

	<p>Full Council 24th November 2008</p> <p>Report from The Executive</p>
<p>Wards Affected: ALL</p>	
<p>The First Reading of the 2009-10 Budget Priorities of the Administration</p>	

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report sets out the Administration's top priorities for action and spending and should be read in conjunction with the Corporate Strategy and the concurrent report from the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources which sets out the main parameters surrounding the setting of the budget.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Council is recommended to consider the priorities alongside the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources paper on the budget and to debate them as set out in Standing Orders 25A and 44.

**3.0 PART 1
The Priorities**

3.1 The Priorities that we outline this year are clearly set within the context of the severe economic downturn we are now facing. Our first priority as an Administration must be to protect services to our most vulnerable citizens and ensure that whatever hardships people face the Council uses its skills and resources to help ameliorate them.

3.2 The other overriding priority must be to ensure that we maximize the effectiveness of our ever tightening financial resources and that

everything we spend maximizes the positive outcome for local people.

- 3.3 Applying the principles of the previous two paragraphs we therefore believe that there is now no higher priority than making the Improvement & Efficiency Strategy which we launched in September 2008 deliver. It is essential that the programme of reviews and activities detailed in the strategy are carried through to conclusion and from there flow services that better meet our residents needs whilst producing efficiency savings that can be reinvested into priority services and further performance improvements.
- 3.4 With the economic downturn we believe it is now timely that we review delivery of our Corporate Strategy, not to change it but to ensure that those priorities which have most resonance with meeting the effects of difficult economic conditions have sufficient weight. We are therefore asking the Chief Executive to take this forward and respond to us if any changes of emphasis are necessary.
- 3.5 It therefore follows that our priorities for expenditure this year will be to invest in the delivery of our key four themes, Crime & Community Safety, Young People, Sustainability & Regeneration. To ensure (with partners) the continued delivery of our LAA targets and to use 'invest to save' capital and revenue in service changes identified by the Improvement & Efficiency Strategy and subsequent activities.
- 3.6 We will be continuing to seek to create space through revenue efficiency for further service improvements and better outcomes. Our success with Children's Social Care highlighted in this report shows clearly that focused and well spent 'up front' investment results in spending significantly less on services over a sustained period of time but with significantly better outcomes.
- 3.7 At this stage in the budget making we identify the following key areas for additional support in 2009/10:-
- We will put further investment in CCTV to keep our citizens feeling safe
 - We will continue our investment in additional PCSO's to build on our highly successful push on crime reduction and we will put our own funding in addition to any Building Schools for the Future allocation to invest in the best possible futures for all our children and make schemes happen
- 3.8 In the next year we will be prioritizing additional resources into services for youth & young people by
- Continuing to roll out extended schools provision and ensure that it is sustainable for the long-term.
 - Investing in services to our 3-4 year olds and putting further money into Sure Start and our Children's Centres.

- Recognising the importance to vulnerable people of getting our reforms to Adult Social Care right we will in the next year put additional resources into this to make this happen.

3.9 Through the use of one off monies from performance reward gained from the successful implementation of our first LAA we will with our Partners re-invest this into improvement projects to drive through our second LAA.

4.0 PART 2

The Achievements

4.1 This is the third year of delivering the challenging four year Corporate Strategy ensuring high quality public services which are relevant to local needs and improve the quality of life experienced by people who live and work in Brent. The Corporate Strategy 2006-2010 is structured around the three priority issues agreed with local partners in the Community Strategy and they aim to create:

- A Great Place
- A Borough of Opportunity
- An Inclusive Borough

4.2 From this, the Administration has identified four key themes where significant progress is expected: crime and fear of crime, regeneration and economic prosperity, services for young people and environmental sustainability. Improving the performance of public services and addressing disadvantage and inequality through effective governance and local partnership working are central to the administration's strategic and operational objectives. Our recent achievement of level three of the new Equality Standard is evidence of this.

