



Cabinet
14 April 2015

**Report from the Director of
Regeneration and Growth**

Wards affected:
ALL

Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report introduces the Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy, following an extensive consultation and engagement exercise.
- 1.2 This is the first such strategy to be produced in Brent and it is intended to align closely to the approach set out in other strategic documents, in particular the Borough Plan, the Regeneration Strategy and the Housing Strategy. The vision for the strategy is: *To reduce inequality and raise living standards through economic growth and employment.*
- 1.3 It is a partnership strategy, with responsibility for delivery lying with organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors and with engagement and involvement of residents and communities as a central priority. Within the wider partnership, the council will take a strategic role, coordinating and facilitating activity across the range of partnerships involved and monitoring delivery against the agreed objectives and outcomes.
- 1.4 The strategy draws on an Evidence Base that will be updated regularly over its life, to ensure that the most current and relevant information and data are taken into account alongside continuing engagement and discussion with partners who may be wholly or partly responsible for delivery. Implementation and monitoring of the Strategy is supported by a detailed Action Plan, which will also be a working document subject to regular review.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve the draft Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy.
- 2.2 That Cabinet consider and note the content of the Equality Impact Assessment which is set out in Appendix 2 to this report.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy has been developed in response to the challenges posed by recent economic conditions and their impact on Brent residents and businesses but emphasises the significant opportunities arising from the potential for growth in the borough and an improving climate. Brent is well placed to take advantage of these opportunities. While elements of national policy such as the Work Programme and welfare reform continue to pose challenges, the council has already responded positively through the work of the Employment & Enterprise Team and other services, recognising the importance of employment and support for existing and new business in tackling poverty and deprivation and maximising prosperity in the borough. The creation of a new Employment & Skills service from April 2015 will extend the Council's capacity to support employment and business success. The Strategy aims to develop effective partnerships to take this work forward, acknowledging that the council on its own, while it has significant relevant powers, influence and leverage, is not able to take sole responsibility for a strategy that encompasses such a wide range of programmes, partners and services.
- 3.2 In improving economic conditions, Brent has much to offer business and enterprise, notably through the identified growth areas where ability to attract inward investment is clearest, as well as to raise the skill levels and improve the employment prospects of residents.

4. Detail

- 4.1 Officers and members have engaged with partner organisations over the past twelve months to identify priorities and actions with a view to agreeing a shared agenda. Responses have been positive, with organisations across the public, private and voluntary sector, including Brent businesses, welcoming the production of a strategy and demonstrating commitment to delivery.
- 4.2 Engagement has identified five main objectives, each with one or more related outcomes that will form the framework for delivery of the vision which is: *To reduce inequality and raise living standards through economic growth and employment.* These objectives are set out below, with a brief outline of the challenges to be addressed and the proposed approach.
- 4.3 **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:** To promote economic growth through regeneration, increasing the number of local jobs and providing new opportunities for local businesses.

- **Outcome 1A:** At least 5,000 sustainable new jobs will be created in Brent's growth and regeneration areas by 2020.
- **Outcome 1B:** Brent will have a high public profile as an excellent place to set up and grow successful businesses.

4.3.1 The Strategy identifies the many positive aspects of Brent's economy and position in London: the supply of employment land and premises, excellent transport connections to central London and beyond, a ready supply of local labour, the opportunities provided by the Growth Areas and an increasing range of local facilities for businesses. It also recognises what has already been achieved – for example, around new business and employment in Park Royal and Wembley – and what remains to be done – for example, better promotion of Brent as a place to do business or enhanced opportunities for entrepreneurs to test out new business ideas.

4.3.2 Work to achieve the identified outcomes will include new employment provision by developers in the Growth Areas, who will also champion and promote local employment schemes to the businesses that occupy their new schemes in line with the approaches adopted by Quintain in Wembley and Segro in Park Royal. Developers themselves will be expected to directly provide local employment and apprenticeship opportunities during the construction phases and to work with local schools to help raise the knowledge and engagement with the world of work to the Borough's young people.

4.3.3 To promote Brent's profile with business, the council will review its approach to develop stronger business partnerships, supporting established business networks to expand and facilitating new business networks where none exist at present. Public sector procurement opportunities will be identified, with a view to providing more opportunities for local companies to submit tenders for work. Supply of affordable business spaces will be increased, for example through expanding the successful Meanwhile programmes. The way that regulatory services interact with businesses will be reviewed to ensure that there is clarity on the service and response standards that local businesses can expect from the Council and other providers.

4.4 **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:** To ensure that local education and skills provision is reflective of the demands of the labour market, providing a labour pool made up of well qualified and highly motivated individuals

- **Outcome 2A:** 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.
- **Outcome 2B:** All residents participating in adult education will have an 'into work plan'.

- **Outcome 2C:** A year on year reduction in the number of residents with no qualifications, so that by 2020 the figure will consistently be well below the London average.

4.4.1 Research and consultation confirmed the findings from the evidence that there is a need to ensure that education, training and skills provision should be related closely to the needs of the labour market.

4.4.2 Partnership with schools and the College of North West London, along with Brent Start and the University of Westminster will be central to delivery and this strategy will work alongside the Borough's 14-19 Partnership. The recent review of the work of Brent Start has identified a clear need for a re-balancing of the curriculum to ensure a far stronger focus on employability skills. The emphasis is on the delivery of high quality skills, qualifications and employment outcomes, wrapped around with more intensive employment support encompassing CV writing, interview skills, motivation and attitudinal skills and job search. All participants are supported to prepare their own clear 'back to work plan', which will follow them through their progress into work.

4.4.3 For all providers of further education and adult education it will be important to ensure that curriculums are fully informed by employer needs in both the local and wider London labour market, while training providers must be able to specifically support workforce development aimed at assisting employees to progress within their organisations. For adults, it will be important that skills providers support clear pathways to improved educational attainment so that on achieving a qualification equivalent to NVQ Level 1, residents are able to progress on to Level 2 and 3 as appropriate.

4.5 **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:** To have a strong focus on addressing inequality by reducing economic and social polarisation within our most deprived neighbourhoods and amongst those residents who are furthest away from work.

- **Outcome 3A:** By 2020, the gap in employment levels between priority neighbourhoods and communities and the borough as a whole will be halved.

4.5.1 The improving employment picture masks continuing inequality and worklessness in particular neighbourhoods, which are often characterised by other issues, including poor health and higher levels of child poverty, as well as concentrations of both social and private rented housing. This pattern of deprivation has remained relatively unchanged over the last twenty years and national employment programmes are failing to make any significant impact. Evidence indicates similar barriers to employment and social mobility for some groups, including particular BAME and migrant communities, people with disabilities (including learning disabilities), and people with mental health issues.

4.5.2 The proposed solution is to work with local communities to develop tailored approaches to addressing the particular issues faced in each neighbourhood, supporting a local infrastructure that brings together the knowledge and expertise of voluntary and community organisations on the ground with the resources of the

mainstream employment services. This partnership will seek to identify every workless resident and support them into employment and to work with young people to prevent them falling into unemployment. The approach has been developed and is to be piloted through the Whole Place Community Budget programme in St Raphaels, but is also well being progressed in Harlesden (led by LIFT) and in Church End (led by Catalyst Housing.)

4.5.3 An equally important focus for this outcome is on groups where there is evidence of polarisation and barriers to employment such as health, lack of affordable child care and the impact of welfare reform. These include, but are not necessarily limited to; people with disability or health needs, including mental ill health; people with an offending history; households impacted by welfare reform; women and lone parents; BAME groups including, for example, young black males, new migrants and older jobseekers (50+). Providers will work closely across sectors and services to identify the core barriers to work and develop appropriate solutions. Where additional resources are required, the council and its partners will seek these through external funding where possible and appropriate.

4.6 **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4:** To reduce poverty through employment and progression in work.

- **Outcome 4A:** There will be year on year reductions in the proportion of residents earning less than the London Living Wage (LLW), which by 2020 will have reduced to below the London average.
- **Outcome 4B:** There will be year on year increases in the level of median incomes in Brent, which by 2020 will be well established above the London average.

4.6.1 This objective concerns both residents who are out of work and those who are 'under employed' – for example, those in part-time work when full-time work is preferred, taking a more junior role in order to manage work-life balance, or in low value, low skilled employment and unable to progress due to a lack of necessary skills. This outcome is particularly concerned with the latter group - those trapped in entry level jobs characterised by low wages.

4.6.2 Primary activities will focus on achieving increased commitment from local employers to the London Living Wage (LLW). The Council itself is already a Living Wage accredited organisation and efforts will be made to extend the commitment to the London Living Wage to as many Brent employers as possible. Working alongside the Living Wage Foundation and local businesses, a package of measures will be introduced to promote the business benefits of paying the London Living Wage and incentivise businesses to become accredited.

4.7 **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5:** To secure increased local influence over national and regional employment programmes so as to deliver better outcomes for Brent residents.

- **Outcome 5A:** By 2020 the performance of the mainstream employment programmes in Brent will be in the upper quartile when compared to the rest of London

4.7.1 The majority of the resources for employment and job brokerage are managed centrally through the DWP, either via the Job Centre Plus network or through the centrally commissioned Work Programme and ability to influence this locally is currently very limited. Nevertheless, other parts of the country have secured a significant devolution of decision making – often through the Growth Deals – with the aim of better tailoring the mainstream provision to the specific local needs of local areas with a view to improving outcomes locally. The focus of this objective is to ensure that nationally delivered or commissioned employment and skills programmes are better tailored to local needs.

4.7.2 Work undertaken to date to establish the Brent Employment, Skills and Enterprise Partnership¹ will be formalised so as to bring together strategic partners to ensure alignment of priorities and strategies and to drive performance improvement. The Council will take a leadership approach to support and challenge providers of nationally commissioned services to ensure that there is transparency in performance reporting and to ensure that locally commissioned employment and related services add value rather than duplicate mainstream provision. The Council will work with the Mayor of London, the GLA, the London LEP and the West London Alliance to secure additional devolution to regional and sub regional levels in respect of mainstream provision – in particular in respect of the forthcoming re-procurement of the Work Programme.

4.8 As the strategy is taken forward, the Brent Employment, Skills and Enterprise Partnership, bringing together key partners, will oversee delivery and monitoring against the Action Plan and progress will be reported to members annually.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no additional direct financial implications arising from the adoption of the strategy over and above those already included within both revenue and capital budgets of the relevant services.

5.2 Any future financial commitments from Council resources will need to be contained within approved service budgets and / or from any 3rd party grants received.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 Although local authorities do not have a statutory obligation to prepare an Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy, they have the power to do so. Under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, under the general power of competence, local

¹ Brent Employment, Skills and Enterprise Partnership will sit within Partners for Brent. Chaired by Brent Council, partners include DWP, the College of North West London, VCS representation and, at the time of writing, representation from each of the three Prime contractors of the Work Programme.

authorities have power to do anything that individuals may generally do. However, this power does not permit local authorities to do anything that is specifically prohibited in legislation and this exception does not arise here.

7.0 Diversity Implications

- 7.1 An Equality Analysis is attached at Appendix 2. It is anticipated that the impact will be positive for all protected groups, although it should be stressed that there is insufficient data available to support a robust assessment in some cases. It should also be stressed that responsibility for collection of data and monitoring does not, in many cases, lie with the council but with a range of partner organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors. A key emphasis for future work will be to ensure that monitoring and data collection are coordinated to provide a robust and consistent basis on which to assess the continuing impact of the policies and activities set out in the Strategy, so as to ensure that the impact for protected groups is understood and adjustments can be made to the approach as required.

8.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 8.1 There are no staffing or accommodation issues arising from this report.

Background Papers

Draft Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy and Action Plan

Appendix 2: Equality Analysis



Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy

2015-20

March 2015

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(To be completed following Cabinet approval of final document)

Foreword

On behalf of the council and the many partners who have contributed, I am pleased to introduce the first Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy for Brent. This is a strategy for all partners, across the public, private and voluntary sectors, who will share responsibility for its delivery.

The strategy has been developed in response to world-wide economic difficulties flowing from the banking crisis of 2008 but is published at a time when grounds for optimism are emerging, nationally and locally. The council and its partners are keen to seize and take advantage of these opportunities to benefit residents and businesses.

Brent is a great place to live and do business in, as indicated by the significant population growth over the last 10 years, well above the London average. Our residents and our diversity are key borough assets with a wealth of talent and energy. Our businesses, over 96% of which are small or medium sized, play a crucial role in the borough economy and local employment. There are real opportunities to attract new investment and new business, especially in our growth areas and high streets. Our young people are achieving excellent results in school and we are determined to translate this into similar success in their future careers.

There are many challenges still to be faced. Worklessness in Brent is higher than the London average, some communities and neighbourhoods still experience high levels of poverty and deprivation and many individuals face barriers to employment that we must help them overcome. Welfare reform has had a negative impact for many Brent families and even those who find a job may struggle to afford to live in a borough with high rents and house prices.

This strategy aims to coordinate the efforts of all partners around an agreed set of objectives to tackle unemployment, poverty and social exclusion through action to increase employment, improve skills, make national and local employment programmes work effectively to address local priorities and raise incomes. While the council and its partners cannot control the national economy or market forces, we can use our powers, influence and leverage to foster the conditions in which the local economy can thrive and create the opportunities that residents need.

