

## Appendix Two - Brent Poverty Commission – Delivery Plan

### Workstream Two – Economy and Jobs

Ref	Recommendation (in bold = priority)	Financial Implications	Update and Key Milestones	Lead Directorate/s
11	We recommend the council makes poverty reduction an explicit part of the council’s current and future economic development strategies, with a clear set of poverty reduction targets.	Detailed financial implications would be assessed as part of strategy development.	<p><b>Ongoing</b> - Poverty reduction features in the Inclusive Growth Strategy and the draft Local Plan contains policies that seek to address ‘poverty’s’ constituent parts e.g. access to housing, employment.</p> <p>The draft Local Plan is currently being examined by the planning inspectorate; the aim is to adopt the plan as a statutory document in 2021.</p> <p><b>Ongoing</b> - There are direct links with the community wealth building and social value elements of the council’s Procurement Strategy 2020 - 2023</p>	<b>Regeneration and Environment</b>

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			which was presented to Cabinet on 12 October 2020. Work in this area is ongoing and reducing poverty will form a key part of implementation of current and future economic development strategies.	
12	We are pleased that the council is introducing participatory budgeting and recommend that, with proper representation from those experiencing poverty, this should be treated as a key element of engagement and ownership of decisions at the neighbourhood level.	Within existing resources.	<p><b>November – December 2020</b> – Promotion and piloting of participatory budgeting.</p> <p><b>January – March 2021</b> - Participatory budgeting is formally rolled out.</p>	<b>Assistant Chief Executive</b>
13	<b>With the likely further decline in retail post-Covid, we recommend the council work with the GLA and central government to regenerate its high streets, support job creation and create affordable workspace,</b>	Initially within the existing budget. Financial implications of any actions would be assessed as plans are developed.	<b>Ongoing</b> – The Affordable Workspace Strategy & Action Plan (AWS) were agreed at Cabinet on 7 September 2020 and are now at implementation stage. The AWS aligns with Inclusive Growth policies	<b>Regeneration and Environment</b>

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	<p><b>and places for community hubs, while enhancing the local environment.</b></p>		<p>to develop and support businesses, curate a strategic vision for workspaces and diversify town centres and focuses on 8 key actions for future activity. The council is participating in the High Streets recovery taskforce.</p> <p>Action 3 of the strategy – encourages meanwhile uses to strengthen town centres and high streets. Meanwhile uses can occupy harder to let and vacant units, with lower rents for small businesses, reduced costs for landlords, and day and night time activities to boost local footfall and spend. Examples include Cottrell House and Hackspace in the borough.</p>	

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			<p><b>September 2020</b> - The council has also acquired the Picture Palace in Harlesden and the procurement was issued on the 21 September 2020 to find a suitable operator. This was a long standing vacancy in the town centre and can be utilised as an asset to support delivery of social and economic benefits locally. Also in Harlesden, NCIL and Historic England Funding as part of the Harlesden Heritage Impact Zone has been secured to bring a long vacant Bank back into use for the Refugee Support Network.</p>	
14	<p>We recommend the council uses its influence to maximise the help provided by careers services for those moving from school to work, and where</p>	<p>Within the existing budget, with external funding secured where possible.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b> - The council provides targeted support for NEET young people 14-19 (school age) and those 'at risk of NEET', delivered by</p>	<p><b>Regeneration and Environment / CYP</b></p>

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	<p>appropriate, the council encourages take up of the government’s “Kickstart Scheme”.</p>		<p>Prospects. Schools also can commission Prospects to deliver a Connexions careers advice and guidance offer to their young people in school.</p> <p>The council uses the National Careers Service (NCS) to support those moving from school to work – this is a universal service but light touch. Brent Works provides 121 support to young people to access jobs and apprenticeships across a number of sectors.</p> <p><b>November – December 2020</b> – new Brent Works website due to be launched which clearly sets out the support available for those moving from school to work alongside its</p>	

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			<p>other services. This will include the new Government Kickstart scheme.</p> <p>A year-long campaign “Keep Brent Working” has been launched to support residents facing job losses throughout the pandemic. It includes raising awareness from residents and businesses of the support available through Brent’s council-run and free-to-use job brokerage service Brent Works.</p> <p>The council has adapted its packages of professional support to businesses and offers regular one to one sessions with workers and job seekers in need of support.</p> <p>Brent Works is also working with employers to recruit 16-24 year olds</p>	

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			<p>on Universal Credit on six-month job placements.</p> <p>The campaign also highlights the training and support on offer through adult education from Brent Start.</p>	
15	<p><b>We recommend that the council extends the use of its procurement powers to secure more good quality apprenticeships and social value from council contracts (using the Social Value Act and, where applicable, section 106 agreements), including by making contracts conditional on payment of the London Living Wage (e.g. through the West London Alliance partnership with neighbouring boroughs).</b></p>	<p>Within existing resources.</p>	<p><b>October 2020</b> – the council’s procurement strategy (2020-2023) was presented to Cabinet. This includes detailed actions and KPIs. The focus is on securing more good quality apprenticeships and social value.</p> <p><b>Ongoing</b> - For all contract tenders applicants are asked if they pay the LLW and this is taken into account when reviewing tenders. The council is keen to encourage local and small employers e.g. the homecare</p>	<p><b>Customer and Digital Services</b></p>