4.3 Crime and Fear of Crime

A Safe Place

- Brent exceeded its crime target, recording a 21% reduction against the basket of 10 indicators. This equates to 4,518 fewer offences since 2003/04.
- We moved from 66% of people feeling threatened by crime a 'great deal' or a 'fair amount' to 41% of residents expressing such fear. (online crime survey)
- Increased the rating given by park users in the annual survey for feeling safe in parks from 8.2 to 8.5 on the ILAM scale in wardened parks and from 6.0 to 7.0 in parks without wardens.
- We developed the Brent Crime Prevention Partnership Plan 2008-2011.
- A Borough wide Controlled Drinking Zone was put in place.
- Our LAA target for getting 1300 local residents into structured drug treatment programmes was exceeded.

- The mediation project, made possible through a successful bid to the treasury, addressed neighbourhood disputes with provision of mediators at a conflict clinic and piloted a programme for minimising disputes in a school environment.
- We celebrated the first anniversary of Brent's Specialist Domestic Violence Court which has increased successful outcomes by 50%. The Court also saw a 34% increase in cases heard and a 7% increase in the conviction rate.
- The 'Don't be a target of gun and knife crime' campaign 2008 was launched.
- Dispersal orders have been put in place for a number of areas across the borough to curb anti social behaviour.
- Reduced anti-social behaviour through prevention, diversion and enforcement activities
- Delivered programmes of prevention work on knife and gun crime with local schools through operation Curb and the Comedy School and Stereo theatre presentations
- Removed 99.1% racist graffiti within 24 hours in 07/08 (100% target)
- Investigated 96.5% reported abandoned vehicles within 24 hours of notification in 07/08 (98% target)
- Average time of one and a half days to remove abandoned vehicles from the date the authority is legally entitled to remove the vehicle
- Removed abandoned fly-tips within 24 hours
- 26% reduction in illegal trading between 2007 and 2008 as measured by the number of reported infringements
- A 0.6% reduction in sales of age restricted goods to children
- CCTV strategy approved and an average of 99% of CCTV fully operational in 07/08
- Average 212 hours of surveillance by Police in CCTV Control Room per quarter for 2007
- CCTV actively used by council regulators in enforcement against street crime

4.4 **Regeneration and Economic Prosperity**

Local Employment and Enterprise

- We supported 1156 local workless residents into work through the Brent in2 Work team. Over half of these residents live in the most deprived neighbourhoods in the borough and three-quarters had been unemployed for at least a year.
- In 07-08 Bin2W placed 44 residents with disabilities into employment. Bin2W now funds and supports outreach roles in a number of local organisations. This includes posts within the mental health trust and Cricklewood Homeless Concern. A post has been created within Brent Mencap to focus on people with disabilities. The Incapacity benefit programme will also continue to support existing IB claimants who are not yet picked up through Pathways to Work

- The Wembley Works employment hub was opened in August 2008 by Stephen Timms, the then Minister of State for Employment and Welfare Reform. The hub is located inside the first completed building within the Wembley development area. It will provide skills training and job opportunities for some of the 6,200 leisure, retail and hospitality jobs that will become available in the Wembley City development as it is built over the next few years. The project is delivered through a partnership between Brent In2 Work, Quintain Estates & Development plc and the College of North West London.
- The Employer Partnership has held three breakfast business forums since March that have been attended by over 50 local businesses. A partnership of local business support agencies, Jobcentre Plus and business training providers, the Employer Partnership is led by the Regeneration Team and aims to promote and raise awareness of business growth opportunities within the Borough while providing an effective interface to Council services.
- Brent in2 Work has successfully completed the second phase of the LDA's Personal best volunteering programme. Almost 40 local residents completed the 8 week Level 1 qualification and are now progressing into further training, volunteering or employment. They will also be given the opportunity to be a volunteer at the 2012 Olympics.
- The Council has recently agreed to consult local residents on proposals for the long term regeneration of the North Circular Road area.
- The Council has addressed a range of shortcomings associated with the South Kilburn New Deal for Communities programme. A full governance review has been undertaken and a reconstituted Board is currently being recruited. A Delivery Plan has been approved by the Council and the government for the final three years of the programme and plans are being established for the longer term succession arrangements. The Council is exploring new options for the delivery of the physical regeneration programme, and is in advanced discussions to bring forward a new sports facility and healthy living centre.
- In March 2008 we launched our Brent London 2012 Action Plan at Wembley Stadium. This demonstrates our commitment to London 2012 and how we want to maximise benefits for local residents. Work undertaken includes:
 - Working with GLA to host the start of the Beijing Torch Relay at Wembley Stadium/Arena in April 2008.
 - Working with the West London Alliance to host 'Culture8' at Wembley Arena celebrating the launch of the Cultural Olympiad and showcasing sports and arts activities from across the sub-region.
 - Securing funding to deliver a third phase of the Personnel Best programme in Brent.