I would like to thank all the organisations and individuals who have contributed to the development of this strategy. Your ideas and enthusiasm will be just as important as we begin to implement the action plan and I urge you to remain engaged over the next five years to help the strategy change and adapt.

Councillor Roxanne Mashari, Lead Member for Employment and Skills

Signature and photo to be inserted into final version

INTRODUCTION

Situated at the heart of North West London, Brent is committed to playing a full role in the growth of the London economy. The Borough is home to London's largest industrial estate at Park Royal and has a regeneration strategy which promotes new growth in five key areas – Wembley, Alperton, Kilburn, Church End and Burnt Oak. Much of that growth will be residential, but in Wembley and Alperton there remains scope for considerable new employment growth. Additionally, two of London's other key growth areas border the Borough at Old Oak Common and Brent Cross Cricklewood and both aim to deliver thousands of new jobs.

This strategy 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 preparation of this strategy has involved considerable engagement and consultation with those organisations that have a role to play in shaping the local economy and the local labour market. Local businesses, the voluntary and community sector, the Job Centre Plus, the Work Programme providers, the College of North West London, the Borough's 14-19 Partnership and local registered housing providers have all contributed to the thinking and priorities set out in this document. Equally importantly, they are all committed to working towards the delivery of the strategic outcomes. A summary of all of the comments made through the consultation and engagement process is published alongside this document.

The strategy looks to the long term, recognising that structural changes to the local economy and labour market will not be delivered overnight, but retains a strong focus on the next five years. The accompanying action plan will provide clarity on who will do what, by when, in order to work towards achieving the outcomes. This will be owned, reviewed and monitored by a new Employment, Skills and Enterprise partnership under the Partners For Brent umbrella.

Strategic Context

The Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy has been produced within the context of the new **Borough Plan**, which sets out the overall priorities for Brent over the next four years. The overall vision for Brent as set out in the Borough Plan is:

A great place to live and work

Our vision is to make Brent a great place to live and work, where people feel that they have real opportunities to change their lives for the better, where they feel that they and their children are safe and cared for and achieve well,

and where they receive excellent services when they need them. A place where business and enterprise can prosper and where local people can find employment; a place with plentiful access to arts, leisure and cultural activities; a place where people from different backgrounds feel at ease with one another; a place where the principles of fairness, equality, good citizenship and respect for people and place are valued.

In order to achieve this vision the Borough Plan sets out three broad priorities, of which two are especially relevant to the Employment, Skills and Enterprise strategy:

Priority 1 - Better lives

This means:

- Making sure that local people have the best possible life chances, regardless of their starting position;
- Supporting local enterprise, generating jobs for local people, helping people into work and promoting fair pay;
- Making sure that our schools are amongst the best and that our children and young people achieve to their potential;
- Enabling people to live healthier lives and reducing health inequalities; and
- Supporting vulnerable people and families when they need it.

Priority 3 - Better locally

This means:

- 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;
- Promoting cohesion and integration amongst our communities;
- Making sure that everyone has a fair say in the way that services are delivered, that they are listened to and taken seriously;
- Making sure that inequalities in the quality of life in different parts of the borough are tackled by a stronger focus on local needs; and
- 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.

Of course, there are other strategies that will have a major influence on delivering the outcomes expressed in the Employment, Skills & Enterprise strategy. The Borough's **Local Plan** sets out the commitment to growth and identifies where this growth will be focussed (the five growth areas, plus Park Royal and the North Circular Road). It sets out the scale of the anticipated growth (e.g. 10,000 new jobs in Wembley) and puts in place spatial policies to facilitate the growth.

Brent's established **Regeneration Strategy** (2010-2030) sets another critical framework for the Employment, Skills & Enterprise strategy. In particular Strategic Priorities two and three are relevant:

Strategic priority two: To increase employment and income levels of Brent residents concentrating on those most in need.

Strategic priority three: To maximise investment in Brent from the private, public and community sectors in line with our regeneration priorities and ambitions.

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.

There is a stark and entrenched correlation in Brent between existing patterns of worklessness and social housing. The new **Housing Strategy 2014-19** seeks to address this issue by stressing the links between housing and employment, recognising the importance of housing supply across all tenures in supporting the economy and the importance of employment in helping people secure and sustain appropriate and affordable housing. The strategy sets ambitious targets for new

housing supply and aims to reward employment through improved access for working households to affordable and mid-market housing options.

For those individuals who are furthest away from the labour market the journey to employment may be longer and may require a number of intermediate steps. In order to ensure that there is appropriate support available for these individuals, a new **Anti Poverty Strategy** will be developed in 2015, as well as a new **Financial Inclusion Strategy**, aimed at ensuring that Brent residents have access to and understanding of appropriate financial services and products, such as banking and credit facilities, reducing reliance on high cost options such as pay-day lending.

Finally, many of the ideas and proposals set out in the Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy had their genesis in the independent **Brent Social Mobility Commission** which investigated the barriers to social mobility across Brent during 2012 and made a series of recommendations across themes that are relevant to this strategy.

EVIDENCE BASE

The background information and data that support this Strategy are set out in a separate Evidence Base document that will be updated and reviewed regularly. The following section summarises some key aspects of the evidence and the context for the Strategy.

The starting point for any evidence base has to be Brent's location. Situated within North West London, with excellent transport connections into both the City and the West End – the two largest employment nodes in the UK – Brent is ideally placed to ensure significant local benefit for both local people and local businesses. Within the Borough there are significant opportunities to grow and diversify the local economic base - most obviously at Park Royal and Wembley – and there are other large scale employment growth areas on the Borough's fringes at Old Oak Common, Brent Cross Cricklewood and Paddington. The proposals for a new HS2 / Crossrail link at Old Oak Common, together with the proposed extension of Crossrail along the West Coast Mainline (through Wembley Central) will also reduce significantly the journey times from Brent to Heathrow in future years. There can be fewer places in the country better positioned or growth than Brent.

In reviewing the evidence base it is critical to keep in mind that Brent is very much part of the London and wider south-east England economy. Arguably there is no such thing as the Brent economy, such is the influence of being part of one of Europe's largest and most successful cities. The London economy has shown greater resilience than many other parts of the country over the last few years, reflecting London's importance in the global and national economies and its contribution to overall GDP. However, London has by no means been immune to the impacts of the prolonged economic problems that followed the banking crisis of 2008 - including high unemployment, low business confidence and static or falling incomes. Although economic indicators are improving, new challenges are emerging such as the growth of insecure and short-term employment, slow improvements in wage levels and the continuing impact of welfare reform. Tackling inequality, unemployment and low incomes and increasing opportunities for Brent residents and businesses are therefore important themes for the strategy.

Brent Labour Market

The latest available data indicates that in 2012 there were 115,000 jobs in Brent. The ratio of employment opportunities to working age adults has decreased as a consequence of both an increase in the number of working age residents and of a loss of jobs in some sectors. In terms of the types of jobs that are available, the service and construction sectors are especially prominent, but employment in the higher value finance and IT sector is at a level well below the London average and employment in the public administration, health and education sector is also lower than in London and the UK as a whole. A further feature of the local labour market is the overwhelming predominance of small and medium sized enterprises and a corresponding significant shift away from the historical manufacturing base

dominated by a few large companies. This should increase the resilience of the Brent labour market through a recession – as manufacturing tends to be hit first and take longer to recover than other sectors – and the employment figures would tend to support this hypothesis.

There are clear opportunities to grow the local employment base through inward investment, especially through the regeneration and growth programmes at Park Royal, Old Oak Common and Wembley. In doing this it may also be possible to diversify the local business base further.

In respect of start up growth, Brent remains a highly entrepreneurial borough with significantly higher than average business start up levels. Although this is matched by higher business failure rates, this is to be expected and generally reflects a very buoyant entrepreneurial culture across Brent.

Employment Trends

Brent's overall and working age populations have seen significant increases, in line with trends across London. By March 2014, 123,900 people aged 16–64 were classified as economically active, with 112,100 in employment and 11,800 unemployed. This represents an employment rate below the London average.

Over the past 15 years Brent's unemployment rate has consistently been 1-3% above the London level. Recent trends however show a closer convergence between Brent and the London and West London figures. This is perhaps a reflection of both improved attainment by existing residents as well as increasing in-migration of an economically active population as house prices continue to spiral across Brent. Notwithstanding this, of particular concern is the 27.1% of working age people who are economically inactive and not seeking employment (based on the ONS Annual Population Survey) - mainly those people unable to work due to a long-term health condition or because they are looking after family or home, although there is also a high number of students in full time education.

The headline level improvements at Borough level tend to mask a more mixed picture at ward-level. In June 2014, unemployment rates varied between 1.3% in Kenton to 9.5% in Harlesden. Over the past twenty years, some wards and neighbourhoods have exhibited a consistent pattern of entrenched and high unemployment, coupled with other indicators of deprivation. There is a particularly striking correlation with the concentrations of social housing in Brent – South Kilburn, Stonebridge, Church End, Roundwood and Chalkhill are all unemployment hotspots. This strategy seeks to address this growing polarisation within the Borough.

Interestingly, analysis suggests that Brent residents are increasingly able to compete successfully in the labour market, with only about a quarter of all Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants in Brent being unemployed for more than 12 months. This is similar to London and national averages.

National efforts to tackle unemployment are focused on the Work Programme, which in Brent is currently delivered by three prime providers, who also cover the much wider West London area. Alongside this, a range of local programmes, including those run by the council, VCS and registered housing providers are in operation. A key challenge and opportunity for this strategy is to ensure better alignment and focus of these programmes to tailor them more effectively to local circumstances.

Qualifications and Skills

In an increasingly competitive labour market, the level of formal qualifications and skills achieved becomes even more critical to people's ability to secure meaningful and well paid work. Between 2008 and 2013, the proportion of the working age population with various levels of NVQ in Brent increased, while the proportion with no qualifications remained consistent at 8% (very close to the London average). It is difficult to be clear how much of this improvement is down to the in-migration of well qualified and highly skilled new residents.

As with unemployment, ward-level analysis shows concentrations of residents with no qualifications, with Stonebridge and Harlesden recording 26.8% and 22.6% respectively. Clearly the lack of a recognised qualification is increasingly likely to reduce the chances of an individual securing sustained employment.

In some sectors there clearly remains a long-term mismatch between skills and employment provision, including specific or technical skills, with the construction industry (an important sector in Brent) as a particular example.

It is not just formal academic or vocational qualifications which hamper 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 for this strategy identified this as a significant issue in Brent, particularly amongst young people and those for whom English is a second language.

Clearly a critical way of resolving this situation over the medium term is to improve the educational attainment of school leavers across the Borough such that they are able to progress to further and higher education and subsequently maximise their chances in the labour market. The Borough's 14-19 Partnership is the key vehicle for achieving this, bringing together schools, further education providers, the local authority and careers advice services (now the responsibility of schools) to drive improved outcomes. This strategy does not attempt to replicate the efforts of the 14-19 partnership but rather to consider what added value can be achieved by – for example – building closer relationships between business and schools across the Borough.

The Borough has a relatively low number of 16-17 year olds who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs). Support for this group of Brent residents is delivered under the Youth Contract by Prospects and Catalyst.

Adult skills provision is funded mainly, although not exclusively, through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and delivered by the College of North West London and – to a smaller scale – Brent Start, the Council’s adult community education and training service. Both the College and Brent Start are on improvement trajectories and both are now driven by a key objective of improving employment outcomes amongst their client groups.

Earnings

It is undoubtedly true that within London the only real way to have access to a decent quality of life is to be in employment. However, the cost of living in London (and Brent) is such that being in work alone is no longer likely to be enough for a majority of households. The evidence shows that although Brent’s employment figures are on a positive trajectory, there remains a significant gap between the income of Brent residents and the London average – showing that average earnings of people in work across Brent are much lower than should be expected in London.

Over the past 15 years gross median earnings for Brent residents have consistently been below London levels, while median pay by work place is at very similar levels. This suggests that residents who are working outside of the borough are not achieving significantly higher earnings in most cases. There is also a suggestion of growing polarisation between high and low earners and between different neighbourhoods. Finally the data suggests that there may be a movement of higher earners into the borough in recent years.

The council’s commitment to the London Living Wage (LLW) and action to encourage a similar commitment across partners is an important element of efforts to increase earnings, alongside the wider activity to increase employment and support residents to progress within employment.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The evidence base demonstrates that whilst the trends in Brent are broadly aligned with those across London, there are some specific opportunities and challenges that the new Employment, Skills & Enterprise strategy needs to address. These are identified below:

Opportunities for Investment & Growth

Brent has considerable opportunities for inward investment, both within the five growth areas set out in the regeneration strategy and across the wider Park Royal area. In Wembley alone as many as 10,000 new jobs are expected to be created. Similarly there is huge employment growth potential in areas immediately adjoining the Borough, most significantly at Brent Cross Cricklewood and Old Oak Common. This strategy aims to maximise the amount of new investment into these areas and at the same time provide support for Brent's established businesses and new entrepreneurs to exploit the new markets associated with this growth.

