



**Full Council**  
10 July 2017

**Report from Director of Policy,  
Performance and Partnerships**

For Action

Wards Affected:  
ALL

**Report from the Chair of the Resources and Public Realm  
Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Matt Kelcher**

**1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the work carried out by the Council's Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee in accordance with Standing Order 41. The report covers the period from 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017 to present, detailing committee members, planned training, programme of work and items discussed during the committee meetings.

**2.0 Detail**

- 2.1 The Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee covers corporate resources, (including Customer Services, Policy, Partnerships and Performance, Procurement and IT) as well as regeneration, regulatory services, environment, transport and community safety. The committee is composed of eight elected members.

In December 2016 Cllr S Tatler resigned from the R&PR Scrutiny Committee to take up a post on the Cabinet and Cllr Duffy was appointed to the vacant post. In February 2017 Cllr M Patel also resigned from the Committee to take up a post on the Cabinet and Cllr Mashari was appointed to the vacant post. Both were appointed to the Committee following approval by Full Council. At the AGM in May a new R&PR Committee was confirmed, and the committee has since completed its induction and work planning session for the coming year.

*2017-18 Resources and Public Realm Committee Members:*

Councillor Matt Kelcher (Chair)

Councillor Joel Davidson (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Abdi Aden

Councillor Lia Colacicco

Councillor George Crane

Councillor Ernest Ezeajughi

Councillor Sam Stopp

Councillor Roxanne Mashari

## 2.2 Engagement and development

As part of the 2017/18 Work Programme members will be considering which visits they will want to make as part of their reports and which experts in particular policy areas from outside the local authority can complement the committee's work. These may include Brent's high streets, a recycling facility, council assets and a regeneration project. The committee may also carry out other engagement activity with residents and groups, and observe the work of trading standards officers.

Members of the three scrutiny committees were involved in training in May with Cllr Barrie Taylor, who is a senior member in another London borough with significant experience of overview and scrutiny and wider policy development.

## 2.3 Committee Meetings

Since the last chair's report in January the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee has met twice. A summary of the meetings follows.

On 8 March 2017, the committee received the following reports:

### 2.3 *Environmental Sustainability*

A report summarising the work undertaken across key service areas to address the issue of sustainability was introduced to the committee by Councillor Southwood (Lead Member for Environment). The report was wide ranging and addressed seven key areas: transport and travel; air quality; in-house carbon management; street lighting and parking; public realm and waste; parks and biodiversity; and flood risk management. The committee also welcomed representatives from the Environment Agency, Lee James (Team leader, London West Partnerships and Strategic Overview Team) and Edward Crome (Lead for engagement with Brent on planning matters) who outlined the borough's flood risks and explained the structures in place for responding to these.

Members questioned plans the council had to regenerate areas with persistently poor air quality, address traffic congestion in the borough and tackle proposals to include an incinerator in the Brent Cross Cricklewood development. They also discussed charges on diesel vehicles. Further questions were posed regarding the contractual arrangements for disposal of residual waste, referring to a BBC report which listed Brent as the second worst borough in London for fly-tipping. Members questioned whether there was insufficient targeting of enforcement activity and sought details of the level of evidence required to pursue prosecution.

### 2.4 *PREVENT Programme*

The committee received a report and introductory presentation on delivery of the Prevent programme in Brent. Kibibi Octave (Strategic Prevent Coordinator) highlighted that under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (CTSA) 2015, the council had a duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The council approached this duty as a safeguarding concern, recognising the risks of grooming, extortion

and harm that vulnerable people could be subject to. The requirements of the Prevent Statutory Guidance, including the requirement to conduct risk assessments and develop an action plan, were outlined to the committee.

In the subsequent discussion the Committee sought further details regarding engagement with Brent's Muslim community. Members emphasised the importance of engaging the whole of a community, including seeking women's voices and of supporting good governance of community groups and organisations, including supplementary schools. Further questions were raised regarding any potential alignment with work relating to gang recruitment and activity and the provision of training to community leaders.

## **2.5 *Pre-Cabinet Scrutiny of Proposals Relating to Tackling Illegal Rubbish Dumping and Litter with Uniformed Street Patrols***

Councillor Southwood (Lead Member for Environment) presented a draft report which would be finalised and submitted to the Cabinet meeting on 13 March 2017. The report reviewed the uniformed street patrol pilot which had been undertaken with Kingdom Security Ltd, outlined the available options for taking the service forward from June 2017 and concluded that the creation of an in-house service would be the most advantageous of these options.

In the ensuing discussion, several queries were raised by the committee including whether formal minutes had been taken of discussions between officers and Kingdom Security Ltd. Further information was sought regarding the intended balance of enforcement activity for minor littering offences with larger-scale illegal rubbish dumping and how amending this relationship could affect the viability of the model. Members questioned whether Kingdom Security Ltd were London Living Wage accredited, whether the anticipated wages for an in-house team were appropriate, and if the proposed future model was the best option.

On 3 May 2017, the committee received the following reports:

## **2.6 *Safer Brent Partnership Annual Report and Update on Community Safety Safer partnership item.***

This item was attended by Michael Gallagher (Borough Commander, Metropolitan Police), Councillor Miller (Lead Member for Stronger Communities), Karina Wane (Head of Community Protection) and Amar Dave (Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment). The committee questioned the work being undertaken to combat anti-Semitism and raised concerns regarding incidents of intimidating behaviour associated with religious sectarianism in Brent's Islamic communities. Referring to the statistics provided regarding hate crime in Brent, members sought further detail regarding the groups affected and questioned why there had been an increase in hate crime related to religion.

Members queried the procedure for information sharing with local councillors following the occurrence of a major crime in their wards. In view of the rising figures associated with anti-social behaviour and gang activity in Brent, the committee requested an overview of the work being undertaken to tackle such issues, including drug dealing and prostitution, and highlighted a number of

hotspots of illegal activity in the borough. Members questioned which initiatives were pursued with the borough's schools, particularly around issues of domestic violence and violence against women and girls.

## **2.7 *Task group report on Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises***

The committee received a task group report on how the council can grow and enhance power of SMEs in the borough. Cllr Tatler welcomed this report and its focus on SMEs due to their importance as sources of employment. The Committee discussed businesses' online and high street presence and the council's role in supporting them to flourish in borough, as well as that of the West London Alliance and West London Business, and how the sub-region can promote and support investment. Members agreed the task group's recommendations on developing an SME support programme and a programme to improve skills, creating the role of business champion to advocate for SMEs, and investing in business incubation and support services. The report will be considered at Cabinet in July.

## **2.8 **Scrutiny and Cabinet****

The committee has sent a number of recommendations it made during its meetings in 2016/17 to the Cabinet for it to consider. These include recommendations from the Budget Scrutiny task group report; and the Small and medium-sized enterprises task group report which will go to Cabinet on the 10<sup>th</sup> July 2017.

## **3.0 **Upcoming Scrutiny Meetings and Activities****

The first meeting of 2017-18 is scheduled for 11 July 2017 and the items which it will consider are:

- Annual Overview & Scrutiny Report
- Current Financial Position, and
- Scoping paper - Use of food banks in Brent (task group).

### **Contact Officers**

Mark Cairns  
Policy and Scrutiny Manager  
[Mark.Cairns@brent.gov.uk](mailto:Mark.Cairns@brent.gov.uk)  
020 8937 1476