

## **APPENDIX 1 – UPDATES FROM LEADER AND CABINET**

### **1. Leaders Introduction – Councillor Muhammed Butt**

- 1.1 A fuller update will be provided at the meeting in the form of my annual State of the Borough report. In addition, the unfolding crisis in Afghanistan and Brent's role in response will also be addressed as part of our motions for debate.
- 1.2 Until then, as we will surely see in the weeks ahead, the pandemic continues to dominate. That said, at the time of writing, London was England's best performing region for 'cases by area for the last 7 days', with a per100k or population rate of 238.7. For reference, Yorkshire and the Humber was worst performing, with a per100k rate of 365.5. Nationwide, England's 7day per100k rate stood at 317.0, with Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales standing at 798.4, 533.7, and 480.6 respectively. Here in Brent, our 7day per100k rate was 257.8, down from its 20/21 New Year peak of 1,234.69. Nevertheless, residents are still being hospitalised by avoidable infection, and friends and loved ones are still dying from the virus itself or complications arising from having been struck down by it.
- 1.3 Regrettably, despite having been ravaged by the pandemic, and despite the widespread availability of proven and demonstrably safe and effective vaccines, ours is the 6<sup>th</sup> from bottom worst performing local authority nationally for first dose recipients, with 60.6% of those eligible having received a jab, and 5<sup>th</sup> worst for second doses, at 52.8%. However, credit where it's due – this is a large, diverse, and complicated borough – health partners have still managed to give 218,221 residents one shot, and 189,870 a second. Clearly there is more to do, but I know and appreciate that all efforts are being made to encourage and enable the hesitant to do the right thing and protect themselves, their loved ones, and their communities.
- 1.4 In addition to the human tragedy COVID19 has also inflicted an economic crisis on this borough. Tens of thousands of working age residents in Brent are at present out of work or under-employed due to necessary pandemic related restrictions and are either dependent on a soon-to-end furlough scheme or – as addressed in the motion for backbench debate – a soon-to-shrink Universal Credit. Compounding this looming crisis is a local housing market largely dominated by expensive private rental properties in which rent arrears will have undoubtedly accrued and to which eviction protections no longer apply. For reference and by way of example of this government's hierarchy of priorities, a company in COVID-related rent arrears on its commercial premises lease remains protected from eviction until at least March 2022. The furloughed employees of that same company, and many more like it, in reduced personal income related PRS rent arrears, were stripped of those same eviction protections earlier this summer.
- 1.5 Whilst we are yet to experience the totality of this pent-up problem, a harsh winter will undoubtedly reveal the true extent of these multiple pressures. As we and every other council across the country has done from the outset, everything that can be done for those in need will be done as quickly and

comprehensively as possible. However, for local government, the present capacity of “as possible” is in short and declining supply. Therefore, if we are to avoid falling short of our best intentions, we cannot be left to meet these new and substantial burdens without adequate resources from central government. And, for the avoidance of doubt, ‘adequacy’ in this instance, is at the very least tens of millions of pounds of new and unrestricted emergency funding. Whether we are such support remains to be seen.

## **2. Deputy Leader – Councillor Margaret McLennan**

### **2.1 Finance**

2.1.1 The process of budget-setting for 2022/23 commenced in July with the publication and approval of three key financial reports, that I have repeated from last month as a vital part of the constitutional process in achieving a legally required balanced budget:

- Financial Outturn 2020/21 - This report sets out the outturn for income and expenditure versus the revenue budget for 2020/21.
- Q1 2021/22 Financial Forecast - This report sets out the current forecast of income and expenditure versus the revenue budget for 2021/22.
- Medium Term Financial Outlook (MTFS) - This report sets out the overall financial position facing the Council over the medium term and the proposed budget setting strategy for 2022/23.

2.1.2 The MTFS is the principle report that sets out the:

- Risks and uncertainties that already existed prior to COVID-19 and the new risks that must now be addressed. It also sets out the proposed budget setting strategy for 2022/23, which is the Council's minimum legal duty in respect of local authority budget setting, and beyond in order to maximise the period of consultation with residents, businesses and other key stakeholders.
- Outlines how the MTFS aims to provide a framework to invest broader ambitions and long term priorities such as the Borough Plan, the recovery from COVID-19 and other future steps to ensure the Council continues to operate in a financially sustainable and resilient way.
- Sets out the medium term risks and uncertainties to the current budget assumptions contained within the MTFS.

2.1.3 On the 26th August, the Deputy Director of Finance and I attended the first of four designated Budget Scrutiny Task Group meetings to discuss the budget process and implication for 2022/2023 to ensure there is robust oversight on behalf of the residents we serve. This includes close monitoring of the recently approved £17m COVID-19 Recovery Fund to ensure the objectives of the funding, projects and programme are met.

### **2.2 Fair Funding Review/Spending Review**

2.2.1 It is now certain that there will not be a Spending Review this year and that the hoped for 3-year plus settlement will not be provided this year. It now means we will again be delayed in the budget setting process and hope that we will have notification in October, but it could be November or even December, as we had last year. We will therefore go into the budget-setting process on our very best assumptions as we did for 2021/22.

### **2.3 ICT/Digital Transformation**

- 2.3.1 The Oracle Cloud Finance, Procurement and HR Transformation programme is to be further enhanced with new functionality that will allow real-time data production and also invoicing; where automatic compensation will be paid directly to all Providers/suppliers, should their invoice payment be delayed beyond the 30 day legal requirement. It will also further reduce any reliance on paper reports. This is part of the Capital Programme for Digital Transformation agreed at Budget-Setting Full Council in February 2021.

## **2.4 Customer Services: Customer Access (Housing Customer Services, Customer Service, Contact Centre and Benefits)**

- 2.4.1 The demand per week is steady and the operational hours 10:00 to 14:00 hours function well with the current level of demand, but is regularly reviewed should numbers increase. The self-service has now opened and staff are helping residents to complete application forms for Housing, Universal Credit, Housing Benefits, RSF etc. The service offers a virtual appointment system that is working well with staff using that to facilitate some of the most vulnerable housebound residents who cannot use the self-service.
- 2.4.2 Staff are also supporting the Contact Centre on the switch board and Covid calls. The Track and Trace outbound calls have increased with staff working 9 to 5 all seven days a week supporting this.
- 2.4.3 The self-scanning project is on-going. All back end processes have been integrated and we are now in the process of user testing.

## **2.5 Registration and Nationality**

- 2.5.1 Religious Buildings: Good progress is being made with the return of the registers from the religious venues, following the introduction of The Marriage Schedule System on 4th May 2021, where Marriage registers have now ceased and A4 Marriage Schedules are signed as notification that a marriage has taken place. From the 93 buildings we have received 58, with 45 outstanding. Second reminders have been sent allowing them to be returned any day of the week.

## **2.6 Community Hubs**

- 2.6.1 The Hubs have now fully reopened, including the new Hub based at Kingsbury Library and at The Living Room, Harlesden. The Brent Law Centre will be working from the Hubs from this month until it finds a new permanent base in the Borough. Work is well underway on developing the hub offer for the Civic Centre from October.
- 2.6.2 The current face to face opening arrangements are as follows:
- Monday - Wembley Hub, Ealing Road Library - 10am-2pm
  - Tuesday - Willesden Hub, Willesden Green Library - 10am-2pm
  - Wednesday – Harlesden Hub, Harlesden Library - 10am-2pm
  - Wednesday – (Outreach) Trussel Trust food bank, Kingsbury - 1pm-3pm

- Thursday – Kilburn Hub, William Dunbar House, 10am-12pm
- Kingsbury Library, Kingsbury - 10am-2pm
- Thursday – (Outreach) St Laurence's Larder food bank - 10.30am-12.30pm

## **2.7 Legal Services**

- 2.7.1 The Council's legal service consists of two teams made up of 6 sub-teams. These are the Commercial Team (Property & Planning, Contracts & Governance) and the Litigation and Dispute Resolution Team (Adults Social Care, Housing & Children's Social Care, Criminal Litigation & Licensing and Commercial Litigation). A small Practice Management Team supports the service.
- 2.7.2 Over the past 4 years the service has expanded to enable it to insource work previously placed with private sector solicitors firms or which is of a type that in the past would have been so placed. In all instances; a business case has been prepared to assess the viability of in-house provision and the potential financial and other benefits to the council. Support from private solicitors firms is very expensive and it is much more cost effective to undertake work in-house wherever possible, using external solicitors only for genuinely very specialist advice or in cases where, for example, the LGA are instructing solicitors on behalf of a number of local authorities including Brent.

## **2.8 Human Resources**

Human Resources will be encouraging all Departments to engage with Brent Works to support placement of 30 Kickstart residents within the organisation.

### 3. Public Health, Culture and Leisure – Councillor Neil Nerva

The report to the September meeting of Council highlights work undertaken by

- Library, Arts and Heritage services
- Physical Activity and Sports services

#### 3.1 Introduction: Restore, Reinvent, Retain and Remove

3.1.1 Brent's Library, Arts and Heritage (LAH) Covid recovery plans are based on Restore, Reinvent, Retain and Remove and aligned with Universal Offers<sup>1</sup> "which aims to demonstrate the power of libraries to enrich the lives of individuals and their communities" (Libraries Connected).