Pockets of Significant and Entrenched Unemployment

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (due to be updated in 2015), supported by data on employment and skills, shows concentrations of deprivation centred on the south of the borough and on our social housing estates. Successive mainstream interventions have made little impact on skills, employment and incomes in areas such as Harlesden, Stonebridge and South Kilburn. As well as these geographical concentrations, other groups and communities face particular barriers. For example, unemployment impacts some BAME groups, recent migrants and people with a disability or mental health issues disproportionately. The approach outlined in this strategy, with a strong focus on priority neighbourhoods and identified groups in the wider community, offers the opportunity to break long-term cycles of deprivation and address the growing polarisation within the borough.

Unemployment and Worklessness

While the JSA claimant rate is improving, many residents face additional barriers to work and this is reflected in the number of people claiming benefits such as Income Support or not claiming benefits to which they may be entitled. This includes the high number of residents who wish to work but find it difficult to enter the labour market due to health issues (particularly mental ill health), lack of affordable or appropriate child care, other caring responsibilities, or lack of marketable skills and experience and basic language skills. Such barriers are prominent for women, those at the older and younger end of the age spectrum and new migrants, among others. Improving opportunities for this group is central to this strategy.

Low-Paid Employment

The improving employment rate also masks the number of residents trapped in low value employment. This is characterised by low incomes, mostly at national minimum wage, with few prospects for career development and progression. This is coupled with an increasing trend for less secure employment terms such as zero hour or 'few hours' contracts. Evidence also suggests that large numbers of those

who describe themselves as self-employed (including some small business owners) are only achieving low incomes. The strategy aims to address this issue through promoting the London Living Wage and through a range of adult skills interventions.

The London Economy

Although skills levels in Brent are on an upward trend, further improvement is needed to equip residents to compete for the thousands of higher value jobs available across the wider sub-regional and London economy. Ensuring young people can access these jobs will be critical if they are to secure the earnings that will allow them to stay in Brent. At the same time, this strategy aims to establish the conditions in Brent in which existing and new high value businesses can thrive.

Housing

The links between housing and employment are critical and interdependent. Decent, affordable housing is an essential support to employment. And secure, appropriately rewarded employment is essential if residents are going to be able to afford to remain living in Brent. The cost of housing in Brent is currently rising sharply, largely as a consequence of the Borough being seen as an attractive place to live by those who are already in well paid work. Increasing housing growth and diversifying tenure so as to be accessible to people on a range of incomes will be essential if Brent is to maximise opportunities for local people to secure work. The recently published housing strategy aims to introduce policies that support residents who secure employment to remain in the Borough and should be seen as a partner document to the Employment, Skills & Enterprise Strategy.

The Role of Partnership

The success of this strategy will be wholly dependant 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 this 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.

VISION

“To reduce inequality and raise living standards in Brent through economic growth and employment”.

The long-term ambition is that within twenty years, levels of employment in Brent will be comfortably above the London average. The strategic objectives and related outcomes in the next chapter provide the framework through which the vision will be realised. Successful delivery will depend on businesses, the voluntary and community sector, local residents, the Job Centre Plus and other local partners all playing core roles. Brent Council will commit to a leadership role – bringing partners together to further refine strategy, develop action plans, secure resources, monitor performance and facilitate delivery.

Strategic Objectives

Following extensive consultation, the following five objectives have been identified that will form the framework for the delivery of this vision:

1. To promote economic growth through regeneration, increasing the number of local jobs and providing new opportunities for local businesses.
2. To ensure that local education and skills provision is reflective of the demands of the labour market, providing a labour pool made up of well qualified and highly motivated individuals.
3. To have a strong focus on addressing inequality by reducing economic and social polarisation within our most deprived neighbourhoods and amongst those residents who are furthest away from work.
4. To reduce poverty through employment and progression in work.
5. To secure increased local influence over national and regional employment programmes so as to deliver better outcomes for Brent residents.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES

This section sets out the outcomes associated with each of the strategic objectives, along with a commentary on the proposed approach to delivery. More detail on the data and analysis supporting the selection of these objectives is set out in the Evidence Base, while detail on the specific actions identified to deliver the outcomes is provided in the Action Plan.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Strategic Objective 1

To promote economic growth through regeneration, increasing the number of local jobs and providing new opportunities for local businesses.

The Brent Local Plan and the Brent Regeneration Strategy set out the framework for growth across the Borough over the next twenty years. Five growth areas are identified as providing the majority of the borough's new homes, facilities, shops and jobs – Wembley, South Kilburn, Alperton, Burnt Oak and Church End. In addition, Park Royal is specifically identified as having significant employment growth potential. Growth is also encouraged in and around the Borough's town centres and transport nodes.

The conditions for business in Brent are good. There is a plentiful supply of employment land and premises. Transport connections to central London and beyond are excellent. There is a ready supply of local labour within reasonable travel to work distances and there is an increasing range of local facilities for businesses to benefit from.

Much has already been achieved. Park Royal has restructured its employment provision, complimenting its historical manufacturing strengths with new distribution, warehousing, food and media businesses. The new London Designer Outlet Centre in Wembley has brought many hundreds of new retail, leisure and hospitality jobs into the Borough. And the strong focus on recent years on making use of empty properties to host 'meanwhile' workspaces in Kilburn, Wembley and Willesden has increased opportunities for fledgling businesses to gain a foothold in the Borough.

There is more that can be done though. Whether it be improved transport connections – and reduced journey times – to Heathrow; better promotion of Brent as a place to do business; or enhanced opportunities for budding entrepreneurs to test out their new business ideas.

It is also important to remember that Brent is not an 'island' – as a Borough it is very much part and parcel of the wider London and South East England economy. The vast majority of working age people who live in Brent will always work outside of the Borough, more often than not in central London. It is therefore important that our

sights are raised beyond simply growth within the Borough. Brent needs to influence growth and investment opportunities in areas surrounding the Borough – e.g. at Old Oak Common at Brent Cross Cricklewood – and ensure that local people are able to access the associated job opportunities. Similarly, it is important that people who are seeking work are encouraged to look beyond Brent for the right employment opportunities – this is all part and parcel of being part of a large and complex city.

Brent's Regeneration Strategy already explicitly links the physical transformation of the borough to the social and economic improvement of neighbourhoods and raising the quality of life for Brent residents. In similar spirit, this strategy recognises that the physical regeneration of the borough plays a critical role in supporting the growth of the local economy and the employment of local residents.

Outcome 1A

At least 5,000 sustainable new jobs will be created in Brent's growth and regeneration areas by 2020.

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 will be expected to be active in championing and promoting local employment schemes to the businesses that occupy their new schemes in line with the approaches adopted by Quintain in Wembley and Segro in 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.

Sometimes the Council acts as a developer – for example for new school buildings and estate regeneration schemes – and in these instances it will seek to secure local employment and training opportunities through the procurement process.

To increase economic benefits further, developers will be expected to promote supply chain opportunities to local businesses so as to maximise their impact on the local economy. Brent Council will facilitate this through its Supply Brent web portal.

Working in partnership with neighbouring local authorities, Brent will also seek to increase access to employment opportunities arising from regeneration in the wider sub region, such as at Old Oak Common and Cricklewood Brent Cross. This will involve all providers ensuring that training and employment support provides residents with the skills necessary to benefit from these opportunities.

Outcome 1B

Brent will have a high public profile as an excellent place set up and grow successful businesses.

Consultation, particularly with local business, highlighted the need for the Council to use its powers, partnerships and influence to the fullest extent to support existing and new enterprise, including self-employment. There are a number of areas that will be reviewed:

- *Stronger business partnerships* – supporting established business networks to expand and facilitating new business networks where none exist at present.
- *Public sector procurement opportunities* – in particular to consider how better communication and changed practices could provide more opportunities for local companies to submit tenders for work.
- *Supply of affordable business spaces* – expanding the successful Meanwhile programmes to fully utilise empty business premises for new entrepreneurs and exploring opportunities for an adequate supply of ‘move on’ spaces as business expand.
- *Better regulation* – reviewing the way that regulatory services interact with businesses to ensure that there is clarity on the service and response standards that local businesses can expect from the Council and other providers.

Brent has significant competitive advantages and opportunities when competing for new investment and there is a clear need to strengthen, promote and publicise these to potential new investors.

There are excellent transport links and connectivity – to the City, the West End and to much of the rest of the country. However there remains significant scope for improvement. Most immediately, there is an opportunity to secure a new Crossrail extension along the West Coast Mainline and for this to stop at Wembley Central. This would significantly reduce journey times to Heathrow (via Old Oak Common) and increase the attraction of Wembley as a place to do business. More locally there is scope to work with the newly established Old Oak & Park Royal Development Corporation to consider access improvements to Park Royal both by road and rail.

Access to employees with relevant skills has been identified as one of the top five factors driving investment decisions – objective 2 seeks to address this.

SKILLS

Strategic Objective 2

To ensure that local education and skills provision is reflective of the demands of the labour market, providing a labour pool made up of well qualified and highly motivated individuals

Research and consultation confirmed the findings from the evidence that there is a need to ensure that education, training and skills provision should be related closely to the needs of the labour market. Brent schools are obviously critical partners in the delivery of this objective, as are the College of North West London (CNWL) who already deliver a wide range of employment-focused provision and activities; along with the Council's own training and skills delivery arm – Brent Start. The University of Westminster also has a campus in Brent and it will be important to engage them in a far stronger partnership than at present.

Outcome 2A

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 stress 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.

Outcome 2B

All residents participating in adult education will have an 'into work plan'.

The recent review of the work of Brent Start, Brent's training and skills provision has identified a clear need for a re-balancing of the curriculum to ensure a far stronger focus on employability skills –ranging from core numeracy and English language skills, through to relevant vocational qualifications. The emphasis is on the delivery of high quality skills, qualifications and employment outcomes, wrapped around with more intensive employment support encompassing CV writing, interview skills, motivation and attitudinal skills and job search. All participants are supported to prepare their own clear 'back to work plan', which will follow them through their progress into work.

For all providers of further education and adult education it will be important to ensure that curriculums are fully informed by employer needs in both the local and wider London labour market. It will also be important that training providers will be able to specifically support workforce development aimed at assisting employees to progress within their organisations.

Outcome 2C

A year on year reduction in the number of residents with no qualifications, so that by 2020 the figure will consistently be well below the London average.

Brent continues to be home to relatively large numbers of residents with no qualifications – 8% of the population.

For school leavers this objective is strongly linked to Objective 2A and the work of schools and the Brent 14-19 partnership to improve educational standards and attainment.

For the adult community it will be important that skills providers support clear pathways to improved educational attainment so that on achieving a qualification equivalent to NVQ Level 1, residents are able to progress on to Level 2 and 3 as appropriate. A key challenge will be how to ensure that at the point a resident secures employment, there remains the flexibility for them to continue to improve their educational attainment.

REDUCING POLARISATION

Strategic Objective 3

To have a strong focus on addressing inequality by reducing economic and social polarisation within our most deprived neighbourhoods and amongst those residents who are furthers away from work.

The improving employment picture masks continuing inequality and worklessness in particular neighbourhoods. Coupled with in-migration of higher income households, there is a risk of growing economic and social polarisation in the borough. Neighbourhoods with high concentrations of worklessness are often characterised by other issues, including poor health and higher levels of child poverty, as well as concentrations of both social and private rented housing. This pattern of deprivation has remained relatively unchanged over the last twenty years. Bulk volume employment programmes, commissioned at a national level, are failing to make any significant impact in these neighbourhoods. Regeneration and other funding programmes over the past twenty years have also had limited impact beyond physical improvements to the housing stock and the environment.

Similarly, the evidence indicates particular barriers to employment and social mobility for some groups, including particular BAME and migrant communities, people with disabilities (including learning disabilities), and people with mental health issues. While there will be a strong focus on priority neighbourhoods, it is important to stress that this will not be at the expense of needs identified in the wider community and programmes and actions will run in parallel and are equally significant for this Strategy.

Outcome 3A

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 (led by LIFT) and in Church End (led by Catalyst Housing.)

Partnership will address constraints to accessing, securing and sustaining employment, including child care and health needs and integrated housing and employment support for all, but particularly to those affected by welfare reform including the Overall Benefit Cap.

One important aspect of this approach – and a key difference from previous geographical based interventions - will be to address the strong correlation between housing tenure, allocation and need and an individual's employment status. The Brent Housing Strategy, the Tenancy Strategy and the new Allocation Scheme are all designed in part to help break the cycle of concentrations of workless communities in social housing estates.

The consultation responses welcomed the focus on these areas but stressed the need to ensure that this is not at the expense of supporting other groups that cannot be identified with a particular neighbourhood. An equally important focus for this outcome is therefore on groups where there is evidence of polarisation and barriers to employment such as health, lack of affordable child care and the impact of welfare reform. These include, but are not necessarily limited to; people with disability or health needs, including mental ill health; people with an offending history; households impacted by welfare reform; women and lone parents; BAME groups including, for example, young black males, new migrants and older jobseekers (50+).

There is a strong partnership of providers in Brent who will work closely across sectors and services to identify the core barriers to work and develop appropriate solutions. Where additional resources are required, the council and its partners will seek these through external funding where possible and appropriate.

REDUCING POVERTY

Strategic Objective 4

To reduce poverty through employment and progression in work.

This objective concerns both residents who are out of work and those who are 'under employed'. Residents may be under employed for a number of reasons, including being in part-time work when full-time work is preferred, taking a more junior role in order to manage work-life balance (particularly common for those with caring responsibilities) or being in low value, low skilled employment and unable to progress due to a lack of necessary skills. This outcome is particularly concerned with the latter group - those trapped in entry level jobs characterised by low wages.