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			<p>contract now consists of 5 contracts locally commissioned and delivered.</p> <p><b>Ongoing</b> - Going forward the council will continue to work with the West London Alliance in procuring services.</p>	
16	<p>We strongly support the Brent Black Community Action Plan and we recommend strengthening of the links with CVS and the Young Brent Foundation and others in the voluntary and community sector.</p>	<p>Within existing resources.</p>	<p><b>September 2020</b> - The workstreams and actions for the Black Community Action Plan were agreed at Cabinet on 7 September to be delivered over the next 6 months. A project co-ordinator has been recruited. Working with the VCS is a fundamental element of this activity.</p> <p><b>November 2020</b> - A Black Community Action Plan Summit is due to take place in November 2020.</p>	<p><b>Assistant Chief Executive</b></p>

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17	<p><b>We recommend that the council extends its offer, to support those with disabilities into employment and gives more publicity to the work it is doing.</b></p>	<p>Within the existing Regeneration and Environment budget.</p>	<p><b>From July 2020</b> - The council has achieved level 2 Disability Confident accreditation. As part of this process, an action plan has been developed with a particular focus on supporting those with disabilities into employment. The Employment, Skills and Enterprise team is working with HR to ensure implementation of actions.</p> <p><b>Ongoing</b> - The Work and Health programme focuses on those who are long term unemployed, which can include residents with learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities, creating a support framework to enable them to gain employment. The West London Alliance has commissioned the Sure Trust to undertake this work working</p>	<p><b>Regeneration and Environment</b></p>

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			<p>alongside Health bodies and the council.</p> <p><b>November 2020 – March 2021 –</b> Working with communications over the next six months the Employment, Skills and Enterprise Team will raise the profile of this work including how to access this offer.</p>	
18	<p>We recommend that the delays caused by Covid-19 to Brent's imaginative programme as the London Borough of Culture be used to give extra focus to the opportunities for engaging young people, particularly those from BAME communities, in activities that raise aspirations and improve employment prospects.</p>	<p>Within existing resources.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b> - A pioneering online programme has been taking place since lockdown restrictions were introduced in March with events for the community and young people across the borough, including video series, podcasts and a cultural leadership programme.</p> <p>Projects focused on engaging young people include:</p>	<p><b>Community and Wellbeing</b></p>

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			<p><b>The Blueprint Collective.</b> A cultural leadership scheme developed by and with the young people of Brent. The Collective is giving the opportunity for young people to help deliver Brent 2020 and contribute to their community. The work has included Seen and Heard – a campaign created with the London School of Economics, asking for better public spaces for young people in London.</p> <p><b>The VICE Partnership.</b> Across 55 weekly episodes and 3 documentary series, these podcasts are created by and with young people as part of the largest and most ambitious platform for engagement with young people ever undertaken by a London Borough. The podcasts have given a</p>	

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			<p>platform for young people to debate the issues that really concern them relating to health, creativity, discrimination, racism, empowerment of women.</p> <p><b>Brent Locked In.</b> A video series made during lockdown, hosted by members of the Blueprint Collective, exploring how Brent heroes and legends had been shaped by the borough and how they are coping in lockdown.</p>	
19	We recommend that the council sets out clearly how it intends to work with the community and voluntary sector in tackling digital exclusion, and how it intends to ensure residents can operate online, including using digital hotspots	Within existing Digital Strategy budget.	<b>Ongoing</b> - Brent's digital strategy 2019-23 sets out the council's ambition to make Brent a digital place through building a borough-wide digital infrastructure providing instantaneous connectivity and developing a training and education	<b>Customer and Digital Services</b>

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	<p>created on estates and local safe spaces.</p>		<p>framework that nurtures digital skills and expertise, with clear pathways into high-value contemporary employment. This work is being supported by new initiatives, which respond to the increase need for digital inclusivity in the context of the Pandemic.</p> <p>Work is currently underway to roll out full fibre connectivity across the council's housing stock and key community spaces. Work in this area continues with the VCS, for example – Community Fibre is currently working up digital skills pilots based around the Hubs at South Kilburn and Willesden and the council has secured a full fibre broadband connection for the SUFRA foodbank. The council has also connected other</p>	

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			<p>community spaces, such as some tenant meeting rooms on estates.</p> <p><b>May-July 2020</b> - The council has supported the VCS in the provision of laptops during Covid-19. The council's localities work and local data approach will include close working with the VCS.</p> <p><b>September - December 2020</b> - The Digital Transformation team, working with Citizens Online, will be hosting an online event with VCS organisations and Registered Providers to map out current provision across the borough. This will help inform a jointly owned action plan which will strengthen and improve the overall offer. The council will also be piloting digital</p>	

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			champions, first using Brent staff, to receive access to structured training content to enable them to better support residents to do more online.	
20	We recommend that Brent goes further in its efforts to encourage fair remuneration for employees by: insisting on contractors requiring their sub-contractors to pay the London Living Wage; for private sector residential and care homes to pay the LLW where the council is paying residents' fees; by considering the designation of specific locations as "Living Wage Places"; and by persuading accredited employers to address the need for flexibility in employment with contracts that guarantee minimum hours.	The budget to fund this commitment has been embedded in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.	<p><b>April 2020</b> - The council's social value and ethical policy agreed in April 2020 sets out standards of integrity and professionalism expected from the council's suppliers in their dealings and practices.</p> <p><b>January – March 2021</b> - Progress will be reported annually to Cabinet in March with an interim report to the Lead Member in January.</p> <p><b>November – January 2021</b> - For "Living Wage Places" – work in this area will need to be progressed using existing business engagement mechanisms. Scoping and terms of</p>	<b>Customer and Digital Services/Assistant Chief Executive /Regeneration and Environment</b>

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			reference work is planned to be undertaken between now and January 2021. The aim is to set an ambition to be a Living Wage Place, the council can consider how it encourages and/or incentivises (such as the existing Business Rates incentive scheme) organisations paying the living wage.	
21	We recommend that Brent Council signs up to the Good Work Standard and uses its convening power to bring together anchor employers to address low paid, low hours employment contracts in Brent and to guarantee improved terms (e.g. a minimum of sixteen hours a week and the right to notice periods of at least four weeks for shifts).	Within existing resources.	<p><b>November 2020</b> – paper completed by officers setting out approach and key milestones.</p> <p><b>December 2020</b> – Implementation timetable agreed.</p>	<b>Regeneration and Environment</b>

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22	We recommend that the council expands its employment support packages to help tackle low wages and insecure work conditions.	Yes - This will have financial implications and further financial analysis would need to be undertaken. Opportunities to avail of grant funding can also be explored.	<p><b>Ongoing</b> – The Brent Works service is seeking additional investment, including funding via the Youth Futures Foundation to deliver additional support to young people who are disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 economic impacts. Investment in Brent Works is also from Section 106 planning obligations, however, the impacts of the Government’s proposed planning policy reform may impact on this.</p> <p><b>Ongoing</b> - The West London Alliance are lobbying for additional investment in the Skills Escalator to improve progression in-work for local residents. This is set-out in the WLA Build and Recover Plan 2020.</p>	<b>Regeneration and Environment</b>

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			<p><b>Ongoing</b> - The council will also continue business development activity to support the sustainability and upscaling of the Moving on Up programme for black young men (funded by Trust for London, City Bridge Trust and NCIL), and the Forward Trust's work with ex-offenders (funded by DWP grant).</p>	
23	<p>We recommend that the council explores the opportunities for action to support affordable childcare provision, considering loans or grants to both providers and parents that would enable moves into employment in the aftermath of Covid-19.</p>	<p>Within existing resources.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b> - The council is committed to supporting recovery of the early years sector and work is underway in a number of areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with Finance to widen the eligibility criteria so that more early years providers could apply for the LA discretionary grant. As a</li> </ul>	<p><b>CYP</b></p>

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			<p>result 60 childcare providers successfully applied for this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring payments to providers of their termly free early education funding has been made in a timely manner, moving payments forward to help with provider cash flow issues. This has already enabled a number of providers to remain sustainable.</li> <li>• Developing and implementing a real time tracking system for monitoring sustainability and sufficiency of childcare provision in the borough to have an overview at ward level and enable early</li> </ul>	

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			<p>identification of emerging issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing tailored and bespoke support to early years providers based on individual responses to a provider survey carried out in June/July 2020.</li> <li>• Working with the DfE, LGA, GLA and London Councils through membership of working groups and networks, increasing their understanding of the impact of Covid-19 on Brent early years providers and seeking to ensure that appropriate support is provided for the sector to remain sustainable.</li> </ul>	

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24	<p>We recommend that the council develops a bespoke digital offer and support for those with disabilities so that they can easily access services remotely and gain confidence in areas such as cashless payments, recognising that this could lower spending, enable access to benefits, and applications for support.</p>	<p>Within existing Digital Strategy budget.</p>	<p>A Digital Inclusion package, which includes support for developing digital skills, is in place as part of the Residents' Support Fund.</p> <p><b>October – December 2020</b> - The council has commissioned a report by Citizens Online to provide analysis of the digital inclusion challenges within Brent, in particular the digital skills gap. The review already identified the 'top 3' wards with the highest risk of digital exclusion as being Harlesden, Stonebridge and Dollis Hill. It has also highlighted particular groups of residents who are more likely to be digitally excluded and require tailored support. This report once finalised will be used to scope work on a bespoke digital offer for those</p>	<p><b>Customer and Digital Services</b></p>

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			with disabilities. This will feature in the action plan to be developed with VCS organisations.	
25	We recommend that the council uses its influence to encourage businesses to follow the lead of the council and become Disability Confident Employers.	Within existing resources.	This forms part of the action plan for gaining disability confident level 2.  <b>See Rec 17.</b>	<b>Regeneration and Environment</b>