

	<p align="center">Full Council 8 July 2024</p>
	<p align="center">Report from the Corporate Director of Law and Governance</p>
<p align="center">Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Chair's Report</p>	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Council
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
List of Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	<p>Chatan Popat Strategy Lead – Scrutiny, Democratic Services 020 8937 5068 chatan.popat@brent.gov.uk</p> <p>Amira Nassr Deputy Director Democratic Services 020 8937 4595 Amira.nassr@brent.gov.uk</p> <p>James Kinsella Governance & Scrutiny Manager 020 8937 2063 james.kinsella@brent.gov.uk</p>

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 To update Full Council on the meetings and activities of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and North West London Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee since the last meeting of Full Council on 20 November 2023.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

That Full Council

2.1 Note the report and the updates provided for both the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and North West London Joint Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee (NWL JHOSC).

2.2 Note that the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee's updated 2024/25 work programme will be provided as part of the next update report to Full Council once completed following the final planning session on 16 July 2024.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

3.1.1 The work of the committee contributes to the delivery of all of the strategic priorities within the Borough Plan as it seeks to support, advise and enhance the Council's activity. The recent activity outlined in this report contributes most specifically to the "A Healthier Brent," "The Best Start in Life," "Prosperity and Stability in Brent" strategic priorities within the plan.

3.2 Background

3.2.1 Brent Council has two scrutiny committees: the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee. The council also participates as a full voting member in the North West London Joint Health Overview Scrutiny (NWL JHOSC). Councillor Ketan Sheth was re-elected as chair of the Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee at the Annual Council Meeting on 22 May 2024 and pending his re-election as chair of NWL JHOSC at its first meeting of the 2024-25 municipal year also continues to serve as chair of that body.

3.2.2 A scrutiny committee can review anything which affects the borough or its inhabitants, subject to its remit. The remit of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee is set out in the Council Constitution under the Terms of Reference for Scrutiny Committees which includes:

Adult social care; Safeguarding; Children's services; Cultural services; Education; Health; Housing; Public Health and Wellbeing.

3.2.3 As part of its remit set out in the constitution, and its role to review the provision and operation of health services within the borough, the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee can scrutinise, and make recommendations to NHS organisations or relevant health service providers.

3.2.4 The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee's 2024/25 work programme will be finalised on 16 July 2024. The work programming exercise for the committee has been delayed this year due to the announcement of the General Election. Once agreed, it will outline the policy areas and council decisions the committee plan to review during the 2024/25 municipal year. Statutory guidance on overview and scrutiny recommends that for scrutiny to be effective, scrutiny committees focus on conducting fewer in-depth reviews of highly significant topics¹.

¹ *Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities* (Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government), p21