Outcome 4A

There will be year on year reductions in the proportion of residents earning less than the London Living Wage (LLW), which by 2020 will have reduce to below the London average.

Outcome 4B

There will be year on year increases in the level of median incomes in Brent, which by 2020 will be well established above the London average.

It is undoubtedly the case in London that for those people able to work the only meaningful way of securing a decent standard of living is to secure employment. Nevertheless, for many people work still does not provide enough income to support the high costs of living in London. Objectives 2 and 3 have focussed on the support that will be provided to local people to help them progress in the labour market and improve their earnings potential in the Brent and wider London market. This objective is focussed on increasing the supply of decent paid employment across the Borough.

The primary activities in relation to this outcome will focus on achieving increased commitment from local employers to the London Living Wage (LLW). The Council itself is already a Living Wage accredited organisation, with all directly employed staff paid at least the London Living Wage and a commitment to work towards ensuring that all staff working for directly employed contractors similarly are paid the LLW.

However, efforts will be made to extend the commitment to the London Living Wage to as many Brent employers as possible. Working alongside the Living Wage Foundation and local businesses, a package of measures will be introduced to promote the business benefits of paying the London Living Wage and incentivise businesses to become accredited.

IMPROVING EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Strategic Objective 5

To secure increased local influence over national and regional employment programmes so as to deliver better outcomes for Brent residents

A very significant majority of the resources that are available to be spent on employment and job brokerage are managed centrally through the DWP, either via the Job Centre Plus network or through the centrally commissioned Work Programme. The ability to influence this locally is currently very limited. Nevertheless, other parts of the country have secured a significant devolution of decision making – often through the Growth Deals – with the aim of better tailoring the mainstream provision to the specific local needs of local areas with a view to improving outcomes locally. The focus of this objective is to ensure that nationally delivered or commissioned employment and skills programmes are better tailored to local needs.

Outcome 5A

By 2020 the performance of the mainstream employment programmes in Brent will be in the upper quartile when compared to the rest of London

This is a challenging outcome which will need to build on the recent positive trend in respect of claimant counts. It will require a strong commitment to partnership across all organisations involved in the delivery of the core employment programmes. To this end the work undertaken to date to establish the Brent Employment, Skills and Enterprise Partnership² will be formalised so as to bring together strategic partners to ensure alignment of priorities and strategies and to drive performance improvement. The Council will take a leadership approach to support and challenge providers of nationally commissioned services to ensure that there is transparency in performance reporting and to ensure that locally commissioned employment and related services add value rather than duplicate mainstream provision.

The Council will work with the Mayor of London, the GLA, the London LEP and the West London Alliance to secure additional devolution to regional and sub regional levels in respect of mainstream provision – in particular in respect of the forthcoming re-procurement of the Work Programme.

² Brent Employment, Skills and Enterprise Partnership will sit within Partners for Brent. Chaired by Brent Council, partners include DWP, the College of North West London, VCS representation and, at the time of writing, representation from each of the three Prime contractors of the Work Programme.

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

Successful implementation of this strategy will require close partnership working across a full range of organisations. Key partners include:

- Local businesses
- Local community and voluntary organisations
- The DWP – working through the local Job Centre Plus networks
- The College of North West London
- Local Schools
- Brent Council
- Brent Housing Partnership and other Registered Housing Providers

In order to ensure that efforts are co-ordinated and prioritised this strategy will be accompanied by an annual Action Plan, which will set out the actions to be undertaken in pursuit of the outcomes for each strategic objective, the lead partner and the expected milestones that will show progress.

This progress will be overseen by a new Brent Employment, Skills and Enterprise partnership which will be facilitated by the Council. The Council will also continue to facilitate the regular ‘providers forum’ which at a practical level will bring together all organisations who are working to deliver employment, enterprise and skill related provision across the Borough.

Over the lifetime of the strategy there are likely to be multiple opportunities to secure additional funding into Brent in pursuit of the objectives and outcomes set out in the strategy – be that from European Funding, London LEP resources or elsewhere. The Council will continue to facilitate dialogue amongst the delivery partners to ensure that additional funding is maximised in line with the core priorities set out in this document.

ACTION PLAN

This Action Plan is for an initial period of three years. Its progress will be regularly reviewed together with key partners and the action plan itself will be refreshed on an annual basis.

To provide structure for this document and to support monitoring, outcomes and actions have been grouped under each of the Strategic Objectives in the Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy, but it should be noted that in many cases, they will be relevant to more than one objective.

Outcome	Key Activity	Lead Partners	Progress Milestones	RAG Rating and Comments
ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF THE STRATEGY AS A WHOLE				
N/A	Bidding for relevant external funding by both the Council and local partners. All bids to be aligned to the priorities of the Employment, Skills & Enterprise strategy.	Brent Council Local Delivery Partners	External funding bidding pipeline established - <i>April 2015</i> ESIF monies successfully secured for Brent priorities (minimum of £1m in 2015/16) – <i>March 2016</i>	
N/A	Establish a commissioning model for the delivery of employment, skills and enterprise provision in the Borough, aligned to the priorities of the	Brent Council	Employment Services Provider Framework established - <i>March 2015</i> Call off projects to be aligned to	

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	Employment, Skills & Enterprise Strategy.		Employment, Skills & Enterprise Strategy - <i>ongoing</i>	
N/A	<p>DWP's commissioning of Flexible Support Fund (FSF) to be aligned to Brent's Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy. Joint commissioning through Brent's Employment, Skills & Enterprise Partnership where possible and appropriate.</p> <p>Where appropriate, DWP to use Brent Council's Framework for Employment Service for FSF commissioning</p>	DWP	<p>Employment, Skills & Enterprise Partnership arrangements formally established – <i>June 2015</i></p> <p>FSF priorities to be confirmed – <i>April 2015</i></p> <p>Joint commissioning to complement ESIF bidding activities – <i>July 2015</i></p>	

Outcome	Key Activity	Lead Partners	Progress Milestones	RAG Rating and Comments
<p>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1</p> <p><i>To promote economic growth through regeneration, increasing the number of local jobs and providing new opportunities for local businesses</i></p>				
<p>At least 5,000 sustainable new jobs will be created in Brent's growth and regeneration areas by 2020</p>	<p>Drive forward the delivery of the five growth areas, maximizing new employment opportunities securing appropriate arrangements for job brokerage.</p> <p>Actively participate in bringing forward the regeneration of Old Oak Common, bringing forward 55,000 new jobs and safeguarding many more on Park Royal.</p>	<p>Brent Council</p>	<p>Wembley, Alperton and Church End Investment Plans complete – <i>April 2015</i></p> <p>Burnt Oak Investment Plan complete – <i>July 2015</i></p> <p>Opportunity Area Planning Framework adopted for Old Oak Common - <i>March 2016</i></p>	
	<p>Support the recruitment of local people where employment opportunities arise through regeneration schemes.</p> <p>Review the local arrangements for achieving this (Wembley Works)</p>	<p>Brent Council DWP College of North West London</p>	<p>Review Wembley Works with a view to establishing a sustainable job brokerage offer, specifically targeted at new employers moving into the regeneration areas</p> <p>Scope agreed - <i>May 2015</i></p>	

	Maintain the established partnership of delivery organisations to ensure widespread awareness of new employment opportunities and ensure a co-ordinated local response.		Business Plan established - <i>Sept 2015</i> Wembley Works notified of employment opportunities to be created from regeneration schemes in the borough - <i>Ongoing</i>	
	Maximise employment related outcomes from planning and capital projects via section 106 agreements, CIL and Developers' commitments.	Brent Council	Toolkit for Employment and Skills Opportunities from Planning and Procurement (TESOPP) finalised - <i>April 2015</i> Roadshow of TESOPP across council services - <i>April – August 2015</i> Evaluation of TESOPP and roll out, as appropriate, across other partners, including NHS - <i>April 2016</i>	
Brent will have a high public profile as an excellent place to set up and grow successful	Continue to develop Brent Business Hub and promote this widely as the Borough's online portal for business support and advice.	Brent Council	Brent Business Hub full launch, aligned to Brent Council's Customer Access Strategy - <i>Sept 2015</i> Monthly business engagement newsletter circulated to businesses – <i>November 2015</i>	

businesses.	Develop the Supply Brent portal to increase the number of contracts advertised and to support local businesses secure supply chain opportunities	Brent Council	Supply Brent portal to promote supply chain opportunities arising from procurement of <i>service</i> contracts (in addition to capital procurement) – <i>June 2015</i> To explore rolling out use of Supply Brent to other partners, such as NHS and Fire Service – <i>January 2016</i>	
	Work with businesses in Park Royal to promote growth within the estate	Park Royal Business Partnership	Park Royal Business Partnership established including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly partnership meetings • Local Authority liaison seminars – <i>Sept 2015</i> 	
	Ensure the provision of a range of incubator, move-on and meeting spaces for SMEs Utilise and strengthen the partnership with the Meanwhile Foundation to provide short term premises	Brent Council Meanwhile Foundation	Establish a workspace strategy consolidating Council's and partners' approach (to include use of empty commercial units) – <i>Sept 2015</i> Map property in Brent suitable for move-on space and actively inform growing businesses of their availability – <i>Sept 2015</i>	

	<p>Develop focused high street plans leading to the future development of a revitalised town centre/high street strategy for selected areas.</p>	<p>Town Teams Brent Council</p>	<p>Undertake further analysis of key town centres and high streets to understand their specific issues and areas of concern, appreciating that each area is likely to have specific problems that need to be tackled individually – by <i>March 2016</i></p> <p>Kilburn High Road and Wembley High Road studies completed – <i>April 2015</i></p> <p>Deliver High Street Fund projects in Wembley in accordance with delivery plan – from <i>April 2015</i></p> <p>Bring forward initiatives in other High Streets in accordance with Town Team priorities – <i>Sept 2015</i></p>	
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Outcome	Key Activity	Lead Partners	Progress Milestones	RAG Rating and Comments
<p>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2 To ensure that local education and skills provision is reflective of the demands of the labour market, providing a labour pool made up of well qualified and highly motivated individuals</p>				
By 2016 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.	Map existing employment and career related activities across Brent schools.	Brent Youth Parliament	Design and complete survey – <i>May 2015</i> Survey utilised to identify gaps in provision and the support that schools need to improve the quality of their employability skills and careers guidance programmes. This may include providing labour market intelligence and links to future growth sectors – from <i>June 2016</i>	
	Explore the option to pilot an 'Employment Passport' in participating Brent Schools.	Schools Brent Council	Review lessons from Tri-borough pilot – <i>June 2015</i> Early adopting Brent schools identified for a pilot project – <i>June 2015</i> First year pilot completed – <i>June 2016</i>	

	Explore opportunity to pilot mentoring scheme between Council staff and Brent school pupils (years 10 and 11) – linked to Council’s emerging strategy on corporate volunteering.	Schools Brent Council	<p>Project development - key objectives and outcomes agreed – <i>July 2016</i></p> <p>Participating schools and cohort of young people identified – <i>Sept 2015</i></p> <p>Relevant training and support mapped and provided to participating mentors – <i>Sept 2015</i></p> <p>Pilot tested for one year – from <i>Sept 2015</i></p> <p>Evaluation and next steps identified – <i>July 2016</i></p>	
	Develop Brent Council’s in-house apprenticeship service within the Council so that 100 positions have been created in three years.	Brent Council	In progress – this scheme has already progressed and is on target to achieve 100 apprenticeships by end of financial year 15/16.	
	Support local businesses, with a focus on SMEs, to create apprenticeship opportunities.	Brent Council	<p>Enhanced Brent Apprenticeship model commissioned using NHB funding - <i>April 2015</i></p> <p>Enhanced Brent Apprenticeship</p>	.

			programme concluded with evaluation undertaken - <i>September 2016</i>	
All residents participating in further and adult education will have an 'into work plan' and receive direct support to secure employment	<p>Design and implement new operational service delivery models within CNWL and Brent Start to provide an employment-focused service.</p> <p>Establish strong partnership working between Brent Start and CNWL to ensure complimentary curriculum and provision</p> <p>Work with businesses to inform a curriculum which is relevant to the labour market.</p>	Brent Council College of North West London	<p>Merger of Brent Start and Employment & Enterprise services - <i>April 2015</i></p> <p>Undertake fundamental review of service delivery model in the light of future funding trajectories – <i>June 2015</i></p> <p>Quality Improvement Board for Brent Start established – <i>Sept 2015</i></p> <p>CNWL proposals for greater employment focus delivered – <i>Sept 2015</i></p> <p>Develop clear referral pathways between Brent Start, the CNWL and other employability support and services including Wembley Works – <i>Sept 2015</i></p>	
	Establish and promote a workforce development offer to established employer partners	Brent Council College of North West London	<p>Workforce development courses delivery underway - <i>Jan 2016</i></p> <p>Traineeship programmes operational -<i>Sept 2015</i></p>	