Civic Leadership

- We continued to deliver on the first LAA. Brent Council and Partners began the final year of stretch targets in April 2008. The majority of our stretch targets are at or close to target. Having already achieved the value for money target, the outlook is generally very positive. Overall our performance is on target to achieve £8,615,779 out of a possible total £9,380,850 of Performance Reward Grant for our first LAA. This year interim stretch target achievements have included:
 - Increased proportion of domestic violence crimes that are successfully brought to justice through charge and prosecution at court
 - A reduction in accidental fires in residential properties
 - An increased number of schools achieving the December 2005 National Healthy Schools Standard
- Final negotiations for the new 2008 LAA were completed in June. Levelling inequality is the key priority within our new LAA. We have developed a total of 38 priorities (including 12 first round LAA stretch targets and 4 local). They are strategic and cross cutting in nature, usually involve at least one or more partners for delivery, and have a focus on prevention. These 'elements' were tested as part of the consultation, selection and challenge process for the LAA during its development. Our evidence base guided our decision making and all the priorities are in line with the overarching community strategy.
- We have put in place a partnership performance management framework and a governance and accountability framework for the LSP to support our partnership working. In the context of this framework, we are working with partners to expand our systems to performance manage the delivery of the new LAA.
- We have a site for our new civic centre, are going out to procure a design team and at the same time are recruiting a new assistant director as part of our Business Transformation Department to drive the project forward.

Settled Homes

- Despite severe pressures, we remain on target for key homelessness indicators on reduction of temporary accommodation use, length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation and repeat homelessness acceptances.
- Revised arrangements for the delivery of housing advice services have resulted in a significant increase in the numbers of people seen and targets for referral to homelessness services have been exceeded.
- A new homelessness strategy has been adopted.
- Our Private Housing Services Team have again exceeded their target for bringing empty homes back into use and for tenancies benefiting from mandatory enforcement action.
- A new approach to day-to-day repairs by Brent Housing Partnership resulted in significant improvement in the time taken to complete works and customer satisfaction.

- The council has continued to bid successfully for regional housing pot funding to deliver larger homes through a programme of extensions and deconversions.
- Good progress made on our housing and social care PFI, with financial closure expected in November 2008.
- We are anticipating confirmation of the completion of 500 new affordable homes over the last twelve months, an increase on previous years.
- Brent Housing Partnership has secured funding to deliver its first three family homes.
- The first housing block in the Wembley development was handed over in August 2008 and the new masterplan, including 4000 new homes in addition to the existing consent, is out for consultation.
- Met annual targets for housing in multiple occupation licensing
- Private landlords forum met quarterly
- Met LAA target to increase the % of vulnerable households in decent homes in the private sector
- Introduced a pilot rent plus scheme

4.5 Young People

Early Excellence

We have evidence of robust partnerships with the PCT, voluntary sector and schools, which have resulted in key achievements:

- Sustained improvements in child and adolescent mental health services with targeted and specialist support structures in place to support children on the verge of care and those already in the care system.
- A decline in teenage conceptions and an increase in the proportion of mothers initiating breastfeeding.
- Positive progress in the area of child protection against the background of increased referrals which is evidenced by a reduction of repeat referrals.
- The focus on early identification and prevention interventions continues to be strong with the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework and Lead Professional roles across the borough.
- There is evidence of further improved GCSE results which are above the London and national averages. We are also set to reach our LAA stretch target to improve outcomes for Looked After children in gaining 5 A*-G grade GCSEs.
- We have improved outcomes for Black Caribbean and Somali pupils at Key stages 2 and 4.
- The participation and involvement of children and young people in strategic planning, design and service development is good with a strong Youth Parliament that is representative of all sectors of children and young people in the borough.
- There is evidence of good participation in education, training or employment and low numbers of young people recorded as being

not in education, training and employment. Performance in this area has exceeded the 2010 target.