- 3.2.5 In terms of work undertaken since the previous update, the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee met for its third meeting of the 2023/24 municipal year on 22 November 2023. The meeting focused on three items relating to Housing. The first of these was Brent Housing Management's (BHM) readiness for tenancy satisfaction measures; these set out the standards that social housing landlords must adhere to. The committee focused on what the measures are, the implications of the new Social Housing (regulations) Act and how the Grenfell disaster had impacted on the movement of these regulations. The committee also received a detailed summary on the current performance of BHM as a whole. Overall, it was agreed that the department were well prepared for the new satisfaction measures and the current performance of BHM had improved throughout the year.
- 3.2.6 The second item was the new Single Homeless Service (SHPS). Last summer Brent refocussed its partnership working to The Turning Point in Harlesden with the Committee reviewing the move to Harlesden from Wembley and the impact on the service and residents since the move. The Committee also received an update on the challenges surrounding homelessness and prevention and the current financial and social pressures faced by Brent's Temporary Accommodation service. As the new service had only been live for three months, the committee agreed to seek a further update once more fully established. The third item concentrated on the new Landlord Selective Licensing scheme which came into force on 1 August 2023. The committee's discussions were centred around the details of the new scheme, what lessons had been learnt so far and plans for expanding the scheme.
- 3.2.7 The committee's fourth meeting of the municipal year held in January 2024 focused on three items. The first of these was a report on the Brent Youth Strategy and Provision. The report not only focussed on delivery of performance, outcomes and opportunities identified since the implementation of the Brent Youth Strategy 2021-23, but also provided detail on the notable work conducted by the department with partners such as the NHS, the voluntary sector and the Brent Young Foundation ensuring effective delivery on current youth provisions. The committee also examined the work Children & Young People (CYP) were conducting in identifying and tackling local youth issues such as gang involvement, knife crime, anti-social behaviour and other similar issues around youth crime and disorder. A highlight was hearing from some of the young people about their use of the Roundwood Youth Centre, concerns they have and how things could be improved for them. Additionally, representatives of the Brent Youth Parliament were also present to question officers and the Lead Member. Youth engagement is continually promoted within the Community & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and members of the BYP regularly attend meetings providing interesting insights and questioning.
- 3.2.8 The second item was an external item from NHS North Central London ICB who addressed the Committee about their consultation on proposed changes to maternity, neonatal, and children's surgical services. Their report set out the options being consulted on and the impact these proposals will have on Brent residents, especially if the maternity and neonatal services at the Royal

Free Hospital cease to be provided. They outlined the approach to consultation and how residents, staff and stakeholders can give their feedback on the proposals. Changes to the current setup will have an impact on residents, especially in the south of the borough so it was imperative the committee scrutinised the initial proposals and any decisions that are made following the consultation. The committee agreed to monitor the outcome of the consultation. Councillor Ketan Sheth also attended a North Central London JHOSC meeting on 30 November 2023 to discuss these proposals and will attend another of their meetings on 25 July 2024 to learn about the initial findings of the consultation and gain further insight on the impact to Brent residents.

- 3.2.9 The third item was an update from the Adult Social Care directorate on the Council's preparations for inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The committee heard from officers about the process in preparing for an inspection, and the continued work to integrate CQC preparation work, improvement actions and transformation work within the directorate. An informative discussion took place whereby the committee were assured that the department would be prepared for the inspection and that there was an expectancy on a positive result based on evidence gathered, benchmarked data and five recent inspections that had taken place across England.
- 3.2.10 In February, the committee held a call-in meeting addressing concerns raised by five Councillors on proposals approved at Cabinet for the acquisition of a property in the Barn Hill area as part of the Brent Residential Children Care Home Project. During the meeting the committee were able to address the issues raised by the members who had called-in the decision and local residents in support of the call-in regarding the proposal. Having considered the response provided, the committee decided to uphold rather than refer back the decision originally made by Cabinet to allow the acquisition to proceed.
- 3.2.11 In March the committee dealt with a number of items all related to the Community Health and Wellbeing directorate. The first of these was a report on Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery. The report not only focussed on delivery of the treatment service and the work conducted by the department with partners such as B3 and the NHS but also the impact substance misuse has on individuals, families and the borough in general. There was also a discussion on substance misuse within the homeless community and links to other addictions such as gambling and how the Council could tackle the rising numbers. The committee heard from users of the treatment and recovery service and the positive impact that has had on their lives. The committee were pleased to hear from residents whose lives had been positively impacted by the service.
- 3.2.12 The second item was an update on the Brent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Public Health Team provided a detailed update of progress made against key commitments set out in the current strategy. A constructive discussion took place around various aspects of the strategy including healthy eating, oral health, use of green spaces, the use of Family Wellbeing Centres and patient access to GPs. The committee also heard about the Health and Wellbeing Board's reaffirmed support for the five themes of the Strategy. The committee acknowledged that not all commitments have been delivered and

that some will require additional resources or will require continued efforts. However, it was apparent that considerable progress had been made by collaborating with partners and that joint working with Council departments, by primary, community, secondary and mental health services and by the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) have been successful.