		Employers Park Royal Business Partnership	Pre-employment programmes delivered to support job vacancies - <i>Sept 2015</i>	
	To achieve and track improved employment outcomes within Brent Start to ensure it is a work focused service.	Brent Council	All learners to have an employment focused action plan including short-term and long-term goal – <i>June 2015</i>	
A year on year reduction in the number of residents with no qualifications, so that by 2020 the figure will consistently be well below the London average.	Ensure a good provision of high quality functional skills courses (including basic English literacy, numeracy and digital skills) of high quality to be delivered.	All skills providers	<p>Mapping of providers offering functional skills completed to aid signposting of residents for support – <i>June 2015</i></p> <p>External funding identified to provide further provision in the borough as necessary – <i>September 2015</i></p> <p>Council commissioned or delivered ESOL provision to have embedded employment support – <i>September 2015</i></p> <p>DWP locally commissioned ESOL programmes to be employment focused</p>	

			(English for employment) – <i>September 2015</i>	
	Alignment of the DWP Skills Funding Agency (SFA) funding pot to the priorities of the Employment, Skills & Enterprise Strategy so as it commissions vocational courses informed by labour market intelligence.	DWP	DWP to use their influence with SFA and SFA funded providers in the borough to ensure skills provision is informed by the labour market (from financial year 2015/16).	
Outcome	Key Activity	Lead Partners	Progress Milestones	RAG Rating and Comments
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3 To have a strong focus on addressing inequality by reducing economic and social polarisation within our most deprived neighbourhoods and amongst those residents who are furthers away from work				
By 2020, the	Undertake initial detailed place-based	Brent Council	Six priority neighbourhoods identified.	

gap in employment levels between priority neighbourhoods and communities and the borough as a whole will be halved.	research to understand key barriers to employment and specific nuances in each priority neighbourhood.		Key community lead partner in each neighbourhood identified - <i>April 2015</i>	
	Drive a place-based approach in Harlesden through the Our Place programme to ensure it is community led and meets the needs of local people.	LIFT	Our Place business case submitted to Locality for approval – <i>June 2015</i> Action Plan completed – <i>Dec 2015</i> Subsequent milestones to be determined within the agreed action plan	
	Drive a place-based approach in Stonebridge to ensure it is community led and meets the needs of local people.	Hyde Housing	Action Plan completed – <i>Dec 2015</i> Subsequent milestones to be determined within the agreed action plan	
	Drive a place-based approach in Church End to ensure it is community led and meets the needs of local people.	Catalyst Housing	Action Plan completed – <i>June 2015</i> Subsequent milestones to be determined within the agreed action plan	
	Drive a place-based approach in South Kilburn to ensure it is community led meets the needs of local people.	South Kilburn Trust	Action Plan completed – <i>June 2015</i> Subsequent milestones to be determined	

			within the agreed action plan	
	Drive a place-based approach on the St Raphael's Estate to ensure it is community led and meets the needs of local people.	Brent Council Brent Housing Partnership Help Somalia Foundation	Integrated Team in post – <i>April 2015</i> 2 year pilot commences - <i>April 2015 – March 2017</i> Year 1 evaluation completed - <i>April 2016</i> Year 2 evaluation completed - <i>April 2017</i> Sustainability plan for St Raphael's Estate to be implemented - <i>January 2017</i>	
	Delivery of targeted community learning programmes in Priority Neighbourhoods, working through the Community Learning Partnership	Brent Council	Delivery of targeted community learning programmes to 1,500 participants – <i>Sept 2015</i>	
	Implement and pilot WLA Mental Health National Trailblazer and LEP Pilot in Brent.	West London Alliance Brent Council Health Providers	Project to be established from <i>Sept 2015</i>	
	Council commissioning of employment and skills provision to focus on priority neighbourhoods and communities most	Brent Council	Employment service provider framework established - <i>January 2015</i>	

	disadvantaged (including those with a disability, experiencing mental ill health, and impacted by welfare reforms).		New job brokerage service in place targeting those residents in receipt of housing benefit or impacted by welfare reforms - <i>May 2015</i>	
	Explore the viability of testing new approaches to housing register and allocation to ensure the provision of employment support to those with social tenancies	Brent Council Registered Providers	Model developed by <i>Sept 2015</i>	
	Explore the viability of testing new approaches to fixed-term tenancies which incentivise tenants to participate in employment support	Brent Council Registered Providers	Model developed by <i>Sept 2015</i>	
	Integrate housing options, welfare and employment advice at the frontline.	Brent Council Job Centre Plus VCS Partners Registered Providers	Evaluation of pilot integrated triage system at Brent Customer services completed and lessons adopted as required - from <i>April 2015</i> Reconfiguration of Brent Customer Services at the Civic Centre completed – <i>April 2015</i>	

	<p>Continuation of a coordinated response to addressing the impact of welfare reforms.</p> <p>In particular, wider work with partners across the borough particularly around money management and advice</p>	<p>DWP Brent Council BHP</p>	<p>Co-located activities with DWP and Citizen's Advice Bureau colleagues to continue - <i>ongoing</i></p> <p>Commissioning of job brokerage services for residents impacted by welfare reforms – <i>May 2015</i></p> <p>Capacity building for colleagues who work in front-line service such as Children's Centres and Adult Social Care to increase awareness of employment support - <i>ongoing</i></p> <p>Universal Credit implementation plan initiated – <i>April 2015</i></p> <p>Universal Credit Partnership Agreement in place – <i>April 2015</i></p> <p>Financial Inclusion Strategy agreed – <i>Sept 2015</i></p>	<p>This requires a specific approach which places employment as a key mitigation for welfare reform.</p>
	<p>Address child care being a barrier to searching, securing and sustaining</p>	<p>Brent Council DWP</p>	<p>Support a community-based childcare provision - a group of Somali parents will</p>	

	employment		<p>be trained so that they can register as child-minders, offering culturally appropriate provision which is more likely to be taken up by other Somali families (the community group most impacted by welfare reform) – by <i>March 2016</i></p> <p>Increase take up of childcare through increased awareness raising and access to DHP funding (for 14/15 – to be reviewed post DHP award for 15/16).</p> <p>Further develop the flexible child-minding pool, ensuring that there are child-minders available in each locality. This allows key partners such as DWP to link directly with child-minders when assisting parents to find work - <i>ongoing</i></p>	
	Build capacity of VCS providers to provide community based support in the employment and skills arena, to ensure the full engagement of those communities who may not be responsive to statutory services and organisations.	Brent CVS	Ongoing	

	Brent Council, as one of the two largest employers in the borough, to lead by example in promoting employment opportunities to local people.	Brent Council	Continue to promote the 100 apprentice opportunities locally Introduce a Brent Graduate scheme to compliment the existing National Graduate Scheme	
	To establish Wates construction academy to provide work experience and apprenticeship opportunities within the Borough as part of the investment programme in Brent's housing stock	Brent Housing Partnership Wates	Model to be developed over <i>2015/16</i>	

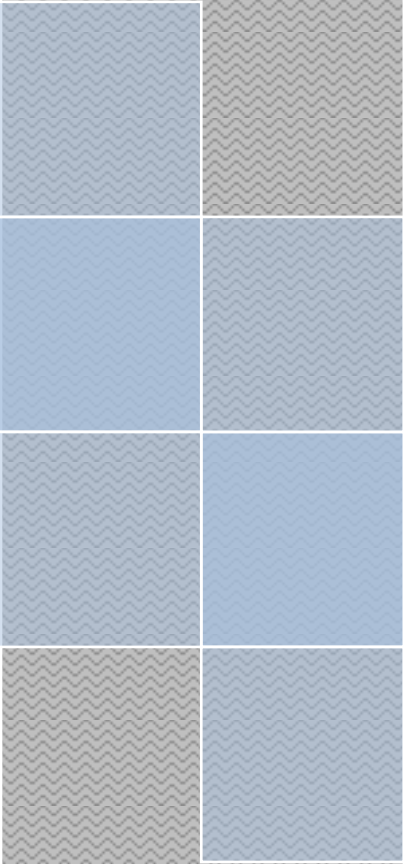
Outcome	Key Activity	Lead Partners	Progress Milestones	RAG Rating and Comments
<p>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4 To reduce poverty through employment and progression in work</p>				
<p>There will be year on year reductions in the proportion of residents earning less than the London Living Wage (LLW), which by 2020 will have reduce to below the London average.</p>	<p>To work with local businesses to raise commitment to paying the London Living Wage</p>	<p>Brent Council Living Wage Foundation</p>	<p>Non-Domestic Discretionary Rate LLW Discount scheme finalised - <i>March 2015</i></p> <p>NNDR LLW discount scheme launched – <i>April 2015</i></p> <p>Communication strategy for LLW established – <i>May 2015</i></p> <p>Evaluation undertaken of year 1 and decision made for subsequent year – <i>January 2016</i></p>	
	<p>Brent Council will ensure adoption of LLW amongst its supply chain as contracts are renewed.</p>	<p>Brent Council</p>	<p>LLW introduced as contracts are retendered - <i>ongoing</i></p>	
<p>There will be</p>	<p>To actively work with local employers</p>	<p>CNWL and Brent Start</p>	<p>As Outcome 2 above</p>	

<p>year on year increases in the level of median incomes in Brent, which by 2020 will be well established above the London average</p>	<p>to support workforce development.</p>		<p>Work with the London Designer Outlet (Realm) to develop and deliver an Academy programme focused on upskilling the current workforce to encourage staff progression and increase retention levels – <i>Sept 2015</i></p>	
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Outcome	Key Activity	Lead Partners	Progress Milestones	RAG Rating and Comments
<p>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5 <i>To secure increased local influence over national and regional employment programmes so as to deliver better outcomes for Brent residents</i></p>				
<p>By 2020 the performance of the mainstream employment programmes in Brent will be in the upper quartile when compared to the rest of London</p>	<p>Strategic partnership with key stakeholders including DWP, Prime Providers of nationally commissioned employment programmes, CNWL, VCS representatives and Brent Council to drive up employment rates within the borough.</p>	<p>Brent Council DWP Work Programme Providers College of North West London Business VCS Partners</p>	<p>Brent Employment, Skills & Enterprise Partnership formally adopted within the refreshed Partners for Brent structure - <i>June 2015</i></p> <p>Regular quarterly meetings to review progress against this strategy and action plan</p> <p>Annual refresh of this action plan – <i>April 2016</i></p>	
	<p>Work with the London LEP and the West London Alliance to secure greater sub-regional and local influence in respect of the commissioning of local DWP and SFA programmes.</p>	<p>West London Alliance Brent Council</p>	<p>Establish a West London Economic Prosperity Board – <i>Sept 2015</i></p>	



Equality Analysis



Brent Council Equality Analysis Form

1. Roles and Responsibilities: please refer to stage 1 of the guidance	
<p>Directorate: Regeneration and Growth</p> <p>Service Area: Housing and Employment</p>	<p>Person Responsible: Name: Jon Lloyd-Owen Title: Contact No: 5199</p> <p>Signed: </p>
<p>Name of policy: Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy 2015-20</p>	<p>Date analysis started: Nov 2014</p> <p>Completion date: March 2015</p> <p>Review date: March 2016</p>
<p>Is the policy: New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Old <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Auditing Details: Name: Arleen Brown Title: Equality Officer Date: Contact No: Signed:</p>
<p>Signing Off Manager: responsible for review and monitoring Name: Jon Lloyd-Owen Title: Operational Director, Housing and Employment</p> <p>Date: January 2015 Contact No: 07867169854 Signed:</p>	<p>Decision Maker: Name individual /group/meeting/ committee: Cabinet</p> <p>Date: April 2015</p>

2. Brief description of the policy. Describe the aim and purpose of the policy, what needs or duties is it designed to meet? How does it differ from any existing policy or practice in this area?

The Employment, Skills and Enterprise Strategy sets out the shared ambitions and objectives of the council and a wide range of partners, centred on improving employment prospects and opportunities for Brent residents and fostering the conditions in which existing and new Brent business can thrive. It is a strategy for the whole borough and will be delivered by a combination of public, private and voluntary sector organisations working together, with the council taking a strategic and leadership role. Structured around a long-term vision but with a particular focus on the next five years, the strategy sets out joint objectives to support enterprise and employment growth and improve outcomes for businesses and residents, taking advantage of the opportunities arising from improving economic conditions and new partnership approaches.

The vision for the strategy is:

To reduce inequality and raise living standards through economic growth and employment.

The long-term ambition is that, within twenty years, levels of employment in Brent will be equal to or better than the London and West London averages. Engagement has identified the following objectives that form the framework for delivery of the vision:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: To promote economic growth through regeneration, increasing the number of local jobs and providing new opportunities for local businesses.

Outcome 1A: At least 5,000 sustainable new jobs will be created in Brent's growth and regeneration areas by 2020.

Outcome 1B: Brent will have a high public profile as an excellent place set up and grow successful businesses.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: To ensure that local education and skills provision is reflective of the demands of the labour market, providing a labour pool made up of well qualified and highly motivated individuals

Outcome 2A: 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.

Outcome 2B: All residents participating in adult education will have an 'into work plan'.

Outcome 2C: A year on year reduction in the number of residents with no qualifications, so that by 2020 the figure will consistently be well below the London average.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: To have a strong focus on addressing inequality by reducing economic and social polarisation within our most deprived neighbourhoods

and amongst those residents who are furthest away from work.

Outcome 3A

By 2020, the gap in employment levels between priority neighbourhoods and communities and the borough as a whole will be halved.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: To reduce poverty through employment and progression in work.

