



Cabinet

Monday 23 February 2015 at 7.00 pm

Board Room 4 - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,
Wembley HA9 0FJ

Membership:

**Lead Member
Councillors:**

Portfolio

Butt (Chair)
Pavey (Vice-Chair)
Crane
Denselow
Hirani
Mashari
McLennan
Moher

Leader of the Council
Deputy Leader of the Council
Lead Member for Environment
Lead Member for Stronger Communities
Lead Member for Adults, Health and Well-being
Lead Member for Employment and Skills
Lead Member for Regeneration and Housing
Lead Member for Children and Young People

For further information contact: Anne Reid, Principal Democratic Services Officer
020 8937 1359, anne.reid@brent.gov.uk

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democracy.brent.gov.uk

The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting

Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Apologies for absence.

Item	Page
1 Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests	
2 Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 14
3 Matters arising	
4 Petitions	15 - 16

Petitions on the following have been received in response to the budget exercise:

- 1. Keep Stonebridge Adventure Playground open**
- 2. Keep Welsh Harp Environmental Study Centre open**
- 3. Save our youth service**
- 4. Save School Crossings Patrol**
- 5. Leopold Primary School - save our School Patrol Officer**
- 6. Keep Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre open**

Details attached.

5 Budget 2015/16 and Council Tax	<i>Circulated separately</i>
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On 15 December 2014 Cabinet considered the council's overall financial position and a set of draft budget proposals. Cabinet agreed that:

"...consultation be carried out with residents, the voluntary and community sector, local businesses and other groups as necessary on the draft savings proposals and their consequences."

Cabinet is now required to recommend a budget for Full Council to consider at its meeting of 2 March 2015. This report therefore presents a summary of the further work that has been undertaken in order to reach the budget now proposed, and the reasons for the proposals. Where appropriate the financial information previously presented has been updated, and those remaining uncertainties (as at the date of despatch) are highlighted and addressed.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Councillor Pavey
Contact Officer: Mick Bowden, Operational

Children and Young People reports

6 Contract with Brent Play Association for Stonebridge Adventure Playground 17 - 34

This report seeks to determine the future of the contract with Brent Play Association for the provision of play activities at Stonebridge Adventure Playground (SAP). The current contract runs until 31 March 2015.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Councillor Moher
Contact Officer: Sara Williams, Operational
Director, Early Help and Education
Tel: 020 8937 3510 sara.williams@brent.gov.uk

7 The future development of Children's Centres 35 - 184

This report details the initial outcome of ongoing consultation with staff and service users on the development of a sustainable model for the borough's children's centres to be implemented from September 2015. This report recommends a preferred option following consideration of the consultation and requests approval to invite tenders in respect of the management and operation of Children's Centres as required by Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Councillor Moher
Contact Officer: Sara Williams, Operational
Director, Early Help and Education
Tel: 020 8937 3510 sara.williams@brent.gov.uk

Regeneration and Growth reports

8 Stonebridge redevelopment proposals including Primary School Expansion and the Stonebridge Day Centre - update 185 - 296

Following public consultation, this report is an update to Members, detailing the development of site proposals for the Subject Lands, setting out the process of public consultation on the most up-to date plans and setting out the feedback received. Based on this, Officers have made various recommendations with regard to the redevelopment.
(Appendix referred to below)

Ward Affected:
Stonebridge

Lead Member: Councillor McLennan
Contact Officer: Sarah Chaudhry, Head of
Strategic Property
Tel: 020 8937 1705
sarah.chaudhry@brent.gov.uk

9 Development Funds Programme Development for 2015-16 297 -

324

This report seeks the approval of Cabinet for the proposed spatial and thematic allocation of Section 106 funds for expenditure in 2015-16 and commissioning specific projects and budget amounts detailed herein.

Ward Affected:

All Wards

Lead Member: Councillor McLennan

Contact Officer: Aktar Choudhury, Civic Centre Programme

Tel: 020 8937 1764

aktar.choudhury@brent.gov.uk

10 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan and Budget (including rent proposals for 2015/16) 325 -

360

This report presents to Members the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) forecast outturn for 2014/15 and a proposed HRA Business Plan budget for 2015/16 as required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The report sets out budget proposals for housing management services, stock investment and new council housing development, and rent-setting proposals for 2015/16.

Ward Affected:

All Wards

Lead Member: Councillor McLennan

Contact Officer: Jon Lloyd-Owen, Operational Director, Housing and Employment

Tel: 020 8937 5199 jon.lloyd-

owen@brent.gov.uk

11 Authority to award contracts for Rough Sleepers' Outreach and Housing Advice and Resettlement Services 361 -

428

At its meeting on the 16 June 2014, Cabinet approved proposals to invite tenders for the provision of the London Borough of Brent's Rough Sleepers' Outreach and Housing Advice and Resettlement Services. Subsequently the services were put out as two separate tenders namely: The Rough Sleeper's Outreach Service; and The Rough Sleepers' Housing Advice and Resettlement Service. This report now requests authority to award contracts as required by Contract Standing Order No 88. This report summarises the process undertaken in tendering this contract and, following the completion of the evaluation of the tenders, recommends to whom the contracts should be awarded.

(Appendix referred to below)

Ward Affected:

All Wards

Lead Member: Councillor McLennan

Contact Officer: Jon Lloyd-Owen, Operational Director, Housing and Employment

Tel: 020 8937 5199 jon.lloyd-

owen@brent.gov.uk

12 National Non Domestic Rates – applications for Discretionary Rate Relief 429 - 438

The Council has the discretion to award rate relief to charities or non-profit making bodies. It also has the discretion to remit an individual National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR) liability in whole or in part on the grounds of hardship. The award of discretionary rate relief is based on policy and criteria agreed by the Executive in September 2013. New applications for relief have to be approved by the Cabinet. The report details new applications for relief received since the Executive last considered such applications on 26 August 2014.

Ward Affected: All Wards
Lead Member: Councillor Mashari
Contact Officer: Margaret Read, OD Customer Services
Tel: 020 8937 1521
margaret.read@brent.gov.uk

Environment and Neighbourhoods reports

13 Libraries Stock Contract 439 - 442

This report sets out the process for re-tendering of the stock contract for the Library Service. The current framework agreement with the Central Buying Consortium ends in March 2016. There are two potential new frameworks that Brent could join. This report addresses that and also suggests a contingency arrangement, should the setting up of the frameworks be delayed.

Ward Affected: All Wards
Lead Member: Councillor Denselow
Contact Officer: Sue McKenzie, Libraries, Arts and Heritage
Tel: 020 8937 3144 sue.mckenzie@brent.gov.uk

Adult Social Care reports

14 Adult Social Day Care Opportunities provision - Direct Services 443 - 456

The report identifies the need to begin a statutory consultation period on the future delivery model for day opportunities currently delivered from the New Millennium Day Centre and Kingsbury Resource Centre. The report additionally identifies the need to carry out a co-production exercise and options appraisal process in parallel to the statutory consultation to ensure we make best use of existing resources, support the re-modelling of day opportunities services within the community and ensure the current service users eligible needs continue to be met.

Ward Affected: All Wards
Lead Member: Councillor Hirani
Contact Officer: Nancie Alleyne, Direct

Services
Tel: 020 8937 4042
nancie.alleyne@brent.gov.uk

15 Tudor Gardens - Supporting Independent Living 457 -
468

Tudor Gardens is a registered residential care home that Brent Council, adult social care, directly provides for adults with learning disabilities. This paper provides an overview of the service and the proposal to de-register the residential care home and re-provide it as supported living accommodation in line with the department's objectives to support people to have increased choice and control to live as independently as possible. The report also sets out the consultation process that will need to take place and highlights the potential issues that will need to be resolved as we go through that consultation process.

Ward Affected: All Wards
Lead Member: Councillor Hirani
Contact Officer: Nancie Alleyne, Direct Services
Tel: 020 8937 4042
nancie.alleyne@brent.gov.uk

16 Authority to award contract for Housing Related Support Services 469 -
476

This report requests authority to award a Floating and Accommodation Housing Related Support Services (FAHRS) contract as required by Contract Standing Order No 88. It also summarises the process undertaken in tendering this contract and, following the completion of the evaluation of the tenders, recommends to whom the contract should be awarded.

(Appendix referred to below)

Ward Affected: All Wards
Lead Member: Councillor Hirani
Contact Officer: Amy Jones, Commissioning and Quality
Tel: 020 8937 4061 amy.jones@brent.gov.uk

Central Reports

17 Promoting Individual Electoral Registration - Scrutiny Task Group Report 477 -
508

This report brings to the Cabinet a report which contains findings and recommendations of the scrutiny task group's investigation into how to manage a successful transition to Individual Electoral Registration (IER). The IER system went live in July 2014 and is expected to fully supplant the current Household Electoral Registration system on 1st December 2015 with the aim of making the process of registration more convenient and secure.

Ward Affected: **Lead Member:** Councillor Pavey

All Wards

Contact Officer: Cathy Tyson, Assistant Chief Executive's Service
Tel: 020 8937 1045 cathy.tyson@brent.gov.uk

18 Authority to tender a contract for pre paid Financial Services

509 -
514

This report concerns the procurement of pre-paid financial services for clients (principally adult care clients and carers of children) who are allocated personal care budgets, in order to allow them more independence in the management of their financial affairs. This report requests approval, as required by Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89 to invite tenders for the renewal of this contract from 1st October 2015.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Councillor Pavey
Contact Officer: Conrad Hall, Chief Finance Officer
Tel: 020 8937 6528 conrad.hall@brent.gov.uk

19 Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committee - none

20 Exclusion of Press and Public

The following items are not for publication as they relate to the following category of exempt information as specified in the Local Government Act 1972 namely:

APPENDICES:

- Stonebridge redevelopment proposals including Primary School Expansion and the Stonebridge Day Centre - update
- Authority to award contracts for Rough Sleepers' Outreach and Housing Advice and Resettlement Services
- Authority to award contract for Housing Related Support Services

(reports above relate)

21 Any other urgent business

Notice of items to be raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Democratic Services Manager or his representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 64.

Date of the next meeting: Monday 16 March 2015



- Please remember to set your mobile phone to silent during the meeting.
- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public.

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LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE CABINET Monday 26 January 2015 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Butt (Chair), Councillor Pavey (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Crane, Denselow, Hirani, Mashari, McLennan and Moher

Also present: Councillors Ahmed, Chohan, S Choudhary, A Choudry, Kabir, Mahmood, Perrin and Warren

1. **Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests**

None made.

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 December 2014 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. **Matters arising**

None.

4. **Museum and Archives Strategy**

The report before the Cabinet presented for consideration the Brent Museum and Archives Strategy produced following a comprehensive consultation process. The report set out a framework and action plan for evolving the service to meet the needs of a wider audience. Councillor Denselow (Lead Member, Stronger Communities) supported the vision of the strategy which he said was a unique opportunity and he was pleased that the council would be one of the few in London that had a local museum. The council would be working in partnership with the voluntary sector and the facility would seek to appeal to the whole borough. Councillor Denselow reported that the community looked forward to the prospect of the rebranded museum space and archives search room in the Library at Willesden Green.

With the consent of the Chair, Councillor Warren addressed the meeting and spoke in support of maintaining traditional access to the archives. Councillor Denselow responded that existing users would be welcomed however efforts would be made to attract young people as they were the users of the future. Cabinet members expressed support for the strategy and the sustainable opportunity to showcase the borough's history and heritage with the new Library at Willesden Green. Members

also paid tribute to the Wembley Library at the Civic Centre which demonstrated the transformation from old to new use of space, with many activities in conjunction with partners.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the findings of the Museum and Archives Strategy be noted and agreement be given to its vision that: "Brent's museum and archives are here for everyone; a window into the history of Brent, its people and places. We will use these unique resources to create opportunities, improve lives and create stronger communities";
- (ii) that the three interlinked objectives which have been formed to deliver the vision of the Strategy as set out in paragraph 3.15 of the report be agreed;
- (iii) that agreement be given to the action plan to deliver the Museum and Archives Strategy as set out in Appendix 3 to the report;
- (iv) that the content of the Equality Impact Assessment as set out in Appendix 4 to the report be noted.

5. Adult Social Care - Local Account 2013/14

Councillor Hirani (Lead Member, Adults, Health and Well-being) introduced the report Local Account 2013/14 which provided a mechanism by which councils were required to demonstrate local engagement and accountability. It was also a tool for planning improvements, as a result of sharing information on performance with people who use services and engaging with them to get feedback on their experience. The document attached to the report from the Strategic Director, Adults had appended at Appendix A the full version of the report. Councillor Hirani advised that in response to feedback, the report had been made more accessible and an easy to read interactive version would be available on the council's website. He drew attention to the partnership approach adopted in consultation and the role of other stakeholders. Councillor Hirani highlighted the increase in the number of people receiving home care and the variation in the number of hours of care from the average of 7.3 per week to 35 hours per week (at a cost of £21,400 per year). He referred to the Adult Social Care core priorities which included zero tolerance of abuse, prevention by supporting independence, early intervention and choice and control to help people access the support they wanted to meet their individual needs. Councillor Hirani paid tribute to the work of the Carers Hub which dealt with approximately 4,000 enquiries per year.

With the consent of the Cabinet, Councillor Warren addressed the meeting and welcomed the role of Healthwatch Brent as the council's critical friend. He also sought more information on the number of safeguarding adults alerts, the outcome of full investigations and why some were inconclusive. Councillor Hirani responded wherever possible cases were investigated but sufficient information was not always available to allow this.

RESOLVED:

that the finance and performance information and the public service standards contained in the report be noted, together with the current and future risks associated with the information provided and the strategic priorities identified.

6. Procuring an Accommodation Based Respite Framework Agreement

The report from the Strategic Director, Adults sought authority for the invite of tenders in respect of an accommodation based respite framework agreement as a means of managing the increase in demand for community-based respite care. Members noted that as the West London Alliance Home Support Framework and the Day Care services, Shared Lives Services did not include accommodation-based respite care and neither was there an appropriate contract elsewhere, there would be a supply gap for those cases where residential respite placement services were needed. It was therefore proposed that the council established a dedicated Framework, called the Accommodation Based Respite Framework Agreement for this service.

Councillor Hirani (Lead Member, Adults, Health and Well-being) advised that the framework would allow for an agreed price instead of the current spot purchasing. In response to a question from Councillor Perrin, Councillor Hirani confirmed that the framework was not London Living Wage compliant but that work towards this continued.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that approval be given to the invite of tenders in respect of an accommodation based respite framework agreement on the basis of the pre-tender considerations as set out in paragraph 6.1 of the report from the Strategic Director, Adults;
- (ii) that approval be given to the evaluation of tenders referred to in (i) above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 6.1 of the report.

7. National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) - Discretionary Discount Scheme for businesses accredited to Living Wage Foundation

Councillor Mashari (Lead Member, Employment and Skills) introduced the report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth which set out proposals for an incentive scheme designed to support those businesses who were considering paying the London Living Wage (LLW) by offering a discount to any business who becomes accredited with the Living Wage Foundation. Councillor Mashari reminded the Cabinet that the majority of people in poverty were in work particularly in retail, hospitals and the private sector. The Cabinet noted that approximately 30% of Brent residents were paid less than the London Living Wage in comparison to a London average of 20%. Councillor Mashari advised that the council was trying to incentivise and encourage employers through the discretionary rate discount. She advised that negotiations were taking place with the local businesses and partners for the package to be put in place by April 2015 to coincide with the proposed discount coming into effect. Councillor Mashari was pleased to report that Brent Council was the first authority in the country to offer business rates discounts as an incentive to pay the 'living wage' to help living standards for low paid workers.

Members of the Cabinet welcomed the initiative and Councillor Mashari advised that the success of the initiative could be measured by the number of employers that signed up. Approximately 30 had expressed interest and further information would be included with business rates correspondence. Work was also taking place with the trade unions.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that approval be given to the proposal to offer a discount in National Non-Domestic Rates of five times the costs of accreditation to the first 100 businesses in Brent which become accredited with the Living Wage Foundation and who meet the criteria detailed in Appendix 1 of the report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth, pursuant to the Council's powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and that the Cabinet is satisfied that that this proposal is reasonable having regard to the interests of those persons who are liable to pay council tax in the borough of Brent;
- (ii) that the scheme be implemented from 1 April 2015 and run to 31 March 2016 in order to monitor take up and the cost incurred by the council in funding the scheme. A report would be submitted in January 2016 detailing the success of the scheme thus far and whether or not it should be extended into 2016/17;
- (iii) that applications for such discounts in National Non-Domestic Rates that meet the criteria as set out in Appendix 1 be approved jointly by the Head of Employment and Skills and Head of Customer Service and Revenue.

8. Brent's Local Welfare Assistance Scheme for 2015/16

The report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth set out a recommended scheme for Local Welfare Assistance payments in 2015/16. It proposed amendments to the current local scheme and changes to funding arrangements in Brent for the scheme in 2015/16 and beyond. It also recommended a fundamental review the scheme for 2016/17 and set out the financial impacts of the recommended Local Welfare Assistance Scheme for Brent and residents.

Councillor Mashari (Lead Member, in introducing the report, recommended Option 2 for 2015/16 as referred to in the report, which involved an increase in the maximum period for a Crisis Payment award to up to 14 days subject to a more fundamental review of the scheme in preparation for 2016/17 (Option 3). Councillor Mashari drew attention to the government's announcement earlier in the year that continued funding was to be withdrawn. The decision to continue with a Local Welfare Assistance scheme would be at the discretion of each authority but any scheme from April 2015 would need to be funded from the council's budget.

With the consent of the Chair, Councillor Warren, questioned why, of the £1.7m Government funding provided for the scheme, only £400,000 had been spent. Councillor Mashari drew attention to Appendix B of the Strategic Director's report which set out a draft timetable for the scheme review for implementation in 2016/17. She also pointed out that central government misclassification in the formula by the inclusion of budgeting loans had adversely affected Brent together with local authorities across London and the UK. As a result, the initial figures from the Department of Work and Pensions made the scheme appear less generous. The council could afford to be more flexible in the coming year and any underspend

could be used to continue the scheme. Councillor Mashari acknowledged that a number of successful applicants had subsequently been found to have savings over the permitted thresholds and efforts would be made to retrieve the assistance given. The administration costs had deliberately been kept low. Councillor McLennan welcomed the intention to add to the list of qualifying benefits which allow an application to be considered.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the current Local Welfare Assistance scheme objectives and structure be retained into 2015/16, but with amendments to scheme criteria designed to ensure that support is targeted at those most in need as as described in Option 2 set out in the report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth;
- (ii) that the underspend in Local Welfare Assistance scheme payments in 2013/14 and the forecast underspend in 2014/15 be ring-fenced to provide a Local Welfare Assistance scheme for at least the next two years;
- (iii) that the Local Welfare Assistance scheme be fundamentally reviewed during 2015 with a revised scheme to be implemented in April 2016;
- (iv) that the content of the Equalities Analysis as set out in Appendix C to the report be noted.

9. **Update on Schools Capital Portfolio**

The Cabinet noted that in a report on the revised School Place Planning Strategy 2014-2018 approved in October 2014, officers had committed to report back with fully detailed and costed proposals on three projects to be added to the Phase 3 Permanent Primary School Programme to enable full Cabinet approval to proceed. The report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth primarily addressed that requirement and provided a full update on the financial profile of the overall schools capital portfolio. Approval was also sought to enable the commencement of works contract procurement on additional Phase 3 projects as appropriate. Councillor McLennan (Lead Member, Housing and Regeneration) drew members' attention to the procurement process and the costs of permanent expansion.

In considering the report, members welcomed the proposals in the light of the expanding cohort and shortage of school places. The Chief Finance Officer drew attention to the uncertainty over funding for capital projects and it was noted that plans for expansion did not include secondary schools due to the number of Free Schools opening in the borough. Councillor McLennan advised that the Community Asset Strategy was under consideration and would include schools. Councillor Shafique Choudhary expressed concern at the over concentration of schools opening in the Wembley area in the vicinity of the Civic Centre.

The Cabinet also had before them an appendix to the report which was not for publication as it contained the following category of exempt information as specified in Schedule 12 of the Local Government (Access to Information Act) 1972:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

RESOLVED:

- (i) that approval be given to the proposal to rebuild and expand Islamia Primary School (subject to necessary approvals) noting the potential for increased capital costs for the project and consultation timescales described in paragraphs 3.3 - 3.6 of the joint report from the Strategic Directors, Regeneration and Growth and Children and Young People and authority to approve the fully costed and detailed proposals be delegated to the Strategic Director Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Lead Member for Regeneration and Housing. A detailed report on proposals for Winkworth Hall would be provided in September 2015;
- (ii) that approval be given to the proposal to expand Byron Court Primary School as described in the report at paragraphs 3.7 - 3.9;
- (iii) that approval be given to the proposal to expand Oakington Manor Primary School on the terms described in paragraph 3.10 of the report and authority to approve the fully costed and detailed proposals be delegated to the Strategic Director Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Lead Member for Regeneration and Housing;
- (iv) that approval be given the proposal to expand Leopold Primary School to become a 4FE split site primary school using the Gwenneth Rickus Building as described in paragraph 3.11-3.14 of the report and authority to approve the fully costed and detailed proposals be delegated to the Strategic Director Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Lead Member for Regeneration and Housing;
- (v) that approval be given to the invitation to tender for three works contracts for the schools detailed in (ii) to (iv) above on the basis of the pre-tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.16 of the report;
- (vi) that officers evaluate the tenders referred to (v) above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 3.16 of the report;
- (vii) that approval be given to the updated Schools Capital Portfolio financial profile as set out in paragraph 3.17-3.22, section 4 and Appendix 1, including the revised project/programme allocations;
- (viii) that approval be given to the criteria for developing new school expansion projects described in paragraph 3.23-3.25 and Appendix 5.

10. **Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for the Procurement and Management of Temporary Accommodation**

Councillor McLennan (Lead Member, Housing and Regeneration) introduced the report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth which sought authority pursuant to the council's Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89 to invite tenders for a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for the Procurement and Management of

Temporary Accommodation in accordance with the Council's Private Sector Accommodation Scheme. The procurement exercise was designed to provide a sufficient supply of temporary accommodation in the right places to adequately respond to the recent welfare changes and current overheated Housing Market in London. The proposed system would commence in July 2015 for the duration of two years with an option to extend for up to two years.

Councillor McLennan stressed the importance of increasing the stock of private housing so that people would not have to be re-housed outside the borough. She was pleased the tender would have two distinct lots to meet the council's requirements for affordable cost effective and good quality temporary accommodation one inside the M25 that was within Brent's geographical boundaries or as close as possible and Lot 2 Accommodation outside the M25 affordable to people in receipt of benefits, without increasing the costs to the Council Tax payer.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Butt, while welcoming the proposals, drew attention to the increasing gap between local housing association and market rents in the borough contributing to the collapse of the Housing Benefit rental market in the borough and Councillor Mashari expressed concern at the impact on young working people who could no longer afford to live in the borough.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that approval be given to the pre-tender considerations and the criteria to be used to evaluate tenders for a Direct Purchasing System for the Procurement and Management of Temporary Accommodation as set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth;
- (ii) that approval be given to the invite of expressions of interest, agreement of shortlists, the invite Tenders for a DPS for the Procurement and Management of Temporary Accommodation and their evaluation in accordance with the approved evaluation criteria referred to in (i) above;
- (iii) that authority be delegated to the Operational Director for Housing and Employment, as and when required, to appoint new service providers onto the DPS where they meet the selection criteria set out by the council;
- (iv) that authority be delegated to the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth to agree annual changes to the management fee.

11. **Award of Contract for procurement and management of Temporary Accommodation for Housing Association Leasing Scheme**

The report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth detailed the competitive tendering process of the contract for the Procurement and Management of Temporary Accommodation for Housing Association Leasing Scheme and made a recommendation as to award pursuant to Contract Standing Orders 88(c). The cabinet noted that authority to tender for the contract was given at the meeting of the Cabinet on 21 July 2014.

Councillor Butt (Leader of the Council) drew attention to the Equalities Impact Assessment and the anticipated adverse impact in relation to disability. Councillor McLennan assured that each case would be considered on its own merits.

The Cabinet also had before them an appendix to the report which was not for publication as it contained the following category of exempt information as specified in Schedule 12 of the Local Government (Access to Information Act) 1972:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

RESOLVED:

that approval be given to the recommendation of the evaluation panel to award the contract for Procurement and Management of Temporary Accommodation for HALS to the three Providers listed below for an initial period of three years, with an option to extend up to a further two years: Genesis Housing Association, London Strategic Housing Association and Shepherds Bush Housing Association.

12. South Kilburn Regeneration Programme - energy supplier for decentralised energy solution

Councillor McLennan (Lead Member, Housing and Regeneration) introduced the report which provided an update in respect of the South Kilburn Decentralised Energy System, which recommended that an Energy Service Company contract tender process be re-started. Councillor McLennan advised the Cabinet that as the decision to procure a contract to bring forward a decentralised energy system was first taken in 2011 it was felt necessary to review whether it was appropriate for commercial reasons given the time elapsed and the likelihood that the market would have developed with new entrants now available.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the tender process for the procurement of the South Kilburn decentralised energy system be re-started, noting the risks associated with this as set out in paragraph 3.13 of the report from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth;
- (ii) that approval be given to the invite of tenders for the procurement of the South Kilburn Regeneration decentralised energy system on the basis of the pre-tender considerations as set out in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (iii) that tenders referred to in (ii) above be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria set out in Appendix 2 of the report.

13. South Kilburn Regeneration Programme - Gloucester House and Durham Court, Chippenham Gardens secure tenancies for Phase 4

The report before the Cabinet from the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth set out the approvals required by the Cabinet to firstly further progress the Gloucester House and Durham Court redevelopment site (being part of 'Phase 2b' of the South Kilburn regeneration programme and as shown edged red on Plan A at

Appendix 1 to the report); secondly further progress 4 to 26 Stuart Road and 5 to 9 Chippenham Gardens which included the Kilburn Park Post Office (together defined as the 'Post Office Plus Site' and as shown edged red on Plan B at Appendix 1); and finally serve demolition notices on Phase 4A of the South Kilburn regeneration programme (being Craik Court, Austen House, Neville House, Winterleys and 113 to 128 Carlton House.

Members welcomed the progress towards the next phases of the South Kilburn regeneration programme and Councillor Mashari particularly welcomed requirement for the developer, once appointed, to submit and gain approval for an employment and training action plan to deliver education links, apprenticeships and local labour outcomes in accordance with a Section 106 agreement for Gloucester House and Durham Court.

RESOLVED:

Gloucester House and Durham Court

- (i) that the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth be authorised to undertake a mini competition under the Greater London Authority (GLA) London Development Panel subject to confirmation by the Director of Legal and Procurement that participation in the GLA London Development Panel is legally permissible, to procure a developer partner for the redevelopment of Gloucester House and Durham Court and report back to the Cabinet to secure approval for award of the contract;
- (ii) that approval be given to set rent levels for the affordable homes at Gloucester House and Durham Court once complete, at a rent equivalent to the Homes and Communities Agency Target Rent levels;

Post Office Plus Site

- (iii) that it be noted that within the main body of this report that, on 19 December 2014, the Council entered into a collaboration agreement with Woodville Properties Limited, the landowner of 5 to 9 Chippenham Gardens which includes the Kilburn Park Post Office, to bring forward the comprehensive redevelopment of 5 to 9 Chippenham Gardens which includes the Kilburn Park Post Office with the Council's adjoining land at 4 to 26 Stuart Road (together defined as the Post Office Plus Site') as shown edged red on Plan B at Appendix 1;
- (iv) that approval be given to the acquisition by agreement pursuant to section 227 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the making of a compulsory purchase order (CPO) pursuant to section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to acquire all non-Council interests in the area shown edged red on Plan B attached at Appendix 1 ('the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land') being the Post Office Plus Site together with any new rights which may be required under section 13 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous) Provisions Act 1976 to facilitate the development of the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land in furtherance of the regeneration of the Post Office Plus Site (and such CPO being referred to in this report as 'the Post Office Plus Site CPO')

- (v) that the following be authorised, the:
- (a) Submission of the Post Office Plus Site CPO, once made in respect of the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land, to the Secretary of State for confirmation whilst at the same time seeking to acquire the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land by private negotiated treaty on such terms as may be agreed by the Operational Director Property and Projects;
 - (b) Operational Director Property and Projects, on behalf of the Council, to enter into agreements with and give undertakings to the holders of all interests in the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land or parties otherwise affected where such agreements or undertakings are appropriate. These agreements or undertakings will set out the terms for the withdrawal of the objections to the confirmation of the Post Office Plus Site CPO and may include granting rights over or offering back any part of the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land which is not required by the Council following completion of the development.
 - (c) Making of one or more general vesting declarations or the service of Notices to Treat and Notices of Entry (as appropriate) pursuant to the Compulsory Purchase (Vesting Declarations) Act 1981 and the Compulsory Purchase Act 1965 respectively should the Post Office Plus Site CPO be confirmed by the Secretary of State or otherwise in order to gain possession of the Post Office Plus Site;
 - (d) Serving of all requisite notices on the holders of the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land relating to the making, confirmation and implementation of the Post Office Plus Site CPO;
 - (e) Operational Director Property and Projects to remove from the Post Office Plus Site CPO any plot (or any interest therein) no longer required to be acquired compulsorily for the Post Office Plus Site redevelopment to proceed and to amend the interest scheduled in the Post Office Plus Site CPO (if so advised) and to alter the nature of the proposed acquisition from an acquisition of existing property interests to an acquisition of new rights (if so advised);
 - (f) Operational Director Property and Projects within the defined boundary of the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land, to acquire land and/or new rights by agreement either in advance of the confirmation of compulsory purchase powers, if so advised, or following the confirmation of compulsory powers by the Secretary of State;
 - (g) Operational Director Property and Projects, if so advised, to seek to acquire for the Council by agreement any interest in land wholly or partly within the boundary of the Post Office Plus Site CPO Land for which a valid blight notice has been served.
- (vi) that agreement be given to set rent levels for the affordable units at the Post Office Plus Site once complete, at a rent equivalent to Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Target Rent levels;
- (vii) that agreement be given to proceed with securing vacant possession of the residential and non-residential properties within the Post Office Plus Site through negotiation and private treaty and then, if necessary, via possession proceedings based on Ground 10A of Schedule 2 to the Housing Act 1985

(‘Ground 10A’) in relation to the secure tenants and then CPO of all interests remaining following the confirmation of the CPO;

- (viii) that the Operational Director of Property and Projects (where the Operational Director of Property and Projects in conjunction with the Chief Finance Officer considers applicable) be authorised to acquire third party interests and rights within the Post Office Plus Site as necessary to progress the project by way of negotiation;
- (ix) that the Cabinet authorise the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth to seek Secretary of State’s consent to appropriate for planning purposes all interests in the Post Office Plus Site;
- (x) that approval be given to the serving of demolition notices and the suspension of secure tenants’ Rights to Buy in relation to secure tenancies in 4 to 26 Stuart Road and authorise the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Growth to issue all and any notices required to be issued in connection with such demolition;

Phase 4A Demolition Notices

- (xi) that approval be given to the serving of demolition notices and the suspension of secure tenants’ Rights to Buy in relation to secure tenancies in blocks Craik Court, Austen House, Neville House, Winterleys and 113 to 128 Carlton House (all numbers inclusive) (together defined as ‘Phase 4A’ of the South Kilburn regeneration programme) and authorise the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth to issue all and any notices required to be issued in connection with such demolition.

14. London Councils Grants 2015/2016

Councillor Pavey (Deputy Leader of the Council) presented the report from the Chief Finance Officer which sought agreement to London Councils Grants Committee budget for 2015/16 and the associated level of contribution by Brent Council to the London Borough Grants Scheme. He pointed out that Brent’s contribution was less than the previous year but that participation in the future would be kept under review.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the recommendations made by the London Councils Leaders Committee summarised in section 3 and attached at Appendix 3 to the report from the Chief Finance Officer be noted;
- (ii) that agreement be given to the recommended budget for the London Councils Grant Scheme and the contribution of £339,278 to be paid by the Council towards the London Boroughs Grants Scheme for 2015/16.

15. Authority to tender a contract for Healthwatch

The Cabinet considered the report from the Chief Executive which concerned commissioning arrangements for Local Healthwatch as set out in part 5 of the

Health and Social Care Act. The current Local Healthwatch contract was due to expire on 31 March 2015 and the report outlined the Council's statutory responsibilities and the business need to meet the statutory requirement in 2015/16. The report requested approval to invite tenders in respect of the Local Healthwatch contract as required by Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89.

Councillor Pavey (Deputy Leader of the Council) introduced the report in his capacity as Chair of the Health and Well Being Board and stressed the importance of Healthwatch as a strong independent voice. The intention was to put in place an interim contract to ensure continued provision of a Local Healthwatch service whilst the procurement process for a new contract was being undertaken by the council. Attention was drawn to the new criteria against which tenders would be evaluated which Councillor Pavey stated were designed to attract the best organisations.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that approval be given to the invite of tenders for a Local Healthwatch service contract on the basis of the pre-tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report from the Chief Executive;
- (ii) that the new contract be let for a term of one year with the option to extend for a further 12 months;
- (iii) that approval be given to the evaluation of the tenders referred to in (i) above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report;
- (iv) that approval be given to an exemption from the usual tendering requirements of Contract Standing Orders and the approval of the direct award of an interim contract to the current provider, Healthwatch Brent, for a three month period from 1 April 2015 for the operational reasons set out in paragraph 3.8. of the report.

16. **Financial Report - November 2014**

Councillor Pavey (Deputy Leader of the Council) introduced the report from the Chief Finance Officer which set out the overall financial position of the Council for 2014/15 as at November 2014 and included, a budget monitoring summary, Council Tax and NNDR collection rates, debt analysis, capital programme summary and financial control. He drew attention to the reasons for projected underspends and overspends particularly within the Registrars Service of £0.3m due to a forecast reduction in income from Citizenship Ceremonies and the Nationality Checking Service. He noted that capital expenditure was currently as forecast. The HRA debt was attributed to the non-payment of rent and schools would be asked to take on additional services in the light of their surplus. Councillor Pavey drew lead members' attention to the audit reports with limited assurances where lessons needed to be learned.

Councillor Denselow expressed regret at the lack of information from the Home Office regarding policy changes which would lead to a loss of income and increased the financial burden on the council.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Finance report be noted;
- (ii) that approval be given to the revenue budget virements in section 7 of the Financial Report appendix.

17. **Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committee**

None.

18. **Any other urgent business**

None.

The meeting ended at 3.10 pm

M BUTT
Chair

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Cabinet – 23 February 2015

Petitions have been received in the following terms in response to the budget proposals:

1) Keep Stonebridge Adventure Playground Open

“We the undersigned insist that the redevelopment of Stonebridge School and the new housing, includes keeping the Stonebridge Adventure Playground open.”

From: Brent Play Association

2) Keep Welsh Harp Environmental Study Centre open

This petition comprises numerous letters from individual children at Chalkhill Primary School.

From: Chalkhill Primary School

3) Save our youth service (paper and e petition)

“Youth services are vital for young people as well as the community and we believe there will be an adverse effect if the service no longer exists. This will put added pressure on statutory services such as the Youth Offending Service, the police and social care.

We call on Brent Council to consult with young people effectively before making any cuts to any youth provision in the borough.

We call on Brent Council to scrutinise existing provision to ensure that these resources are appropriate and effective.

The young people of Brent are willing and able to assist Brent Council with this important task.

We call upon Brent Council to consider the voice of young people in the light of these savings!”

E-petition: started by Roisin Healy (Brent Youth Parliament)

4) Save School Crossings Patrols

“Brent Council is under a legal duty to promote road safety and to promote sustainable transport, such as walking and cycling. Road traffic accidents are the biggest killer of children in the UK (they peak when children start primary school and secondary school). 2011-2020 is the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety. School Patrol Officers are an integral part of the community, ensuring the safety of our children and they encourage children to have independence. Many schools in Brent are on busy roads (e.g. Salusbury Primary School and Islamia on Salusbury Road in NW6) which are only going to get busier with new housing developments with a new influx of cars and residents. Our roads should become safer places for our children, not more dangerous. And children should be encouraged to walk and cycle to school rather than be driven.”

E petition started by: Michelle Goldsmith on behalf of local residents

5) Leopold Primary School - save our School Patrol Officer

“Brent Council is considering removing our Lollipop crossing patrol at Hawkshead Road. The School is surrounded by several busy roads. We believe this is unacceptable and will directly put our children in danger of a road traffic accident.”

From: the Parent, Teachers and Friends Association of Leopold Primary School

6) Keep Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre Open

“The centre provides a venue for many members of our local community and plays a vital part in our leisure time. Many of us use the facility on a weekly basis to play football, use the gym, relax in the steam and sauna and meet friends. The centre hosts children education, courses and activities that are beneficial to their development. The centre serves as a venue where rooms can be hired to many different groups who hold meetings, training and celebrations. Closing Bridge Park would affect all of us in different ways. We need this Centre to remain open so that our young people have a place to meet and do sports in a safe environment. Stonebridge is a deprived area and we feel that crime and unsocial behaviour will increase if the centre is closed. Unlike a few years ago the centre now is used by men and women of all ages and faith. People come to Bridge Park to get fit and improve their health. Although we understand that the council funds are limited, the cost of dealing with health and antisocial behaviour will far outweigh the cost of operating our leisure centre. We have signed below to show our opposition to the closure.”

From: Mr Adam, Tordjok, local resident.

 <p>Brent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cabinet 23 February 2015</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Strategic Director of Children and Young People</p>
<p>For decision Wards affected: Stonebridge</p>	
<p>Contract with Brent Play Association for Stonebridge Adventure Playground</p>	

1.0 Summary

This report seeks to determine the future of the contract with Brent Play Association for the provision of play activities at Stonebridge Adventure Playground (SAP). The current contract runs until 31 March 2015.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet agrees that the contract with Brent Play Association for the provision of play services delivered from Stonebridge Adventure Playground is allowed to expire on 31 March 2015 and that the council does not enter into a further contract for the delivery of play services from Stonebridge Adventure Playground.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Stonebridge Adventure Playground (SAP) is a council-owned building with indoor and outdoor play facilities. Brent Play Association (BPA) manages and maintains the SAP and provides after school and holiday play services to children in the Stonebridge area. BPA has provided play services in Brent for a number of years, initially under a grant but in recent times under contract. The council awarded a contract for a one year period from 1 April 2014 to BPA to deliver play services primarily from SAP. In addition to this contract with the council which provides core revenue funding of £118,000 for the financial year 2014/15, BPA has indicated it also brings in £45,031 of match

funding from a variety of other sources to support the running costs of the SAP.

3.2 The SAP enables children and young people to take part in a range of outdoor and indoor play experiences. Outdoor activities at the SAP include: outdoor adventure play, go-karting, gardening, and sports. Indoor activities at the SAP include: games, arts and crafts, a ball pond, Wii games, and cooking. Other linked activities include trips, access and use of a narrow boat. The scheduled opening hours are:

- Monday – Friday term-time, 2-7pm;
- Saturdays, 11am-4pm;
- School holidays (summer, Christmas, Easter, and during the three School half-term breaks), 7am-6pm.

3.3 The Children with Disabilities (CwD) service also separately procures holiday activities/events from BPA for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Whilst the SAP is used to host some of these activities/events, the majority of these are hosted at BPA's main site at Peppermint Heights.

3.4 Officers monitor the contract with BPA and the usage of SAP reported by BPA is as follows:

**Table 1 – Average daily usage during term-time
(based on quarter one 2014 monitoring data return)**

Age range	Note	No.
0-4	Accompanied by parents / carers	10
5-13	Core Group	90
14-18	By agreement with Staff on site	20
	TOTAL	120

**Table 2 – Average daily usage during holiday period
(based on quarter two 2014 monitoring data return)**

Age range	Note	No.
0-4	Accompanied by parents / carers	9
5-13	Core Group	135
14-18	By agreement with Staff on site	36
	TOTAL	180

3.5 While SAP is a valued and popular facility, it is the only facility of its kind in Brent which receives financial support from the council. In previous decades, play and after-school provision was funded through a number of sources across the borough. A wide range of play and after-school provision is on offer to children across the borough at schools and other establishments, especially in Brent's many areas of social deprivation, but it is funded either from parental contributions, charitable sources or (for specific children) schools' Pupil Premium. This is in line with other local authorities where

services have ceased to be funded as children's services are reduced to a statutory core.

3.6 BPA has been aware since the summer of 2014, and following meetings with council officers, that the council needed to give serious consideration to not letting a further contract for play services delivered from SAP given the financial constraints on the council from 2015 onwards.

3.7 Elsewhere on Cabinet's agenda is a report on the proposed regeneration scheme for Stonebridge which includes a one form of entry expansion to Stonebridge Primary School. Expansion of the school will enable a larger offer of after school provision by the School. The report proposes the land on which the SAP is located is re-planned to form part of the expanded Stonebridge Primary School. There has been consultation with BPA as part of these proposals and Members are referred to the contents of that report as to the consultation and the results of the consultation. Members will note that the majority of responses to the consultation expressed a desire to keep the SAP.

3.8 Officers have carried out an Equalities Impact Assessment into the effect of not letting a further contract for play services delivered from SAP. Members are referred to Section 6 below and to Appendix 1 for further details.

3.9 In view of the financial constraints facing the council, Officers have concluded that they must recommend the contract with BPA for the provision of play services delivered from SAP is allowed to expire on 31 March 2015 and that the council does not enter into a further contract for the delivery of play services from SAP.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 The SAP received revenue funding of £118,000 from the council for the 2014/15 financial year. The funding is used to support the ongoing running costs of the SAP. This is matched funded by £45,031 from BPA.

4.2 The council entered into a Deed of Dedication for 10 years, on 22 July 2008, with the Big Lottery Fund to receive £199,555 in capital grant to develop the Adventure Playground. This included a requirement that the site only be used for the purposes of the project, and not to dispose of the site without the consent of the fund. If the Adventure Playground ceases to be used for this purpose, the one-off grant payback to the Big Lottery Fund, has been estimated at £40,000. This one-off cost will be funded from the Early Years service within the Children and Young People budget.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 The SAP was part funded by the Big Lottery Fund and therefore is subject to title restrictions to reflect the funding agreement, which require the consent of the Big Lottery Fund to any works, or disposal of the site.

- 5.2 Play services delivered from SAP are not a council core service, and the council has no legal duty to provide or fund play facilities.
- 5.3 BPA has provided play services in Brent for a number of years, initially under a grant but in recent times under contract, the most recent contract being for a one year period from 1 April 2014. The contract will therefore expire automatically on 31 March 2015. As indicated in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7, there has been consultation with BPA regarding not letting a further contract for play services delivered from SAP. The impact of not letting a further contract is addressed in Section 6 below.
- 5.4 The current contract with BPA includes provision for a confirmatory non secure lease to be formally granted to BPA following receipt of Big Lottery Fund consent to the council's letting application (Big Lottery Fund consent is required due to the financial contribution it made to the establishment of the SAP). Consent from the Big Lottery Fund has not to date been received and hence a non secure lease has not yet been formally granted to BPA. In the absence of the grant of such lease, it is considered that BPA has a non secure status under their contract with the council and could be required to vacate SAP on expiry of the contract.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 The SAP serves a sub-set of the children and young people from the Stonebridge ward. While Stonebridge is a ward with a high level of deprivation, there are many areas and communities of young people across Brent with high levels of deprivation, reflecting the borough's high level of child poverty.
- 6.2 The reduction in provision at SAP, or the potential non provision, will have an impact on children and young people in the Stonebridge ward. However, there are alternatives such as after-school, and play activities, provided by the local primary schools. In addition the neighbouring Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre hosts some play activities by various providers through the school holiday periods, and local schools also offer holiday activities.
- 6.3 Since the council contributes revenue funds towards the SAP it is free of charge to children and young people who wish to use the facilities. As described earlier in the report, schools have to charge for after school clubs and it is likely that if the SAP free provision is no longer in place, the local offer from schools and other providers will widen their provision.
- 6.4 Other diversity implications are discussed in detail in the Equality Impact Assessment, attached as Appendix 1.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 7.1 There are no staffing/accommodation implications in relation to council staff.

7.2 There are a number of full-time, sessional and volunteer staff that BPA use to deliver the SAP service, and average staffing figures are detailed in Table 3 below. Some of the staff and volunteers also work at BPA's main site at Peppermint Heights.

**Table 3 – Staff involved in delivering the SAP service
(based on quarters one and two 2014 monitoring data return)**

Who is involved?	Period	Numbers
Full / part-time Staff involved	Term-time	9 (3 of which are management)
Volunteers supporting	Term-time	4
Full / part-time Staff involved	May half-term holidays	7 (3 of which are management)
Volunteers supporting	May half-term holidays	4
Full / part-time Staff involved	Summer holidays	36 (at least 3 of which are management)
Volunteers supporting	May half-term	6

Background Papers

Report for 23.02.15 Cabinet - Stonebridge Redevelopment Proposals including Primary School Expansion and the Stonebridge Day Centre – Update

Contact Officers

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GAIL TOLLEY
Strategic Director of Children and Young People

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2012

Equality Analysis Guidance and Form



Brent Council Equality Analysis Form

Please contact the Corporate Diversity team before completing this form. The form is to be used for both predictive Equality Analysis and any reviews of existing policies and practices that may be carried out.

Once you have completed this form, please forward to the Corporate Diversity Team for auditing. Make sure you allow sufficient time for this.

1. Roles and Responsibilities: please refer to stage 1 of the guidance	
Directorate: Children and Young People Service Area: Early Help and Education	Person Responsible: Name: Sue Gates Title: Head of Early Years and Family Support Services Contact No: 0208 937 2710 Signed: Sue Gates
Name of policy: Stonebridge Adventure Playground	Date analysis started: 01/12/14 Completion date: 02/02/15 Review date:
Is the policy: New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Old <input type="checkbox"/>	Auditing Details: Name: tbc Title: Contact No: Signed:
Signing Off Manager: Responsible for review and monitoring Name: tbc Title: Date Contact No: Signed:	Decision Maker: Name individual /group/meeting/ committee: tbc Date:

2. Brief description of the policy. Describe the aim and purpose of the policy, what needs or duties is it designed to meet? How does it differ from any existing policy or practice in this area?

Please refer to stage 2 of the guidance.

To determine the future of the revenue contract with Brent Play Association (BPA) for play provision at Stonebridge Adventure Playground (SAP), which currently runs until 31 March 2015.

Brent Council is the registered freehold owner of the Adventure Playground land and buildings, and planning applications for this area date back to 1974, 1975 and 1985. BPA have occupied the SAP through an historic arrangement with the council, for which the council receives no rent.

The council secured Big Lottery Funding on 22 July 2008 to support the upgrade and development of the SAP, into an Adventure Playground with indoor and outdoor facilities to enhance the provision of after-school, weekend, and holiday play activities and experiences. BPA, manage, and maintain the SAP, and provide the service. BPA bring in match funding (approximately 1/3) to support the running costs of the SAP.

The SAP enables children and young people to take part in a range of outdoor and indoor play experiences. Outdoor activities at the SAP include: outdoor adventure play, go-karting, gardening, and sports. Indoor activities at the SAP include: games, arts and crafts, a ball pond, Wii games, and cooking. Other linked activities include trips, and access to, and the use of a narrow boat. The scheduled opening hours are:

- Monday – Friday term-time, 2-7pm;
- Saturdays, 11am-4pm;
- School holidays (summer, Christmas, Easter, and during the three School half-term breaks), 7am-6pm.

The SAP is the only facility of its kind in Brent being supported by the council. The Children with Disabilities (CwD) service also commissions holiday activities/events from BPA for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Whilst the SAP is used to host some of these activities/events, the majority of these are hosted at BPAs main site at Peppermint Heights. **It should be noted that play services are not a council core service, and there is no statutory requirement for the council to fund play services.**

The redevelopment options for Stonebridge which affect the SAP are being considered separately and have been the subject of a large public consultation led by Officers from Regeneration and Growth.

3. Describe how the policy will impact on all of the protected groups:

The Stonebridge 2011 Census Profile is detailed below.

2011 Census: Stonebridge

Population



2001: 15,935

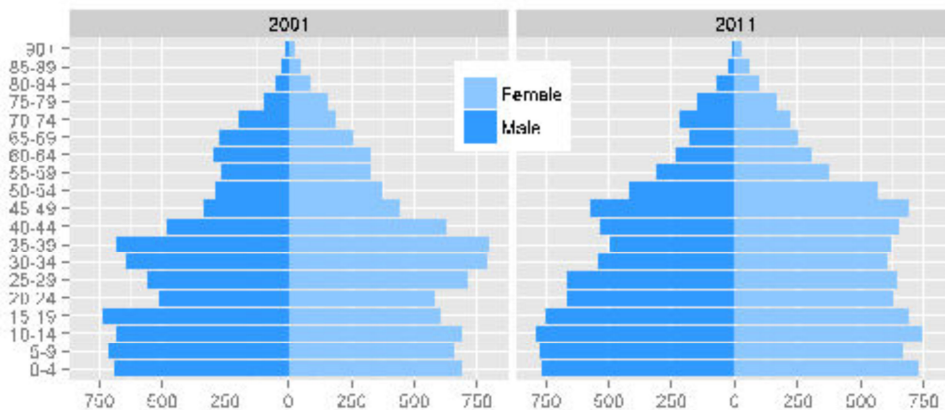
2011: 16,903



Points of note

- Population increased by 6% - third smallest increase
- Most residents aged 5 to 19 years
- Largest number of Bangladeshi
- Most people with a religion
- Fewest people with a Level 4 or higher qualification
- Most social rented households

Population by five-year age band



Tables CS001 / PP04, PP05, PP06

Ethnicity



Tables KS006 / KS201EW

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BPA is a registered charity (Registered Charity No. 1085110). Companies House records inform BPA were incorporated in 11 November 1999. BPA's accounts for the year end 31 March 2013 state their objective and services in Stonebridge provide the following:

- Objectives. "The charity's object and its principal activity continues to be that of providing and supporting facilities within the London Borough of Brent and surrounding areas for the daily care, play, recreation and education of children and young people seven days per week and school holidays and also provide day respite and learning opportunities for children and young people with special needs up to the age of 18 years."
- Stonebridge Adventure Playground. "The charity currently runs an all-year-round club in the Stonebridge Adventure Centre, on behalf of Brent Council. It offers integrated facilities for children and young people with special needs, 'state of the art' Adventure Playground structures, and indoor facilities, which include an Art and Craft room, TV and video room, main hall and kitchen."

BPA receives funding via a contract of £118,000 from Brent in 2014/15 to part-fund the delivery of the SAP service. BPA state they match fund this by £45,031 (BPAs submitted Pricing Schedule 2014-15), and that match funding comes from other funding sources external to Brent.

The BPA March 2013 accounts highlight the Stonebridge free facility as a one off, funded primarily by Brent. BPA's accounts show that for the year ending 31 March 2013, the income received totalled £315,304 (£211,304 67 per cent from Brent). Brent's Children with Disabilities (CwD) service also commission activities and services from BPA, which accounts for the remainder of the revenue funding from Brent. Some of the activities for CwD are held at BPA's main accommodation at Peppermint Heights in Wembley, and other facilities such as Special Schools across Brent. More able children that have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are provided for at the SAP.

A Brent Cabinet report 15 December 2014 from the Chief Finance Officer on the Budget, as per recommendations from the Strategic Director, Children and Young People proposes:

"To cease contract for play provision with the Stonebridge Adventure Playground, this funding to BPA provides after school and holiday provision for children at the SAP which is free to the families at point of delivery and is unique to this area. It is proposed to cease this funding as it is no longer sustainable, or justifiable in the current financial climate".

The Brent Cabinet forward plan / agenda for the meeting on 23 February 2015 includes a paper from the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth on the proposed Stonebridge redevelopment plans, and an equality analysis in respect of the accommodation issues, therefore this Equality Analysis will only focus on the service and service users.

As the SAP is based in the Stonebridge ward, it is the only adventure playground within Brent. It is therefore practically only accessible by local children. The provision is a 'one off' and it (or similar free provision) is not accessible to similarly disadvantaged children across the borough.

If the SAP were to close, as a result of the revenue funding contract with BPA

being terminated, this would primarily impact on the core group that attend, mainly 5-13 year olds, mainly from local black African and Caribbean groups.

Regular monitoring of the contract with BPA takes place by Officers from the Early Years and Family Support service. BPAs quarterly monitoring data, has been used to populate the tables below.

**Table 1 – Average daily usage during term-time
(based on quarter 1 2014 monitoring data return)**

Age range	Note	No.
0-4	Accompanied by parents / carers	10
5-13	Core Group	90
14-18	By agreement with Staff on site	20
	TOTAL	120

**Table 2 – Average daily usage during holiday period
(based on quarter 2 2014 monitoring data return)**

Age range	Note	No.
0-4	Accompanied by parents / carers	9
5-13	Core Group	135
14-18	By agreement with Staff on site	36
	TOTAL	180

**Table 3 – Normalised average daily usage by ethnicity during term-time
(based on quarter 1 2014 monitoring data return)**

White British	1
White Irish	1
White Other	1
Italian	1
Portuguese	1
Polish	7
Mixed (white/black Caribbean)	2
Mixed (white/black African)	1
Mixed (white/Asian)	2
Indian	1

Pakistani	1
Bangladesh	0
Asian Other	0
Black Caribbean	43
Black African	16
Somalia	8
Eritrean	2
Black Other	2
Black British	3
Other	3
Not known	4
Mixed (other)	1
South American	0
Chinese	1

Please give details of the evidence you have used:

- 2011 Census data;
- Brent's School Expansion Strategy 2014-18;
- Planning applications records;
- Charity Commission records;
- Companies House records;
- Brent Play Association accounts for the year end 31 March 2013;
- Brent Cabinet forward plan / agenda for the meeting on 26 January 2015;
- Brent Cabinet report 15 December 2014 from the Chief Finance Officer on the Budget;
- BPA contract monitoring data Quarters 1 and 2 (2014).

4. Describe how the policy will impact on the council's duty to have due regard to the need to:

(a) Eliminate discrimination (including indirect discrimination), harassment and victimisation;

The service provided at the SAP is an optional service which parents/guardians may or may not choose to access. The supervised nature of the provision it could be argued does help with eliminating harassment and victimisation as it provides a place where young people can engage in useful activities. The free at point of entry service allows users to access services overcoming the cost barrier in respect of other nearby provision, which in the context of Brent is a one off service for both

Brent and BPA – inadvertently disadvantaging similar service users in other Brent locations.

While it is regrettable that funding of this provision would cease because of financial constraints, there is not an equalities argument for maintaining this funding, due to the unpalatable alternatives to this budget reduction and lack of future sustainability for the project.

It is also important that the wider market of school based after school provision continues to develop and strengthen within the borough.

(b) Advance equality of opportunity;

In line with Brent public sector duty to eliminate both discrimination and ensure equality of opportunity the comments as per section (a) apply.

(c) Foster good relations

Officers will be working with BPA to explore if an alternative revenue mitigation option can be agreed.

5. What engagement activity did you carry out as part of your assessment?

Please refer to stage 3 of the guidance.

i. Who did you engage with?

- Officers from Children and Young People met with the managing directors of BPA.
- A decision to consult with SAP service users, within the context of the wider funding cuts, was pending Cabinet's decision on 15 December 2014 to agree the recommendation from the Strategic Director, Children and Young People:

“To cease contract for play provision with the Stonebridge Adventure Playground, this funding to BPA provides after school and holiday provision for children at the SAP which is free to the families at point of delivery and is unique to this area. It is proposed to cease this funding as it is no longer sustainable, or justifiable in the current financial climate”.

This recommendation has since been agreed.

- Officers from Regeneration and Growth have consulted on their plans regarding the SAP accommodation within the context of the Stonebridge site redevelopment plans, and details of who they engaged with are included in their EIA.

ii. What methods did you use?

- Officers from Children and Young People met with the managing directors of

BPA on Friday, 8 August 2014 to discuss the possible termination of the contract post March 2015.

iii. What did you find out?

- BPA agreed to consider alternative revenue funding arrangements post March 2015.
- External consultation of the Stonebridge site redevelopment was completed by Officers in Regeneration and Growth. The consultation showed there was extensive support for the SAP as a unique and valued local facility.
- Previously there has been strong local public concern when the future of the SAP playground has been at risk. The service is highly valued by children and families that regularly use the provision, which has been serving the local community since 1976 in some form or other.
- Historically local children and families had signed a petition against the closure of the SAP, and BPA have been adding signatures to the petition over the years.

iv. How have you used the information gathered?

- We have used feedback to inform our future plans as detailed in the section below.

v. How has it affected your policy?

- Where negative impacts have been identified, we have used the information to propose possible mitigation options.

6. Have you identified a negative impact on any protected group, or identified any unmet needs/requirements that affect specific protected groups? If so, explain what actions you have undertaken, including consideration of any alternative proposals, to lessen or mitigate against this impact.

With regards to the proposed termination of the revenue funding contract with BPA, identified negative impacts include:

- the impact on BPA, its Staff, service users, and their families given the uncertainty regarding its sustainability;
- the possible loss of free play provision in a built up urban area serving a population with high levels of deprivation;
- the existing occupation arrangement with BPA would be terminated with the revenue funding contract;
- the possible closure of the SAP, which is the only adventure playground of its kind in Brent.

With regards to the negative impact of accommodation issues resulting from the Stonebridge site redevelopment, these are detailed and mitigation plans discussed

in the EIA accompanying the cabinet paper from the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth, on the forward plan for the cabinet meeting on 23 February 2015.

Mitigation of the negative impacts resulting from the proposed termination of the revenue funding include:

- there are a number of local Schools that already offer before and after school play activities, these could be enhanced to offer a wider variety of activities if subsidised, and free provision was no longer available at SAP;
- there are a number of local Schools that already offer holiday play schemes, these could be enhanced if the issue of unfair competition with the SAP was addressed;
- there are already a number of holiday play schemes that are hosted at the neighbouring Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre and other Brent leisure facilities, these could be targeted towards SAP service users;
- BPA may be able to secure revenue funding from alternative sources to continue to provide play services;
- In general delivery of play services across a wider range of venues across Brent would make them more accessible and equitable to children in other areas impacted by deprivation indicators.

Please give details of the evidence you have used:

- 2011 Census data;
- Brent's School Expansion Strategy 2014-18;
- Stonebridge Primary School Ofsted inspection report in 2013;
- Planning applications records;
- Charity Commission records;
- Companies House records;
- Brent Play Association accounts for the year end 31 March 2013;
- Brent Cabinet forward plan / agenda for the meeting on 26 January 2015;
- Brent Cabinet report 15 December 2014 from the Chief Finance Officer on the Budget;
- Dfe records;
- BPA contract monitoring data Quarters 1 and 2 (2014).

7. Analysis summary

Please tick boxes to summarise the findings of your analysis.

Protected Group	Positive impact	Adverse impact	Neutral
Age		X	
Disability			X
Gender re-assignment			X
Marriage and civil partnership			X

Pregnancy and maternity			X
Race		X	
Religion or belief			X
Sex			X
Sexual orientation			X

8. The Findings of your Analysis

Please complete whichever of the following sections is appropriate (one only). Please refer to stage 4 of the guidance.

No major change

Your analysis demonstrates that:

- *The policy is lawful*
- *The evidence shows no potential for direct or indirect discrimination*
- *You have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.*

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion and the information that you used to make this decision.

Adjust the policy

This may involve making changes to the policy to remove barriers or to better advance equality. It can mean introducing measures to mitigate the potential adverse effect on a particular protected group(s).

Remember that it is lawful under the Equality Act to treat people differently in some circumstances, where there is a need for it. It is both lawful and a requirement of the public sector equality duty to consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary.

If you have identified mitigating measures that would remove a negative impact, please detail those measures below.

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion, the information that you used to make this decision and how you plan to adjust the policy.

Continue the policy

This means adopting your proposals, despite any adverse effect or missed opportunities to advance equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not amount to unlawfully discrimination, either direct or indirect discrimination.

In cases where you believe discrimination is not unlawful because it is objectively justified, it is particularly important that you record what the objective justification is for continuing the policy, and how you reached this decision.

Explain the countervailing factors that outweigh any adverse effects on equality as set out above:

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion and the information that you used to make this decision:

The council is faced with a challenging financial position next financial year, and must make savings of £54million. Play services are not a core council service, and terminating the revenue funding contract with BPA would save the council £118k per year as an alternative to reductions in children’s social care, or early help services.

While it is regrettable that part funding of this provision would cease because of financial constraints, there is not an equalities argument for maintaining this funding, due to the unpalatable alternatives to this budget reduction.

Stop and remove the policy

If there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, and if the policy is not justified by countervailing factors, you should consider stopping the policy altogether. If a policy shows unlawful discrimination it must be removed or changed.

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion and the information that you used to make this decision.

9. Monitoring and review

Please provide details of how you intend to monitor the policy in the future. Please refer to stage 7 of the guidance.

As a result of the consultation, revised project outcomes are as follows:


- (i) There are no revised project outcomes at present.

10. Action plan and outcomes

At Brent, we want to make sure that our equality monitoring and analysis results in positive outcomes for our colleagues and customers.

Use the table below to record any actions we plan to take to address inequality, barriers or opportunities identified in this analysis.

Action	By when	Lead officer	Desired outcome	Date completed	Actual outcome
To explore the mitigation plans in further detail		Simon Topping			

 <p>Brent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cabinet 23 February 2015</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Strategic Director of Children and Young People</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards Affected: [ALL]</p>	
<p>Future Development of Children's Centres</p>	

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report details the initial outcome of ongoing consultation with staff and service users on the development of a sustainable model for the borough's children's centres to be implemented from September 2015. This report recommends a preferred option following consideration of the consultation and requests approval to invite tenders in respect of the management and operation of Children's Centres as required by Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the initial outcome of the consultation on the development of a sustainable model for the borough's children's centres as detailed in paragraphs 3.1- 3.2 of the report and Appendices 3 and 4 be noted.
- 2.2 That the invitation of tenders for the management and operation of Children's Centres on the basis of the pre-tender considerations set out in paragraph 4.0 of the report be approved.
- 2.3 That officers be authorised to evaluate the tenders referred to in 2.2 above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 4.7 (vi) of the report.
- 2.4 That an exemption from Contract Standing Order 104 (b) be granted to permit evaluation of bids on the basis of quality criteria alone within a price envelope.
- 2.5 That approval be given to the inclusion in the invitation to tender documents of

a draft form of lease(s) and/or licence, to be on terms agreed by the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Director of Legal and Procurement to be granted to the preferred partner of the Children Centres.

- 2.6 That it be noted that organisations tendering will be expected to demonstrate that they will work with local voluntary organisations as service providers in children's centres and that will be assessed as part of the tender evaluation
- 2.7 That the Strategic Director of Children and Young People, in consultation with the Lead Member, be authorised to approve the final service specification.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Consultation – General

3.1.1 Pursuant to the Cabinet decision of 10 November 2014, there has been consultation carried out with service users, potential service users and our partners and providers of services. The initial findings are reported at Appendix 3 and 4. An external community engagement organisation was utilised to carry out part of the consultation to ensure some independent overview and challenge of the process.

3.1.2 As a headline summary of the response from **parents and carers**, three key concerns were repeatedly raised across all areas:

- that users value the services highly and are very concerned lest children's centres close.
- that they value the current staff and want continuity
- that they are worried that a new provider might stop or charge excessively for services which they value and need reassurance that the council is not planning to close services.

3.1.3 Approximately 500 people responded to the consultation (*the exact figures will be included in the full report which is expected in early February and will be included as Appendix 7*); this includes responses collated on-line, from focus groups, public and professional/partner questionnaires. The following details high level feedback from the consultation activities:

3.1.4 Key aspects of what is valued by users of the children's centres are:

- Parents see learning and development of their children
- New structured programme – children learning through play
- Parent learning and socialisation (ESOL, Baby Massage, Aromatherapy)
- Ability to get children 'out of the house'

- Close to home
- Small steps to employment for parents (confidence, language, networks, skills)
- Knowledge – first aid put into practice in home accident (example where parent did not need to take child to A & E)
- Access to early support – speech and language therapy, parenting classes, new parent workshops
- Good parent/staff relationships
- Improvement in children’s behaviour
- Day trips – discounted rates e.g. £5 for 10 swimming lessons
- Preparation for nursery means children have command of English and are not isolated at nursery school

3.1.5 The wider benefits parents gain from the Children’s centres are immersion into community life in Brent thereby enabling their children to settle and be more likely to secure educational attainment. These benefits mean that Children’s Centres are highly valued by users.

3.1.6 There were three clear major concerns among parents about the proposed partnership:

- Potential future closure of Children’s Centres if additional funds are not raised
- A new partner will shift focus to ‘business’ rather than children and families
- The potential introduction of costs to parents to access the services that are currently free

3.1.7 However, despite voicing these concerns parents mainly supported the introduction of a partnership model to protect and secure Children’s Centre Services.

3.1.8 There are concerns that the partners’ requirement to raise funds may shift the focus from ‘children’s outcomes’ to ‘income generation’. One parent described the proposal as ‘a high risk strategy that may fail if funds are not raised’. Parents do not want a focus on business to overshadow the focus on children and families.

3.1.9 The strongest request to the Council is to secure continuity of staffing. Parents have significant affection and respect for the staff at the Children’s Centres, and clearly recognise the difference that the staff have made to their lives and their children. Parents would like existing staff to remain as they have relationships and trust in the people they know.

3.1.10 Costs are also a key concern. Parents with two or more children voiced praise for the ‘low or no cost’ of services, that they would not be in a position to afford if they were required to pay.

- 3.1.11 Those service users classed as ‘the middle class’, who do not receive benefits and would be the likely ones to face increased charges for use explain that while they worked and earned money, they also had very low disposable incomes and would find it challenging to meet charges for services.
- 3.1.12 Whilst there is recognition that money will need to be raised to secure the future of services, parents recognise the financial value they gain from ‘free and minimal contribution services’. They want a partner that will protect children’s outcomes as well as source income. Many parents told us they could not afford to pay per session in the future; which would lead to less use of the services by parents.
- 3.1.13 Despite these concerns there is support for the introduction of a partner organisation to maintain the delivery of services.
- 3.1.14 There is overwhelming support for a model that enables services to continue with as little change or cost implication as possible. Parents were able to identify some potential positive impacts from the new approach, and were keen to see a new partner explore opportunities to further develop services and provide more programmes
- 3.1.15 Parents hope that any new partner will:
- Continue to support disadvantaged families
 - Increase the number of sessions and programmes available
 - Keep costs minimal, or out of, delivering services
 - Not over-estimate parental contribution to delivering sessions (the example was given of parent led music sessions not having the same input and impact as professionally tutored classes).
- 3.1.16 Attached as Appendix 5 are the two consultation documents used for online and drop in the box responses at children’s centres. These booklets were widely circulated. Further workshops for targeted families took place on 16 and 17 January 2015. A full report on all public consultation is attached as Appendix 7.
- 3.1.17 To gain views of **partners and providers**, a booklet was sent to all our partners, an online questionnaire was available and a provider/partner consultation meeting was held.
- 3.1.18 Key concerns raised by partners/providers were their worries that current partnerships and agreements would not be honoured/continued.
- 3.1.19 The Head of Service also visited each Headteacher with a centre on the school site for a discussion around the implications for schools in regard to partnership working and where there are shared utilities and services that schools currently invoice the council for. The Headteachers were broadly in

agreement that working with a partner/partners was an acceptable way forward.

3.1.21 Throughout the consultation few other alternatives to the partnering proposal were suggested by any of the groups, except for the proposal that a small charge for services and hiring out the buildings be introduced to offset the need to make budget savings. These had been explored before and would not create the required savings.

3.1.22 Five out of six independent chairs of the Children's Centres Advisory Board made a suggestion for the Council to approach all schools, both primary and secondary, to see which of them would have the commitment to the Early Years and offer their skills and expertise to 'develop an integrated, organic model of education'. While the Curzon/Fawood school-run model of children's centre delivery works well, there are no other federations with the critical mass and specialism in early years. To assign/transfer the centres out to schools individually would not deliver the required cost savings and would require more central support than is currently in place to support, co-ordinate and quality assure.

3.2 Consultation - managers, staff and unions

3.2.1 Consultation with managers, staff and unions has also taken place. This is in addition to the formal consultation under TUPE policy as it was important for staff to be fully aware of the possible implications for them.

3.2.2 A consultation based on the Council's Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 ("TUPE") Policy started in November and is continuing. Staff are clear that this will only be implemented if Cabinet approve the proposals at the February Cabinet meeting. In general, staff questions and comments show there is a level of concern about security of jobs if the service is tendered and staff transfer by way of TUPE. However, staff also see that the preferred proposal of working with a partner/s is a way of securing the future of Children's Centres and they therefore broadly support the proposal.

3.2.3 The unions which represent the Children's Centre staff (GMB and Unison) are very clear that they are opposed as a matter of principle to the contracting out of council services of any sort and they do not support the proposals.

3.3 Overall officers' conclusion from the consultation process is that the tendering for a partner to deliver and manage childrens' centres, staff and services remains the preferred way forward as it seems the only option to maintain this well valued service, sustain outcomes and still produce a saving to the council.

3.4 In addition officers have tested the market for possible providers. Officers have consulted widely with potential public, private and voluntary sectors through a range of mechanisms including a formal open stakeholder event

held at Brent Civic Centre on the 10 December 2014, soft market testing and web based market discussion. The consensus view is that, given the relatively small number of buildings covered by the contract, to deliver the efficiencies and service improvements expected by the Council, this objective would best be met through the letting of a single contract. It should be noted that the small number of other authorities who have externalised the running of their Children's Centres such as Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Greenwich have significantly more centres than Brent. e.g Hertfordshire CC have issued a tender recently for the management and operation of over 80 centres.

- 3.5 Cabinet should note that the proposal does not include the three centres run currently by the governing body of the federated maintained nurseries Fawood and Curzon. They manage, via a service level agreement Fawood, Curzon Crescent and Challenge House Children Centres which effectively means that two providers would be running children's centres in Brent.
- 3.6 In view of the reasons detailed above, it is recommended that the Council should seek a partner to take over the management and operation of the 14 Children's centres listed at Appendix 6. In order to select an appropriate partner, it will be necessary to conduct a tender process.

4.0 **Proposed Tender Procedure**

- 4.1 Cabinet should note that the proposed tender process departs from traditional tenders in some respect to reflect the unique nature of the service being procured. In working up these proposals officers have consulted widely including with a diverse range of potential suppliers from the public, private and voluntary sectors, other local authorities who have similar arrangements up and running and other interested stakeholders. The main differences from traditional tendering approaches are as follows:

4.2 One stage approach

In the previous report presented to Cabinet, officers referred to the possibility of using a combination of the restrictive or competitive dialogue route as an appropriate procurement strategy for tendering the requirement. However, following consultation with the potential market and other internal discussion, there were clear concerns about the cost and time required for a tender process using a combination of the restrictive or competitive dialogue route. In order to reduce time and bidding costs for both bidders and the authority, a single stage procurement approach outlined at paragraph 4.7 (vi) of this report is now proposed. Whilst the procurement of a partner for the relevant service is not straightforward, officers believe by producing a comprehensive set of tender documents containing all relevant information on TUPE, pensions, property and other service matters, the single stage approach can work well and the amount of clarification usually associated with such procurements will be minimised.

4.3 Quality led evaluation

Officers are of the view that rather than seeking bids which may prove unaffordable to the Council, it is better for the Council to indicate its budget for the service (a price envelope) and to ask organisations to propose how they would deliver the service against such a budget. It is therefore proposed to undertake a quality led evaluation, with bidders advised in the tender documents the proposed budget they will be required to deliver the services within over the potential five years of the contract. The budget will reflect the savings the Children's and Young People's Department has to deliver to meet the Council's wider objectives as outlined in the Financial Implications in Section 5 of this report. By providing this information, officers consider bidders will be able to better plan how they will deliver the services over the life of the contract and crucially to retain key staff. Evaluation teams will also thus be able to focus exclusively on evaluating the quality of bidders proposed service delivery and would intend to request and evaluate method statements addressing the following:

- MS 1 Meeting the Needs of the service
- MS 2 Diversity
- MS 3 Staff training and Development
- MS 4 Contract mobilisation
- MS 5 Quality
- MS 6 Targets and performance management
- MS 7 Stakeholder engagement and partnership working
- MS 8 Partnership Board working
- MS 9 Marketing and Communication
- MS 10 Health and safety
- MS 11 Safeguarding
- MS 12 Application of experience of property and portfolio management
- MS 13 Income Generation
- MS 14 How would you plan to work with the local voluntary and SME sectors

4.4 Efficiency savings

Bidders will be asked to produce annual cost efficiency plans which will detail how they will deliver additional efficiency savings at the centres through better operational and resource management.

4.5 Income generation

As indicated in the previous Cabinet report, an advantage of adopting the approach proposed in the report is that third parties are able better to potentially attract or identify additional revenue streams not open to the authority such as lottery funding and other grants. Bidders will therefore be asked to detail in a method statement how they will generate additional revenues through such things as better utilisation of buildings, delivery of other services which can be paid for at users' discretion, sponsorship,

submitting bids for lottery funding, etc. The income raised would be used to reinvest in service improvements.

4.6 Partnership Board

A genuine partnering approach to the operation of the contract will be adopted. A partnership Board will be established to oversee the strategic and operational performance of the contract. Board membership would include the Strategic Director, Children and Young People, senior representation from the successful bidder organisation and service user representatives.

4.7 In accordance with Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89, pre-tender considerations have been set out below for the approval of the Cabinet.

Ref.	Requirement	Response	
(i)	The nature of the service.	The management and operation of Children's Centres	
(ii)	The estimated value.	£2.4m	
(iii)	The contract term.	The contract will be for a period of 4 years with the option to extend for a further 12 months.	
(iv)	The tender procedure to be adopted.	This is a Part B service therefore exempt from the normal advertising and timescales requirement of the EU procurement directives. To meet the timetable set by the Service a single stage approach is recommended.	
	The procurement timetable.	Indicative dates are:	
		Adverts placed/ Invite to tender	2 March 2015
		Deadline for tender submissions	14 April
		Panel evaluation	15-29 April
		Report recommending Contract award circulated internally for comment	30 April - 8 May
		Cabinet approval	June tbc
		Contract Mobilisation	June –1 September
		Contract start date	2 September
(vi)	The evaluation criteria and process.	1. A single stage tender process will be followed which will mean that tenderers' responses to the Council's qualification questionnaire and tender will be evaluated simultaneously. For the qualification	

Ref.	Requirement	Response
		<p>questionnaire evaluation, tenderers' will be evaluated to ensure they meet the Council's financial standing requirements, technical capacity and technical expertise.</p> <p>2. Tenders will be evaluated using the following high level quality evaluation criteria;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenderer' proposed business model • Tenderers' proposed plans for ensuring effective quality management of the service and plan to achieve and maintain performance to contract standards, requirements and targets including self monitoring and evaluation • Tenderer's approach to working in partnership with all stakeholders including children and their parents, carers, the council, health and the local voluntary sector. • Health and safety policies and how they will be applied to the contract • Tenderer's proposals to adhering to child protection requirements • Application of previous experience to the delivery of the contract
(vii)	Any business risks associated with entering the contract.	Financial Services and Legal Services have been consulted concerning this contract and have identified the risks associated with entering into this contract set out in sections 5 and 6 of the report.
(viii)	The council's Best Value duties.	The adoption of a competitive tendering process will ensure the council achieves best value for money from this tender.
(ix)	Consideration of Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012	See Section 9 below.
(x)	Any staffing implications, including TUPE and pensions.	See section 8 below.
(xi)	The relevant financial, legal and other considerations.	See sections 5 and 6 below.

4.8 The Cabinet is asked to give its approval to these proposals as set out in the recommendations and in accordance with Standing Order 89.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 In determining the proposed contract price a number of factors have been taken into account, including the existing budget for the centres, other budgets that are in scope of the contract (business support staff within HR that solely support the centres and facilities management / running costs that are located within Regeneration and Growth) and the required level of savings. This is shown in the table below.

	£m
Existing budget for the children's centres in scope of the contract (Children and Young People budget)	2.5
Other facilities management / running costs (Regeneration and Growth budget)	0.1
Business support staff (HR budget)	0.2
Total budget envelope	2.8
Total Savings required	(0.4)
Proposed contract price	2.4

5.2 In relation to the total budget envelope that will be used to pay for the contract, the HR and Regeneration and Growth budgets will transfer to the Early Years service, within Children and Young People. These budgets have been specifically earmarked for this contract and are prior to savings committed between 15/16 and 16/17 for HR and Regeneration and Growth.

5.3 The total savings committed for the Early Years service is £0.5m, of which £0.4m will be delivered directly through the proposed contract and £0.1m through Children's Centre services that will be retained by the Council and are outside the scope of this contract, for example Fawood CC, Curzon Crescent CC, Speech and Language Therapy contracts and the Citizen's Advice Bureau contract.

5.4 As described in paragraph 4.3 the Invitation to Tender will include a method statement on income generation as it is anticipated that bidders will have access to additional funding and make better use of the buildings. Efficiency savings can also be made through a more established pool of volunteers. In recognition of this additional income and efficiency savings it is proposed to reduce the contract price year on year by 3%. This will enable the contract to deliver additional savings of £0.210m between years 2-4 (and £0.280m if

extended to year 5) which is over and above the £0.500m originally committed, as shown below.

	Contract Price £m	Additional Saving £m
Year 1	2.440	0.500
Year 2	2.370	0.070
Year 3	2.300	0.070
Year 4	2.230	0.070
Year 5 (Optional)	2.160	0.070
Total		0.780

5.5 As part of the proposed contract there are four buildings which will withdraw from the current Facilities Management contract with Europa, which will incur a one off exit fee to the Council under the existing contract terms. The total cost is estimated to be £30,000 and will be funded from Early Years budget.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 Legislation about children’s centres is contained in the Childcare Act 2006 and subsequent Statutory Guidance issued by the Department for Education, which local authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions under the Childcare Act 2006.

6.2 Under section 5D of the Childcare Act 2006 the council must consult before making any changes to the services provided through existing children’s centres and in undertaking that consultation, the council has a duty to factor in the four underlying obligations that the council is required to follow in undertaking any consultation. These obligations are that:

- a) Consultation must be at a time when proposals are at a formative stage;
- b) The proposer must give sufficient reasons for its proposals to allow consultees to understand them and respond to them properly;
- c) Consulters must give sufficient time for responses to be made and considered; and
- d) Responses must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising the decision.

6.3 The report sets out the steps that officers have taken in consulting with various groups and concludes that the management and operation of children’s centres service should be tendered by way of a contract.

6.4 The estimated value of the contract for the management and operation of children’s centres is in excess of the relevant threshold under the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (“the EU Regulations”) for Services contracts.

The contract is however classed as a contract for a Part B Service under the EU Regulations and as such is not subject to the full requirements of the EU Regulations (save that there must be a technical specification contained in the contract documents and on award of contract the Council must issue a Contract Award Notice in the OJEU within 48 days of award). The procurement of the contract for the management and operation of children's centres is nonetheless subject to the overriding EU Treaty principles of equality of treatment, fairness and transparency in the award of contracts.

- 6.5 As the estimated value of the contract over the term of the contract (including the 12 month extension) is £12 million, it is classed as a High Value Contract under the Council's Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and the Cabinet must approve the pre-tender considerations set out in paragraph 4.7 above and the inviting of tenders.
- 6.6 Contract Standing Order 104(b) requires tenders for Services to be evaluated and awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous offer to the council which is a combination of price and quality criteria. As detailed at paragraph 4.3 however, officers are of the view that rather than seeking bids which may prove unaffordable to the council, it is better for the council to indicate its budget for the service (a price envelope) and to ask organisations to propose how they would deliver the service against such a budget. Members are therefore requested to grant an exemption from Contract Standing Order 104 (b) to allow a quality led evaluation. As this a Part B Service, evaluation on the basis of quality criteria alone is not precluded.
- 6.7 Once the tendering process is undertaken, officers will report back to the Cabinet in accordance with Contract Standing Orders, explaining the process undertaken in tendering the contracts and recommending award.
- 6.8 Members are referred to section 8.0 below in relation to staffing issues. Given that the proposed tender would result in transfer of more than 20 council staff, the decision to transfer such staff following any tender is one reserved to Cabinet.
- 6.9 The Barham satellite Children's Centre is on land held by the Barham charity of which the Council is trustee. Therefore the Trust consent will be required in respect of a partner providing services at the Children's Centre.
- 6.10 Alperton, Three Trees and Hope Children's Centres are in premises leased to the Council. The leases of Alperton and Three Trees Children's Centre have provisions permitting the assignment or subletting for Sure Start Children Centre purposes subject to the prior consent of Alperton and Queens Park Schools. The Hope Centre Lease, which is for 3 years, permits sharing of the premises and will require a variation of the terms. Applications for consent, and where applicable variations to lease, will be made for this purpose

7.0 Diversity Implications

- 7.1 Equalities Impact Assessments have been carried out for both staff impact and for service user impact as part of this project and are attached as Appendices 1 and 2.
- 7.2 Children's centres were established to tackle disadvantage and promote equality of opportunity. Work is carried out to target particular groups, eg Somali community, eastern European families, Traveller families to address disadvantage.

8.0 Staffing and Accommodation Implications

- 8.1 Subject to consultation and further consideration by the Cabinet, any outsourcing of the management and operation of the identified children's centres would have significant staffing and accommodation implications. TUPE will apply to approximately 60 council staff working in the centres likely to transfer to a provider appointed as a result of the tender. Pursuant to TUPE any new provider will be required to meet obligations under the legislation. The procurement process will require that all prospective providers must operate consistently with Brent TUPE processes to protect the rights and benefits of Brent employees.
- 8.2 A requirement will be imposed on the provider to permit former council staff to continue to access the Local Government Pension Scheme ("LGPS") if they wish by the provider becoming a admitted body under the LGPS. An admitted body under the LGPS will generally bear liability for any pensions' deficit that may accrue. It is not considered to be in the council's interest to place 100% of all pensions' risks on the provider as the provider has no real control over such risks. Where the provider has to bear full pensions risks, its bid will generally be more expensive. As the council is setting a funding envelope for the contract, placing 100% of risks on the provider will instead translate into the provision of fewer services or a lower quality service. In the circumstances, Officers intention is to seek bids on the basis that a pensions' risk share agreement will be offered, with the standard form of pensions risk share agreement, agreed by the General Purposes Committee, issued with the Invitation to Tender.
- 8.3 Accommodation implications include ensuring that the partner is able to maximise use of the children's centre buildings for the benefit of children and the wider community
- 8.4 The centres would be offered at a peppercorn rent. In some cases a service charge would be applied where for instance the building is not standalone and Brent will need to continue to have a responsibility for maintenance and utility provisions. Grant conditions when the centres were originally provided would require the repayment of grant if the property was rented at a market rent.

8.5 The centres would in the majority of cases be leased to the operator who will then take on full responsibility for the repair and maintenance of the building. Leases would be for a period of five years with appropriate break clauses. In the case of the Granville Children's Centre this would not be guaranteed for the full term as the building is subject to review within the wider regeneration of South Kilburn. This centre would not be offered on a full lease.

9.0 Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

9.1 It should be noted that the nature of the services being procured naturally align themselves to the requirements of the act as they are aimed at supporting and improving the lives of some of the most vulnerable and deprived sections of the local community. Officers are seeking to boost the local economy through the organization of stakeholder events which promote opportunities for potential suppliers from the local community to start a dialogue which may lead to them either acting as sub contractors for the delivery of certain services in centres to larger organisations or forming consortia to bid for the work themselves. Evaluation of bids will include looking at bidders proposals to work with the local voluntary sector.

10.0 Background Papers

10.1 Cabinet report of 10 November 2014.

Contact Officer(s)

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**Appendix 1
Equalities Impact Assessment**

CHILDREN'S CENTRES

CHANGES TO GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

**EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (Staffing)
Updated January 2015**

1. Roles and Responsibilities: please refer to stage 1 of the guidance	
Directorate: Children and Young People Service Area: Early Years and Family Support	Person Responsible: Name: Sue Gates Title: Head of Early Years and Family Support Contact No: 020 8937 2710 Signed:
Name of policy: Children's Centres Changes to Governance and Management	Date analysis started: 10 October 2014 Completion date Review date: 6 January 2015
Is the policy: New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Old <input type="checkbox"/>	Auditing Details: Name: Title: Date Contact No: Signed:
Signing Off Manager: responsible for review and monitoring Name: Sara Williams Title: Operational Director Date Contact No: 02089376422 Signed:	Decision Maker: Name individual /group/meeting/ committee: Strategic Children's Senior Leadership Team Date:

2. Brief description of the policy. Describe the aim and purpose of the policy, what needs or duties is it designed to meet? How does it differ from any existing policy or practice in this area?
Please refer to stage 2 of the guidance.

The purpose of the proposed change is to achieve budget reductions across the children centre provision at the same time as meeting statutory requirements and the needs of the most vulnerable families in the borough.

The proposed change is to tender the management and day to day governance of the children's centres to an experienced provider with them taking on the running of some of the buildings, the employment and management of staff and the responsibility for service delivery to meet the core purpose requirements.

This change will enable the council to continue to meet its statutory duties in a more cost efficient way as well as;

- Improve access to support for families with complex problems
- Improve process to ensure the right level of support is given to families
- Improve the range and quality of services to families with complex problems
- Make the most efficient and effective use of resources whilst continuing to improve and extend services

6 January 2015:

The process will be subject to on-going assessment and EIAs will be conducted in phases in line with the process. This will help to ensure that the EIA remains up to date and relevant. The purpose of consulting with staff on the proposal is to ensure that staff feel informed from the start of the process and are given the opportunity to put forward ideas and suggestions before any decisions are taken.

3. Describe how the policy will impact on all of the protected groups:

It is not anticipated that the change will have any adverse impact on any protected groups, but this will be closely monitored throughout the implementation process.

6 January 2015:

On reviewing again at this point, we do not have enough information to make an informed decision on the impacts, adverse or positive. A decision has not been taken on the future of children's centres. A report will be presented to Cabinet on the results of the consultation on 24 February 2014.

Please give details of the evidence you have used:

There are currently 55 staff (42 FTE) within the children's centres and six BIBS staff (total 61 staff affected) who will be affected as part of this change.

This figure does not include staff at Children's Centres managed through SLA by the Governing Body of Curzon and Fawood Maintained Nursery schools (Fawood, Curzon and Challenge House Children's Centres).

The breakdown of staff as at 8 January 2015 from information recorded , is set out below:

By Age Band	Headcount	Percentage of Total
Under 21	0	0.00%
21-30	6	10.53%
31-40	21	36.84%
41-50	16	28.07%
51-60	11	19.30%
61-70	3	5.26%
71-79	0	0.00%
Total	57	

By Disability	Headcount	Percentage of Total
Disabled	5	8.77%
Not Disabled	45	78.95%
PNTS / Unknown	7	12.28%
Total	57	

By Religion	Headcount	Percentage of Total
No religion/belief	3	5.26%
Christian	31	54.39%
Hindu	8	14.04%
Muslim	5	8.77%
Other	3	5.26%
PNTS / Unknown	7	12.28%
Total	57	

Married or in a civil partnership	Headcount	Percentage of Total
Yes	19	33.33%
No	25	43.86%
PNTS / Unknown	13	22.81%
Total	57	

By Gender	Headcount	Percentage of Total
Female	53	92.98%
Male	4	7.02%
Total	57	

By ethnic origin	Headcount	Percentage of
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		Total
Asian	15	26.32%
Black	20	35.09%
Mixed Heritage	3	5.26%
White	9	15.79%
Other	0	0.00%
PNTS / Unknown	10	17.54%
Total	57	

By Sexual Orientation	Headcount	Percentage of Total
Lesbian, gay or bisexual	2	3.51%
Heterosexual / straight	45	78.95%
PNTS / Unknown	10	17.54%
Total	57	

Currently on Maternity (December 14)	Headcount	Percentage of Total
No	54	94.74%
Yes	3	5.26%
Total	57	

Gender Reassignment	Headcount	Percentage of Total
No	57	100.00%
PNTS / Unknown	0	0.00%
Yes	0	0.00%
Total	57	

- The majority of those affected are female (92.98%) which is in line with the organisational profile.
- 65% of those affected are BME. This is in line with the organisational profile. This represents a disproportionate effect on this group.
- The majority of staff are aged between 31-60 (85% collectively). There are five members of staff affected between 17-30 and are 3 people between 60-69. There is a disproportionate affect on this age range as the average age in the whole workforce is 44.
- There is a disproportionate effect on disabled staff with 7% of affected staff declaring a disability as the workforce average is 8%.
- The majority (69%) of those affected are heterosexual but almost a third have not responded (27%).
- There are 3 staff currently on maternity leave

- It is not possible to analyse the other protected characteristic of gender re-assignment, or pregnancy due to lack of available data.

4. Describe how the policy will impact on the Council's duty to have due regard to the need to:

(a) Eliminate discrimination (including indirect discrimination), harassment and victimisation;

By consulting on the proposals with staff, and if the proposal is agreed, the implementation will follow the council's TUPE process to mitigate against discrimination.

6 January 2015:

The Contract could contain provision that the provider will not change employees' terms and conditions for a specified period and after this period, only if market conditions change. Where the provider is permitted to change employees terms and conditions, it would need to demonstrate an economic, technical or organisational reason for such change

Should the decision be taken to work with a partner and TUPE staff to a new a provider, checks will be undertaken to ensure their Equal Opportunities policy is fit for purpose, monitored and implemented throughout the organisation. We will also review their data on the staff profile of the organisation; staff subject to disciplinary; staff who have raised a grievance; sickness; 121 and appraisal processes, etc.

(b) Advance equality of opportunity;

6 January 2015:

We are seeking the opportunity for staff to maintain their existing employment status regarding pensions and redundancy.

Should the decision be taken to work with a partner and TUPE staff to a new a provider, support would be provided to the staff during the transition. Should staff choose to seek alternative employment and not be part of the TUPE, training and support is available to staff to improve/further develop their skills for enhanced marketability. Through both the corporate training programmes available and all children's centre practitioners can access a range of courses on parenting programmes and skills based programmes to support their ongoing development such as coaching and mentoring, CV writing and more.

With regards to pensions and redundancy, we do not have a decision on the future of children's centres so we are unable to provide any information with regards to the impacts on these areas. However should the decision be taken to work with a partner we will be seeking some sort of reassurance that they do not plan for any immediate changes. The council are also examining the possibility of having a risk-share agreement around

pensions.

The Contract could contain provision that the provider will not change employees' terms and conditions for a specified period and after this period, only if market conditions change. Where the provider is permitted to change employees terms and conditions, it would need to demonstrate an economic, technical or organisational reason for such change.

(c) Foster good relations

Through consulting with staff and having a plan for communicating with staff, it should help to foster good relations.

6 January 2015:

All affected staff have been invited to a series of staff meetings and a further meeting is planned for 12 January. This provides an opportunity for the senior management to respond to any concerns and be open and transparent with the staff. Staff are also able to meet on a one to basis with the Head of Service, their line managers and HR this enables individuals to choose a communications method most suitable to their needs and requirements. Regular communications with the staff on progress should help to maintain good working relationships and minimise insecurities and issues.

5. What engagement activity did you carry out as part of your assessment? Please refer to stage 3 of the guidance.

i. Who did you engage with?

Formal consultation with affected staff began on 24 November 2014.
One briefing for managers was held on 17 November 2014.
Discussions and consultation with Union Groups took place after they had received the staff consultation report on 17 November 2014.

6 January 2015:

A mid point meeting will take place on 12 January. Children's centre managers and staff have been invited as well as BIBs officers in scope and their team leaders and those on maternity or long-term sickness absence. Union representatives have also been invited.

ii. What methods did you use?

A predictive assessment was used based on the staff equalities data extracted from One Oracle. A series of staff meetings will be held during the consultation process; at the beginning, in the middle of the process and at the end. Staff are also able to meet on a one to basis with the Head of Service and their line managers.

A list of FAQs will also be frequently communicated to affected staff.

Records have been kept of meetings held and questions raised, with their responses.

6 January 2015:

A report on the proposal was issued to all staff and all were invited to attend a meeting to go through the contents of the report. These meetings provide a valuable opportunity for staff to express their opinions and to ask questions to the Head of Service. This in turn enables the Head of Service to address concerns and issues with the information known at this point in the process.

iii. What did you find out?

This is a predictive Equality Impact Assessment.

The findings from the public consultation, of which staff are also able to contribute, will be reported to Cabinet in February 2014.

6 January 2015:

The Operational Director of Early Help and Education met with Union representatives in November 2014. The union representatives are very clear that the unions are opposed to tendering out council services of any sort and they do not support the proposals.

From the managers briefing in 17 November, there was an understanding of the need to “do things differently” in order to meet the savings and ensure services are sustainable. With some positivity around working with a partner.

The feedback from the staff meetings in November is generally a feeling of anxiousness. Staff questions and comments show there is a level of concern about security of jobs if TUPE takes place, however staff also see that the preferred proposal of working with a partner/s is a way of securing the future of Children’s Centres and they therefore broadly support the proposal.

On 23 December 2014 a collective response was received from the affected BIBS officers requesting that they be given the choice to be included or not as part of a TUPE process. This will be responded to by HR once they have investigated the issues.

iv. How have you used the information gathered?

This is a predictive Equality Impact Assessment.

The findings from the public consultation, of which staff are also able to contribute, will be reported to Cabinet in February 2014.

6 January 2015:

As at this point there is still no decision on the future of children’s centres so responses will be included in the report for Cabinet in February. The Head of Service, will however take on board comments and feedback received to date when meeting with the staff on 12 January and share these at the meeting.

v. How has it affected your policy?

This is a predictive Equality Impact Assessment.

The findings from the public consultation, of which staff are also able to contribute, will be reported to Cabinet in February 2014.

6. Have you identified a negative impact on any protected group, or identified any

unmet needs/requirements that affect specific protected groups? If so, explain what actions you have undertaken, including consideration of any alternative proposals, to lessen or mitigate against this impact.

Please refer to stage 2, 3 and 4 of the guidance.

The proposed change has not identified an adverse impact on any protected groups, or identified any unmet needs/requirements that affect specific protected groups but this will be closely monitored throughout the implementation process.

6 January 2015:

On reviewing equality impacts again at this point, it is unclear if there will be any negative or positive impact on any protected groups and what exactly they will be. A decision has not been made on the future of children's centres.

The process is subject to on-going monitoring and assessment to aid the identification of any impacts.

Please give details of the evidence you have used:

A predictive assessment was used based on the staff equalities data extracted from One Oracle.

6 January 2015:

Responses received from staff and Union representatives will be also be used for evidence.

7. Analysis summary

Please tick boxes to summarise the findings of your analysis

Protected Group	Positive impact	Adverse impact	Neutral
Age			
Disability			
Gender re-assignment			
Marriage and civil partnership			
Pregnancy and maternity			
Race			
Religion or belief			
Sex			
Sexual orientation			

6 January 2015:

On reviewing equality impacts on protected groups again at this point, it is unclear what the impacts will be as a decision has not been made on the future of children's centres, so there are many unknown variables.

8. The Findings of your Analysis

Please complete whichever of the following sections is appropriate (one only).

Please refer to stage 4 of the guidance.

No major change

Your analysis demonstrates that:

- The policy is lawful
- The evidence shows no potential for direct or indirect discrimination
- You have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion and the information that you used to make this decision.

The proposed change is lawful.

The process proposes to transfer all staff to a new service provider by adhering to the Councils TUPE process.

6 January

This is to be reviewed after the EA is complete.

9. Monitoring and review

Please provide details of how you intend to monitor the policy in the future.

Please refer to stage 7 of the guidance.

We will be asking staff to update their personal information on One Oracle and we will review the data and the Equality Impact Assessment again.

10. Action plan and outcomes

At Brent, we want to make sure that our equality monitoring and analysis results in positive outcomes for our colleagues and customers.

Use the table below to record any actions we plan to take to address inequality, barriers or opportunities identified in this analysis.

Action	By when	Lead officer	Desired outcome	Date completed	Actual outcome

Appendix 2 Equalities Impact Assessment

Children's Centre Community Consultation

Department
Children and Young People
Created
10th January, 2015
Status
Complete

Person Responsible
Ilona Maragh
Last Review
10th January, 2015
Next Review
n/a

Screening Data

1. What are the objectives and expected outcomes of your proposal? Why is it needed? Make sure you highlight any proposed changes.

Against a background of substantial cuts by central government, Brent Council wants to maintain and strengthen Children's Centre services through engagement of a partner in the management and delivery of Children's Centres. By re-commissioning, Brent Council aims to:

- Secure our Children's Centres long term sustainability;
- Improve outcomes for children aged 0-4 years and their families; and
- Narrow the gap for vulnerable and disadvantaged children and families at risk of poor outcomes.

The Executive approved a proposal to tender the management and day to day governance of the Children's Centres to an experienced provider with that provider taking on the running of the buildings, the employment and management of staff and the responsibility for service delivery to meet the core offer requirements. See Attached.

Under this model the selected provider will resource and develop the required universal services and the Local Authority will fund the targeted Early Intervention services for the most vulnerable families. Under this model the strategic role for the Early Years Service will be to secure good quality children's centres, challenge practice and performance management, supporting good Ofsted outcomes and focusing resources on the targeted households and other families with additional needs.

Essentially this model attempts to deliver a similar level of service to the current model (or potentially better) for a reduced level of resourcing from the local authority. It looks to future sustainability, since external service providers will have the ability to leverage in additional funds from their own contacts for example the National Lottery, European funding, etc. which the current service, as a council service, cannot access.

The partnership delivery model proposed is one that has been put in place in other local authorities and there are several strong providers present in the market. The contract will specify outcomes from the centres and the Council would fund the targeted work, while the contractor would be expected to provide universal services using volunteers and by raising funding from other sources. The provider will have the use of the buildings such that they could diversify community use if it contributed to the essential aims of the Children's Centres and the core services were successfully delivered. This has the potential for wider community benefits.

2. Who is affected by the proposal? Consider residents, staff and external stakeholders.

The proposed changes will result in TUPE transfer of staff to the successful contractor, as has occurred in other local authorities that have undertaken similar commissioning. This is the subject of a separate EIA. This EIA relates to the children and families that access services through Brent's network of Children's Centres. Broadly speaking, this model is preferred given its essentially neutral in relation to impact on protected groups (although if the Council were otherwise compelled to reduce substantially reduce the number of Children's Centres through continuing within in-house provision this would materially impact protected groups).

3.1 Could the proposal impact on people in different ways because of their equality characteristics?
Yes

If you answered 'Yes' please indicate which equality characteristic(s) are impacted
Age
Disability

Pregnancy and maternity
Race
Religion or belief
Sex

3.2 Could the proposal have a disproportionate impact on some equality groups?
Yes

If you answered 'Yes' please indicate which equality characteristic(s) are impacted
Age
Disability
Pregnancy and maternity
Race
Religion or belief
Sex

3.3 Would the proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?
No

The new service provider would be required, at a minimum, to continue to deliver all services currently in place. The Council will however require the new provider to seek opportunities to increase and improve service delivery.

3.4 Does the proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?
No

3.5 Is the proposal likely to be sensitive or important for some people because of their equality characteristics?
Yes

If you answered 'Yes' please indicate which equality characteristic(s) are impacted
Age
Disability
Pregnancy and maternity
Race
Religion or belief
Sex

3.6 Does the proposal relate to one of Brent's equality objectives?
Yes

The proposal relates to Brent equality objective (5) to ensure that sound equality practices underpin our Procurement and commissioning processes. It is fundamental that any successful provider that delivers services on behalf of Brent Council can demonstrate that they can successfully meet all commitments vis-a-vis Equality Act (2010). For example, the service specification makes specific reference

This objective is about making sure that when we choose somebody, such as a building company, to provide services on our behalf, fairness and equality are at the centre of the process. The specification, for example, details that the provider will be expected to maintain consistency of key management policies and procedures across all Children's Centres. These will be agreed with Brent Council and are expected to include:

- Confidentiality and data protection
- Complaints
- Equality and diversity
- Health and safety
- Information sharing
- Marketing and promotion
- Safeguarding
- Staff training and development

Recommend this EA for Full Analysis?
Yes

Comments

There has been wide-ranging consultation with service users, potential service users and our partners and providers of services . This includes an online survey, consultation drop-in with service users and potential service users and a drop-in box at all children's centres. Consultation booklets were widely circulated that set out the purpose and context for the consultation.

In addition, a partner/provider booklet was sent to all partners, an online questionnaire was available and a provider/ partner consultation meeting was held. There were also targeted consultation activities with all Headteachers and strategic partners through the Children's Centre Locality Advisory Boards and Brent Children's Centre Strategic Partners Group.

Rate this EA

N/A

Impact Assessment Data

5. What effects could your policy have on different equality groups and on cohesion and good relations?

5.1 Age (select all that apply)

Positive

Children's centres prioritise outcomes for families with children aged 0-4 years.

The Department for Education (DfE) developed the "Core Purpose" of Sure Start Children's Centres in 2011/12 and the vision and principles underpin the statutory guidance and inform the expectations within the inspection framework. The revised Ofsted framework for the inspection of children's centres, issued in March 2013, describes centres as a "one stop shop" for children under five and their families to help them secure good outcomes in the following areas:

- Readiness of children for school.
- Improved parenting.
- Opportunities for adults to participate in activities that improve their personal skills, education and employability.
- Development of healthy lifestyles.
- Parents' understanding of their responsibilities for their children's safety and well-being.

The service specification relevant to the management and delivery of Brent Children's Centres reiterates this core priority to secure positive outcomes for families with children aged 0-4 years. Specifically, the service specification commits the service provider to continue the 'good' practice (as measured by Ofsted) of registering and engaging at least 65% of children aged 0-4 years in early childhood services and activities.

As the attached document shows Brent Children's Centres working with partner agencies is engaging children well in excess of the 65% target for 'good'. This is true in all Brent children's centre localities and is crucial to whether Brent is rated good or otherwise. Given this, the Council has included the requirement that this positive focus on 'age' remains and so any anticipated service provider must deliver at least this level of engagement with families with children aged 0-4 years. To make this work effectively, we leverage existing partnerships e.g. Children's Social Care, Brent Family Solutions, Health Visiting to ensure that we can properly identify which families to focus efforts so that we can continue to have this positive impact related to age. This includes detailed data sharing, continued strategic oversight of Children's Centres through the Brent CC Strategic Partners Group and continued provision of detailed reports to any new service provider.

The service provider will need to understand their duty to cater for the needs of younger children, to prepare them for school readiness to enable children to meet Key Stage 1 and 2 requirements and to enhance their quality of opportunity later in life.

Supporting documentation can be found here :
ENGAGEMENT-OF-CHILDREN-AGED-0-4-YEARS.docx

5.2 Disability (select all that apply)

Positive

Specific provision is made for parents and children with disabilities and additional needs through Brent Children's Centres. It is acknowledged that this is an area of strength for Brent Children's Centres. For example, Ofsted inspectors reported in the Wembley team 1 inspection that 'there are a number of children in the area with disabilities and special educational needs. Many of these have benefitted from the Special Needs Groups run at the centre. This provision is enhanced as parents have access to a fully trained special needs coordinator for support and advice.'

Core to delivery of positive outcomes for parents and children with disabilities and additional needs is ensuring these families are included in the local definition (set by the Brent Children's Centre Strategic Partners Group) of 'target group' households. These households and children are known and their registration/ engagement with Children's Centres monitored. For example, as at March 2014:

Age Group	Under 1	Age 1	Age 2	Age 3	Age 4	Grand Total
Female	0	12	22	31	50	115
Male	5	15	58	119	111	308
Total	5	27	80	150	161	423

As a result, Children's Centres have data to enable them to specifically target and engage families with disabilities/additional needs. This tends to result in bespoke support for families with disabilities, including access to specific provision such as 'special needs groups' for families with children aged 0-4 years with disabilities operate across the borough, targeted speech and language therapy assistance, priority access to universal services such as 'stay and play' sessions, additional support to access childcare and access to a commissioned Citizens Advice Bureau service that assists with financial literacy, debt management and housing.

To ensure good quality personalised support for individual children and their families, a borough wide lead for children with additional needs (Willow Nursery head teacher) is responsible for the coordination of support for children with additional needs, as well as acting as an expert source of advice, guidance and consultancy for individual families with children with additional needs and multiagency practitioners working with Children's Centres. To enhance this provision, each locality also has at least one trained and designated 'special needs' early years worker.

Where needs arising from disability are more complex, the Brent Family Solution team will lead work to develop a plan alongside the family for addressing the holistic needs of the family, working in partnership with individual Children's Centres.

Brent Council remains committed to sustaining this good practice in the proposals for a new model of management and delivery of Children's Centres. The service specification makes clear these commitments. See, for example, requirements 3.9, 3.16-3.18, 3.24-3.25.

3.9 The Service Provider will ensure that all Children's Centre services are accessible to children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disabilities.

3.16 The Service Provider will work closely with the Willow Nursery (or other) lead responsible for borough wide coordination of early years support for children with additional needs/ disabilities. The Service Provider will contribute to the identification of children with special needs to plan and deliver packages of support for children and families and fully participate in the Early Support Programme, which supports parents and carers of disabled children aged five and under.

3.17 The Service Provider will ensure that at least one early years worker within each locality is appropriately trained and designated to act as a focal point for early years support for children with additional needs/ disabilities. These early years workers will have access to ongoing advice and guidance from the Willow Nursery (or other) lead responsible for borough wide coordination of early years support for children with additional needs/ disabilities.

3.18 Where specialist and targeted services for children with additional needs and disabilities are offered at individual Children's Centres, the Service Provider will continue to deliver these services at that Centre and/or at other outreach venues, as required.

3.24 A key priority for Brent Council is the provision of early help support that provides intensive support to families that are at greater risk of escalating problems. The Brent Family Solutions Team coordinates provision for this cohort of families and the Service Provider must ensure that all staff, most particularly family support workers, community involvement workers and early years workers, play an active role as part of the team around the family model of working, as required with families accessing support through this team.

3.25 The Service Provider will comply with all relevant policies, processes and procedures in relation to children and families engaged with statutory social care provision. This includes working closely with Brent Social Care teams to support families where there is or has been a Child in Need Plan, Child Protection Plan, Looked After Child Plan, Fostering and Adoption Plan etc. using the guidelines within the protocols to identify and share information and to inform planning and service delivery. The Service Provider will also work with local social care professionals to review arrangements in identifying families in need and providing support.

5.3 Gender identity and expression (select all that apply)
Neutral

5.4 Marriage and civil partnership (select all that apply)
Neutral

5.5 Pregnancy and maternity (select all that apply)
Positive

Children's Centres specifically provide support to, and engage with parents from the ante-natal period through to the child commencing at school. In Brent, community midwives deliver ante-natal support from Children's Centre settings and for young mums, a Family Nurse Partnership that begins ongoing 1:1 support for young mums with a dedicated midwife and health visitor from the ante-natal period through to the child's third birthday is now in place. The Council working with partners in delivery of maternity services and the Healthy Child programme remains committed to these practices.

To promote positive pregnancy/maternity, all Children's Centres have achieved accreditation as a Healthy Early Years setting which includes ensuring that provision promotes and supports breastfeeding, early childhood immunization, smoking cessation, physical activity and healthy food/drinks for all parents, with a particular focus on parents to be.

Brent outcomes in relation to breastfeeding initiation, conception rates for young mums and smoking during pregnancy are especially good relative to the rest of England (see attached). A key area of focus is improving physical activity and diet so as to impact the poorer outcomes in relation to obesity both for children and for parents. The positive approach taken by Brent Children's Centre in this respect is recognised. For example, the most recent Ofsted inspection of Wembley team 2 identified 'Health outcomes are generally good with an exceptionally high percentage of mothers breastfeeding at six-to-eight weeks (77%), far greater than the national figure. Immunisation rates are also good and there are very low rates of smoking in pregnancy. Childhood obesity is higher than the national figure which the group is trying to counteract with healthy cooking sessions and encouraging healthy eating in the centres. Dental-health specialists attend sessions in response to high levels of childhood cavities'.

Brent Council remains committed to sustaining this good practice in the proposals for a new model of management and delivery of Children's Centres. The service specification makes clear these commitments. See for example 3.29-3.30.

3.29 The Service Provider will support community health services to ensure all parents with babies and very young children have access to the Healthy Child Programme and that all pregnant women and their families have access to antenatal advice and support.

3.30 The Service Provider will provide access to information, guidance and signposting about:

- Breastfeeding, nutrition, hygiene and safety.
- Immunisations
- Smoking cessation
- Healthy lifestyles e.g. healthy eating and physical activity
- Good physical and mental health for children and families, including healthy relationships and information and
- guidance to support families affected by domestic violence and substance misuse
- Dental hygiene, including how to register with dentists
- Other public health programmes that operate within the borough

Supporting documentation can be found here :
HealthProfile2014Brent00AE.pdf

At a minimum the new provide must continue to deliver services already in place, however we will be expecting the service provider to improve service provision for this protected group.

5.6 Race (select all that apply) Positive

Children's Centres have a very particular role in enabling access to all families from all ethnic backgrounds. Brent is one of the most ethnically diverse local authorities in the UK- 92.0% of school children are from a minority ethnic group this is the second highest for any local authority in England.

Children's Centres monitor the registration and engagement of families from different ethnic backgrounds and make specific efforts to target families that are not engaging. The analysis below shows that BAME users have the highest levels of service user engagement of the children's centres.

The Service Provider will need to understand the cultural diversity of the community which it will serve and ensure provision of services to meet our client group requirements. At a minimum they must continue to deliver services already in place, however we will be expecting the service provider to improve service provision that will enhance quality of opportunity for our BAME users. For example, applying for grants specifically targeted at provision for BAME users.

To assist the service provider, the local authority will continue to provide detailed breakdowns of ethnic communities, as well as additional data relevant to families to specifically engage because of their higher levels of need on at least a termly basis. This will ensure that there is a continued focus on identifying and engaging these families.

Registration Rate (as @ 17/12/14) - Based on Jan-14 under 5 population (21,708)

	Population* (Jan-14)	Registered	Percentage Registered
Asian - Bangladeshi	188	82	44%
Asian - Chinese	68	66	96%
Asian - Indian	3233	2,549	79%
Asian - Other Asian	2621	1,236	47%
Asian - Pakistani	1499	614	41%
Black - African	3708	1,417	38%
Black - Caribbean	1990	439	22%
Black - Other Black	565	595	105%
Mixed - Other Mixed	668	714	107%
Mixed - White & Asian	239	145	61%
Mixed - White & Black African	213	74	35%
Mixed - White & Black Caribbean	373	97	26%
Other ethnic group	1481	1,156	78%
White - British	1367	1,060	78%
White - Irish	276	136	49%
White - Other White	2700	2,267	84%
Not obtained/Refused	519	5,016	967%
Grand Total	21708	17,663	81%

**Based on percentages from Jan-13 school census*

In making specific provision to target and engage families from diverse ethnic communities and so ensure that Children's Centres bring families together from across all ethnic backgrounds:

- (a) our staff teams represent diverse communities
- (b) Children's Centres prioritise recruiting and supporting parent volunteers that speak community languages
- (c) parent volunteers are proactively engaged in supporting the engagement of families that do not speak English and delivering services in community languages (for example, some of our parenting programmes are delivered by trained Somali volunteer facilitators for Somali parents)

(d) adult education services provide English language courses through or in collaboration with Children's Centres and this is augmented with additional conversational English language sessions through Children's Centres
(e) ensuring that all of Brent's Parents Voice groups (parents forums that operate as part of the governance of children's centres in all localities) and Locality Advisory Boards (that are the key board governing children's centres in all localities) have parents from different ethnic groups participating
(f) annual parent impact and satisfaction study also draws out qualitative differences in the experiences of families from different ethnic backgrounds (as well as where there are parents/children with disabilities, young parents and parents that are not in work/households where no adult is in work).

The most recent report identifies that families from Black and minority ethnic communities typically have high levels of satisfaction with Brent Children's Centres and report positive impacts in all key outcome areas both for parents and for children.

Brent Children's Centres' community involvement workers will proactively engage parents that attend our Children's Centres to contribute to overall governance so that the cultural diversity of Brent is represented in service planning. As a result, there are more than 100 parents participating in Parents Voice across the five localities.

It is also the case that we review the satisfaction and impact rates associated with families from different ethnic groups to ensure that we can meaningfully address and engage all families; and so positively undertake work to promote the participation of all groups. We note, for example, in the attached parent satisfaction and impact report, the extent to which ethnic groups report equally positive levels of satisfaction (99%) and high levels of benefit for parents and for children from engagement. We will continue to monitor these differences on an ongoing basis, coupled with our detailed work about who is accessing the Centre and what we can do in a targeted way to ensure that all communities are engaging.

As noted above, this had led to specific provision for specific communities such as Somali parents (working alongside local community organisations) and focused work to engage communities as well. For example, at Wembley team two, Gujarati parent volunteers have been recruited to assist with work to support other Gujarati speaking parents.

Similarly, this analysis points to a need for more engagement with Polish parents who are engaging less with the children's centre. As a result, the Action Plan has a focus on the recruitment of a Polish parent volunteer.

Supporting documentation can be found here :
ethnicity-and-engagement-rates-.xlsx

5.7 Religion or belief (select all that apply) Positive

As part of a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion and fostering good community relations, Children's Centres ensure that all major religious festivals and celebrations for Brent residents are integrated into their provision. In addition to displays set up within the Centres, Children's Centres will host celebratory events that all families can participate in (whether affiliated to the particular religion or not).

Staff also take account of the different requirements of families' religious beliefs, for example, in support for healthy eating and physical activity. This is a requirement of Children's Centres' Healthy Early Years Status accreditation (which all Children's Centres have achieved). Similarly, Brent's parenting programmes (all accredited programmes delivered by appropriately qualified practitioners) take account of different belief systems as part of how people parent. This is especially true of the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities parenting programme which is delivered at least once each term on a rotating basis throughout all localities.

This is not to say that different beliefs which are inconsistent with positive child development and UK law, for example in relation to the safeguarding and protection of children are viewed acceptable. These are not and all staff and parent volunteers delivering services through Children's Centres must have had safeguarding training and understand Brent's commitment to, and policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding. Parenting programmes, for example, challenge beliefs which are not conducive to positive outcomes for children such as smacking children.

However, this is done in a way that educates parents about the sustained benefits to child development and parent/ child relationships through routine setting and behaviour management not challenging religious beliefs. In this way, Children's Centres are contributing to the fostering of good relations for families with different religions/ belief systems.

The new Service Provider will need to demonstrate awareness and knowledge of supporting families with diverse religions and beliefs and how they might seek to further improve service provision to support these families.

5.8 Sex (select all that apply)

Positive

A key priority for Brent Children's Centres is engagement of all parents. This is consistent with the 'whole family' model of working that is in place across the Early Years and Family Support Service. Registration and engagement rates of both female and male parents/carers is recorded and monitored.

In the last 18 months, this approach has led to much more concerted focus on engagement of dads/ male carers where traditionally dads/ male carers have been largely disengaged from participation in services with Children's Centres. This includes offering a diverse range of parenting and peer support interventions that are specific to dads/ male carers (see attached) led by a children's centre network manager with responsibility for the 'dad's programme'.

The growth in registration and engagement of fathers/ male carers is set out below.

Description	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Fathers with a 0-5 year old reached within period	1179	1126	1292
Fathers registered with a 0-5 year old within period	7030	8625	10056

While universal and targeted services are all taken up by mums/ female carers, there are also specific programmes of support that are relevant to mums with specific requirements too. For example, Brent Children's Centres all offer programmes for mums affected by domestic abuse (this includes bespoke in-refuge support for mums and children affected by domestic abuse) and all Children's Centre localities have qualified staff for identifying and engaging mums affected by domestic abuse. There are also physical activity programmes specifically for mums too. As noted previously, as part of all Children's Centres achieving their Healthy Early Years Status accreditation, all Children's Centres needed to demonstrate positive approaches to educating and supporting mums with breastfeeding and smoking in pregnancy.

Brent Council remains committed to sustaining this good practice in the proposals for a new model of management and delivery of Children's Centres. The service specification makes clear these commitments. See for example 3.22 and 3.23.

3.22 The Service Provider shall ensure that each Children's Centre provides welcoming, inclusive supportive services for all fathers and male carers which respond to their needs. Such services will be delivered in an environment where they are accepted and free to participate without being judged. This will include across the borough at least once weekly activities that cater specifically to the requirements of fathers and male carers. At least one Children's Centre network manager should be a designated 'father's lead' to ensure appropriate senior level coordination of support through Children's Centres for fathers and male carers.

3.23 Working closely with the Brent Family Nurse Partnership health professionals, the Service Provider shall be responsive to local need for support for teenage and young parents by providing specialist, tailored support, including support for teenage and young fathers. Services will be delivered in ways that encourage teenagers to access early advice and support through Children's Centres.

Supporting documentation can be found here :
[Father-figure-activities.pdf](#)

5.9 Sexual orientation (select all that apply)

Neutral

5.10 Other (please specify) (select all that apply)

Neutral

6. Please provide a brief summary of any research or engagement initiatives that have been carried out to formulate your proposal.

What did you find out from consultation or data analysis?

Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal?

How did your findings and the wider evidence base inform the proposal?

There has been consultation carried out with service users, potential service users and our partners and providers of services. To support this consultation, booklets for parents and for partners were created and distributed that set out the context and purpose of the proposals and consultation activity. From November 2014-January 2015, consultation has included paper and online surveys and drop in the box feedback at all Children's Centres, an online questionnaire for partners, a provider/ partner consultation meeting and individual meetings by the Head of Early Years and Family Support Service with all headteachers which have Children's Centres co-located with the school site.

There have been especially good levels of engagement from ethnically and culturally diverse parents. Key findings for parents are:

1. Parents value the opportunity for learning and development of their children and themselves as part of their family immersion into the Brent community while planning for their long term future.
2. Parents recognise and value the way Children's Centres support their aspirations for future success
3. Parents value the 'low/no cost' of Children's Centre services
4. Parents have a perception that the Council intends to close services
5. Parents do not want the new partner to focus on income over children's outcomes
6. Parents are concerned that costs will be introduced that may exclude them from using the services
7. Some parents are concerned that costs will target economically active families
8. The majority of parents are willing to make a small contribution to attend specific programmes
9. Parents need a clear explanation of the tender process
10. Parents support the Proposal as the opportunity to save Children's Centre Services
11. Parents want the existing staff to remain in their roles
12. Parents want quality to be maintained
13. Parents support the need to generate income
14. Parents accept business and charitable involvement in Children's Centres

Key additional concern raised by partners were that current partnerships and agreements would not be honoured/continued. The headteachers were broadly in agreement that working with a partner/partners was an acceptable way forward.

Throughout the consultation few other alternatives were suggested except for a small charge for services and hiring out the buildings. These had been explored before and would not create the required savings. Consultation with managers, staff and unions has also taken place, albeit that this was not strictly required as a separate function at this stage. Nonetheless, employees working for Brent Children's Centres have been consulted. Their perspectives are integrated into a specific EIA relevant to staff.

Officers have also consulted widely with potential public, private and voluntary sectors through a range of mechanisms including a formal open stakeholder event held at the Civic Centre on 10 December 2014, soft market testing and web based market discussion. The consensus view is that, given the relatively small number of buildings covered by the contract, to deliver the efficiencies and service improvements expected by the Council, this objective would best be met through the letting of a single contract. It should be noted that the small number of other authorities who have externalised the running of their Children's Centres such as Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Greenwich have significantly more centres than Brent. e.g. Hertfordshire CC have issued a tender recently for the management and operation of over 80 centres.

The attached service specification resonates strongly with the views set out by parents and partners. In seeking to tender a partner to deliver and manage Children's Centres, staff and services, it enables the maintenance of this well valued service with good outcomes and still produce a saving to the Council. It means there is no requirement for large scale reductions in staffing and Children's Centre sites or the introduction of fees that would limit families especially those with greater levels of need from engaging with Children's Centre services (e.g. families with disabled children, families that are new arrivals to UK, families without paid work or in low paid work, young parents etc.), while at the same time ensuring continued good quality and securing of positive outcomes for children and families, particularly those at greater risk of poor outcomes.

The Children's Centres are located in areas of higher rates of deprivation in the borough. The borough profiles indicate that these areas have the highest rates of BAME and younger aged residents. The Council are seeking to continue the provision of services at the same time as delivering saving efficiencies. In order to achieve this, the proposal is to work with a new provider. The new service provider would need to be aware of the ethnic profile of the community it will be serving and have knowledge and understanding of their needs, ensuring they can deliver services to meet the needs of Brent's diverse community.

