



**Cabinet
14 December 2015**

Report from the Chief Executive

**Brent Corporate Plan 2015 – 2016
April – September 2015 – Progress update**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the progress update on the implementation of the Brent Corporate Plan for 2015 – 2016 with details against each objective included in the attached Appendix A. The objectives, milestones and success measures set out in the plan have been developed to provide a clear programme of operational activities to deliver the ambitions and outcomes agreed in the ‘Brent Borough Plan 2015 – 2019’ by the Cabinet and Full Council in March 2015.
- 1.2 The Borough Plan constitutes a community strategy for Brent and sets out how the Council, its partner services, local residents, local business and the voluntary and community sector – will, working together, improve the quality of life for local people. The priorities and the promised outcomes identified are firmly rooted in what local people have told us they believe to be the most important things to be achieved during public consultation in 2014.
- 1.3 In order for the strategic objectives contained within the Borough Plan 2015 – 2019 to be translated into specific actions and tangible outcomes they must be embedded within the council’s planning process and operational management, with progress regularly monitored through our performance management procedures.
- 1.4 The Corporate Plan 2015/16 sets out how the agreed priorities within the Borough Plan have been built into the council’s planning for 2015/16. It details the key milestones that will be used to assess progress and the expected outcomes and success indicators that will be used to measure our effectiveness in creating positive change for people living and working in Brent. This report provides a progress report on the first six months of implementation for the period April – September 2015.
- 1.5 The Corporate Plan is supported by detailed team plans covering all aspects of the council’s work. Each member of staff has targets relating to the delivery of their team plan so that each person can see how their unique contribution supports the overall delivery of the Borough Plan as agreed by members.

2. Recommendations

The Cabinet is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the progress made in delivering the Corporate Plan 2015 – 2016.
- 2.2. Note that quarterly and annual reports are brought to the Cabinet covering performance against key indicators. The indicator set which monitors the quarter performance outcomes is the subject of a separate report to Cabinet on a quarterly basis.

3. Detailed considerations

The Corporate Plan and the Planning Framework

- 3.1 The Brent Borough Plan 2015 – 2019 has three priority themes which underpin our ambition 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. The three priorities are:-
- Better Lives
 - Better Place
 - Better Locally
- 3.2 The Corporate Plan 2015 – 2016 sets out in detail the operational actions that the council will take to deliver these priorities. In addition to the three Borough Plan priorities, the Corporate Plan 2015 – 2016 also includes those actions that the council will take to improve its internal management arrangements: these are collated under the theme ‘Better ways of working’.
- 3.3 Effective planning is crucial in all organisations but especially during times of change. It enables us to set objectives and priorities, turn policy decisions into action, decide how best to allocate resources, and review results so that learning feeds back into the decision-making process.
- 3.4 It is through an effective planning framework, with clear processes for monitoring and evaluating progress that all stakeholders can understand exactly what goals are being worked towards and assess progress towards them. An effective planning framework also reflects the role of the organisation and each of its various services and teams – and of each individual within those services and teams – in achieving those goals, and it sets out how performance will be judged.
- 3.5 The Corporate Plan is actively managed by the CMT, managers and their teams. It is essential that performance against the plan is regularly monitored so that prompt management action can be taken, where necessary, if there is slippage or if an activity needs to be changed in the light of circumstances. This means departments and teams setting aside a specific time for monitoring progress against the plan as a whole. Once every three months should be the minimum requirement, some priorities could require more frequent monitoring. This feeds into the six-monthly monitoring of the Council’s Corporate Plan reported to the Cabinet.
- 3.6 Where the council has set specific performance targets to be achieved it is imperative that departments ensure there are robust and reliable systems in place to collect necessary performance data. The Cabinet will receive each quarter a performance report setting out the council’s performance against the measures and targets set out with the Corporate Plan.

Progress achieved during the period April to September 2015.

- 3.7 This section provides an outline of the key achievements under each of the four priorities within the corporate plan and the areas of risk currently rated as ‘Red’.

Better Lives

This means:

- Supporting local enterprise, generating jobs for local people and helping people into work and promoting fair pay.
- Making sure that our children and young people have access to the best education and training, achieve to their potential and have the best start in life.
- Enabling people to live healthier lives and reducing health inequalities.
- Supporting vulnerable people and families when they need it.

3.8 Key achievements against this priority have been:-

- Completion of the investment plans for Wembley and Alperton growth areas Plans for Churchend and Burnt Oak are in draft stage. Negotiations with Old Oak Development Corporation have made positive progress with key objectives agreed.
- All New Homes Bonus and high street funded projects are now in implementation.
- The new Employment, Skills and Enterprise Partnership is now active, with joint working on improved referral pathways between the Council, CNWL and JCP in place.
- At the end of September 86% of primary, secondary and special schools were judged by Ofsted to be either good or outstanding. Our target is to reach 100% by 2017. Two schools are in special measures currently.
- 84% of private voluntary and independent early years settings were judged as good or outstanding by Ofsted.
- The Rapid Improvement Process implemented in schools has demonstrated good outcomes with the six schools who have used the process since 2014 being subsequently judged good.
- Progress has been made in rolling out public health programmes in relation to children's health, focused on reducing tooth decay and the Health Schools programme which achieved 'Silver' level.
- The transfer of responsibility to the council for health visiting and family nurse partnerships is now complete.
- Architects have been appointed to develop designs for the Healthy Living Centre in Kilburn with two public engagement events held.
- Implementation of the new model of service for day care services has commenced following the agreement of Cabinet at July 2015.
- 66% of all children's foster placements are now made with a Brent employed foster carers.
- The tackling social isolation project has been launched with partners.
- Successful partnership work has taken place on mapping dementia and developing a joint approach to becoming a dementia friendly borough

3.9 Areas of potential risk for this priority are summarised below:-

- There have been delays on one project for the primary school expansion. However as the demand for school places has changed slightly the profile of provision is still projected to meet demand with 2,000 additional places created by the end of April 2016 which is above the original target of 1785.
- There have been delays in creating additional in-borough, alternative provision in main stream schools for pupils with special education needs.
- Targets for smoking cessation have been low and it is thought this may be related to people 'vaping' as an alternative to stopping smoking. This pattern has been seen across London.

- 66% of children's social workers are on permanent contract. Actions are in place to undertake a focused recruitment campaign to seek permanent staff and increase the direct employment of permanent staff.

3.10 The DWP time scales for implementation of Universal credit have slipped. The council is working with partners on our response to further changes to welfare payments announced in the summer budget. These will particularly impact on families in receipt of benefits with the cap set at £23,000. However there is the potential for people in low waged employment to also be affected by a reduction in their level of tax credits.

3.11 **Better Place**

This means:

- Making sure that Brent is an attractive place to live with a pleasant, sustainable environment, clean streets and well-cared for parks and green spaces.
- Continuing to reduce crime, especially violent crime, making people feel safe.
- Increasing the supply of affordable, good quality housing.
- Providing good quality, accessible arts and leisure facilities.

3.12 Key achievements against this priority have been:-

- The cycling strategy has been the subject of wide public consultation since June 2015.
- The backlog of food premises inspections has been reduced from 1,726 to 100 and will have been cleared by December 2015.
- The procurement of the contractor to deliver the new park in Kilburn has been completed and work on site has started and is expected to be completed by April 2016.
- The crime level in the borough is below the London average at 76.8 crimes per 1000 people. The London average is 84.3 crimes per 1000 people. While ASB levels are now at the London average, although our target is to achieve lower quartile performance.
- 91% of women who have used domestic violence support services reported feeling safer as a result.
- 10 sites have been confirmed for new council housing developments, delivering 48 to 50 units. Of these 48 units 4 sites have received planning permission (21 units). Planning permission has been applied for further 21 units across 4 sites -decision pending. For the remaining GLA funded properties (52 properties) planning is due to be submitted by end of November 2015. An additional bid to the GLA to fund development of 150 properties is in development and was submitted at the end of October 2015.
- The remaining 6 units are at the stage of being in the planning application process. Consultation delays have occurred but this has not impacted the overall progress of the project.
- The initial stages of the introduction of the private rented housing licencing scheme has gone well with regards to the implementation of the scheme, establishing and developing a team and delivery of the services. However the number of applications received has been lower than forecast although it should be pointed out that the figure was speculative as this is the 1st year the scheme has been running. As of the end of September 5500 applications have been received and it is likely that less than 9000 will be received by March 2016, this figure is more likely to be around 7000. Nevertheless more than 1500 suspected properties that have failed to be licenced have been identified and proactive action is being taken against these to address this. The enforcement policy is still being worked on and being developed as the licencing scheme continues to be established. 6 cases

have already been forwarded to legal for prosecution with 3 successful, high profile prosecution's already completed

- The Willesden's Green Cultural Centre has successfully opened.

3.12 Areas of potential risk for this priority are summarised below

- There has been a reported increase in the incidence of fly-tipping within the borough. Partly this is attributable to improvements in the system for reporting through the introduction of the app. Residents have expressed considerable concern regarding the level of illegally dumped rubbish and a Member scrutiny task group has been working with the service and residents to develop solutions. There has however been an increase in enforcement actions in response to the increase in illegal dumping.
- The Wates Contract for planned housing maintenance has not achieved the agreed targets. An improvement plan has been agreed and put in place to bring performance back on track.
- The average number of households that are being accepted as homeless (57) is currently exceeding the average number of duties being ended in the private rented sector (35). This is primarily due to market conditions. Continued demand for private rented accommodation of rising costs has created challenges in sourcing affordable rented properties to minimise use of B&B accommodation. Although there has been a reduction in the overall number of homeless households in non self contained B&B (130 as at 27/09) the council are still accommodating families in non-self contained B&B for greater than 6 weeks. A review of the private rented sector procurement model is taking place to increase the number of units procured in Brent/London and the Home Counties, and more units are being secured in the West Midlands
- The next phase of the regeneration plans for South Kilburn have experienced delays caused by underground issues and the removal of the post office and ongoing negotiations with the private landowner partner. Necessary planning consents are now due to be achieved in mid 2016 for Phase 3. As a result the revised Masterplan will not be adopted until 2016.

3.13 **Better Locally**

This means:

- Building community resilience and promoting citizenship.
- Making sure that everyone in the borough is able to participate in local democracy, has a fair say in the way that services are delivered and is listened to and taken seriously.
- Working with partners to find new ways or providing services that are more finely tailored to individual, community and local needs.

3.14 Key achievements against this priority have been:-

- Quarterly figures for the number of new voluntary groups being provided with advice and support via CVS Brent were above target at 34.
- Use of the Voluntary Sector Resource Centre has expanded with both the volunteering service and Healthwatch now located at the centre. Training and develop sessions for local voluntary groups are being delivered on a regular basis and are well attended.
- The volunteering service with Groundwork was launched on 1st June 2015. During the first 4 months an additional 250 people have been recruited as new volunteers. The focus during the start-up phases is on securing volunteer placements as well as new volunteers. Development sessions for groups seeking volunteers are taking place and are well attended. The project is on track to deliver the first year targets.

A communications campaign has been agreed with partners and the website launched supported by an outreach programme across the borough in libraries, JCP offices, community events and Brent Connects Forums.

- The Community Safety Communication Strategy has been completed and work is progressing on the delivery.
- The annual canvass has begun; the canvass marks the second phase of the Individual Electoral Registration campaign. Canvass staffing posts have been recruited to and filled. The council received the Silver award for public campaigns for its work to encourage residents to register to vote following changes to the registration system.
- New partnership Advice Agency service and Financial Inclusion Strategy agreed by Cabinet in November 2015.
- Brent Youth Parliament is on track to ensure 11 meetings are held by March 2016. In this quarter there have been 3 full BYP meetings. BYP is on track to hold 22 Executive meetings by March 2016. In this Quarter we have held 6 executive meetings.
- Brent Youth Parliament has held two training sessions in the past quarter focused on 'Understanding Government' and 'Developing Debating Skills'.

3.15 **Better ways of working**

This means:

- Accessible and responsive customer services.
- Levels of public satisfaction with council-commissioned services amongst the highest in London.
- Performance indicators for all council-commissioned services amongst the best in London.
- Savings targets met.
- A public service workforce that reflects the community.

3.16 Key achievements against this priority have been:-

- The My Account (portal) for Council Tax and Benefits functionality has been fully released to Brent residents in November 2015 via the main Council website landing page, with amendments made to existing Council Tax and Benefits pages to promote availability of new online functionality. Since full release the take up has been encouraging and steady.
- Staff restructures in Strategic Commissioning, HR and BIBs now completed.
- 66 Apprentices have been recruited.
- New Intranet went live.
- Income from external use of the Civic Centre now on track to achieve target.
- Strategic Property Plan was agreed by Cabinet

4. **Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However the Corporate Plan 2015 -2016 does provide the operational framework for the delivery of the council's Medium Term Financial and achieving greater efficiency in the use of our resources. Over the coming period the council will face a considerable reduction in its available resources and it is critical that actions set out within the corporate plan which contribute towards achieving budget efficiencies are delivered to timescale. It is also the case that the actions set out within the corporate plan will continue to be reviewed in the light of priorities and available funding, to ensure that the council is making the most appropriate use of its resources.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 Under section 4 of the Local Government Act 2000, every local authority in England must prepare a sustainable communities strategy for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom. A local authority may modify its sustainable communities strategy from time to time. When preparing or modifying its strategy, a local authority should consult with and seek the participation of “each partner authority” it considers appropriate, and any other person the local authority considers appropriate.
- 5.2 The Corporate Plan 2015 – 2016 sets out the detailed operational actions that the council will take in order to implement its community strategy the ‘Brent Borough Plan 2015 – 2019’.

6. Equalities Implications

- 6.1 Reducing inequality of opportunity and improving the quality of life experienced by all local people is the central objective of the Brent Borough Plan 2015 – 2019 and as such the council’s strategic equality objectives have been built into the actions set out in the Corporate Plan 2015 -2019. Each individual aspect of the plan or changes to services deriving from the plan will be supported by specific equality assessments.

Carolyn Downs
Chief Executive