Outcome 4A: There will be year on year reductions in the proportion of residents earning less than the London Living Wage (LLW), which by 2020 will have reduce to below the London average.

Outcome 4B: There will be year on year increases in the level of median incomes in Brent, which by 2020 will be well established above the London average.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: To secure increased local influence over national and regional employment programmes so as to deliver better outcomes for Brent residents.

Outcome 5A: By 2020 the performance of the mainstream employment programmes in Brent will be in the upper quartile when compared to the rest of London.

3. Describe how the policy will impact on all of the protected groups:

Two points should be stressed before considering the potential impact. First, the majority of relevant data – for example, the claimant count unemployment figures – are not collected or held by the council and much is published at the national level. Several consequences flow from this. Other agencies, particularly national agencies such as Job Centre Plus, collect equalities related data in a different format to that used by the council or other partners. Data may therefore not be as detailed, for example in terms of the categories used, and may not be directly comparable across different agencies. Collection and publication schedules will also differ, also raising comparability issues. In many cases, it is not possible to obtain robust data concerning the baseline position because it is either not collected at all or not collected in a form readily presentable at borough level.

Second, similar issues affect ability to monitor outcomes arising from the strategy. At the broadest level, it may not be possible to relate, for example, an improvement in the unemployment rate or in the rate of business start-up directly to any interventions arising from this strategy in a way that is directly measurable and separable from any improvement that has occurred independently. In addition, the range of agencies involved in delivering the outcomes, including the council, will all have their own approaches to monitoring. In some cases these may produce figures that can be linked more directly to outcomes arising from specific interventions, for example employment opportunities created and filled by local residents as a result of regeneration schemes. Although the strategy aims to improve coordination, it is unlikely that it will be able to achieve a wholly consistent approach to recording and measuring outcomes and assessing the impact for protected groups. With these caveats in mind, the following paragraphs consider potential impacts in relation to each protected group.

Overall, it is anticipated that the impact will be positive for all protected groups. The Strategy has been developed specifically to help residents and businesses overcome

the barriers and negative impacts arising from prevailing economic conditions as well as the impact of national policy developments such as welfare reform. However, it is recognised that the needs and aspirations of different groups vary and that particular issues arise for members of protected groups in some areas. The Strategy therefore has a particular emphasis on assistance to those furthest from the job market or facing additional barriers to training and employment, based on where they live as well as their individual circumstances. Tailored solutions will need to be developed to ensure that all groups can benefit.

Age

In general, it is anticipated that the impact will be positive in equipping residents across all age groups with the skills and qualifications necessary to compete in the job market, improving employment opportunities and progress within employment, reducing polarisation and tackling poverty. The focus of the strategy is on residents of working age and therefore has a limited impact on older people who are no longer involved in the employment market, while recognising that some residents of pensionable age will wish to continue to work or enter into further training to develop new skills.

Some outcomes have a focus on a particular age group but in general the outcomes and associated actions are intended to benefit residents of all ages.

The evidence indicates some specific issues relevant to age that the Strategy seeks to address:

- There is evidence that fifty plus residents experience higher rates of unemployment and are more likely to remain unemployed long-term. The rate of 50-64 year old JSA claimants in Brent is 1.5 per cent above the UK average (3.3 per cent in Brent vs. 2.6 per cent in London and 1.8 per cent nationally). There is a reduced resilience to re-enter the labour market.
- A quarter of women and a sixth of men nationally aged 50-64 have caring responsibilities for a sick, disabled, frail or elderly person.
- Nationally, 12 per cent of economically inactive people aged 50+ are caring for a sick, disabled or elderly person for 20 or more hours per week, compared to only 3 per cent of workers.
- Although the JSA claimant rate for 18-24 year olds is at its lowest over the past two years, this cohort remain above the London average and present a national priority.
- As a whole, the borough presents an improving and resilient labour market across all age cohorts; however, ward-level analysis shows not all communities are benefitting from this improving borough-wide picture, which subsequently exacerbates worklessness across ages within particular neighbourhoods.
- Funding streams are often limited to recipients of working-age benefits, and although opportunities exist to work with older adults, they are more limited. The Strategy recognises the specific needs of older residents and activity will focus specifically on those impacted by welfare reform or facing long-term unemployment.

Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) are a targeted cohort. This aligns with the 14-19 Strategy and Children & Families' NEET strategy for Brent, delivering targeted interventions and monitoring young school leavers up to 18 years of age under their statutory duty. The Connexions contract, currently delivered by Prospects also works directly with this group.

The outcomes and actions identified in the strategy will address the wide range of specialist support needs demanded by different age groups through personalised and tailored programmes and projects. This is particularly important for older and younger unemployed or economically inactive residents.

Disability

Inactive and disability benefits such as Employment Support Allowance (ESA), Incapacity benefit, Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) are widely claimed across Brent, with higher concentrations in priority neighbourhoods, and contribute to Brent's broader economic inactivity. Long term health conditions account for over 23 per cent of Brent's economic inactivity. Approximately 22 per cent of economically inactive residents would like to have a job in the future.

Supporting residents with a mental health condition or a physical or learning disability into employment requires a tailored, specialist and intensive intervention. The Brent Employment Services Provider Framework is a list of preferred organisations able to deliver employment-related support services to Brent residents on behalf of Brent Council. It also allows the Council to identify appropriate partners to bid with for external funding opportunities. The Framework will identify providers with the capacity and capability to address these specialist support needs. Should that specialism not exist on the Framework the Council has reserved the right to procure services outside of the Framework.

Gender reassignment

There is a lack of data or evidence to support any firm conclusions. However, it may be reasonable to assume that residents in this group face particular barriers that would require additional or specialist support beyond mainstream training and employment provision. This may especially true of residents who are experiencing gender variance or who are in the process gender transition, who are likely to experience difficulties, including direct discrimination, when accessing or sustaining employment. Residents who have completed a transition may face similar prejudice.

It is also assumed that some mainstream support services, through lack of awareness and experience working with this group, may fail to fully understand and address the support needs of someone going through transition or experiencing gender variance.

In this context, the Strategy will seek to ensure that providers and partners monitor effectively (this will apply to all protected groups) and that, where appropriate, tailored services are identified to ensure that this group has equal access to skills and employment support.

Pregnancy and maternity

The Strategy recognises that a key barrier to participation in training and support for this group will be child care responsibilities and action to improve the availability and affordability of child care are identified.

Marriage and civil partnership

No particular impact has been identified for this group, although note the comments in relation to sexuality, which may also be relevant to civil partnerships.

Race

The evidence indicates that some Black, African, Caribbean and other minority ethnic groups in Brent are more likely to be unemployed or workless or lack higher level qualifications and that these groups are also represented strongly in the priority neighbourhoods. This pattern is common across London but particularly significant in the context of Brent's diversity

For example, Harlesden has a 67.0 per cent black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) population with an Asian population of 14.4 per cent and a black population of 40.0 per cent. The largest BAME groups in Harlesden are the Black/African/ Caribbean/Black British.

Stonebridge has a 76.6 per cent BAME population with an Asian population of 17.2 per cent and a black population of 47.1 per cent. The largest BAME groups in Stonebridge are the Black/African/ Caribbean/Black British.

Kilburn has a 50.0 per cent BAME population with an Asian population of 11.4 per cent and a black population of 24.6 per cent. The largest BAME groups in Kilburn are Black/African/ Caribbean/Black British.

The strategy identifies the need for a targeted, place-based approach, to be developed with local communities and representative groups in order to identify and tackle barriers effectively.

Religion or belief

The evidence indicates that Muslim and Christian groups in Brent are more likely to be unemployed or workless, with some of these groups represented strongly in the priority neighbourhoods. For example:

The largest religious groups in Harlesden were:

- Christian (54.6 per cent compared to 41.5 per cent in Brent)
- Muslim (21.8 per cent compared to 18.6 per cent in Brent)
- Hindu (3.7 per cent compared to 17.8 per cent in Brent).

The largest religious groups in Stonebridge were:

- Christian (49.9 per cent compared to 41.5 per cent in Brent)
- Muslim (28.2 per cent compared to 18.6 per cent in Brent)
- Hindu (6.3 per cent compared to 17.8 per cent in Brent).

The largest religious groups in Kilburn were:

- Christian (47.7 per cent compared to 41.5 per cent in Brent)
- Muslim (16.8 per cent compared to 18.6 per cent in Brent)
- Hindu (2.0 per cent compared to 17.8 per cent in Brent).

In these areas, it is likely that faith is linked strongly to ethnicity and the place-based approach noted above is intended to ensure that these groups receive targeted support.

Sex

In Brent, as elsewhere, women are over-represented among the unemployed and economically inactive, among the low-paid and among those lacking qualifications. As noted in relation to pregnancy and maternity, lack of flexible childcare can act as a significant constraint for women and lone parents accessing meaningful and sustained employment. Services developed through this Strategy and the Brent Employment Services Provider Framework will have access to and promote a flexible childcare pool as well as work with lone parents to overcome the challenges that childcare commitments can bring to an employment search.

It should be noted that, to some extent, services provided under the umbrella of the Strategy may have disproportionate impacts for men or women (and similar effects may be seen in relation to other protected groups). However, this is largely due to the disproportionate presence of certain groups in the different areas of activity. For example, services supporting homelessness tend to see a higher level of single men, while services supporting inactive benefit claimants will see a higher proportion of Income Support claimants, who are predominantly female lone parents. Any disproportionate take-up of services will therefore reflect and is intended to correct existing inequalities within the overall economy and employment market. The impact is therefore expected to be positive, but monitoring and review will aim to ensure an even spread of services to address the support needs of all groups.

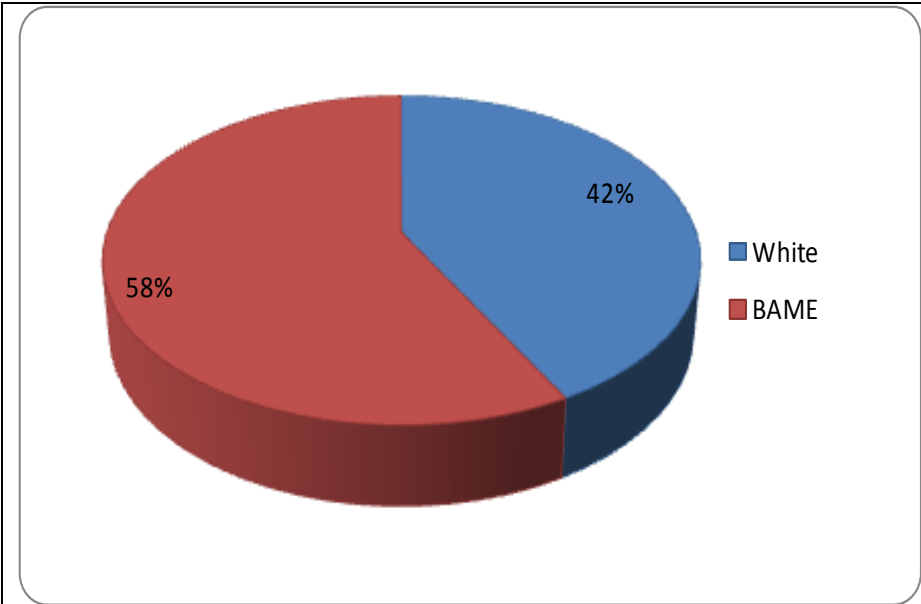
Sexual orientation

There is a lack of data or evidence to support any firm conclusions.

Nevertheless it is reasonable to assume that residents in this group could experience prejudice, which can pose challenges to securing and sustaining meaningful employment.

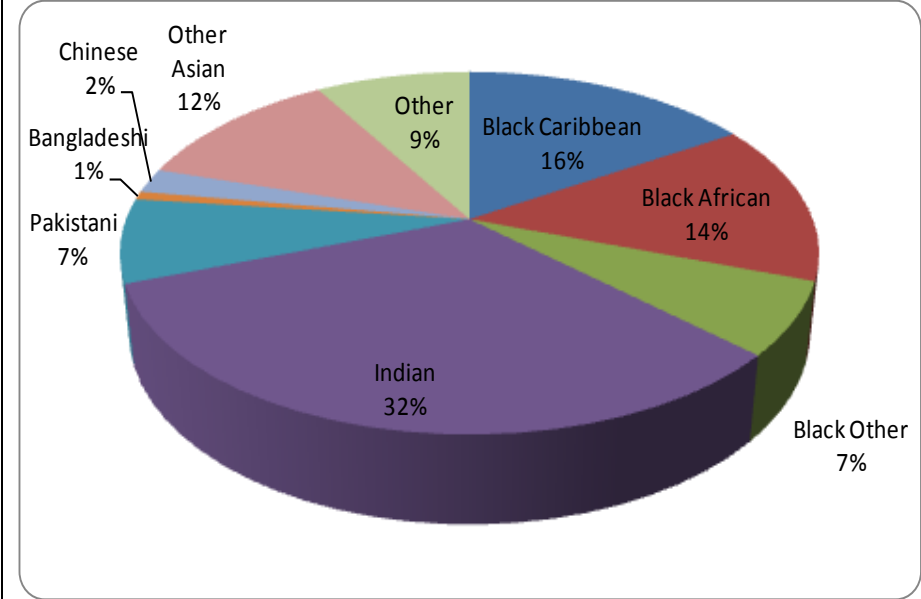
Please give details of the evidence you have used:

Overall Population (2011 Census)



Population growth between the 2001 and 2011 Census exercises is partly due to in-migration (national and international) and partly due to Brent’s high birth rate. In London overall, as in Brent, when outward migration is balanced against in-migration, the birth rate is the most significant factor, reflecting the relatively young population compared to the rest of the UK.