- We have reduced the numbers of looked after children from 390 to 369 and improved the quality of placements through the implementation of the 'invest to save' strategy.
- We are mapping youth provision by the council and its partners with the aim of providing a more integrated youth offer in the borough. Last year, the Youth Service exceeded national benchmarks for recorded outcomes achieved by young people.
- To build schools for the future and transform education in the borough with 21st century facilities, we have established a consultation forum with secondary Head Teachers to shape our expression of interest submission to DCSF.
- 2007/08 saw improved sports participation by young people and particularly looked after children and disabled young people with performance exceeding LAA targets for that year.
- Brent has the third highest reduction in outer London from 2006-2007 (latest available data) in terms of the level of ongoing total road traffic accident casualty reduction
- We have achieved consistent improvement over the last three years in numbers of our schoolchildren attaining five or more GCSEs at A*-C, with 65% achieving this year. We have ranked in the top quartile of councils for last two years.
- Similarly, we have improved consistently in pupils achieving Level 5 or above in their Key Stage 3 ICT test – from 64% last year (bottom quartile) to 72% (third quartile) this year.
- Pupils achieving Level 5 or above in Key Stage 2 maths has seen us improve from third quartile in 06/07 to second quartile in 07/08.
- We achieved our target of 100% of child protection cases being reviewed in 2007/08.

4.6 Environmental Sustainability

A Clean Place and a Green Place

- Significant improvements seen in street cleanliness with the first independent score this year showing only 13% of Brent's streets fail to meet an acceptable level of cleanliness compared to an annual score of 21% in 2007/08. We appear to be on track to meet our target for this year.
- Our compulsory recycling initiative was launched in August 2008, compelling residents to use their green recycling box for certain waste items. Participation in some areas has risen to over 90% from an average of 40% and reduced the amount of waste sent to landfill.
- Further, we have placed on-street recycling bins outside every transport hub (tube stations, etc) in the borough, and we send waste guidance to developers to ensure that recycling facilities are designed into all new housing projects.
- 84% of Council buildings now have recycling facilities. We are in negotiation with landlords and aim to achieve 100% by Dec 2008

- Our Graffiti Partnership Board has successfully created intelligence sharing networks between key enforcement partners, including Police, housing providers, graffiti clean up teams and rail companies, resulting in 8 individuals being apprehended between March and August 2008.
- Brent has the third highest reduction in outer London from 2006-2007 (latest available data) in terms of the level of ongoing total road traffic accident casualty reduction
- We won the 'Contribution to sustainable transport' award at the National Transport Awards for work on the Wembley National Stadium '3 station strategy', which substantially reduced the use of private cars and led to the stadium being known as a 'public transport destination'
- We won an award at the "Smarter Travel Awards" for our travel plans
- Developed the Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Plan to aid reduction of carbon emissions by 2010. Some energy efficiency projects have already been implemented.
- We have added a district park, bringing the borough's total up to four. User satisfaction with access to our parks has also increased from "average" to "good", according to the Annual Parks Survey.
- We have continued to increase the numbers of multi-use games areas (MUGA's) in parks
- 2129 trees planted in Parks and roadside habitats maintained by the Parks Service.