3.1.2 Each offer reflects the challenges libraries face as we ease out of lockdown. In partnership with local and national organisations they can also be used to respond to societal issues:

- Children's Promise
- Culture and Creativity
- Health and Wellbeing
- Information and Digital
- Reading
- Vision and Print Impaired People's Promise

3.1.3 Examples of recovery and what this has meant for LAH is:

- Restore – opening buildings to the public in a phased, safe and secure way that ensures staff, volunteers and the public return with reassurance and confidence
- Reinvent – imagine the way we provide LAH services, a hybrid model of physical and digital events
- Retain - digital services but empowering the workforce with technological solutions – WhatsApp worked very well for many LAH staff by managing to support a community of people sharing knowledge and experiences
- Remove – the barriers to access, ensure staff, volunteers and the public have the right digital resources, that personal finance does not hinder engagement, for example, removing fines.

3.1.4 We want everyone to know about the brilliant things the world of arts and culture is already doing to bring creativity to homes across the borough. Examples are detailed below of "recovery" oriented work

#### **Arts Council England (ACE) - Harlesden**

The service made an Expression of Interest (EOI) for a project in Harlesden project. It was successful and we have now been invited to submit a full application to ACE. The proposal is to:

- redesign the main library
- create a dedicated learning and hub space

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/>

- enable more residents to access services
- more flexibility for library events to take place with higher attendances
- refurbish a defunct classroom creating the Front Room, an inclusive, accessible community space, adaptable to cater to the various functions required
- provide a source of income through commercial hires

The project involves working across council, especially with colleagues in facilities. The next deadline is towards the end of September.

### **Being Brent - Brent Heritage for Health and Wellbeing**

The Heritage Wellbeing Fund community projects are kicking off soon with “Coal, Dole and Dinner Ladies” immersive theatre in September 2021. In the autumn, an Artist in Residence will join the project to create digital artworks with local significance over a 5-month residency.

A digital walking tour, Harlesden Trailblazers, which will celebrate local people and places.

There are exhibitions to explore on the second floor of The Library at Willesden Green:

- [Roots and Changes: Gujarati Influences](#) (closed 22 August)
- From the Ground Up (opening 6 September)
- Icons of Colour: Portraits of Brent's Change Makers (opening in December)

Being Brent is supported by a Steering Committee made up of local community members, Brent Council staff and a Brent councillor and is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

### **Being Green**

The new short film [Being Green](#)<sup>2</sup> looks at how local people in Brent connect with the wonderful natural heritage around them. You will see and hear from community members of Barn Hill Conservation Group, Queens Park Harriers running club and Friends of Welsh Harp.

### **Book Fund**

The book fund of £450k is utilised to provide online resources, adult fiction and non-fiction, children's fiction and non-fiction, periodicals, spoken word, newspapers, reference materials, memberships and subscriptions.

### **Brent Health Matters**

Brent LAH and the community leader for Brent Health Matters met to discuss the role of Community Coordinators - who represent 5 Brent Connect Areas across the borough.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/culture-leisure-and-parks/brent-museum-and-archives/being-brent/being-green/>

Community Coordinators will attend the September Performance and Officers meeting 1) for coordinators and officers to meet; and 2) to go off into breakout sessions and discuss Brent Health Matters local or thematic issues.

In addition to the health awareness raising benefits, this will help LAH develop community engagement – thinking beyond the confines of a building, etc.

### **Brent Hubs**

Operating from four of the six libraries, Brent Hubs started at Harlesden in 2018/19. Pre-pandemic we were seeing around 300 people a month there, predominantly seeking support for accessing benefits, with debt support and employment the next two most common areas.

Post pandemic, food insecurity is a huge problem and they are seeing a broader demographic across the hubs than previously as more people are newly impacted and needing to navigate the welfare system.

### **Brent Start**

Volunteers contribute greatly to running ESOL classes. The classes are often a gateway for many to the learning provided by Brent Start.

During the lockdown, to keep our relationship working, Brent LAH kept in touch with participants via emails, phone call and Zoom meetings; then for the autumn programme 2020, with the help of Brent Start coordinators, we established the ESOL classes online and successfully continued it for Spring & Summer 2022.

As with much LAH development work, it's working with partners that bring about the most successful experience for communities.

Nine volunteers - who ran two classes each week – did so and around 373 students attended them.

### **Community Libraries**

Throughout the lockdown, Brent LAH have been liaising directly and more often with all Community Libraries providing regular updates in meeting and via email.

Each library had their own issues and concerns – Kensal and Barham were simpler as it was a matter of reopening. Preston Rd and its redevelopment and Cricklewood and its opening of a new library posed and continue to pose unique challenges.

They were all provided with infection control training from Public Health colleagues as well as site visits from LAH managers to support them with risk assessments.

### **E-Library**

With free access to over 20,000 ebook titles through the London libraries consortium, resources can be easily accessed 24/7 for free with a library card and PIN.



They are available on a variety of phones and e-readers and include children's e-books and e-audio; youth e-books and e-audio; African Stories; eComics - Marvel & more; and over 2,500 e-newspapers and magazines in over 100 languages (available only in libraries or local hotspots).

With an extensive catalogue of educational classes, there is also access to learning courses online which include resources to practice driving theory test online and citizenship.

Brent libraries offers e-reference material that supports homework help for children with *Encyclopaedia Britannica* as well as providing access to a range of academic resources (available only in libraries). Subscriptions include access to the online Oxford English Dictionary and others such as Spanish, French, Portuguese, German and Arabic.

There is a wealth of reference material from other dictionaries - National Biography, Art, Music, Bibliographies, Biblical Studies, Islamic Studies, Shakespeare to finding biographical data on more than 33,000 influential people from around the world in the online version of *Who's Who*.

There are short introductions on subjects such as, philosophy, horror, Henry James, creativity and much more.

Also on offer is online mental health and support service for children and young people. It includes a range of free, safe and anonymous online support for their mental health:

- Online forums
- Counselling (all counsellors are BCAP accredited)
- Discussion boards
- Journals
- Magazine
- Mini activities

## Events

During the various lockdowns, LAH delivered online events and activities. After 1 ½ years, library rhyme times will return to the physical space in September.

The list of ad hoc and regular events happening this Autumn 2021 is as follows:

- **Summer Reading Challenge celebration!** Every year the Summer Reading Challenge encourages and supports children to enjoy a summer of brilliant books. It helps bridge the gap of the long summer holiday and children transition from one year to the next.

This year's theme is Wild World Heroes – teaming up with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) for a nature-themed challenge has inspired. All the statistics have yet to be returned when the challenge finishes in September. But early indicators are positive:

<b><u>Library</u></b>	<b><u>Starters</u></b>	<b><u>Finishers</u></b>
Willesden Green	191	51
Wembley Library	249	87
Harlesden Library	93	21
Ealing Rd Library	173	65
Kilburn Library	102	25
Kingsbury Library	177	40
Total	<b><u>985</u></b>	<b><u>289</u></b>

- **Upcoming events include**

- The Queen's Park Book Festival returns on Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 September 2021. The festival showcases literary talent from across the UK. Brent LAH will also be there. Further info is available at <https://queensparkbookfestival.co.uk/>
- Libraries Week October 4 – 10 October - This year's theme focuses on the central role that libraries play in their community as a driver for inclusion, sustainability, social mobility, and community cohesion.
- The 12 Plants of Christmas - Wreaths, Raisins & Roasties - by Michael Holland
- Knitting Club
- Reading Friends Coffee morning
- Black History Month
- Uncovering the History of Black British Mariners
- Empowering Black History: The Perfect Storm That Ended Slavery
- Family Learning Festival 16 – 31 October - Inspire a love of learning in family life.
- The Big Draw – Insect symmetry butterfly
- Live family theatre by Upswing
- London Jazz Festival 2021 - A musical journey from the Delta to the Ganges
- Stoneface: The Rise and Fall of Buster Keaton
- Family Learning English for Speakers of other languages
- Family Learning IT
- Booktrust storytime and rhymes

Upcoming Heritage badged events include:

- People Powered – From the Ground Up opens to the public from Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September with the Private View Launch on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> (Cllr Nerva should have received his invite).
- **Coal, Dole and Dinner Ladies**<sup>3</sup>- Local theatre performances this autumn from Brent Museum and Archives telling the story of Brent's support for the Kent miners strike.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/culture-leisure-and-parks/brent-museum-and-archives/being-brent/coal-dole-and-dinner-ladies/>

## **Fines**

To enable participation and remove barriers that might inhibit it, for many years under 18s have not incurred library fines for late returns. Post pandemic, those over 18 will now not be charged a fine. We only retain hire charges on DVDs and printing charges.

## **Marketing**

### **Social Media Reaches:**

- Newsletter distributed to 19,605
- Facebook: 4,560 followers
- Twitter: 3,368 followers
- Instagram: 1,329 followers
- Eventbrite: 548 followers
- YouTube: 171 subscribers

### **Opening Times and Opening Up Services**

- All six libraries open
- Museum open
- Gallery spaces open
- Halls for Hire returning – opportunities for Cllr and MP surgeries
- Libraries are open 7 days a week from 10:30 to 18.00 (Willesden and Wembley close at 20.00). All libraries are open Saturday, 10.30 to 17.00 and Sunday, 12.00 to 17.00
- Reintroduction of private study spaces with a forthcoming online booking facility

### **Outreach**

- Home Library service – new volunteers recruited following a social media campaign and making connections with teams at Brent Council e.g. Do It Brent (part of C-19 response team)
- Volunteering continues to be a substantial contribution to service deliver. In 2020-21, 15 volunteers contributing 319 hours helped Outreach and learning and reader development activities – incredible considering the lockdown and pandemic
- The team will attending the Queen's Park Book Festival on Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 September 2021

## **Reading Friends**

Reading Friends programme that we launched the beginning of 2021. It segued nicely from an internal pilot called the Winter Reading Challenge which dovetailed the campaign for schools food programme to engage school with reading and literacy during the winter lockdown and festive holidays.

