



Full Council
26 November 2018

**Report from the Director of
Performance Policy & Partnerships**

**Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee Chair's
Update Report**

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	N/A
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	Appendix A – Work Programme
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Pascoe Sawyers, Tel: 020 8937 1045 Email: Pascoe.sawyers@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

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 14. The report covers the period from September 2018 to present.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 Council is recommended to note this report.

3.0 Detail

3.1 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 comprised of eight elected members (seven from the Labour Group and one opposition group member, which is consistent with current political balance arrangements).

3.2 *2018-19 Resources and Public Realm Committee Members*

Councillor Matt Kelcher (Chair)
Councillor Neil Nerva
Councillor Roxanne Mashari
Councillor Kieron Gill
Councillor Sandra Kabir
Councillor Saqib Butt
Councillor Erica Gbajumo
Councillor Suresh Kansagra

- 3.3 The committee has met once since the last report to Council, on 5 September 2018 (though this meeting was prior to the last full Council meeting, it fell after reporting deadlines, and so is covered in this report).
- 3.4 The committee received a report on **Highways Contract Performance** which outlined the contractual arrangements in place, the measures for auditing performance, current performance levels and how the contract was linked to the Council's Highways Asset Management Plan.
- 3.5 Members expressed concern regarding the time it took for repairs to be made to some Category 2 (medium priority) defects, and the number of defects miscategorised. The committee questioned the financial and other risks faced by the council as a result of not repairing potentially hazardous paving. Comment was sought from the Deputy Leader on the potential increase in the cost of a highways maintenance contract in the future, given the existing state of Brent's roads and the likely increase in extreme weather conditions.
- 3.6 Under questioning from the committee, the highways contractor Conway Aecom acknowledged not currently being fully compliant with performance targets due to a lag in defect rectification; however, this had followed a difficult period over the winter and was being addressed, with compliance rising steadily since then. It was acknowledged that there was a conflict of interest between the council and contractor with regard to defect categorisation (and how repairs were therefore funded), and the contract was being varied to grant the council greater powers to determine repair works.
- 3.7 Members questioned whether a single contractor was the best model for delivering highways services or whether the use of multiple smaller contracts could be used to support smaller businesses in Brent. Queries were also raised regarding quality control of reactive repairs, and the sufficiency of the budget for full highways repair and maintenance.
- 3.8 The committee asked Cabinet to note its view that the council should not enter into any further self-monitoring contracts. It will also explore undertaking specific scrutiny work appraising options for the repair of Brent's highways, including consideration of funding via long term borrowing.
- 3.9 The committee also received a report on the **progress of the Digital Strategy and outcomes for vulnerable people**. Officers provided an overview of key workstreams, including the roll out of the Microsoft Dynamics platform to the Housing Management Service, the impending launch of a digital skills

curriculum by Brent Start, the introduction of cutting edge technology in the Stonebridge Learning Centre, progress in securing ultrafast fibre broadband for social housing stock and beyond, and plans to expand the hub model.

- 3.10 Members sought details of how success was measured with regard to supporting residents' digital skills, and support for those who either did not have internet access or were not in the habit of using it. They also asked officers to reflect on any pitfalls that may have been identified and resolved with the hub pilot. Officers welcomed members' suggestions on the promotion of the My Brent service and the provision of one-off skills sessions to those accessing services digitally for the first time and agreed to take these forward. They also agreed to send targeted communication promoting the council's digital offer to groups identified as requiring assistance with digital skills, and to review the access of IT within the Harlesden hub to the council servers in order to ensure this is as quick as possible.
- 3.11 Finally, the committee received an update on **Area Based Working** being utilised by the council's Town Centre Managers (TCMs) and Neighbourhood Managers (NMs). Members questioned whether NMs and TCMs would develop closer working relationships with the ward councillors for their areas, noting the scope for both strategic and resident level working, and learned about plans for monthly meetings, as well as member involvement in the development of TCM action plans. Clarification was also sought regarding the working relationships between NMs and TCMs, noting that certain issues impacted across both remits. The committee further noted that some NMs made greater use of social media, for instance to engage with resident forums, and questioned how the council could support NMs in developing social media skills. The committee asked the NMs and TCMs to comment on whether there were any additional resources or tools that would help to increase the productivity of their roles, and queried what support was available to NMs and TCMs.
- 3.12 The committee endorsed the council's moves towards neighbourhood based working, and asked the Regeneration and Environment department to ensure that NMs and TCMs were trained to utilise social media to support their work with the community.

4.0 Other activities and future meetings

- 4.1 To inform its questions in advance of the September meeting, members of the committee visited the Harlesden Hub to see in person how it operated. They also met with Town Centre Managers and Neighbourhood Managers to discuss their activities with them.
- 4.2 The next meeting of the committee will be 15th January 2019 (as the meeting originally scheduled for November has been rescheduled for 11th February). The amended work programme is attached as an appendix below.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 There are no legal implications.