- 3.2.13 The final item was a one-year update on the committee's very own Social Prescribing Task Group. The committee acknowledged the positive impact Social Prescribing has had recently and how working alongside the NHS and VCS partners has strengthened the offer. However, there were also concerns from the VCS that the development of social prescribing will simply mean more signposting from statutory services to the VCS without any additional funding. The committee have agreed to continue monitoring the work around social prescribing and will ask for a further update this municipal year.
- 3.2.14 In April, the committee had its final meeting of the municipal year. The first item was the Annual School Standards and Achievement report for the academic year 2022-23. Also in attendance were two Brent Headteachers representing primary and secondary school provisions in Brent. The report outlined current school performance across a number of educational settings, ranging from early years to Key Stage 5 with the performance across the borough remaining good with high levels of attainment across most groups. Members were particularly keen to understand progress made in improving the attainment of Black British boys of Caribbean heritage and other groups suffering from socio-economic deprivation and the specific pieces of work undertaken to improve outcomes for these groups. The committee sought assurances that CYP will continue to collaborate closely with schools to tangibly improve the attainment of these groups. There was also a detailed discussion focussed around the outcome of a recent Ofsted inspection, involving a local Primary School and the impact of a subsequent Academisation Order which had been imposed as a result. The committee will continue to monitor the situation and have requested a further update in the new year.
- 3.2.15 The second item on the agenda was the implementation of the Brent Carer's Strategy 2024-27. The committee heard detailed information on the numerous parameters of the strategy and also heard from the Chief Executive of the Brent Carer Centre and a full-time carer. The committee were pleased to hear how partners were collaborating with the Council in developing the new strategy in order to provide a more focussed approach for the thousands of carers both adult and youth, paid and unpaid across the borough.
- 3.2.16 The final item was an update on the Brent Reablement Service. Reablement is a fundamental part of patient recovery and regaining independence and the item was well received by the committee. Detailed responses were given to member questions regarding the procurement of new contracts, how they will be managed and what outcomes are to be expected over the next few years. The discussion also clearly laid out Brent's approach not only as a local authority but also on how the Council will work with partner agencies to improve its offer whilst also finding a solution that is dependable and cost-effective. The committee acknowledged that it was premature to evaluate the

successes of the new provider contracts, as they had only gone live in February 2024. A report will therefore be requested to be brought back to the committee later this year with some analysis of the benefits of the new approach to reablement and the impact that the new lead providers have had on peoples' care and support.

3.2.17 Since the last report to Full Council, the North West London Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (NWL JHOSC) has met twice; at Hounslow in December and then at Brent in March. December's meeting led to informative discussions around the topics of Winter Resilience, performance of the Ambulance Service, the ICS workforce strategy and the newly formed North West London Elective Orthopaedic Centre based at Central Middlesex Hospital. In March, Brent hosted the final meeting of the municipal year. The committee scrutinised the NHS and partners on Obesity and Preventative Services, the NW London Commissioning Arrangements for Community Pharmacy and Dental Services. However, the focal point of the meeting surrounded the item of Primary Care Access namely the new Same Day Access Model that had been announced for launch. The Committee expressed a number of concerns about the approach taken by the NWL NHS to launch the model, given what was felt to be a lack of suitable communication or consultation. A large number of residents from across NW London also attended the meeting and made their case for opposing the model. A decision has since been made by the NHS to suspend the launch of the scheme until next year.

3.2.18 The work programming meeting for NWL JHOSC has also been rescheduled and will now be held after the General Election. The first meeting of the year will now take place in September.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

4.1 Members of the Committee continue to be fully engaged in the development and delivery of the scrutiny work programme.

5.0 Financial Considerations

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 Legal Considerations

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

7.1 There are no equity, diversity or inclusion implications arising from this report.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 There are no climate change or environmental implications arising from this report.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

9.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

10.0 Communication Considerations

10.1 There are no communication implications arising from this report.

Report sign off:

Debra Norman

Corporate Director, Law and Governance