97.5% with 95.56% collected at 31st March 2010. This leaves 1.94% or £1.5m to be collected to achieve target. During the period April 2009 to March 2010 0.08% or £62k was collected for arrears in this year.

3.2.10 Pre contract arrears (1993 to 2003)

Collection for pre contact arrears at the end of March for debts relating to arrears from 1993 to 2003-04 was £129k compared to £187k for the same period in the 2008-09 year. This debt is becoming increasingly difficult to collect as the age of the debt increases.

4.0 Improvement Strategies and arrangements for customer contact

4.1 A number of initiatives were undertaken during 2009-10 to improve collection performance, these will continue to be built on during 2010-11.

4.1.1 Firstly it should be noted that claims for Council Tax benefit have increased. Between 31st March 2009 and the end of February 2010 the number of residents in receipt of Council Tax benefit has increased by 11% from 30,193 to 33,437. A total of £32.2m has been awarded in Council Tax Benefit for the year, in comparison to £28.6m at the same

time last year for the 2008/09 year, which represents an increase of £3.6m.

- 4.1.2 This increase can be linked to a number of factors including the current economic climate, changes in legislation which meant that child benefit was no longer treated as an income and changes to the treatment of capital for pensioners when claiming Council tax Benefit.
- 4.1.3 Alongside these legislative changes there have also been changes in the working arrangements for the assessment of Housing and Council Tax benefits, which have improved the speed and responsiveness of the Benefits service to customers. In essence, claims are now assessed during face to face interviews with customers, ensuring that decisions are made promptly and customers understand how their entitlement has been decided. The new arrangements have resulted in a joint restructure of the Benefits and OSS services and relocation of Benefit assessment officers into customer facing roles. The average time for processing new claims & change events 2008/09 was 18.35 days. Currently for 2009/10 this is at 18.13 days, but under the revised working methods for February 2010 the average time reduced to 9.61 days for new claims and 10 days for changes in circumstances.
- 4.1.4 The number of Council Tax payers on DD has increased from 38,602 at the end of December 2008 to 40,063 at the end of December 2009. Direct debit is the most effective payment method for the Council, with 99% of these customers paying by the instalment date and not receiving a reminder or other recovery notice.
- 4.1.5 At the September 2009 committee Members were also updated on the continuation of a pilot exercise involving revised arrangements for customers who have council tax arrears. During this pilot, customers with arrears are able to speak directly to a Capita recovery officer who will be able to clarify any questions about the arrears and negotiate affordable payment arrangements with the customer that allows the debt to be gradually repaid.
- 4.1.6 This pilot has allowed us to support customers during the current economic climate, by ensuring more work is being done to provide extended payment arrangements for those who are experiencing financial difficulty. A total of 863 customers have made arrangements to pay the debt and of those 77% have either paid in full or continue to adhere to the arrangement given.
- 4.1.7 When dealing with the call the Capita recovery officer reviews the customer's circumstances and seeks to come to a suitable arrangement that will enable them to gradually reduce their arrears and maintain adherence to arrangements for repayment. Once agreed these arrangements continue to be monitored by the recovery team. This will allow more in-depth analysis of the type of call that is best handled by a specialist recovery officer, to help inform decisions about longer term working arrangements for arrears cases.
- 4.1.8 Alongside the recovery pilot, a lean systems review of overall Council Tax arrangements was carried out between November 09 and February 2010. The Lean Systems review is a methodology that gathers evidence on the Project 12 performance from a customer

perspective, including how existing working arrangements support customer's requirements. The review uses extensive evidence of current customer contacts to identify ways in which the service could be improved and utilises this evidence to pilot new ways of working, to better meet customers' needs. The lean systems review has highlighted the need to ensure that customers have direct contact with collection and recovery officers, in order to optimise every customer contact to support collection. The first stage of the review has also identified the potential to improve both the accuracy and speed with which new and amended bills are produced, by ensuring that the customer's full circumstances are captured before initial bills are sent. The outcomes of the review will be taken into account in the specification of the new Council Tax contract which is due to begin in May 2011. The scope for the new contract will thus include responsibility for customer contacts with the full detail of this being determined by the end of April 2010 Council Tax service delivery.