4.7 **Delivering the rest of the Corporate Strategy**

Health and Wellbeing and Help when you need it

- By promoting the independence of service users, we increased the number of people aged 18-64 with physical disabilities, learning difficulties or mental health problems who are helped to live at home. As a result we have reduced the number of people aged 18-64 being placed in residential care.
- An increased number of older people aged over 65 were helped to continue living in community settings.
- We achieved significant increases in the number of people from all client groups receiving Direct Payments to purchase their care.
- The number of people provided with equipment or adaptations within seven working days following the completion of their assessment has risen to 91%.
- We are delivering a programme of joint priorities with the PCT including implementation of our Health and Well Being Strategy, reducing delayed discharges and developing intermediate care services.
- The Health Select Committee looked at the health inequalities in the borough to shape their work programme and challenge key health initiatives at committee meetings where the PCT was strongly engaged and responsive to their input.

- The CSCI inspection carried out during February and March 2008 found that:
 - Brent's safeguarding of adults was adequate;
 - Our delivery of personalised services was good;
 - Our capacity to improve was promising;
 - We have implemented an action plan to improve safeguarding.

A Lively Place

- The Library Strategy 2008-2012 was agreed by the Council's Executive in January 2008. The strategy sets out a programme of radical improvements to buildings and services, aimed at increasing usage and participation and progress so far includes:
 - Opening of the new Kingsbury Library Plus in April 2008, a merger with customer services to provide a better service offer.
 - Progressing the refurbishment of Harlesden Library, having successfully secured a Big Lottery Grant for the project.
 - Progressing refurbishment of the Neasden Library.
 - Restructuring of Library Service underway to allow for overall increase in library opening hours.
- 2007/08 saw improved sports participation by young people and particularly looked after children and disabled young people with performance exceeding LAA targets for that year.
- We further expanded our sports programme for both adults and young people to increase levels of physical activity and have used the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics as a catalyst to increase participation
- Working with Sport England to develop a draft strategic plan for sports facilities within the borough which will allow us to prioritise future facilities developments across the borough.

Community Engagement

- The neighbourhood working model agreed at the all-party Constitutional Working Group in 2007 is now working in all 21 wards. It is a significant component of the Council's strategic response to the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act and contributes to delivering our LAA commitments and place-shaping role. Councillor 'walk abouts' have been held in most wards and action plans have been developed for all wards based on residents' views. Key internal and external partners are engaged, particularly Streetcare and Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams. The neighbourhood working team are developing Neighbourhood Bulletins in partnership with Safer Neighbourhood Teams and NHS Brent to give feedback to residents.

Building Our Capacity

- We have achieved a score of four for our CPA block this year with improvements in a number of key indicators. The major

transformation of the service in recent years has been recognized with the Benefits team winning the IRRV Most Improved Team of the Year 2008.

- Brent's performance management framework was reviewed and strengthened this year and sets out the main principles and structures in the council to ensure effective performance management. Associated training sessions for managers are planned in early 2009.
- The present service planning framework was introduced in 2007/08. Service plans list critical success factors to directly measure achievement of each plan's objectives, and targets for these factors. Improvements to the new service planning framework this year included challenge days for all service plans, further training on the planning required before a service plan is written and a process underway to get service plans on PerformancePlus, our performance management software.
- PerformancePlus is now being used to collect and report all of the council's key performance information. PerformancePlus is being rolled out to some of our partners for direct entry of data.
- The quarterly Performance and Finance Review, introduced in 2007/08, continues to provide activity, performance and spending information for each service area enabling assessment of risk to delivery of corporate priorities. It now has more in depth information on the LAA. Reporting, facilitated by PerformancePlus, is considered by our Executive, Corporate Management Team and Overview and Scrutiny committees. The Local Strategic Partnership has received regular reports on performance and will continue to do so with the in-depth LAA pages.
- The council's commitment to efficiency is demonstrated by being the only council to build an efficiency stretch target into its Local Area Agreement. We exceeded the stretch target performance with efficiency savings of £26.4m, more than the £1.6m above the 7.5% cumulative government target for 2005/06 to 2007/08 required.

5. We continue to be proud of the progress we have made but as we set out in Part 1 of this report we intend to make a step change in our approach to improvement and efficiency to do more and to do better.

PAUL LORBER
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL