



Partnership and Place Committee
24th February 2011

**Report from the Director of Strategy,
Partnership and Improvement**

For Information

Wards Affected:
ALL

Report Title: 'Partners for Brent' Highlights 2010/11

Forward Plan Ref:

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report sets out the highlights from partnership projects in 2010/11.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The committee is asked to note the report.

3.0 Summary

3.1 Brent Council has a strong history of effective partnership working to ensure the best outcomes for residents in the borough. This year saw enhanced governance arrangements for our partnership groups, the launch of the Community Plan – 'Brent – Our Future' setting out the priorities for the years ahead and improved outcomes for residents as a result of the joint work undertaken during the year.

4.0 Introduction

4.1 'Partners for Brent' is a set of partnership groups delivering projects to achieve outcomes set out in our Community Plan: 'Brent- Our Future 2010 -2014.' Some of the groups focused on engaging a wide set of public, private and voluntary sector representatives with new strategies and key issues affecting the borough. Others are responsible for using this feedback to inform the delivery of partnership projects they have been tasked with.

4.2 This year has seen changes in political leadership both locally and nationally, the announcement of unprecedented cuts to the public sector and vast waves of central government policy announcements. The sheer pace and scale of change in public and voluntary sector organisations as a result of CSR is challenging, particularly with the shifts in the structure and responsibilities of some public services. Partners are

aware that this context cannot fail to impact on our relationships and some of our partnership projects.

- 4.3 This paper highlights some of the partnership achievements in 2010/11, many of which have been funded by grants which were removed by central government during 2010/11 or are due to cease from 2011/12. This changing financial context will impact partnership projects in future. Partners will need to make better use of existing resources and have a more detailed understanding of the impact of changes each organisation makes, on the other organisations in the borough and ultimately the overall provision of services to residents.

5.0 Changes to partnership working

- 5.1 Brent has changed its approach to partnership separating the engagement with strategic issues from the delivery of projects to improve outcomes for residents as a result of this insight. The new structure for the partnership has allowed us to consolidate our partnership working and prioritise what works based on what we have learnt in the past.
- 5.2 This year saw work on a 'total place' project (an approach which seeks to identify and avoid overlap and duplication between organisations – delivering a step change in both service improvement and efficiency at the local level, as well as across Whitehall). Partners for Brent made an initial assessment of spend related to joint priorities by some of the key partners in the borough. The next steps, drawing on this initial work are now being considered in light of the public sector cuts and the shift in central government focus to community based budgets (an approach which seeks to reconsider the way in which the total public sector spend is allocated to deliver joint priorities locally).
- 5.3 We have enhanced engagement between sectors, the local community and local politicians through events like the 'One Community, Many Voices' event which drew together partners, elected politicians and members of the public to inform Overview and Scrutiny of partnership projects. Our Employer Partnership breakfast meetings with the business sector and the approach to engaging a range of interested parties at the Sustainability Forum also illustrate this improvement.

6.0 Achievements this year

- 6.1 We have produced high quality analysis of the state of the borough drawing on a range of statistics to enhance the evidence base for our partnership strategies. The local economic assessment, children and young people's assessment and latest update to the main borough profile are examples of the work carried out this year. Based on our evidence base and feedback from each of our organisations and residents and we have developed and agreed the strategic direction for the borough. The Leader set out our joint priorities when launching 'Brent – Our Future,' our Community Plan. This year also saw the launch of two other strategies – the Cultural Strategy and the Climate Change Strategy, with the Regeneration Strategy due to be launched soon.
- 6.2 Regenerating the borough
Work is now underway on the construction of the Civic Centre and the council has worked closely with the contractor to identify and support local businesses through the employer partnership to access supply chain opportunities. In South Kilburn planning permission had been secured for 500 homes in South Kilburn with a further 200 currently submitted to planning and we are delivering a programme of public art initiatives. We have also continued to deliver the Language2Work programme and

completed delivery of the Personal Best programme, preparing some of our unemployed residents for 2012 volunteering opportunities. Brent is on track to achieve or beat the target for the number of affordable and net additional homes in borough; having also reduced the number of households living in temporary accommodation

6.3 Reducing crime

We informed and reassured residents through partnership days; raising the confidence level in Brent to well above the London average (38% to 68%). Satisfaction with the way the police and council deal with antisocial behaviour in the borough was at 94% this quarter. We have reduced the number of accidental and deliberate fires in residential properties in the borough. We are on track to see improvement in the number of first time entrants into the youth justice system and have ensured improved numbers of drug users in effective treatment. We also developed a Somali Women's Collective to tackle youth, ASB and DV issues in Chalk Hill.

6.4 Health inequalities and social care

Health and social care partners developed and implemented integrated models of care for children and adults. We have carefully considered and responded to changes required in the Health White Paper as preparations begin for a shift to a GP commissioning model and public health based in the local authority. We launched the anti-obesity, physical activity and tobacco control strategies this year; improved the completion levels of treatment for TB in the borough and were successful in increasing the numbers of children participating in sport.

6.5 Supporting children and families

Brent was one of top performing boroughs in the country for reducing the number of young people not in education, employment and training. Nineteen-year-olds are increasingly better qualified and we have done particularly well in supporting learning and achievement. We are rated as offering 'good' looked after children, fostering and adoption services. The achievement of children and young people from low income families and those with special educational needs has improved. Also the numbers of young women under the age of 18 who become pregnant have reduced faster than in similar authorities and nationally. Overall we have been developing integrated models of care and have agreed new governance arrangements for future partnership working aligning the work of the Children's Partnership with Brent Local Children's Safeguarding Board.

6.6 Sustainability

The Sustainability Forum members created a community 'Sustainable Brent' website as a place for information sharing for residents, community groups and businesses. This year we put in place the structures to enable us to reach level 3 in the implementation of our plans to adapt to climate change by March 2011.

6.7 Culture

Following the launch of the Cultural Strategy, the forum developed a new map of key cultural venues in the borough and was successful in obtaining funding to develop a website to support us all in selling what Brent has to offer.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 This report highlights just some of the achievements this year. At the Partners for Brent conference, partners articulated some of the impacts of recent national changes and the extent of the challenges ahead. So far in planning for 2011/12 partners have agreed to thematic partnership projects to deliver the community plan, establishing more formal partnership principles, developing an intelligence hub, assessing ways to align customer service, making intelligent use of staff and looking at options for sharing assets and procuring together.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 None arising from this report

9.0 Legal Implications

- 9.1 None arising from this report

10.0 Diversity Implications

- 10.1 The agreed joint priorities for partners are set out in 'Brent Our Future', our community plan, which has been developed with a commitment to reducing poverty, redressing inequality and preventing exclusion being at the heart of all our actions.

Background Papers

Brent – Our Future 2010 - 2014
Partnership working in Brent

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