4.2 Other action to improve collection

- 4.2.1 During 2009-10 action was targeted at landlords who own a number of properties in the borough for which council tax has not been paid will over the next year. This will continue in 2010-11.
- 4.2.2 Throughout 2010-11 we will continue to seek ways in which to address issues that prevent better arrears collection. This will include continuing with robust action for those who show wilful refusal to pay, such as bankruptcy and charging orders on their properties.

5.0 Discounts and Exemption Review

- 5.1 An initiative carried out by the Audit commission for all boroughs during 2009-10 highlighted 3,655 cases where those in receipt of a single person discount may not be entitled. These cases were identified by matching the Council Tax database and the Electoral list and identifying cases where discrepancies appeared to exist. Apart from 222, all of these cases have now either been visited or sent letters to clarify whether the discount is still valid or needs to be removed. This has so far resulted in 505 accounts having had their single persons discount removed and created additional Council Tax charges of £415,000. This will increase further as f cases under investigation are concluded, including those for which a letters response has not been received.

6.0 NNDR (Business Rates) Update

6.1 2009-10 Collection

- 6.1.1 At the 26th March 2010 in year collection was 97.71%. The projected end of March figure is 97.8% compared to 97.95% at the same time last year. The contractual target for 2009-10 is 98.5%.
- 6.1.2 Table 3 below shows details of the monthly collection in comparison to previous years. When comparing collection for 2009-10 to 2008-09 it should be noted that amend

properties to allow relief for properties with a rateable value less than £50,000 and the early award of discretionary relief in 2009-10 has positively impacted on the collection at the beginning of the year.

Table 3: NNDR for 2009-10 in comparison to previous year

	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
2008/09	9.27	18.9	28.74	38.71	47.55	56.95	67.22	75.6	85.37	94.1	93.57	97.95
2009/10 Target	9.27	18.9	28.74	38.71	47.55	56.95	67.22	75.60	85.37	94.10	93.57	98.50
Actual	10.39	19.9	29.65	39.26	48.05	58.21	67.54	75.65	85.42	93.95	95.53	
Variance on last year	1.12	1	0.91	0.55	0.50	1.26	0.32	0.05	0.05	-0.15	1.96	
Month on month %	10.39	9.63	9.84	9.97	8.84	9.40	10.27	8.38	9.77	8.73	1.58	

6.1.3 At the end of February 2010 benchmarking was undertaken for NNDR collection. Twenty of the 33 London Boroughs shared information and the average decrease in collection across those Authorities when compared to the same point in time in 2009, was 0.36%

6.2 NNDR Changes

6.2.1 2010 Revaluation

The revaluation of NNDR properties came into effect on 1 April 2010. The new rateable values were based on market rental values at 1 April 2008 and will remain effective for five years.

6.2.2 Payment Deferral Scheme

Letters were sent to all NNDR customers in the second week of August offering the opportunity to defer sixty per cent of the increase in their 2009-10 bills. At the end of March 408 NNDR payers had availed of this opportunity, the total value of deferred payments was £306,519.

6.2.3 Business Rates Supplements (BRS) for Crossrail

In order to pay for Crossrail the Mayor has introduced a levy of 2p on all non-domestic properties in London with a rateable value of £55,000 or more from April 2010. A total of 827 properties in Brent will be subject to this levy.

6.2.4 Small Business Rate Relief

The Government has introduced a temporary increase in the level of Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR) available to eligible businesses. These changes will come into effect in October 2010.

At the end of March 2010 there were 1,919 accounts in receipt of SBRR and for 2010/11 3,043 could potentially apply. However, this is purely based on the Rateable Value being less than £25,500 and the account status is occupied. Some of these ratepayers will be in possession of more than one property and will not be eligible for the relief but it is not possible to accurately ascertain how many fall into this category.