7.0 Equality Implications

7.1 There are no equality implications.

Report sign off:

Peter Gadsdon

Director of Performance Policy &
Partnerships

Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19

Tuesday 15 January 2019

Agenda	Item	Details	Cabinet Member/Member	Brent Council/Partner organisations
1.	Chair's report	Update from the Chair on the work of the committee.	Cllr Matt Kelcher, Chair Scrutiny Committee	
2.	Budget scrutiny report	Committee to scrutinise and agree the Scrutiny Budget report for 2019-20 and 2020-2021.	Cllr Muhammed Butt, Leader Cllr Margaret McLennan, Deputy Leader	Carolyn Downs, Chief Executive Althea Loderick, Strategic Director of Resources Conrad Hall, Chief Finance Officer
3.	Local Plan	Pre-scrutiny of the draft Local Plan in development for launch in 2020, and due for consultation during 2019.	Cllr Shama Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways, Planning	Amar Dave, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment Aktar Choudhury, Operational Director Regeneration Alice Lester, Head of Planning, Transport and Licensing
4.	Knife Crime Task Group scoping paper	Scoping document for Knife Crime Task Group to be approved by the committee.	Cllr Tom Miller, Cabinet Member for Community Safety Task Group Chair (TBC)	Amar Dave, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment Chris Whyte, Operational Director of Environment Services Karina Wane, Head of Community Protection

<p>5.</p>	<p>Affordable Housing Task Group report</p>	<p>Report on the findings and recommendations from the scrutiny task group review of affordable housing delivery in new developments.</p>	<p>Cllr Shama Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways, Planning</p> <p>Cllr Eleanor Southwood Cabinet Member for Housing & Welfare Reform,</p> <p>Cllr Neil Nerva, Task Group Chair</p>	<p>Amar Dave, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment</p> <p>Phil Porter, Strategic Director of Community Wellbeing</p> <p>Hakeem Osinaike, Operational Director Housing</p> <p>Alice Lester, Head of Planning, Transport and Licensing</p>
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Monday 11 February

Agenda	Item	Details	Cabinet Member/Member	Brent Council/Partner organisations
1.	Chair's report	Update from the Chair on the work of the committee.	Cllr Matt Kelcher, Chair Scrutiny Committee	
2.	Parking and electric car charging	A report on progress with council plans to create and enable more electric car charging points. The committee will also investigate how the parking regime can free up more space on roads by restricting vehicle lengths.	Cllr Krupa Sheth Cabinet Member for Environment Cllr Shama Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Highways, Planning	Amar Dave, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment Chris Whyte, Operational Director of Environment Services Tony Kennedy, Head of Highways and Infrastructure Rachel Best, Transportation Planning Manager Gavin Moore, Head of Parking & Lighting
3.	Annual report on complaints	Committee to receive update on the council's 2017-18 complaints performance	Cllr Margaret McLennan, Deputy Leader	Peter Gadsdon, Director Performance, Policy and Partnerships Irene Bremang, Head of Performance & Improvement

4.	Food Banks Task Group Update	A report updating cabinet actions following the food bank task group recommendations	<p>Cllr Margaret McLennan, Deputy Leader</p> <p>Cllr Roxane Mashari, Task Group Chair</p>	Peter Gadsdon, Director of Performance, Policy and Partnerships
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Monday 14 March 2019

Agenda	Item	Details	Cabinet Member/Member	Brent Council/Partner organisations
1.	Chair's report	Update from the Chair on the work of the committee.	Cllr Matt Kelcher, Chair Scrutiny Committee	
2.	Contracts 2023	The committee will look at several key council contracts due to end in 2023 and examine the process for setting the terms of these contracts and the merits/obstacles to bringing the services back in-house.	Cllr Margaret McLennan, Deputy Leader Cllr Krupa Sheth Cabinet Member for Environment	Amar Dave, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment Chris Whyte, Operational Director of Environment Services
3.	Air quality pledges	A report updating on progress against air quality pledges made during the election. How can the council can deliver against these promises over the coming years?	Cllr Krupa Sheth Cabinet Member for Environment	Amar Dave, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment Chris Whyte, Operational Director of Environment Services Karina Wane, Head of Community Protection

<p>4.</p>	<p>Flats and recycling</p>	<p>A report on recycling levels in flats. The committee will examine barriers to recycling and consider how landlord licencing can help to boost rates.</p>	<p>Cllr Krupa Sheth Cabinet Member for Environment</p>	<p>Amar Dave, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment Chris Whyte, Operational Director of Environment Services</p>
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Monday 15 April 2019

Agenda	Item	Details	Cabinet Member/Member	Brent Council/External organisations
1.	Chair's report	Update from the Chair on the work of the committee.	Cllr Matt Kelcher, Chair Scrutiny Committee	
2.	Knife Crime Task Group report	Report on findings and recommendations from the task group examination of knife crime in Brent.	Cllr Tom Miller, Cabinet Member for Community Safety	Amar Dave, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment Chris White, Operational Director of Environment Services Karina Wane, Head of Community Protection
3.	Illegal rubbish dumping	A report on actions the Council can take to help combat the problem of illegal dumping of rubbish on non-council land. This is to include a review of options for mattress tagging in the private rented sector.	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment	Amar Dave, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment Chris Whyte, Operational Director of Environment Services
4.	Annual Safer Brent Partnership Report 2018/19	Annual report of the Safer Brent Partnership and update on community safety.	Cllr Tom Miller, Cabinet Member for Community Safety	Carolyn Downs, Brent Chief Executive Amar Dave, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment Karina Wane, Head of Community Protection Metropolitan Police

Proposed for 2019/20:

- Options for a new Council Tax Support scheme and potential impacts of Council Tax collection moving in-house