BAME Groups (Proportion of the overall 58% total)



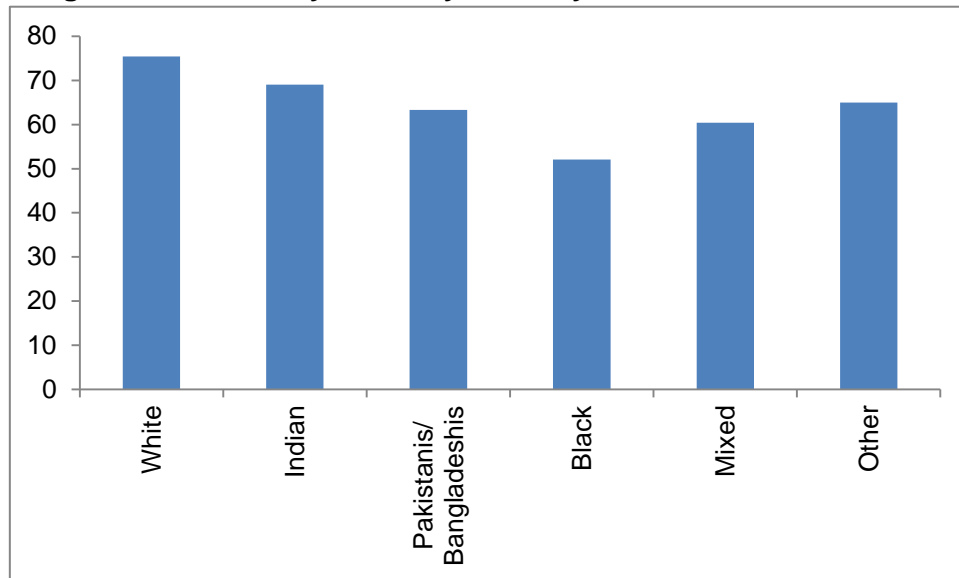
Of the total working age population only those who are in employment or those who are unemployed but actively looking for work are classified as ‘economically active’. In March 2014 123,900 people aged 16–64, 72.9% of Brent’s population, were classified as economically active. Of these 112,100 are in employment, 65.9% of the economically active working age population. The London average for the proportion of working age adults in employment is 70.5%, 4.6% higher than Brent. In Brent 41.8% of working age adults are employed, 9.4% are self-employed and 9.6% are unemployed and looking for work. There are 11,800 unemployed people in Brent. In London the overall unemployment rate is 8.3% and for the UK it is 7.3%. Over the past 15 years, Brent’s unemployment rate has consistently been 1-3% above the

London rate.

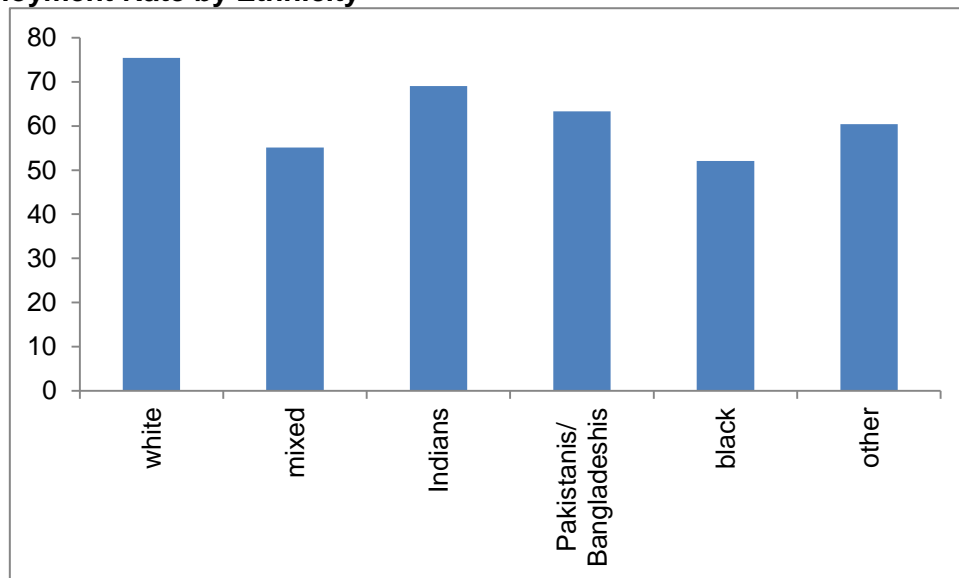
In Brent, 46,100 people (27.1%) are economically inactive and not seeking employment. The main reasons given are students in full time education (17.1%), unable to work due to a long –term health condition (8.2%) or looking after family or home (17.0%). Of the economically inactive, 5,700 people would like to have a job.

The ethnic group with the highest proportion of economically active people is the white ethnic group with 75.4% economically active. The lowest proportion is the black ethnic group with 52.1% of people economically active.

Percentage of economically active by ethnicity

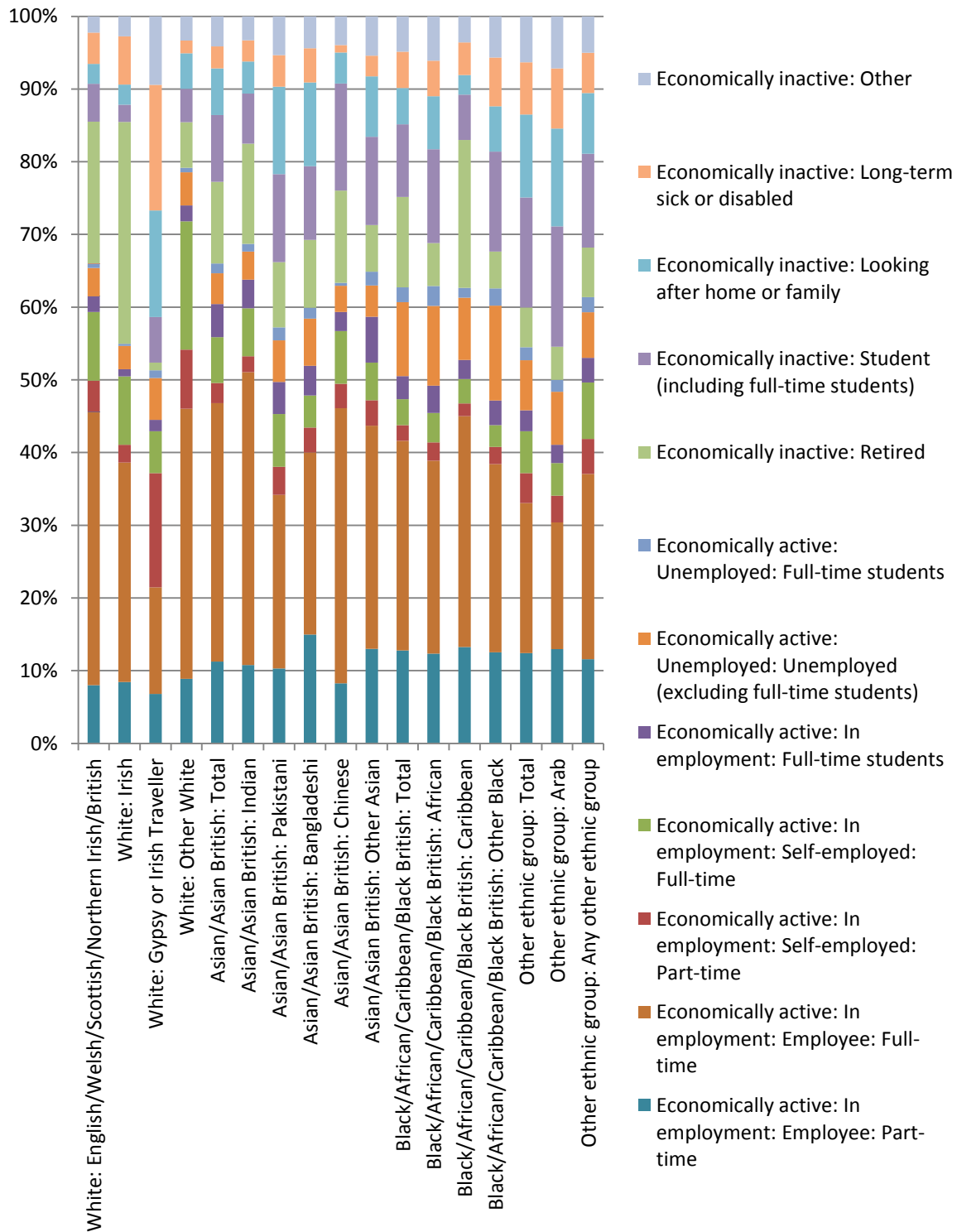


Employment Rate by Ethnicity



A more comprehensive breakdown of both economic activity and inactivity by ethnicity is demonstrated by the chart below, based on data from the 2011

Census:



Qualifications

While there is evidence of general improvement in the qualification levels of Brent residents, it is unclear how far this is due to in-migration (national and international) of people with higher qualifications. There are significant variations at ward and neighbourhood level, as illustrated in the table below.

Area	% of people with no qualifications
Brent Average	19.21
<i>Neighbourhood</i>	
Chalkhill	20.34
Church End	25.28
Harlesden	22.58
St Raphaels	25.66
Stonebridge	26.83
South Kilburn	20.81

Trends in Unemployment 2004-14

Currently there are 11,800³ people who are unemployed and seeking employment, of which 6,098 are claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA). In June 2014, the rate of all working age people claiming JSA was 3.2% - higher than the London average of 2.6% and the UK average of 2.5%.

Earnings

Over the past 15 years gross median earnings for Brent residents have been below London median earnings. In recent years the gap has increased. Median earnings have remained above UK averages and over the past year have increased faster than before. Weekly median gross earnings for all employees at the end of 2013 were £538, £5 less a week than £543 in 2012. Average weekly earnings in neighbouring boroughs are:

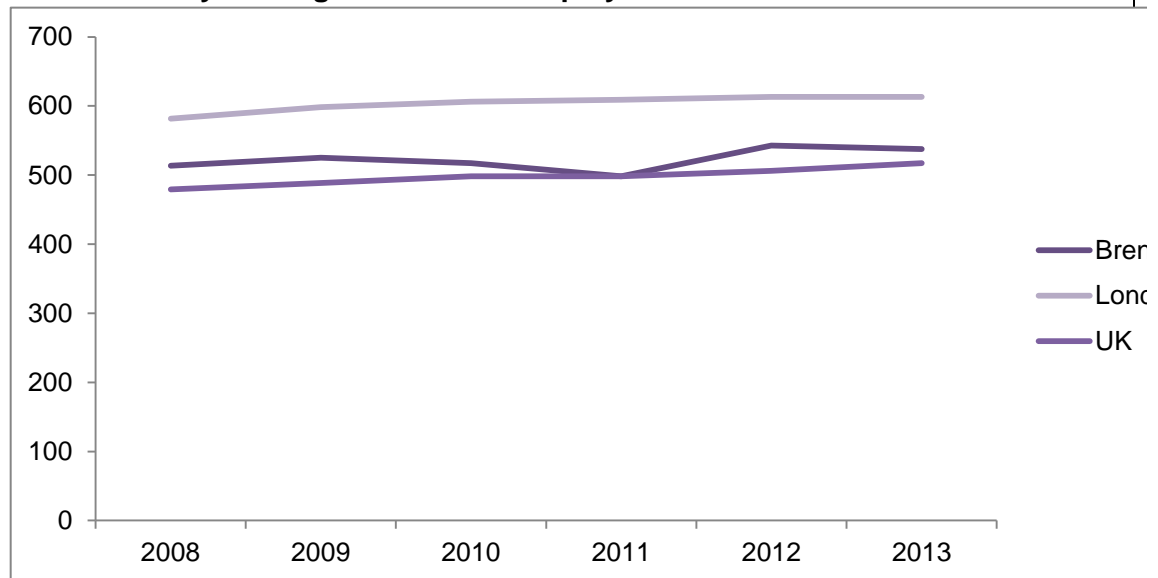
- Ealing - £567
- Harrow - £572
- Hillingdon - £597
- Hounslow - £568

In 2013, male earnings in Brent (£560) were similar to the male national average (£556), and female earnings (£520) were above the female national average (£459). Both male and female earnings were below the London averages, £658 and £575 respectively. The median pay by work place in Brent is £546 per week suggesting that many Brent residents are employed outside the borough, although it is also apparent that they do not achieve significantly rewards.

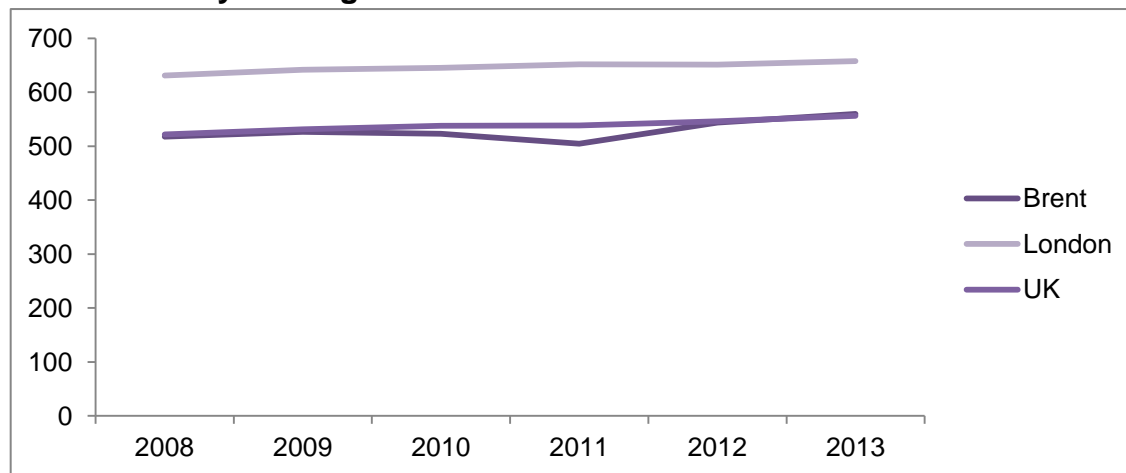
³ Model based estimate March 2014 Source: Nomis

While there are no hard data to support a reliable analysis, there is strong anecdotal evidence (for example, from letting agents) that the borough's large private rented sector is attracting higher earners, many of whom work outside the borough, as rents in inner-London become prohibitive even for households earning well above London average levels. Perhaps the best indicator of this demographic shift, is the decline in Housing Benefit claims in inner London as the sector becomes increasingly unaffordable, mirrored by an increase in claims in outer London. The majority of households claiming HB are working.

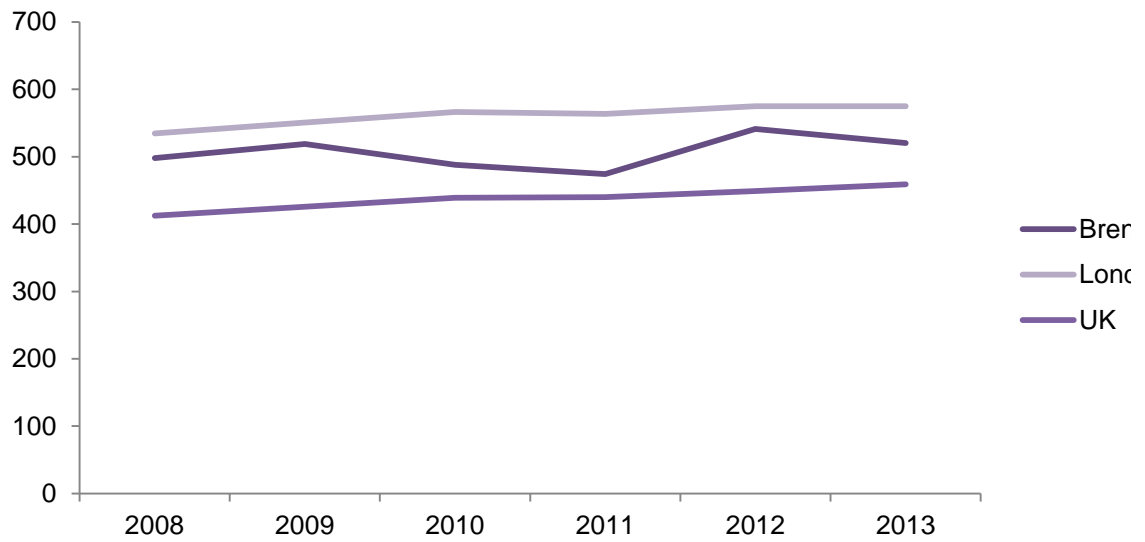
Median weekly earnings all full-time employees



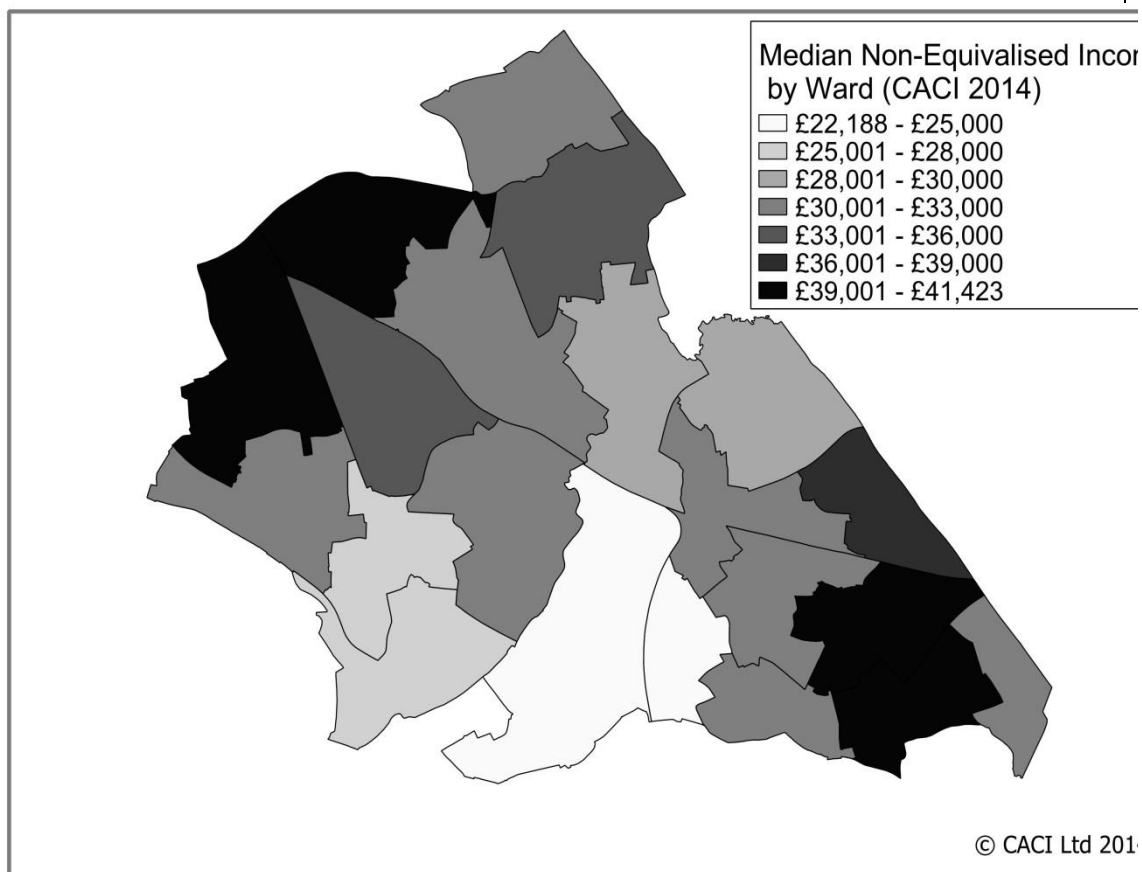
Median weekly earnings males



Median weekly earnings females



Annual median income by ward 2013



Annual income levels by ward illustrate the changing patterns of income distribution in the borough and the risk of further polarisation.

4. Describe how the policy will impact on the Council's duty to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate discrimination (including indirect discrimination), harassment and victimisation;

In general terms, the Strategy aims to ensure that Brent residents are able to compete effectively in the employment market and progress in employment and to support Brent businesses, including support for recruitment and workforce development. Specifically, the Strategy identifies barriers and adverse impacts arising elsewhere that it sets out to address. It is therefore expected that the Strategy will make a positive contribution in this area.

(b) Advance equality of opportunity;

As noted above, a primary aim for the Strategy is to deliver equality of opportunity through partnerships that will provide a framework within which all Brent residents are able to compete effectively in the employment market where this is the appropriate or desired option for them.

(c) Foster good relations

The Strategy aims to foster good relations by reducing the gap in employment and incomes between Brent's poorest neighbourhoods and communities and the rest of the local population.

5. What engagement activity did you carry out as part of your assessment? Please refer to stage 3 of the guidance.

i. Who did you engage with?

Engagement involved organisations and individuals across the public, private and voluntary sectors and spanned the year leading up to 31st October 2014, when formal consultation on the draft document concluded.

ii. What methods did you use?

- A series of one-to-one focused discussions with key stakeholders including DWP, CNWL, RPs, VCS, businesses, and youth representatives
- Presentation at meetings and fora including the 14-19 Strategic Partnership, Brent Employment Providers' Forum, and Voluntary Sector Liaison Forum
- A Members' Briefing seminar
- A series of business engagement workshops
- Borough plan focus groups
- A written consultation document shared with over 400 providers including housing associations, voluntary organisations, schools, businesses, Brent Youth Parliament, and community groups working with, among others, the disabled and BAME communities.

iii. What did you find out?

Overall, responses were very positive, welcoming the development of a comprehensive strategy and supporting the objectives and outcomes identified. In general, responses suggested changes of emphasis or requested more detail in some areas and these comments have been taken into account in finalising the document. Several responses stressed the need to emphasise the positive indications in the borough as well as the challenges, with a stronger focus on the opportunities available or emerging.

There were no indications of any concern with regard to the impact of the proposals on any protected group or with regard to any other aspect of equality.

iv. How have you used the information gathered?

The Strategy has been developed through consultation and engagement and input from partner organisations shaped the consultation document and subsequent drafts. The Strategy is a partnership document and delivery is a collective responsibility and it has therefore been essential to ensure that partners have been fully engaged. It is therefore not really possible to separate out the areas that have been influenced by information gathered during consultation.

v. How has it affected your policy?

As noted above, consultation and engagement has shaped the policy from the outset.

6. Have you identified a negative impact on any protected group, or identified any unmet needs/requirements that affect specific protected groups? If so, explain what actions you have undertaken, including consideration of any alternative proposals, to lessen or mitigate this impact.

Please refer to stage 2, 3 & 4 of the guidance.

No negative impacts have been identified and there are no identified areas of unmet need arising from this Strategy, although the purpose of the Strategy is to address areas of unmet need arising for other reasons.

Please give details of the evidence you have used:

See above

7. Analysis summary

Please tick boxes to summarise the findings of your analysis.

Protected Group	Positive impact	Adverse impact	Neutral
Age	X		
Disability	X		
Gender re-assignment	X		
Marriage and civil partnership			X
Pregnancy and maternity	X		
Race	X		

Religion or belief	X		
Sex	X		
Sexual orientation	X		

8. The Findings of your Analysis

Please complete whichever of the following sections is appropriate (one only). Please refer to stage 4 of the guidance.

No major change

Your analysis demonstrates that:

- *The policy is lawful*
- *The evidence shows no potential for direct or indirect discrimination*
- *You have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.*

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion and the information that you used to make this decision.

The policy is lawful and no adverse impacts or potential for discrimination have been identified. The policy is expected to deliver positive outcomes across protected groups and advance equality and good relations.

Adjust the policy

This may involve making changes to the policy to remove barriers or to better advance equality. It can mean introducing measures to mitigate the potential adverse effect on a particular protected group(s).

Remember that it is lawful under the Equality Act to treat people differently in some circumstances, where there is a need for it. It is both lawful and a requirement of the public sector equality duty to consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary.

If you have identified mitigating measures that would remove a negative impact, please detail those measures below.

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion, the information that you used to make this decision and how you plan to adjust the policy.

Continue the policy

This means adopting your proposals, despite any adverse effect or missed opportunities to advance equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not amount to unlawfully discrimination, either direct or indirect discrimination.

In cases where you believe discrimination is not unlawful because it is objectively justified, it is particularly important that you record what the objective justification is for continuing the policy, and how you reached this decision.

Explain the countervailing factors that outweigh any adverse effects on equality as set out above:

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion and the information that you used to make this decision:

Stop and remove the policy

If there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, and if the policy is not justified by countervailing factors, you should consider stopping the policy altogether. If a policy shows unlawful discrimination it must be removed or changed.

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion and the information that you used to make this decision.

9. Monitoring and review

Please provide details of how you intend to monitor the policy in the future.
Please refer to stage 7 of the guidance.

The policy will be reviewed regularly through the establishment of Brent Employment Summit. The Employment Summit brings together senior officers from key strategic partners including DWP, CNWL, VCS and Brent Council. This group will be responsible for monitoring adherence to the policy and its overall impact.

10. Action plan and outcomes

At Brent, we want to make sure that our equality monitoring and analysis results in positive outcomes for our colleagues and customers.

Use the table below to record any actions we plan to take to address inequality, barriers or opportunities identified in this analysis.

Action	By when	Lead officer	Desired outcome	Date completed	Actual outcome
Monitoring delivery of action plan	Ongoing 1 st report May 2016	Jo Francis	Council is able to measure and assess delivery of key actions		
Review equalities monitoring arrangements across partners	April 2016	Jo Francis	As far as possible, within the limitation noted above, approach to monitoring will be consistent and compatible and will enable robust assessment of the impact of policy and service delivery for all protected groups		
Carry out further EA after first year of operation	May/June 2016	Jo Francis	Identify any issues and areas for change		