Eligible ratepayers will pay no rates on properties with rateable values up to £6,000, with a tapered relief between 100% and 0% for properties with rateable values between £6,001 and £12,000. The new levels of relief will be available for 12 months from 1 October 2010 to 30 September 2011.

For those who already claim SBRR they will automatically get the increase in the SBRR.

7.0 Contract Expiry

7.1 The current Revenues and IT contract will expire in April 2011; as a result the tender process has commenced with a target date for contract award by December 2009. The OJEU notice has been published and Pre-qualification Questionnaires have been issued to potential bidders with a deadline for submission to the council of 6th April 2010.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

9.0 Diversity Implications

9.1 There are no direct diversity implications arising from this report.

10.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

10.1 There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report.

11.0 Background Papers

12.0 Contact Officers

12.1 Margaret Read - Head of Revenues and Benefits
Paula Buckley - Head of Client

DUNCAN McLEOD
Director of Finance and Corporate Resources

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Performance and Finance Committee April 2010

Report from Director of Business Transformation

For Information

Staff Survey 2009/10 – Main findings and actions to date

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report is to update members of the Performance and Finance Committee the main findings from the 2009/10 Brent council staff satisfaction survey and actions to date.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Recommendations to note.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The market research company, ORC International undertook the survey on behalf of the council. The 2009 survey is the third successive survey undertaken by ORC. The main strengths of ORC's approach continue to be their wide experience and technical expertise in employee surveys; their independence, access to their UK benchmarking databases, (which includes data from other local authorities) and the range of bespoke reporting options they offer.

4.0 Methodology

- 4.1 As in previous years, a questionnaire was available for staff to complete on-line. In addition, paper copies of the survey were targeted at staff with limited access to PC's or the intranet. Structure and content of the questionnaire were revised, although fifty-three, (53) core questions were retained to enable comparisons with previous years. The restructured questionnaire was divided up under the following ten section sub-headings:

- Your job;
- Training and career development;
- Performance and line management;
- Senior management and leadership;
- Communication;
- Equal opportunities;
- Work Life Balance;

- Pay and Benefits;
- Customer Focus;
- Perceptions of Brent Council.

4.2 The survey fieldwork period ran from October 5 to October 30. During that time 1,968 questionnaires were completed. This represents an overall response rate of 62%, four percentage points down on the 2008 figure of 66%, but still considerably above the 49% average of other local authorities within the ORC International perspective database.

Response Rates broken down by service areas

Service Area	2007	2008	2009
Environment & Culture	64%	73%	79%
Finance & Corporate Resources	67%	77%	77%
Business Transformation	-	-	76%
Central	64%	68%	65%
Children & Families	53%	49%	48%
Housing & Community Care	54%	71%	47%
Brent Council overall	62%	66%	62%

4.3 The main reporting mechanisms include:

- The narrative report, 'Engage, Inform, Improve' 2009 - containing a full textual analysis on the six main sections of the questionnaire plus additional analysis on the areas of work life balance, pay and benefits and customer focus. The narrative report also contains – Key Driver analysis. A draft copy of the narrative report is appended to this report.
- A benchmarking report showing how Brent compares the average scores recorded in the ORC local govt benchmark database. Thirty questions in the 2009 survey are benchmarkable A copy of the benchmark report is also appended to this report.
- A comments report. The questionnaire included an open comments question; ***'If there was one thing you would change at Brent Council, what would it be?'*** The responses to this question and the responses to other part questions that required open text answers are reproduced verbatim in the comments report. Comments have been proof read and edited to ensure confidentiality and themed. Where appropriate, anonymised comments are included in the narrative report to aid explanation and add context.
- Enhanced managers' reports. For the first time enhanced managers' reports have been made available to service areas. Fifty-four enhanced managers reports have been published and distributed. These reports contain a breakdown of results by service area and show comparisons to their parent directorate. Enhanced managers reports also contain a key driver analysis for that particular service area.
- The highlights tool. As in previous years the highlights tool is the principal mechanism for generating top-line data results. The highlights tool allows for results comparisons to be made between service areas, directorates and the Council overall. In addition data can be looked at by trend, demographic sub-group and against local govt benchmarking scores.

5.0 Results

- 5.1 **General** - Fifty-three, (53) questions in the 2009 survey can be compared with the 2008 survey. Differences of $\pm 5\%$ are considered statistically significant and are highlighted as an improvement or a decline. Of the thirty benchmarkable questions, two thirds, (20) are in-line with benchmark scores and five are significantly above. Only five questions are below the benchmark scores.
- 5.2 The narrative report contains detailed analysis covering the ten main sections in the questionnaire: Your Job, Training & Career Development, Performance & Line Management, Senior Management & Leadership, Communication and Equal Opportunities, Work Life Balance, Pay & Benefits, Customer Focus and Perceptions of Brent Council. Results in these sections are for the Council overall but demographic and sub-group differences are highlighted where appropriate. (See narrative report pages 29 to 54).
- 5.2.1 **Your job** – The overall score for this section is 74% and is one of the highest scoring sections. Staff are generally positive about their jobs and clear about what they are expected to achieve, (84% +ive). Staff are prepared to go the extra mile when required, (92% +ive). However only 42% of staff responded favourably to the question – *‘there are good working relationships between departments in line with the principles of One Council’*. ORC suggest that the low score might be because staff do not fully understand the principles of ‘one council’, or as evidenced by the high neutral score, staff do not work cross-departmentally and therefore do not have the experience to answer positively or negatively. Staff satisfaction with physical working environment has risen by 5% since 2007.
- 5.2.2 **Training and career development** – staff perceptions in this section have decreased slightly over the last two years. *‘I am given the opportunity to improve my skills at Brent Council’*, *‘the training I receive is appropriate to my job’* and *‘my performance has improved as a result of skills I have developed over the past year’* (66%, 67% and 64% +ive respectively) – all slightly down on the 2008 scores but still either on or above the local govt benchmark. However only 34% are confident about their career opportunities in Brent and this has dropped 5% since 2008 – also 3% under the local govt benchmark. ORC say training and career development is a key driver of employee engagement and is therefore a priority area for improvement.
- 5.2.3 **Performance and line management** – there has been little movement in satisfaction levels on performance and line management over the past two years. Four questions in this section are showing slight declines, whereas *‘my line manager recognises and acknowledges when I have done my job well’* and *‘my line manager motivates and inspires me to more effective in my job’* have both improved and are both above the local govt benchmark. Two questions: *‘my line manager gives clear direction on how my job helps the Council meet its business objectives* and *‘there are good working relationships and support between managers and*

employees', are identified as having a strong impact on employee engagement. ORC suggest acting on these to influence engagement and improve business performance. There are considerable variations in both these questions when viewed by directorate. A majority of staff, (72%) have had an appraisal in the last 12 months – (up two percentage points on the 2008 figure). Only 66% of respondents feel that their appraisal accurately reflects their performance. Although this is the same as the 2008 score it remains eleven percentage points below the local govt benchmark score. This question also had a large neutral score, (28%), which ORC suggests might indicate low understanding of the appraisal process and the competencies.

- 5.2.4 **Senior Management / Leadership** – this is the lowest scoring section with notable declines on all questions. Senior management providing effective leadership and being sufficiently visible have both dropped significantly since the 2008 survey, (41% +ive, a five percentage point drop since 2008 and 40% +ive, an eight percentage point drop since 2008 respectively). Moreover these two questions have high neutral scores, (40% and 35% respectively). ORC recommend that more effective ways to encourage employee involvement are devised, e.g. more encouragement to staff to get involved in improvement activities and a PR campaign to improve perceptions of leadership from and visibility of senior managers. Less than a third of staff, (31%), believe Brent Council supports employees affected by change. This question attracts a high neutral score, (48%) and it's suggested that this may be due to few staff being directly affected by change, or having knowledge of staff who are directly affected by change.
- 5.2.5 **Communication** – satisfaction with communications has declined slightly with the exception that *'the future of Brent Council is clearly communicated to me'*, (60% +ive – up three percentage points on the 2008 survey and 8 points on 2007). Staff feel *'they have the necessary information to do their jobs well'* and *'understand what other services in their department do'*, (72% and 68% +ive respectively). Staff were asked to rate the effectiveness of different internal communication channels – the intranet and information from the line manager were the most popular. However there are some high neutral scores in this section, particularly *'Brent Council involving staff when undertaking organisational change'*, *'being encouraged to have a say on the way things are done'*, and *'feeling safe to speak up'* (38%, 36% and 33% neutral respectively). ORC suggest that upward communications is an area for improvement.
- 5.2.6 **Equal Opportunities** – The overall score for equal opportunities is 72% and has not changed since 2008. Equal Opportunities remains one of the highest scoring sections. Notwithstanding there has been a slight decline in the perception that Brent is an equal opportunities employer since 2008, but the score is in line with the local govt benchmark. The incidence of harassment/ bullying, (12%) and discrimination (11%) have both declined, with managers being identified as the main source of harassment/bullying and discrimination. Analysis of the reasons for not reporting

harassment/bullying or discrimination indicate that better communications are needed to assure staff that their concerns are treated with confidence.

5.2.7 **Work Life Balance** – scores for this section are generally in line with those from the 2008 and 2007 surveys but the proportion of staff who are able *'to balance their work and personal commitment'*, (64% +ive), is still five percentage points below the local govt benchmark. Twenty-seven (27%) of staff *'feel unable to do their job effectively within the hours for which they are paid'* and 18% are *'uncomfortable with the pressures placed on them by their job'*. Notwithstanding, only 1% of staff have taken time off work due to work related pressures. ORC suggest that dissatisfaction with work life balance could have a negative impact on engagement and further impact on the quality of services to customers.

5.2.8 **Pay and Benefits** – perception that pay is fair given responsibilities has improved by 5 percentage points since 2008. However satisfaction with the total benefits package, (49% +ive), is lower than the local govt benchmark by sixteen percentage points. There is a large neutral response to *'I am satisfied with the total benefits package etc'* (32% neutral) – indicating that more communication of benefits may be needed.

5.2.9 **Customer focus** – This is the highest scoring section in the survey. Perceptions of Brent Council being customer focused are high with staff *'being committed to customer satisfaction'*, (74% +ive and six percentage points above the local govt benchmark) and *'acting on the feedback from internal and external customers'*, (74% and 76% +ive respectively).

5.2.10 **Perceptions of Brent Council** – this section is used to measure the levels of employee engagement within the Council. (narrative report pages 22 & 23.) ORC define engagement in terms of Say, Stay and Strive.

- **Say** – where employees are inclined to speak positively about the organisation;
- **Stay** – reflecting the individual's commitment to the organisation, e.g. career development, commitment to stay and be part of the organisation;
- **Strive** – going the extra mile and put extra discretionary effort into their work.

The Employee Engagement Index (EEI) which is the average score for the questions in this section is 77% - the same as 2008. However three questions: *'I am proud to tell people I work for Brent Council'*, *'considering everything I am satisfied working for Brent Council'* and *'I am happy to go the extra mile at work when required'*, (65%, 75% and 92% +ive respectively) are all above the local govt benchmark. Overall satisfaction with working for Brent Council has risen marginally by 1%.

6.0 Employee engagement and Key Driver Analysis

6.1 A Key Driver Analysis (KDA) has also been undertaken and can be used to focus on those aspects of working for Brent council which have the greatest impact on engagement. For the first time KDA is has been undertaken at service team level and is available in the enhanced managers reports. Six main areas, (factors) and their relative importance to engagement are listed in the table below. Each factor being made up of key questions in the survey.

Factor	Relative importance (%)
Training & Career Development	30%
Customer Focus	22%
Work Life Balance	15%
Senior Management & Communications	15%
Equal Opportunities	13%
Performance & Line Management	5%

6.2 An explanation of the KDA process can be viewed within the narrative report – (pages 24 & 25). Some headline strengths and weaknesses are listed below:

6.3 Areas identified as strengths

- **Employee engagement** - levels are higher than average and employees feel happy to work on their own initiative and go the 'extra mile' when required.
- **Job satisfaction** - is high and staff are positive about their job, clear on what they are expected to achieve and how their role relates to the Council's goals and objectives. ORC suggest that this is consequence of the future direction of Brent council being more clearly communicated – up by eight percentage points since 2008.
- **Information to do the job** – satisfaction with work related information is high and staff feel they have the necessary information to their job well, (72% +ive). Staff also understand what other services are provided by their department, (68% +ive).
- **Good teamwork and support** – a high proportion of staff feel they are encouraged to work in partnership with other units in their department and believe their colleagues cooperate to get work done.
- **Employees treated with fairness and respect** – 71% believe this and this score is in line with the local govt benchmark.
- **Perceptions of Brent Council being a customer-focused organisation are high** – staff are committed to customer satisfaction, (74% +ive which is 6 percentage points above the local govt benchmark), and staff act on feedback from internal and external customers – (also 74% +ive).

6.4 Areas to improve on

- **Training and career development** – helping staff feel more confident about their career and development opportunities is seen as an area for improvement. Only 34% are confident about their career opportunities in Brent with similar proportions being either neutral or not confident, (33% and 33% respectively).
- **Senior management / effective leadership and visibility** – Senior management providing effective leadership and being sufficiently visible have both dropped significantly since the 2008 survey, (41% +ive, a five percentage point drop since 2008 and 40% +ive, an eight percentage point drop since 2008 respectively). Moreover these two questions have high neutral scores, (40% and 35% respectively). ORC recommend that more effective ways to encourage employee involvement are devised, e.g. more encouragement to staff to get involved in improvement activities and a PR campaign to improve perceptions of leadership from and visibility of senior managers.
- **Improve perceptions of good working relationships between departments** – perceptions have declined since 2008 and are notably below the benchmark.
- **Improve recognition** – only 47% of staff feel properly recognised or rewarded.

6.5 ORC also identify the following for further work:

- Work life balance;
- Supporting employees affected by change;
- Perceptions of line management – particularly at directorate level;
- Being informed about matters affecting me;
- Some negative perceptions that employees are appointed not on the basis of merit;
- Satisfaction with the total benefits package is below the benchmark;
- Harassment/bullying and discrimination – although the incidence is down less staff are reporting.

7.0 Next Steps


- 7.1 The consultants ORC presented findings to staff at a One Council seminar on 13 January
- 7.2 The importance of taking forward key recommendations presented by the consultation to departmental managers – January – February.
- 7.3 Feedback to staff – initial staff feedback was given through the January edition of 'insight', the staff newsletter.
- 7.4 HR and Consultation Teams are continuing to provide support and advice to services areas using the highlight tool.
- 7.5 Developing action plans – HR has developed the first draft of the corporate action plan awaiting sign off CMT.
- 7.6 Internal intranet site has been commissioned by HR and developed by IT. The aim is to allow for the sharing of departmental action plans across the council.
- 7.7 The first training session for departmental facilitator's took place 31st March 2010. The aim of the training is to develop departmental facilitator's skills in supporting and developing local action plans. This is also the beginning of developing an "Employee Engagement" culture. Research has shown that a highly engaged workforce will have greater impact on business performance.
- 7.8 Paul Eccles (Health & Safety) has been given access to the highlights data tool to enable him to complete the H & S Workplace Stress Assessment Analysis.
- 7.9 The survey results fed into the liP steering group and shared with the external liP Assessor.
- 7.10 Narrative and Benchmarking reports uploaded on the intranet.

8.0 Background Papers

- Brent Council Staff Survey (draft) narrative report, Engage, Inform, Improve 2009
- LB Brent Staff Survey Benchmarking Report 2009

Contact Officers

Margaret Newman
Strategic HR Manager – Business Transformation

	<p style="text-align: center;">Performance & Finance Select Committee 14th April 2010</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Director of Policy & Regeneration</p>
For Action	Wards Affected: ALL
Effectively Curbing Anti-Social Behaviour in Brent	

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report provides an overview of Anti-Social Behaviour in Brent.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the committee note and comment on the report and presentation.

3.0 Detail

3.1 This brief overview report will be augmented by a presentation to the committee.

3.2 Antisocial behaviour covers a whole raft of issues that affect individuals, communities and households. Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is in fact virtually any intimidating or threatening activity that scares you or damages quality of life. Anti-social behaviour doesn't just make life unpleasant. It holds back the regeneration of disadvantaged areas and creates an environment where more serious crime can take hold.

3.3 People involved in ASB, where their behaviour is not effectively addressed as youngsters overwhelmingly go on to commit further criminal acts. Some research indicates where youngsters commit repeat ASB before their 17th birthday may up to 80% more likely to be in prison by their 21st.

3.4 Examples of ASB include:

- rowdy, noisy behaviour
- 'yobbish' behaviour
- vandalism, graffiti and fly-posting
- dealing or buying drugs on the street
- fly-tipping rubbish
- aggressive begging
- street drinking
- setting off fireworks late at night

The Legislative Framework

- 3.5 During the past 12 years the Government has introduced rafts of legislation and dedicated significant resources aimed at tackling the problem of ASB.
- 3.6 In addressing concerns around ASB, the importance of effective partnership working has been recognised by Government and local agencies alike (for example in the creation of statutory partnerships such as Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) in 1998) with the focus on a three pronged approach to tackling it - prevention, intervention and enforcement.
- 3.7 Brent pre-empted the 1998 crime and Disorder Act having set up some years earlier the Crime Prevention Strategy Group that now fulfils the statutory functions required of CDRPs. This Group chaired by the Chief Executive of the Local Authority with the Borough Police Commander as vice Chair.
- 3.8 CDRPs are encouraged to:
- Use all the tools and powers effectively, especially those to tackle breaches
 - Promote local service standards to the public for ASB
 - Keep communities regularly updated on collective action being undertaken locally on ASB
 - Ensure effective links between neighbourhood Policing teams and Neighbourhood Management teams to resolve ASB.

The Scale of the Problem

- 3.9 In human terms the scale of the problem has sadly been thrown into stark relief the death of Fiona Pilkington this threw the spotlight on shortcomings in how authorities respond to cases where vulnerable people are constantly tormented by jobs.
- 3.10 She committed suicide and killed her severely disabled 18-year-old daughter Francecca after gangs kept them prisoners in their home in Barwell, near Hinckley in Leicestershire.
- 3.11 David Askew, who had learning difficulties died, after years of abuse from local youngsters, described by one Police Officer as nothing short of “bear baiting”

- 3.12 A snapshot survey by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) found officers did not turn up to almost one in four (23%) anti-social behaviour complaints and as a result almost all those victims were unhappy with police.
- 3.13 Researchers also found that one in five repeat victims classed themselves as disabled in some way.
- 3.14 Around 3.6 million reports of antisocial behaviour were made in 2008-9, compared with 4.6 million crimes, but officials believe the true figure could be twice as high.

Establishing the Cost of Antisocial Behaviour

- 3.15 It is easy to see that given the breadth of behaviour covered that many different council departments and agencies are involved in solving problems that arise and preventing it. This makes costing each case and prevention work extremely complex.

Useful information of national trends can be found at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/dpr26.pdf>

- 3.16 The following table provides an insight into the raft of agencies and officers involved in this area of work in Brent.

All groups and departments, people involved in delivering solutions.

Organisation	Department	Team
	Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal and democratic services • Communication • Member services • Neighbourhood Working
Brent Council	Env and Cultural Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Health (animal health, noise etc) • Building Control • Health Safety and Licensing • Parks • Planning • Sports • Streetcare • Trading Standards
	Children and Families	<p>Social Care Division</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care planning and children in need • Youth offending Service • Placements • Youth Service • Connexions • Alternative Education
		<p>Strategy and partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated services
		<p>Access and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Workers • Duty and assessment teams

		Care management and review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Workers
	Housing and Community Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Housing Services unit • Enforcement team (HMO Licensing) • Grants/contracts – empty property team
	Brent Housing Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical services • Supporting people • ASB Team • Technical services(graffiti) • Supporting people
		Community Care Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drugs and Alcohol Team • Mental Health Team • Vulnerable adults
Brent Police/Courts		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Neighbourhood Teams • Borough Intelligence Unit • Crown Prosecution Service • Community Protection Unit • Community Safety Team • CENTRE – provide reports to them
RSL's		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stadium • PCHA • ASRA • London and Quadrant • Innis Free – Genny most of the top 10
CRI (Drug Support Agency)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach team
Victim Support		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main and specialist team
Courts		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magistrates & Crown
Fire Service British transport police Transport For London Neighbouring boroughs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arson

Increasing Effectiveness and Streamlining Costs

- 3.17 Clearly, with this disparate there is an inevitability of overlapping and duplicate work being undertaken and there are opportunities to simplify and streamline the systems around.
- 3.18 Work is currently being undertaken to do this and the initial findings will form part of the presentation to the Committee.
- 3.19 It was inevitable with new legislation that finding the most effective method of delivery would take time, however, there have been some eight rafts of new laws and about 380 policies and guidance notes affecting this area of work.

- 3.20 These factors have combined with a justifiable rise in public expectation, leading to a rather disjointed method of delivery that predominantly works extremely well but may not be cost effective.
- 3.21 The other danger of the current interagency system is that because it is based on overwhelmingly on people's personal relationships it could fall down as and when individuals move on.
- 3.22 The other key area where cost saving can be found is by reviewing internal procedures, because of the ever changing and newness legislation and policies agencies have developed byzantine tracking and recording practices. Now work is more established and partners have a number of legal cases as precedence this can be simplified, freeing staff to deal more swiftly and effectively with cases.
- 3.23 The ASB Team is one strand of the Community Safety Partnership Unit, this department coordinates the agencies involved in all aspects of Crime and Antisocial Behaviour. Developing skills in partner agencies and facilitating robust partnership working and being the link with regional central government are key functions of the Unit.
- 3.24 All staff work in the area of ASB, for example a Project Officer outside of the main ASB team works with Transport for London on a groundbreaking project to curb rowdy behaviour on buses and trains for journeys to and from school and college.
- 3.25 The core ASB team in Brent is made up of a Coordinator, two case work officers, two Police Constables (funded in full by the Metropolitan Police Service) and two support officers. This is broadly in line with comparable boroughs, except greater investment is made in having a very senior coordinator.
- 3.26 The team are based at Willesden Green Police Station and housed rent free, but IT and other support is funded by the Council.
- 3.27 The Basic cost to the Council is £184,000. Of this some £90,000 plus on costs comes from Council core funds with £94,000 being contributed from Partnership funding that comes from the Metropolitan Police Authority and the Home Office.
- 3.28 Looking solely at the at the Council ASB team each case closed costs approximately £650 this is however in reality the tip of the iceberg and the by the time of the presentation more reflective costings will be available.

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

Background Papers

Contact Officers

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