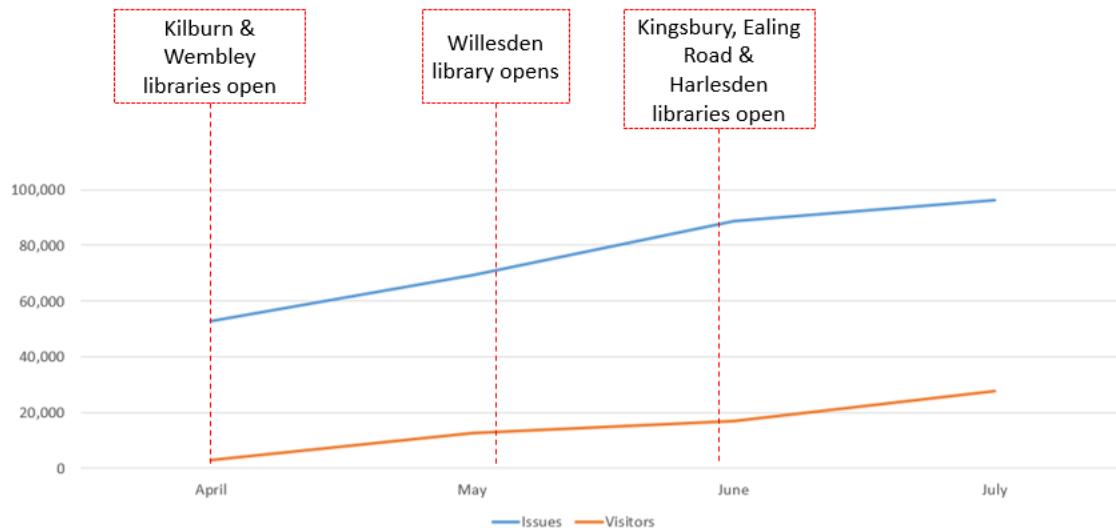
Reading Friends is UK-wide programme from The Reading Agency. Brent LAH successfully bid £10,000 funding from the National Lottery Community Fund and government with the aim to tackle loneliness by bringing people together to read, chat and share stories. Activity has involved:

- Befriending calls – 109
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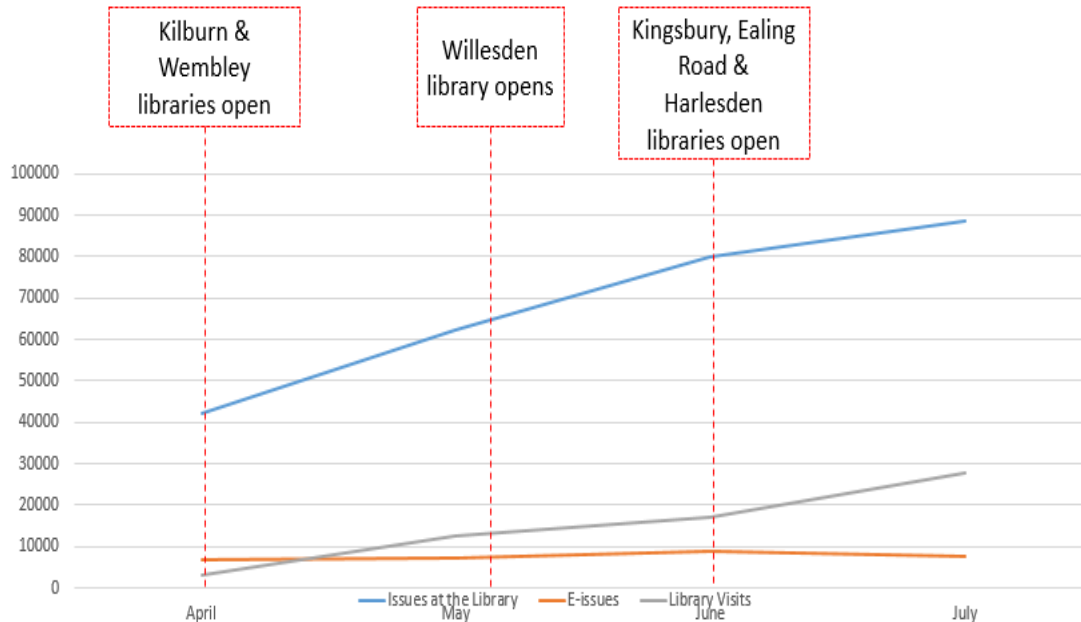
- Children & Young People events – 34 / 1769 attendees
- Adult events – 2 / 90 attendees

## Stats / Key Performance Indicators

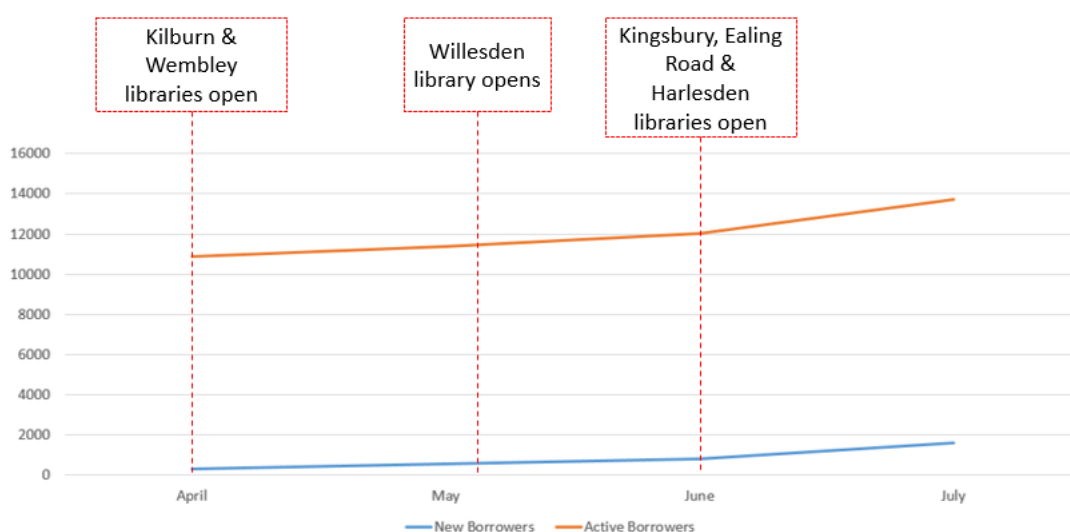
**Highlights:** Issues and Visits rise steadily as we ease out of lockdowns and restrictions.



Slight drop in e-issues as libraries open and visits increase showing demand physical access.



New enrolments and active borrowing show encouraging signs that people want to participate.



### Exhibition Space and Museum Visits

April	May	June	July
	263	1,077	1,009

### Search Room Visits

April	May	June	July
	17	13	

### Issues at the libraries

April	May	June	July
46,295	62,367	80,004	88,562

### E-resources Issues

April	May	June	July
6,725	7,142	8,851	7,730

### Library Visits

April	May	June	July
3,185	12,690	17,130	33,005

## **STEM<sup>4</sup>**

Operated out of Ealing and Harlesden previously, successful partnership with STEM Learning, brilliant volunteer support, additional holiday programming through partners including the Linnean society. STEM club didn't run during the lockdowns. We are reinstating the clubs at Ealing Rd Library for the upcoming Autumn programme.

### **Wembley Children's Library**

Wembley Library children's area refurbished at cost of £58,000 funded by S106 funding. This location now offers a more attractive, sensory, colourful, and manageable space which is flexible to accommodate events and activities.

## **3.2 Physical Activity and Sport update**

### **3.2.1 Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre**

- Phased reopening from 12 April.
- Memberships doing well. Classes fully booked (reduced capacity).
- Steam/Sauna open.
- Sports Hall bookings returned.
- Room Bookings and Functions not yet operational.
- Restarting conversations about Redevelopment with Property/Legal/Sport England

### **3.2.2 Vale Farm Sports Centre**

- Phased reopening from 12 April.
- All areas of activity reopened and doing well. Numbers and income as pre Covid.
- New activities to encourage residents in to centre.



- Kids Swim Programme ran over summer holiday – well attended
- Fit for Sport ran holiday programmes – well attended.
- Starting discussion about Tri-borough contract (Brent, Ealing & Harrow) extension as current contract expires 2023

### **3.2.3 Willesden Sports Centre**

- Phased reopening from 12 April.
- All areas of activity reopened and doing well. Numbers and income as pre Covid.

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.stem.org.uk/system/files/elibrary-resources/2018/09/STEM%20Clubs%20%20Library%20Impact%20report\\_WEB.pdf](https://www.stem.org.uk/system/files/elibrary-resources/2018/09/STEM%20Clubs%20%20Library%20Impact%20report_WEB.pdf)



- Kids Swim Programme ran over summer holiday – well attended
- Fit for Sport ran holiday programmes – well attended.
- Classes and activities capacity being increased to meet demand

### 3.2.4 Community Physical Activity Sessions

Our Parks – ran on line during Covid lockdowns. Very well attended, with 100 at 1 class. Current programme includes 4 sessions in person and 4 online. Programme extended to end December 2021. A leaflet is attached

CLASS	TIME	DAY	PARK
Full Body Workout	10:00	Tuesday	Tokington Rec (online)
HIIT	10:30	Wednesday	King Edward VII Park (online)
HIIT	10:00	Thursday	Gibbons Rec (online)
ABT	09:30	Thursday	Alpertons Sports Ground, Alpertons Lane, Wembley, HA0 1JH (OUTDOORS)
Full Body Workout	10:00	Sunday	Roundwood Park, Harlesden Road, Brent, NW10 3RT (OUTDOORS)
Circuit	10:00	Saturday	Roe Green, Kingsbury High Road Kingsbury NW9 (OUTDOORS)
HIIT	10:00	Sunday	Gladstone Park, Dollis Hill Lane London NW2 (OUTDOORS)
Full Body Workout	10:00	Sunday	Queens Park Gardens (online)

### 3.2.5 Outdoor Gym programme

Weekly sessions across the borough. Open access when park is open.

	9.30 - 11am	12 - 1.30pm	2.30 - 4pm
<b>Mondays</b>	Gladstone Park, Willesden	Alpertons Sports Ground	Tokington Recreation Ground, Stonebridge
<b>Tuesdays</b>	King Edward VII Park, Wembley	Neasden Recreation Ground	Eton Grove, Kingsbury
<b>Wednesdays</b>	Chalkhill Park, Wembley	Northwick Park, Sudbury	Roundwood Park, Harlesden
<b>Thursdays</b>	Gibbons Recreation Ground, Church Road	Barham Park, Sudbury	Grove Park, Kingsbury
<b>Fridays</b>	Preston Park, near Wembley	One Tree Hill, Alpertons	
<b>Saturdays</b>	Tiverton Playing Field	GEC Sports Ground, Wembley	
<b>Sundays</b>	Roe Green Park, Kingsbury	Woodcock Park, Kenton	

### 3.2.6 Healthy Walks programme: 7 walks throughout the week at different park locations

### 3.2.7 Parkrun: Restarted on 26 June

### 3.2.8 Holiday Activities and Food Programme

- 45 different organisations delivered activities across the summer, in 15 wards.

- Brent HAF agreed to fund just under 3000 places (2954).
- Number of children who attended is TBC as monitoring data is now being returned, full attendance data should be available later in the month. However, anecdotally attendance was good, and we are hoping that the majority of funded places were taken up.
- Provided Nutritional resources for all deliverers that included video workshop, recipe, and workshop notes.

### **3.2.9 PHE Prevention and Promotion Fund for Better Mental Health 2021-22**

Recruitment for Get Active Officer post to deliver as bid:

- To work with Public Health and the Sports Centres across the borough to provide programmes for residents affected by mental health conditions (stress, anxiety, depression, loneliness)
- These programmes to focus on encouraging and supporting non-active residents with mental health issues to be more active and to engage with other residents
- There will be specific targeting of areas of high deprivation and low income (through community champions) with funding used to ensure programme locations are easily accessible, local with a range of activities which are free/nominal charge



## 4. Environment – Councillor Krupa Sheth

### 4.1 Key areas of operational activity include:

- Leybourne Open Space Improvements: Work is underway on the resurfacing of Leybourne Open space following a successful NCIL bid. Residents have come up with a number of suggestions for improvement for the middle of the space and the service is in discussion as to the possibilities of each.
- NCIL Bids: A number of NCIL bids were successful in the last round; including a new sensory playground at Silver Jubilee. Officers are working to ensure an efficient delivery process.
- Gladstone Car Park: The service is undertaking a review of the car park and will be liaising with colleagues in Parking to consider options for a sustainable process for preventing anti-social behaviour in the long term.
- Responding rapidly to changes in retail and hospitality sectors' opening hours as Covid restrictions were lifted: All Parking services were upgraded immediately, and have been operating at 100% capability since the lifting of Covid restrictions.
- Neighbourhood Management including Environmental Enforcement: Activity undertaken includes:
  - Finishing the first round of 21 community Skips events, which has been received well by members of the public
  - Cleaner front garden project (pilot as part of the great British Spring Clean), found to be a 60-70 success rate with the next step to increase pilot area.
  - Started idling engagement, with over 90 interactions so far.
  - Days of Action, continuing with days in Wembley, Neasden and Queensbury targeting ASB and other issues connected to the street scene.
  - "Wanted" Campaign having affect with residents identifying by offenders, who are normally neighbours. 4 x offenders identified (July) using this method, which may not have been identified without the "wanted" campaign.
  - 1ST June – 1st August 2021 = 356 Fixed Penalty Notices issued for waste offences
  - Euros, 100+ Fixed Penalty Notices issued for breach of Public Space Protection Orders > mainly for urination & illegal selling of tickets.
- Injection Patching Contract: A new Injection Patching Contract is now out to tender, the previous very successful two-year contract having come to an end having completed around 35,000 pothole repairs

### 4.2 Other notable events include:

- Cricket nets installed at One Tree Hill: The installation has been a success with local residents. Litter has been a problem, but we are working with Veolia to provide additional cleaning.
- Green Infrastructure Vision Action Plan: The service is leading on the working group developing the action plan for the green infrastructure vision. We expect all actions in the first year plan to be achieved on time

and within budget. Discussions are still underway regarding the publication of the action plan.

- Dog bag stations: The installation of 10 dog bag stations at a number of parks have proved to be very successful. We have requests for a further 10 at additional locations.
- Parking and Lighting:
  - Street tree planting: 120 new street trees planted in deprived wards on schedule, funded by external grants and CIL
  - New traffic and bus lane enforcement CCTV cameras: High traffic road junctions and bus routes affected by unreliable services are being targeted
  - Euros: Effective parking enforcement prevented disruption to residents' parking on match days
- Footway Improvement Programme: The second phase of the £20m footway improvement programme is now coming to an end, with around 45 miles of footway having been resurfaced, which equates to about 8.5% of the footway network. The six shopping parades are all that remain and are programmed for autumn / winter.
- Hostile Vehicle Mitigation Measures: Eleven of the thirteen original sites identified for anti-terrorist bollards are now complete, with one site under construction and the other in design. Two more elements of work are in the design stage.
- North End Road Connector: The new North End Road junction at Bridge Road opened in June 2021, ahead of the Euro 2020 events at Wembley. Initially this will operate as a T junction and we are liaising with TfL on signalisation of the junction and future bus services. There are also plans to strengthen the culvert which has a 17t weight limit.
- Town Centre Improvements: Public Realm improvements are planned for Wembley High Road and Church End. Starting in November 2021, these are part of the Councils wider plans to support the economic recovery of local town centres through cultural activities, shop local campaigns and providing an attractive and accessible environment. The schemes will improve pavements, roads and provide new trees and greening, street furniture, lighting and signage.
- Air Quality:
  - New guidance to tackle engine idling launched spring 2021. This included communications on the effect of pollution on climate change and public health, and arrangements for enforcement. Council suppliers have been contacted and there is an ongoing campaign from the pan-London anti-idling group to raise awareness.
  - E-cargo bikes have been piloted in Harlesden Town Centre in May and will be trialled in Willesden between December 2021 and June 2022. We are also investigating further trials in the borough. The aim is to promote zero emission deliveries in local town centres.
  - Green screens have been installed in Our Lady of Lourdes and will be installed at Harlesden Primary School in September to reduce children's exposure to pollution. These measures have been identified through the 'Breathe Clean' project, raising air quality awareness and monitoring pollution in our schools. Further schemes to be implemented as funding is identified.

## **5. Regeneration, Property and Planning – Councillor Shama Tatler**

### **5.1 Economic development and Town Centres**

5.1.1 As restrictions lift, and we head towards recovery we need to do all we can to support the economy of the borough. We have 19 town centres and 14000 SMEs as well as the bigger industrial sites and small start-ups.

5.1.2 We have working on several strategies to support those valued businesses and support our residents.

5.1.3 We've held various webinars that look to support businesses going online and going green. In fact, I went to visit a site in Park Royal where Segro have converted a unit to be carbon-neutral. Businesses are actively working to go greener and more sustainable.

5.1.4 Some things I'd like to highlight in particular:

#### **a) Affordable Workspace**

Brent Council adopted its [Affordable Workspace Strategy & Action Plan](#) in September 2020. The Action Plan outlines eight actions to increase supply in the borough.

- Action 1: Develop a Brent Affordable Workspace Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
- Action 2: Expand the Affordable Workspace Operator list to give developers a better range of options when disposing affordable workspace, and improve the local affordable workspace. Operator list expanded from 7 to 14 operators, with a wider range of typologies. New operators include:
  - Impact Hub (flexible office space for social enterprises)
  - South Kilburn Trust (signing up existing operator of the Granville)
  - Enterprise4Good (flexible office space for small businesses)
  - Wimbletech (flexible office space)
  - CEME (flexible offices, conference centre and engineering workshops)
  - Bow Arts (creative studios)
  - The Co-Spaces (flexible offices and kitchens)
- Action 3: Create or facilitate affordable workspace projects in vacant and hard to let properties on the high street.
  - Meanwhile Space appointed as partner for Meanwhile Pilot (January 2021).
  - Landlord outreach and engagement exercise to landlords in priority town centres of Church End, Neasden and Willesden Green town centres.
- Action 4: Inform and direct business cases for workspaces in Council assets and developments, specific to location and context, for how best to develop and manage the workspace.

- Action 5: Facilitate and optimise affordable workspace delivery in mixed-use developments
- Action 6: Agree a forward plan for using S106 commuted sums collected in lieu of onsite affordable workspace.
- Action 7: Work with economic development and finance colleagues to create a specific discretionary business rate relief for Affordable Workspace Operators.
- Action 8: Develop and launch a Brent finance and grant scheme for Affordable Workspace Operators with a focus on either location or sector.

Officers have been working to progress the Action Plan, with particular focus on developing a finance scheme for workspace (Action 8), delivering workspace in vacant high street units (Action 3) and drafting an Affordable Workspace Supplementary Planning Document (Action 1).

#### **b) Harlesden Action Zone**

The Harlesden Action Zone (HAZ) relates to a number of improvements to Harlesden Town Centre. Some of these improvements are capital works to shop fronts and historic buildings in the town.

The architects have been appointed and have proposed the required works to bring the shopfronts and buildings to an acceptable condition and heritage appearance. Consultation with shop owners and property owners are taking place.

## **5.2 Planning**

### **5.2.1 Local Plan - Consultation on Proposed Modifications**

The proposed modifications to the draft Local Plan are required by the Inspectors undertaking the examination. This is to ensure that the plan is sound and legally compliant and can be adopted by the Council.

The modifications follow the examination hearings sessions between 29th September and 16th October 2021 and associated actions required of the Council. The consultation only relates to modifications. Other parts of the draft Plan that are not changing cannot be commented on. It will be for a 6 week period starting 8th July 2021.

### **5.2.2 Property and Planning achievements**

Working with Housing, we're proud to say that to date we have

- Over 260 council homes built and occupied
- Over 500 under construction
- Over 300 with planning permission

In terms of planning the last year has seen the following be secured in planning

- 9,283 new homes approved
- 2,847 secured as Affordable Housing

- 27,000 sqm of industrial / warehousing space
- 4,000 sqm of retail / food and drink space
- A new secondary school
- A new Special Educational Needs school
- Extensions and improvements to schools (incl. an art studio and an artificial turf pitch)
- Three new multi-use community facilities
- A new nursery
- New university facilities and student accommodation
- Affordable Workspace
- New primary health centre
- New gyms and leisure facilities
- A new sports and recreation centre
- Upgraded train driver accommodation
- 9 additional concerts each year at Wembley Stadium
- A diplomatic and consular services facility

A huge thank you to the planning committee and department who have worked so well continuing the work of planning online.

**5.2.3 Planning Policies** – work continues on the Neasden Station Growth Area and Church End Masterplans. Thank you to everyone who has participated so far on these policies.

### **5.3 Brent Streetspace/Active Travel**

**5.3.1** We have been delighted in the success of the school street programme and now over 30 schools and children have benefited from a safer, greener and more active journey to school. We are working on making improvements to the schemes following consultation and hope to expand the programme to other schools.

**5.3.2** Living Streets have started engagement with residents and councillors about Brent Healthy Neighbourhoods. There will be a series of online meetings, on street conversations with residents on proposed schemes. The initial approach has not been ideal but as the Cabinet Lead I am determined to look at ways we can improve air quality as well as improve infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists. We have also have a public health duty to encourage more active travel and modal shifts. We will work with residents and councillors on this.

### **5.4 NCIL**

**5.4.1** It has been fantastic to see NCIL projects come to life and benefit their communities. I have was proud to visit The Lexi Cinema (Kensal Green) and Leybourne Open Space (Queensbury) to see how NCIL have been used and will support our communities. Huge thanks to the NCIL team, officers, ward councillors and residents who have driven these projects forward.

## **5.5 South Kilburn – Kilburn residents buzzing at the chance of becoming beekeepers**

- 5.5.1 When people think about beekeeping, Kilburn in northwest London is not necessarily one of the images or places that springs immediately to mind.
- 5.5.2 That is all going to change, however, with the delivery of a new beehive and hive of bees as part of the plans for Carlton Vale Boulevard. Five Kilburn residents have also been trained on how to become a beekeeper. GM Design Associates Limited, the company appointed by Brent Council to lead and develop proposals for the regeneration of Carlton Vale, South Kilburn, is donating the new beehive and beekeeping suits as part of its social value
- 5.5.3 The new beehive will join an existing hive in the Energy Garden at Brondesbury Park Rail Station. Energy Garden is a community benefit society that maintains a network of 34 thriving green plots on train platforms across London. Energy Garden supported local residents to create The Beeline at Brondesbury Park station in 2018. This space, which includes wildflower meadows and beehives, allows people in Kilburn to grow food and promote biodiversity and sustainability in their local area.

## **6. Schools, Employment and Skills – Councillor Tom Stephens**

### **6.1 Update on ‘Summer on your Doorstep’ holiday activities and food (HAF) programme**

- 6.1.1 A wide range of activities were on offer to attendees at HAF clubs over the school summer holidays. Activities included: multi-sports and games, arts and crafts, dance, drama and music, coding, gardening, podcasting, kayaking, horse-riding, cooking and baking, and trips in and around London, as well as a range of other physical and enrichment activities.
- 6.1.2 45 individual providers were involved in the delivery of Brent’s summer HAF programme, across 47 different sites. In total, 3000 places were offered at summer holiday clubs in Brent. Final attendance figures are in the process of being returned by providers, but initial reporting suggests take up of HAF funded places over the summer was high.
- 6.1.3 Councillor Mili Patel and I were delighted to pay visits to several providers across Brent during the summer – including at Newman Catholic College, the Roundwood Youth Centre, Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre and Stonebridge Park. We were very pleased by the diversity of activities on offer and the broad range of young people – of all ages, and from across Brent’s schools – who participated in the programme and got the chance to engage with each other.
- 6.1.4 In addition to the above, I was also very pleased to attend TETH Youth and Adult Services’ awards ceremony for all the young people who participated in their summer HAF programme, and hand out awards to all the young people who took part. The excellent dancing and singing performances on show at the event – which young people had practiced to perfection, often within the space of just a week – were an outstanding demonstration of the talent and drive of Brent’s young people.
- 6.1.5 We will be lobbying the Government for the continuation of the HAF programme for the long-term. Support outside of term time is vital for the education and wellbeing of our young people, particularly the most disadvantaged. We have seen the direct impact these activities have on building self-confidence, enhancing wellbeing and building community cohesion amongst young people, with the benefits going far further than simply improving educational attainment. Programmes such as these should be a fundamental part of local councils’ offer to schools and young people, and we will fight for continued funding.

### **6.2 Employment support update**

- 6.2.1 The employment team has continued to enhance its support offer as the furlough and self-employed income support schemes come to a close at the end of September. Brent Works has continued to enjoy successes even during the summer months, which are usually a less busy period for them.
- 6.2.2 Recent achievements include:

- Achieving 927 Brent works registrations since April, 52 job starts, 22 apprenticeship starts and 44 apprenticeship starts
- We will be creating up to 30 Kickstart placements within Brent Council at London Living Wage, in addition to the placements we have created with businesses locally
- Working with housing colleagues and the charity Beam to offer employment support to those at risk of homelessness
- The Living Room team, based within the now re-opened Brent Hubs, has achieved 22 job outcomes over the last 4 months

6.2.3 More targeted support programmes are also continuing to deliver for the most disadvantaged groups. The Moving on Up programme for young black men, supported by NCIL funding, has commissioned a local charity called Hornstars to engage and support young Somali men in Brent. This will add to the current delivery consortium who have been funded to build capacity in their delivery. Since April, 112 engagements and 31 job outcomes have been achieved for Moving on Up.

6.2.4 As part of the Black Community Action Plan, Business in the Community have continued their work on challenging employers in discussing issues like unconscious bias amongst employers in recruitment of young black men. They have held several employer engagement and support sessions to focus on the issue, and a feedback session for employers to hear directly from young black men about the barriers they see to their engagement with these organisations. They have held three events with different employers to promote various sectors and roles to the programme beneficiaries.

6.2.5 Finally, Career Camp CIC, commissioned to deliver the Tech camps project, have continued to enjoy success in raising awareness with Brent residents of opportunities in the tech industry. They have delivered various tech camps and engaged a wide range of employers as well as participants. 8 residents have thus far secured employment. The next camp is scheduled for September with Alstom and Hitachi Rail. They have 20 quality job roles and apprenticeships that are attached to the project. The programme will also lead on a Green Skills Summit in November 2021, to tie in with COP26.

### **6.3 Expanding the employment service offer**

6.3.1 The employment team continues to work to secure funding to enhance its offer, building on the day-to-day funding it receives in Section 106 contributions from developments in Brent. As Members will know, Brent Works already successfully submitted a successful business case for £500K from the Council's Renewal fund to support local residents with skills and employment over the next 2 years aimed to mitigate some of the employment losses arising from the pandemic by building pathways into key growth area opportunities.

6.3.2 Building on this, a bid has been submitted for £500K to UK Community Renewal Fund to build capacity in Brent Works' service and key partners (BEAM and Careers Camp) until the end of financial year. The funding will provide targeted support to disadvantaged individuals including upskilling for careers of the



future. Funding is also being sought from DWP to support the priority groups identified by Jobcentre Plus. The groups in focus are 18-24 year-olds, women and people aged over 50.

- 6.3.3 In addition, as we chart a path to recovery, increasing the wages and quality of employment for our residents will be a key priority, as identified in the report of the independent Poverty Commission in July last year. Plans are currently being drawn up to build on and where possible exceed the recommendations of the Poverty Commission, including in relation to 'Living Wage Places', and Members can expect a further update on this in the near future as we approach Living Wage Week in November.

## **6.4 Brent Start update**

- 6.4.1 Brent Start, our Council-owned adult education college, has achieved and exceeded its enrolment target of 5,000, which is a good indicator that we will receive the full GLA grant allocation of £3.1 million without the need for any clawback. Early signs indicate that the team will match the previous year's achievement rate of 92.5%, but this will be subject to data validation and confirmation later in the year. This is testament to the excellent work of the Brent Start team and the dedication of the students on the courses.

- 6.4.2 In addition to the above, Brent Start has also secured two additional funding bids:

- £220,000 over two years as part of the 'Good Work for All' initiative, focusing on NSF (Level 3 programmes), Health and Social Care, Digital skills and ESOL.
- £98,900 from the ESOL for Integration Fund (EFIF), focusing on accredited and non-accredited courses to support residents with the lowest level of English language

- 6.4.3 A new Head of Brent Start is due to be appointed in late October, and a new annual prospectus for the Brent Start courses available has been finalised and is due for distribution in the coming weeks. A copy will be forwarded to Members when completed and you are encouraged to share it widely with residents.

- 6.4.4 Plans to tender for the design and build contract for Morland Gardens and to decant Brent Start to the Stonebridge annexe are continuing apace. Once completed the project will significantly enhance the support offer for our residents with a state-of-the-art adult education centre, whilst also securing vital affordable housing for the most vulnerable residents in the borough.

## **6.5 GCSE, A-Level and BTEC results**

- 6.5.1 Brent students did extremely well during this year's GCSE, A-level and BTEC results, and I pay tribute to the hard work of students across Brent's schools in their achievements – as well as the school teachers, support staff and leaders who made this possible.

- 6.5.2 This has been a very challenging year for Brent students and teachers, and as Members will be aware on 6 January 2021 the Government confirmed that this summer students would be awarded grades based on an assessment by teachers. The results this year are for the use of the students they are awarded to. As with the summer 2020 results, the DfE is not publishing any performance tables, and the data should not be used by others, such as Ofsted, local authorities and academy trusts, to hold schools or teachers to account.
- 6.5.3 The outstanding results achieved are testament to the efforts of all Brent pupils and schools, and they should be deeply proud of what they have achieved. I was pleased to see their hard work and results being celebrated across social media and in the local press. Ahead of results day, I was also delighted to be invited by Step Up Hub to speak with Somali students and parents about results day, and to reassure them about the processes in place.

## **6.6 Schools update**

- 6.6.1 As Lead Member I continue to make plans for school visits across the borough, now that the start of term is upon us. It was a privilege to visit a number of schools during the summer holidays to see the excellent summer activities they have organised as part of our 'Summer on your Doorstep' Holiday Activities and Food programme.
- 6.6.2 As part of this, I was delighted to meet with students at Ark Academy recently to discuss their ongoing campaign to encourage the Football Association to accredit as a London Living Wage employer. I support their campaign, and applaud the long-standing work of students – over many years – to fight for better rights and pay for Brent workers.
- 6.6.3 Now that the summer holidays have ended, schools have returned under an updated Covid safety regime, and Covid safety plans have been updated. It is essential that we work to keep school students, teachers and support staff safe to allow for the continued education of young people, and work is currently being done to explore what further support we can provide as a Council in light of some recent campaigning on school ventilation.
- 6.6.4 Finally, the school place planning strategy update for this year is in the process of being prepared, and is due to be reported to Cabinet in November 2021. Schools forum and, through this, schools unions, will be engaged on the strategy update. In subsequent months following the completion of this strategy, we will review current secondary school and SEND capital expansion needs to meet place planning requirements.

## **7. Community Safety & Engagement – Councillor Promise Knight**

### **7.1 Community Safety**

- 7.1.1 **ASB:** the Community Protection Team have continued to target known hotspots and high streets over the summer. Actions were conducted in a number of locations including Wembley and Ealing Road, Neasden Town Centre and Willesden Green targeting street drinking, begging, and rough sleeping and on street prostitution. Community Protection Warnings, Notices and Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued as a result of these operations.
- 7.1.2 **Walks:** to ensure that there is greater alignment between actions taken and concerns raised by Members, myself and the team took part in walkabouts with members and key stakeholders in a number of wards including Queensbury, Alperton, Barnhill, Tokyngton and Harlesden to identify ASB hotspots alongside tangible solutions.
- 7.1.3 **Nuisance control:** the Nuisance Control Team are currently running a party patrol programme which commenced on 6 August up until 4 September. Pre warning letters were sent to Housing Providers, businesses and premises likely to hold unlicensed music events from previous intelligence. The police have also shared warning letters with some individuals on the gang matrix.
- 7.1.4 **Increased demand:** the team is still dealing with a very high demand of noise app cases which has been exacerbated by the COVID outbreak and previous restrictions. Additional temporary cover has been brought in to deal with the current demand.

### **7.2 Regulatory Services**

- 7.2.1 **Easing of Lockdown Rules and full reopening of hospitality:** Staff continued to oversee and support businesses as lockdown ended and the final restrictions were eased. We have been following up non-compliant businesses who were issued penalties during the pandemic who have yet to pay their penalties.
- 7.2.2 **Tables and Chairs Licenses:** The Business and Planning Act 2020 which allowed tables and chairs to be placed on the pavement outside businesses were originally introduced until 30 September 2021. The expiry date has now been extended for a further year so the Licensing team have been making arrangements ahead of those wanting to renew their licence. So far, 53 businesses who don't have a licence that should do have been identified. Visits have been arranged to address this.

### **7.3 Engagement**

- 7.3.1 **New Consultation and Engagement Platform – Citizenlab:** the platform is now live and features the following 5 live consultations:
- Carlton Value Boulevard (regen.)
  - Housing Allocations Scheme (statutory consultation)

- Making it easier and safer to travel in Brent
- Town Centre Workspace Loan – demand survey
- Chapter Road – public realm improvements

## 7.4 Successes, challenges and risks

- 7.4.1 **VAWG training:** the safety of women and girls continues to be a top priority. Alongside the Brent VAWG Forum, we have developed a selection of local VAWG training opportunities. These sessions are being delivered between August and December 2021 by local specialist VAWG providers and are open to all Brent professionals. The free training for staff working in the Night Time Economy in Brent supports businesses include how to identify and support vulnerable customers and staff.
- 7.4.2 **Food Safety Challenge:** the Food Safety Team has secured a small £6k grant from the Food Standards Agency to provide some administrative support triaging the backlog of food business waiting a food hygiene inspection. The backlog has occurred due to the high number of new food businesses opening during the Covid pandemic and the fact that only high risk inspections were being carried out during the lockdown.
- 7.4.3 **Adult gaming and betting shops:** the Licensing Sub Committee approved a premises licence for an adult gaming centre for Little Vegas, High Road, Wembley. The planning application for this premises was refused but the applicants have appealed. These premises tend to be situated in areas most at risk of ASB related issues and where vulnerable residents reside. Although it is well known that these establishments contribute to health and other inequalities, quantifying the impact of a particular betting shop is challenging.
- 7.4.5 We are making every effort to pre-empt any potential increase in violent crime due to the relaxation of Covid restrictions. Community Safety has been working alongside partners to ensure a coordinated approach to preventing / reducing local incidents. Police led Operation Bloomington has focused on a coordinated plan across the summer with Operation Horizon. Children and Young People services have worked closely with Community Safety to ensure the most vulnerable are directly diverted from criminality through diversionary summer activities.

## **8. Children's Safeguarding, Early Help and Social Care – Councillor Mili Patel**

### **8.1 Afghani children and their families**

- 8.1.1 We have all watched on in horror as the latest deadly events have unfolded in Afghanistan. I can only imagine how disturbing this has been for our existing Afghani community in Brent. Children & Young People (CYP) have taken immediate action into supporting Brent's Looked After Children and Care Leavers of Afghan origin. Personal advisers and social workers have made contact with these young people, and foster carers looking after Afghani children to ensure that they are receiving appropriate support.
- 8.1.2 The team in CYP are also looking into how the Council can make use of mental health and wellbeing services such as West (Anna Freud Centre) and Kooth, as well as Young Roots – a community group who could offer some emotional support.
- 8.1.3 In addition to the direct intervention, arrangements are in place to liaise with local community groups, and other activities include, peer support for Afghani children.

### **8.2 Young Pride of Brent Awards**

- 8.2.1 This August we once again hosted the Pride of Brent Youth Awards at the Civic Centre. These awards are a rare opportunity to honour the achievements of the young people in our borough. What this year's winners had achieved, when faced with the added pressures of the pandemic and lockdowns makes their success even more astonishing and even more noteworthy. The following awards were presented:
- Young Leader – Dev Patel: volunteered to help deliver meals twice or three times a week to the elderly and most vulnerable in his community, as part of the Neasden Temple's 'Connect and Care' programme
  - Positive Role Model - Maleekah Burden-Kaizra: studies at the University of Law in London, and has been praised by her tutors for her academic and the very high standard for her assignments
  - Most Improved Young Person - Michael Panford: escaped gang culture through football and involved in football projects run by the youth charity, Connect Stars, which saw him and his friends win local and national football tournaments
  - Community Spirit - Denisa Stincanu: managed a project around mental health, the aim of which is to increase the awareness of the mental health issues and to provide information about them
  - Young Volunteer of the Year – Niamh Butler-McMahon: juggled her GCSE coursework and extra revision sessions with volunteering as a play worker for the Two Da Stage Performing Arts & Childcare Club

- Young Environmentalist – Joshua Bennett: organised community litter picks in particular in King Edward VII Park and Roundwood Skate Park to keep the area tidy and clean for residents during lockdown
- Young Person of the Year – Casey Clownes; autism ambassador who dedicates a huge amount of her time to raising awareness and educating others about autism
- Special Recognition Group – Ansar Youth Project: young people at Ansar organised vans to distribute and deliver food to those who were vulnerable or in need, offering many a lifeline
- Community Spirit Group – Phoenix Rising: charity working with children and young people to raise aspirations and self-esteem through a number of community activities

### **8.3 YP inspectors**

8.3.1 It is one of my priorities to ensure that those people who have used our services are able to influence the way they are delivered in future. I believe this is essential to ensuring they are continuously improved.

8.3.2 This is why I was extremely excited about the young inspectors project. As part of this a group of 11 Brent care leavers, aged 18-25 years old were trained to lead an inspection of services and activities for care leavers in Brent Council.

8.3.3 The aim of their inspection was to explore the quality and effectiveness of services and activities for care leavers as outlined in the Brent Care Leavers' Charter. This included looking at areas which have been working well, and areas which could be improved. The methods they followed included:

1. Interviews: they conducted four interviews with five service managers and team leaders
2. Focus groups: they led three focus groups with two groups of PAs and one with the Virtual School
3. Surveys: they created a survey for other care leavers to share their views on the inspection themes, and the survey received 19 responses
4. Mystery shopping: they carried out two mystery shopping exercises on the duty line
5. Desk research: they researched the inspection themes in Council documents, such as the 2019 Ofsted report that focused visit to the Brent children's services, Bright Spots Report and TACT Language That Cares Report

8.3.4 Through the project they created a list of recommendations to improve the services for them and future care leavers in Brent. My department will now be analysing these closely to see how we can learn the lessons and make them a reality.

### **8.4 Ministerial visit**

8.4.1 At the start of August, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Eddie Hughes MP made a visit to the Three Trees Family Wellbeing Centre. The minister wanted to talk to families

and keyworkers about their experiences, and find out how Brent's new family wellbeing centres are making a difference for local families.

- 8.4.2 It was great to know that Brent's work is being recognised on a national level by a Whitehall department. But more importantly, from my point of view, was the fact I was able to speak to the minister directly. I highlighted several challenges that councils face in supporting families, particularly after a decade of austerity and the continued uncertainty we face around long term funding for work with the supported families programme. I explained that our family wellbeing centres are a great solution to the problem in the circumstances, but that if we were properly funded we'd ideally have more of them ensuring services were even more widely available across Brent.

## **8.5 CIA Summer party**

- 8.5.1 On 19 August I attended the Care in Action Summer Fun Day for care experienced young people and their carers. This was held at Kenton Hall. The event was planned in partnership with members of Care in Action and Care Leavers in Action.
- 8.5.2 It was a rare chance for all those who have experience care in our borough to come together in a social setting to relax and network. I know that everyone in attendance enjoyed the experience and for many it was their first in-person social event since the pandemic.

## **8.6 Youth Strategy**

- 8.6.1 When I was growing up in Brent, the youth services on offer were a huge lifeline for me, and many thousands of other young people like me. Therefore, as a Cabinet Member, I was very honoured to present the new Brent Youth Strategy at September's Cabinet. I want to make it clear that the new strategy belongs to the young people of Brent. At every stage it was designed to represent their voices. The ideas and opinions we heard underpin both the strategy and our plan for delivery.
- 8.6.2 I am sure all members will agree that the Independent Brent Poverty Commission, which reported in 2020, was a hugely impressive and important piece of work. It laid bare the huge challenges many people – especially the young - face in our borough. I am determined that my department will not shirk from this challenge and am pleased that this strategy starts to set out how the council will work together in tackling poverty, inequality and social exclusion to improve outcomes for local young people.
- 8.6.3 But the council cannot achieve all of this on our own. This is why we collaborated closely with partners, including the voluntary sector, across Brent. I know that, as we work to deliver on the commitments in this strategy, our partnerships will grow and develop still further.
- 8.6.4 Central to our vision is a long-term approach. I want this strategy to make a difference in our borough for many years, so, I am pleased it will provide a

statutory framework that will support future funding bids and improve service co-ordination.

## **8.7 Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programmes**

- 8.7.1 Through these programmes, my department provides free places in holiday clubs for the equivalent of at least 4 hours a day, 4 days a week over 4 weeks during the summer and a week at both the Easter and Christmas holidays. These places are available to children of school age on benefits related to free school meals.
- 8.7.2 We developed the programme to provide for other vulnerable groups children and offered places for looked after children, children with an EHC plan, and children assessed as otherwise vulnerable or in need.
- 8.7.3 The summer HAF programme was designed to be as inclusive as possible. We committed to fund 50 places at specialist provision for eligible children with SEND. Activities at specialist provision included arts and crafts, cooking, sensory play, games, sports, dancing and swimming. Brent has also allocated funding to HAF providers to support a further 34 children with additional needs to access mainstream provision (e.g. through funding a 1:1 support worker).

## **8.8 Summer holiday support for Looked After Children and Care Leavers**

- 8.8.1 Over the summer 50 young people accessed a range of activities organised by Brent Virtual School, including:
- ESOL summer school
  - Equine therapy
  - Orienteering, canoeing and raft building at the Phoenix Outdoor Centre
  - online book clubs
  - a writers residential trip to Hebden Bridge
  - Visits to the Chelsea Psychic Gardens
  - Opera Holland Park – workshops with opera singers. One young person was also able to attend a production of Wicked with her foster family, alongside attending the final production.
  - Jamie's Farm residential for UASC
- 8.8.2 One young person from Brent was selected, beating off competition from across England, to become one of only 16 Jamie's Farm ambassadors. As an ambassador they will not only have the opportunity to experience all the Jamie's Farm centres, but will be able to be part of the team that looks to improve the provision and offer as well as be invited to events to represent Jamie's Farm.
- 8.8.3 Care In Action held a successful residential trip to the Gordon Brown Centre, as part of our work to maximise the use of this brilliant Brent resource for children. 14 Looked After Children took this opportunity to plan participation activities for the year ahead and enjoy a range of positive activities including archery, rope climbing and enjoying the farm animals on site.



## **9. Housing and Welfare Reform – Councillor Eleanor Southwood**

### **9.1 Update on the future of St Raphael's Estate**

9.1.1 Since 2018 we have had thousands of conversations with the residents of St Raphael's to understand what they would like for the future of their estate. Two masterplans were developed, one for **infill development** and one for **redevelopment** and it was always our intention to give residents the choice of which masterplan we deliver, as long as both continued to be affordable. Unfortunately, due to a number of factors, including uncertainty around the future availability of funding from the government, the redevelopment option is no longer affordable at this point in time. This means that we will be continuing with the infill masterplan but there will be no ballot offering residents the option of redevelopment at this time.

9.1.2 I want to thank St Raphael's Voice and all the residents who have contributed their time, energy and ideas to the project so far. I appreciate that this news is disappointing and we have not come to this conclusion lightly. However, alongside building new council homes as part of the infill plans, we want to invest significantly in the estate. Over the coming months we'll be continuing to engage with residents as we design the infill scheme and identify priorities for additional investment. This is an opportunity to do so much more than just build new homes and I'm looking forward to working with residents to deliver meaningful change on the estate.

### **9.2 Consulting on changes to housing allocations scheme**

9.2.1 A 10 week consultation is underway on some technical changes and clarifications to the scheme that governs how the council allocates social housing in Brent. There are 7 proposed changes, the first of which is the most substantive change and relates to a recent legal challenge received by the Council.

9.2.2 The wording of Brent's allocation scheme currently states that the register is only open to homeless applicants "to whom a main housing duty is owed". However, those applicants who are homeless, threatened with homelessness, or have a priority need but have made themselves intentionally homeless, should also have been entitled to a "reasonable preference" on the housing register, subject to the residence criteria. We're proposing to amend the allocation scheme, introducing an additional C- category as part of the existing Band C. While this is subject to consultation, the council is proactively contacting applicants who might have been affected and were homeless, threatened with homelessness or have a priority need but are intentionally homeless.

9.2.3 Other proposed changes are largely technical but include giving existing council tenants priority to bid for all newbuild council properties: ensure that families awarded an emergency management transfer for reasons of personal safety are able to move to a home that also addresses any overcrowding issues: and awarding Priority Band A to Special Guardians.

9.2.4 The consultation is open until 14 October. To participate, visit:

<https://haveyoursay.brent.gov.uk/en-GB/projects/housing-allocations-scheme>

### 9.3 Making the most of our housing stock

9.3.1 Cabinet has endorsed a number of initiatives to make sure we're freeing up as many of our larger council homes as possible. The wait for a 3 bedroom property in Brent is around 16 years and we have a chronic shortage of larger homes. This includes:

- Adapting properties, including extensions where this resolves overcrowding. This enables tenants to stay in their current homes instead of needing to move to somewhere larger
- ensuring that empty properties brought back into use also meet need, i.e. keeping demand in mind when we help owners with grants and incentives
- working with residents receiving care to see if a move to a newly built home would be more suitable, including one of the council's NAIL properties
- pilot an enhanced financial incentives programme for people who wish to downsize or move into the private rented sector or who wish to own their own home. This follows a 12 month pilot with tenants who wanted to downsize. This resulted in 31 new homes being made available, including a 6 bed, 2 5 bed and 3 4 bed homes. Everyone's circumstances are different and we will monitor this programme closely but even a small number of large properties being made available makes a significant difference.

9.3.2 Preparing for the end of furlough and the £20 UC uplift and a return to business as usual with evictions.

9.3.3 I know that for many residents the prospect of the end of furlough and likely end to the £20 uplift to UC is causing significant concerns. Please encourage all residents to get in touch with the council and other local organisations for help as early as possible. We're working hard to make sure the council is able to offer support.

9.3.4 Anyone who finds themselves in financial hardship, whether because of Covid19 or not, is encourage to apply to the Resident Support Fund for a grant and/or loan to assist:

<https://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/benefits-and-money-advice/resident-s-support-fund/>

## **10. Adult Social Care – Councillor Harbi Farah**

### **10.1 Social care funding announcement**

10.1.1 The Government's social care announcement is an important 'first step', but further clarity is needed on a range of additional crucial issues. This is a hugely complex area and there is much that needs clarifying in the Government's plan. Over the coming weeks, government therefore needs to work with councils, their partners and those with lived experience, to build a supportive foundation and develop a care and support system which is fit for the future.

10.1.2 Much of the plan currently focuses on the NHS, but a sustainable NHS depends on a sustainable social care system, as care and support is essential in supporting people of all ages to live their best life as well as alleviating pressure on the health service. It is important to remember that, while the NHS backlog needs to be tackled, social care was already under greater pressure pre-pandemic.

10.1.3 It is positive to see additional funding for ASC, but so much is unclear at the moment for example.

- How will the cap work? There is a real risk that it will create a considerable administrative burden
- Will the funding increase the number of people or amount of care they receive?

10.1.4 It is positive to see £500m allocated to the adult social care workforce, but again it is not clear what this will fund and whether it will ensure significant investment in the care workforce creating career pathways, improving training and development and pay that values their contribution – Brent is a London Living Wage borough (and already pays LLW in Homecare, extra care and Supported Living), but this should be the minimum, not the maximum.

(Appendix 1 provides more information on the Government Plans for Health & Social Care)

### **10.2 Vaccination update**

10.2.1 Work continues with care providers to increase Covid-19 vaccination take up in Brent. From 11<sup>th</sup> November in order to work in a care home, all staff will need to be vaccinated. Whilst take up across the borough is good (89% of care home staff have had their first vaccination), there are a number of providers where vaccination rates are a cause for concern. There are 12 care homes (out of 58 in total) where vaccination rates are 80% or less.

10.2.2 With each provider, their Provider Relationship Officer is working with them to ensure their contingency plan is up to date and they have a plan to either ensure staff are vaccinated or can be replaced in the event that they are unable to work in their role from 11<sup>th</sup> November onwards. The support given to the sector to

promote uptake has been substantial, and it is still available if required. Among the actions are –

- Weekly contact by Provider Relationship Officers with all care homes to trouble shoot issues, including support around vaccination take up. Vaccination sessions were arranged in homes to increase uptake amongst staff and residents.
- The LA/Public Health Team facilitated a total of 10 Webinars to address the misconceptions staff had in regards to taking the Covid-19 vaccine, and the PH team are going to homes to talk to staff if that is requested.
- Use of the Workforce Capacity Fund to support staff to receive the vaccination, such as by paying them overtime to attend a vaccination appointment, or arranging cover for them to attend a vaccination appointment during working hours.

10.2.3 A consultation has now been launched on widening compulsory vaccination across the health and social care sector. The implications for staff and providers will be considered in due course, but Brent is already responding to the requirement for compulsory vaccination to work in care homes. All staff that need to work in care homes, including all social workers, OTs, care assessors, the Residential and Nursing Team and Move On Team have been told that vaccination will be essential to do their role. Proof of vaccination is required by 10<sup>th</sup> September, after which time we will better understand the number of our own staff that are still to be vaccinated. (See Appendix 2 for the latest vaccination figures for care providers)

### **10.3 Winter Planning update**

10.3.1 Winter planning across the health and care system has begun for Winter 2021/22, with the main focus as per previous years on hospital discharge and admission avoidance, with the addition of Covid-19 vaccinations this year. Within adult social planning has started and a number of schemes are in development. As with previous years, any funding for adult social care will be allocated within the Better Care Fund, the plan for which will be submitted at the end of October (based on current guidance). The Winter plan will be discussed through the ICP Executive for agreement on the schemes in September, but these will likely focus on key areas to support hospital flow, such as:

- Additional short term packages of care and placements (both block and spot purchased)
- Additional support for Home First – to support people settling at home
- Additional support in the community to support more complex discharges, and for people with dementia and challenging behaviour

### **10.4 Development of ICS and ICP**

10.4.1 NW London has undergone some major changes in the development of a single CCG across the 8 boroughs at a NW London level. At a borough level there remains a core borough team, and significant progress has been made on the establishment of an Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) Executive. The Executive is co-chaired by the Chief Executive of CNWL NHS Trust and the

Strategic Director of Community Wellbeing for Brent Council, and reports into the Health and wellbeing Board. The ICP Executive have put forward four key priority focus areas for transformation for the current financial year:

1. Health inequalities and vaccinations
2. Community services
3. Primary care network (PCN) Development and GP practice variation
4. Mental health and wellbeing

10.4.2 Dedicated executive steering groups have been established to oversee progress against each of these groups, and work is underway on the development of focussed action plans to support delivery and transformation. This work will be reported regularly to the Health and Wellbeing Board

## **10.5 Integrated Rehab & Reablement service (IRRS)**

10.5.1 Following agreement by Cabinet, work is well underway on the establishment of an in house reablement service. This will be live from April 2022, and will include a number of significant improvements to the outcomes achieved and support provided to Brent residents.

10.5.2 At the same time, the Brent rehabilitation service has undergone significant changes in the transfer of staff from one NHS provider (London NW NHS Trust) to another (CLCH NHS Trust). Dedicated work is underway to improve the rehabilitation pathways, including improvements to pathways between reablement and rehabilitation to ensure a seamless and integrated service experience.

10.5.3 Brent council has supported NHS partners in the procurement of 20 new additional rehabilitation beds within a Brent care home (Birchwood Grange), and these beds have provided invaluable additional capacity to the system. Going forwards, there may be scope to go further in providing more additional capacity for residents in receipt of rehab support at home or in other settings outside of hospital.

## **10.6 Health Wellbeing Board Meeting**

10.6.1 The next scheduled meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board would be held on Tuesday 19 October 2021. As reminder this is the agenda for October meeting

- Public Health's Covid update
- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy update
- ICP update – community services, including update on winter planning
- Brent Children's Trust – 6-month update

## **Appendix 1: Government Plan for Health & Social Care**

The Prime Minister has now announced the Government's plan for health and social care. The announcement included commitments to:

- Invest £5.4 billion in adult social care over the next three years.
- From October 2023, the Government will introduce a new £86,000 cap on care costs and a new upper capital limit of £100,000 (up from the current limit of £23,250).
- Develop and publish White Papers on the reform of adult social care and health and social care integration, both to be published before the end of the year.
- Consult on adult social care charging reforms in October this year.
- Invest at least £500 million in new workforce measures over three years. This includes providing support in professionalising and developing the workforce and to fund mental health wellbeing resources and provide access to occupational health funding to help staff recover from their roles through the pandemic.
- There are also commitments to ensure that unpaid carers have the support, advice and respite they need and to invest in the Disabled Facilities Grant and supported housing, as well as exploring other innovative housing solutions to support more people to live independently at home.

## Appendix 2. The latest vaccination figures for care providers

Cohort	Target	W/B 23 <sup>rd</sup> August	W/B 30 <sup>th</sup> August	W/B 6 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Change
Care Home residents (1 <sup>st</sup> Dose)	100%	94%	93%	93%	-
Care Home Residents (2 <sup>nd</sup> Dose)	100%	92%	92%	92%	-
Care home staff (1 <sup>st</sup> Dose)	80%	88%	88%	89%	+1%
Care home staff (2 <sup>nd</sup> Dose)	80%	81%	81%	83%	+2%
Home care staff (1 <sup>st</sup> Dose)	80%	78%	77%	80%	+3%
Home care staff (2 <sup>nd</sup> Dose)	80%	59%	59%	64%	+5%