Supporting documentation can be found here :
brent-council-CC-service-specifications-2-.docx

7. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010? Prohibited acts include direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failure to make a reasonable adjustment.

No

8. What actions will you take to enhance the potential positive impacts that you have identified?

As set out in the main body of the EIA, the service specification for the proposed way forward with management and delivery of Brent Children's Centres articulates commitments for any potential provider to sustain the good practices and positive impacts associated particularly with age, sex, disability and race/ethnicity.

As noted in the previous sections, good quality data sharing enables Brent Council to understand specifically performance of children's centres in relation to key determinants such as age, disability, race and sex. In this context, the Council has already taken steps to ensure that children's centres positively contribute to the equality agenda, most particularly in relation to these protected characteristics.

To sustain this positive outcome and impact, the Council isn't simply seeking to engage a partner to continue this on their own. We recognise this can only happen if the Council continues to leverage existing partnerships e.g. Children's Social Care, Brent Family Solutions, Health Visiting to ensure that we can properly identify which families to focus efforts so that we can continue to have positive impacts related to age, disability etc. This includes detailed data sharing, continued strategic oversight of Children's Centres through the Brent CC Strategic Partners Group and continued provision of detailed reports to any new service provider by the local authority.

The Brent Children's Centre Performance Management Framework requires that any potential provider will continue to prioritise the engagement of service users and potential service users consistent with Brent's equality commitments. To support this, the Early Years and Family Support will continue to provide on at least a termly basis detailed household data to the provider that helps with identifying and engaging families with children aged 0-4 years, as well as provide termly performance data at the Children's Centre level, Children's Centre locality level and borough wide level that demonstrates success or otherwise in engagement with children and families (consistent with relevant protected characteristics). These reports will assist the provider as well as provide the basis for clear outcomes focused contract/ performance management.

In addition, the Brent Children's Centres' Strategic Partners Group will continue as a borough wide partnership chaired by the Head of Early Years and Family Support Services that seeks to further the integration of early childhood services and set and review performance in relation to borough and locality level targets for Children's Centres. This includes in relation to the areas set out in this EIA e.g. at least 80% engagement of all children and 65% of all children that are at greater risk of poor outcomes, families with children with additional needs/disabilities, dads and male carers and families from all ethnic communities.

9. What actions will you take to remove or reduce the potential negative impacts that you have identified?

Most importantly, the Council isn't seeking to engage a partner to work on their own to identify and engage households without the benefit of the excellent partnership working and data sharing that has been the characteristic of existing provision. The Council will continue to leverage existing partnerships- most particularly Children's Social Care, Brent Family Solutions and Health Visiting- to ensure that the provider is able to identify which families to focus efforts so that we can continue to have, and build on the positive impacts related to age, disability etc. This includes detailed data sharing, continued strategic oversight of Children's Centres through the Brent CC Strategic Partners Group and continued provision of detailed reports to any new service provider by the local authority.

10. Please explain how any remaining negative impacts can be justified?

11. What did this equality analysis conclude?

The proposal was accepted without changes

I confirm that this equality analysis represents a fair and reasonable view of the implications of this proposal on equality and that appropriate actions have been identified to address the findings.

Enter your name

Sue Gates

Enter your designation

Consultation with managers, staff and unions has also taken place, albeit that this was not strictly required as a separate function at this stage. Nonetheless, employees working for Brent Children's Centres have been consulted. Their perspectives are integrated into a specific EIA relevant to staff.

Officers have also consulted widely with potential public, private and voluntary sectors through a range of mechanisms including a formal open stakeholder event held at the Civic Centre on 10 December 2014, soft market testing and web based market discussion. The consensus view is that, given the relatively small number of buildings covered by the contract, to deliver the efficiencies and service improvements expected by the Council, this objective would best be met through the letting of a single contract. It should be noted that the small number of other authorities who have externalised the running of their Children's Centres such as Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Greenwich have significantly more centres than Brent. e.g Hertfordshire CC have issued a tender recently for the management and operation of over 80 centres.

The attached service specification resonates strongly with the views set out by parents and partners. In seeking to tender a voluntary sector partner to deliver and manage Children's Centres, staff and services, it enables the maintenance of this well valued service with good outcomes and still produce a saving to the Council. It means there is no requirement for large scale reductions in staffing and Children's Centre sites or the introduction of fees that would limit families especially those with greater levels of need from engaging with Children's Centre services (e.g. families with disabled children, families that are new arrivals to UK, families without paid work or in low paid work, young

Appendix 3
External brief reports re consultation



MUTUALGAIN

Summary Feedback Report on the Future of Brent's Children's Centres consultation

Susan Ritchie
01/12/14

This summary report provides the key findings from seven consultation events held on 11th and 12th November 2014. The events were arranged to engage the parental voice in the consultation on the Children Centre's. They form part of a programme of consultation initiatives that are open until January 2015.

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Introduction

The London Borough of Brent has put in place a number of mechanisms for parents, carers, families, and future users of Children’s Centres to comment on the Future of Brent’s Children’s Centres consultation. The Council wanted to attract views from a variety of groups, using the following approach:

- Direct mail to every parent/carer who uses the services – a copy of the proposal and attached questionnaire delivered to 24,000 homes in Brent¹.
- An online survey (http://brent-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/candf/consultation_on_proposals_for_the_future_of_brents_childrens_centres)
- A survey collection box in every Children’s Centre
- Encouragement and support from Children’s Centre staff to complete questionnaires
- Delivery of 7 Children’s Centre consultation events – designed, delivered and reported independently by MutualGain²



¹ The full consultation proposal can be read at www.brent.gov.uk

² The timing and recruitment was set by Brent Council, with independent capture of views and opinion

Drop In Events

Seven 'drop in' style events were provided, giving opportunities for Children's Centre parents and carers to share their thoughts. The events were offered over a range of times and locations to suit varying needs.

Brent has six Children's Centre Network areas: an event was held in each of those, with an additional evening event held at Brent Civic Centre.

Each event was designed to:

- Provide information on the Proposal
- Gather views on the proposal
- Collect new suggestions for alternative service delivery models that could be considered

A flexible approach was taken to give parents enough information about the proposals and enable time to comment and ask questions (and where necessary, to signpost parents to further information and services).

A member of the Children's Services Operational Team attended most events in an observation role, but provided assistance with technical enquiries related to other childcare matters as needed.

Structure of Events

At each location, parents and carers were provided with:

- An explanation of the proposal
- An explanation of the future role of the Council
- An explanation of the expectations of an appointed 'partner organisation'
- Opportunities for questions to be asked
- Opportunity to contribute to the thinking around the challenge (gathered and recorded visibly using large scale templates)
- A personal 'vote' using 'sticky backed ticks' to support or not support the proposal

Consultation Questions

Participants were asked to provide their views on the following:

1. What do you like most about the Children's Centres?
2. How do you think the proposal will impact on the Children's Centres?
3. Do you have any additional suggestions for a new service delivery model?

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Using 'sticky back ticks' they were asked to indicate their support or non-support for the partnership model

Findings: Highlights

This summary report provides the key findings from the events. A Full Report with demographic profiles will be submitted at the end of the consultation in January 2015. Despite the events being offered at all seven locations, only three locations attracted any participation:

- Wembley Primary
- Alperton
- Three Trees

Due to this low participation, a large template has been left for distribution and use in the other Children's Centres. The Template will be mounted on a wall and parents encouraged to leave their comments – known as a 'Talking Wall' in engagement terms, it provides another opportunity for those who may not want to engage face to face, but have a comment to make. These templates will be collated and reported on in the full report.

Participation

Participation in the events was lower than expected, despite significant postal attempts to engage parents. A total of 23 parents attended the sessions. Despite the lower number attending the events, there are clear shared views across the three network areas that achieved better participation. From this we are able to provide the key findings from those who took part.

The majority of participants in these events came from BAMER communities (Black and Minority Ethnic Refugee) groups. These community members are known not to participate in traditional consultation methods (written questionnaires and online surveys), which provided a welcome voice in the engagement, and can contribute to the next stages of how the Council consider the Future of Brent's Children's Centres.

Many of the parents we spoke with speak English as a Second Language. They were all able to present their views clearly and concisely with no language problems: we thank them for their valuable time.



What do you like most about the Children's Centres?

Parents were very easily able to identify the areas of Children's Centre work that they value: they quickly identified the benefits they have personally gained and how this has contributed to their children's development, and their own socialisation in the Brent community. This was poignant from Polish parents who are particularly appreciative of the ability to learn English themselves and how this supports the preparation of their children for school.

The key things most liked and valued are:

- Learning and development of the children
- New structured programme – children learning through play
- Parent learning and socialisation (ESOL, Baby Massage, Aromatherapy)
- Ability to get children 'out of the house'
- Close to home
- Small steps to employment for parents (confidence, language, networks, skills)
- Knowledge – first aid put into practice in home accident (parent did not take child to A & E)

- Access to early support – speech and language therapy, parenting classes, new parent workshops
- Good parent/staff relationships
- Improvement in children’s behaviour
- Day trips – discounted rates e.g. £5 for 10 swimming lessons
- Preparation for nursery means children have command of English and not isolated at nursery school

Parents recognise and value the way Children’s Centres support their aspirations for future success

Many of the parents we spoke with are recent arrivals to the UK and have faced challenging experiences whilst settling in the UK. Language barriers, housing need and immersion into community life in Brent gave them additional aspirations for

Parents value the opportunity to learn and develop their children, and themselves, as part of their family immersion into the Brent community. It helps them plan for their long-term future.

their children to settle and secure educational attainment. This gives them an acute understanding of the wider benefits they gain from the Children’s centres and therefore the Children’s Centres are highly valued by them.

Parents value the ‘low/no cost’ of Children’s Centre services

Closely connected to their recent arrival status, are the challenging economic pressures many parents face. In particular, parents with two or more children voiced praise for the ‘low or no cost’ of services, that they would not be in a position to afford if they were required to pay.

Parents do not want the new partner to focus on income over children's outcomes

How do you think the Proposal will impact on children's centres?

There were three clear major concerns among parents about the proposed partnership:

- Potential future closure of Children's Centres if additional funds are not raised
- A new partner will shift focus to 'business' rather than children and families
- The potential introduction of costs to parents to access the services that are currently free

Despite voicing these concerns **all parents fully supported the introduction of a partnership model** to protect and secure Children's Centre Services.

There is a perceived threat of 'closure' that needs to be addressed so that parents can engage meaningfully and make a contribution to finding a solution to the Children's Centres future; so that their creative ideas can be considered.

Parents have a perception that the Council intends to close services

There are concerns that the partners' requirement to raise funds may shift the focus from 'children's outcomes' to 'income generation'. One parent described the Proposal as 'a high risk strategy that may fail if funds are not raised'. These concerns were very much shared in all the discussions and parents do not want a focus on business to overshadow the focus on children and families.

There is recognition that money will need to be raised to secure the future of services; as each group recognise the financial value they gain from 'free and minimal contribution services' – but they **want a partner that will protect children's outcomes as well as source income.**

Costs were present throughout the discussion groups. Many parents told us they could not afford to pay per session in the future; which would lead to less use of the services by parents like them.



Costs were also raised by two families in different consultation events, from a different perspective; they raised fear for costs to 'the middle class' who do not receive benefits and would be the likely ones to face increased charges for use. One parent explained that while they worked and earned money, they also had commitments and it should not be assumed that they have significant disposable income.

These dialogues led to parents making suggestions for the levels of affordable contribution they could, and would, make to maintain and protect services. These suggestions are detailed on [page 10](#), and ranged from £1 per session to £5 per week.

Parents are concerned that costs will be introduced that may exclude them from using the services

Some parents are concerned that costs will target economically active families

Majority of parents are willing to make a small contribution to attend specific programmes

Despite these concerns there is support for the introduction of a partner organisation to maintain the delivery of services.

There is overwhelming support for a model that enables services to continue with as little change or cost implication as possible. The facilitator allayed the initial fears of 'closure' and enabled participants to understand that this new approach is aimed at securing services, and provided confidence that their suggestions would help the development of an appropriate model for Brent.

Key questions raised about the new approach:

- Will there be reduced diversity in current programmes?
- Who will be the new partner?
- Is there a partner lined up?
- Will a 'private' partner change the focus to business rather than on children and families

The questions above were repeated at all the consultation events – and gives an indication that parents welcome more information on any future tender process. We would suggest that parent representation could be sought to inform the implementation of the new approach.

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Parents need a clear explanation of the tender process

Parents were able to identify some potential positive impacts from the new approach, and were keen to see a new partner explore opportunities to further develop services and provide more programmes. Examples were recorded about waiting lists for programmes at two Children's Centres and a desire for a new partner to increase access to services.

Support given for the proposal

- A new partner may raise additional funds
- A new partner might broaden the current offer
- The new approach could attract additional services e.g. immunisations, GPs
- The new partner might bring back services that have stopped – music classes delivered by professional musicians

Parents support the Proposal as the opportunity to save Children's Centre Services

Hopes for the new partnership

In discussing the challenges facing Brent Council – cuts, population growth and need, the parents articulated their hopes for the future service. They hope that the new partner will:

- Continue to support disadvantaged families
- Increase the number of sessions and programmes available
- Keep costs minimal, or out of, delivering services
- Parental contribution to delivering sessions is not over estimated (example given of parent led music sessions not having the same input and impact as professionally tutored classes)

Parents expressed the need for the Council to continue its role in quality assurance, educational standards and the performance management of the partner. However, their greatest request to the Council is to protect the staff. Parents have significant affection and respect for the staff at the Children's Centres, and clearly recognise the difference that the Centre staff have made to their lives and their children. Parents

would like existing staff to remain as they have relationships and trust in the people they know.

Parents support the need to generate income and accept business and charitable involvement in Children's Centres

Parents want the existing staff to remain in their roles: they want 'quality' to be maintained

Suggestions for a new model for the Future of Brent's Children's Services

Parents were invited to offer their suggestions for new approaches to delivering the Children's Centre Services. They were encouraged to put forward ideas that could make a difference and assist in shaping a new model.

The most frequent suggestion heard was for parents to make a small financial contribution to the costs of delivering sessions. Although there are concerns about the level of costs and how this impacts of families with two and more children, there is a willingness to contribute rather than lose the service.

Parents' suggestions were:

- A small cost to parents
- Seek support from Charities
- Sponsorship is sought from large energy suppliers – electricity, gas etc.
- Individual benefactors are approached – here and abroad
- Sponsorship from large businesses e.g. Lego, Sony and Early Learning Centre
- Evening room and ground hire to the community
- Health checks in centres to encourage attendance
- Centres should deliver more services like NHS dentist, speech therapy
- Reduce waste through printing and advertising
- Go hard on Central Government and reject cuts – 'education should not be compromised

Voting with sticky backed ticks

Each parent was given a single sticky tick and asked to place it against the statement that most reflected their view:

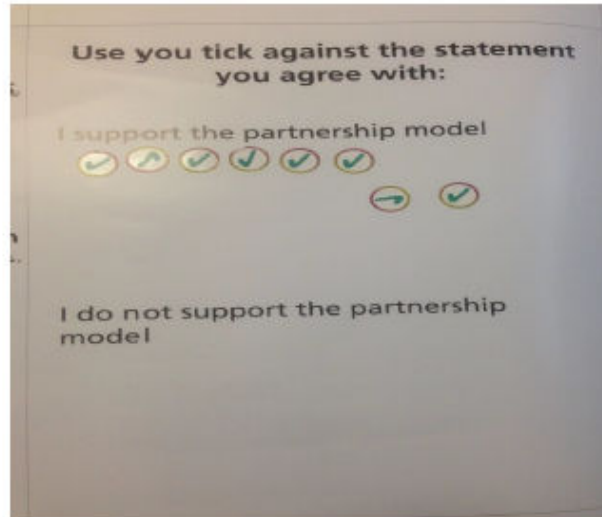
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I support the partnership model

I do not support the partnership model

23 supporting ticks were recorded in total, and 0 recorded as not supporting the proposal – full support of those in attendance, for the introduction of a partner organisation to maintain and secure delivery of Children’s Centre Services in Brent.





What do you like most about the children's centres?	How do you think the proposal will impact on children's services?
<p>New timetable - more structured better programme - kids learning thru play: Maths session Beneficial Courses for parents: parenting ESOL - Aromatherapy - baby massage Workshops for new parents: Excursions - discounted rate Baltic's November - day trip Legoland Swimming £5 - ten lessons @ Nutfield → Children know each other 'its nothing' - children benefit: - Preparing them for nursery - help with learning languages.</p>	<p>costs for families - Will the partner charge Should be low - not high lots of families won't be able to attend lots of sessions £1- is ok. Who is the partner - high risk system will fail if parents not secure - No longevity - unknown lifetime - Partner might think 'business model' lead them to introduce fees - May then lack diversity in programme - look at the costs. - Hope for no centre closures - Did the partnership model work in Greenwich?</p>
<p>Any other suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Families pay a small fee for use/activities - Granville + three trees - Charge small amounts to parents - Council should lobby Government - state the benefits to parents - Go in harder -> wake up the gov. - Should not compromise on educ. <p>- Sponsors: Charity, Early Learning Centre, Groups/businesses geared towards children M1 Sony, Leg</p>	<p>Use you tick against the statement you agree with:</p> <p>I support the partnership model</p> <p style="text-align: right;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> </p> <p>I do not support the partnership model</p>



Next Steps

Due to the lower than expected levels of participation, MutualGain recommends that additional activity is undertaken to gather the views of vulnerable families and working families, through planned focus group discussions

Future engagement activities should consider using incentives to encourage participation and consider if there are other locations in the community to attract more parents into the consultation programme.

WWW.MUTUALGAIN.ORG
SUSAN@MUTUALGAIN.ORG
07875237846

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Appendix 4

External brief reports - consultation

The Future of Brent's Children's Centre Consultation Statement from MutualGain

Feedback received from parents through face to face engagement and online/paper surveys has provided some clear messages that will assist Brent Council in making a decision on the future model of service to be delivered to parents and children in Brent. There is overwhelming support to **maintain the existing number of Children's Centre sites**, with an appetite to increase the services that are delivered.

Brent Parents are **concerned about potential future closures** and the introduction of costs to them. In short parents want all services to be maintained at all sites, and would **prefer to make a zero or no financial contribution** for these services.

Parents are concerned about 'access' and transport costs that could be incurred if some services move location in the future.

There are also concerns about the future quality of service delivered and **a desire to retain the existing members of staff currently in post**. Parents have good relationships with staff and want to maintain the level of trust and support they have. There is recognition of the value added to children and parents lives by the Centres and widespread support for the Centres to continue to support the most vulnerable families in need.

Some parents have a perception of 'under use' of some Children's Centre sites; **the current networked delivery model may not be fully understood by parents**, but does provide an opportunity for additional/new service configuration in the future model that could bring in funds to support and protect the existing services.

Parents are supportive of a partnership model to protect the services they currently access, and have confidence in the Councils proposed role in the future and would like to be kept informed of any future procurement process.

Parents who responded to the online survey articulated the same concerns, but also expressed **a strong need for 'localising' a future model**. Examples were given of a model that included multiple use of the buildings for youth and community use where needed, and several comments were put forward that buildings should not be sold or land used for housing in the future.

Recommendation:

The engagement to date has secured the views of parents from diverse multi ethnic groups. The consultation will benefit from undertaking four focus groups with parents who are currently underrepresented:

- Group 1: Families with children that have had a social care assessment, CAF or are in Troubled Families
- Group 2: Families with Nursery Education Grant with 2 children
- Group 3: Families with children likely to have additional needs at school (as provided by SENAS)
- Group 4: Families with children with lower levels of additional needs

Emerging Feedback from the surveys identifies:

- Extend the building use to meet wider community needs
- Protect the buildings and land from sale
- The need for an Impact assessment to consider within the context of additional planned changes i.e. future of VCS and charitable organisations also under threat.

The final Report will contain full analysis and ethnicity data where provided.

The highlight report submitted in December identified the following priorities that were further echoed in the paper and online surveys:

1. Parents value the opportunity for learning and development of their children and themselves as part of their family immersion into the Brent community while planning for their long term future.
2. Parents recognise and value the way Children's Centres support their aspirations for future success
3. Parents value the 'low/no cost' of Children's Centre services
4. Parents have a perception that the Council intends to close services
5. Parents do not want the new partner to focus on income over childrens outcomes

6. Parents are concerned that costs will be introduced that may exclude them from using the services
7. Some parents are concerned that costs will target economically active families
8. The majority of parents are willing to make a small contribution to attend specific programmes
9. Parents need a clear explanation of the tender process
10. Parents support the Proposal as the opportunity to save Children's Centre Services
11. Parents want the existing staff to remain in their roles
12. Parents want 'quality' to be maintained
13. Parents support the need to generate income
14. Parents accept business and charitable involvement in Children's Centres

Appendix 5

Consultation booklets

Proposals for the Future of Brent's Children's Centres

25 November 2014 – 14 January 2015



www.brent.gov.uk/CCconsultation



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Children's centres are an important part of Brent's services to children aged from 0 to 4 and their families, especially to those in the greatest need. A number of local authorities' children's centres are faced with closure and cuts to their services. In Brent we are looking for options which can safeguard the future of children's centres while recognising that the council has less money.

THE CURRENT OFFER

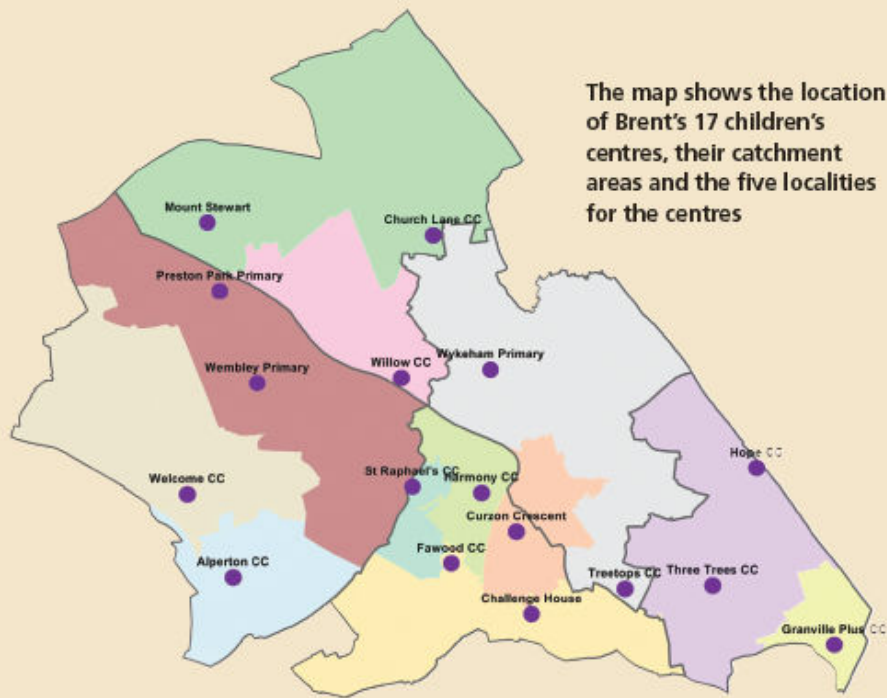
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- child development and school readiness;
- parenting aspirations, self-esteem and parenting skills;
- child and family health and life chances.*

(* Department for Education, Sure Start Children's Centre's Guidance April 2013).

WHY ARE WE CONSULTING?

Brent's funding for children's centres is being reduced. In 2012 we changed our delivery model by clustering centres into locality working with a team managed by a network manager. These localities are Harlesden, Kilburn, Kingsbury, Wembley and Willesden. However, in order to run the centres and continue to provide opportunities and protect services in particular for the most vulnerable we need to make further changes.



NATIONAL CHANGES AFFECTING BRENT

Since the first children's centre opened in Brent in 2005 central government policy on supporting families and young children has changed. There is no longer specific funding to pay for children's centres. Instead national initiatives have been introduced to support families in different ways. These include:

- Funding for 15 hours' free childcare for two year olds in low income families
- Funding for 15 hours' free childcare for all three and four year olds
- A Family Nurse Partnership which delivers a home visiting programme for first time mothers and fathers under the age of 19
- A Public Health Healthy Child Programme for children, young people and families, which focuses on early intervention and prevention. It offers a programme of screening tests, immunisations, developmental reviews, information and guidance on parenting and healthy choices. It aims to identify families which need additional support or who are at risk of poor health.

- More funding directly to schools which can be used to provide before and after-school activities for children
- More funding for health visitors to support new parents (in Brent the number of health visitors is increasing considerably).
- More funding for the Troubled Families Programme (known as the Working with Families programme in Brent) which works with families who have a number of complex issues.

At the same time as these changes, overall the council has seen large reductions in the funding it receives from central government. This means that we expect the council funding to reduce by half across all services over the next two years.

We must therefore look at all the services we provide to see how we can do things differently.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

We have reviewed all the services children's centres provide. We know from satisfaction surveys and the increasing use of children's centres that they are greatly valued. The proposal is that Brent Council wants to continue to provide children's centres, but in partnership with providers from the voluntary sector, community or business.

Given the increased choice of early years' services available to parents and the focus on supporting the most vulnerable children and families we believe the best way to maintain all of the children's centres and their teams, while increasing and improving services, is to work in partnership with other providers which could be a charity, community organisation or business.

Brent Council would continue to fund the targeted services for the most vulnerable families and be responsible for the overall quality of the provision while our new partners would generate funding and resources such as volunteers for the delivery of universal services for all families. The provider would also manage the staff, buildings and general service delivery to maximise benefits for local communities. This means that the current team of staff will continue to deliver services, transferring to the new provider. However, some new services, staff and volunteers may be involved.

We will ensure that the providers selected are as passionate about children's centres as we in Brent are and that we will continue to involve parents and carers in all aspects of the future of children's centres.

In developing this proposal we have taken into account changes already made in 2012 to the way children's centres operate, the newly funded services and programmes the government has introduced and the satisfaction local families have shown with services and the need for us to make savings.

Children's centre services will continue to be delivered from all current buildings, these include:

Alperton, Church Lane, Granville Plus, Harmony, Hope, Mount Stewart, Preston Park, St Raphael's, Three Trees, Wembley Primary, Willow, Wykeham, Welcome and its satellite Barham Park, and Tree Tops.

Curzon, Fawood and Challenge House children's centres are not included in the proposal and they will continue to be managed in partnership with the maintained nursery governing body.

Some of the buildings are expected to remain under the management of Brent Council.

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

While we want to be clear about the proposal to enter into a partnership arrangement, there are alternative approaches. For example, to reduce the number of centres overall or to increasingly run the services from other buildings such as schools and community centres rather than having dedicated buildings. We would welcome your proposals and ideas.

HAVE YOUR SAY

We would like to hear your views on the proposal. The consultation runs from 25 November until 14 January 2015. Please complete the questionnaire in this booklet. There is a section at the end for you to add any other comments that you would like us to consider.

The consultation form can be returned to us by post:

**Early Years and Family Support,
6th Floor Brent Civic Centre,
Engineers Way, Wembley, HA9 0FJ**

They can also be scanned and emailed to:

cfis@brent.gov.uk or put in a drop box at each children's centre.

Paper copies can be obtained at children's centres and Brent Civic Centre reception.

You can also request a paper copy by emailing:
CFIS@brent.gov.uk or calling: **020 8937 3001**.

You can have your say online by visiting:
www.brent.gov.uk/CCconsultation

All comments must be received by 5pm on 14 January. Comments received after this time cannot be considered.

CONSULTATION EVENTS

We will be holding consultation events where you can find out more information, talk to the team at Brent Council who have developed the plans, and share your views. You are encouraged to attend.

Locality	AM	PM
Kilburn	No event	Three Trees, 12 December 3.30-5pm
Harlesden	No event	St Raphael's , 11 December 12.30-2pm
Kingsbury	Willow, 12 December 11.30-1pm	No event
Wembley	Alperton, 12 December 9-10.30am	Wembley Primary, 11 December, 3.15-4.45pm
Willesden	Wykeham, 11 December 10-11.30am	No event

There will also be a consultation event at Brent Civic Centre on 11 December, 6-7.30pm

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE CONSULTATION?

Once the consultation has closed on 14 January 2015 all comments will be reviewed by Brent Council. The Cabinet of the council will be asked to take the comments received from both the public and staff consultations into account when deciding the future of children's centres. If the proposal to work with partners is approved we would also need the Cabinet's authority to start a tender process, carried out fairly under the council's procurement rules, to find the right provider. The results of this consultation will be available online, in the children's centre newsletters and at a follow-up meeting at Brent Civic Centre.

CHILDREN'S CENTRE QUESTIONNAIRE

Brent Council is seeking your views about the future of the Children's Centre Service. If you are a Brent Resident and have a child under 5 years of age or you are a carer/parent to be, please complete this questionnaire and tell us what you think. Please only go to question 8 if you do not use a children's centre and complete the rest of the questionnaire.

1. How often do you use a children's centre? (Please tick one)

- At least once a week
- At least once a month
- At least once every three months
- Less often than once every three months
- Never (please go to Question 8)

2. Which is your nearest children's centre? (Please tick one)

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Alperton Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hope Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Curzon Crescent Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | St Raphael's Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Harmony Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Welcome/Barham Park satellite centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Preston Park Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wykeham Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Three Trees Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Church Lane Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Willow Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fawood Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Challenge House Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mount Stewart Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Granville Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wembley Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tree Tops Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

3. Which centre/s do you regularly use? (Tick all that apply)

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Alperton Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hope Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Curzon Crescent Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | St Raphael's Children's Centre. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Harmony Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Welcome/Barham Park satellite centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Preston Park Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wykeham Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Three Trees Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Church Lane Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Willow Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fawood Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Challenge House Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mount Stewart Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Granville Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wembley Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tree Tops Children's Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

7

4. Which services do you use at the centre? (Tick all that apply)

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Childminding Network | <input type="checkbox"/> | Stay & Play sessions – including Messy Play, Babies Cafe, Baby Bop | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Citizen's Advice Bureau | <input type="checkbox"/> | Well Baby Clinic - health visitor run clinic for weighing babies, advice & support, and breast feeding support | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Counselling 1:1 and couples work | <input type="checkbox"/> | Adult Training and Employment support - Job Centre Plus, Ingeus, Reed and all the adult/family learning courses, such as ESOL. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Dad's sessions | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other, please specify: | |
| Family Support Services – including Parenting Programmes, such as Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities and Parents Power | <input type="checkbox"/> | <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 50px; width: 100%;"></div> | |
| Nutrition Services – including Weight Management, Children's Activity, Cook & Eat and Drop ins | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Speech & Language support - Music & Rhyme Time, Talking Toddlers, Parent Workshops and Play & Talk Workshops | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

5. Which of these services has made the greatest difference to your child and you / or your family? (List your top 3 services below)

1.
2.
3.

6. Have you used any other sites to get services or support?

- Yes No

7. If you answered yes to question 6, please tell us the site/s you have used.

8. Please tell us why you don't use a children's centre

8

9. Further to the information in the council's draft proposals attached to this questionnaire, what do you feel the impact of the proposals will be for the centre that you attend? (Please write in)

10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with Brent Council's overall proposals for changes to children's centre provision in the borough? (Please write in)

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I don't know

11. What do you feel the impact will be for all children's centres in Brent? (Please write in)

12. Do you have any additional comments on the proposals? (Please write in)

9

ABOUT YOU

To ensure we are meeting your needs, we are asking questions about you because we want to ensure we are welcoming all members of our diverse community. You do not have to answer these questions but we hope you will. All information will be kept strictly confidential. This information helps us to provide better services.

13. Are you a (tick one box)

- Prospective Parent
- Mother
- Father
- Grandfather
- Grandmother
- Child Minder
- Other Relative / Carer – please specify: _____

14. What is your age group? (tick one box)

- | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| 16-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 55-64 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 65-74 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35-44 | <input type="checkbox"/> | 75+ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 45-54 | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

15. Which of these groups do you feel you belong to? (tick one box)

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Asian Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mixed White & Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mixed White & Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mixed White & Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mixed Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> | White British | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> | White Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Black Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | White Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other Ethnic Group | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Other, please specify: _____

16. Do you consider yourself to have a disability? (tick one box)

- 10 Yes No

**17. Does your disability or impairment affect your daily life?
(tick one box)**

Yes No

18. What is your religion? (tick one box)

Baha'i	<input type="checkbox"/>	Islam	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buddhism	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sikhism	<input type="checkbox"/>
Christianity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Taoism	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hinduism	<input type="checkbox"/>	No religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jainism	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
Judaism	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. What is your sexual orientation? (tick one box)

Bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heterosexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lesbian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

**20. Have you been pregnant within the last six months or are you
breastfeeding?**

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

11.2014 BOU 7182

Proposals for the Future of Brent's Children's Centres

25 November 2014 – 14 January 2015



www.brent.gov.uk/CCconsultation



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LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Children's centres are an important part of Brent's services to children aged from 0 to 4 and their families, especially to those in the greatest need. A number of local authorities' children's centres are faced with closure and cuts to their services. In Brent we are looking for options which can safeguard the future of children's centres while recognising that the council has less money.

We are currently consulting with service users and potential service users around the future of Brent's children's centres and would value your views and ideas as people who are involved or impacted by the children's centres services in your locality.

Whilst children's centres staff are welcome to comment through this process and put forward their ideas, there is a separate consultation of staff taking place regarding any possible impact on them as employees, should changes be made following the consultation with the public and professionals.

THE CURRENT OFFER

Brent Council has 17 children's centres providing a range of services to families and children, including group activities for children and their parents and carers. These activities and services meet the requirements of the core purpose of children's centres which are to improve outcomes for young children and their families, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged families, in order to reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in:

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Brent's funding for children's centres is being reduced. In 2012 we changed our delivery model by clustering centres into locally working with a team managed by a network manager. These localities are Harlesden, Kilburn, Kingsbury, Wembley and Willesden. However, in order to run the centres and continue to provide opportunities and protect services in particular for the most vulnerable we need to make further changes.

3. How do you think this will impact on children's services?

4. Do you or have any further comments/suggestions?

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE CONSULTATION?

Once the consultation has closed on 14 January 2015 all comments will be reviewed by Brent Council. The Cabinet of the council will be asked to take the comments received from both the public and staff consultations into account when deciding the future of children's centres. If the proposal to work with partners is approved we would also need the Cabinet's authority to start a tender process, carried out fairly under the council's procurement rules, to find the right provider. The results of this consultation will be available online, in the children's centre newsletters and at a follow-up meeting at Brent Civic Centre.

Questionnaire on the future of Brent's children's centres

Brent Council is seeking your views about the future of the children's centres. Please complete the questionnaire and tell us what you think. There is a box at the end for you to add any other comment that you would like us to consider.

1. How are you involved with the children's centres?

- Member of Local Authority Children's Centre Staff Member of Local Advisory Board
- Partner delivering services in children's centre, if so:
 - Manager/strategic level Practitioner/Service Delivery
- Commissioned/Spot Purchase Service, if so:
 - Manager/strategic level Practitioner/Service Delivery
- Local School, if so:
 - Nursery Primary Secondary SEN Specialist PVI setting
- Other (please specify):.....

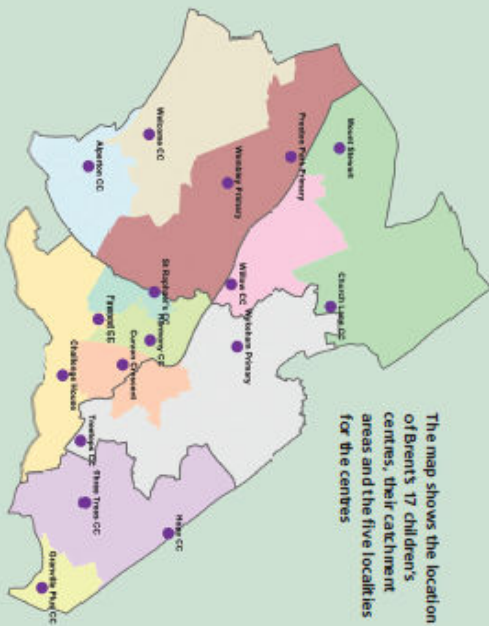
2. How much do you agree or disagree with the council's proposals for the futures of children's centres?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

Further Comments (please specify):.....

6

The map shows the location of Brent's 17 children's centres, their catchment areas and the five localities for the centres



NATIONAL CHANGES AFFECTING BRENT

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4

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HAVE YOUR SAY

We would like to hear your views on the proposal. The consultation runs from 25 November until 14 January 2015. We will be holding a consultation event for professionals, providers and partners on 3 December 2014 at 1pm until 2pm at Brent Civic Centre, where you can find out more information, talk to the team at Brent Council who have developed the plans, and share your views.

Please complete the questionnaire in this booklet. There is a section at the end for you to add any other comments that you would like us to consider.

The consultation form can be returned to us by post:

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Engineers Way, Wembley, HA9 0FJ**

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You can have your say online by visiting: www.brent.gov.uk/consultation

All comments must be received by 5pm on 14 January. Comments received after this time cannot be considered.

5

Appendix 6

List of Children's Centres in their clusters

Willesden

Treetops Children's Centre	Doyle Gardens London NW10 3SQ	Tel: 020 8838 3901
Wykeham Primary Children's Centre	Annesley Close London NW10 0ES	Tel: 020 8937 5960

Wembley 1

Wembley Children's Centre	East Lane Wembley HA9 7NW	Tel: 020 8937 5590
Alperton Children's Centre	Alperton High School, The Annexe South Building Ealing Road Wembley HA0 4PW Locality Wembley	Tel: 020 8937 3860
Barham Park Children's Centre	Barham Park Children's Centre Harrow Road, Wembley HA0 2HB	Tel: 0208 903 9541

Wembley 2

Preston Park Children's Centre	Preston Park Primary School College Road, Wembley HA9 8RJ	Tel: 020 8937 5980
The Welcome Children's Centre	Wembley Centre For Health & Care 116 Chaplin Road Wembley HA0 4UZ	Tel: 020 8903 9541

Kilburn

Granville Plus Children's Centre	80 Granville Road London NW6 5RA	Tel: 0208 937 6580
Three Trees Children's Centre	Tiverton Road London NW10 3HL	Tel: 020 8459 4385
Hope Children's Centre	228 Walm Lane London NW2 3BS	Tel: 020 8937 6490

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Harlesden 1

Challenge House Children's Centre	One Stop Community Stores Ltd Bank Buildings 1-2 High Street , London NW10 4LT	Tel: 020 8937 4025
Curzon Crescent Children's Centre	Curzon Crescent Children's Centre Curzon Crescent London NW10 9SD	Tel: 020 8459 6813
Fawood Children's Centre	35 Fawood Avenue London NW10 8DX	Tel: 020 8965 9334

Harlesden 2

Harmony Children's Centre	38 Bridge Road Neasden Brent NW10 0BX	Tel: 020-89373620
St Raphael's Children's Centre	St Raphaels Community Centre, Rainborough Close London NW10 0TS	Tel: 020 8937 3620

Kingsbury

Church Lane Children's Centre	Church Lane London NW9 8JD	Tel: 020 8937 3890
Mount Stewart Children's Centre	Mount Stewart Infant School Carlisle Gardens Harrow HA3 0JX	Tel: 020 8937 5970
The Willow Children's Centre	Barnhill Road Wembley HA9 9YP	Tel: 0208 937 6560

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Report on the Future of Brent's Children's Centres consultation

January 2015

Susan Ritchie

Public

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Introduction

This report provides the full consultation findings from the public and stakeholder consultation entitled *The Future of Brent's Children's Centres*, undertaken between 25 November 2014 and 14 January 2015. The formal consultation documents can be accessed here (http://brent-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/candf/consultation_on_proposals_for_the_future_of_brents_childrens_centres?tab=files)

The London Borough of Brent invited parents and carers who use the Children's Centres now, and those who have experience of using the Centres in the recent past, to share their thoughts and experiences on the future of model of delivery. With the consultation events planned, MutualGain was commissioned to deliver and report on the findings.

Consultation content

'Children's centres are an important part of Brent's services to children aged from 0 to 4 and their families, especially to those in the greatest need. A number of local authorities' children's centres are faced with closure and cuts to their services. In Brent we are looking for options which can safeguard the future of children's centres while recognising that the council has less money'.

(consultation document)

The consultation document provided parents with information on the history, development and current challenges facing the long-term sustainability of Children's Centres in their current format. It set out a possible future operating model with some key questions for parents and carers to respond to. These lines of enquiry were repeated in all methods used during the consultation.

Methodology

To enable as many parents and carers as possible to participate in the consultation dialogue a number of methods were used to suit a range of diverse needs and reflect the local importance of each Centre:

- Consultation document and feedback form delivered to every parent of a child aged under five in Brent (November 2014) – with a Freepost address
- Online consultation survey (25th November 2014 to 14th January 2015)

- Consultation documents available at every Children’s Centre site with postal box
- Face to face engagement sessions held at 6 Children’s Centres and 1 session held at Brent Civic Suite (11th and 12th December 2014)
- 4 Focus Group discussions with specific groups January 2015 (reported on page 30) These groups were particularly hard to reach and led to the use of telephone interviews to make participation easier.
- Telephone interviews with parents unable to attend Focus Groups January 2015 (Reported on Page x)

Public participation

The Consultation aimed to reach as many parents and carers as possible. The table below presents the numbers participating across all methods used:

Public Participation Method	Responses	Survey Percentage
Online surveys	43	30%
Postal surveys	7	4%
Collected at Children’s centre/face to face events	95	66%
Focus Groups	17	
Telephone surveys	21	
Total Public Participants	183	

The full equalities profile of participants can be seen in Appendices I (public Surveys) and II (Focus Groups)

Stakeholder Participation

Brent Council undertook a workshop with key stakeholders including the voluntary and community sector. The findings from the workshop are not reported here.

Additional opportunity was given to stakeholders to respond using a paper survey and online questionnaire. This option was also made available to staff. The total responses yielded were 24; reported in further detail on page 23. One online survey response was received on 15th January and has been included. This submission has been accepted due to the expectation of a ‘midnight deadline’, although the Council formally ended the consultation at ‘midday’.

Key Findings

Summary of Key findings from the Public Consultation

For ease of use to the reader, the detailed finding from each method used is reported separately in this report. There were strong views that emerged across all methods, which should be taken as the priority voice gathered during the public consultation:

- Parents want all Children's Centres to remain open
- Parents have a fear and suspicion of plans to close Children's Centres
- All parents value the Children's Centres contribution to their children and themselves, particularly the personal benefits of learning, English classes and parenting skills
- Parents are willing to make small financial contributions to protect the services they receive
- The vast majority of participants in the face to face engagement support the proposal as a means to protect the existing Children's Centres from closure
- Parents expressed their desire for any new partner to incorporate the ethics and focus which secures a child centred approach with a community approach that continues to be inclusive
- The vast majority of respondents use the Children's Centres at least once a week
- Few parents use more than one Centre – 60% of the survey respondents have never used another centre
- The majority of reported use is 'Stay and Play' sessions which is also the lead service to have made a difference to their children

Summary of Key Findings from the Stakeholder Responses

Below are the key points found in the 24 Stakeholder responses received. These findings have not been compared to the views gathered in the Workshop delivered by Brent Council, and may not fully reflect the stakeholder position.

40% of respondents were Children's Centre staff.

The consultation response form enabled open comments to be put forward with one statistical measure that showed if respondents 'agree'/'disagree' with the proposal. From the open questions the following issues were raised:

- Clear concerns expressed about the impact of future closures on staff, children and families

- Strong concern for staff retention and TUPE impacts
- The majority of respondents disagree or strongly disagree with proposal (67%)
- Respondents are concerned about the future in terms of access to updated data and information on families
- Concerns raised around quality, access and focus of future model
- Particular support for future service delivery to continue to be provided to vulnerable families
- Support for the provision of additional services – by improving the existing model
- Some support for new partnership model and enthusiasm for additional positive impacts – almost 15% agree and strongly agree with the proposal
- Some concerns that the proposal will add pressure to other services e.g. Health Visitors and Social Workers

The stakeholder responses are provided in further detail on 27. Equalities monitoring data was not collected for this group.

Summary of Key Findings from the Face to Face Public Engagement

Seven 'drop in' style events were provided, giving opportunities for Children's Centre parents and carers to share their thoughts. The events were offered over a range of times and locations to suit varying needs.

Brent has six Children's Centre Network areas: an event was held in each network area, with an additional evening event held at Brent Civic Centre.

Each event was designed to:

- Provide information on the Proposal
- Gather views on the proposal
- Collect new suggestions for alternative service delivery models that could be considered

A flexible approach was taken to give parents enough information about the proposals and enable time to comment and ask questions (and where necessary, to signpost parents to further information and services).

A member of the Children's Services Operational Team attended most events in an observation role, but provided assistance with technical enquiries related to other childcare matters as and when needed.

Participants were asked to provide their views on the following:

1. What do you like most about the Children's Centres?
2. How do you think the proposal will impact on the Children's Centres?
3. Do you have any additional suggestions for a new service delivery model?

Using 'sticky back ticks' they were asked to indicate their support or non-support for the partnership model. A total of 23 parents attended the sessions.

The majority of participants in these events came from BAMER communities (Black and Minority Ethnic Refugee) groups. Many of the parents we spoke with spoke English as a Second Language: all were able to present their views clearly and concisely and were understood by everyone involved.

They said:

- Parents recognise and value the way Children's Centres support their aspirations for future success
- Parents value the opportunity to learn and develop their children, and themselves, as part of their family immersion into the Brent community. It helps them plan for their long-term future
- Parents value the 'low/no cost' of Children's Centre services
- Parents do not want the new partner to focus on income over children's outcomes
- Parents have a perception that the Council intends to close services
- Parents are concerned that costs will be introduced that may exclude them from using the services
- Some parents are concerned that costs will target economically active families
- Majority of parents are willing to make a small contribution to attend specific programmes
- Parents need a clear explanation of the tender process
- Parents support the proposal as the opportunity to save Children's Centre Services
- Parents want the existing staff to remain in their roles: they want 'quality' to be maintained

For more detail on the phase 1 face-to-face public engagement activities see the report of the overall findings in December 2014. This report is attached as Appendix III

Detailed Findings from the Public Survey

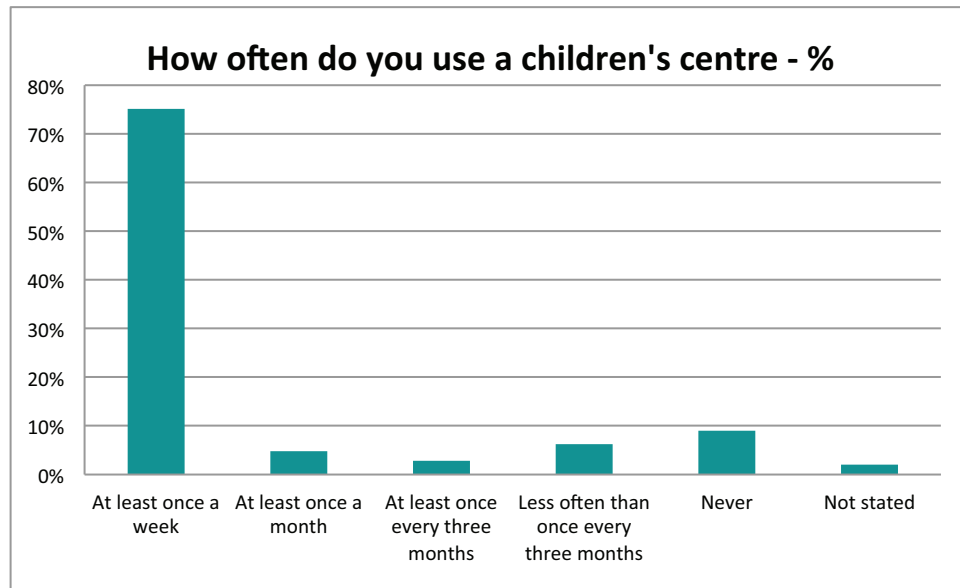
The public surveys enabled a mix of statistical reporting and open comments to be received. This section provides a detailed flavour of the open comments included.

The survey asked:

1. How often do you use the Children's Centre?
2. Which is your nearest Children's Centre?
3. Which Centres do you regularly use?
4. Which services do you use at the Centres?
5. Which services have made the greatest difference to your child?
6. Have you used any other sites to get services or support?
7. If you answered yes to question 6, please tell us the site/s you have used.
8. Please tell us why you don't use a children's centre
9. Further to the information in the council's draft proposals attached to this questionnaire, what do you feel the impact of the proposals will be for the centre that you attend?
10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with Brent Council's overall proposals for changes to children's centre provision in the borough?
11. What do you feel the impact will be for all children's centres in Brent?

Reported below are the quantitative and qualitative responses to each question, followed by some comments which you might consider in light of these findings. These comments qualify some of the statistical responses, particularly the spirit of support given to the proposal that is not immediately evident on the statistical recording alone.

1. How often do you use the Children’s Centre?

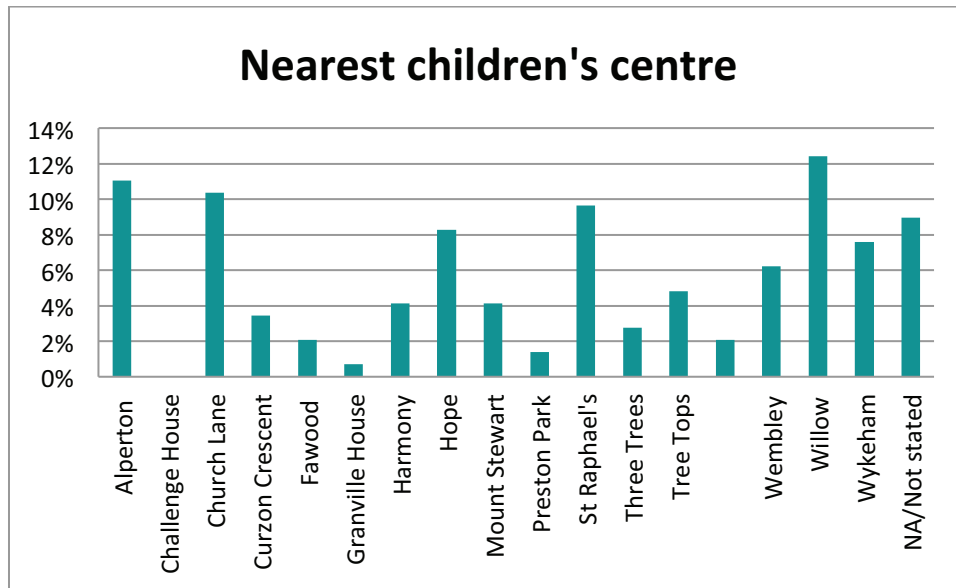


At least once a week	109	75%
At least once a month	7	5%
At least once every three months	4	3%
Less often than once every three months	9	6%
Never	13	9%
Not stated	3	2%

The response to question one should give assurance to the Children’s Services team that parents involved in this consultation are mainly current regular users of the service. Their views are based upon current active use of the Centres.

Each Children’s Centre utilises the Network Outreach Workers who could potentially increase use of the centres by those parents who are using the services less frequently. By developing their engagement they could understand why some entitled parents do not use the centres at all.

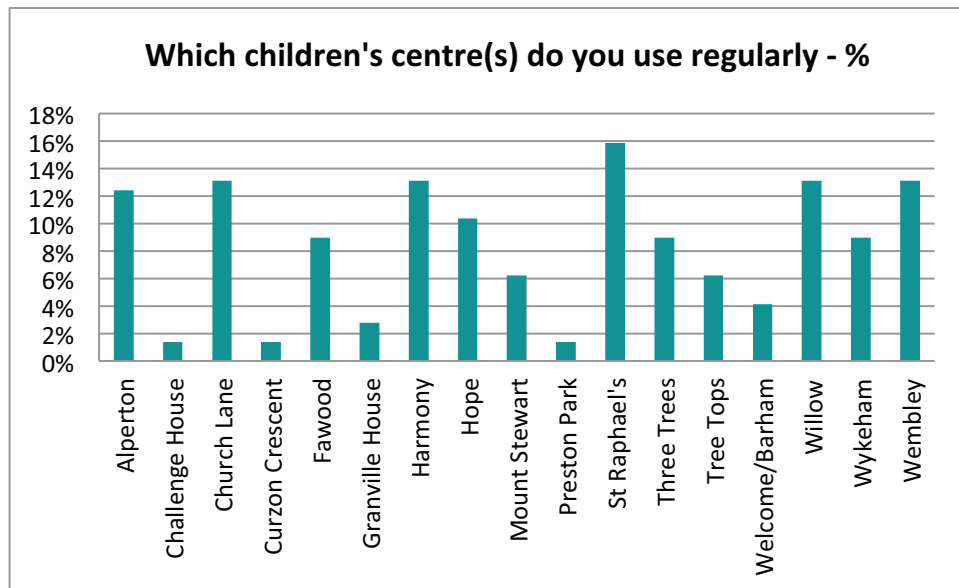
2. Which is your nearest Children's Centre?



Alperton	16	11%
Challenge House		0%
Church Lane	15	10%
Curzon Crescent	5	3%
Fawood	3	2%
Granville House	1	1%
Harmony	6	4%
Hope	12	8%
Mount Stewart	6	4%
Preston Park	2	1%
St Raphael's	14	10%
Three Trees	4	3%
Tree Tops	7	5%
Welcome/Barham Park	3	2%
Wembley	9	6%
Willow	18	12%
Wykeham	11	8%
NA/Not stated	13	9%

Parents at Willow Children Centre gave more survey responses than any other Children's Centre. However it is notable that Church Lane Children's Centre gave 15 responses, putting it in the top 3 response sites, even though face to face engagement activity did not take place here.

3. Which Centres do you use regularly?



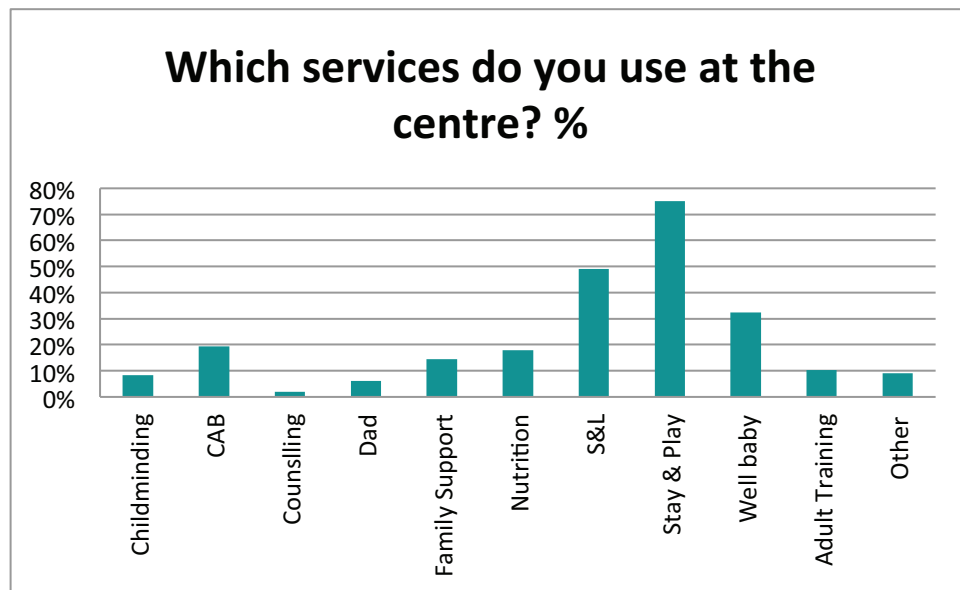
Alperton	Challenge House	Church Lane	Curzon Crescent	Fawood	Granville House	Harmony	Hope	Mount Stewart
12%	1%	13%	1%	9%	3%	13%	10%	6%

Preston Park	St Raphael's	Three Trees	Tree Tops	Welcome /Barham	Willow	Wykeham	Wembley
1%	16%	9%	6%	4%	13%	9%	13%

Wembley, Church Lane, Fawood and St Raphaels Children's Centres are used more often than is inferred from the number of respondents who declared those centres to being the nearest to home. This implies that these Children's Centres are providing services to parents outside of their immediate area.

Three Trees and Tree Tops Children's Centres are recording as having less reported regular use than those who say it is the nearest. This could be for a number of reasons: a useful starting point would be to explore the most popular services as recorded by the Centres to give an understanding of what motivates parents to travel for services. If there are gaps in the services provided by Tree Tops and Three Trees these could be offered by future partners.

4. Which services do you use at the Centres?



Childminding	CAB	Counselling	Dad	Family Support	Nutrition	*S&L	Stay & Play	Well baby	Adult Training	Other
8%	19%	2%	6%	14%	18%	49%	75%	32%	10%	9%

*S & L = Speech and language support

There is significant use of the Stay and Play sessions delivered at the Centres. Good use is also seen in the Speech and Language support service. The comments recorded suggest that parents have high social and housing needs which are a motivator for them 'getting out of the house' and using the centres to alleviate home pressures.

The CAB (Citizens Advice Bureau) service is reported to have more use than the Childminding Network, Dads group and adult training. Again, this may reflect the gender of participants – most are female, and it may be that this female group have higher needs of Advice Services due to the majority being from diverse and recently arrived communities that need additional support.

Parents reported using the following in the 'other' category:

- Sewing classes
- Zumba
- Cooking classes
- Community outreach/celebration events
- Baby massage/bumps and mums
- English courses

From an operational service perspective, these responses provide an insight into the ‘popular services’ that an existing provider might specialise in. Using CAB as an example, CAB could be a potential partner as part of a consortium, and provide its core services from the Children’s Centre sites. This has the potential to reduce its independent facilities and save costs on facilities.

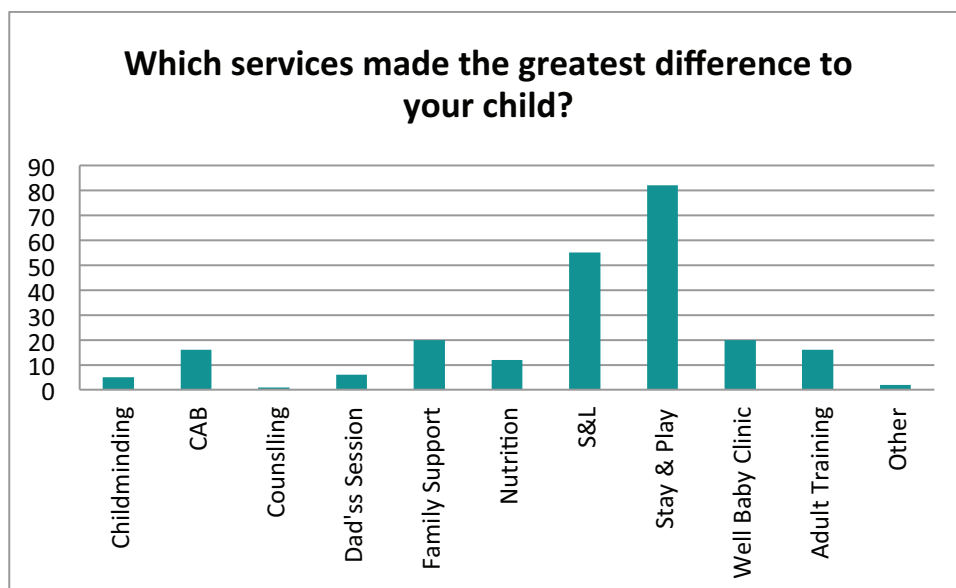
The popular stay and Play sessions may also be an attractive proposition for the independent children’s play sector – introducing additional play services to meet the needs expressed by parents (see QX).

5. Which services have made the greatest difference to your child?

Parents immediately recognised the benefits to their children gained from using the Stay and Play sessions. However in the case of Stay and Play Sessions 82 respondents reported it as making the greatest difference (increase of 7 parents from Q4).

Increases could be seen in Speech and Language Service too - 6 more parents reported it as making the greatest difference to their child compared to responses in Q4. Similarly, increase was seen in the numbers reporting the greatest difference made by Adult Training and Family support (increases of 6 parents each).

The Well Baby sessions show a 12 person decrease in the number of parents reporting use of these sessions and the numbers of parents reporting the service to have made the greatest difference to their child.



Childminding	CAB	Counselling	Dad's Session	Family Support	Nutrition	S&L	Stay & Play	Well Baby Clinic	Adult Training	Other
5	16	1	6	20	12	55	82	20	16	2

Parents took the opportunity to describe the classes and sessions they used as follows – these are free text responses added to the options they have ticked. These comments are the qualitative descriptions given by parents:

- Parent workshops (which is under S&L)
- Sewing class
- Zumba
- Crèche provide service
- Giving extra courses
- Sewing class
- Messy play
- Play
- First aid courses
- Singing
- Craft activity
- Identify child's needs
- For my child to interact with other children
- For my child to learn and play
- Cook and Eat
- Messy play
- Childminding network
- Childminding network
- Very very good

The findings from Question 5 give insight into what parents think works for their children. This personal belief in 'what works' could be used to attract a partner that is able to commit to an outcome based partnership. The outcomes could focus on parents need for Stay and Play – increasing sessions, increasing the number of families using them, and increasing the use by those currently not using and having low/infrequent use of the centres.

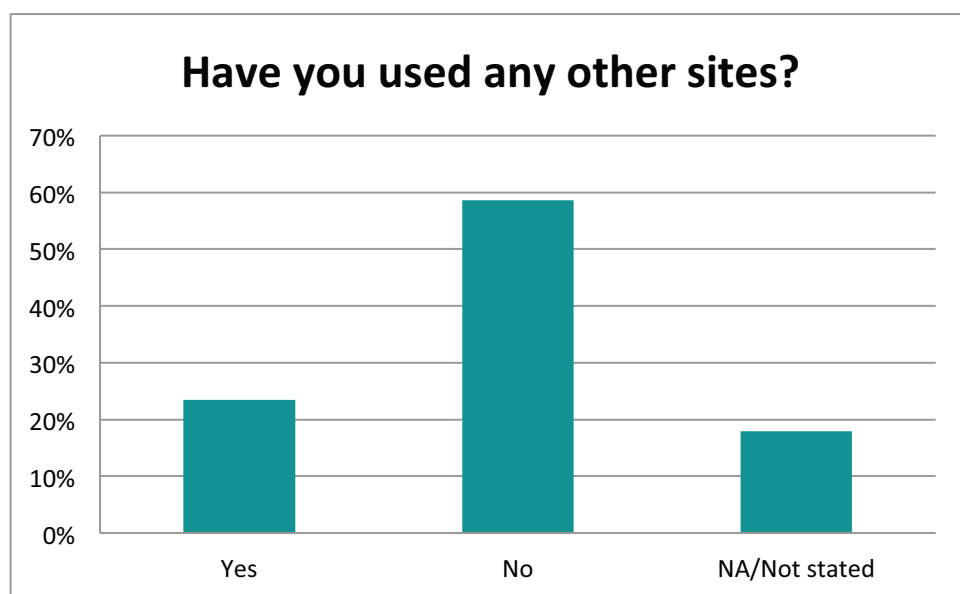
6. Have you used any other sites to get services or support?

This was a closed question offering a simple 'yes' or 'no' response. Responses to this question demonstrate the loyalty and possibly the

'neighbourhood' focus of Brent parents. Almost 60% of parents have not used another Children's Centre site in addition to the Centre they currently use.

In other areas of the consultation, parents verbally expressed the need to keep the Centres local and are concerned about future travel to other sites, as they cannot afford the transport costs. This may explain the need for 'local' children's centres for certain parent groups.

The survey did not ask about transport methods used to access the services but it would be useful to know in the future how parents transport modes influence the way they use the services



Yes	34	23%
No	85	59%
NA/Not stated	26	18%

7. If you answered 'yes' to question 6, please tell us the site/s you have used

Some of the parents that declare using other sites described the services they use. Of the 34 parents that use other services, 20 named the services as.

- Child Hills
- Parenting programmes
- Harmony
- Willow for dad's sessions
- St Michaels Youth Project in Stonebridge

- Willesden
- NCT
- NCT
- Vale Farm
- Food bank
- Wembley, Wykham
- Children centre in Pinner where we used to live. They are very different from the ones in central London. We really miss them.
- Church Lane Children's Centre
- Health Starts.co.uk
- Welford Centre (Wednesday 11 - 1 pm)
- Church Lane and Willow Children Centres
- Harmony children centre
- Curzon Crescent
- HR (sic)
- Harmony

Some parents are already using services from external agencies and voluntary sector organisations as described above. It may prove useful to explore what the voluntary community sector offer is to parents at low/no cost as a way of leveraging additional support for children and families that can be accessed independently, as well as the potential to explore new partnerships.

8. Please tell us why you don't use a children's centre

There were five reported responses where participants have children outside of the Children's Centre age range. For the parents who have children and choose not to access the services, the most common response related to access. The access reasons stated are transport access and issues with full classes and waiting lists.

Parents stated:

'We are too far to easily get to one on foot. I took my son to Wykeham for an advertised cookery session which was not running and was put off''

'Unfortunately, they are not very easily accessible from where we live. The services provided are not necessarily of use to either me or my child due to the hours these are provided. However, I am completing this survey because I know that these services are used a great deal by other parents in the area and are very highly valued, so wanted to support their provision, either by Brent directly or a public/private partnership, as much as possible'.

'We can never get into the sessions, always full'

Two parents reported conflicting working hours as a reason for not using the services, and a further two raised concerns about costs to parents preventing them from using the Centres:

'Yes the government has cut funding, however, they have also cut parents' funding'

'Centres still want a donation even if you bring your own fruit and water'

Costs of using the Children's Centres is a constant theme across all the consultation methods and should be a priority consideration within the future model. This consultation has heard views of parents who currently use the children's centres, and include those who shared the barriers that prevented them from using the Centres. Some parents believe that a small fee might be charged in the future, but a future model should include a financial impact assessment on parents prior to appointment of a new partner.

9. Further to the information in the council's draft proposals attached to this questionnaire, what do you feel the impact of the proposals will be for the centre that you attend?

There was a wide range of comments in response to this question. Those responding to the online survey provided more detailed and clearly articulated feedback, compared to those returning hand written responses. The responses also indicate that parents interpreted this question as impact 'now and in the future'. The implementation timeframe will need to be made much clearer to parents in the coming months.

The comments fell into key areas stated below, with example quotations from participants.

Perceived threat of closure

Parents participating in the consultation have been hampered by their perception and assumption that the Centres face closure. Many comments have been recorded where parents respond as though they are being asked to comment on closure, despite the explanation within the consultation document. Examples include:

'It will create logistical problems for parents and children as the service provision stops being local. The need for transport to access these services will create social isolation and increased risk in the key areas. Children's centres were created in

Brent to address for current users as use of public transport is an additional cost users cannot afford. Also the time factor in travel means that the distance between the nearest children's centre and the local primary school will also restrict parents with children covering the age range 0 – 10'

'I hope it stays open'

"I would be very disappointed if Mount Stewart was to close"

"If they close any centres then I think sessions would be overcrowded. More demand and less supply"

"If it is closed we won't be able to do any of the activities that our kids like or to teach them thymes before they attend school"

These comments show the need for the continued dialogue with parents after the consultation, and during any future modelling process. Centre staff delivering accurate messages about the future model process and implications could help clarify any misconceptions.

Reduction/relocation of services

Parents are concerned about the impact on levels of service delivered. Many are concerned that there will be limited services delivered causing greater demand for fewer Centre Services. Parent comments reported included:

'I am a bit afraid. If you will close some centres or reduce the services, the services you will leave will be too crowded'

Overcrowding at the reduced number of centres therefore children will have less access to staff attention and resources

If they close any centres then I think sessions would be overcrowded. More demand and less supply

These concerns were addressed and explained in the consultation document. Responses imply that not all participating parents have read the full document; as the section below shows clearly a different perspective from parents who demonstrate that they have read the full document.

Aspirations and support for new partnership

Although the statistical representation of the level of support for the proposal was 19%, greater support and aspiration is found in the comments put forward. Several parents verbally supported the proposal:

The impact will be good and services provided will be great for my child if it is run properly

Hopefully there will be better access to the stay and play sessions as these are now very difficult to attend since you have had to book a place

Based upon the aforementioned proposal, I believe that the site I attend would remain operational

I think that if managed well, there will be little negative impact as long as the services are supervised by Brent Council. I can understand the difficulties given the budget constraints.

The proposal suggests that the change won't have any significant impact as the service will just be delivered including partnership

It might give other volunteer groups/businesses the chance to bring their visions and ideas to Brent

The support expressed here is based on a clearer understanding of the proposal by these parents, who do not express fears of closure in the way that parents who do not support the proposal do.

'The partnership 'providers' need to be involved in a grass roots level to some extent otherwise changes may be implemented which do not benefit all those using the centres'

Although the Consultation Document was produced in Plain English, consideration should be given to producing any further information on the Future of Brent's Children's Centres in an Easy Read version to ensure that the diverse parent population groups in Brent have a shared understanding and can engage from an informed position.

**Easy Read is a pictorial and reduced text method of explaining material and content in an easy to read way that meets the needs of many diverse community groups as well as being suitable for people with specific cognitive, language and literacy needs.*

Valuing and maintenance of existing services

Although the statistical representation of disagreeing with the Council's proposal is high, there is a strong indication that parents do not support the proposal because they want to protect the services that they already have.

A large proportion of the comments received were presented as 'keep statements' – as in 'keep the services we have at the point of use'. The majority of statements collected for this question indicate that parents are opposing the proposal as an expression of 'keep the Children's Centres open'. Parents stated:

I hope we don't lose the variety and choice we have

I can't access the proposals but am not in favour of any cuts

We need more accessible places for under 3s

More sensory rooms

10 o'clock clubs are a great idea

I am quite happy with the way my centre (Mount Stewart) is being run today and would like to see staff recognised for the good service instead of having their employment in any way threatened. The way it is today I feel that staff take a genuine interest in our children's wellbeing and this is the best attitude to engage parents

Hopefully the service will continue for those who are in great need, disabled, non-speakers of English as less well-off individuals

If they close any centres then I think sessions would be overcrowded. More demand and less supply

There were 4 comments that were clearly rejecting the partnership proposal. These parents reported:

I just think that is not going to work

I think that the council should continue to provide the different services for the centres. I have seen the changes of family, children and the community

I'm not in favour as I feel the council may close some centres in the future

Any centre would be adversely affected by the proposals

Loss of community socialisation/integration for parents

Many of the respondents taking part in the survey are from diverse communities, including 'recent arrivals' to the UK. The comments they express demonstrate that the Children's Centres enable them to socialise and

integrate into the Brent community. These parents place high value on the support and relationships they build through the Centres:

This is a place that I think it look part the mental group of my child. This is a place we change idea with parents, this is a place that we learn how to be good parent. The impact we will lose all this.

'It is very supportive for myself and my children. It helps them a lot. They feel happy and play, meet and interact with other children.'

'Families not have a place to explore and bond with other families and their children. As well as a place of meeting new people that are going through the same things.'

'This is not good for us. Then there is no stay and play, no music rhymes to sing, no chances to meet other mummies'

'I think me and my child will lose a lot of friends, support and useful information about motherhood'

'I live in Willesden and Tree Tops has given me and my baby the opportunity to meet other babies and mothers who live local to me. It has made my child and I become closer, confident when outdoors in different environments'

Impact will be that any child will not be able to attend any activity and children and families have nowhere to go have a better outcome for children

For these parents the Children's Centres are playing a vital role in supporting assimilation and integration. The expression to oppose the proposal through fear of losing the social connectedness that the Children's Centre give them is a consideration for any future partner.

Access and equity (including gender and geography of perceived closure sites)

Some respondents raised concerns about the locations of the perceived closures, the equity and lack of equity in the perceived closures, as well as the impact on fathers - raising questions of gender equity. Again, the concerns are raised on the perceived notion that some Children's Centres will close.

'The proposals seem to affect all the centres I use in the Harlesden/Stonebridge area, doesn't seem to be considered fairly. More vulnerable parents and children without support of the centre'

'I am a father and attend twice a week with my daughter and it is a great place for children to develop. I fear other providers would not provide the same support'

The proposal will impact all the families in the area because they won't get any advice and support

The quality and variety of service may go down as other providers will see costs as an overriding factor. Not providing relevant activities to each specific area.

The concerns raised about equity will need to be addressed through further equalities impact assessment as the proposal progresses, to ensure that parents feel confident that they are not disadvantaged due to their gender and place of residence in the borough.

These comments also provide the insight that parents in Brent want a partner to provide an equitable service that is not different in different Centres.

Maintain support for vulnerable families

Although not strongly echoed in other parts of the consultation, these parents are concerned about where changes will take place and who the changes are most likely to affect. These comments imply that parents want to be sure that those who need the services most continue to access them. This was clearly stated by a parent as:

'Hopefully you will take it into your plan or you will narrow down the participants? What does it mean 'most vulnerable families'? For example. My love and I have an 8 month old baby. My love works, I can't work because of the baby. The money is just enough for the bills, rent, food and that's it. My family is away. We do not have anybody who could look after the baby while I work. I think our family is not the most vulnerable one but I really need this service. It is so useful for the baby and for me as well. I would be sad if we could not use this service because we are not 'vulnerable' enough'

Concern for existing staff and future staffing models

Parents show concern for the staff at the Children's Centres and would like to see the same staff remain in place. Several comments were recorded about continuity and familiarity that might impact negatively due to potential changes. They stated the impacts on their Children's Centre would be:

Reduction of familiar staff

My child will be unsettled as he is familiar with the staff and his surroundings

There will be unrest and uncertainty, until clarity for staff and parents are provided

I fear that parents will be asked to take a more active role in running the centres which is inconvenient when we already have to look after our children during the sessions (stay and play)

volunteers would not provide the same service as the current staff that are very good'

The comment above was the only reference to the volunteer parent role reported in the surveys. The role of parent volunteer staff was referred to in much higher numbers in the face to face engagement and could possibly be tested by survey in the future to see if the appetite exists for these parents who use the paper and online methods to share their views.

A related concern raised about staffing, is the issue of quality and the need to ensure that families do not 'fall through the cracks' due to staff pressures and expert professionals in place to deliver the quality services parents want:

my concern is that the families who are truly at risk will fall through the cracks, particularly if the centres will be staffed by a number of volunteers who may or may not be able to provide the considerable support some families may need.

9. Further to the information in the council's draft proposals attached to this questionnaire, what do you feel the impact of the proposals will be for the centre that you attend?

The range of views gathered in response to this question provides valuable insight to the level of understanding and variety of needs among parents. It is very clear that parents associate the 'Proposal' with closure, and effort is needed to ensure parents understand the Proposal better. The dialogue with parents should continue throughout the implementation process; and materials used to inform parents must be suitable to their diverse needs.

There are many valuable insights to what services parents expect a provider to maintain. The evidence recorded here demonstrates that parental objection to the Proposal is generated by a perception that the proposal is to close Children's Centres. The dialogue put forward by parents aims to 'protect' the services they receive – with very few comments on the structures that may deliver them. In this we can accept that parents are primarily concerned with the services at the point of use.

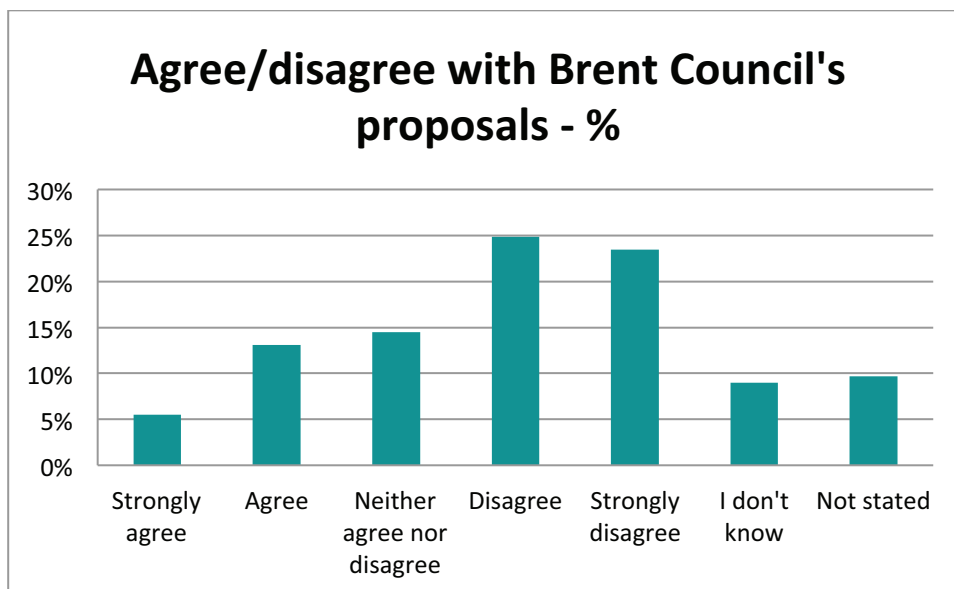
Parents do prioritise the role and need for continuity of staff and do not want a destabilising environment for their children. Maintaining staff stability during and future TUPE process will be of critical importance to maintain the trust and confidence of parents.

The staff role in communicating the Consultation process and explanation of the consultation content must not be underestimated. Children's Centre staff have a very powerful role and influence on many parents, and this must be positively utilised so that parents understand the scope and assurance contained in the Consultation document; and future documents that will be produced as a result of this consultation.

10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with Brent Council's overall proposals for changes to children's centre provision in the borough.

As stated above, there is a dialogue and story behind the statistical responses given in this Consultation. Based on their understanding and misconceptions that the Proposal seeks to close Children's Centres, parents have given a strong voice that they do not support the Proposals.

The evidence put forward above makes it clear that parents want to maintain the services they receive by the existing Children's Centre workforce at the current locations, and do not want any services to close. Parents see a need to increase service delivery and that additional services should be made available to address their unmet need - more sessions at times that meet their needs.



Strongly agree	8	6%
Agree	19	13%
Neither agree nor disagree	21	14%
Disagree	36	25%
Strongly disagree	34	23%
I don't know	13	9%
Not stated	14	10%

The evidence shows 19 % agree or strongly agree with the Proposal; 14% neither agree nor disagree and the majority of 48 % disagree or strongly disagree with the proposal.

The qualitative evidence shows that parents want to maintain their local services – with their interest lying at the point of use and not concerned with the structural organisation of how that service is structured.

Parents in this survey are asserting their disagreement with :

- Children's Centre Closure
- Children's Centre Staff changes
- Reduction in services delivered
- Potential travel to different locations
- Potential variation at different centres
- Potential loss of access to and management of data to protect vulnerable families
- Loss of social networks and support for community integration

Identifiable patterns

There are few areas with the survey that we have explored to see if there are any patterns, connections or links that might provide additional insight for Brent Council. We have identified a few areas that may help develop further thinking on how a partnership model could be specified and address some of the issues raised by respondents.

1. Frequency of use and services used

The majority of respondents use the Centres at least once a week. These respondents are using Stay and Play, Speech and Language and Well Baby Services. All other services are recorded at below 20% of total parental use. The CAB achieves just below 20% reported use. Several other named services achieve less than 10% reported parent use. This gives rise to some areas for future exploration:

- What future role could CAB play in the new model?
- What is the resource required to deliver the lesser used services; and how could these be included differently in the future?
- What can be done to increase use of services by those currently reporting much lower use?
- How can those who never use the services be encouraged to join?

2. Services that make the greatest difference and attendance

The parents that report using the services at least once a week report that the Stay and play, Speech and Language sessions have made the greatest difference to their children in the highest volume.

- How can less frequent users be encouraged to attend?
- Is there opportunity to increase Stay and Play style of services?

3. Frequency of use and disagreement with the proposal

Of the parents that disagreed with the proposal, 45% used a Children's Centre at least once a week: strong disagreement came from those who use the services frequently and possibly those who want to protect the services the most.

- How can Brent utilise this passion to protect services?

4. Frequency of use and sites regularly used

Of those who report using services at least once a week, the highest sites of use were St Raphaels (22%) Willow (15%) Wembley (13%)

- What shared learning might there be for the community outreach workers to be better utilised?
- How can communication with parents be accurately and concisely shared among staff and parents?

The considerations raised above, may or may not have significant meaning – based on the numbers these comments are derived from and the already detailed understanding Brent Council has of its Children's Centres. However they provide potential considerations for those learning from this consultation exercise.

Detailed Findings from the Stakeholder Survey

Stakeholder participants

Few Stakeholders took the opportunity to participate in this method of consultation:

24 Responses were received

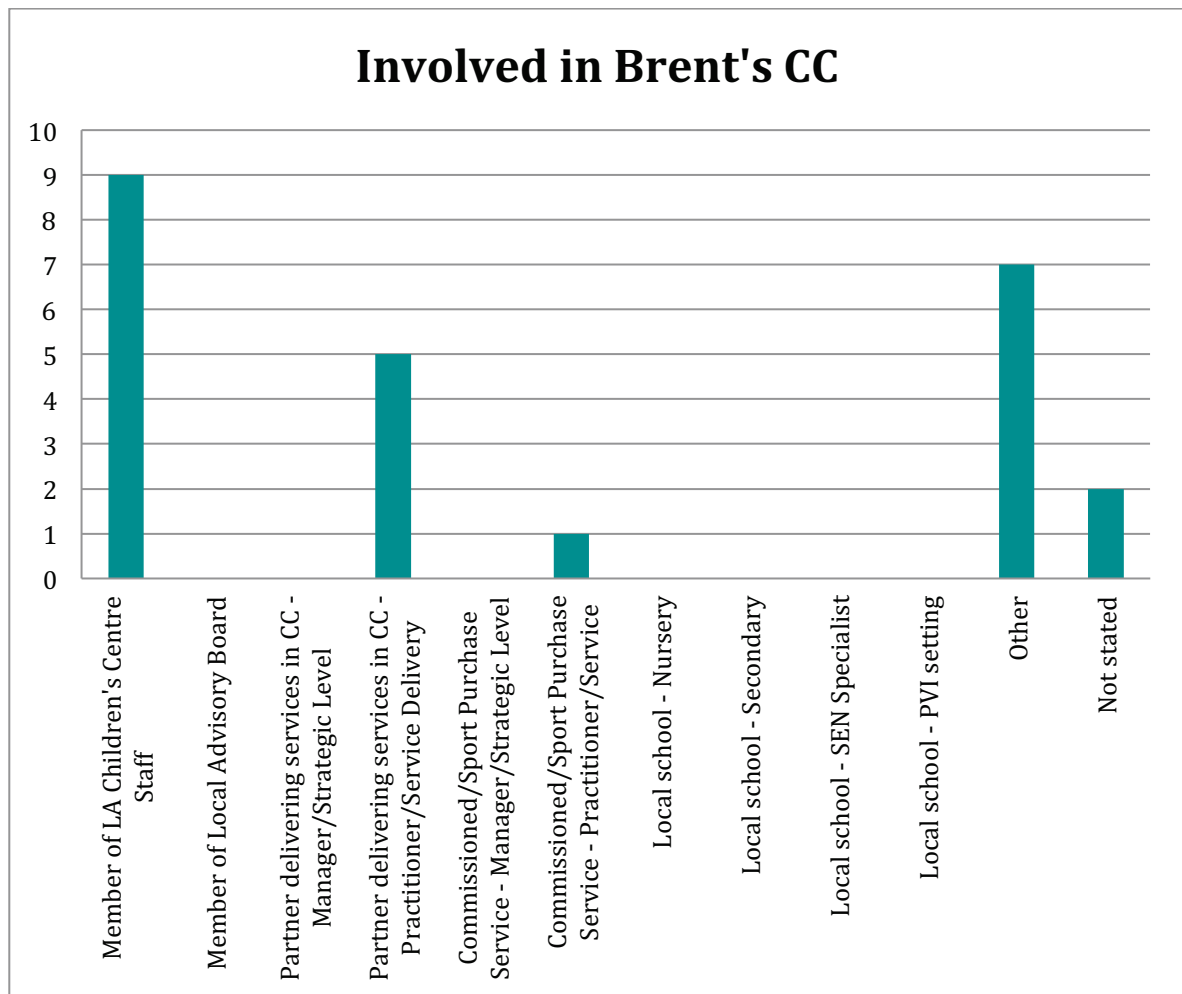
9 declared themselves to be Children’s Centre staff

5 were providing services to the Children’s Centres

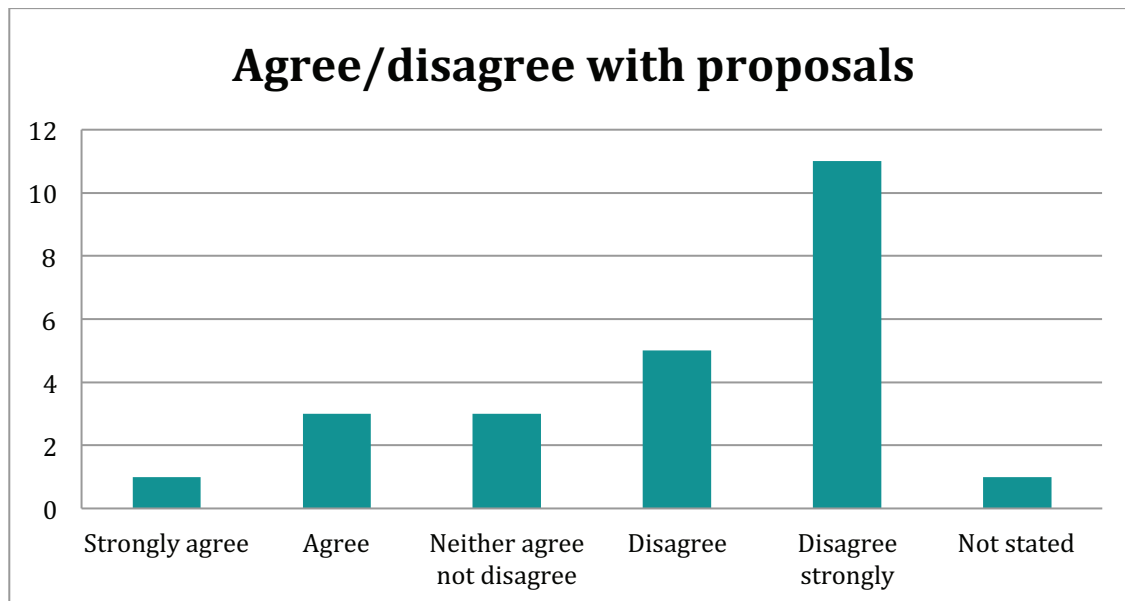
The remaining 10 were declared as ‘other’ or not stated.

This low response may be due to satisfactory Stakeholder and Staff participation through other Channels led by Brent Council.

A graph of the the response to the question ‘How are you involved in the Children’s Centre?’ is below:



Stakeholders were invited to state their position on the level of agreement they have for the Proposal.



The vast majority of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposal. While 67% is a high percentage of rejection, the total number taking part is low and may not reflect the wider views of Stakeholders. This question also invited ‘further comments...’ – which generated a small number views to demonstrate concerns and reasons for disagreement with the Proposal. The direct voice of those Stakeholders is below:

‘The changes are not clear and how it will effect on the worker’

‘Brent has such a high population of children compared to other boroughs and highly deprived families. I think this should be a publicly funded service’

‘I think the proposal will bring in additional services for CCs’

‘Child-minders need somewhere safe and stimulating for the children they care for, other than home setting’

These themes are repeated in the Responses to the two key questions posed to Stakeholders.

Question 3 ‘How do you think this will impact on the Children’s Centres?’

Impact on the wider health and care system

The views gathered here show that Stakeholders are considering the direct and indirect impact of any future changes within the wider local child health and care system. There were several references to the ‘knock on effect’ on other services, e.g:

'If the children's centres will be closed the more pressure will go on NHS (midwives, health visitors, parents support services) nurseries and schools (children centres help a lot with transitions and separations, children achieve good social, physical, emotional behaviour and language skills at children centres),...'

Again, the perception of future closure can be seen in the above quotation – and will need to be addressed swiftly.

'With libraries closing also, children will not get the chance to mix with other children and broaden their social skills'

Earlier in this Report, the role of the Equalities Impact Assessment was put forward to provide assurance as well as exploration into the wider effects of the Future Proposal. It may also provide a useful tool to engender confidence in the Proposal if staff and Stakeholders can be made aware of the use of an EIA and that the Proposal will take on board a wider 'whole system view' as part of the implementation process.

The impact on employment

'Many people will lose their jobs and position after years of good service delivered'

'Less jobs for staff working in children centres this would not be fair'

Although not strongly echoed in many responses, there is a sense of uncertainty among staff: the staff responding to this survey have concerns for their future employment. Closely linked to this are some concerns on the development and growth of parents: already known to be diverse and often vulnerable, staff are concerned that parents will lose opportunities to develop skills that ultimately support them accessing the workplace.

Personal Professional investment

There were several heartfelt expressions that projected the high level of care and commitment staff have to the families they serve at the Centres. Stakeholders are concerned at the longer term impact of the proposal, albeit with some misconceptions about closure. Underpinning these concerns is their recognition for the journey and development of the Children's Centre Services, their own professionalism and the benefits they know they contribute to improving children and families lives – it is this sense of professional investment in the Children's Centres that they want to protect.

Examples given below provide the direct words of those responding:

'The service provided by the children centres has been heavily made use of. Families have a safe and comfortable place where they are able to get advice, help and assistance with various aspects/areas of their lives. The children centre has had a huge impact on many, if not all of the families registered and the various support networks is nothing compared to others. A change in the provision would

have a detrimental impact on many, if not all families considering their reliance on it...'

'Having worked with the children centres for a few years it would be devastating for children centres to close. The families and practitioners would lose all confidence in utilising Brent services. This service is a very important part of people's lives.'

'Child-minders need somewhere safe and stimulating for the children they care for, other than home setting'

'The work we have put into children centres will be cut badly. The passion and love we have for the community, ignored. We love our children centres, they emphasise a caring council who look after their borough/people'

Protection of quality

There were two comments made about 'maintaining quality'. The comments did not put forward any specific aspects or concerns about how quality will be managed in the new model proposed. The assumption is made that stakeholders were making reference to the quality of service at the point of delivery, rather than the management of quality by the Council at distance from the service provider. The comments gathered were:

I think the services will be worse

Concerned about the quality of services provided being maintained across the borough

The above commentary on quality has been included, so that the Brent Council is aware that their future role may need to be more clearly explained so that all staff and stakeholders are aware of 'how' quality will be managed in the future; and in turn be better placed to explain this to parents and carers.

Maintain support for Vulnerable Families

There are concerns that future changes will impact on vulnerable families in a range of ways. Staff are concerned about:

- Reduction in service delivery
- Reduced access to services for parents
- Prohibitive introduction of costs
- Increased risks (safeguarding) to children and families
- Loss of equity across Children's Centres

There were many views that repeated these concerns; which have been summarised above due to the length of commentary put forward. The examples below highlight and contain the key messages put forward:

'I think there will no longer be equity of service in children's centres across the borough'

'Vulnerable families and children will be put at risk because independent funding may not prioritise partnership with health and social care services'

'I think these new changes will put the families away. Maybe they will have to pay for services that they are not used to'

Conversely, there is support within this group for the proposal. Supporters provided their hopes and opportunities that could come from the future model.

'I think that if the quality of the services are kept, in the interest of the most vulnerable will continue to be the utmost priority for all those involved in this process of change, the council to work with other partners can only contribute to uphold the standard envisioned since the inception of children centres, reducing at minimum any risks of negative impact on the services...'

'It may improve children's services, less restriction on types of activities'

'Positive to keep services in place rather than face cuts to service. Potential for other provider (eg: charity) to access other funding streams, utilise expertise and being fresh ideas as to how to utilise buildings, engage with families etc'

'I think the proposal will bring in additional services for CCs'

'Extra services may be bought in because currently so many services have been reduced or disappeared which have had a negative impact on services'

This support for the new model shows the aspirations of some stakeholders, but is also indirectly indicated by some cautious support offered by another respondent:

'I am not entirely sure what impact on children's services this will have in the future, but I do hope that whoever the provider will be if it does happen, will continue to think about the families we have in the community who have benefited greatly from services, information, activities and support from the children's centre. I know that change could be good, but I also know that the children's centre has changed a lot of lives and brought people together, increased knowledge and education and I pray that this will continue with the proposed changes'

As seen in the public feedback, Stakeholders are asserting the things they want to protect and some areas that concern them, such as closure, parent access and safeguarding risks. While many have utilised the 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' options, the dialogue supports the principle of keeping the Children's Centres open. What is also clear is that they assert key 'outcomes' positioned as an opposing view, but actually, these views reflect many of the key outcomes defined in the proposal.

Future Responsibilities

One participant made reference to changing responsibilities – and public sector management of the Children’s Centres. Two comments were recorded that refer to maintaining publically run children centres.

Brent has such a high population of children compared to other boroughs and highly deprived families. I think this should be a publicly funded service. The continuation of the children services in the manner in which it is currently being managed would be the best suggestion for the public, most especially for the families who regularly take advantage of the life changing services that is accessible to them. Working in partnership with other providers would not allow the service delivery to work as well and therefore will have an impact on the effectiveness of the service provision’

This view was a lone voice within the stakeholder responses, but the previous comment implies that stakeholder are not fully clear that the proposal still depends on investment and funding from the Council, and may need to be clearly explained in the future.

Question 4: Do you have any further comments or suggestions?

Keep the Children’s Centres open

Strong agreement from all respondents was expressed to keep the Children’s Centres open. Some views were prefaced with fears for staff, some with support for the benefit to the community and some with principles of caring for children and young people.

The closure of children centres can affect many families and parents, children. I think we cannot leave them without support and it is good for children!’

‘Keep the children centres open’

Keep our centres open. They are an important part of Brent services. Helping families, supporting, giving them the ability to move on with their lives, become more independent

‘It will be really sad if the centres close as they have been a great support for myself and the children I look after love coming to the centres’

In addition to the shared view that the Children’s Centres should remain open, respondents did have some comments to add to the future shape of the Service:

- I think it is particularly important for the local authority to have a strong role in supporting families to access health and social care ie: family support workers and speech and language therapist
- I just hope that any changes to come not put families away

- I do think proposals should be considered so that staff are not affected ie: job losses. Pay, conditions and pensions need to be clarified and systems put in place prior to proposals going forward
- I hope that staff contracts will be protected as much as possible in TUPE process and that opportunities for development and progression continue. Hope that services maintain focus on vulnerable families across Brent in an effective and empathetic way
- Children cents should be able to generate extra income depending on the space they have

These suggestions echo the sentiments expressed throughout the responses.

There is a single clear message from respondents to keep all Children's Centres open. The concerns raised are likely to require further clarification so that Stakeholders can be confident that their desired outcomes for high quality accessible and sustainable Children's Centres remain available to children and families in Brent.

Respondents seem to position their desires as being in opposition to the Council's vision set out in the proposal. There is potential to consider how best to continue the dialogue in a way that presents the shared aims and desired outcomes that the Council has.

Summary Findings from the Focus Groups

Target Audience

Four focus groups were organised to attract participation from specific target groups, whose voice wasn't heard during the public engagement events.

These groups were:

- **Group 1:** Families with children that have had a social care assessment, CAF or are in Troubled Families
- **Group 2:** Families with a Nursery Education Grant
- **Group 3:** Families with children likely to have additional needs at school (as provided by SENAS)
- **Group 4:** Families with children with lower levels of additional needs

All parents have been assured of anonymity.

The groups were organised to meet the needs of these parents by:

- Taking place during the day
- Offering a crèche place to all children
- Located in the main Children's Centre they used
- Offered reimbursement of travel expenses
- Providing an incentive (voucher)

The first three focus groups were not well attended, but the dialogue with those who did attend was a useful one. Many of the participants were from diverse communities using English as an additional language, and came from vulnerable groups. Parents gave responses to structured questions that reflected the focus of the main consultation survey.

These questions were developed and further explained where necessary to ensure the groups understood the aims of the proposal and could give their opinion on the possible impact. Some of the responses detailed below may stray from the question, but represents what is important to these parents and what they feel needs to be considered for the future of Brent's Children's Centres: it is their response.

Outline of Session

The group participated in an icebreaker which asked how many children they had, and how long they had been using the Centre. They were then asked the following questions:

Question 1

Could you share with us your experience of the children's centres in your area?

Prompts:

- Do you think the things you've spoken about might be affected by the Proposal?
- What are your reasons for agreeing/disagreeing with the proposal?
- What would make a good partner organisation?
- Give reminder of protection of staff if required.

Question 2

What impact do you think there might there be?

- What are the positive things that a new partner might add to Children's Centres
- What might be the negative impacts? Who/how would that affect parents?
- Do you think many parents share those concerns/hopes?

Question 3

Do you have any suggestions for a new way of maintaining the Children's Centres?

- Give examples of suggestions gathered – charities, sponsorship, rich individuals abroad
- Do you have any new ideas – or ideas that work in other areas or places?
- Should parents make a contribution? What would be acceptable?
- Are there other ways parents could help?

Wind down – close

Are there any final key messages that you want Brent to be aware of?

Summary of Findings from the Focus Groups

There was real congruence with the views gathered from the public engagement events and surveys. The main priority for the majority of parents is to:

- Keep all Children's Centres open
- Resist the introduction of costs but minimal contributions are acceptable
- Keep the focus on positive outcomes for children and families
- Keep local focus and minimise transport distance from homes
- Provide the support and community connectedness they gain as part of being at the centres
- Continue and expand the offer training and development to parents
- Maintain and increase the sessions they can access
- They support a partner with social and community mindfulness
- Maintain access that is equal across Centres

- Continue to access support for children's development including Speech and Language, Parenting classes

The final focus group discussion with parents of children with additional needs brought forward a slightly different position. Comprised of mainly professional working parents, there was less opposition to service change – one parent likened the changes to the rationalisation in health; where local services were centralised to provide a better standard of care to those who needed it. These parents also took a 'longer term view' and raised questions about longer-term changes that might follow after the partnership was formed – rather than the more immediate future explored by the other groups.

Despite this differing perspective, most parents were comfortable accepting a partnership solution rather than reduction in services. Parents were also able to make suggestions towards an alternative model of providing the Children's Centres.

Below are the views gathered from each group in January 2015. A total of 18 parents took part in these discussions. Due to the strong corroboration of the views of this group and the views gathered from the surveys, the parents voices have been put forward here without editing to provide an authentic voice.

Equalities monitoring data was collected, and can be found at Appendix II

Detailed Feedback from the Focus Groups

Focus Group 1: 5 parents attended (two couples and 1 mum)

1. What are your experiences of children's centres in the area?

- Kingsbury helped with breastfeeding
- drop in centres
- meet other mums, felt alone before since I was in a new area. Having two kids was hard, if it wasn't for the children's centre wouldn't of been able to cope.
- Brilliant. Every class of family, really nice thing to have.
- Classes like Rhyme Time.
- Two children's centres Wembley and Alperton, vaccinations, parent study and have a crèche available, able to learn the basic things. Negative is a very small space for events like parent study, makes it difficult.
- Sometimes need to travel to children's centre.
- Alperton children's centre - good that they can use the crèche in addition to day trips like to the zoo and other places like Watford, let children use up their energy.

2. What would be the impact of having new partner?

Positives

- Silent partner or introducing their own ideas?
- Some new changes might not be supported by local community but some might be good.
- Private partner could also allow the children's centre to continue what they are doing.
- They might bring in new things, ideas. Fresh thinking.

Negatives

- Now children's centres take time to help people, you have to make appointments. New partner might make it more like a business instead.
- Some individuals might not be able to enjoy all the services if a new partner comes in if they are not entitled to free help. Now it is equal opportunity, maybe business might separate groups like Catholics, Hindus etc.
- Might start giving free to only concessions which might put some people off. What if the business doesn't have experience with children's centres and the community and can't connect with the community and make services payable? 1pound etc adds up.

- New partner might upset a lot of people, a lot of people out there that don't have that spare cash. When they are little they need to get out. I had been a nanny for 13 years and thought I knew it until I had my own kids and the children's centre can help parents learn from each other and commune and know that they aren't the only ones.

3. What sort of a partner should the council look for?

- Really look for any partner that has funds but massive bonus if they have experience with children.
- They might try and make money for themselves which could be a problem.
- We really enjoy what we have now-partner is not a problem, as long as it doesn't turn into a business, council needs to pick a partner that likes equality and someone who wants to continue what we have now, services. Don't want to lose any services that we have now-only gain new services.
- Some children are in very small spaces: need more room in playgroup, homes and centre are both small spaces, need more room to make it not the same.
- Need crèche at all places while parents are in classes and college.
- Space and learning for children and parents - learning toys like IT important since people learn those things very early on now.
- Give facilities to help children develop earlier on since things are being taught at a younger age.

4. Do you agree with the proposal?

- Yes
- Doesn't mind
- If the proposal to get a partner wasn't an option would the alternative to be to close the children's centres or to start charging parents for sessions? If so, yes to partner

5. Is charging for sessions acceptable?

Some families might not be able to do that. Maybe a donation system would work where some who can give something would while others who can't won't. Donations better than asking.

Could you afford to pay?

- Depends on sessions and prices, different prices for different sessions.
- Music group specialised with instruments charging more than 50p or something like Rhyme Time about 50p.
- Coming to the end of the month might be hard to pay.
- Weekly activities good for children, look forward to it, gives them a routine.

Partners? New model?

- Things can't continue the way they are.
- Solar power companies to help sponsor children's centre.
- Are they looking for one person or many partners?
- There might be companies that want to help but may not have the resources they need eg Solar power to do panels to save electricity. Then other companies to help like Stage Coach (drama group) to help, private, QPR to help invest or other Football clubs. Little Kickers are too expensive because they are based for the wealthy families, reach out to other communities also helps them find new talent. The children are the future of Britain, first 5 years learn a lot, if we as parents aren't able to nurture them then they don't have a lot of hope either.
- Football one is a good idea, more day trips.

Is there anything missing from the children's centres?

Sports activities, dads and kids play football.

Would you come a Sunday morning? More opportunities to use it?

- Yes, football can use the park outside, local coach from local school, kick ball around, few tips, this helps address kids spending too much time on computers. Companies can use their own space to help children's centres.
- Would be great to use on weekend if they have the money.
- Some children's centres have parks but not all. Some are close enough to something like a park etc to use, can walk there, Silver Jubilee park near one centre.

Are there other things that parents can do to help?

- Skills used at home to share with other parents in workshops
- volunteer time in cake making, sewing, business studies to help parents.
- Fundraising buckets? Sponsored parent's activities, sack race with dads and grandmas. Very close to immediate family. Mom goes to grandmother sessions.

Do you see any opportunity to have a role in parents assisting a class?

- Yes to helping run a session. Yes other parents might help to run the session as well.
- A Role for grandparents? Yes.

Top Message for Brent Council:

- Such a valuable thing we have here, otherwise a lonely community: centres bring community and cultures together, really sad if it wasn't here.
- Important that they can find a solution that can continue it, kids are the future it is how we bring them up and what we teach them, it's great for the country.

- When I had my 2nd child I had a counselling service, help to reassure me to help leave my son, don't know where I would be today.
- It's about the future not about now.

- Support for partnership approach but focus on families and children to be maintained
- Additional session and services needed – continue with parent learning sessions
- Concerns around cost introduction
- Positive to more flexible use of sites – particularly weekend use and use of outdoor space
- Increase use and access for fathers
- Bring in partners that can help children excel
- Utilise the skills of parents

Focus Group 1: 3 Parents Attended

Parent A - Using children's centres since 2010, Kingsbury- children 3 years and 2 years, one on the way

Parent B - 1 year using centres

Parent C - Mum received pamphlet by post, other couple didn't receive it

1. What are your experiences using the children's centres?

- engaging with other parents
- attended children's centres to find out more info
- new mother - speak to staff with questions
- to get out of the house
- ran groups - like first aid, children's workshops, activities for children, children are also learning and being around other parents and children as well
- nice to see child interact with other children
- enjoyed going out every few days if didn't have anything else to do
- playing with children and learning language from other children, kids are happy there, cooking classes, language courses,
- the centre with cooking is too far away but do go - two buses to go to the children's centre.
- Use library at centre, parents take turns taking kids
- hasn't been to dad classes because of work.

2. What would be the impact from the proposal?

Parent C - There will be changes, they might be different. Might affect attendance.

Parent B - Used to a certain way of doing things, people might be less motivated to attend if the children's centres are changed in a way.

3. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal?

I would disagree with the proposal. Yes. Yes.

I agree - Brent Council may not be able to keep up what it is doing, better to have a backbone to carry you; before I would of disagreed because change can have a negative impact.

Agree - everything is okay to have a partner, just to carry on.

4. Does it matter if it is a business partner or partner from community?

After explaining the concept of a partner – that the partner could be a charity, community organisation or private company, initial responses included:

- It changes the whole aspect of it, public may not want to go, takes the realness out of it, the name in itself, may take the feel out of a children's centre. It's just money at the end of the day.
- Our library, many are gone: Wilson Library, a private developer bought buildings taking away resources from children that they need, now we have to go to the city centre. A bit out of the way for some, partnership will have more of a say so as to what goes on in the centres and a lot might be taken out of the centres.
- Might have to pay for the services.

How would you feel if costs were introduced?

- We pay for one child, could not afford to pay for sessions, sometimes we can pay the fees and sometimes we can't afford it
- You want to make sure your child gets the best out of their development, not a nice feeling for your child to miss out.
- Child gets used to going and if they miss out one day they get upset and paying all adds up.
- Maybe a one off pound for food or vegetables, but in today's economy parents might not want to invest in their children's centres.
- Life is expensive like food, clothing etc.
- What is the control after a partner?

What type of partner?

- Maybe a sports centre?
- Queen's Park Rangers have no knowledge of the centres, they have no background of children. Main priority to know children, if they are going to make changes, partner needs to know views of parents.

Benefits of a partner arrangement

- take some of the strain off of Brent Council
- open up new doors for the community
- a little bit of extra money - maybe put more things on, better access to other services.
- friendship between the children
- language learning development, mixing with the others, friendships when they go to school later on.
- definitely use buildings for other things, evening courses to help get parents into work, parent groups, more job aspects for parents groups.

5. Anything that parents can do within the partnership model?

- someone on board like a parent governor? already have parent forums?
- could parents look after the grounds? To have parents working they need to be committed, are they committed enough to keep the upkeep of the building, gardening, cleaning?

- incentives of work? parents out of work, centres could have a physician come, vacancies for parents to work, would they want to do it without being paid?
- can we rely on parent volunteers? Parents also have kids to look after, have to have a passion and commitment.
- child uses centre and parent gives us 5 hours? will that work? Certainly not. And no. Time is money. If that was the case much rather pay 2 pounds than 5 hours of your time. All choose 5 pounds. Paying 2 pounds is your choice where as the 5 hours is a must and not as much of a choice.
- should we ask parents for financial contributions? Pay mother and baby session 1 pound previously, wasn't a problem paying as an investment for a child is not a problem for me,
- in the middle, what about parents that can and not afford it? What if they have more than 1 child?

6. Is it okay to ask for a small contribution?

- have to make contributions to go to fun bouncy places (outside private businesses) but those are more expensive than what this could be for children's centres to ask.
- council committed to keep services? everything boils down to money, parents are getting a good deal, it's comfortable, it's carpeted, going down another route to keep places open, asking for a small contribution might assist.

The messages are really clear from this group:

- Parents value the socialisation and friendships they have gained through using the Centres
- Parents skills have been increased and enhanced through services accessed at the Centres
- Mixed opinions on support for the partnership model
- Concerns about changes – staff, services and approach
- Support for exploring opportunities – greater and different use of buildings
- Be realistic about the role parent volunteers can play
- Life is expensive – keep costs out or to a minimum

Focus Group 3: 5 Parents (incl. one couple, 2 mums, 1 dad)

Introductions

- One participant has a 3 year 7 months old child with a disability and has been in many children's centres like St.Raph's and Barnham (?). Feels isolated being at home and the centres help to get out.
- One participant has 1 child with a severe disability, developmental delay, comes to Willow, Alperton, and Barnham Park: Wife and child from Pakistan in 2013.
- Used centres for one year, child now in school. Used Wembley, Willow and Alperton: child has delay in speech.
- Has used centres for three years: 4 year old has Prader-Willi syndrome, has behavioural problem, went to Harmony.

Questions that one participant asked at the beginning included

How will the partner help? Are they actually running the facilities? Will the Council spend less money? Has any other council used this model in the country?

1. Please share your experiences of the Children's Centres in your area.

- Family felt isolated, started at Treetops, met other parents with children with disability, helped to have conversation with them and learned their point of view. If some children's centres close down or not find a partnership it will not be nice if we can't go somewhere where we can have a conversation. Worried for all children's centres and for other parents with children with disabilities. Talking for parents on same journey that she is going through.
- Goes to Harmony with son and St. Raphael's. Even if parents have children with different needs it is nice to sit down and talk and see how each other cope, share advice with other parents, felt like they aren't the only one.
- Sympathises with other parents who felt isolated. Can't find other groups of parents with child of same disability. Only now realising things she is going to go through by reading, knows that she has a lot of hurdles to go through - children's centre is a good base for parents that have to face challenges and challenging behaviours as well. Parents sometimes feel low.
- Help and reassurance, see other children with problems and you know that you aren't alone. Gives you courage. Child enjoying the centre. At the start they felt their son wasn't getting the support that he needed and now at Willow he feels that he is getting the support. They are reassured that he is being looked after and is safe. Used to go to Alperton for a month.
- Children Centre helped with speech language skills, usually not talking that much, always playing with toy car, they helped with child, but Welcome Centre (charity?) helped with that. Also went to Alperton. Charity offering drop in service to children centres like Alperton. The charity gives info and meet other parents, signpost services etc.

2. What is your gut reaction to the proposal?

- Good, as long as the service level is the same and care and support is not dropped but stays the same. As long as they can manage all the children's centres and not cut down services or centres.
- A bit fearful of who the partner will be. What will they be offering? Better or the same? Or will they start cutting services. If you have partnership you have to think what they are going to do and are they going to keep things the same or change?
- No objection to find a partner, as long as they are still working so parents can access the centres and children have access to be stimulated by other children. Same value for parents.
- Would suggest not going with any partners. Hasn't been done before in the area. Afraid that the partner might not have enough experience for the children's centres like the council has.
- Worried about child and if he wouldn't get the help he needs. If the council wants to give to the private partner doesn't mind as long as he gets the support.

3. What does the new partner need to be a 'good' partner?

- What I see in the news like prisons run by G4S has been big problems. Serco has problems. The government is too much privatising to contractors and subcontractors.
- The council has been around for years and has learned from things, new partner might not have that much experience.
- Will the new partner be able to value the confidence parents have from the children's centres?
- What kind of level will the partner be at? Will they bring more or expand it? Make more accessible for my child?

4. What positive impact or what negative impact is expected from the new partner?

- We all need the service to be the same from the new partner. Council has an upper hand in experience.
- Will they understand what the children's centres are about? Like Tesco putting money in children's centre? Need to know partnership.
- Trying to think any charities that would do this? Will this be a charity with expertise for children with disability?
- Keeping same staff. Do they have to reapply for their jobs? As they notice things, they might restructure and make staff reapply.
- Parents might not know what to do if they restructure (staff)
- Services would be affected, not at the level they are now, doesn't see any improvements.
- Has been in different centres, Granville, Treetops, Barnham, Willow, when she goes there 2 or 3 moms or sometimes alone which is a

waste of money, just staff around. Seeing inefficiencies, two centres at the same time only each have a few or no people to use them.

5. Are you worried that it might affect you money wise?

- We pay council tax, bills are high and benefits down. Definitely not okay for parents to pay costs. Also costs bus fare as well.
- Not really acceptable to charge parents.
- How much would a contribution be? Hasn't had to pay before for services and doesn't want to pay. Worry is that no one would go because they can't afford. Over 10 pounds, can't afford. Might put parents off. Then children's centres will close if no one is coming in.
- It's a business for them, council has obligation to run and provide service while partner doesn't.
- Anything over 5 pounds? Only one parent working, can't afford. If both parents are working can't come to weekdays, maybe need to come in weekends.

6. Can parents contribute other ways?

- Train some parents to look after other children. Train parents to work with their children in the centres. Might be a temporary solution. There is a difference between trained staff and parents.
- Could do software for centre.
- Gave up work working with other child and parents with disability. Now has son with certain disability. With her work history could demonstrate her skills to other parents.
- Working parents can contribute money according to scale. Those not working can contribute time.

What about Sat and Sun Children's Centres?

- Children's Centres can be used for other activities.
- Primary schools already let others use it for sports after school.
- Allow for family gathering - to be hired, not the children space too hard to change the space but if there was a conference room or hall. People do hire out places.
- His work hires a school space every now and then to play sports and relax.

7. Any suggestions to having a partner alternative?

- Introduce a third party to visit children's centres and know what they need and learn to how to make it profitable, individual children's centres.
- People wouldn't be happy about shutting down a children's centre, better to see what is working and not working, how can we develop it. Advertising.
- In software there is a separate audit body that they follow their standards.
- Is it okay to explore each children centre individually?

- What is the point in keeping one open if no one comes here.
- Explore, understand, identify what works.
- Some parents don't know of the children's centres, don't know that it's there. Harmony told her it was no longer her centre and was told Treetops was the new one even though it was further away. Didn't like that they moved her to a new centre that she would have to get to know.
- Real belief is that parents don't know about the children's centres. Gave friend example.
- When went to the doctor came to know that there was a centre. Thought the centre was a nursery, not visible to parents. Children's Centres are not advertised enough. A nurse told her about Harmony. Even when you're pregnant advertise in hospitals.
- Maybe parents need to think about marketing.

8. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal?

Disagree, undecided, disagree, disagree, disagree.

- Staff highly valued – want to see staff protected and maintained
- Most disagree with partnership approach –
- Parents high standards for partner ethos, experience and expertise
- Must have expertise to meet special needs
- High confidence in Brent Council
- Do not want to see costs introduced
- Utilise skills of parents – but not equate to professional trained staff
- Explore how we can develop and learn from what we already have
- Consider if each Centre should be assessed individually – make bespoke solutions
- Needs marketing and better visibility of Centres

Focus Group 4: 5 parents attended

1. Experience of Children's Centres:

- Fawood, Treetops – used for 2 children; came today because they've been good for me and my children
- Used centres for 3 years – son has autism; didn't have family here – just the children's centre Fawood; did parenting course, supported by speech therapist at 15 months for diagnosis of autism.
- Other parents stated their ages only.
- 1 seen document = 4 haven't
- Uses Willow – happy with progress of son; happy with activities.
- Without the centre don't know where me and my son would be. Early intervention is care – has Autism in family have seen the difference of life without early intervention.
- Have worked with children's centre – and can see the difference. By the time he is 6 years he will be almost ok. Lots of speech therapy – referral to professionals paramount. Am successful with my son *because* of the Children's Centre
- I bring my daughter when she was young – my daughter learned a lot; I have gained by speaking with other parents. Good facilities here.
- Youngest child autistic – he plays with other children and makes him happy. Good to get out of the house and interact with other children. Has helped with behaviour – his tantrums at home decreased – now shares.

2. Impact of the Proposals

- No knowledge of the proposal within the group
- Does it mean that parents have to pay?
- I will feel sorry for parents like me without the children's centre – going into reception class without learning. The earlier the better to identify needs and work on that early.
- What is the partner going to be – business; non profit? It depends on what kind of business they're in – are they social driven?
- I am happy that the Council want to keep them open. No problem if non profit want to keep it the way it is. But if it's a business that wants to close 3 days a week then that's a problem.
- CC are paramount for special needs – perhaps Autistic Society; should be a partner that understands children's needs.
- What if it's a private business? If there are improvements then yes – it's better than closing. If they bring in new things that's ok.
- If the private sector has to come in or it has to close down? We have no choice.
- Is there any options from having a partner?
- It's a double edged sword – we have no choice, I feel like I'm not so open to changes; if I had my way I would have Brent in control – changes attitudes; staff attitudes – some staff might not want
- Would prefer to be with the Council – like the sense of community would prefer the Council to run.

- Like the way things are
- Improvements in the buildings – positive changes in facilities
- Negative is effect on staff – it does affect the staff attitude; if staff aren't happy then that has an impact. Continuity of staff – need to have a stable workforce Council to oversee
- This is a friendly welcoming environment staff are willing to help you, tolerance of staff – if staff are unhappy it beats the purpose. You come here for support and input of staff eg. lady with autistic son. If you work with children you have to be happy – the CC is the centre of community it's a place where you come for support and input of other parents. It is really important to maintain a high morale – their future might become uncertain, look for other jobs
- If the partner can improve the quality of staff then that's good.

3. Are you worried that it might affect you money wise?

- Not concerned about cost, but if it benefits my child it is worth it.
- Children's centre for whole community – some members of community cannot afford to pay and this is a place where everyone belongs. As long as we have parent forum to maintain community minded to keep focus on community.
- If it's private then they will charge!
- 1 or 2 pounds will make a huge difference as to whether I can come and bring my children and loses the purpose of being community – a place where no one is inferior – will affect attendance and it would almost make parents stay home with their children
- One of the reasons we use it, it is accessible and it is free. It will definitely make a difference: there are places in Brent that charge – I don't go to them.
- They might cut services – if sessions were cut it will have an impact – we look forward to going there. It means pressure on services; more people show up to attend; it might mean less staff – or may lead to less people going.
- Most Children's centres should be free for children in need or with special needs – close some. Have fewer children's centres like A & E – concentrate them, make them higher quality – and close the ones that are not used well. Invest the money in the ones that work – and invest in the busy ones for special needs/low income.
- But I would have to travel = on the bus, with the buggy – they should all work. Closing any of them is not a solution, all of them should work. They should be in walking distance.
- Childminders attend – they meet other children; all children should have the chance. It won't work for childminders.
- They need to be near home – special needs children; limited walking.

4. What can parents do?

- Parents should volunteer to run play classes – volunteers need to be trained.
- Fathers should run sessions, and big companies giving volunteers
- Continue and update skills they have, good for parent's future – give feeling of satisfaction and future for self esteem
- A lot of parents are willing to volunteer – need to advertise the support that is needed; ask parents.

5. Suggestions for alternative model

- Rent the rooms to raise income;
- What if you can't afford the service such as dance classes
- Rent it out for adult space – conference meeting space

6. Do you agree or disagree with the proposal?

1 disagree

3 agree

1 cannot say not knowing what it will bring.

- Parents value the early intervention approach – making a huge difference to their lives
- Most support the introduction of a new model that produces positive changes using a dynamic, inclusive approach
- Concerns about the role of 'private' partnerships
- Very strong support for staff, and concern for impact on staff morale
- Support for community role taken by Children's Centres
- Some have strong support for Council to maintain and disagree with the Proposal
- Some accept the introduction of costs – others do not; and most show concern for families that cannot afford to pay
- Continued access for all parents supported
- Some support the closure of some centres – to protect the excellent ones
- Utilise parents skills and support – communicate the support needed

Feedback from Interviews

Participation in the focus groups was lower than expected due to a range of personal challenges that participants faced on the day. As a result we captured their views through telephone interviews.

The findings didn't reveal any new or additional information. None had heard of the proposal, and most struggled to understand the concept of a partner relationship with the Council. For those that did understand there was support for a new partner with the same caveats as set out above: ethics of organisation must go beyond profit, concerns about charging, but a commitment to continue and extend the provision. Some participants spoke of the need for creativity and a fresh look on provision, and understood that the Council could not do that alone in the current financial climate.

Respondents were very clear about the value that the centres contribute to providing good space for parent/child play, as well as the educational/advisory services supporting parents to get the best for their children.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusion

Most respondents believed that the proposal was a cover for 'cuts' and the inevitable closure of the Children's Centres that they love and want to strongly protect: they were unconvinced of the integrity of the Council to genuinely want to keep the centres open and many had not read the consultation document.

Once this was shared and parents/carers were able to discuss possibilities, they were unanimous in wanting to keep the Children's Centres open, with existing staff retained. They were open and keen to look for new ways to generate income and additional resources, which would expand the services currently delivered for the immediate and long-term sustainable future of them (family based services and private hire/use of space).

Their desired outcomes strongly reflected the aims of the proposal consulted on: Brent's parents want the same outcomes that the proposal seeks to achieve, but they are nervous about (and opposed to) reduction in services or closure.

When seeking a partner, there were mixed views: some arguing strongly to keep in the hands of the Council (because of concern about quality and quantity of services), and others welcoming the flexibility and dynamism that a partner (or partners) could bring to the diversity of provision (but concern about potentially imposed charges).

There were mixed views on the inclusion of parents in the provision of future services. Most could see the value of including parents in service delivery: added opportunity to develop work related skills; opportunity to share existing skills used in previous employment and/or the home. Some of the skills could help build cultural bridges and strengthen cohesion for parents and children. There was an appetite to think beyond mothers, to fathers and childminders in this consideration.

In the responses received from stakeholders we saw strong opposition to the proposal, with a minority of stakeholders holding onto the 'state run' service model. The key concern raised by stakeholders was maintaining quality of staff. Many Stakeholders have had long-term histories in the Children's Centre journey and want to maintain the knowledge and expertise gathered over many years to help build the community of Brent. A very real concern for the stakeholders is the impact on future staffing and ultimately the long term stability of the services currently in place.

Stakeholder response rates were low. This 12 week consultation was widely promoted so non-participating stakeholders may have used other channels to contribute their thoughts.

Staff contribution was low which may be because their voice is being pursued through the internal channels.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to assist the capture of parent, carer and stakeholder voice in future decision-making processes:

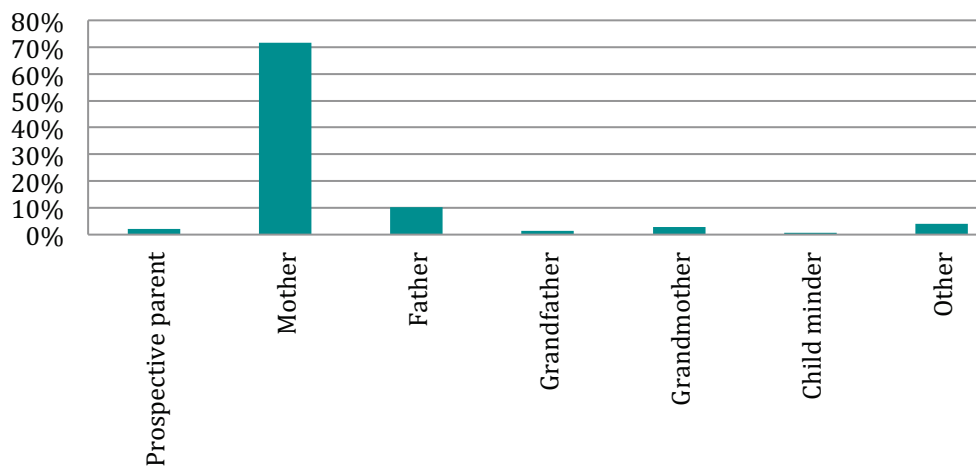
1. Parents raised questions about availability, over-use/waiting times for the most popular sessions and services. Underuse was also raised as an issue in some instances. We assume analysis of use has been undertaken, but if it hasn't it should be prior to tendering for a future partner. The findings should be shared with parents and carers to involve them in developing future solutions and contractual ideas for future partner role (examples could be to use the centres at evenings and weekends, and extending Stay and Play sessions to address unmet needs).
2. Parents could be made more aware of similar support services available in the voluntary and community sector. Many expect to receive support from within the Children's Centre buildings, when there may be additional services close by, but uncoordinated. Reducing the 'under one roof' approach through better use of other existing structures may ease some of the concerns about waiting times.
3. A financial impact assessment should be undertaken to understand the potential impact on services charges. Projections based on the lifetime of the contract could help allay fears of future charging or the loss of services.
4. An Equalities Impact Assessment should be undertaken with a focus on the wider children's health and care system. This should involve and be communicated to staff and stakeholders.
5. Clear communication is required to ensure parents understand that the Proposal does not mean immediate closure. To be sure that the correct information is shared, the Council should plan 'how' it continues its dialogue with parents, supported by staff.
6. The Council should consider utilising Easy Read materials for ease of understanding by its diverse communities.
7. The Council and Stakeholders should consider alternative ways to increase the level of parent/carers involvement in any future partner model. Maintaining parental involvement and enabling influence should

be prioritised to reflect concerns about equity, equality and quality of provision.

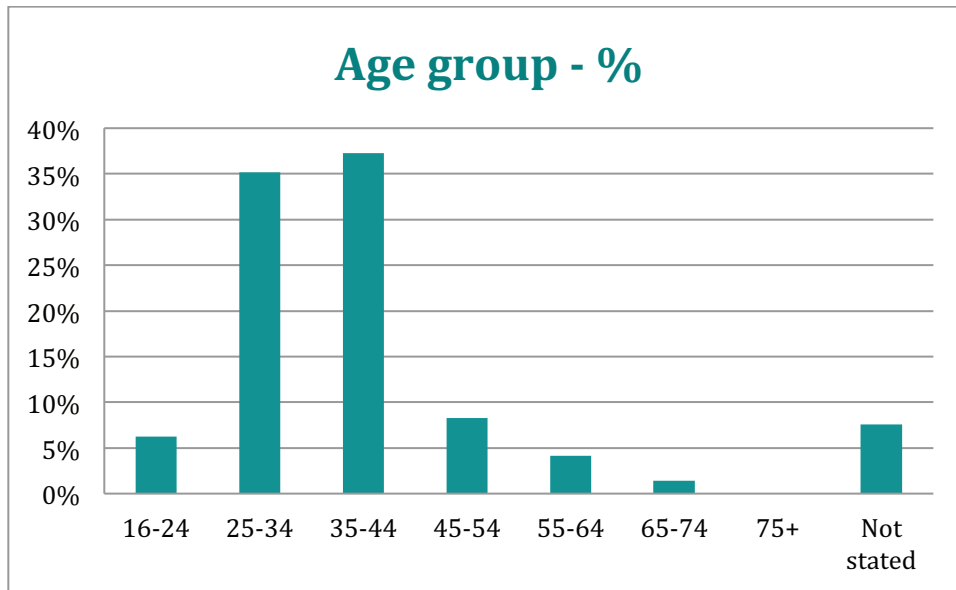
8. Future partners should demonstrate how they will respond to the findings in this Report.
9. Staff concerns on quality, wider system impacts and TUPE arrangements must continue using existing internal channels. Any future consultation and engagement should fully separate staff from stakeholder involvement.

Appendix I: Survey equalities monitoring data

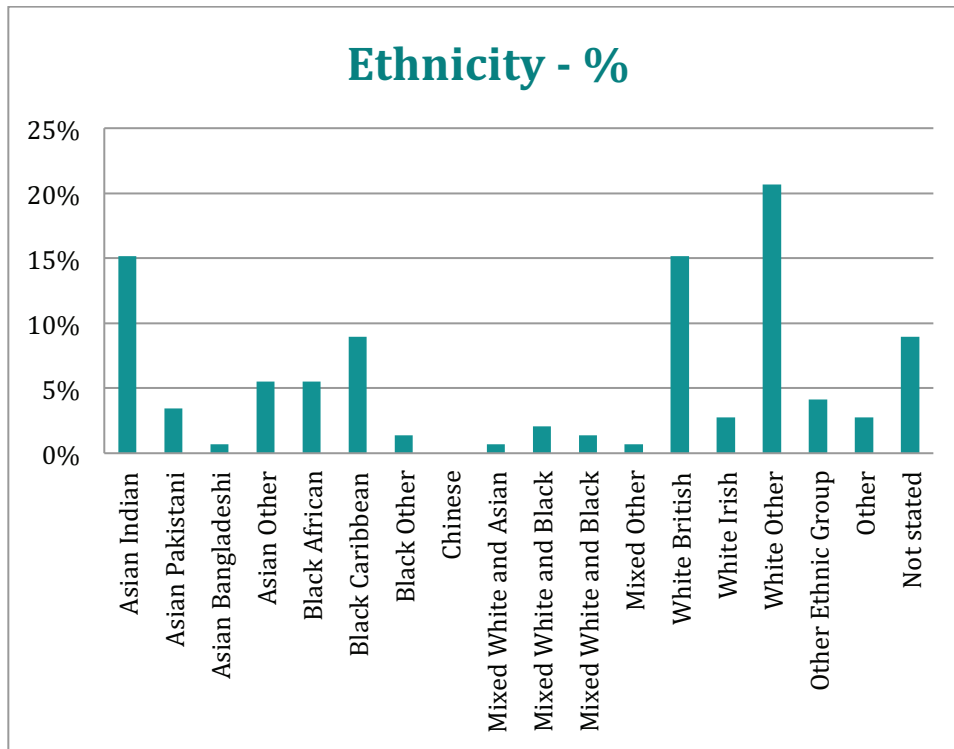
Parent/carer- %



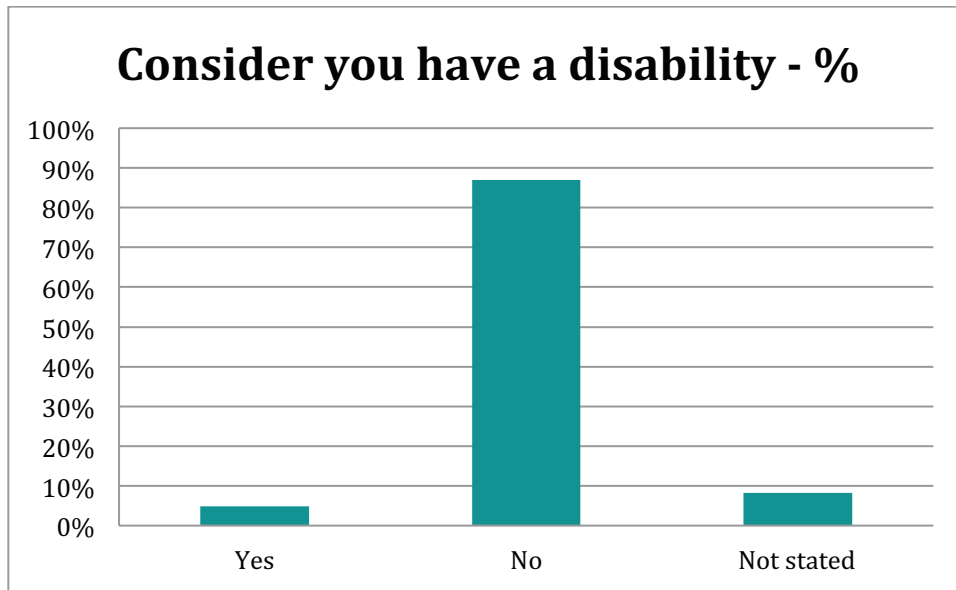
Prospective parent	3	2%
Mother	104	72%
Father	15	10%
Grandfather	2	1%
Grandmother	4	3%
Child minder	1	1%
Other	6	4%
Not stated	10	7%
*Two people stated they were mothers and child-minders		



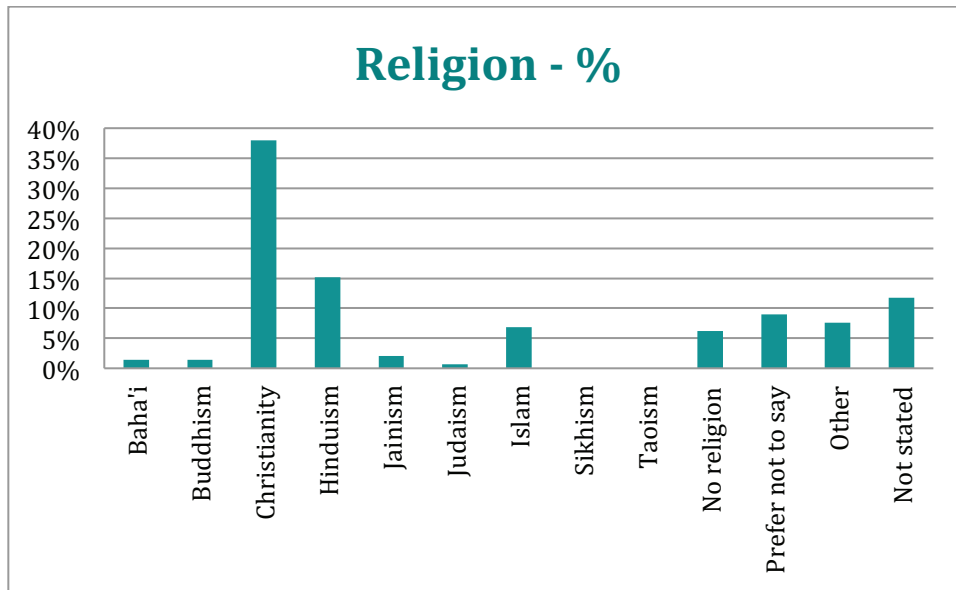
16-24	9	6%
25-34	51	35%
35-44	54	37%
45-54	12	8%
55-64	6	4%
65-74	2	1%
75+		0%
Not stated	11	8%



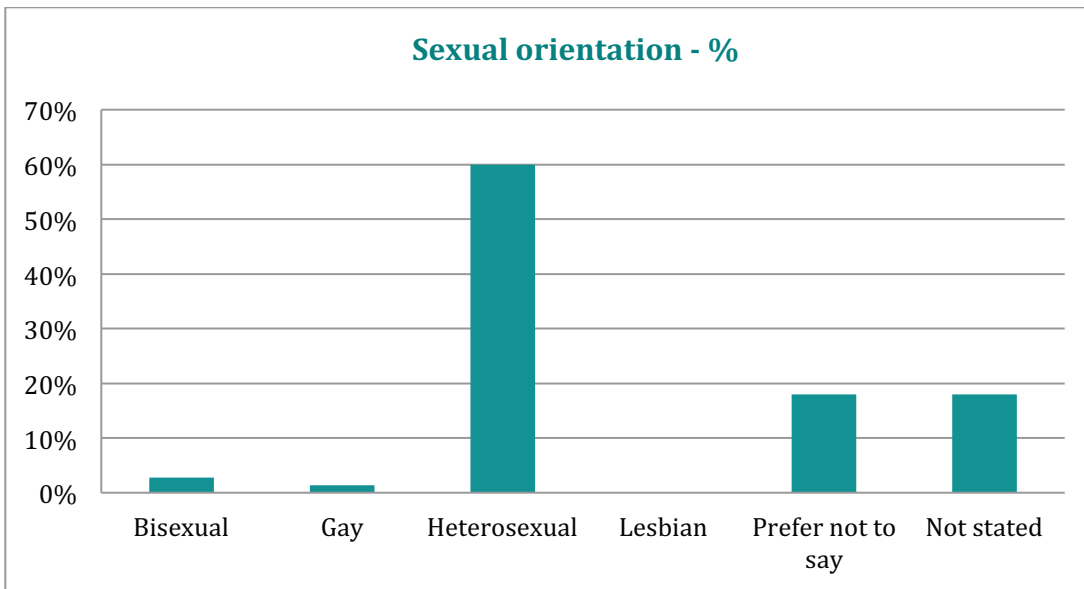
Asian Indian	22	15%
Asian Pakistani	5	3%
Asian Bangladeshi	1	1%
Asian Other	8	6%
Black African	8	6%
Black Caribbean	13	9%
Black Other	2	1%
Chinese		0%
Mixed White and Asian	1	1%
Mixed White and Black African	3	2%
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	2	1%
Mixed Other	1	1%
White British	22	15%
White Irish	4	3%
White Other	30	21%
Other Ethnic Group	6	4%
Other	4	3%
Not stated	13	9%



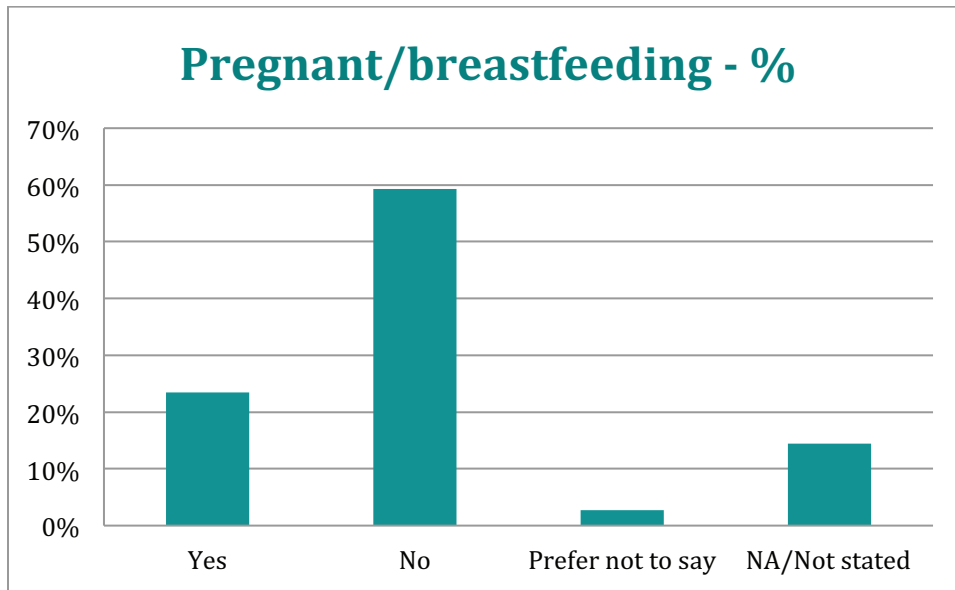
Yes	5	3%
No	137	94%
Not stated	3	2%
71% of those who identified themselves as disabled said it did affect their daily life		



Baha'i	2	1%
Buddhism	2	1%
Christianity	55	38%
Hinduism	22	15%
Jainism	3	2%
Judaism	1	1%
Islam	10	7%
Sikhism		0%
Taoism		0%
No religion	9	6%
Prefer not to say	13	9%
Other	11	8%
Not stated	17	12%



Bisexual	4	3%
Gay	2	1%
Heterosexual	87	60%
Lesbian		0%
Prefer not to say	26	18%
Not stated	26	18%

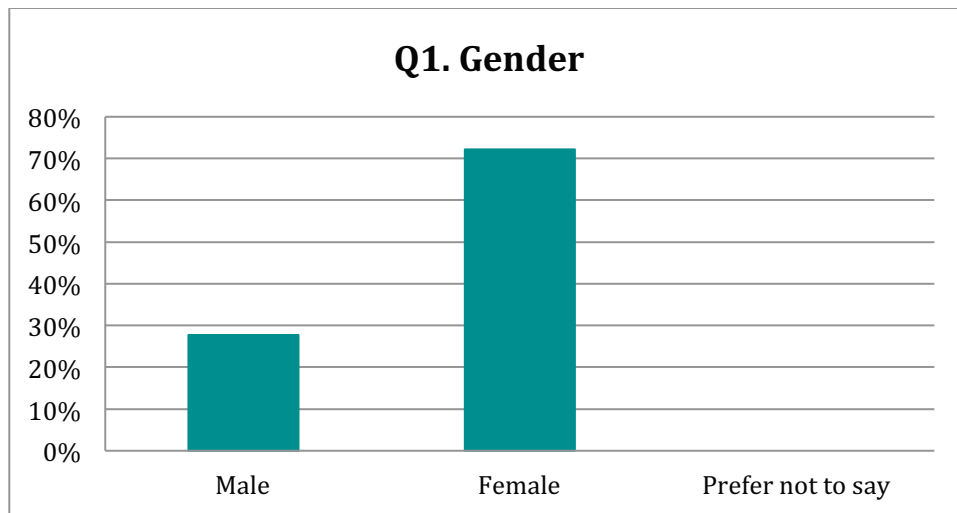


Yes	34	23%
No	86	59%
Prefer not to say	4	3%
NA/Not stated	21	14%

Appendix II: focus group equalities monitoring

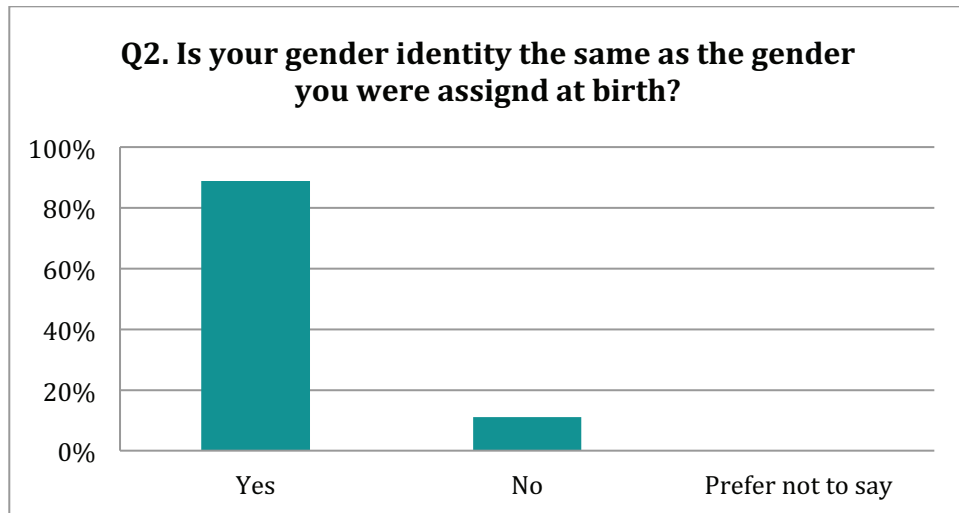
Q1. Gender

	No.	%
Male	5	28%
Female	13	72%
Prefer not to say		0%
Total	18	100%



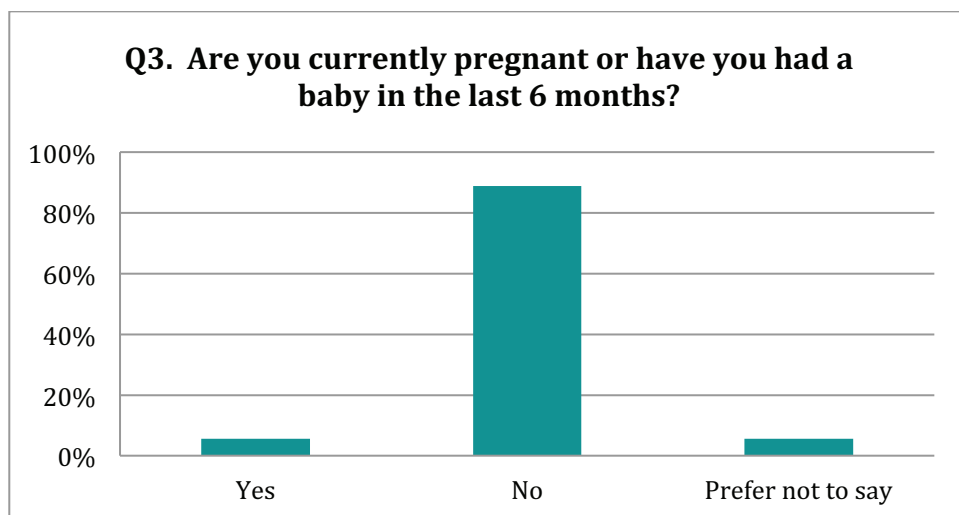
Q2. Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?

	No.	%
Yes	16	89%
No	2	11%
Prefer not to say		0%
Total	18	100%



Q3. Are you currently pregnant or have you had a baby in the last 6 months?

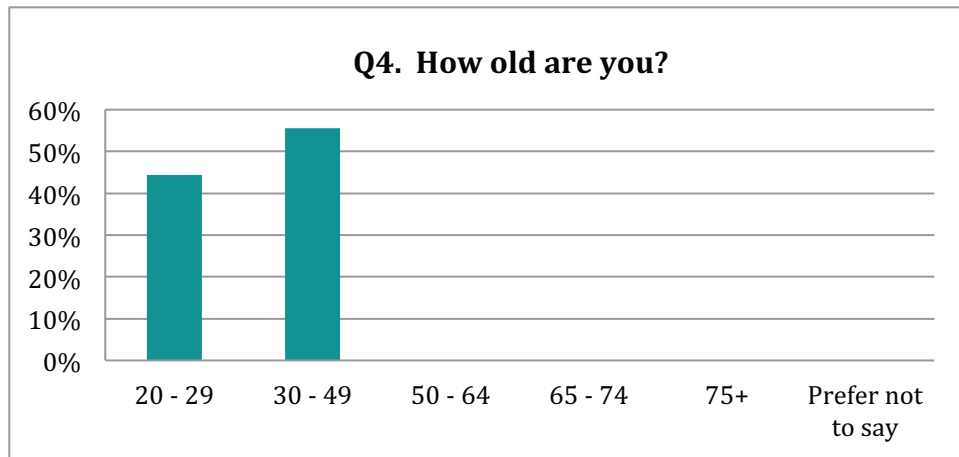
	No	%
Yes	1	6%
No	16	89%
Prefer not to say	1	6%
Total	18	100%



Q4. How old are you?

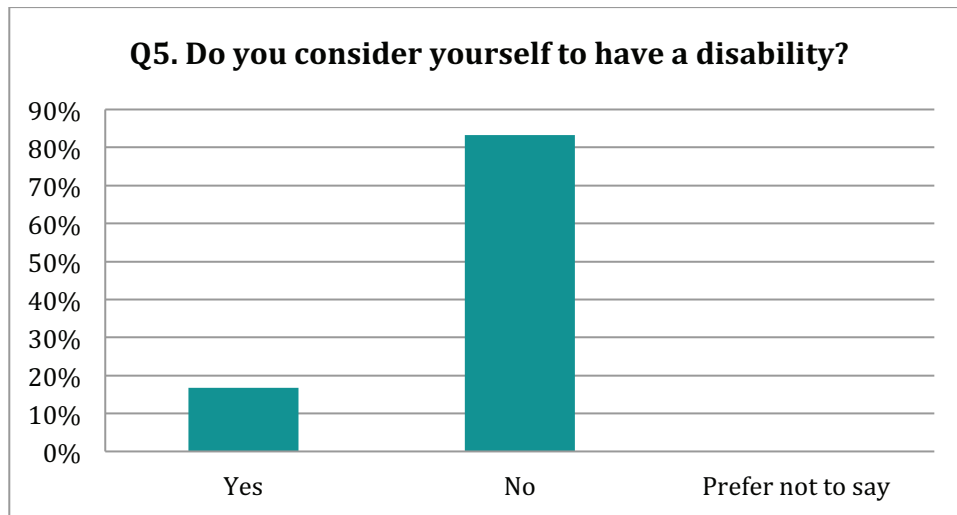
	No	%
20 - 29	8	44%
30 - 49	10	56%
50 - 64		0%
65 - 74		0%
75+		0%

Prefer not to say		0%
Total	18	100%



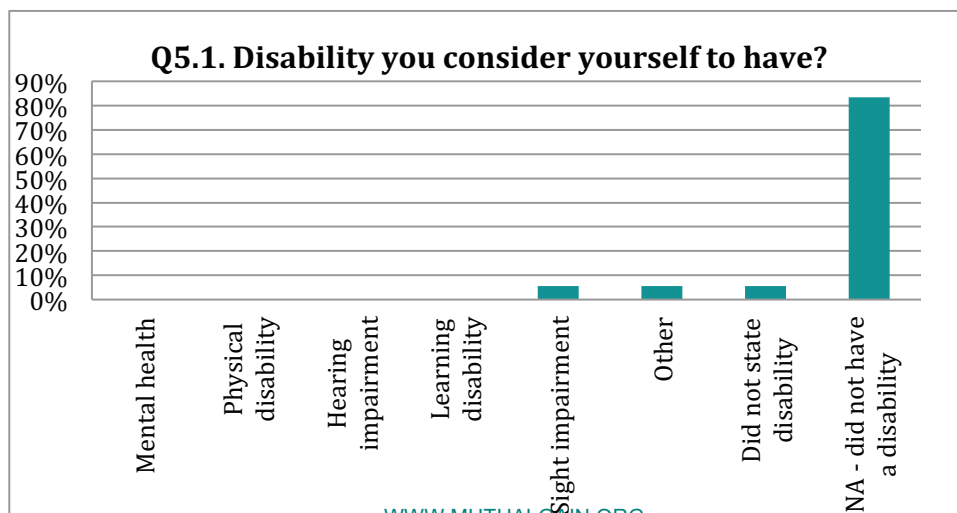
Q5. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

	No	%
Yes	3	17%
No	15	83%
Prefer not to say		0%
Total	18	100%

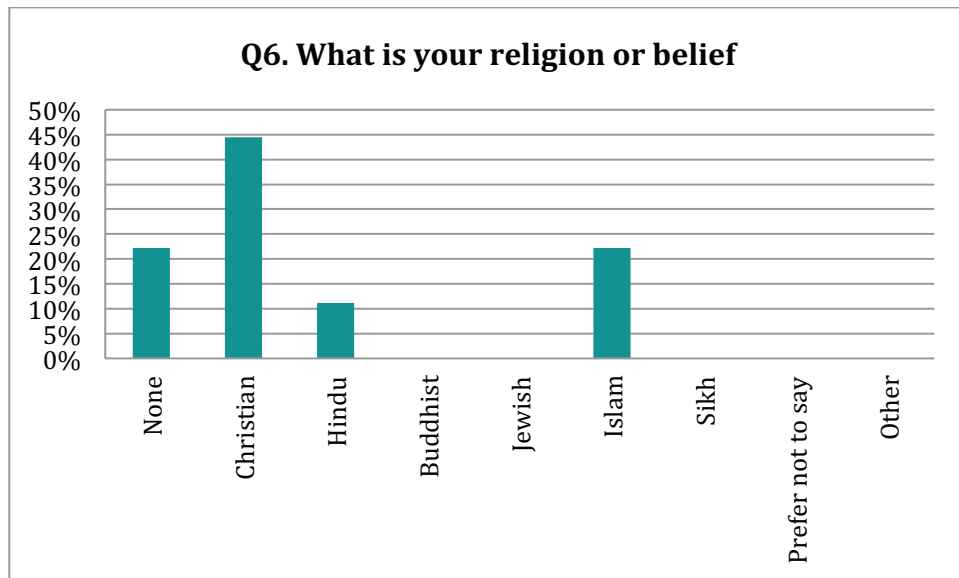


Q5.1 Disability you consider yourself to have?

	No	%
Mental health		0%
Physical disability		0%
Hearing impairment		0%
Learning disability		0%
Sight impairment	1	6%
Other	1	6%
Did not state disability	1	6%
NA - did not have a disability	15	83%
Total	18	100%



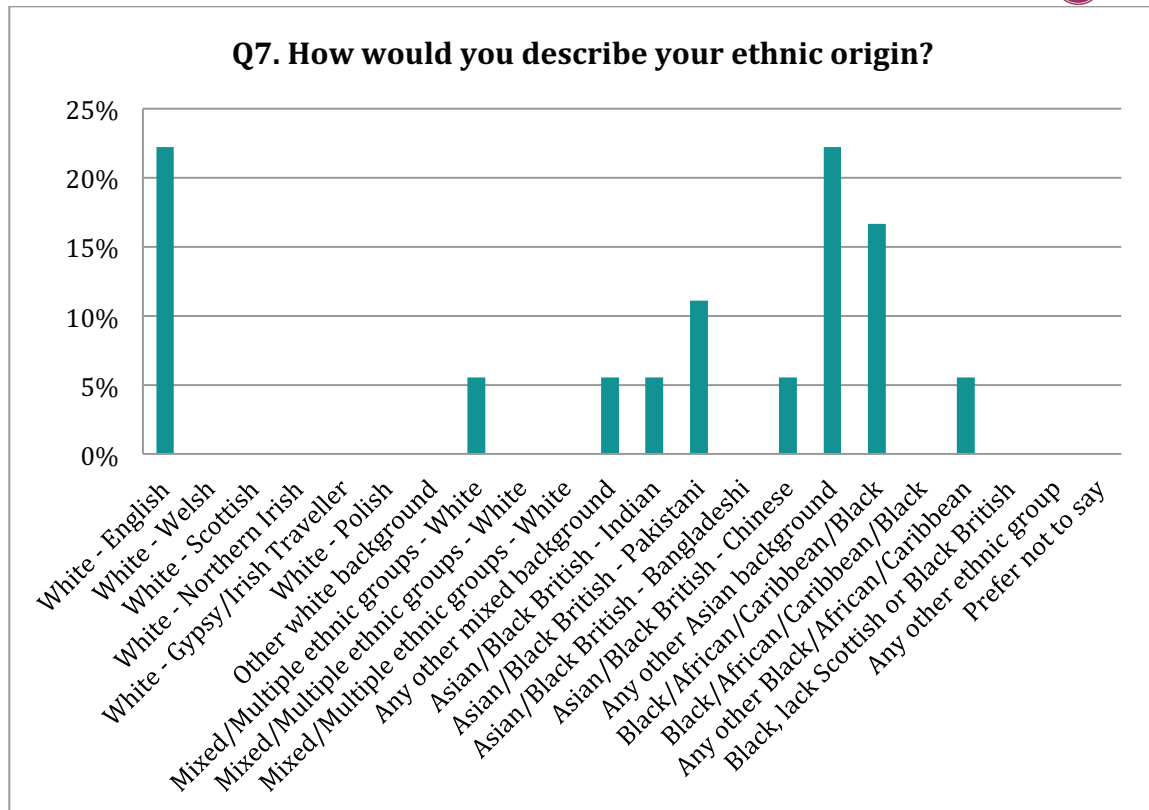
Q6. What is your religion or belief?



	No	%
None	4	22%
Christian	8	44%
Hindu	2	11%
Buddhist		0%
Jewish		0%
Islam	4	22%
Sikh		0%
Prefer not to say		0%
Other		0%
Total	18	100%

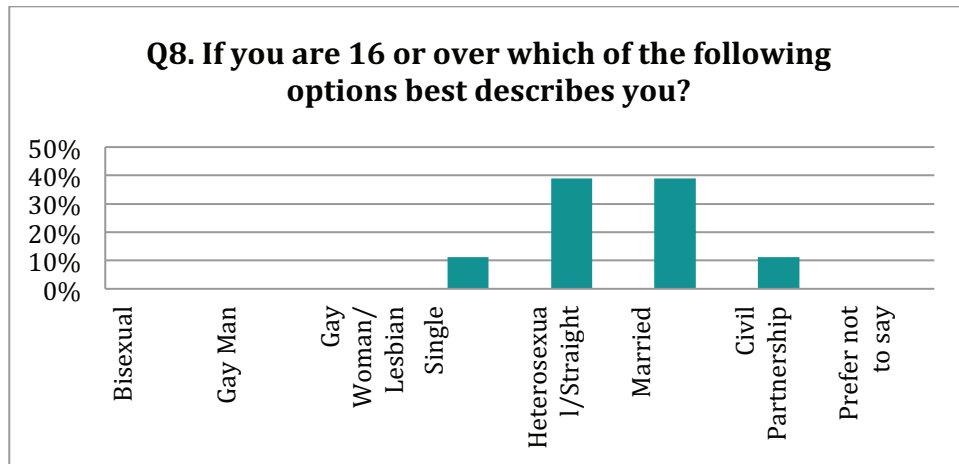
Q7. How would you describe your ethnic origin?

	No	%
White - English	4	22%
White - Welsh		0%
White - Scottish		0%
White - Northern Irish		0%
White - Gypsy/Irish Traveller		0%
White - Polish		0%
Other white background		0%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White and Black Caribbean	1	6%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White and Black African		0%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - White and Asian		0%
Any other mixed background	1	6%
Asian/Black British - Indian	1	6%
Asian/Black British - Pakistani	2	11%
Asian/Black British - Bangladeshi		0%
Asian/Black British - Chinese	1	6%
Any other Asian background	4	22%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - African	3	17%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British - Caribbean		0%
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	1	6%
Black, Black Scottish or Black British (only required if you have staff in Scotland)		0%
Any other ethnic group		0%
Prefer not to say		0%
Total	18	100%



Q8. If you are 16 or over which of the following options best describes you?

	No	%
Bisexual		0%
Gay Man		0%
Gay Woman/Lesbian		0%
Single	2	11%
Heterosexual/Straight	7	39%
Married	7	39%
Civil Partnership	2	11%
Prefer not to say		0%
Total	18	100%



Appendix III: Interim Findings, December 2015

Report on the Future of Brent's Children's Centres consultation

Susan Ritchie

Public

Introduction

The London Borough of Brent has put in place a number of mechanisms for parents, carers, families, and future users of Children’s Centres to comment on the Future of Brent’s Children’s Centres consultation. The Council wanted to attract views from a variety of groups, using the following approach:

- Direct mail to every parent/carer who uses the services – a copy of the proposal and attached questionnaire delivered to 24,000 homes in Brent¹.
- An online survey (http://brent-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/candf/consultation_on_proposals_for_the_future_of_brents_childrens_centres)
- A survey collection box in every Children’s Centre
- Encouragement and support from Children’s Centre staff to complete questionnaires
- Delivery of 7 Children’s Centre consultation events – designed, delivered and reported independently by MutualGain²



Drop In Events

¹ The full consultation proposal can be read at www.brent.gov.uk

²The timing and recruitment was set by Brent Council, with independent capture of views

²The timing and recruitment was set by Brent Council, with independent capture of views and opinion

Seven 'drop in' style events were provided, giving opportunities for Children's Centre parents and carers to share their thoughts. The events were offered over a range of times and locations to suit varying needs.

Brent has six Children's Centre Network areas: an event was held in each of those, with an additional evening event held at Brent Civic Centre.

Each event was designed to:

- Provide information on the Proposal
- Gather views on the proposal
- Collect new suggestions for alternative service delivery models that could be considered

A flexible approach was taken to give parents enough information about the proposals and enable time to comment and ask questions (and where necessary, to signpost parents to further information and services).

A member of the Children's Services Operational Team attended most events in an observation role, but provided assistance with technical enquiries related to other childcare matters as needed.

Structure of Events

At each location, parents and carers were provided with:

- An explanation of the proposal
- An explanation of the future role of the Council
- An explanation of the expectations of an appointed 'partner organisation'
- Opportunities for questions to be asked
- Opportunity to contribute to the thinking around the challenge (gathered and recorded visibly using large scale templates)
- A personal 'vote' using 'sticky backed ticks' to support or not support the proposal

Consultation Questions

Participants were asked to provide their views on the following:

4. What do you like most about the Children's Centres?
5. How do you think the proposal will impact on the Children's Centres?
6. Do you have any additional suggestions for a new service delivery model?

Using 'sticky back ticks' they were asked to indicate their support or non-support for the partnership model

Findings: Highlights

This summary report provides the key findings from the events. A Full Report with demographic profiles will be submitted at the end of the consultation in January 2015. Despite the events being offered at all seven locations, only three locations attracted any participation:

- Wembley Primary
- Alperton
- Three Trees

Due to this low participation, a large template has been left for distribution and use in the other Children's Centres. The Template will be mounted on a wall and parents encouraged to leave their comments – known as a 'Talking Wall' in engagement terms, it provides another opportunity for those who may not want to engage face to face, but have a comment to make. These templates will be collated and reported on in the full report.

Participation

Participation in the events was lower than expected, despite significant postal attempts to engage parents. A total of 23 parents attended the sessions. Despite the lower number attending the events, there are clear shared views across the three network areas that achieved better participation. From this we are able to provide the key findings from those who took part.

The majority of participants in these events came from BAMER communities (Black and Minority Ethnic Refugee) groups. These community members are known not to participate in traditional consultation methods (written questionnaires and online surveys), which provided a welcome voice in the engagement, and can contribute to the next stages of how the Council consider the Future of Brent's Children's Centres.

Many of the parents we spoke with speak English as a Second Language. They were all able to present their views clearly and concisely with no language problems: we thank them for their valuable time.



What do you like most about the Children's Centres?

Parents were very easily able to identify the areas of Children's Centre work that they value: they quickly identified the benefits they have personally gained and how this has contributed to their children's development, and their own socialisation in the Brent community. This was poignant from Polish parents who are particularly appreciative of the ability to learn English themselves and how this supports the preparation of their children for school.

The key things most liked and valued are:

- Learning and development of the children
- New structured programme – children learning through play
- Parent learning and socialisation (ESOL, Baby Massage, Aromatherapy)
- Ability to get children 'out of the house'
- Close to home
- Small steps to employment for parents (confidence, language, networks, skills)
- Knowledge – first aid put into practice in home accident (parent did not take child to A & E)

- Access to early support – speech and language therapy, parenting classes, new parent workshops
- Good parent/staff relationships
- Improvement in children’s behaviour
- Day trips – discounted rates e.g. £5 for 10 swimming lessons
- Preparation for nursery means children have command of English and not isolated at nursery school

Parents recognise and value the way Children’s Centres support their aspirations for future success

Many of the parents we spoke with are recent arrivals to the UK and have faced challenging experiences whilst settling in the UK. Language barriers, housing need and immersion into community life in Brent gave them additional aspirations for their children to settle and secure educational attainment. This gives them an acute

Parents value the opportunity to learn and develop their children, and themselves, as part of their family immersion into the Brent community. It helps them plan for their long-term future.

understanding of the wider benefits they gain from the Children’s centres and therefore the Children’s Centres are highly valued by them.

Parents value the ‘low/no cost’ of Children’s Centre services

Closely connected to their recent arrival status, are the challenging economic pressures many parents face. In particular, parents with two or more children voiced praise for the ‘low or no cost’ of services, that they would not be in a position to afford if they were required to pay.

How do you think the Proposal will impact on children’s centres?

There were three clear major concerns among parents about the proposed partnership:

- Potential future closure of Children’s Centres if additional funds are not

Parents do not want the new partner to focus on income over children’s outcomes

raised

- A new partner will shift focus to ‘business’ rather than children and families
- The potential introduction of costs to parents to access the services that are currently free

Despite voicing these concerns **all parents fully supported the introduction of a partnership model** to protect and secure Children’s Centre Services.

There is a perceived threat of ‘closure’ that needs to be addressed so that parents can engage meaningfully and make a contribution to finding a solution to the Children’s Centres future; so that their creative ideas can be considered.

Parents have a perception that the Council intends to close services

There are concerns that the partners’ requirement to raise funds may shift the focus from ‘children’s outcomes’ to ‘income generation’. One parent described the Proposal as ‘a high risk strategy that may fail if funds are not raised’. These concerns were very much shared in all the discussions and parents do not want a focus on business to overshadow the focus on children and families.

There is recognition that money will need to be raised to secure the future of services; as each group recognise the financial value they gain from ‘free and minimal contribution services’ – but they **want a partner that will protect children’s outcomes as well as source income.**

Costs were present throughout the discussion groups. Many parents told us they could not afford to pay per session in the future; which would lead to less use of the services by parents like them.

Costs were also raised by two families in different consultation events, from a different perspective; they raised fear for costs to ‘the middle class’ who do not receive benefits and would be the likely ones to face increased charges for use. One parent explained that while they worked and earned money, they also had commitments and it should not be assumed that they have significant disposable income.

These dialogues led to parents making suggestions for the levels of affordable contribution they could, and would, make to maintain and protect services. These suggestions are detailed on [page 10](#), and ranged from £1 per session to £5 per week.

Parents are concerned that costs will be introduced that may exclude them from using the services

Some parents are concerned that costs will target economically active families

Majority of parents are willing to make a small contribution to attend specific programmes

Despite these concerns there is support for the introduction of a partner organisation to maintain the delivery of services.

There is overwhelming support for a model that enables services to continue with as little change or cost implication as possible. The facilitator allayed the initial fears of 'closure' and enabled participants to understand that this new approach is aimed at securing services, and provided confidence that their suggestions would help the development of an appropriate model for Brent.

Key questions raised about the new approach:

- Will there be reduced diversity in current programmes?
- Who will be the new partner?
- Is there a partner lined up?
- Will a 'private' partner change the focus to business rather than on children and families

The questions above were repeated at all the consultation events – and gives an indication that parents welcome more information on any future tender process. We would suggest that parent representation could be sought to inform the implementation of the new approach.

Parents need a clear explanation of the tender process

Parents were able to identify some potential positive impacts from the new approach, and were keen to see a new partner explore opportunities to further develop services and provide more programmes. Examples were recorded about waiting lists for programmes at two Children’s Centres and a desire for a new partner to increase access to services.

Support given for the proposal

- A new partner may raise additional funds
- A new partner might broaden the current offer
- The new approach could attract additional services e.g. immunisations, GPs
- The new partner might bring back services that have stopped – music classes delivered by professional musicians

Parents support the Proposal as the opportunity to save Children’s Centre Services

Hopes for the new partnership

In discussing the challenges facing Brent Council – cuts, population growth and need, the parents articulated their hopes for the future service. They hope that the new partner will:

- Continue to support disadvantaged families
- Increase the number of sessions and programmes available
- Keep costs minimal, or out of, delivering services
- Parental contribution to delivering sessions is not over estimated (example given of parent led music sessions not having the same input and impact as professionally tutored classes)

Parents expressed the need for the Council to continue its role in quality assurance, educational standards and the performance management of the partner. However, their greatest request to the Council is to protect the staff. Parents have significant affection and respect for the staff at the Children’s Centres, and clearly recognise the difference that the Centre staff have made to their lives and their children. Parents would like existing staff to remain as they have relationships and trust in the people they know.

Parents want the existing staff to remain in their roles: they want ‘quality’ to be maintained

Suggestions for a new model for the Future of Brent's Children's Services

Parents were invited to offer their suggestions for new approaches to delivering the Children's Centre Services. They were encouraged to put forward ideas that could

Parents support the need to generate income and accept business and charitable involvement in Children's Centres

make a difference and assist in shaping a new model.

The most frequent suggestion heard was for parents to make a small financial contribution to the costs of delivering sessions. Although there are concerns about the level of costs and how this impacts of families with two and more children, there is a willingness to contribute rather than lose the service.

Parents' suggestions were:

- A small cost to parents
- Seek support from Charities
- Sponsorship is sought from large energy suppliers – electricity, gas etc.
- Individual benefactors are approached – here and abroad
- Sponsorship from large businesses e.g. Lego, Sony and Early Learning Centre
- Evening room and ground hire to the community
- Health checks in centres to encourage attendance
- Centres should deliver more services like NHS dentist, speech therapy
- Reduce waste through printing and advertising
- Go hard on Central Government and reject cuts – 'education should not be compromised

Voting with sticky backed ticks

Each parent was given a single sticky tick and asked to place it against the statement that most reflected their view:

I support the partnership model

I do not support the partnership model

23 supporting ticks were recorded in total, and 0 recorded as not supporting the proposal – full support of those in attendance, for the introduction of a partner organisation to maintain and secure delivery of Children's Centre Services in Brent.

Use you tick against the statement you agree with:

I support the partnership model

I do not support the partnership model



What do you like most about the children's centres?

New timetable - more structured
better programme - kids learning thru play: Maths session

Beneficial

Courses for parents: parenting
ESOL - Aromatherapy - baby massage
Workshops for new parents:

Excursions - discounted rate

Batlis November - day trip

Legoland
Swimming £5 - ten lessons @ Nuffield

→ Children know each other

'its nothing' children benefit:

- Preparing them for nursery - help with learning languages.

How do you think the proposal will impact on children's services?

costs for families -
Will the partner charge
Should be low - not high
lots of families won't be able to attend lots of sessions
£1 - is ok.

Who is the partner

- high risk system will fail if grants not secure - No longevity: unknown lifetime
- Partner might think 'business model' lead them to introduce fees.
- May then lack diversity in programme
- look at the costs.
- Hope for no centre closures.
- Did the partnership model work in Greenwich?

Any other suggestions:

- Families pay a small fee for use/activities
- Granville + three trees
- Charge small amounts to parents
- Council should lobby Government: state the benefits to parents
- Go in harder → wake up the gov.
- Should not compromise on educ.
- Sponsors: Charity, Early Learning Centre, Groups/businesses geared towards children
e.g. Sony, Lego

Use you tick against the statement you agree with:

I support the partnership model



I do not support the partnership model




Next Steps

Due to the lower than expected levels of participation, MutualGain recommends that additional activity is undertaken to gather the views of vulnerable families and working families, through planned focus group discussions

Future engagement activities should consider using incentives to encourage participation and consider if there are other locations in the community to attract more parents into the consultation programme.

SUBMITTED IN DECEMBER 2014

 <p>Brent</p>	<p align="center">Cabinet 23 February 2015</p> <p align="center">Report from the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth</p>
<p>For Action</p>	<p align="right">Wards affected: Stonebridge</p>
<p align="center">Stonebridge redevelopment proposals including primary school expansion and the Stonebridge Day Centre – update</p>	

Appendix 3 of the Report is not for publication

1. Summary

- 1.1 Appendix 1 of this Report details the lands that are the subject of this report, namely the former Stonebridge Day Centre currently Stonebridge Primary School Annexe (a temporary use), Stonebridge Primary School including the Welsh School, the Adventure Playground, Stonebridge Open Space and Waste Land, together referred to as the “Subject Lands”.
- 1.2 On 16 September 2013 the Executive approved the following principles of redevelopment of the Subject Lands, namely:
- That the existing Stonebridge Day Centre be redeveloped to provide new housing;
 - That the listed Stonebridge Primary School be permanently expanded from two Forms of Entry (FE) to 3 FE accommodating ‘bulge classes’ currently located at Stonebridge Day Centre, subject to the School’s Governing Body’s consent;
 - That the existing Adventure Playground be re-planned and improved;
 - That the Stonebridge Open Space be re-planned and improved; and
 - That residential development is bought forward in order to better utilise the lands.
- 1.3 Members also agreed at that Executive meeting that public consultation and negotiation be undertaken on the development proposals with local stakeholders, in particular the managers of the Adventure Playground, the Welsh School and the Secretary of State in relation to land adjacent to Stonebridge Primary School;

1.4 Following public consultation, this report is an update to Members, detailing the development of site proposals for the Subject Lands, setting out the process of public consultation on the most up-to date plans and setting out the feedback received. Based on this, Officers have made various recommendations with regard to the redevelopment.

2. Recommendations

That the Cabinet approve:

2.1 The revised principles of redevelopment:

- (i) That the former Stonebridge Day Centre site - currently the Stonebridge Primary School Annex (a temporary use) and Milton Avenue be re-planned to provide new homes;
- (ii) That Stonebridge Primary School be expanded from 2 Forms of Entry to 3 Forms of Entry;
- (iii) That in respect of the Adventure Playground the land be re-planned to form part of the expanded Primary School;
- (iv) That the Open Space is re-planned to provide an equivalent area, of improved quality, running alongside the existing canal feeder;
- (v) That the existing open space at the frontage of the site be re-planned for housing;
- (vi) That the School building currently let to the Welsh School revert back to the Stonebridge Primary School; and
- (vii) That an alternative proposal in respect of play provision be developed on site as appropriate.

2.2 That formal statutory consultation on the proposed expansion of Stonebridge Primary School from 2 Forms of Entry to 3 Forms of Entry is undertaken, subject to approval of the school's Governing Body to proceed to this stage on the basis of the proposals approved by the Cabinet as described in this report.

2.3 That existing occupation arrangements (as per Confidential Appendix 3) with Brent Play Association are terminated and that the mitigation plan included within the Diversity Implications section of this report is implemented.

2.4 That existing occupation arrangement (as per Confidential Appendix 3) with Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain, the Welsh School are terminated and that the relocation plan at paragraph 3.47 is progressed.

2.5 That the Operational Director Property and Projects in consultation with the Operational Director Children and Young People be delegated authority to agree the terms of the termination arrangement with Brent Play Association. And that the Operational Director Property and Projects be delegated authority to agree the terms of the termination arrangement with Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain, the Welsh School.

2.6 That subject to the decisions made on the revised principles of redevelopment a subsequent report be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet for approval providing details of final plans for the expansion of the Stonebridge Primary

school and proposed redevelopment of the wider Stonebridge site and the associated forecast costs of the proposed redevelopment.

- 2.7 That the Chief Finance Officer determines the precise financing arrangements for the scheme, once costs and likely receipts are more certain.
- 2.8 That Cabinet note that the overall land receipts are expected to exceed the capital costs as per 4.5.
- 2.9 That Members note the findings of the Equality Analysis.

3 Detail

- 3.1 The former Stonebridge Day Centre site currently the Stonebridge Primary School Annex (a temporary use), comprises a 1960's building of 1500m² partially used to accommodate primary school 'bulge classes' until 2016/17. These classes are managed by the nearby Stonebridge Primary School which is earmarked for expansion to accommodate the 'bulge classes' on a permanent basis.
- 3.2 Stonebridge Primary School is a grade II listed Victorian building of 3,000m² that operates as a 2 FE school. Adjoining the school are various parcels of land comprising an Adventure Playground, open space and unused waste land (see Appendix 1). London Borough of Brent is the owner of all the lands, including the school and Adventure Playground.
- 3.3 On 16th September 2013 Brent Executive approved the principles of redevelopment of the day centre, primary school, Adventure Playground and surrounding lands, and that public consultation be undertaken in respect of the proposed scheme.
- 3.4 Redevelopment plans were discussed with the Governing Body of the school, Brent Play Association (BPA) (the organisation that occupies the Adventure Playground) and the Welsh School (the organisation that occupies buildings in Stonebridge Primary School).
- 3.5 The equality analysis that accompanied the 2013 report identified a negative impact on the Welsh School which Officers have subsequently sought to mitigate through negotiation - see paragraphs 3.43 to 3.47 on the Welsh School below for further details.
- 3.6 Since the 2013 Executive approvals, the nearby former Pupil Referral Unit was vacated by Brent's Children and Young People Department. It was subsequently agreed that a license be given to the Stonebridge Primary School to make use of the building during the period that redevelopment plans are further developed.
- 3.7 There is a small building located in the Adventure Playground. A condition survey undertaken in December 2014, shows that the property appears generally to be in a satisfactory condition. The projected cost of planned

maintenance, repairs and improvements for this building going forward is as follows:

	Emergency Test / Repairs	Maintenance Costs	Planned Replacements	M&E	Total
Expenditure Year 1	£8,300.00	£4,000.00	£0.00	£41,750.00	£54,050.00
Expenditure Years 2 to 5	£0.00	£16,000.00	£0.00	£31,000.00	£47,000.00
Expenditure Years 5 to 10	£0.00	£22,000.00	£34,500.00	£13,850.00	£70,350.00
Expenditure Years 10 to 15	£0.00	£24,000.00	£6,900.00	£14,250.00	£45,150.00
Expenditure Years 15 to 20	£0.00	£26,000.00	£3,300.00	£11,050.00	£40,350.00
Total 20 Year Costs	£8,300.00	£92,000.00	£44,700.00	£111,900.00	£256,900.00

3.8 With regard to the new homes proposed in Stonebridge, the following Executive reports are noteworthy as they may impact residential proposals:

- On 11 November 2013 the Executive Report on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) asset management strategy affordable housing development approved proposals for Brent to start self building new affordable homes.
- On 17 February 2014 the Adult Social Care Market position statement (MPS2014) resulted in work being undertaken on the New Accommodation for Independent Living (NAIL) project and report to Cabinet in July 2014 that sets out self development options in respect of adult social care housing provision.

Proposals

3.9 The fundamental objectives of the proposals are to deliver an expanded 3 FE primary school in Stonebridge and in so doing to secure an amount of 'enabling' residential development that will contribute towards the cost of this, an improved open space for the area and the release of the former day care centre site (currently Stonebridge School annex) for alternative uses. To this end Southstudio Architects have been appointed to prepare redevelopment proposals. Appendix 2 sets out the proposed land uses across the main site.

3.10 The need to provide additional school places to help meet ongoing increases in demand is well documented. The proposal is to expand Stonebridge Primary School, which currently has a good Ofsted rating, by 210 places to help meet growing demand. The school currently has 420 pupils at the main school site and 180 in the Annex building (the former Stonebridge Day Centre – temporary 'bulge classes'). The proposal is to expand the Primary School from 2 FE to 3 FE. This would mean Stonebridge Primary School would have 630 primary school places in total.

3.11 In order to accommodate the expansion in a feasible manner, it has become clear that it will be necessary to make use of land currently occupied by the Adventure Playground. Although early feasibility proposals indicated that there may be a prospect of the expanded school not requiring additional land take, subsequent testing has demonstrated that this is not feasible.

- 3.12 Options have been explored which increase the school site area to meet the current space guidelines. This will ensure that the expanded school has an appropriate amount of outdoor play space, which in turn will provide opportunities for the school to open up the space for wider use than is currently possible. The latest iterations of the design for the school look to improve access arrangements, which are currently congested. A new safe pedestrian entrance into the school will be introduced, which would be approached via pedestrian footpaths through the new landscaped open space.
- 3.13 The existing Welsh School would no longer be accommodated within the site. These proposals are subject to further design development with the School. The new proposals would result in the loss of the existing site for the Adventure Playground. This will require the termination of the existing occupation arrangements with Brent Play Association (BPA).
- 3.14 The proposed scheme would see a considerable improvement in the quality of open space provision across the site, by moving the space away from Hillside – where it adjoins a busy main road and relocating it along the southern part of the site to incorporate the canal.
- 3.15 The current open space would then be developed for mixed tenure residential development, which would ultimately make a financial contribution to the redevelopment of the school. The scale and mix of this development will be worked up as part of the planning application but is likely to be predominantly private and intermediate products in recognition of the overwhelming concentration of affordable social housing in the vicinity.
- 3.16 The delivery of this scheme will then negate the need for Stonebridge School to make use of the temporary annex currently provided at the former Day Care Centre. Alternative development proposals for new homes will be brought forward for this site.

Consultation Process

- 3.17 Extensive consultation has been undertaken to seek the views of residents and interested parties on the redevelopment proposals. The consultation period ran from Monday 6th October 2014 to Monday 17th November 2014. A consultation leaflet was produced which included details of the proposals and sought views through two open questions:
- Please tell us what you like about the proposals and why; and
 - Please tell us what you would like changed and why.
- 3.18 A website was created setting out consultation information with an on-line response portal.
- 3.19 This consultation exercise formed part of the consultation process for school expansion.
- 3.20 Five face to face consultation events were held:

Date	Venue	
14 October 2014 3.30-5.30pm	Stonebridge Primary School	Drop in consultation event for parents, teachers and pupils
21 October 2014 7pm	Bridge Park	Brent Connects – Presentation and Question and Answer Session
29 October 2014 9.30-11.30 am	The Hub, Hillside	Drop in consultation event
5 November 2014 5.30 – 7.30 pm	The Hub, Hillside	Drop in consultation event
12 November 2014 5.00 – 7.00 pm	Stonebridge Primary School	Drop in consultation event

3.21 Ahead of the start of formal consultation, meetings were held with the Governing Body of Stonebridge School, the Governing Body of the Welsh School, Brent Play Association, the Head-teacher and Governing Body of Our Lady of Lourdes - a nearby Catholic 1 FE Primary School sitting opposite Stonebridge Primary School and the Diocese of Westminster.

3.22 Public consultation was widely advertised as follows:

- At the start of the consultation leaflets were delivered to properties within 0.5 miles of the 'subject site', all pupils of Stonebridge Primary School, the BPA and Our Lady of Lourdes. Further leaflets were issued on 7 November to the Fawood Children's Centre, the Hub, Hillside reception, Brent START Stonebridge, Hillside Primary Care Centre and St Michael's nursery. A total of 6,700 leaflets were distributed over the course of consultation.
- Consultation information was provided to the local press.
- A link to consultation information was sent to a long list of organisations, see appendix 5 (the consultation analysis report) for full details.

3.23 Ahead of the start of the formal consultation process, BPA started a campaign to save the Adventure Playground. This generated considerable local press coverage.

Petition

3.24 On 28 October 2014 the Council received a petition calling for the retention of the Stonebridge Adventure Playground. The petition comprises of 1,042 paper signatures and 152 on line signatures, under the heading:

“We the undersigned insist that the redevelopment of Stonebridge School and the new housing includes keeping the Stonebridge Adventure Playground open”.

Asset of Community Value

3.25 On 31 October 2014 the Stonebridge Park Adventure Playground was entered as nominated land on the Council's list of assets of community value. Under Section 95 of the Localism Act – 'moratorium on disposal of listed assets', the owner (London Borough of Brent) must not enter into a relevant disposal of land unless certain conditions are met.

3.26 The proposal is to change the use of the Adventure Playground. It is not intended that the Council will dispose of the listed assets as part of these redevelopment proposals.

Consultation Outcome

3.27 Around 60 individuals attended consultation events (excluding Brent Connects which was not exclusively for this consultation) and 90 written submissions have been received (leaflets, on line and 17 A4 signed standard documents). Two thirds of the written responses were from people in Brent or Brent organisations. The Council also received one response on the phone ahead of the start of the consultation and this comment has been added to the summary of the verbal comments made at the consultation events.

3.28 The majority of responses focused on the loss of the Adventure Playground and the desire to keep this provision. A number of responses only discussed the Adventure Playground, with many of these respondents saying they did not like anything about the proposals.

3.29 Key consultation messages are as follows:

- (i) *Former Stonebridge Day Centre.* There was a mixed response as to whether there should be more housing. For those who did wish to see more homes there was a desire for houses as opposed to flats and for homes to be affordable. There was a desire for no high rises and for good design.
- (ii) *Stonebridge Primary School Expansion.* Respondents said that the school expansion should be re planned so not to be at the expense of the Adventure Playground or to leave the school on two sites. Due to the school having the annexe site it was felt that the school expansion was only providing a further 30 places. There were respondents who welcomed the school being on one site.
- (iii) *The Adventure Playground.* Respondents highlighted the importance of the safe and supervised nature of the provision. The importance of the facility in terms of childcare – including after school and summer school provision was emphasised. The point was made that it was a safe place for children to go, without which they could partake in anti-social behaviour/crime. Respondents valued the play facilities (including the indoor space) and the facility being a free provision.
- (iv) *Open Space re-location and improvements.* People wanted to see the open space improved. The proposed open space and improvements to the canal feeder were welcomed. Respondents did not want to see a loss of open space or trees.
- (v) *Welsh School.* There were limited responses on the Welsh School. A few responses questioned what the future of the Welsh School would be.
- (vi) *Other issues.* Generally the location of the proposed new play space was not supported as it was seen as unsafe as it was by a road and unsupervised. Traffic and parking issues were raised both with regard to the need to address the current situation and the potential impact of the new proposals. Respondents said the proposals need to ensure community cohesion.

3.30 A detailed consultation report is attached to this report as Appendix 5. Key messages are analysed in the Equalities Analysis at Appendix 4 and a mitigation plan is set out in the equalities section 6 below.

Planning Comments

3.31 The Stonebridge Primary School forms site specific allocation 19 of the Local Development Plan. The allocation is for residential development to the rear of the site, where it will have a limited impact on the setting of the Listed Building.

3.32 Key policy considerations:-

- Impact on the setting of the Grade II Listed School Building
- Impact on open space
- The need to mitigate any impacts on the Adventure Playground
- Impact on biodiversity

3.33 The impact of the proposed development on the Listed Building and its setting must be fully considered. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), a statement will be required on the significance of the heritage asset, including the contribution made by its setting. It must be demonstrated the proposed development would not harm the heritage asset, and would make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

3.34 The area to the north of the school comprises open space. The 'wasteland' is not accessible to the public, derelict and does not provide any recreational opportunities; it is therefore not considered to constitute open space. In accordance with the NPPF and London Plan policy 7.18, the open space must be replaced by at least equivalent provision in terms of quantity or quality. The re-provision must be within the footprint of the site.

3.35 The Adventure Playground is a community facility which contributes to play provision. As required by London Plan policy 3.16 and Core Strategy policy CP 23, given the identified need for play in this area, re-provision will be required of a facility that will meet an equivalent need to the existing Adventure Playground. In determining what constitutes equivalent provision consideration needs to be given to the age range the existing facility serves, the provision it offers and its opening times.

3.36 A Grade II Site of Importance for Nature Conservation runs along the canal feeder on the eastern boundary of the site. In addition, the open space and 'wasteland' is likely to have ecological value. An ecological survey of the site will be required, and any scheme should seek to provide net gain in biodiversity as far as is a possible, as required by the NPPF.

Brent Play Association

3.37 The council has a contract with BPA for the provision of play services in Brent and pursuant to that contract BPA occupies the Brent owned Adventure Playground and manages and maintains the area. As occupation of the

Adventure Playground is required by the contract for the provision of play services, Brent receives no rent in respect of BPA's occupation of the Adventure Playground. The rental guide depending on lease term is between £10-15,000 per annum. Planning applications date back to 1974, 1975 and 1985 relating to buildings in the Adventure Playground area. The newer adventure play equipment has been funded by the Big Lottery Fund and the grant agreement is in the name of Brent Council.

- 3.38 BPA is a registered Charity (No: 1085110). Companies House records inform BPA were incorporated in 11 November 1999. BPA's accounts for the years ending March 2013 state their objectives as follows:

"The charity's object and its financial activity continues to be that of providing and supporting facilities within the London Borough of Brent and surrounding areas for the daily care, play, recreation and education of children and young people seven days per week and school holidays and also provide day respite and learning opportunities for children and young people with special needs up to the age of 18 years".

- 3.39 In respect of the Adventure Playground, the BPA March 2013 accounts state:

"The charity currently runs an all year round club in the Stonebridge Adventure Centre, on behalf of Brent Council. It offers integrated facilities for children and young people with special needs, 'state of the art' Adventure Playground structures and indoor facility which include art and craft room, TV and video room, main hall and kitchen".

- 3.40 The BPA service at Stonebridge is not Ofsted registered. The BPA services at the Stonebridge Adventure Playground run from Monday to Friday during term time, from 2pm to 7pm, on Saturdays from 11am to 4pm and during School Holidays from 7am to 6pm. The core age range is 5 to 13 year old young people.

- 3.41 BPA received funding of £118,000 from Brent in 2014/15 under a contract for the provision of play services. The BPA March 2013 accounts highlight the Stonebridge free facility as a one off, funded primarily by Brent. BPA's accounts show that for the year ending 31 March 2013, the grant received totalled £315,304 (£211,304 67% from Brent), equating to 95.7% of the BPA's total income. A report to Brent's Cabinet of 15 December 2014 from the Chief Finance Officer, as per recommendations from the Strategic Director, Children and Young People proposes:

"to cease contract for play provision with the Stonebridge Adventure Playground, this funding to BPA provides after school and holiday provision for children at the SAP which is free to the families at point of delivery and is unique to this area. It is proposed to cease this funding as it is no longer sustainable or justifiable in the current financial climate".

3.42 Officers in a separate report to this Cabinet meeting are recommending that the current funding arrangements with the BPA be terminated.

The Welsh School

3.43 The Ofsted report of 2013 identifies that the Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain (The Welsh School London) was established in 1958. The school relocated to its current site at Stonebridge School in 2004.

3.44 Officers understand the Welsh School's occupation was agreed directly with Stonebridge School. A below market rent is paid to Stonebridge School - a position which Council Officers have been looking to regularise for some time.

3.45 The Welsh School is a non-selective, co-educational independent day school for pupils between the ages of 3 and 11 years. As at the inspection date there were 34 pupils on roll, of whom five were part time. It is understood that only a handful of students are from Brent.

3.46 The school is run by a board of directors on behalf of the Welsh Schools Trust and aims to provide 'bilingual Welsh education outside of Wales'.

3.47 Since September 2013's Executive approvals, Officers have been in negotiation with the Welsh School and a relocation plan to the former Bowls Club Pavilion, King Edwards VII Park, Park Road, Wembley HA9 7RX has been agreed in principle subject to the Welsh School securing planning consent and Fields in Trust approval. Officers are recommending that the current occupation arrangement with the Welsh School is terminated. A planning application has been submitted and was deferred for further consideration by the planning committee on 13th January 2015. It is expected that a decision will be made at the planning committee on 4th March 2015.

Next Steps

Discussions with BPA concerning the vacation of the Adventure Playground	February 2015
Welsh School relocation plan negotiations continue	February 2015
Stonebridge Primary School Statutory Consultation ends	April 2015
Planning Application target date	June 2015
Tender for School expansions works	June 2015
Option Analysis in respect of proposed new Housing.	June 2015
Marketing of lands as required	August 2015
School expansion works end	October 2016

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Capital funding for the expansion of Stonebridge Primary School was originally approved as part of the Phase 3 programme in the August 2012 Executive report on the strategy for provision of sufficient primary school places, and subsequently re-affirmed in the May 2013 Executive report.
- 4.2 In an Executive report dated 11 November 2013 (from the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth and the Acting Director of Children and Families) titled School Expansion Programme - Phase 2 Permanent Primary School Expansion Works Contract and Portfolio Update, under phase 3 and 4 permanent primary school expansion plans, Stonebridge School is noted as planned to expand by one FE by December 2015 with funding from Department for Education (DfE) including Targeted Basic Need grant of £316,000, which must be spent by September 2015 otherwise the funding is at risk. The total current provision for the school expansion is £3.5m. If the school expansion was not to progress this funding would have to be returned to the DfE.
- 4.3 The report to Executive in September 2013 advised that the capital receipts arising from the proposed disposals in the area are estimated to be in excess of £9m. The indicative marketer's opinion of land value for the three sites is £7.6m for the combined sites, assuming 30% affordable housing. These assumptions will be reviewed following the agreement of the final site configuration.
- 4.4 The disposal of the former Day Centre Site, current Stonebridge Primary School annexe is included in the Councils Capital Disposals Programme for 2016/17 at a forecast value of £1.5m. As such the amount available from any capital receipt arising, as detailed in paragraph 4.3, will be net of this £1.5m which is already included in forecasts for the future funding of the Council's capital programme.
- 4.5 At present costs arising directly from the sale of the sites and overall proposed scheme costs (excluding the primary school expansion) are proposed to be met from the capital receipts arising. As these costs cannot be fully defined until there is an agreed configuration for the site this will be subject to a further report to be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet. This will also need to be reviewed further and reported upon should self development of the housing options be pursued.
- 4.6 Due to timing requirements of works and the availability of land for sale, costs would need to be met initially from the Council's overall Capital funding resource. Again, as costs cannot be fully defined at this time, consideration of affordability and funding requirements will need to be subject to a further report to be submitted to a future meeting of the cabinet.
- 4.7 The financial consequence of ending the Welsh School's ongoing occupation of the site will impact lease income derived by Stonebridge Primary School which is currently £10,500 per annum. This does not have a direct impact on the Council's budget. This small loss of income is not an issue for the governing body of the school.

- 4.8 If existing occupation arrangements with BPA are terminated, there would be costs arising associated with the move of the Adventure Playground. These have been estimated at £220k for demolition and clearance, and £830k for re-provision. The demolition costs would be required for the expansion of the school and open space. The costs of re-provision would be dependent on the type of facility re-provided and the implementation of the mitigation plan. Any re-provision will remain as an asset to the Council.
- 4.9 If the Adventure Playground is closed, a sum of £40,267 would need to be paid back to the Big Lottery Fund in respect of total grant received of £199,555 to develop the Adventure Playground under a Deed of Dedication for 10 years, entered into on 22 July 2008.
- 4.10 The revenue funding of £118,000 for the year 2014/15 paid by Brent to BPA, contributing to management and maintenance of the Adventure Playground, is under consideration as part of the overall Council Savings Proposals for 2015/16 (see Contract with Brent Play Association for Stonebridge Adventure Playground paper).

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 Under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has a general power to dispose of properties including by way of the sale of the freehold or the grant of a lease. The essential condition is that the Council obtains the best consideration that is reasonably obtainable.
- 5.2 Disposal on the open market either via auctioneer, marketing agent (sealed bids tender) or to a special purchaser by way of private treaty will satisfy the best consideration requirement.
- 5.3 The Adventure Playground was part funded by the Big Lottery Fund (BPL) and therefore is subject to title restrictions to reflect the funding agreement which required the consent of the BPL to any works or disposal of the site.
- 5.4 Terminating BPA's funding arrangements and allowing the current contract to expire on 31 March 2015 leading to the termination of BPA's licence to occupy and require BPA to give up possession of the Adventure Playground on the same date, failing this Officers would take steps to secure possession.
- 5.5 In order to avoid the Adventure Playground site being vacant until the site is required for the proposed redevelopment in September 2015, Officers could look to offer the space to the market for an interim use or alternatively look to agree a temporary license with BPA. Should this option be used, appropriate property arrangements would need to be put in place to allow the Council to obtain immediate possession once the site is required.
- 5.7 The Shakespeare Road site is subject to a covenant in favour of the Homes and Communities Agency in summary providing for relevant percentage of the disposal proceeds of redevelopment of the land other than for educational facilities to be invested within a 3 year period thereafter in the re-provision or enhancement of facilities at Our Lady of Lourdes and /or Stonebridge School or

in any other education or community facilities in the Stonebridge Area – potentially assisting proposals at Bridge Park.

- 5.8 The disposal or land swap of qualifying school playing fields forming part of the site will require an application to the Secretary of State for the consent under education legislation if it does not come within the categories which have deemed consent under the General Consent. To mitigate this plans maintain the school site size. Initial legal advice confirmed the application can therefore be dealt with as class consent to change the use of the land and not dispose, this has also gained support from Sport England.
- 5.9 Any disposal of any land or building used for school or education purposes in the last 8 years requires the consent of the Secretary of State.
- 5.10 The Welsh School has occupied the school site under an agreement with Stonebridge School in accordance with an agreement made between Brent Council and Stonebridge Primary School some years ago.
- 5.11 Any proposal to dispose of public open space will need to be advertised under Section 123 2(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 in the local press on two consecutive publication dates giving 21 days from the first publication date for representations to be made to the Council
- 5.12 Land registered with a local authority as land of community value land cannot in general be disposed of (save for an exempt disposal) within a 6 month period following the community land registrar being given requisite notification of a proposed disposal by the owner if within 6 weeks of the owner's notification a community group informs the community land registrar of a wish to be considered as a bidder for the land.
- 5.13 A disposal of land of community value for this purpose is in summary the disposal of the freehold or the grant or assignment of a qualifying lease subject to certain conditions. The proposal in this Report to change the use of the Adventure Playground is therefore not a disposal of land of community value.

Formal Statutory School Expansion Process

- 5.14 The different stages are set out below.
1. Consultation (informal) - which we have just completed. The governing body and the LA must decide if they still want to go ahead with the expansion given the level of objections.
 2. Publication - statutory notice in the local paper explaining the details of the expansion and surrounding plans.
 3. Representation (formal consultation) - at least another 4 weeks for the public to give their views. At this stage most of their questions should be addressed.
 4. Decision - report to Cabinet giving all the details of the two consultations. The Cabinet has two months to make the decision.
 5. Implementation - if the Cabinet decide the school should expand this is the period that the changes take place.

6. Diversity Implications

6.1 On 16 September 2013, the Executive approved the principles of redevelopment. The proposals included the relocation or termination of arrangements with the Welsh School, which was a negative impact which Officers have been looking to mitigate. The council is in active discussions with the Welsh School and a relocation plan has been agreed in principle, subject to planning consent and Fields in Trust approval.

6.2 In respect of current proposals, the loss of the Adventure Playground will negatively impact BPA, its staff and BPA service users (children and their families). Due to the local make up (as per 2011 census data) which comprises a higher than average 5-19 year old population in an area with a high concentration of socially rented homes which suggest deprivation, BPA services are likely to be in demand.

6.3 The most up-to date plans result in the following impacts:

Area	September 2013	February 2015
Stonebridge School	Positive	Positive
Adventure Playground	Positive	Negative
Open Space	Negative	Positive
The former day centre site & housing	Positive	Positive
Welsh School	Negative	Positive

6.4 Public consultation was undertaken on current proposals resulting in a well publicised campaign to save the playground and a petition being submitted to the Council, the majority of 60 attendees at consultation events and 90 of the paper responses focused on keeping the Adventure Playground provision.

6.5 To mitigate against this negative impact, the following accommodation based solutions could be developed:

- Redesign the school expansion plans to see if at all possible the Adventure Playground can stay put, as above. The plan produced by the architect's shows a severely compromised open space solution which would need to be measured to ensure no loss of area. Officers have discussed the plan with BPA and the initial feedback is that the proposals are unsuitable in the main.
- To work with the adjoining land owner Hyde Housing Association – Hillside Housing Trust, considering options on their land. The principle has been discussed, though the detail needs to be worked through.

6.6 In respect of the BPA service, the December 2014 Cabinet report from the Chief Finance Officer proposed funding cuts. The Brent Cabinet forward plan / agenda for the meeting on 23rd February 2014 includes a paper from the Strategic Director of Children and Young people on the proposed funding cuts including an equality analysis and mitigation plan. Only if the service's mitigation plan requires accommodation for BPA will accommodation solutions be developed.

- 6.7 In respect of consultation overall, in future Officers will look to find ways in which to better engage with all sections of the community in particular Asian households who although forming 17% of the local community in the 2011 census, failed to respond to the consultation.
- 6.8 All other outcomes of consultation will be further developed as proposals move through planning. Particular to the open space, Officers will work with colleagues in Sports and Parks to develop an alternative solution to the play space which the public said they did not like.
- 6.9 Officers recognise the mitigations may not fully mitigate all negative impacts and that some may not work for various reasons. However due to ongoing demand for school places and homes, the recommendation is to proceed as proposed. Leaving the Adventure Playground in situ would compromise the overall development impact.

7. Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 7.1 There are no staffing/accommodation implications for Brent Council employees. There would be staffing implications for the Brent Play Association and the Welsh School.

8. Background Papers

1. Executive Report 16th September 2013: Stonebridge redevelopment proposals including Primary School Expansion and the Stonebridge Day Centre
2. 11 November 2013 the Executive Report on the Housing Revenue Account – asset management strategy affordable housing development.
3. The 17 February 2014 Adult Social Care Market position Statement

9. Appendix

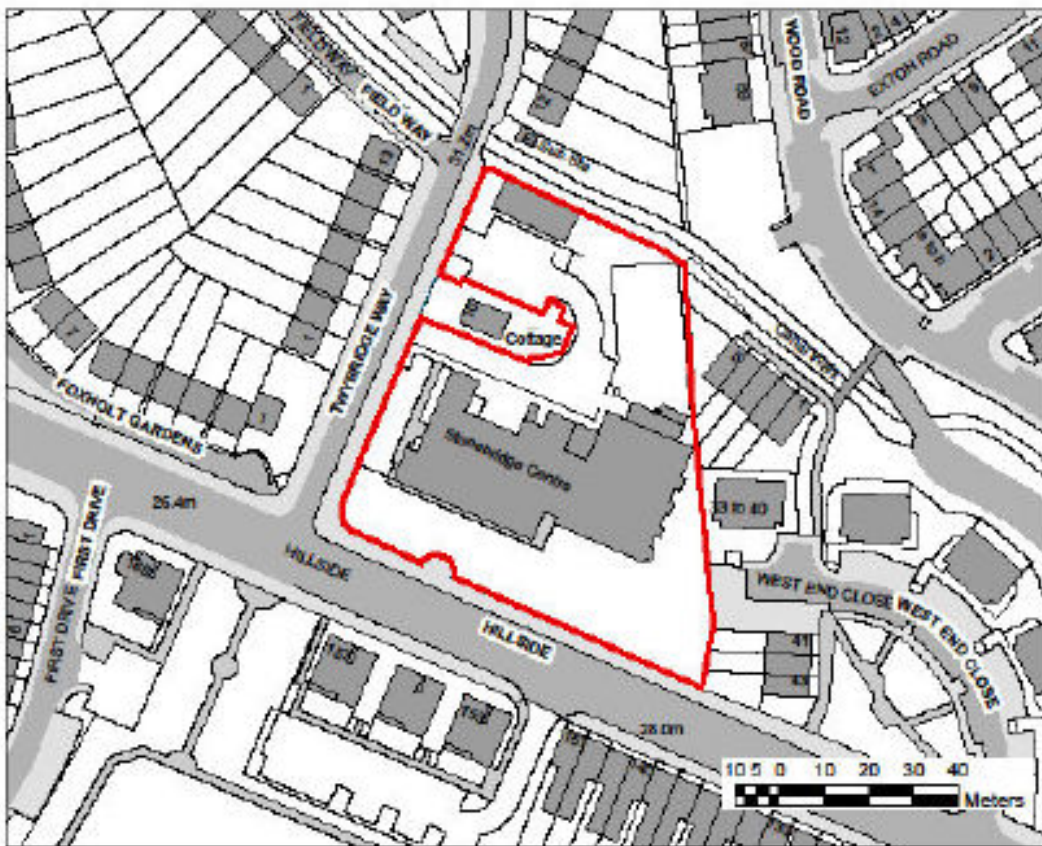
1. The Stonebridge 'Subject Lands'
2. New Proposed Site Plan
3. EXEMPT Occupation Status of Welsh School and Brent Play Association.
Confidential
4. Equality Analysis
5. Consultation Report

Contact Officers

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Stonebridge Day Centre, Twybridge Way, London, NW10 0ST



Brent

Premises shown outlined red.

1:1,250

Plan to stated scale if printed at A4.

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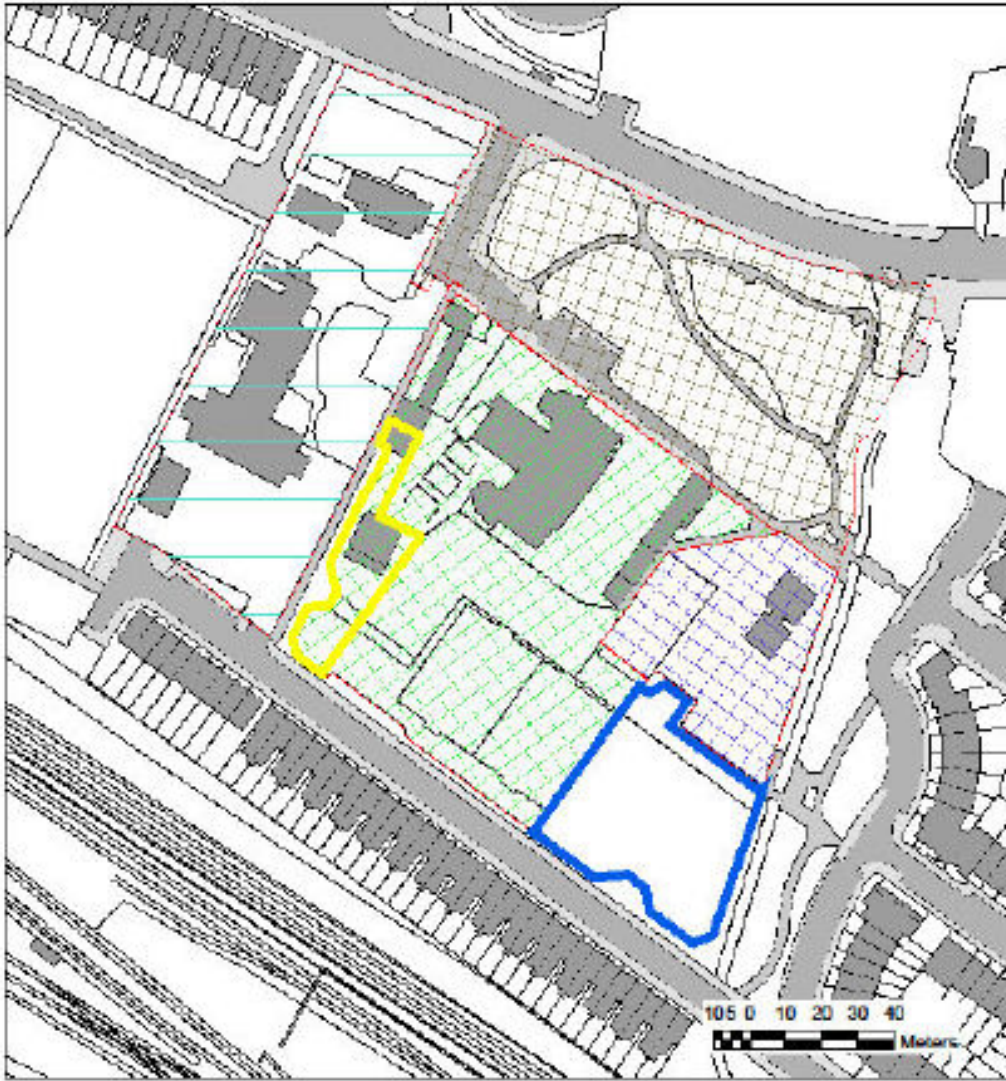
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NORTH





**Stonebridge Primary School,
Shakespeare Avenue,
London, NW10 8NG**

Legend

- SHAKESPEARE AVENUE, STONEBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL
- STONEBRIDGE ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND
- STONEBRIDGE ESTATE OPEN SPACE
- WEBLEY ROAD, OUR LADY OF LOURDES RC PRIMARY
- WASTE LAND
- WELSH SCHOOL

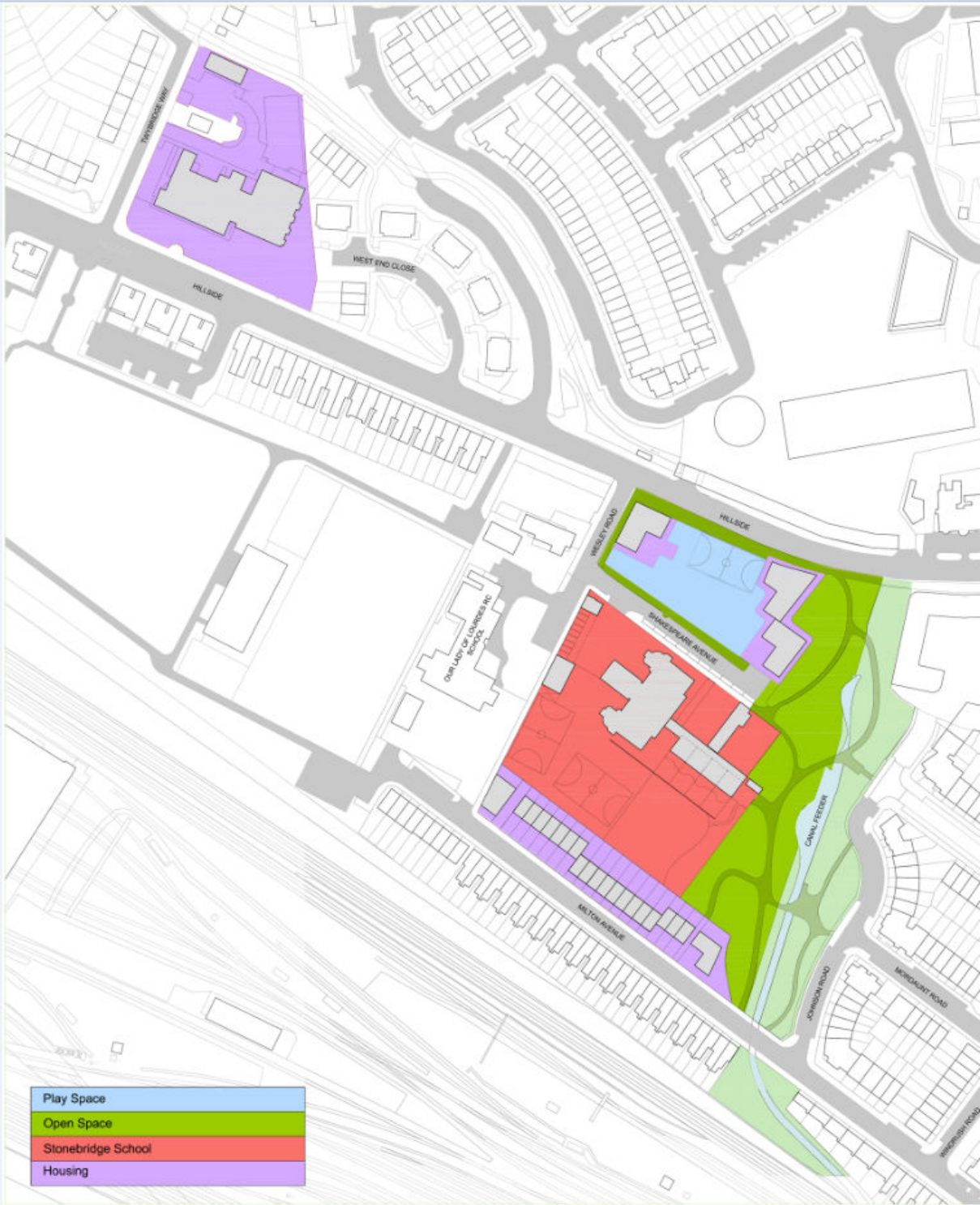
Brent

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NORTH

Appendix 2 – New Proposed Site Plan



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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2012

Equality Analysis Guidance and Form



Brent Council Equality Analysis Form

Please contact the Corporate Diversity team before completing this form. The form is to be used for both predictive Equality Analysis and any reviews of existing policies and practices that may be carried out.

Once you have completed this form, please forward to the Corporate Diversity Team for auditing. Make sure you allow sufficient time for this.

1. Roles and Responsibilities: please refer to stage 1 of the guidance	
Directorate: Regeneration and Growth Service Area: Property and Projects	Person Responsible: Name: Sarah Chaudhry/Jill Rennie Title: Head of Strategic Property/Project Manager Contact No: 0208 937 1705/ 020 8937 2556 Signed: Sarah & Jill
Name of policy: Stonebridge Redevelopment including Stonebridge Primary School Expansion	Date analysis started: 1/12/14 Completion date: 5/12/14 Review date:
Is the policy: New <input type="checkbox"/> Old <input type="checkbox"/>	Auditing Details: Name: Sarah Chaudhry Title: Head of Strategic Property DateContact No:30/01/15 Signed: Sarah
Signing Off Manager: responsible for review and monitoring Name: Richard Barrett Title: Operational Director Property and Projects Date Contact No: 02089371330 Signed:	Decision Maker: Name individual /group/meeting/ committee: Cabinet Date: 23/02/15

2. Brief description of the policy. Describe the aim and purpose of the policy, what needs or duties is it designed to meet? How does it differ from any existing policy or practice in this area?

Please refer to stage 2 of the guidance.

This equality analysis is in respect of Stonebridge Redevelopment proposals.

September 2013

In September 2013, the Executive approved the following redevelopment proposals:

- That the existing Stonebridge Day Centre be redeveloped to provide new housing;
- That the listed Stonebridge Primary School be permanently expanded from two Forms of Entry (2FE) to three Forms of Entry (3FE) accommodating 'bulge classes' currently located at Stonebridge Day Centre – subject to School Governing Body consent;
- That the existing Adventure Playground be re-planned and improved;
- That the Stonebridge Open Space be re-planned and improved; and
- That residential development is bought forward in order to better utilise the lands.

An equality analysis was undertaken and the following impacts were identified:

- Potential **Negative** impacts:
 1. Possible loss of open space.
 2. Proposals may result in the Welsh School closing.
- Potential **Positive** impacts:
 1. Aligning with the Council's core objectives the delivery of social housing although it was noted Stonebridge already has a high concentration of homes with this tenure.
 2. Remodelling and improving the adventure playground positively impacting resident's aged 5 to 19 fostering good relations and reducing anti-Social Behaviour and crime.
 3. The permanent primary school expansion would provide for permanency in an expanded refurbished modern school centre/ Primary school expansion.

Current proposals November 2014

As detailed in the Cabinet report, aligning with Brent corporate strategies the objective is to deliver an expanded 3 forms of entry (FE) primary school at Stonebridge and in doing so securing an amount of 'enabling' residential development, an improved open space and the release of the former day care centre site, resulting in the following:

- Stonebridge Primary School currently has 420 pupils at the main school site and 180 in the Annex building (the former day care centre – temporary 'bulge

classes'). The proposal is to expand the Primary School from 2 FE to 3 creating 210 permanent extra school places. Resulting in 630 Primary School places at Stonebridge Primary School. And new homes on part of the site.

- In order to accommodate the expansion and meet current space guidelines, it is necessary to make use of land currently occupied by the adventure playground and land occupied by the Welsh School for the purposes of the school. Resulting in a loss of the adventure playground and the termination of existing occupation arrangements with Brent Play Association. As per the previous Equality Analysis Officers have been working with the Welsh School to mitigate against the previously identified negative impact from the termination of their occupation of buildings on the Stonebridge School site.
- The open space will be moved from a busy main road and relocated along the southern part of the site to incorporate the canal feeder providing for much improved provision.
- The existing open space would be developed for mixed tenure homes (likely to be private and intermediate due to existing high concentration of social housing in Stonebridge) that will financially contribute to the school expansion, some of the site would include an element of unsupervised children's play space.
- On delivery of the scheme the former day care centre will become vacant and plans are to redevelop this site for new homes.

These proposals went out to public consultation on 6 October which closed on 17 November 2014. Feedback from the proposals informs this equality analysis.

3. Describe how the policy will impact on all of the protected groups:

The Stonebridge 2011 Census Profile is below.

2011 Census: Stonebridge

Population



2001: 15,935

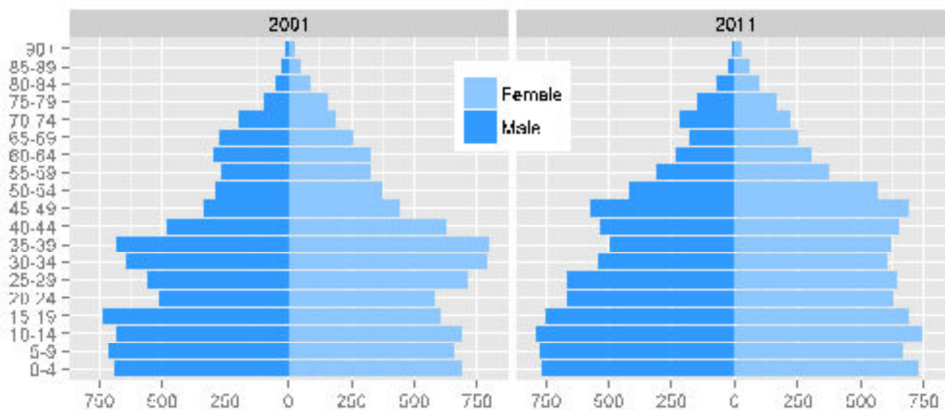
2011: 16,903



Points of note

- Population increased by 6% - third smallest increase
- Most residents aged 5 to 19 years
- Largest number of Bangladeshi
- Most people with a religion
- Fewest people with a Level 4 or higher qualification
- Most social rented households

Population by five-year age band



Tables CS001 / PP04, PP05, PP06

Ethnicity



Tables KS006 / KS201EW

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Some of the proposals will have impacts on the whole of the local community whilst others will have impacts on specific sections of the local community

Stonebridge Primary School Expansion

The demand for school places is as detailed in Brent's School Expansion Strategy 2014/18:

- There is a rising demand for school places. In the Census, between 2001 and 2011 the number of under fives in the borough increased by 37.7%. Brent therefore has one of the youngest populations in the country, with 28.8% of the population being under 18.
- The make up of the Borough is changing. Brent has one of the most diverse populations in London, with over 140 home languages currently recorded among our school children. This diversity is not a fixed picture but rather there are rapid changes to the population.
- There are more people in the borough with limited land. In common with the rest of London, population density in Brent is increasing, land values are high and there are a number of competing pressures for such land as is available.
- High aspirations, often in the context of deprivation. While the proportion of pupils in our schools who qualify for the pupil premium is about average for London, using broader demographic data the borough is in the top 15% of the most deprived areas of the country and using the current means of measurement, around a third of children live in poverty. While adult skills levels are low - 25% have a NVQ level 4, compared to 38.6% across London – both the more established and emerging communities in Brent place a high value on education and rightly see their children's education as a key part of the path to prosperity for their family. The highest performing Brent schools show that social disadvantage is no barrier to high achievement, but the context of high mobility and deprivation can be.

In relation to equality Stonebridge Primary School's Ofsted's inspection report in 2013 rated the school overall as 'good' stating the following:

- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils enter the school roll later than the usual starting points.
- The majority of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speaks English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding provided for looked after children, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils with a parent in the armed forces, is also well above average.

The Stonebridge Primary School expansion will have an overall **positive** impact on age, race and disability as it will provide more permanent school places in a deprived school community. The current bulge classes were always intended as a temporary solution and the proposed expansion will allow of continuity creating provision in an area that has a high number of 5-19 year olds as detailed in the census 2011 results.

In respect of the school expansion the next stages of reporting would comprise a Cabinet decision to approve the expansion of the school following the second stage of statutory consultation and a paper that seeks approval to award the works contract.

Loss of Adventure playground

Brent Council is the registered freehold owner of the Adventure Playground land and buildings, planning applications for this areas date back to 1974, 1975 and 1985 relating to buildings. The newer adventure play equipment has been funded by the Big Lottery fund, the grant agreement is in the name of Brent Council. Brent Play Association (BPA)'s occupy the adventure playground for which Brent receives no rent. The occupation is a historic arrangement Officers are told, but don't really know, that previously Brent Council operated the adventure playground service which was later taken on by BPA.

Termination of existing occupation arrangement with BPA

The BPA occupies the Brent owned Adventure Playground and as part of this arrangement manages and maintains the area, this is a historic arrangement for which Brent receives not rent.

BPA is a registered charity (Registered Charity No. 1085110). Companies House records inform BPA were incorporated in 11 November 1999. BPA's accounts for the year end 31 March 2013 state their objective and service at Stonebridge to provide the following:

- Objectives. "The charity's object and it's principal activity continues to be that of providing and supporting facilities within the London Borough of Brent and surrounding areas for the daily care, play, recreation and education of children and young people seven days per week and school holidays and also provide day respite and learning opportunities for children and young people with special needs up to the age of 18 years."
- Stonebridge Adventure Playground. "The charity currently runs an all-year-round club in the Stonebridge Adventure Centre, on behalf of Brent Council. It offers integrated facilities for children and young people with special needs, 'state of the art' Adventure Playground structures, and indoor facilities, which include an Art and Craft room, TV and video room, main hall and kitchen."

BPA's accounts mention Brent's Play Strategy, a document which was produced for the period 2005-8, in this document BPA are mentioned as follows: "the biggest single provider is Brent Play Association - a charitable company that runs 9 sites based in schools, and an after school club and play scheme at Stonebridge Centre", the strategy is now out of date.

The BPA service at Stonebridge is not Ofsted registered. The BPA services at the Stonebridge Adventure Playground run from Monday to Friday during term time, from 2pm to 7pm, on Saturdays from 11am to 4pm and during School Holidays from 7am to 6pm. The core age range is 5 to 13 year old young people and is a free service at point of entry.

BPA receives grant funding of £118,000 from Brent in 2014/15. The BPA March 2013 accounts highlight the Stonebridge free facility as a one off, funded primarily by Brent. BPA's accounts show that for the year ending 31 March 2013, the grant received totalled £315,304 (£211,304 67% from Brent), equating to 95.7% of the BPA's total income.

A Brent Cabinet report 15 December 2014 from the Chief Finance Officer on the Budget, as per recommendations from the Strategic Director, Children and Young People proposes:

“To cease contract for play provision with the Stonebridge Adventure Playground, this funding to BPA provides after school and holiday provision for children at the SAP which is free to the families at point of delivery and is unique to this area. It is proposed to cease this funding as it is no longer sustainable or justifiable in the current financial climate”.

The Brent Cabinet forward plan / agenda for the meeting on 23 February 2015 includes a paper from the Strategic Director of Children and Young people on the proposed BPA funding cuts and an equality analysis in respect of the service and service users, this Equality Analysis will only focus on accommodation issues.

In respect of the physical overall redevelopment plan, the loss of adventure playground will **negatively** impact BPA and its staff, BPA service users children and their families. Due to the local make up (as per 2011 census data), a higher than average 5-19 year old population in an area which comprises a high concentration of socially rented homes that suggest deprivation, BPA services are likely to be in demand.

Termination of existing occupation arrangements with the London Welsh School

Officers understand the Welsh School's occupation was agreed directly with Stonebridge School. A below market rent is paid to Stonebridge School - a position which Council Officers have been looking to regularise for some time.

Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain, the Welsh School, London, Dfe registration number: 304/605, unique reference number: 101573 were inspected on 17-18 May 2012. The report informs the school was established in 1958. It is a non selective, co educational independent day school for pupils between the ages of four and eleven. The school is run by a board of directors on behalf of the Welsh School Trust and aims to provide 'bilingual Welsh education outside of Wales'. The school has a satisfactory Ofsted rating. As at the inspection date there were 34 pupils on roll, of whom five were part time. It is understood that only a handful of students are from Brent.

There are no statistics to identify Welsh speakers in the borough, but the 2011 census had 1108 people in Brent who identified themselves as being born in Wales, down from 1970 in 2001. It is understood that the Welsh School currently has around 30 children. The pupils come from parental backgrounds including

Mexico, Pakistan, India, Cayman Islands, Spain, Chile, and from numerous other backgrounds from the Indian subcontinent and Afro Caribbean nations.

In line with the previous Executive approval to Stonebridge redevelopment plans and the equality analysis which identified a negative impact on the Welsh School. Officers have been working with the school to find a new home within the borough. The Welsh School have agreed to use the former Bowling Green Pavilion in King Edward VII Park in Wembley as a new location. Heads of terms have been issued detailing key terms. In order to allow the Welsh school to use the pavilion a planning application is required and this has been submitted by the Welsh School. Brent has submitted an application to the Fields in Trust, who needs to agree to the school using the former Bowling Green Pavilion in King Edward VII Park, Wembley.

Without new premises, the proposal will have a negative impact on the Welsh language speakers. If the planning application and fields in trust application are successful this will provide a **positive** impact as it would give the school future stability. Due to the local make up (as per 2011 census data), a higher than average 5-19 year old population in an area which comprises a high concentration of socially rented homes suggesting deprivation, the Welsh School's school places are likely to be in demand but inaccessible to local people because of school fees.

Open Space

Brent Park strategy 2010-15, notes the following in respect of Stonebridge:

- Spatial deficiencies in the public open space in Brent by type, under district parks; Stonebridge is listed, as it is under local parks.
- Fear of crime and poor facilities are named as a main barrier to entering parks (interestingly, among a sample of about a hundred young people interviewed as part of the Brent youth Parliament's crime and safety survey 10% rated the parks after dark as 'the most dangerous places in Brent' compared to 21% for Stonebridge).
- In respect of satisfaction with parks and open space the average satisfaction level is 82% Stonebridge was below the average with a range between 50% - 63%.

The current open space is difficult to manage, maintain and prone to attracting antisocial behaviour, site levels make the area difficult for the Parks service to maintain as it is uneven to mow.

The proposal involves building on part of the current open space and reprovision along the canal feeder, resulting in some loss of trees. The proposals will provide for an improved area of open space, along the canal feeder, between the school and the housing off Johnson Road and would be to the benefit of the local community.

The open space facility improvements should have a **positive** impact they will aim to reduce the fear of crime, positively impacting 'disability' as the current open space is quite uneven. The loss of trees will be compensated by planting new

ones (subject to planning requirements). The negative impacts of building new homes on the open space are covered below.

The former day centre site & housing

On 21 July 2014 Brent's Cabinet approved the Housing Strategy 2014-19, detailed the following objectives:

1. To significantly increase the supply of affordable housing. To significantly increase the capacity to meet housing needs and support social mobility through the provision of 5,000 affordable rent and low cost home ownership properties by 2019.
2. To ensure that at least 35% of new general needs affordable rented housing is 3 bedroom or larger, to align with demand profile. To halve severe overcrowding in the social housing sector by 2019.
3. The development of 1000 build to rent homes by 2019 of which at least 30% are affordable to those on lower incomes.
4. To provide an additional 200 extra-care and specialist supported housing units by 2016 to widen housing options and reduce reliance on residential care.

Directly contributing towards these objectives the Stonebridge redevelopment proposals will provide:

1. The redevelopment proposes to build c.140 homes across the three sites, which will be a mix of flats and terraced housing, which will include affordable housing. At this time the mix of housing is not known but the Council will look to provide housing inline with planning policy of 50% where possible, although the form of affordable housing may need to be carefully considered bearing in mind the local housing make as detailed below. Any homes that are built as affordable will need to comply with the London Mayors Housing Design Guide.
2. Stonebridge has 49.3% of homes which are of "Flat, maisonette or apartment: Purpose-built block of flats or tenement" compared with the borough average of 33%, so a development which includes terraced housing will add to the mix. The proposal includes provision for homes that are 3 bedrooms.
3. Stonebridge currently has 65.2% of households who socially rent compared with the borough average of 24.1%. 15.8% who privately rent compared with the borough average of 30% and 19% who own their own home compared with the borough average of 44.4%. There is therefore an argument that new homes in Stonebridge should aim to rebalance the current profile, with market rented homes and homes for sales, perhaps shared ownership or reduced equity.

The new homes at Stonebridge will provide an overall **positive** impact as it will directly contribute towards meeting the objectives in the housing strategy 2014-19, which has an overall positive impact on equality. Some of the homes will be affordable, there is an argument and as per the census 2011 details, that suggest due to current concentration of social housing in Stonebridge, sales or market rent

homes may provide for more balanced local housing market.

Overall

The table below sets out assets and the impact as reported to Executive in September 2013 and the expected impact of revised proposals in January 2015.

Area/ Organisation	September 2013	February 2015
Stonebridge School	Positive	Positive
Adventure Playground	Positive	See BPA
Brent Play Association (BPA)	-	Negative
The London Welsh School	Negative	Positive
Open Space	Negative	Positive
Former day centre site & housing	Positive	Positive

Please give details of the evidence you have used:

- 2011 Census data;
- Brent's School Expansion Strategy 2014-18;
- Stonebridge Primary School Ofsted inspection report in 2013;
- Planning applications records;
- Charity Commission records;
- Companies House records;
- Brent Play Association accounts for the year end 31 March 2013;
- Brent's Play Strategy 2005-8;
- Brent Cabinet forward plan / agenda for the meeting on 26 January 2015;
- Brent Cabinet report 15 December 2014 from the Chief Finance Officer on the Budget;
- Dfe records;
- The Welsh School Ofsted inspection report latest;
- Brent Park strategy 2010-15; and
- 21 July 2014 Brent Cabinet approved Housing Strategy 2014-19.

4. Describe how the policy will impact on the Council's duty to have due regard to the need to:

(a) Eliminate discrimination (including indirect discrimination), harassment and victimisation;

Stonebridge Primary School Expansion

Local education authorities must find a free school place for all children who are of 'compulsory school age'. If a child of compulsory school age can not receive education at school the local education authority has a duty to provide suitable education in some other way, for example, home tuition. The duty of the local authority to provide full time education applies to all pupils including those who are temporarily living in the area for long enough to attend school, have come from abroad and have special educational needs. Local authorities as public bodies have a legal right responsibility not to discriminate and to promote equality of opportunity. Provision of permanent school places in an expanded Stonebridge

Primary School will ensure the council is taking steps to ensure a free school place for all children who are of 'compulsory school age' are provided an education. The school expansion will have an overall positive impact in respect of eliminating discrimination.

Loss of Adventure playground

Please see the BPA below.

Termination of existing occupation arrangement with BPA

The service provided at the Adventure Playground is an optional service which parents/guardians may or may not choose to access. The supervised nature of the provision it could be argued does help with eliminating harassment and victimisation as it provides a place where young people can engage in useful activities. The free at point of entry service allows users to access services overcoming the cost barrier in respect of other nearby provision, which in the context of Brent is a one off service for both Brent and BPA – inadvertently disadvantaging similar services users in other Brent locations.

In the context of redevelopment proposals, the corporate order of priority is 1. The delivery of school places and 2. new homes, if in this context the adventure playground is negatively impacted mitigation options in respect of this provision will need to be considered subject to it not compromising the above priorities.

Termination of existing occupation arrangements with the London Welsh School

Although independent see comments in respect of school place provision and rights of children to access education as per the United Nations convention on the rights of the child. This schooling offer provides an educational solution, although it is accepted it is not accessible for the mainstream as it is fee paying and due to language requirement. If the mitigation plan, to relocate the Welsh School is successfully implemented this school provision may help eliminate discrimination and provide access for children to education.

Open Space

Brent Park Strategy 2010-15 notes "fear of crime and poor facilities are named as a main barrier to entering parks (interestingly, among a sample of about a hundred young people interviewed as part of the Brent youth Parliament's crime and safety survey 10% rated the parks after dark as 'the most dangerous places in Brent' compared to 21% for Stonebridge)".

The neighbourhood crime league table for October 2014 ranked Stonebridge as 84 out of 114 areas, sitting somewhere in the middle in respect of reported crimes and of the 186 crimes reported 41 were violence related equating to 22%. (note these are for the Stonebridge area on the UK CrimeStats website)

The proposals will improve the current open space provision, increasing accessibility, visibility and lighting in order to reduce the fear of crime, providing a

benefit for all the community.

The Former Day Centre & Housing

As highlighted in the Cabinet approved Housing Strategy in July 2014. Specific to this question the following text applies: ' the strategy aims to ensure that policy and service delivery are centred on identified need and demand, based on an analysis of local market conditions and demographics, including the specific needs of protected groups.' These proposals should help households that need housing to access new provision.

(b) Advance equality of opportunity;

In line with Brent public sector duty to eliminate both discrimination and ensure equality of opportunity the comments as per section (a) apply.

(c) Foster good relations

As identified as negative in the previous Equality Analysis (September 2013), Officers have worked with the Welsh School in order to assist with an alternation solution to their accommodation needs.

As identified in this Equality Analysis as a negative, Officers will be working with the Brent Play Association to see if an accommodation mitigation option can be agreed.

5. What engagement activity did you carry out as part of your assessment? Please refer to stage 3 of the guidance.

i. Who did you engage with?

- Leaflets were delivered to properties with 0.5 miles of the site
- Leaflets were provided to all pupils of Stonebridge Primary School
- Leaflets were provided to Brent Play Association (the organisation who manages the Adventure Playground), the Welsh School and Our Lady of Lourdes School
- The website had full details of the consultation
- Consultation information was provided to the local press

The link to the website consultation was also sent to the following organisation:

- Stonebridge Primary School
- All maintained schools and Academies in Brent
- Brent Council - key officers
- Westminster Diocesan Education Service
- London Diocesan Board for Schools
- London Borough of Ealing
- London Borough of Barnet

- London Borough of Camden
- London Borough of Harrow
- London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
- London Borough of Westminster
- Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
- Local Resident Associations
- All Councillors
- Local Member of Parliament
- All Brent Customer Service Shops
- All Brent Libraries
- All Brent Children Centres
- Sport England
- Secretary of State, School Organisation Unit
- Local private nurseries
- Any trade unions who represent staff of Stonebridge Primary School
- Representatives of main trade unions in Brent
- Early Years and Family Support Service
- Early Years Quality and Improvement Team
- Parent and Toddler groups in the area
- Victorian Society
- English Heritage
- Hyde Housing
- Welsh School
- Our Lady of Lourdes

ii. What methods did you use?

The consultation ran from Monday 6th October to Monday 17th November. A consultation leaflet was produced which included details on the proposals and sought views through two open questions. A website was also created which had the consultation information and an on-line consultation response portal. 5 consultation events were held.

The consultation leaflet and on-line consultation included the same two open questions asked:

1. Please tell us what you like about the proposals and why?
2. Please tell us what you would like changed and why?

Ahead of the start of the formal consultation, Brent Play Association started a campaign to save the Adventure Playground. This received local press coverage and was on the front page of The Brent and Kilburn Times for a number of weeks, as such there was a lot of coverage in the media of the proposals.

A drop box for completed leaflets was left at The Hub, Hillside for the duration of the consultation event.

On Friday 7th November officers delivered further leaflets to Fawood Children's Centre, the Hub, Hillside reception, Brent START Stonebridge, Hillside Primary Care Centre and St Michael's nursery.

iii. What did you find out?

This summarises all the above different consultation responses received, with the exception of the petition which is dealt with separately.

The Council distributed around 6,700 leaflets, around 60 individuals attended consultation events (excluding Brent Connects which was not exclusively for this consultation) and we received 90 written submissions (papers, on line and 17 A4 signed standard documents). Most of the written responses were from local people and around 1/3 from people who did not live in Brent. The Council also received one response on the phone ahead of the start of the consultation.

The majority of responses focused on the loss of the Adventure Playground and the desire to keep this provision. A number of responses only discussed the Adventure Playground proposals, with many of these respondents saying they didn't like anything about the proposal. The highlights of the responses are detailed below:

Stonebridge Primary School Expansion

- That the school expansion should be re planned so not to be at the expense of the Adventure Playground or to leave the school on two sites.
- Due to the school having the annexe site it was felt that the school expansion was only providing a further 30 places.
- There was a general understanding for the need for school places.
- There were respondents who welcomed the school being on one site.

Loss of Adventure Playground

- The value of play and play facilities (including the indoor space).
- Respondents focused on the BPA service.

Termination of existing occupation arrangement with BPA

- Importance of the safe and supervised nature of the provision.
- Importance of the facility in terms of childcare – including after school and summer school provision.
- As a place for children to go without which they could partake in anti-social behaviour/crime.
- The facility being a free provision.

Termination of existing occupation arrangements with the London Welsh School

- There were limited responses on the Welsh School.
- Responses questioned what the future of the Welsh School would be.

Open Space

- People wanted to see the open space improved.

- The proposed open space and improvements to the canal feeder were welcomed.
- Residents did not want to see a loss of open space or trees.

Stonebridge Former Day Centre & Housing

- There was a mixed response to whether there should be more housing.
- A number of respondents did not want to see more housing, especially on the current open space site and the Milton Avenue site.
- For those who did wish to see more housing there was a desire for houses as opposed to flats and for the homes to be affordable.
- There was a desire for no high rises and for good design.

Other Issues

- Generally the new play space was unsupported as it was seen as unsafe; as it was by a road and unsupervised.
- Traffic and parking issues were raised in regards to the needs to address current provision and the impact of the proposals.
- The proposals need to ensure community cohesion.

A detailed consultation analysis is appended to this report.

Equalities information is only available as part of the leaflet/online responses (which had 66 returns). Where it states “not known” this is where the respondent either identified that they would prefer not to say or who did not put a response for the question.

The census data (for the Stonebridge ward) from 2011 is also included:

Age

The majority of respondents 40.9% (17) were aged 35-54. The lowest response was from people aged 16-24 1.5% (1). With 10.6% between the age of 0-15 (7). 28.8% (19) of respondent’s ages were not known.

Age Census 2011:

0-4:	8.86% (1,498)
5-19:	26.11% (4,413)
20-34:	22.15% (3,744)
35-49:	21.10% (3,566)
50-64:	13.10% (2,215)
65+:	8.68% (1,467)

As most the responses were in respect of BPA the age profile is as expected comprising adults 35-54 (we assume but don’t really know parents / guardians and carers) and young people 0-15.

Health & disability

In response to the question – “Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?” 10.6 %(7) said yes. With 50% (33) saying no. The remainder is not known.

Health & disability census 2011:

Day-to-day activities limited a lot: 8.42% (1,423)

Day-to-day activities limited: 8.09% (1,368)

Day to day not limited: 83.49% (14,112)

The 10.6% response from people with health problems or disabilities compares well with census 2011 responses with 16.51% saying their day to day activities were with limited a lot or limited.

Sex

The majority of respondents were female 48.5% (32). 19.7% (13) were male. And 31.8% not known.

Sex census 2011:

Male: 48.35% (8,173)

Female: 51.65% (8,730)

We assume, but don't really know, that the comparatively low level of engagement in the survey by men may reflect current household child caring arrangements.

Gender

When asked if respondents gender identify is the same as the gender at birth. 54.5 %(36) said yes with 45.5% (30) not known.

Ethnicity

The majority 31.8% (21) were black. 22.7% (15) white. 4.5% (3) mixed. 4.5% (3) other. And 0% Asian. 36.4% (24) is not known.

Ethnicity census 2011:

Asian: 16.97% (2,868)

Black: 47.17% (7,973)

Mixed: 6.33% (1,070)

White: 23.50% (3,973)

Other: 6.03% (1,019)

No responses from the Asian does not align with the census data and a plan on how to better engage is part of the community needs to be considered as part of future consultation. As a large number of responses focused on the adventure playground, as the number of Asian people using the BPA service in Stonebridge is low, the consultation responses could be indicative of this.

Sexual orientation

48.5% (32) were heterosexual/straight, with 50% (33) not known 1.5% (1) was bisexual.

Census 2011:

This question was not included in the census

Religion or belief

30.3% (20) were Christian. 18.2% (12) had no religious belief. 42.4% (28) were not known. 6.1% (4) were Muslim. 1.5% (1) was Jewish. 1.5% (1) was agnostic. And 0% was Hindu and Sikh.

Religion 2011 census:

Buddhist:	0.44% (74)
Christian:	49.86% (8,436)
Hindu:	6.32% (1,069)
Jain:	0.10% (17)
Jewish:	0.17% (29)
Muslim:	28.20% (4,772)
Sikh:	0.16% (27)
Other religion:	0.50% (84)
No religion:	6.72% (1,137)
Religion not stated:	7.54% (1,275)

As per the 2011 census responses, the largest religious communities in Stonebridge Park are Christians (49.9%) and Muslims (28.2%), when compared with survey respondents it suggests a very low response rate from the Muslim community.

iv. How have you used the information gathered?

We have used feedback to inform our future plans as detailed in the section below.

v. How has it affected your policy?

Where negative impacts have been identified, we have used the information to develop mitigation options.

Stonebridge Primary School Expansion

Officers have asked the project architects to consider if the school expansion could be delivered with the adventure playground in situ – see below ‘adventure playground’.

Loss of Adventure Playground

Accommodation based solutions:

- Redesign the school expansion plans to see if at all possible the adventure

playground can stay put, as above. The plan produced by the architect's shows a severely compromised open space solution which would need to be measured to ensure no loss of area. Officers have discussed the plan with BPA and the initial feedback is that the proposals are unsuitable in the main.

- To work with the adjoining land owner Hyde Housing Association – Hillside Housing Trust considering options on their land.
- Or provision for alternative play or adventure equipment to form part of redevelopment (unsupervised provision).

Termination of existing occupation arrangement with BPA

As per section 3. The Brent Cabinet forward plan / agenda for the meeting on 26 January 2015 includes a paper from the Strategic Director of Children and Young people on the proposed BPA funding cuts and an equality analysis in respect of the service and service users. Only if the service user's mitigation plan requires accommodation for BPA will these accommodation solutions be developed.

Termination of existing occupation arrangements with the London Welsh School

We will continue to work through the previously identified mitigation plan aiming to work with the school in delivering a relocation strategy.

Open space

Where there is a loss of trees we, we expect as part of the planning process for any tree loss to be mitigated by planting new ones. We will work through the detailed at planning application stage.

The Former Day Centre Site and Housing

As per Brent's housing strategy we will look to provide a mix of both homes for sale and rent including affordable. The detailed will become clearer as the proposals go through the planning process.

Other issues

Officers will work with planning and sports and parks to identify other alternative solutions to the proposed play provision.

6. Have you identified a negative impact on any protected group, or identified any unmet needs/requirements that affect specific protected groups? If so, explain what actions you have undertaken, including consideration of any alternative proposals, to lessen or mitigate against this impact.

Outcome of public consultation

In respect of consultation overall, in future Officers will look to find ways in which to better engage with all sections of the community in particular Asian and Muslim

households who although forming a reasonable proportion of the Stonebridge community in the 2011 census, no or low responses were forthcoming from them.

Loss of Adventure Playground

Accommodation based solutions:

- Redesign the school expansion plans to see if at all possible the adventure playground can stay put, as above. The plan produced by the architect's shows a severely compromised open space solution which would need to be measured to ensure no loss of area. Officers have discussed the plan with BPA and the initial feedback is that the proposals are unsuitable in the main.
- To work with the adjoining land owner Hyde Housing Association – Hillside Housing Trust considering options on their land, principle has been discussed detail needs to be worked through.

Termination of existing occupation arrangement with BPA

As per section 3. The Brent Cabinet forward plan / agenda for the meeting on 23 February 2015 includes a paper from the Strategic Director of Children and Young people on the proposed BPA funding cuts and an equality analysis in respect of the service and service users. Only if the service user's mitigation plan requires accommodation for BPA will these accommodation solutions be developed.

Please give details of the evidence you have used:

- 2011 Census data;
- Brent's School Expansion Strategy 2014-18;
- Stonebridge Primary School Ofsted inspection report in 2013;
- Planning applications records;
- Charity Commission records;
- Companies House records;
- Brent Play Association accounts for the year end 31 March 2013;
- Brent's Play Strategy 2005-8;
- Brent Cabinet forward plan / agenda for the meeting on 26 January 2015;
- Brent Cabinet report 15 December 2014 from the Chief Finance Officer on the Budget;
- Dfe records;
- The Welsh School Ofsted inspection report latest;
- Brent Park strategy 2010-15;
- 21 July 2014 Brent Cabinet approved Housing Strategy 2014-19;
- Metropolitan Police neighbourhood crime league tables;
- Stonebridge Redevelopment including Primary School Expansion consultation leaflet and outcomes; and
- Census 2011 data.

7. Analysis summary

Please tick boxes to summarise the findings of your analysis.

Protected Group	Positive impact	Adverse impact	Neutral
Age		X	
Disability			X
Gender re-assignment			X
Marriage and civil partnership			X
Pregnancy and maternity	X		
Race		X	
Religion or belief			X
Sex			X
Sexual orientation			X

8. The Findings of your Analysis

Please complete whichever of the following sections is appropriate (one only). Please refer to stage 4 of the guidance.

No major change

Your analysis demonstrates that:

- *The policy is lawful*
- *The evidence shows no potential for direct or indirect discrimination*
- *You have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.*

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion and the information that you used to make this decision.

Adjust the policy

This may involve making changes to the policy to remove barriers or to better advance equality. It can mean introducing measures to mitigate the potential adverse effect on a particular protected group(s).

Remember that it is lawful under the Equality Act to treat people differently in some circumstances, where there is a need for it. It is both lawful and a requirement of the public sector equality duty to consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary.

If you have identified mitigating measures that would remove a negative impact, please detail those measures below.

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion, the information that you used to make this decision and how you plan to adjust the policy.

On 16 September 2013, the Executive approved the principles of redevelopment. The proposals included the relocation or termination of arrangements with the Welsh School, which was a negative which Officers have been looking to mitigation, the council in its active discussions Welsh School and a relocation plan has been agreed in principle subject to planning consent and Fields in Trust approval.

In respect of currently proposals, the loss of adventure playground will negatively impact BPA and its staff, BPA service users (children and their families). Due to the local make up (as per 2011 census data) which comprises a higher than average 5-19 year old population, in an area which comprises a high concentration of socially rented homes which suggest deprivation, means that BPA services are likely to be in demand.

The most up-to date plans result in the following impacts:

Area	September 2013	February 2015
Stonebridge School	Positive	Positive
Adventure Playground	Positive	Negative
Open Space	Negative	Positive
The former day centre site & housing	Positive	Positive
Welsh School	Negative	Positive

Public consultation was undertaken on current proposals resulting in a well publicised campaign to save the playground and a petition being submitted to the Council, the majority of 60 attendees at consultation events and 90 of the paper responses focused on keeping the adventure playground provision.

To mitigate against this negative impact the following accommodation based solutions could be developed:

- Redesign the school expansion plans to see if at all possible the adventure playground can stay put, as above. The plan produced by the architect's shows a severely compromised open space solution which would need to be measured to ensure no loss of area. Officers have discussed the plan with BPA and the initial feedback is that the proposals are unsuitable in the main.
- To work with the adjoining land owner Hyde Housing Association – Hillside Housing Trust considering options on their land, principle has been discussed detail needs to be worked through.

In respect of the BPA service, the December 2014 Cabinet report from the Chief finance officer proposed funding cuts. The Brent Cabinet forward plan / agenda for the meeting on 23 February 2015 includes a paper from the Strategic Director of Children and Young people on the proposed funding cuts including an equality analysis and mitigation plan. Only if the service's mitigation plan requires accommodation for BPA will accommodation solutions be developed.

In respect of consultation overall, in future Officers will look to find ways in

which to better engage with all sections of the community in particular Asian households who although forming a reasonable proportion 17% of the local community in the 2011 census, no responses were forthcoming from them.

All other outcomes of consultation will be further developed as proposals move through planning, particular to the open space we will work with colleagues in sports and parks to develop an alternative solution to the play space which the public said they did not like.

We recognise the mitigations may not fully mitigate all negative impacts and that some may not work for various reasons. However due to ongoing demand for school places and homes, the recommendation is to proceed as proposed. Leaving the adventure playground in situ would compromise the overall development impact.

Continue the policy

This means adopting your proposals, despite any adverse effect or missed opportunities to advance equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not amount to unlawfully discrimination, either direct or indirect discrimination.

In cases where you believe discrimination is not unlawful because it is objectively justified, it is particularly important that you record what the objective justification is for continuing the policy, and how you reached this decision.

Explain the countervailing factors that outweigh any adverse effects on equality as set out above:

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion and the information that you used to make this decision:

We recognise the mitigations may not fully mitigate all negative impacts and that some may not work for various reasons, or that they may not be deemed necessary. Due to ongoing demand for school places and homes (as set out in section 3), the recommendation is to proceed as proposed. Leaving the adventure playground in situ would compromise the overall development impact.

Stop and remove the policy

If there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, and if the policy is not justified by countervailing factors, you should consider stopping the policy altogether. If a policy shows unlawful discrimination it must be removed or changed.

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion and the information that you used to make this decision.

9. Monitoring and review

Please provide details of how you intend to monitor the policy in the future. Please refer to stage 7 of the guidance.

As a result of the consultation, revised project outcomes are as follows:

1. The revised principles of redevelopment:
 - (i) That the former Stonebridge Day Centre site - currently the Stonebridge Primary School Annex (a temporary use) and Milton Avenue be re-planned to provide new homes;
 - (ii) That Stonebridge Primary School be expanded from 2 Forms of Entry to 3 Forms of Entry;
 - (iii) That in respect of the Adventure Playground the land be re-planned to form part of the expanded Primary School;
 - (iv) That the Open Space is re-planned to provide an equivalent area, of improved quality, running alongside the existing canal feeder;
 - (v) That the existing open space at the frontage of the site be re-planned for housing;
 - (vi) That the School building currently let to the Welsh School revert back to the primary School; and
 - (vii) That an alternative proposal in respect of play provision be developed on site.
2. That formal statutory consultation on the proposed expansion of Stonebridge Primary School from 2 Forms of Entry to 3 Forms of Entry is undertaken, subject to approval of the school's Governing Body to proceed to this stage on the basis of the proposals approved by the Cabinet as described in this report.
3. That existing occupation arrangement (as per Confidential Appendix 3) with Brent Play Association are terminated and that the mitigation plan included within the Diversity Implications section of this report is implemented.
4. That existing occupation arrangement (as per Confidential Appendix 3) with Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain, the Welsh School are terminated and that the relocation plan is progressed.

These outcomes will form part of a detailed project delivery plan, which will be monitored to ensure progress.

10. Action plan and outcomes

At Brent, we want to make sure that our equality monitoring and analysis results in positive outcomes for our colleagues and customers.

Use the table below to record any actions we plan to take to address inequality, barriers or opportunities identified in this analysis.

Action	By when	Lead officer	Desired outcome	Date completed	Actual outcome
Provision of new homes at the former		Jill Rennie	Aligning with Brent's Housing Strategy 2014-		

day centre site and existing open space.			19 the provision of new homes to meet rising demand.		
<p>Expansion of Stonebridge Primary School from 2 FE to 3.</p> <p>Formal statutory consultation on the proposed expansion.</p> <p>The adventure playground to form part of the school.</p> <p>That existing occupation arrangement with Brent Play Association are terminated and that the mitigation is implemented.</p> <p>The buildings occupied by the Welsh School revert back to Stonebridge Primary School.</p> <p>That existing occupation arrangement with the Welsh School are</p>		<p>Simon Emma Sweeney (Expansion)</p> <p>Jill Rennie (Welsh School & redevelopment)</p> <p>Simon Topping (BPA)</p>	<p>Aligning with Brent's School Expansion Strategy 2014-18 and Stonebridge Census 2011 data which shows a higher than average number of 5-19 year olds, the project of new school places to meet rising demand.</p> <p>Provision of new school places that are designed to align with current school building space space guidelines.</p>		

terminated and that the relocation plan is progressed.					
Open Space is re-planned to provide an equivalent area, of improved quality, running alongside the existing canal feeder.		Jill Rennie	Open space that is accessible, visible, with improved lighting to reduce the fear of crime, providing a benefit for all the community.		
That an alternative proposal in respect of play provision be developed on site.		Jill Rennie	An improved play/adventure offer in response to the outcome of public consultation.		

Please forward to the Corporate Diversity Team for auditing.

The aim of this guidance is to support the Equality Analysis (EA) process and to ensure that Brent Council meets its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Before undertaking the analysis there are three key things to remember:

- It is very important to keep detailed records of every aspect of the process. In particular you must be able to show a clear link between all of your decisions and recommendations and the evidence you have gathered.
- There are other people in the council and in your own department who have done this before and can offer help and support.
- The Diversity and Consultation teams are there to advise you.

The Equality Act 2010

As a Public Authority, Brent Council is required to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) contained in the Equality Act 2010. These duties require Brent Council to have 'due regard' to the need to

- Eliminate discrimination, be it direct or indirect discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and others who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it

The equality duty covers:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership (direct discrimination only)
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex (formally known as gender)
- Sexual orientation

What is equality analysis?

Equality Analysis is core to policy development and decision making and is an essential tool in providing good services. Its purpose is to allow the decision maker to answer two main questions.

- Could the policy have a negative impact on one or more protected groups and therefore create or increase existing inequalities?
- Could the policy have a positive impact on one or more protected groups by reducing or eliminating existing or anticipated inequalities?

What should be analysed?

Due consideration of the need for an Equality Analysis should be addressed in relation to all policies, practices, projects, activities and decisions, existing and new. There will be some which have no equalities considerations, but many will. Where an

EA is undertaken, some policies are considered a higher risk than others and will require more time and resources because of their significance. This would include:

- Policies affecting a vulnerable group such as young people, the elderly and people with a disability
- Policies related to elective services such as Sports Centres or Libraries
- High profile services
- Policies involving the withdrawal of services
- Policies involving significant reductions in funding or services
- Policies that affect large groups of people
- Policies that relate to politically sensitive issues

It can sometimes be difficult to identify which policies are more sensitive. If you are in doubt seek advice from a more senior officer or the Diversity Team.

When should equality analysis be done?

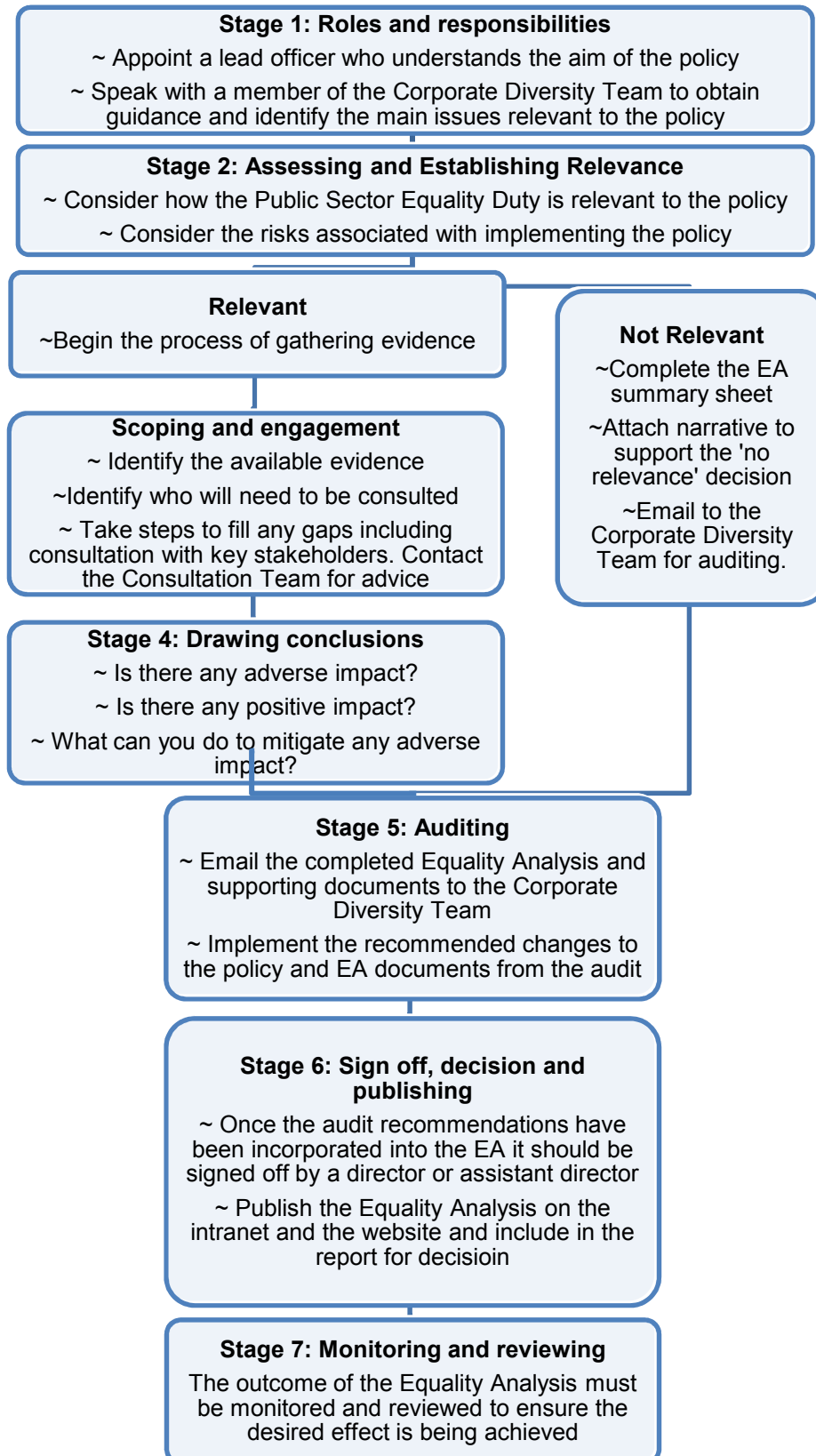
The EA must be completed before the policy is sent to the decision maker but should be carried out at the earliest possible stage. The advantage of starting early is that the equalities data informs and shapes the policy as it develops and progresses and this allows more time to address issues of inequality. You should also bear in mind that several changes may be happening at the same time. This would mean ensuring that there is sufficient relevant information to understand the cumulative effect of all of these decisions.

Positive action

Not all policies can be expected to benefit all groups equally, particularly if they are targeted at addressing particular problems affecting one protected group. (An example would be a policy to improve the access of learning disabled women to cancer screening services.) Policies like this, that are specifically designed to advance equality, will, however, also need to be analysed for their effect on equality across all the protected groups.

Brent Council's Equality Analysis Process

This flow chart sets out the process for carrying out an EA. Details on each stage of the process follow. Please note that it may be necessary to consult the Corporate Diversity team at each stage and that Legal may also need to be involved. This should be factored in to the time scale.



Stage 1: Roles and Responsibilities

The first stage in the process is to allocate the following roles.

Role	Responsibilities and tasks
Decision maker - the person or group making the policy decision (e.g. CMT/Executive/Chief Officer).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that the analysis has been carried out thoroughly: • Read and be familiar with the EA and any issues arising from it and know, understand and apply the PSED. (The evidence on which recommendations are based must be available to this person.) • Take account of any countervailing factors e.g. budgetary and practical constraints
The officer undertaking the EA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the Corporate Diversity and Consultation teams for support and advice • Develop an action plan for the analysis • Carry out research, consultation and engagement if required • Develop recommendations based on the analysis • Submit the EA form to the Diversity team for audit with the evidence and any other relevant documents including the report the EA will be attached to • Incorporate the recommendations of the audit • Include the Equalities Analysis in papers for decision-makers
The Corporate Diversity Team. Usually an individual officer will be assigned at the start of the process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support and advice to the responsible officer • Carry out the audit of the EA to monitor quality standards and ensure it is sufficiently rigorous to meet the general and public sector duties. • Return the analysis to the responsible officer for further work if it fails to meet the necessary standard • Consult Legal if necessary (this stage of the process will take at least 5 days)
The council officer responsible for signing off the EA. Usually a senior manager within the relevant directorate	<p>Ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the EA form is completed • That any issues raised as part of the auditing process have been fully dealt with • That the EA, the evidence used and any issues arising from the analysis are brought to the attention of the decision maker • Ensure that the findings are used to inform service planning and wider policy development.

Stage 2: Assessing and Establishing Relevance

We need to ensure that all of our policies and key decisions, both current and proposed, have given appropriate consideration to equality. Consideration of the need for an EA needs to be given to all new policies; all revised policies, all key decisions and changes to service delivery need an EA. Those that are more relevant will require more resources and data.

The following questions can help you to determine the degree of relevance, but this is not an exhaustive list:

Key Questions:

- Does the policy have a significant effect in terms of equality on service users, employees or the wider community? Remember that relevance of a policy will depend not only on the number of those affected but also by the significance of the effect on them.
- Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered in terms of equality?
- Will it have a significant effect on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the policy relate to functions that previous engagement has identified as being important to particular protected groups?
- Does or could the policy affect different protected groups differently?
- Does it relate to an area with known inequalities (for example, access to public transport for disabled people, racist/homophobic bullying in schools)?
- Does it relate to an area where equality objectives have been set by Brent Council?

If the answer to any of the above is “yes”, you will need to carry out an Equalities Analysis.

“Not relevant”

If you decide that a policy does not impact on any of the equality needs contained in the public sector equality duty, you will need to:

- Document your decision, including the reasons and the information that you used to reach this conclusion. **A simple statement of no relevance to equality without any supporting information is not sufficient, nor is a statement that no information is available.** This could leave you vulnerable to legal challenge so obtaining early advice from the Corporate Diversity team would be helpful.
- Complete the EA Form and send it to the Corporate Diversity Team for auditing. If the Corporate Diversity Team advises that policy is relevant then you will need to continue the EA process (See flowchart). If the Corporate Diversity Team advises that the policy is not relevant then you will need to have it signed off, publish it and put in place monitoring arrangements for the policy.

Stage 3: Scoping

Scoping establishes the focus for the EA and involves carrying out the following steps:

- Identify how the aims of the policy relate to equality and which aspects have particular importance to equality.
- Identify which protected groups and which parts of the general equality duty the policy will, or is likely to, affect.
- Identify what evidence is available for the analysis, what the information gaps are, and establish which stakeholders can usefully be engaged to support the analysis.

Think about:

- The purpose of the policy, and any changes from any existing policy
- The reason for the policy
- The context
- The beneficiaries
- The intended results

At this early stage you should start to think about potential effects on protected groups. This could mean that you decide to change your overall policy aims or particular aspects of the policy in order to take better account of equality considerations. It is often easier to do this at an earlier stage rather than having to reconsider later on in the process.

Sources of information

It is important to have as much up-to-date and reliable information as possible about the different groups likely to be affected by the existing or proposed policy. The information needed will depend on the nature of the existing or proposed policy, but it will probably include many of the items listed below:

- The Brent Borough profile for demographic data and other statistics
- Census findings; the 2011 census data will be available during 2012
- Equality monitoring data for staff and/or service users
- Reports and recommendations from inspections or audits conducted on service areas
- Previous reports that have been produced either on a similar topic or relating to the same service user group
- Responses to public enquiries on similar topics e.g. Freedom of Information requests
- Comparisons with similar policies in other departments or authorities to help you identify relevant equality issues.
- Analysis of enquiries or complaints from the public to help you understand the needs or experiences of different groups.
- Recent research from a range of national, regional and local sources to help you identify relevant equality issues.
- Results of engagement activities or surveys to help you understand the needs or experiences of different groups.

- Local press and other media. This will tell you whether there is public concern about possible equalities implications and help you to highlight issues for engagement

Many of these sources will be consulted as a matter of course when reviewing or developing a policy. Equalities considerations are one part of the policy process, not an extra.

Service user information

The type of information you need will depend on the nature of the policy. However, information relating to service users is usually essential. Consider:

- The full range of information that you already have about the user group e.g. information contained within service reviews, audit reports, performance reviews, consultation reports
- Who actually uses the service?
- When do they use it?
- How do they use it and what are their experiences?
- Are there alternative sources of provision that could be accessed?
- Who will be using the service in the future?
- Information from groups or agencies who deliver similar services to your target group e.g. survey results from voluntary and community organisations.

Identify your information gaps

If you do not have equality information relating to a particular policy or about some protected groups, you will need to take steps to fill in your information gaps. This could mean doing further research, undertaking a short study, conducting a one off survey or consultation exercise, holding a focus group etc.

Engagement

The Consultation team are available to advise on all aspects of engagement. You may wish to carry out engagement, which can help you to:

- Gather the views, experiences and ideas of those who are, or will be, affected by your decisions.
- Base your policy on evidence rather than on assumptions
- Check out your ideas
- Find solutions to problems and develop ways to overcome barriers faced by particular groups.
- Design more appropriate services,
- Monitor and evaluate the success of your policies and understand where improvements may be necessary.
- Avoid the costs of remedying and adapting services after their implementation
- Pre-empt complaints, which can be costly and time-consuming.

But remember you don't always have to consult or embark upon engagement if you already have enough information to assess the likely impact of the policy change on the equality needs, and if there is no other legal duty to consult. This engagement

can form part of the broader consultation being carried out around service changes. You can also use recent engagement and research activities as a starting point, for example on a related policy or strategy and you can use documentation resulting from other equality analysis that Brent Council (or others) have undertaken.

For your engagement to be effective you will need to:

- Think carefully about who you should engage with. You will need to prioritise those who are most likely to be affected by the policy and those who will experience the greatest impact in terms of equality and good relations.
- In regard to people with a disability, as good practice it is recommended that they should be actively involved in engagement activity which directly affects them or the services that they receive.
- Make sure that the level of engagement is appropriate to the significance of the policy and its impact on equality
- Consider what questions you will need to ask, in order to understand the effect of the policy on equality. If you find it difficult to frame suitable questions you may take advice from the Corporate Diversity and Consultation teams
- Link into existing forums or community groups or to speak with representatives to help you reach less visible groups or those you have not engaged with before.
- Create opportunities for people to participate in supportive and safe environments where they feel their privacy will be protected, or via technology such as the internet
- Think of strategies that address barriers to engagement. Other people in the council have experience of this and can advise, as can the Corporate Diversity team and the Consultation team.

Stage 4: Drawing conclusions

You will need to review all of the information you have gathered in order to make a judgement about what the likely effect of the policy will be on equality, and whether you need to make any changes to the policy.

You may find it useful to ask yourself “What does the evidence (data, consultation outcomes etc.) tell me about the following questions”:

- Could the policy outcomes differ between protected groups? If so, is that consistent with the policy aims?
- Is there different take-up of services by different groups?
- Could the policy affect different groups disproportionately?
- Does the policy miss opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, including, for example, participation in public life?
- Could the policy disadvantage people from a particular group?
- Could any part of the policy discriminate unlawfully?
- Are there other policies that need to change to support the effectiveness of the policy under consideration?

If the answer to any of the above is "yes", you should consider what you can do to mitigate any harmful effects. Advice from the Diversity team will be particularly helpful at this stage.

You will also want to identify positive aspects of the policy by asking yourself:

- Does the policy deliver practical benefits for protected groups?
- Does the policy enable positive action to take place?
- Does the policy help to foster good relations between groups

Having considered the potential or actual effect of your policy on equality, you should be in a position to make an informed judgement about what should be done with your policy.

There are four main steps that you can take:

- **No major change**
- **Adjust the policy**
- **Continue the policy**
- **Stop and remove the policy**

(please see EA form for detailed descriptions of each decision)

Decisions may involve careful balancing between different interests, based on your evidence and engagement. For example, if the analysis suggests the needs of two groups are in conflict, you will need to find an appropriate balance for these groups and for the policy in question. The key point is to make sure the conclusions you reach can be explained and justified. Speak to the Diversity team if you are unsure. As a result of your analysis you may need to develop new equality objectives and targets. These should be documented on the EA form.

Stage 5: Auditing

Once you have completed the EA you will need to complete the EA Form and send it to the Corporate Diversity Team for auditing. It is important to ensure that the EA Form is completed as fully as possible. Documenting all of your analysis is important to ensure that you can show how the general and specific duties are being met. This aspect of the analysis has been subject to legal challenge so you need to be able to show how you reached your conclusions. The audit process involves the Corporate Diversity Team reviewing the completed form, the information and evidence. Sometimes this may require advice from Legal. You need to bear in mind that this will take at least five days. The team will send you back a feedback form with comments and recommendations which you will need to action prior to the sign off of the form.

Stage 6: Sign Off, Decision and Publishing

Once the EA Form is completed, the document must be signed off and the completed document must be sent to the Corporate Diversity Team to be published on the council website.

Decision-making

In order to have due regard to the aims of the public sector equality duty, decision-making must be based on a clear understanding of the effects on equality. This means that Directors, CMT and others who ultimately decide on the policy are fully aware of the findings of the EA and have due regard to them in making decisions. They are also entitled to take into account countervailing factors such as budgetary and practical constraints.

Stage 7: Monitoring and Reviewing

Your EA, and any engagement associated with it, will have helped you to anticipate and address the policy's likely effects on different groups. However, the actual effect of the policy will only be known once it has been introduced. You may find that you need to revise the policy if, for instance:

- Negative effects do occur
- Area demographics change, leading to different needs,
- Alternative provision becomes available
- New options to reduce an adverse effect become apparent

You will need to identify a date when the policy will be reviewed to check whether or not it is having its intended effects. This does not mean repeating the EA, but using the experience gained through implementation to check the findings and to make any necessary adjustments. Consider:

- How you will measure the effects of the policy?
- When the policy will be reviewed (usually after a year) and what could trigger an early revision (see above)?
- Who will be responsible for monitoring and review?
- What type of information is needed for monitoring and how often it will be analysed?
- How to engage stakeholders in implementation, monitoring and review?

Section 3: Glossary

Civil partnership: Legal recognition of a same-sex couple's relationship. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a range of legal matters.

Direct discrimination: This refers to less favourable treatment of one individual, if, because of that person's protected characteristic, that person is treated less favourably than another. Direct discrimination cannot be justified unless it is discrimination on the grounds of age.

Disability: A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Equality information: The information that you have (or that you will collect) about people with protected characteristics that will help you to show compliance with the equality duty. This may include the findings of engagement with protected groups and others and evidence about the effect of your policies on protected groups. It includes both qualitative and quantitative information, as well as evidence of analysis you have undertaken.

Gender reassignment: This is the process of transitioning from one sex to another. See also trans, transgender, transsexual.

Harassment: Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It may also involve unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or be related to gender reassignment or sex.

Indirect discrimination: This is when a neutral provision, criterion or practice is applied to everyone, but which is applied in a way that creates disproportionate disadvantage for persons with a protected characteristic as compared to those who do not share that characteristic, and cannot be shown as being a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Mitigation: This is when measures are put in place that lessen the negative effects of a policy or policies on protected groups.

Objective justification: Your provision may indirectly discriminate against a particular group if:

- It is a proportionate means to achieve a legitimate end
- The discrimination is significantly outweighed by the benefits
- There is no reasonable alternative to achieve the legitimate end

For example, some employers have policies that link pay and benefits to an employee's length of service, such as additional holiday entitlement for long-serving employees. This may indirectly discriminate against younger people who are less likely to have been employed for that length of time, but in most circumstances it is seen as being a proportionate way of encouraging staff loyalty.

Direct discrimination on the grounds of age can also be objectively justified (no other direct discrimination can be).

Positive action: Lawful actions that seeks to overcome or minimise disadvantages that people who share a protected characteristic have experienced, or to meet their different needs (for example, providing mentoring to encourage staff from under-represented groups to apply for promotion).

Pregnancy and Maternity: Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant. Maternity is the period after giving birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breastfeeding.

Proportionality: The weight given to equality should be proportionate to its relevance to a particular function. This may mean giving greater consideration and resources to functions or policies that have the most effect on the public or on employees.

Race: This refers to a group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

Reasonable adjustment: Public authorities making adjustments to the way in which they carry out their functions so that disabled people are not disadvantaged by the way in which those functions are carried out. This is with regard to policies, practices or procedures, premises, and the provision of auxiliary aids or services.

Relevance: How far a function or policy affects people, as members of the public, and as employees of the authority. Some functions may be more relevant to some protected groups than to others, and to one or more of the three elements of the general equality duty. The function or policy may still be relevant if the numbers affected by it are very small.

Religion or belief: Religion means any religion, including a reference to a lack of religion. Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (for example, Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included.

Sexual orientation: This is whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

Trans: The terms 'trans people' and 'transgender people' are both often used as umbrella terms for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their birth sex, including transsexual people (those who propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process of gender reassignment to live permanently in their acquired gender), transvestite/cross-dressing people (those who wear clothing traditionally associated with the other gender either occasionally or more regularly), androgyne/polygender people (those who have non-binary gender identities and do not identify as male or female), and others who define as gender variant.

Transgender: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their birth sex. They may or may not seek to undergo gender reassignment hormonal treatment/surgery. Often used interchangeably with trans.

Transsexual: A person who intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment (which may or may not involve hormone therapy or surgery). Transsexual people feel the deep conviction to present themselves in the appearance of the opposite sex. They may change their name and identity to live in the preferred gender. Some take hormones and have cosmetic treatments to alter their appearance and physical characteristics. Some undergo surgery to change their bodies to approximate more closely to their preferred gender. Transsexual people have the protected characteristic of gender reassignment under the Equality Act 2010. Under the Act, gender reassignment is a personal process rather than a medical one and it does not require someone to undergo medical treatment in order to be protected.

Victimisation: Subjecting a person to a detriment because they have made a complaint of discrimination, or are thought to have done so; or because they have supported someone else who has made a complaint of discrimination. Victimisation is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010.

A Summary of the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 replaces the existing anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. The legislation covers:

- Employment and work
- Goods and services
- The exercise of public functions
- Premises
- Associations
- Transport
- Education

The act prohibits:

- Direct discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Discrimination by association
- Discrimination by perception
- Discrimination arising from disability
- Victimisation
- Harassment

The new legislation no longer refers to 'diversity strands' instead it introduces the concept of 'protected characteristics or groups, the protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

The Public Sector Equality Duty

The public sector equality duty requires that the council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

These are generally referred to as the three arms of the duty. In relation to 'fostering' there is a duty to have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

Equality of opportunity is expanded by placing a duty on the Council to have due regard to the need to:

- Remove or minimize disadvantages connected to a characteristic of a protected group.
- Take steps to meet the needs of protected groups.
- Encourage participation of protected groups in public life where participation is proportionately low.

There is also a specific requirement that councils must take steps to take account of a person's disability and there is a duty to make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers for disabled people. The duty is 'anticipatory'. For example, Brent Council cannot wait until a disabled person wants to use its services, but must think in advance (and on an ongoing basis) about what people with a range of impairments might reasonably need.

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CONSULTATION REPORT

STONEBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL EXPANSION PROPOSALS

Report date: 18 December 2014

By: Jill Rennie – Project Manager (Strategic Property) & Emma Sweeney – Project Manager (Schools Capital)

This report is set out as follows:

- 1. Overall design of the consultation**
- 2. Distribution and Advertising the Consultation**
- 3. Consultation Summary**
- 4. Response Analysis**
 - 4.1 On-line, paper returns and emails
 - 4.1.1 Written responses – Brent
 - 4.1.2 Written responses – Brent not identified
 - 4.1.3 Consultation leaflet/online/email response analysis
 - 4.2 A4 Document Analysis
 - 4.3 Consultation Event Discussions
- 5. Questions and Answers**

Annex

1. Overall design of the consultation

The consultation design and process was discussed at the Officers Project Board with advice sought from the Council's consultation, media, web and equalities teams. A consultation strategy was written and Members were briefed on the process.

Consultation aimed to seek the views of residents and interested parties on the proposal. The consultation ran from Monday 6th October to Monday 17th November 2014. A consultation leaflet was produced which included details on the proposals and sought views through two open questions. A website was also created which had the consultation information and an on-line consultation response portal.

<http://brent.gov.uk/regeneration/school-rebuilding-programme/stonebridge-consultation/>

5 consultation events were held:

Date	Venue	
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14/10/2014 3.30-5.30pm	Stonebridge Primary School	Drop in consultation event for parents, teachers and pupils
21/10/2104 7pm	Bridge Park	Brent Connects – Presentation and Question and Answer Session
29/10/2014 9.30-11.30 am	The Hub, Hillside	Drop in consultation event
05/11/2014 5.30 – 7.30 pm	The Hub, Hillside	Drop in consultation event
12/11/2014 5.00 – 7.00 pm	Stonebridge Primary School	Drop in consultation event

The consultation leaflet and on-line consultation included the same two open questions, which asked:

1. Please tell us what you like about the proposals and why?
2. Please tell us what you would like changed and why?

2. Distribution and Advertising the Consultation

Ahead of the start of the formal consultation, meetings were held with:

- The Stonebridge School Governors
- The Welsh School Governors
- Brent Play Association staff
- Headteacher of Our Lady of Lourdes

The first three meetings were with representatives of organisations who are within the site area being consulted on. Our Lady of Lourdes was met as a close neighbour to the site.

The public consultation was advertised through:

1. Leaflets were delivered to properties with 0.5 miles of the site
2. Leaflets were provided to all pupils of Stonebridge Primary School
3. Leaflets were provided to Brent Play Association (the organisation who manages the Adventure Playground), the Welsh School and Our Lady of Lourdes School
4. Consultation information was provided to the local press
5. The website had full details of the consultation
6. The link to the website consultation was sent to the following organisations:
 - Stonebridge Primary School
 - All maintained schools and Academies in Brent
 - Brent Council - key officers
 - Westminster Diocesan Education Service
 - London Diocesan Board for Schools
 - London Borough of Ealing
 - London Borough of Barnet
 - London Borough of Camden
 - London Borough of Harrow
 - London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
 - London Borough of Westminster
 - Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
 - Local Resident Associations
 - All Councillors

- Local Member of Parliament
- All Brent Customer Service Shops
- All Brent Libraries
- All Brent Children Centres
- Sport England
- Secretary of State, School Organisation Unit
- Local private nurseries
- Any trade unions who represent staff of Stonebridge Primary School
- Representatives of main trade unions in Brent
- Early Years and Family Support Service
- Early Years Quality and Improvement Team
- Parent and Toddler groups in the area
- Victorian Society
- English Heritage
- Hyde Housing
- Welsh School
- Our Lady of Lourdes

Ahead of the start of the formal consultation, Brent Play Association started a campaign to save the Adventure Playground. This received local press coverage and was on the front page of The Brent and Kilburn Times for a number of weeks, as such there was a lot of coverage in the media of the proposals.

Responses to the consultation could be made through:

- Completing the online questionnaire
- Completing the paper leaflet and returning it to Brent Civic Centre or in the drop box which was left at The Hub, Hillside for the duration of the consultation event.
- Attending a consultation event

The website did also include an email address and officers phone numbers.

On Friday 7th November officers delivered further leaflets to Fawood Children's Centre, the Hub Hillside reception, Brent START Stonebridge, Hillside Primary Care Centre and St Michael's nursery.

In total around 6,700 leaflets were distributed over the course of the consultation.

3. Consultation Summary

This summarises all the above different consultation responses received, with the exception of the petition which is dealt with separately and does not form part of this consultation report.

The Council distributed around 6,700 leaflets, around 60 individuals attended consultation events (excluding Brent Connects which was not exclusively for this consultation) and we received 90 written submissions (leaflets, on line and 17 A4 signed standard documents). Most of the written responses were from people in Brent/Brent organisations and around 1/3 where it was not or could not be identified that it was from a person in Brent/Brent organisation. The Council also received one response on the phone ahead of the start of the consultation, comments from this were added to the verbal comments from the consultation event.

The majority of responses focused on the loss of the Adventure Playground and the desire to keep this provision. A number of responses only discussed the Adventure Playground proposals, with many of these respondents saying they didn't like anything about the proposal. The highlights of the responses are detailed below:

School Expansion

- That the school expansion should be re planned so not to be at the expense of the Adventure Playground or to leave the school on two sites.
- Due to the school having the annexe site it was felt that the school expansion was only providing a further 30 places.
- There were respondents who welcomed the school being on one site.

Adventure Playground

- Importance of the safe and supervised nature of the provision.
- Importance of the facility in terms of childcare – including after school and summer school provision.
- As a place for children to go without which they could partake in anti-social behaviour/crime.
- The value of play and play facilities (including the indoor space).
- The facility being a free provision.

Open Space

- People wanted to see the open space improved.
- The proposed open space and improvements to the canal feeder were welcomed.
- Residents did not want to see a loss of open space or trees.

Housing

- There was a mixed response to whether there should be more housing.
- A number of respondents did not want to see more housing, especially on the current open space site and the Milton Avenue site.
- For those who did wish to see more housing there was a desire for houses as opposed to flats and for the homes to be affordable.
- There was a desire for no high rises and for good design.

Welsh School

- There were limited responses on the Welsh School.
- Responses questioned what the future of the Welsh School would be.

Other Issues

- Generally the new play space was unsupported as it was seen as unsafe; as it was by a road and unsupervised.
- Traffic and parking issues were raised in regards to the needs to address current provision and the impact of the proposals.
- The proposals need to ensure community cohesion.

4. Response Analysis

In total the Council received 66 online and paper returns to the consultation.

In addition to consultation responses through the on-line portal or paper leaflet, the Council received 17 signed copies of a 2 page A4 document (see appendix), 7 responses via e-mail and received a petition. Officers at consultation events also took notes of the conversations.

4.1 On-line, paper returns and emails

This section discusses the written responses received through the on-line consultation portal, hard copy leaflets and emails. Responses from organisations such as other local authorities are included in the written returns and there is not a distinction between organisational and individual responses.

A number of responses completed their answer only under one question heading of the two questions which were asked, as such the consultation analysis has not distinguished between the questions and focused on the content of the answer.

Of the consultation responses 48 provided an address in Brent or stated that they were within the London Borough of Brent. A further two responses gave their address, but these were either not within the borough or could not be identified as being in the borough.

The written analysis is considered in two parts, those identified as Brent (46 responses) and those who are not (27 responses). This is in order to understand if there is a different response to those who are “local” and those who are not.

Officers have not sought to remove responses if it appears that an individual has submitted multiple responses or where there are multiple responses from a household, as it was felt that it would not be possible to know whether those where an address were not given were multiple responses.

It should be noted that respondents did not comment on all aspects of the proposals and in many instances focused on one issue in their response.

The below is a summary of the key points of the responses and has sought to group comments into categories of comments.

4.1.1 Written responses – Brent

Around two-fifths of respondents said that in general they did not like the proposals or did not want anything to change. Only a couple of respondents in general said they liked the proposals

Stonebridge Adventure Playground and proposed new playspace

The Adventure Playground was the most discussed response topic with around three quarters of respondents stating that they wanted to keep the playground or they valued the Adventure Playground

The top five reasons for the importance of the Adventure Playground (or in some responses children’s needs in general) were around:

1. The importance of safety, supervision or having friendly/trusted staff.
2. The importance of “play” or play facilities
3. The importance for after school, summer holiday or childcare provision.

4. The importance in terms of keeping children off the streets or that without a dedicated space it could lead to crime.
5. That the Adventure Playground had been around for a long time

Other responses included:

- There was an educational element to the Adventure Playground
- That it allowed different children to mix together
- That it was free
- That it was a place where parents could meet
- Importance for children with disabilities or special educational needs
- Children were able to get food or drink
- Important for Community Cohesion

A few respondents also mentioned that they would like a new or improved facility. The importance of having facilities for children in general was also discussed.

The proposed new playspace was not popular. Around a seventh of respondents discussed this and all were against this with safety issues cited as the main reason.

Stonebridge Primary School Expansion

Over a third of respondents discussed the school expansion proposals. The response to whether to expand the Stonebridge Primary School was mixed.

There were a number that did not want the proposed expansion due to the impact on the Adventure Playground, and would want the school expansion re-planned or relocated, including the school remaining on two sites. Some respondents did not view that there was a need for the school expansion or that the proposed expansion was not producing any significant increase in spaces. This was due to the school having the annexe site and it being felt that the expansion was only producing a further 30 spaces.

Some respondents were against the expansion as they viewed Stonebridge as too crowded, whilst there were respondents who were in favour of the proposals.

Housing

The housing proposals were mentioned by around a fifth of respondents. Of these respondents the majority did not want housing or for it not to be in specific locations (along Milton Avenue or by the school).

There was mention of the importance of having affordable/social housing by a few respondents, as well as a desire for no high rise and the importance of good design.

Open space

Open space issues were discussed by less than a fifth of respondents. Respondents did not want to see the loss of the open space as well as wanting to protect/have no loss of trees. A desire for greenery was raised, although a general improvement of existing provision was most important.

Other comments included mentioning that the improvements to the canal feeder were seen as positive and there was a desire for a meeting place mentioned.

Welsh School

The Welsh School was mentioned in a couple of responses, which indicated a desire that it is kept.

Other Issues Raised

Traffic and parking issues were raised in regards to the proposals, both in terms of disruption generated during the construction stage and as part of the development.

The need for clear cycling/pedestrian demarcations was also raised.

The importance of community cohesion was raised by a few respondents

A desire for a library was raised.

4.1.2 Written responses – Brent not identified

Stonebridge Adventure Playground and proposed new playspace

Again the main responses were centred on the Adventure Playground with, over two fifths in favour of keeping the adventure playground.

The top four reasons for the importance of the Adventure Playground (or in some responses children's needs in general) were:

1. The importance of "play" or play facilities
2. That the Adventure Playground had been around for a long time
3. The importance of safety, supervision or having friendly/trusted staff.
4. That it allowed different children to mix together

Other responses included:

- Importance for after school, summer holiday or childcare provision.
- There was an educational element to the Adventure Playground
- That it was a place where parents could meet
- Importance for children with disabilities or special educational needs
- Children were able to get food or drink
- Importance in terms of keeping children off the streets or that without a dedicated space it could lead to crime.
- Important for Community Cohesion

There was a response which did seek that the Adventure Playground be relocated or closed.

Again, the importance of having facilities for children in general was also discussed.

Only one response mentioned the proposed play space which was not liked due to health concerns for children with the location.

Stonebridge Primary School Expansion

Just over a quarter of respondents discussed the school proposals. The majority of responses that discussed the school expansion or the need for additional school places were positive.

Welsh School

The Welsh School was raised once, including about potential unfair treatment compared with the French school

Open Space and Housing

There were a few responses which focused on housing and the open space.

The housing proposal was generally seen positively.

The couple of responses in regards to the open space also viewed the proposals as positive.

Other Issues

Welcome improved sports provision.

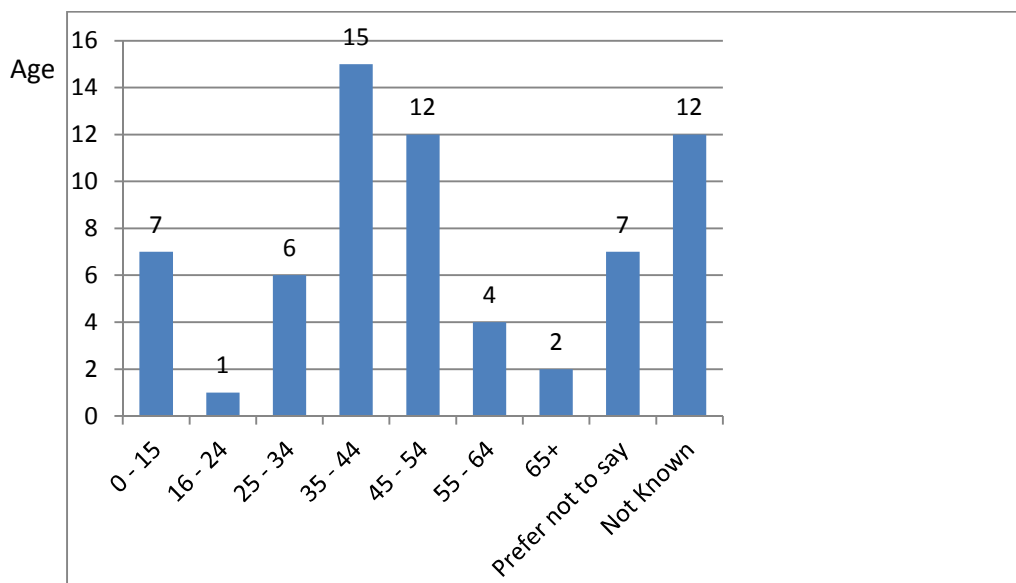
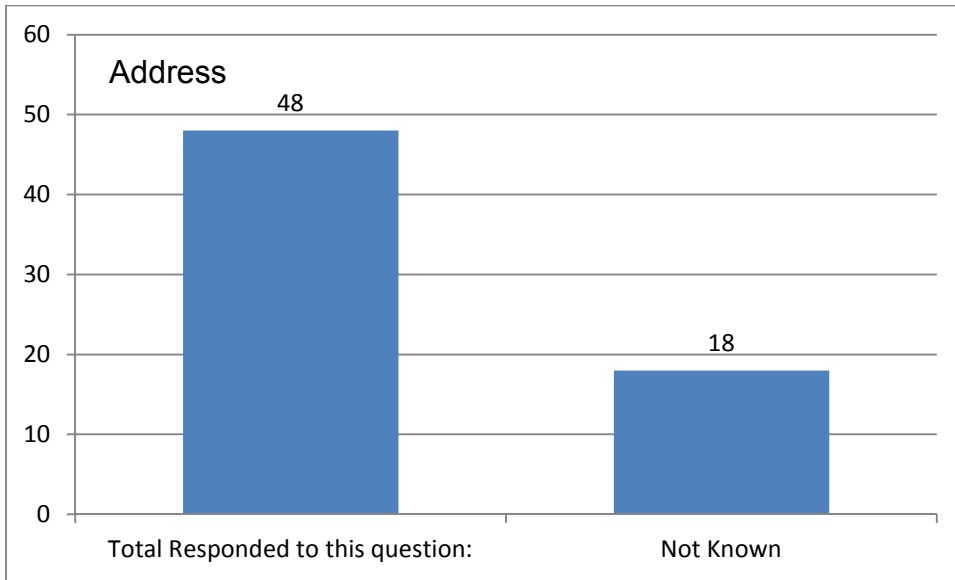
Need for further design information as part of the consultation.

4.1.3 Consultation leaflet/online/email response analysis

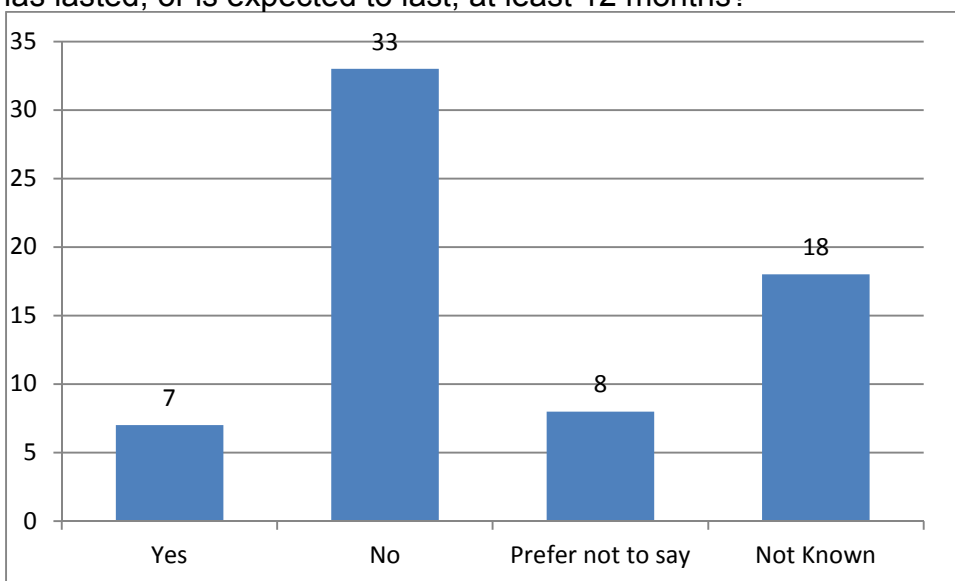
The below illustrates the frequency of themes

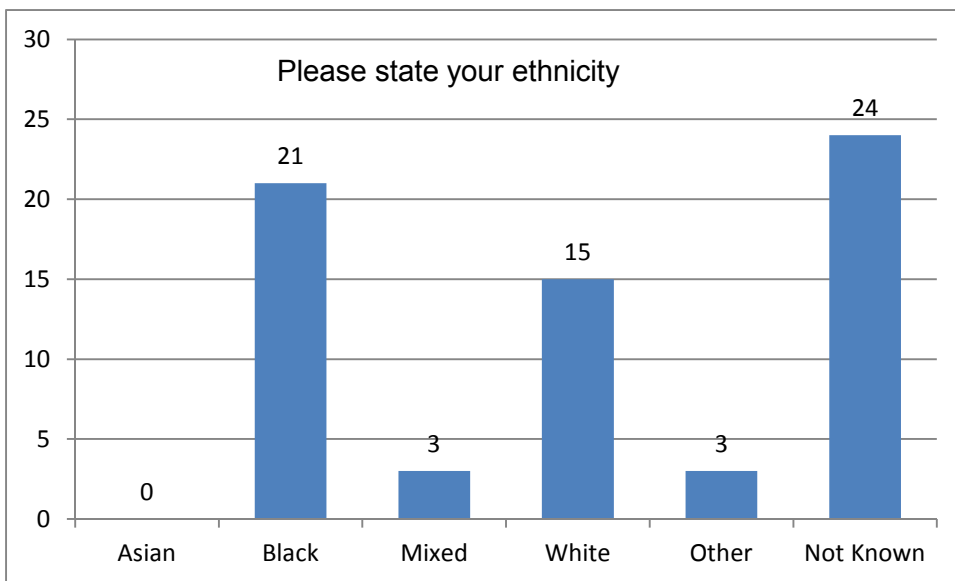
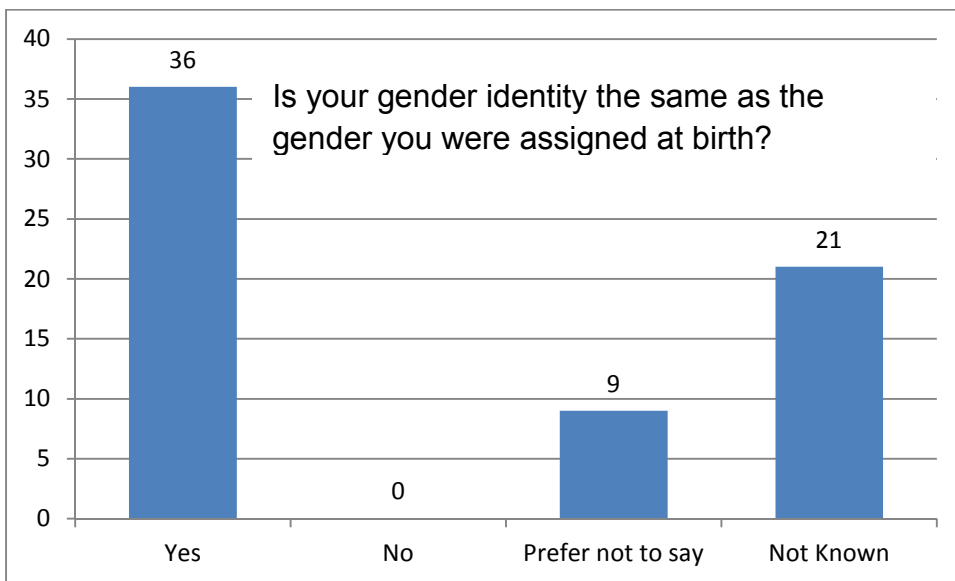
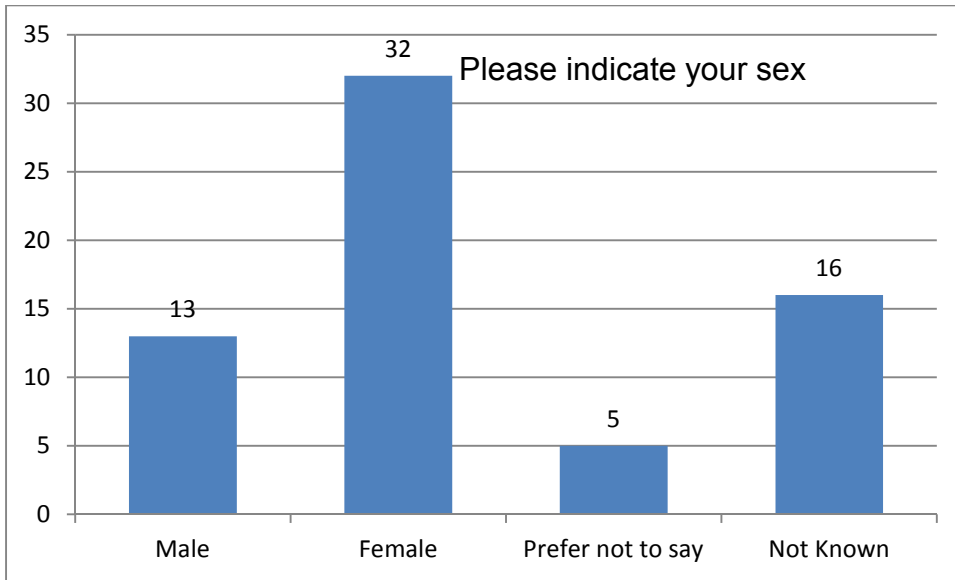


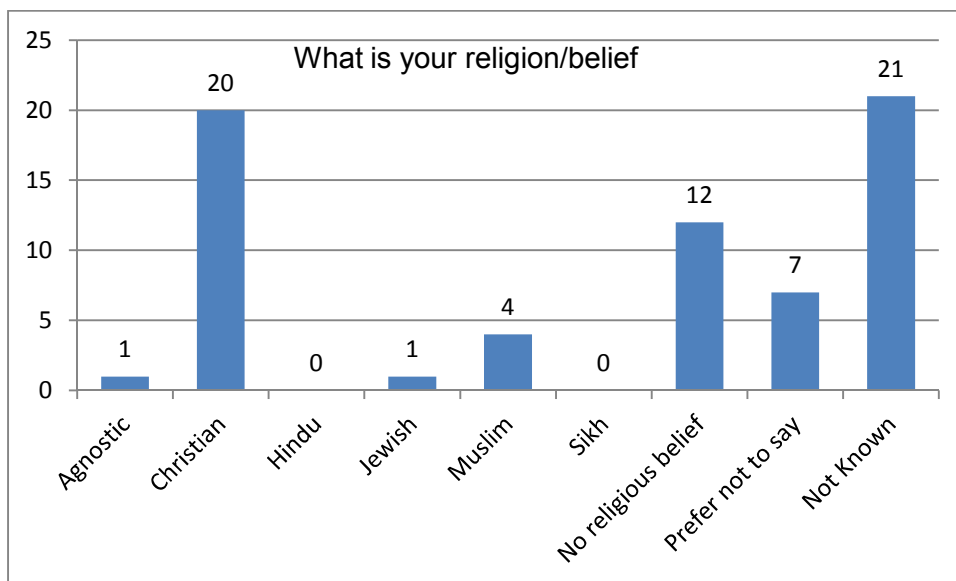
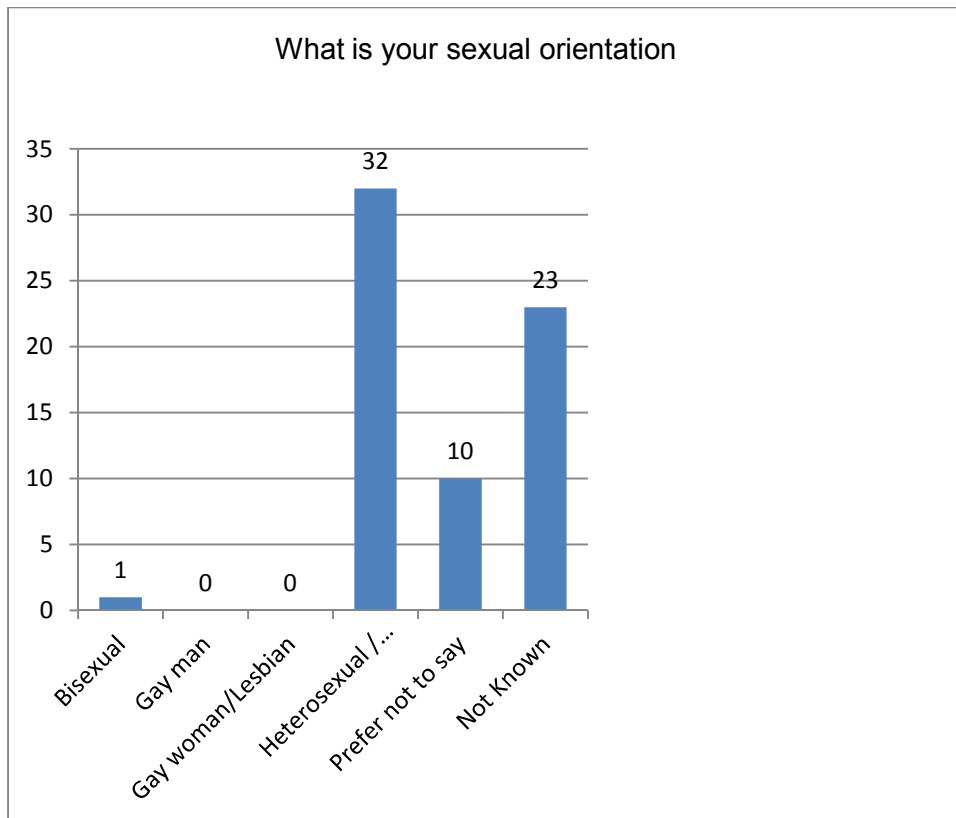
The below is analysis of who responded to the consultation – this data is only available for the consultation leaflet/online portal responses.



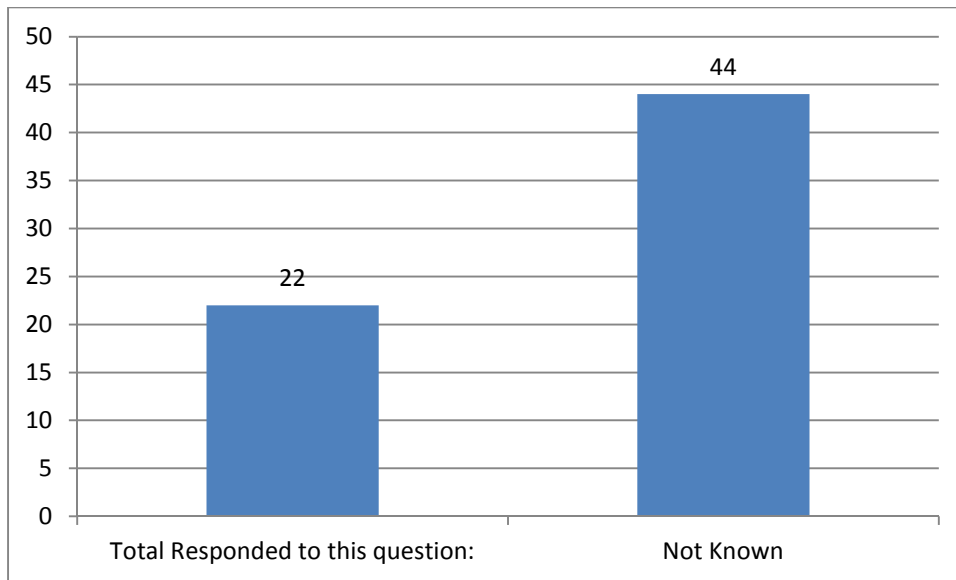
Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?







What are the ages of the other members of your household?
 Do any members of your household have a health problem or disability which limits their day to day activities and which has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months? your household?
 What is the ethnicity of the other members of your household, if it differs from yours?



In addition to the above, 12 of the responses identified that there were children under the age of 18 in the household and that 4 of the respondent had members of the household who had a health problem or disability which limits their day to day activities and which has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months.

4.2 A4 Document Analysis

The Council received 17 signed copies of an two page A4 document. The key points of the document are below and the full document is at the end of this report. Please note that for the purposes of considering the overall consultation response, these points are given a “x17” weighting to recognise the 17 signed submissions.

Adventure Playground and Proposed new play space:

- The existing Stonebridge Adventure Playground should not close
- Children must have somewhere to go
- The playground serves as a gap between school home time and actual at home time
- It is free of charge to use and keeps children off the street in a protected compound
- It is part indoor /outdoor smoke free environment where the children do not need to leave to get refreshments or drinking water.
- No park of play space in the open is free from the pollutant tobacco smoke, alcohol drinkers, drug sellers and users, from dogs and fouling, from unclear broken glass that stays in place for days or weeks.
- With any play area there should be proper walkways/paths to walk into or through the area

Housing:

- Homes are needed but a mix of new and old homes
- Proposed Housing at the annex site seems reasonable
- Housing on current open space/hillside not acceptable – will obscure the wonderful view of school building (too close to the school)
- Must accommodate older homes and the needs of a financially poor area

Primary School Expansion

- The proposal only identifies 30 new pupil places

- Not enough school places are being created, the over populating of Stonebridge is a real concern.

Open Space

- Trees should remain (current open space)
- Perhaps open space can go inside the school
- There must be sufficient walkways

Other Issues

- The Stonebridge area does not need another adult education centre.
- Must be sufficient Parking including disabled bays (available to all)
- There should be no segregated parking at all, for employees
- We, my household DO NOT support these proposals

4.3 Consultation Event Discussions

At each consultation event conversations with attending residents were noted, this provided us with the opportunity to understand in further detail the key opinions that were heard through the written responses.

Adventure Playground

Strong support for Stonebridge Adventure Playground was evident by the majority of representatives, who described the facility not just as a building and outdoor play space that offers 'services' for children and young people, but as a community asset in its broadest sense, it is of social value not only for its place in people's family history and experience but because it represents what it means to live in a community where people grow up together and know each other and support each other through change imposed by others.

The specific positive aspects of Stonebridge Adventure Playground as felt by the residents was that it offers a supervised play space, it is at no cost to the end user, the indoor space, the variety of play offered here and the location.

It was expressed that Stonebridge needs the Adventure Playground as it's a place for local people to meet in an area of poor social cohesion. It also is thought to have a positive effect on some young people in the area and is a preventative measure to crime in an area that has problems with gangs.

Other community facilities do not feel as accessible by the local community and the staff that run SAP have built trusting relationships with the residents.

Open Space – current

The broad comments about the current open space were that it is not used. There were some views explaining that they'd like it to be used more and improvements around bins and lighting were suggested to address this.

Open Space – proposed

Most of the representatives agreed that the proposed open space was much better and would be good for local children and would like to see this used by the school.

There were some concerns about the loss of trees and the safety of the canal and some further comments about the ongoing maintenance of this area.

School Expansion

There were some positive comments on the school expansion and a general understanding of the need for school places, and the benefit of having the school on one site specifically for parents with children at both locations. Some quite detailed improvements were suggested around school access focussing on entrance routes and parking and the need for improvements to the existing building.

There were also residents less keen on the expansion of the school that would be happier for the school to stay on 2 sites and for ¹30 additional places it was not a big enough benefit. Some residents were also concerned that the places would be filled by children from outside of Stonebridge.

Some general concerns about the school were also heard, residents didn't think it was a popular school and a lack of community engagement was voiced.

Housing

Although some representatives of the local community questioned the need for housing and objected to the proposals, some conversations were constructive and there were some suggestions to develop the proposals. They were less keen on high rise dense housing and would like to see houses for local families, not flats and not privately owned. There was a suggestion to provide shops or commercial units on the ground floor and requests to ensure parking is provided within housing plans.

Welsh School

Few residents asked about the Welsh school, those that did wanted to know what was happening to it.

Other/General Points

Generally the new play space by a main road was disliked, it was also explained that this would be underused primarily due to; street drinkers, gangs and intimidation.

There was a strong aversion to the idea of unsupervised play but there were suggestions about having it overlooked by housing which might resolve this and provide something which is semi supervised.

There were several comments about the lack of facilities in Stonebridge (no library, no café) and specifically the need for a secondary school.

There was some objection to the consultation process both in terms of the locations and the days or the events, and also in respect of the amount of information provided.

The below illustrates the frequency of discussion themes at the events as noted by Council Officers and could be used to summarise the most important elements of this consultation;

¹ Assuming the temporary places at the annex at Penryn 2012 there is only a net increase of 30 places.



5. Questions & Answers

During consultation some questions were raised by residents within their responses, we have grouped together question types and these are answered below.

Q1. Who will be housed in these new Properties/the local community will not be able to afford the new housing?

A1. The Council can not at this time identify who will be housed here. Some of the homes will be affordable.

Q2. We would like to hear their views (local industry, trade unions, medical practitioners, TFL, people bordering Stonebridge) at an early stage of the consultations and then parents could make even more informed choices.

Has the Willesden Local History Society already been consulted?

Has the Welsh Assembly Government already been consulted?

Where are the results of your consultations with TFL?

A2. This consultation was the first stage of the public consultation. As part of the public consultation the consultation was advertised as set out in the consultation report. Any organisation could respond to the public consultation. The full written consultation response is available.

Q3. What do you propose to do about dog fouling during building and after?

A3. Dog fouling within the build site should not pose an increased problem as the site will be cordoned whilst building works are taking place. Dog fouling can be reported through the Councils website or The Cleaner Brent app.

Q4. What is the council's policy on giving employees free parking, tax-free perks at the public expense?

A4. The Brent Civic Centre policy where the largest number of staff is based states that Council employees are discouraged from driving to work; exemptions for use of the car park only exist for cyclists, motorcyclists, disabled staff (blue badge holders) and approved staff Civic Centre Business Users. The Council has a Zip car scheme for staff to use where a car is required for work purposes. In regards to school parking, these are managed on a site by site basis.

Q5. How does the expansion project propose to manage CCTV?

A5. The Council has not considered CCTV as part of the development at this time however CCTV will be considered as part of the school expansion.

Q6. What will the authority do about traffic flow and the zebra crossing and other pedestrian crossings?

Will they be relocated, changed or are there any other proposals?

What, if any, will there be in terms of increased signage located in the area at the annexe and school?

How does the expansion take into account any need for cyclists?

How could a route be linked to accommodate the current cycle network and borough's Long Term Transport Strategy?

A6. Traffic and highway proposals will form part of the planning application.

Q7. Will a new (or returning bus route) come into place to accommodate the extra services required by new residents, the extra 30 pupil places and more visitors to the area?

A7. New bus routes are not within the Councils remit, these would be decided by TFL

Q8. What will happen to the Welsh School?

Is it true you have already given the school/occupiers notice to move on? How will their relocation be funded?

Has a compensation package been provided to the school and if so, what does it involve and how much money is included?

Will the children (and/or staff) of the Welsh School be assimilated into the Stonebridge School and are their numbers included in the figures of pupil numbers already at the Stonebridge School main site?

The sites to which the Welsh School might be moved if the proposals are approved should be revealed. The alternative sites need to have the approval of the school and not involve any expenditure by the School.

A8. Officers have been working with the school to find a new home within the borough. The Welsh School have agreed to use the former Bowling Green Pavilion in King Edward VII Park. Heads of terms have been issued detailing key terms. In order to allow the Welsh school to use the pavilion a planning application is required and this has been submitted by the Welsh School. Brent has submitted an application to the Fields in Trust, who needs to agree to the school using the former Bowling Green Pavilion in King Edward VII Park.

Any child who attends the Welsh School can apply for a school place through their local authority, places offered are subject to the local authority's schools admission policy. Only children who meet Brent's criteria and would be offered a place at Stonebridge could go to Stonebridge. Recruiting teaching staff is managed by the school.

Q9. There is racial prejudice on the part of the Council when the Welsh school is compared to the development of the French School on the former Town Hall site.

A9. The Town Hall site was publicly marketed.

Q10. Will SAP jobs be assimilated into permanent roles at the school?

A10. Recruiting teaching staff is managed by the school.

Q11. Please can I see the Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Equality Responses?

Who is going to benefit from this?

A11. The Equality Impact Assessment is available with the January Cabinet paper. Equality information gathered through the consultation is dealt with in the consultation report.

Q12. There has been a miscalculation and there are only 30 new places being provided at the school.

A12. The current bulge class is not a permanent expansion. Long term facilities are needed to have a permanent expansion. The annexe site currently has 180 pupils, with the proposals to create 210 permanent places.

Q13. Why not work in partnership with North West London College rather than bring further Adult Education provision into Stonebridge?

A13. Adult Education working arrangements are outside the scope of this consultation

Q14. Why don't we put a free underground parking, parking also has to be provided by law.

A14. Parking will be provided inline with planning requirements

Q15. Surely providing more homes will only result in the need for more schools so emphasis should be put on improving and expanding the schools and not selling off every last bit of open or green space to developers for poor quality high rise cardboard boxes, how can this kind of development ever be sustainable or improve anyone's lives?

Brent's emerging demographics are such that housing demand continues to rise and this needs to be planned and provided for.

Q16. Will local children's education be disrupted while this build takes place?

A16. The construction site will be hoarded and secured to ensure the safety of the children. The noisiest elements of the construction are constrained to take place outside of normal school hours. As much of the construction will also take place off site. The construction can also offer learning opportunities for children, understanding about design and construction first hand.

Q17. Where would our children be playing after school or in the summer for that matter?

Where will children go with the closure of the Adventure Playground?

A17. Proposed mitigations are within the January Cabinet report

Q18. Why does Brent Council paint such a poor picture of the reality?

A18. No comment.

Q19. Does the Design Review Panel still exist, and how is it constituted?

A19. No

Q20. Who are the developers?

A20. No developer has been selected as yet.

Q21. I was extremely concerned to find that Forward plans for the December Cabinet included a proposal to terminate the funding of Stonebridge Adventure Playground. This pre-empts the outcome of the current consultation before it closes.

A21. This is now on the forward plan for January 2015.

Q22. Is the school building being removed?

A22. No. The school building is a listed building

Q.23 Albert Terrace is not mentioned

A.23 This is referred to as Milton Avenue

Q24. Why spend all the time taking down the high rises of the old Stonebridge and then just build new ones.

Q24. Plans will be further developed through the planning process.

Q25. The Council has already made its decisions

A25. No. The Council undertakes consultation in order to help form its decisions

Q26. Why don't you ask "What do you think about the proposals?"

A26. There were two questions which gave respondents the opportunity to say what they thought about the proposals

Please tell us what you like about the proposals and why?

Please tell us what you would like changed and why?

Q27. There was some objection to the consultation process both in terms of the locations and the days of the events, and also in respect of the amount/type of information provided.

A27. The Council sought to have a range of location and consultation events were held at three different locations which were local to the site: Stonebridge Primary School, The Hub Hillside and Bridge Park Leisure Centre.

The Council does take on board that one of the events was on the 5th of November, but there were alternative days to this event.

As the proposals are in the early stages, there is not detailed information available.

Q28. How many Black people will lead this project or work for the organisations you will be paying? How many Somalians? How many West Indians?

A28. Internally in Brent there are currently no Black people leading this project although some black employees will be involved in developing proposals.

In respect of Brent's supply chain, at each procurement stage, we do collect equalities data. Currently there are no Black consultants employed on this project.

Annex

Stonebridge Primary School Expansion Proposals

Online/Paper submissions

Brent Council will soon be providing more news and information by email and text message.

If you would like to receive our e-newsletter in the future, please add your email address or mobile number here.

Total Responded to this question:	17	25.76%
Total who skipped this question:	49	74.24%
Total:	66	100.00%

1. Address

Total Responded to this question:	48	72.73%
Total who skipped this question:	18	27.27%
Total:	66	100.00%

2. Age range:

Responses:	count	%
0 - 15	7	10.61%
16 - 24	1	1.52%
25 - 34	6	9.09%
35 - 44	15	22.73%
45 - 54	12	18.18%
55 - 64	4	6.06%
65+	2	3.03%
Prefer not to say	7	10.61%
Total Responded to this question:	54	81.82%
Total who skipped this question:	12	18.18%
Total:	66	100.00%

3. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

Responses:	count	%
Yes	7	10.61%
No	33	50.00%
Prefer not to say	8	12.12%
Total Responded to this question:	48	72.73%
Total who skipped this question:	18	27.27%
Total:	66	100.00%

4. Please indicate your sex:

Responses:	count	%
Male	13	19.70%
Female	32	48.48%
Prefer not to say	5	7.58%
Total Responded to this question:	50	75.76%
Total who skipped this question:	16	24.24%
Total:	66	100.00%

5. Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?

Responses:	count	%
Yes	36	54.55%
No	0	0.00%
Prefer not to say	9	13.64%
Total Responded to this question:	45	68.18%
Total who skipped this question:	21	31.82%
Total:	66	100.00%

6. Please state your ethnicity:

Responses:	count	%
Asian	0	0.00%
Black	21	31.82%
Mixed	3	4.55%
White	15	22.73%
Other	3	4.55%
Total Responded to this question:	42	63.64%
Total who skipped this question:	24	36.36%
Total:	66	100.00%

6a. Please specify the detail of your ethnicity:

Total Responded to this question:	13	19.70%
Total who skipped this question:	53	80.30%
Total:	66	100.00%

7. What is your sexual orientation?

Responses:	count	%
Bisexual	1	1.52%
Gay man	0	0.00%
Gay woman/Lesbian	0	0.00%
Heterosexual / straight	32	48.48%
Prefer not to say	10	15.15%
Total Responded to this question:	43	65.15%
Total who skipped this question:	23	34.85%
Total:	66	100.00%

Other, please specify:

8. What is your religion/belief?

Responses:	count	%
Agnostic	1	1.52%
Christian	20	30.30%
Hindu	0	0.00%
Jewish	1	1.52%
Muslim	4	6.06%
Sikh	0	0.00%
No religious belief	12	18.18%
Prefer not to say	7	10.61%
Total Responded to this question:	45	68.18%
Total who skipped this question:	21	31.82%
Total:	66	100.00%

Other religion, please specify:

Rasta

9. What are the ages of the other members of your household?

- Do any members of your household have a health problem or disability which limits their day to day activities and which has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months?

- What is the ethnicity of the other members of your household, if it differs from yours?

Total Responded to this question:	22	33.33%
Total who skipped this question:	44	66.67%
Total:	66	100.00%

Full Written Response returns

Online/Leaflet/Emails

Note personal information has been "blacked"

1a - Please tell us what you like about the proposals and why?	1b - Please tell us what you would like changed and why?
I'm in favour for any potential urban development for the better of the community.	More schemes that lead to community cohesion, the implementation of communal gardens/ greenery, public seating etc. We also need supervised play areas for the younger ones of the community, from your drafts, I can see the stonebridge adventure playground is non existent, it will be a travesty to lose such an establishment within the

	community, the plans need to be reworked with this intrinsic part of the locality included!
██████████ I am very happy that you are expanding the school building to get more classes	
Nothing at all.	I don't want any change, am happy with how things are.
Nothing it's takes away our green space unacceptable	I would like to expand existing school site all this money for 30 school spaces the area has two school collecting children is a nightmare why don't we put a free underground parking parking also has to be provided by law
As a parent of Stonebridge school I do not want play centre to close down because we enjoy it even though we are parents Thank you	every is fine nothing should be change.
The expansion of the Stonebridge primary school is total unnecessary. Not only that, but the expansion will be build on the only proper play centre which our children have. If the play centre is closed where would our children be playing after school or in the summer for that matter? The children centre is not only where the children play. It is our second home for us as Stonebridge parents where we meet for coffee and catch up. There are friendly staff at the play centre who look after the kids whether we are there or not. Incolclusion, we love our play centre and trust the staff there. Therefore me, my family and every parents I know appose this proposal, in any shape or form. ██████████ One of the parents of Stonebridge	
I do not like this proposal Because the Adventure centre has the Right to stay. What about the children who go there think about that. ██████████	I would like this proposal to be reversed this proposal is the wirst what about the Adventure centre think about that ██████████

The only thing I like about the proposals are that there would be more housing but I would hope that this is social housing for local people, but I don't like or support the proposal to close down our play centre which has been running for 42 years. My children don't go there after school as I am at home but there has been a few occasions that I haven't been back in time and I've had to tell them to go there, also I used to attend there when I was a youngster go on trips and have a fun time. I really feel strongly that the Adventure play ground should stay and find another way to expand the school. It's not only children from Stonebridge school that go there its all the children who live in the area and I believe that its a safe and secure place for our childrebn to go after school and during half term holidays the housing situation in the area is ridiculous I have lived in Stonebridge all of my life

[REDACTED]

I don't believe these houses are going to be for us so I'm all for the Adventure Playground to stay and Stonebridge School should stay on two different sites. DON'T CLOSE THE PLAY CENTRE

Nothing

Build on the undeveloped and unused land ...create more school places elsewhere in the Borough Stonebridge and Harlesden is already 'over schooled' especially since Leopold moved to Gwenneth Rickus.

The play centre should not be closed. |

[REDACTED]

There is a gap of 45 minutes to wait. The play centre is the best place to keep The boys busy and active between the time difference. Especially when I rains or winter session. Please keep it open. It

<p>really dose a very good job. And during the holiday periods when you want the kids to keep active.</p>	
<p>Nothing. Live the park for children!!!!</p>	
	<p>The plans should be changed to preserve the Stonebridge Adventure Playground. It is a vital resource for the local area. I taught on the Stonebridge Estate for many years and know how much the playground contributed to the community. Children are only at school for part of the day. The adventure playground offers wonderful play and creative opportunities after school and in the holidays. It's presence has helped reduce crime in the area and has also helped many children progress to useful careers. A small, conventional playground is no substitute. The enlargement if the school should be replanted to leave the .adventure Playground intact so that school and playground can work together in the interests of the children.</p>
	<p>I recognise the need for additional school places to be created, particularly when the government has stopped local councils building new schools where they are required. I also support the building of new housing but think this should be council housing rather than unaffordable private housing. On this particular site, because of the needs of a disadvantaged population and the unique nature of Stonebridge Adventure Playground as an asset of community value not only as a building and playground but in terms of its staff, I think the planners should go back to the drawing board. The plans should retain the Adventure Playground as it is, or improved, and not incorporate it into the school or remove its staffing. Stonebridge and Harlesden children need a playground in a high density</p>

area to provide space to play, experience challenge and develop physical and teamwork skills They need a staffed playground so they and their parents know they are safe The playground is a place where parents and carers mix and get to know each other Children from many different primary and secondary schools mix happily at the Centre The staff are known and trusted by the community and have their respect In turn the staff know several generations of local people and have seen them grow from children into youth and adulthood This makes a unique contribution to the stability of the area The Council is in danger of concentrating on the 'accountancy' in housing and school place provision and missing the social value of what Stonebridge Adventure Playground provides Increased density of housing with no 'safety valve' such as the Playground provides will build up potential trouble for the future (more flats are to be built on the site of Bridge Park and Wembley Point across the North Circular Road may be turned into flats) The kickabout area is next to the main road posing a danger both from traffic accidents and traffic pollution The Playground's holiday and weekend provision for children with special needs and disabilities is unique and its record of integration very positive The Playground also contributes to the mental health and well-being of children and young people through the care and support it offers Any Equalities Impact Assessment would have to recognise that in closing the Adventure Playground the Council would be depriving an already disadvantaged community further as well as removing support from children with special needs, disabilities and mental health problems I [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] know at first hand the dedication of its playworkers at Stonebridge. [REDACTED]

	<p>██████████ and know of the benefit children revived from the playground. NOTE I was extremely concerned to find that Forward plans for the December Cabinet included a proposal to terminate the funding of Stonebridge Adventure Playground. This preempts the outcome of the current consultation before it closes.</p>
	<p>Make sure the play space remains the Stonebridge Adventure Playground, as there are too many community spaces being demolished. This means children and young people have no where to go after school and during holidays which means a likelihood of vandalism will occur. KEEP THE ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND IN STONEBRIDGE!"The play space is not enough space!</p>
<p>I don't like anything about the proposals, yet again brent council are selling off community assets to mercenary developers, destroying what should be a protected building, a beautiful example of architecture and history in the mistaken name of progres. who is going to benefit from this? The local community who will not be able to afford the new flats or the local children whos education is going to be disrupted while this build takes place?</p>	<p>Leave stonebridge primary school and the other facilities(stonebridge adventure playground) local residents have worked hard to build alone</p>
<p>I like the proposal to improve the open space alongside the canal feeder and to improve the school which looks very run down from the exterior although I do not really understand the improvements proposed.</p>	<p>To me the proposal looks like an excuse to sell off more land for homes to gain profit while being disguised as being an expansion to the school. The reality seems to be that the school is being made smaller with the loss of the fairly recently developed annex. The whole area facing onto the Hillside is going to become another big concrete jungle as it used to be in the old days of Stonebridge with a noisy unsupervised children's playground right next to the busy and congested main road. There will be a loss of many mature trees (at least 60) ,as well as open space which will also have an adverse effect on the</p>

	<p>local wildlife. More high rise residential homes have been proposed which are ugly and leave the residents with no personal open space or gardens. The Welsh school - a unique and special feature is being knocked down, as is the Stonebridge Adventure playground which children from far and wide in the area use and cherish as</p>
	<p>somewhere safe and fun to play and socialise. Albert Terrace is a dead end road - the name [REDACTED] is not even mentioned in the proposal document which just goes to show the lack of knowledge or consideration of the developers, yet it is Albert Terrace that is being most affected by this proposal. There are some 20-30 mature trees which will be lost to new homes being proposed on the opposite side of the road to the existing Victorian terraced properties. This will bring increased traffic and pollution and take away one of the few green areas left in residential NW10. The area is already very over-developed. There are too many cars, pollution and rubbish as people moving in lack personal space. Albert Terrace itself has only recently been re-surfaced, something that was promised long ago when the first wave of redevelopment took place and the roads were ruined by heavy traffic and lorries from the construction workers. All of the local residents had to go through years of noise, disruption, traffic chaos and filthy roads and pavements whilst this took place. We all heaved a huge sigh of relief when this work finally came to an end in our local vicinity and now we are faced with the possibility of this again right on our doorstep. This is a quiet</p>

street with a small amount of traffic which is mainly created by access to the sports centre in the recreation ground at the end of the road (this recreation ground was reduced to accommodate further housing development...) I do not want to see more homes on Albert Terrace and I do not want to see the Adventure playground closed. I am sure that the school could be expanded and improved without losing these areas. There is already the area of wasteground which is not utilised and should have been turned into a wildlife park for the local community years ago. The area between the school and Hillside could be developed without the loss of all the trees to include a new playground area for the school so that the existing school playground could be redeveloped to house classrooms for more children. This would improve the open area, provide further capacity for children without taking away trees and open spaces. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] the whole opposite side of Milton Avenue was green space and trees. This has all been lost to development of poor quality residential homes, homes that started to look tatty from the day the developers left. The number of open and safe spaces for children to play has been reduced dramatically. Many local children have told me that they do not use the new unsupervised open spaces such as that adjacent to Lawrence Avenue as they do not feel safe and prefer to use the Adventure Playground. The new homes that have already been constructed are of poor quality, the materials used soon look messy and deteriorate, they seem to be cheaply made and not in keeping with the existing Victorian terraced homes in the area. The last thing this area needs is more high rises - why spend all the time taking down the high rises of the old Stonebridge and then just build new ones. More emphasis should be spent on improving all the communal areas

	<p>and open spaces that already exist and educating people in caring for their community. Surely providing more homes will only result in the need for more schools so emphasis should be put on improving and expanding the schools and not selling off every last bit of open or green space to developers for poor quality high rise cardboard boxes, how can this kind of development ever be sustainable or improve anyone's lives?</p>
<p>I like the development of the green area alongside the canal feeder</p>	<p>I do not like the proposal for new buildings on Albert Terrace replacing the side of the street currently with trees. I do not want the Stonebridge Adventure Playground to be closed. I do not want more high rise buildings built alongside the Harrow Road. Brent took down the old Stonebridge and it's high rises and all the problems they brought and now seems to be building them all again. The quality of the new builds is very poor, they are too high, blocking out light and giving the feeling of another concrete jungle. There are not enough trees and green areas. Albert Terrace is a dead end and quiet road, it is one of the few roads in London where you can park without a problem, all that will change. It is a little piece of tranquility and we are all worried that it will be ruined. Half of the Recreation ground has already been taken away for houses in the last round of building, there are not many green bits left, it is suffocating. There is nowhere for children to play.</p>
<p>Nothing - Becasue it does not benefit the youth's of today. - They are our future, so why take away the one (only) thing that is keeping them on the straight and narrow??? It's nonesense!</p>	<p>Nothing really! But if you can it would be nice to see:- - New/improved building (for play center) - More facilities for young people in Brent</p>
<p>I do not think this centre should be closed down. As it help most kidds to stay of the streets. I think the school should relocate some where else.</p>	

<p>I love Stonebridge Adventure Playground it's the only place my parents let me go all day without worrying and calling me every 30 minutes. I actually get to play and socialise with my friends some of which I made their. Please save the playground.</p>	
<p>No i don't like the proposal because of the exclusion fo the play centre. For over 20 years of my life i can remember the centre thre for the kids, not just the Stonebridge kids but brent, Where are my kids & others supose to go? So i say NO to your Proposals & Yes to keeping the Centre [REDACTED]</p>	
<p>Where as changes are welcomed - NO Provision has been made to replac the Adventure Playground whihc is necessary for the children to play in safely. The Adventure Playground has been there for more than 40 years, the children feels safe and protected when they are there, with adult supervision: The green space that is proposed - there will be a free for all - and children will not feel safe going there. [REDACTED] has been going there for a long time after school, school holidays and when opened other times. I feel there should move the Adventure Playground elsewhere not too far away, still providing the same facilities but in a new place. Not some unattended open space that is already there. I feel that although you have asked for my views - I fel the plans are already mader and nothing will be done about the playground. To take the playground that has been there so long providing a good service to the children in the area to be replace by existing grass area is not acceptable.</p>	
<p>I would like a new building in Stonebridge adventure playground and also I would like to keep Stonebridge Adventure Playground to stay open. It is a benefit for the childrens needs. Nothing</p>	<p>I would like a new building. I would like to keep it open.</p>
<p>I don't like them</p>	<p>dont extend the stonebridge school don't build on the adventure playcenter no unstaffed areas keep all existing trees</p>

	<p>the places you build are not affordable for our community no more bild more open space</p>
Nothing	<p>I and many others want you to keep stonebridge adventure playground. It's the only safe, fully supervised area where our children can go and we don't have to worry. It's fun and educational an asset to the community and to Brent you should be making plans to improve it not demolish it. As for extending the school and making more housing the area is crowded enough Save stonebridge adventure park for the future of our children</p>
I don't like anything about the proposals	<p>I can't believe that in this day and age, you are taking away a safe, supervised play area which kids love, to substitute it with an unsupervised area near a main road. An area which is totally unsafe. It seems that Brent council does not care about the children in the area. Stonebridge adventure playground is a wonderful and safe place which kids love. Us parents can leave out kids there without a worry. Not only do they provide an outdoor facility for kids play they also have indoor facilities which children are free to use. It's educational too my children love it there if only there were more places like this. Many generations have used this playground and for you to even think about taking it away from our future is disgusting. keep stonebridge adventure playground open. For the good of the children in the area. What will they do without it hang about it groups on the dodgy streets of harlesden. Think long and hard before taking the only safe place kids have to play one of the best adventure playgrounds around! Just so you can provide more housing don't you think the area had enough housing go build somewhere else and to provide an extra 30 places in stonebridge school! What good is that you need to provide more schools not just an extra 30 places.</p>

<p>I am opposed to the proposal of expansion of stonebridge school. My main reason is because you are taking the one asset this community has from our children. A safe, fully supervised place for our children to play and learn out of school hours. It's an asset to the community and has been for many years. To think that you the council are planning on destroying it provide a few extra school places and replace it with an open unsafe unsupervised play area on a very busy road makes me wonder do you actually care about what happens to the kids in our area.</p>	<p>Stop the expansion and keep stonebridge adventure playground open! I have given my reasons above its the only safe supervised play area of its kind not only in the area but I believe in Brent. Our children love it there and children have been for many years</p>
<p>I Don't think its a good idea because you will lose the play centre which is for the kids and where the kids can play in a safe environment. I've lived in Stonebridge since [REDACTED] and went too Stonebridge Primary School and the playcentre as a child so I know the importance of the playcentre being somewhere to go and play safely without getting caught up in the bad elements of Stonebridge if I didn't go to the playcentre.</p>	<p>More area's for the kids to play because kids need to play to help togetherness, sharing, caring and understanding different children from different ethics so they can grow together and live as one community</p>
<p>I bring my [REDACTED] down to stonebridge adventure its a lovely environment and the staff are friendly and alert. Eventho it open access they try and make sure that all areas are covered with staff especially when their is over 100 children on summer days. I would like the current playground to stay no new one.</p>	
<p>I use to attended the playground. I now send my [REDACTED] down other to play. They enjoy it very much and I know there safe as the staff I recognise from when I used to attend. They're made great improvement especialy to the outside area the children enjoy it and from their happy so am I. A new space is not needed the one we have now is fine. Stonebridge Adventure Playground</p>	

<p>I don't want the proposal to go ahead I use to attend the playground when I was younger, I have ■ children ■ and they now attend the playground they enjoy it and have lots of fun. They feel relax and have made lots of friend there is the playground we have NO WORRIES they are first aid trained and enjoy working with the children and parents. I will miss it if they take it away this is the ONLY centre left in BRENT in whihc children can come and play in a safe friendly environment. SAVE STONEBRIDGE ADVENTURE.</p>	
<p>The proposed development plan looks nicely in the picture, but in fact when inhabited by tenants take more space than it looks, appears new problems with garbage collection bigger traffic jam in the morning 8:30 -9: 15 and 3:00 -4: 00, access to two schools which are located in there is difficult to overcome by pedestrians despite open space and how you narrow that I do not know.</p>	<p>My ■ attend to the Our of lady school the school playground from the street is very of poor condition do not understand why you want to build a playground next to other require repair.</p>
<p>The proposals are trying to keep the Stonebridge area a community.</p>	<p>Stonebridge adventure playground is a focal point of the community and needs to be included in any proposals. The use of the open space has served and helped many children and helped to fulfil UNCRC which clearly states that children have a right to play. This right should take priority over other rights because Stonebridge adventure playground is one of the few free, safe ply areas left.</p>
<p>The consolidation of Stonebridge School on one site and the additional classes because this will benefit the children and staff and help place children without school places in the south of Brent.</p>	<p>We are concerned about the reduction in playing space and feel it would have a detrimental effect on children in an area where play space is limited. We are concerned that young people might turn to other less productive pursuits.</p>
<p>I do not like the threat to Stonebridge Adventure Playground -please ensure itis not affected by any decision</p>	<p>NO threat to any of Stonebridge Adventure Playground</p>
	<p>we dont want to close this play center we are parent stonebridge schooll</p>
<p>We would like the centre to stay open has the children enjoy coming here in the eveling and on summer holiday</p>	

<p>14th Nov 2014. Hub The pictures looked good and excited us ... But... Stonebridge in the "public" eye for better reasons ... But ... More housing ... But... We can have our say ... But ... The proposal is as expected - misleading - Why does Brent Council paint such a poor picture of the reality?</p>	<p>PLEASE CANCEL PLANS. NFA Leave the school at two sites and build on top of the annexe This proposal is really about new housing for new residents. The Stonebridge school has the Annexe as part of it so your proposal is misleading when it says expanding by 210 places. No way should you build more properties in that area of Brent. Take out the overcrowding people are already on top of each other. Who benefits - give we in Stonebridge already the true benefit not your own staff and friends of the Council. WE DO NOT LIKE THE PROPOSALS</p>
<p>I most definately love the playground my dad use to go and now I attend it's lot of fun. Need it to stay I feel safe there</p>	
<p>I DON'T LIKE THE PROPOSAL. I ALWAYS GO TO THE ADVENTURE PLAYGROUNDS WITH MY FRIENDS. WE MEET UP DER TO CHILL AND HAVE FUN WE FEEL VERY SAFE THERE, SOMETIMES THEY PROVE US WITH FOOD AND DRINKS ESPECIALLY ON HOT DAYS SO WE DON'T HAVE TO LEAVE AND WE CAN JUST ENJOY THE DAY ALL THE TIME WITH NO WORRIES.</p>	
<p>Personally the expansion programme/proposal is a wonderful idea in high insight but in reality an encroachment upon a Community Playground that has helped to grow secure and safeguard many of the adults you see today. I am wondering why it is necessary to distrust a space that has done much in the way of stabilising a community. With unsupervised spaces I believe that the level of crime if not idol gathering in a borough that actually could do with less off. Alternative Solutions expanding Stonebridge School elsewhere - alternative housing solutions and better marketing of the next consultation SAP stays</p>	

<p>I think this is a loaded question. Why don't you ask "What do you think about the proposals?" My view is that the current open space has a wildness in places and that is wonderful for children wanting to play and adults wanting a little piece of wild greenery in an urban, concrete town.</p>	<p>I would like you to bring back a library facility for the people of Stonebridge.</p>
<p>That Stonebridge is being considered and clearly there is a bag of money available</p>	<p>Under no circumstances should there be free staff parking. Council employees must pay for parking. No parking at all outside the school location as proposed. There have been accidents and near-misses and money spent in the past years to deal with parking, road users and vehicles mounting the curb onto the green. No houses by the school There must be more than 30 new school places You must not remove the Welsh School. Why is no decisions have been made have they been given notice to move on. Under no circumstances should there be a new play area near the main road. The current playground should remain.the petition of over 1000 signatures adds weight to this. The council should reconsider the over building Stonebridge. There are 2 sites currently in progress and yet more houses on top of each other Not proposals are not detailed enough. It gives very little about what the school will achieve for the pupils.</p>
<p>I DO NOT AGREE TO BUILD THERE. THE SCHOOL NEEDS MORE PLACES BUT NOT HOUSES. SO BUILD ON TOP OF ANNEX. [REDACTED]</p>	
<p>N/A</p>	<p>I would like to change everything about the ideas because I want stonebridge adventure playground to stay.</p>
<p>School expansion - more school places - accessibility - improved sports provision - hopefully community can use - housing opportunities - cleaner modern environment</p>	<p>Clean up canal Improve overall look and feel of school Modern & efficient</p>
	<p>We would like the play centre to stay open for the kids can come and play after school. and in the summer holidays people can socialize kids can have fun</p>

<p>There are aspects of the expansion that is needed such as more school spaces and the generation of new homes but that is all proposed to the detriment of the Adventure Playground. There is no proposal made for a new adventure playground which is an important site for the well being of the kids from the surrounding communities and the children who attend the nearby schools. My child plays there most days after school as there are different activities that he can partake in, new friends that he can meet. For adults, it's a place we can talk while the kids enjoy themselves</p>	
	<p>DONT BUILD ON THE ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND OR LET THE SCHOOL STEAL IT...KIDS FROM LOTS OF SCHOOLS USE THIS PLACE ...HARLESDEN LADY OF LORDS, CONVENT, COPLAND BRENTFIELD, BRAINCROFT, LEOPOLD , AND MORE.....KEEP IT.. STONE BRIDGE SCHOOL HAS NO RIGHT TO TRY AND TAKE THIS PLACE IT HAS BEEN FOR GENERATIONS OF OUR KIDS ...SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY NOT THE SCHOOL...SUPPORT STONEBRIDGE ADVENTURE</p>
<p>The school expansion at the expense of the Adventure Playground is a backward step. The playground is a crucial facility for the children of the community. As someone who worked at the school when it first opened I have first hand knowledge of its effectiveness. the fact that it is still thriving after all this time is testament to its value</p>	
<p>Dont/ it should of never gone ahead</p>	<p>The proposal all together/ the adventure playground is the community HISTORY , my history and my children history / I'm hoping it WILL b my grandchildren history</p>
<p>Not much - you're destroying a priceless asset by destroying the playground!</p>	<p>Leave the playground ALONE. Disadvantaged children need it.</p>
	<p>Keep the Adventure Playground...the children need it</p>
	<p>Keep adventure playground</p>

	<p>████████████████████ What will happen to the play centre? Is there an alternative provision? Parents and Children feel that it is a safe space (supervised) for their Children to play and exercise after School</p>
<p>████████████████████ I think it's a great idea to bring both schools together and all the children will be under one roof. One Family. One School.</p>	
<p>We dont want to close the play center because it is fun and cool. I like play center because it is so fun and cool for evbroby. *The best thing is ██████████.</p>	
<p>We dont want it to close. It is fun and I like it so much. My best thing is ██████████</p>	
<p>████████████████████ It is extremely important that the Children's Adventure Playground remains open and unchanged. It has a history of supporting children and young people of Brent for over 40 years. I became a Child Protection Officer in Brent during the early 90's. Brent's Children Services were in crisis. One point of stability for children and their families was the Stonebridge Adventure Playground. It remains so, to this day and should continue to do so ██████████</p>	
<p>████████████████████ Idea for expansion of the school as all the pupils from Stonebridge can come together.</p>	
<p>Nothing- Taking away the community spirit for the children</p>	<p>The whole proposal- My children & grandchildren feel threaten by this proposal</p>
<p>We lick it becas fum ai i catlth and fum. facyou</p>	
	<p>Don't touch the Adventure Playground!! It's been an amazing place for the whole of my life. Special needs and mainstream children and their parents play together. Parents rely on it. There are no comparable sites in the area.</p>

The centre has been a blessing in the community. It allows children to be off the streets and to be doing something of value, whether that be making quick snack, making new friends and developing better social skills, the centre also allows children with SEN to play in a safe environment. Many of my family has gone to the centre and now my children go. Staff are welcoming, professional and always willing to help. WITHOUT the centre children will be left to roam the streets and crime will increase. [REDACTED]

(Much Information is Lacking) The Council has a poor record of fourfiting liked buildings, the listed status of the School is not even mentioned. Has the Willesden Local History Society already been consulted? The sites to which the Welsh School might be moved if the proposals are approved should be revealed. It was strange that no representative of the Welsh School attended the first two consultation meetings. The alternative sites need to have the approval of the school and not involve any expenditure by the Schol. Has the Welsh Assembly Government already been consulted? (Two letters on the subject have been ignored. Written when the proposal was first announced) An allegation has been made (not by me) that in comparison with the development of a French School on the site of the abandoned Town Hall that there is an element of racial prejudice on the part of the Council, on which it has been accused on other occasions. French is not an official language anywhere in the United Kingdom, Welsh is. Other objects to the proposals were made at the first consultation meeting that presumably may result in legal action of some kind. There is no reference to the possible design of housing on the corner of Twybridge Way or indeed anywhere else; That may lack popular appeal. Does the Design

<p>Review Panel still exist, and how is it constituted? Any acknowledgement or response to these suggestions would be appreciated. (The council is to be congratulated on the general design of the consultation document) [REDACTED]</p>	
<p>I think the proposals are very good. The school is old and needs redeveloping. More housing is definitely needed in the area. Having visited the adventure playground in the summer with my children I'm sorry to say it was awful, dirty and needs to be relocated somewhere else or closed down. I think that the regeneration of the canal will be a bonus to the look of the area, and it could be a place to have a picnic with our children. Open green space is needed in Harlesden.</p>	

Email responses

1. We welcome the creation of additional primary school places that can help to meet the current and future demand being experienced.
2. I have consulted with colleagues in Camden and we have no further comment or any objections in relation to this consultation.
3. No comments
4. An ambitious plan. I hope you can pull it off.
5. I am a Stonebridge Ward resident [REDACTED]
 I wish to oppose the closure of the Stonebridge Adventure playground, although the facility can perhaps be moved to a new site.
 If you persist in attempting to close the playground anywhere, then you need to publish financial statements of subsidies, running-costs and capital needs, long-term usage figures, and why you think the facility is no longer fit for purpose (as far as I know, children are still children, and this is an austerity-hit area, not often visited by the wealthy banking criminal classes).
 Regarding other matters, you should protect the maximum number of mature trees. You allowed over a dozen healthy examples to be felled on parts of the Stonebridge estate, yet the land, facing Winchelsea Road, has remained empty for seven years. Furthermore, it took a successful campaign to impose a 1997 Tree Preservation Order to stop even more trees from being destroyed.
 You need to document and justify the removal of every significant tree, individually. On new parkland paths, you must allow for the cost of robustly-installed UK highways standard signage, where pedestrians have to share paths with cyclists, and also where those arrangements END (since around such areas, some cyclists regard normal 'pedestrian-only' pavements as fair game). Do not make any arrangement 'informal'.
 Cycle paths from your parkland paths should cross pavements, using

contrasting surfaces and tactile paving, to drop-kerbs onto surrounding streets, with minor build-outs to prevent parking.

Since recent new buildings in the area display water damage, you must insist that planning applications document why this will not happen - surfaces that weather badly should be rejected (some turn green!), mortar that leeches out and stains brickwork should be banned (some turns white!), and over-flow pipes on buildings must not even exist externally, or only if designed so they will definitely not stain walls below (some build up ugly permanent stains over several floors!).

All these mistakes seem routinely made in approved designs in Brent, and it would cost Brent Planning nothing to demand higher standards.

6. The architects MUST redesign the project to KEEP the well-established adventure playground which is VITAL to the well-being and safety of the young, local population.

The leadfall in the proposed, unsupervised space could be harmful to the children's developing lungs.

Selling land to developers is unlikely to be beneficial to Brent in the long-term.

The architects MUST redesign the project to KEEP the well-established adventure playground which is VITAL to the well-being and safety of the young, local population.

7. "The Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS) provides archaeological advice to boroughs in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and GLAAS Charter.

Having considered the proposals with reference to information held in the Greater London Historic Environment Record and/or made available in connection with this application, I conclude that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on heritage assets of archaeological interest.

Although this application refers to two large areas, neither area actually lies within a Borough designated Archaeological Priority Area. An environmental desk based assessment was carried out over the general area of Stonebridge, Harlesden, in 1996 by Oscar Faber. This assessment indicated that the sites have had quite heavy industrial use for most of the 20th century and the land is considered to have a high potential for contamination. In light of this and the absence of any known archaeological deposits in the area, I conclude that no further archaeological safeguards are required in relation to this application.

No further assessment or conditions are therefore necessary.

Please note that this response relates solely to archaeological considerations. If necessary my Historic Buildings and Areas colleagues should be consulted separately regarding statutory matters."

Copy of A4 Document submitted 17 times (*this has been typed for clarity*)

RESPONSE TO The Stonebridge Primary School proposals consultation by London Borough of Brent

This is a citizen's reply to the consultation of 6 October to 17 November 2014

Homes

Homes are needed but new homes must accommodate older homes and the needs of a financially poor area. Stonebridge's community is already housed. The local authority's rehousing policy is unlikely to assist those who are overcrowded and needing one extra room. However, perhaps you could advise us who will be housed in these new Properties? It seems highly unlikely from your proposals that rehousing will be for those already in Stonebridge that desperately need the help.

Proposed housing at the annex site seems reasonable (rigid conditions being met), but not for the site both sides of the intended park (at the main of Harrow road/Hillside). These houses will obscure the wonderful view of the wonderful sight of a Listed Building, the Stonebridge School. Also, the small grass area these properties are proposed on is just about sufficient to keep as it is (cleaned up with some benches and bins). New housing, school expansion and play areas, accounting for the following points (1-21 below), should clearly outlined at the outset and for this consultation to work properly more answers are required to the questions and queries raised about the proposals.

With consultation everything should be stated. Even on-line there are no links to anything else). No lead officer name and no contact telephone number or section. There are no statistics, no scoping documents, no impact assessment, no health and safety risk assessment, and no report from parent governors or children's school council. What do the people in local industry say? What about the trade unions? Medical practitioners? TFL? Those people who live bordering Stonebridge? We would like to hear their views at an early stage of the consultations and then parents could make even more informed choices.

Like with any new housing development, but which seems to have been somewhat ignored there needs to be

- 1) **Rubbish**: sufficient areas for storage of waste bins and recycling and enforcement of dumping rubbish including generally bin bags and fly tipping.
- 2) **Storage of rubbish**: stored at height and away from foxes.
- 3) **Environmental impact re rubbish**: rubbish/recycling should not be left to pollute the roadside or air. Foul smells and spillages should be taken care of quickly. And residents should be informed not to put left over or stale foods out onto the roadside or pavements (as is common place in Stonebridge).
- 4) **Location of bins**: residential or business garbage bins and recycling should not have a permanent home on the roadside/pavements or walkways of our boroughs.
- 5) **Lighting**: there should be adequate street lighting and means for emergency lighting if normal lamp-posts lights go out. Lighting should be permanent throughout the evenings and nights when the construction workers go home and in any case at all times where we live.
- 6) **Rents**: must be more than consideration for there to be social housing rents should be achievable for payment by workers who do not rely on social benefits but maintain their way through working jobs that pay low income e.g. (or less than basic living wage). Rent per week including service charge should not be more

- than £130 per week for a two bedroom property. There must be a reliance away from housing benefit and council tax support unless for those who are destitute and in desperate need. For those who are reliant on housing benefit or financial support assistance should be offered now e.g. workshops and financial planning, how to maximise income and help those who are losing jobs due to budget cuts caused by council officials and employees overspending (and spending badly).
- 7) **Footpaths**: there must be sufficient walkways, wide enough to let two pushchairs pass side by side. It is not sensible to have average but narrow walkways - those types of walkways cause obstructions. Times have changed we need space (see petition, also signed by some Stonebridge School parents - take a look at "The Avenue" Stonebridge. It is cluttered. We need sufficient space. The petition with Brent Council is ongoing and due to go to Committee January 2015. We ask you to pay particular attention to the needs of the children and wheelchair users.
 - 8) **Dog mess**: what do you propose to do about dog fouling during building and after?
 - 9) **Employees**: the workers, on construction sites, should have sufficient welfare resources and somewhere to sit off the work site. Temporary canteen portakabin at ground level away from the worksite. There should be a parent liaison officer from the Stonebridge community who is permanently employed to engage residents' views and understand the important nature of health and safety and our needs. Work should be given to locals - all arguments against this should be scrutinised by our elected officials.
 - 10) **Parking and roads**: There should be sufficient parking and a mix of residential permit zones and free parking and adequate enforcing of this. There should be free to park visitors' bays and clear signage which can be seen before turning into roads. New roads should have some one-way systems that are enforced (unlike Farm Road and Marshall Street in Stonebridge). Parking in public funded schools, unless for short term visitors should be paid for by the staff at the school. It is also about time there is sufficient disabled bays in and around the Stonebridge area and certainly one at each Brent school location. Council employees like residents should pay for parking at their place of work car parks. If not parking should be free parking for all in Stonebridge. What is the council's policy on giving employees free parking, tax-free perks at the public expense?
 - 11) **CCTV**: this should be working and operating in parks, street corners and road-side. Adequate monitors should be put in place. How does the expansion project propose to manage this?
 - 12) **Traffic**: there will be increasing numbers of residents and visitors in/to the area. What will the authority do about traffic flow and the zebra crossing and other pedestrian crossings? Will they be relocated, changed or are there any other proposals? What, if any, will there be in terms of increased signage located in the area at the annexe and school?
 - 13) **Trees**: does the Authority, school, planners, designers etc agree to conservation and replanting the trees? What will you do to relocate the trees? In any case we do not agree to the proposals to build homes that close to the schools (including Our Lady of Lourdes) and the trees should remain except the very large one by the entrance gate at the Stonebridge School.
 - 14) **Cycle and transport network**: how does the expansion take into account any need for cyclists? How could a route be linked to accommodate the current cycle network and borough's Long Term Transport Strategy? Will a new (or returning bus route) come into place to accommodate the extra services required by new

residents, the extra 30 pupil places and more visitors to the area? Where are the results of your consultations with TFL.

- 15) **Impact assessment:** Please publish your results along with your public sector duties in respect of equalities and how your proposals accommodate those groups of people. We do not believe it is enough for the authority to keep asking about our race, age, sexual orientation etc. if you do not publish the results where we in Stonebridge can easily access them and like them to consultations/surveys like this one. Results should not be tied up in hard to access documents containing pages of irrelevant information. In your consultation document you make no mention as to how you are willing to accommodate those of us with difficulties. Sure this information is already available. Also you have not devised a proposal in a form to solicit the views of the children of the area and what they think about the removal of the playground and how they feel they would cope with the changes to their school and places they love to go.

Summary

New housing (bricks and water) should not be seen as the total answer to the problems in Stonebridge). People do not need to be confined to living on top of each other, meaning, the population numbers and buildings is making an already dense Stonebridge even more over-crowded.

Proposal for school site

- 16) What will happen to the Welsh School? Is it true you have already given the school/occupiers notice to move on? How will their relocation be funded? Has a compensation package been provided to the school and if so, what does it involve and how much money is included? Will the children (and/or staff) of the Welsh School be assimilated into the Stonebridge School and are their numbers included in the figures of pupil numbers already at the Stonebridge School main site?

Does it require a mathematician to work out the following...

- 17) **How many new places?** According to your proposals you state the Stonebridge Primary School "...has 420 pupils at the main school site and 180 in an annexe building at present..." You would close the temporary school places in the annexe and create extra school places on the main school site making a total of 630 places at Stonebridge Primary School. However the 'Stonebridge School' already has 600 pupil places according to your own figures. That would mean the expansion project would be spending several million pounds and several years to create just a measly 30 NEW pupil places. If this is about actual school places then your maths appear misleading as the proposal only identify 30 NEW pupil places. Your hard copy 'Stonebridge Primary School Expansion Proposals' does very little (30 places). Perhaps that carries one extra qualified teacher and more unqualified personnel. This is hardly meeting the 'rising demands' for primary school places. 30 NEW places is merely a drop in the ocean.
- 18) **Reality:** The current Stonebridge community including parents and pupils are entitled to accurate information, realistic aims and benefit in real terms from the proposals currently being consulted on.
- 19) **Parking:** There should be no segregated parking at all, for employees, by the school. Access to road areas should be restricted to deliveries and vehicles transporting the children.
- 20) **Vendors:** There should be no unlicensed vendors/sellers in or outside the

school. This includes the ice-cream van. Those that are permitted to sell should be licensed and registered and referenced to HMRC. There are too many arguments in the area over the sale of goods and exchange of monies. Keep it away from our children.

- 21) **Parks and open space:** please refer to the previous plans and the cost involved clean up the canal bank site. Money was spent and the open space is secluded and not helpful there. The existing Stonebridge Adventure Playground should not close. It is vital that our children have somewhere to go. The workers at the playground also work at the Stonebridge Adventure Playground will they be assimilated in to permanent roles at the school? The Playground serves as a gap between school home time and actual at home time. Rightly or wrongly this is what is demanded by the children and parents and is served according to requirements. It is free of charge to use and keeps children off the street in a protected compound. A park or play space is not protected - the drawings do not even show a shelter and in Stonebridge no park or play space in the open is free from the pollutant tobacco smoke, alcohol drinkers, drug sellers and users, from dogs and fouling, from unclear broken glass that stays in place for days or weeks. The Playground at least has a good reputation, we are sure the designers and planners etc. mean well but they do their work based on what is given to them by the local authority and not what we the public require. However, we require the Stonebridge Adventure Playground to stay. And stay it must. It is part indoor/outdoor smoke free environment where the children do not need to leave to get refreshments or drinking water. Perhaps your open space can go inside the school grounds.
- 22) **Walkways:** With any play area there should be proper walkways/paths to walk onto or through the area. It is short-sighted to have designs showing green grass around the seating when effectively that grass will not be maintained during wet times and will be full of mud. No-one likes to clean mud and muck off children's footwear.
- 23) **Adult Education:** The Stonebridge area does not need another adult education centre. BACES can be used. The Hub has excellent capacity and Harlesden Library is a sensible location and the very expensive Civic Centre could be used. It's a public building and all the community should be encouraged to use it. There is certainly no need to build a new centre. Why is a new building required? If an adult education is required why not use part of the very large Gwyneth Ricketts building - some parts remain under occupied/unused. The Leopold School can be easily secured and separate entrances would not cost anything to create. Why not work in partnership with North West London College?

In summary, the proposals are not welcome.

Not enough school places are being created, the over populating of Stonebridge is a real concern and the benefit to the local community (and individual households), in respect of real terms affordability where housing is concerned, is highly doubtful.

We, my household, DO NOT support these proposals.

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Cabinet
23 February 2015

**Report from the Strategic Director of
Regeneration & Growth**

For Action

Wards affected:
ALL

Development Funds Programme Development for 2015-16

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks the approval of Cabinet for the proposed spatial and thematic allocation of Section 106 funds for expenditure in 2015-16 and commissioning specific projects and budget amounts detailed herein.
- 1.2 The allocation and projects have been reported to CMT in November and PCG in December and this report reflects feedback from those two meetings.
- 1.3 This report has been prepared with the involvement of the Operational Directors of Planning & Regeneration, Housing and Employment, Property & Projects, Environment & Neighbourhoods, Environment & Protection and other relevant officers responsible for regeneration and inward investment across the borough.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the proposed 2015-16 programme of Development Funded projects and authorises the relevant Heads of Service to deliver this programme using the allocated budget and resources available.
- 2.2 That Cabinet notes the 2015-16 allocation of £10.43m of S106 funding in the following split: £4.8m for Education; £0.6m for Transportation, £0.5m for Parks and Sports; £0.1m for Landscaping; £0.2m for Employment & Enterprise; £1.5m for Affordable Housing; £2.3m for Environment & Sustainability; £0.05m for Healthcare; and £0.4m for specific projects in Growth Areas.

- 2.3 That Cabinet notes that any necessary statutory or non-statutory consultation and the consideration of any objections or representations shall be undertaken by the relevant Heads of Service responsible for delivering the projects.
- 2.4 That Cabinet authorises the Director of Planning & Regeneration to approve and relevant Heads of Service to deliver projects in 2015-16 over and above the allocations and projects detailed herein where the exceptional circumstances criteria as set out in section 3.7, below, are met.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Section 106 agreements are legal agreements between local authorities and developers, which are linked to a planning permission. Planning obligations are secured within S106 agreements when it is considered that a development will have negative impacts that cannot be addressed by conditions to the planning permission. Where the Developer cannot directly mitigate the impact the Council can instead take a financial contribution to undertake works. Section 106 obligations should only be used where a planning condition would not be effective or relevant. Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy 2010 (as amended) sets out three tests to be satisfied where a planning obligation must be: (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; (b) directly related to the development; and (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Accordingly, these tests are now law and must be met to comply.
- 3.2 This report is concerned with the allocation of those funds which have been paid by developers held by the Council (hereafter “development funds”).
- 3.3 Development funds secured via S106 agreements can only fund those projects which meet the terms of the agreements from which the funding is derived and can be returned to the developer if the monies are not spent within the period specified in the terms and conditions of the Agreement.
- 3.4 Objectives for the selection and shortlisting of projects are split into “Essential” criteria and “Desirable” criteria:

Essential criteria

- meets the terms of the legal agreement;
- mitigates the impact of the development from which funding is derived; and
- has Member support

Desirable criteria

- meets the objectives of the Borough Plan and the Regeneration Plan and helps to facilitate growth;
- meets Service Area objectives;
- is capable of attracting additional funding streams; and
- has local community support

- 3.5 The **essential criteria** mean any project proposed herein is subject to final verification that the funding is available from suitable sources, which will be ascertained following feedback on this paper from PCG. As a principle, providing

funding for relevant infrastructure is an important means by which development can help to mitigate the impact an increased population can have on a local area and its amenities and social infrastructure; therefore new or expanded social or physical infrastructure in areas of greater development pressure will be prioritised over maintenance or minor improvements to existing infrastructure in areas of low development pressure.

3.6 It is not essential for a project to meet any of the **desirable criteria**, but where there are competing demands for money then it is proposed that projects which meet one or more of the desirable criteria will be favoured.

3.7 **Exceptional circumstances** can arise where S106 funding needs to be committed quickly without reporting to Members (for example where match-funding is needed to support a funding bid, or if the funding can only be used on a particular project and so there is no decision to be made); the criteria for exceptional allocation are:

Exceptional circumstances criteria

- the funding would otherwise expire; or
- the funding is needed to support a bid for external funding which meets corporate priorities; or
- Members approve a project at Cabinet which clearly states that S106 funds are being sought; or
- there is a clear public interest e.g. an urgent road safety project; or
- the funding can only be used for the project concerned

3.8 Since July 2013 the Standard Charge has been replaced with the Community Infrastructure Levy (“CIL”) in Brent and the Council will no longer seek financial contributions for infrastructure via S106 agreements. As at 1 April 2014 the total CIL income stood at £15,200. It will take some time for CIL receipts¹ to reach levels comparable to historic and current S106 receipts (see section 4.1, below). This report focuses on the expenditure of Section 106 monies as there is currently no approved process for allocating CIL resources; a proposal was reported to CMT on 7 August 2014 but is yet to be reported to Members. Consultation with Service Units to refresh the Strategic Infrastructure Plan is underway and this is expected to be reported to PCG in March 2015 and to Cabinet thereafter.

¹ Total CIL receipts to end of Q3 2014-15: Total £3,486,002 (2013-14 £15,200; 2014-15 (Q1-Q3) £3,470,802)

4.0 S106 Finances

4.1 Income

- 4.1.1 S106 income last year (13-14) was £11.8m compared with a five-year average of £3.6m. This increase was a result of an audit of S106 records which enabled officers to pursue unpaid amounts and should not be expected in future years: this is illustrated by income of £2.4m for the first three quarters of 2014-15.

Year	Amount Received
2008-09	£2,671,963
2009-10	£1,653,213
2010-11	£3,330,850
2011-12	£5,952,354
2012-13	£4,291,364
2013-14	£11,754,615
2014-15 (excl. Q4)	£2,403,304

Table 1: Amount triggered, paid

4.2 Planning Legal, Monitoring & Compliance Fees

- 4.2.1 Most legal agreements contain a clause that commits the Developer to paying the Council's reasonable professional costs in preparing the legal agreement and in monitoring and enforcing compliance with the obligations within the deed. As part of the pursuit of unpaid obligations, officers included reasonable fees in the invoices based on a standard sum of £250 per obligation to be monitored. This yielded £36,300 monitoring fee income in 2013-14 and £36,250 monitoring fee income in the first three quarters of 2014-15.

4.3 Outstanding income

- 4.3.1 As at 1 January 2015 a total of £1.3m has been triggered by development and invoices have been issued; of that sum, a first reminder has been issued for £0.1m unpaid after the initial 30 day payment terms whilst a second reminder has been issued for £1.0m unpaid after the first reminder. Instalments have been agreed in five cases.
- 4.3.2 Those which remain unpaid after the second reminder will be passed to the Debt Recovery team in Finance for further action possibly leading to Legal action.

Status (and no. of cases)	Amount owed
First request (4)	£91,493
First chase (1)	£107,704
Second chase (17)	£1,044,046
Instalments (5)	£37,307
TOTAL	£1,280,550

Table 2: Amount of invoiced, unpaid

4.4 Expenditure

- 4.4.1 Expenditure is due to increase to a projected £8m this financial year (2014-15) from a four-year average² of £2.1m. This increase in expenditure is explained by the large amounts commissioned to Education projects to help expand school places across the borough and projects within the five Growth Areas.

Year	Amount spent
2010-11	£2,399,326
2011-12	£1,027,550
2012-13	£2,841,701
2013-14	£1,934,108
2014-15	£8,024,413 ³

Table 3: Amount expended

4.5 Final budget 2014/15

- 4.5.1 A total of £8m has been commissioned to projects to be undertaken this financial year; this sum comprises newly commissioned funds of £7.3m and £0.7m carried forward from unfinished projects from the previous financial year.
- 4.5.2 The table below shows the budget of each Service Unit that has been undertaking the works.

Service Unit	Commissioned this FY	Carried forward	Budget current FY
Other Capital Projects	£1,201,215	£86,454	£1,287,669
Parks & Sports	£920,704	£170,581	£1,091,285
Transportation	£955,516	£216,771	£1,172,287
Safer Streets	£13,000	£0.00	£13,000
Education	£3,819,222	£0.00	£3,819,222
Landscape	£273,656	£225,096	£498,752
Employment & Enterprise	£142,200	£0.00	£142,200
TOTAL	£7,325,512	£698,901	£8,024,413

Table 4: Amount commissioned 2014-15, by Service Unit

4.6 Amount available to commission 2014-15

- 4.6.1 As at 1 April 2014 a total of £19,965,150 was available to commission, subject to the terms of the legal agreements. See overleaf for a breakdown of the funds allocated by Service Unit and by Ward.
- 4.6.2 The allocation of Standard Charge funds, which constitute the majority of funds secured since October 2007, broadly reflects the ratio for Standard Charge contributions of 50% for Education, 25% for Transportation and 25% for Parks, Sports and Landscaping derived from the evidence base for the S106 Supplementary Planning Guidance (2007).

² Records not available for 2009-10

³ Amount for 2014-15 is budgeted figure

4.6.3 Other funds are secured for specific projects or types of infrastructure within the legal agreements.

4.7 Time-limited funds

4.7.1 A total of £1.41m of the funds that have been earmarked for proposed projects in section 5.4 below must be commissioned by the end of FY 2016-17; of that figure, none is required to be commissioned during 14-15, £0.49m must be commissioned during 15-16 and £0.93m during 16-17⁴.

4.7.2 Excluding money that has been earmarked for proposed projects in section 5.4 below, no unallocated funds require commissioning during 15-16. A total of £0.22m must be commissioned by the end of FY 2016-17 and commissioning of these funds will be prioritised during the budget-setting process for 16-17.

⁴ The figures for 15/16 and 16/17 do not total due to rounding

Ward	Education	Landscape, Parks & Sports	Transportation	Sustainability	Regeneration & Growth ⁵	Affordable Housing	Employment & Enterprise	Environmental Health	Grand Total
Alperton	£359,418	£625,677	£698,434		£160,000				£1,843,529
Barnhill	£7,866	£230,024	£184,368	£955	£29			£12,000	£435,243
Brondesbury Park	£76,000	£33,378	£46,658			£50,381			£206,417
Dollis Hill	£465,529	£239,488	£273,562				£211,185		£1,189,764
Dudden Hill	£18,500	£49,043	£54,619					£11,752	£133,914
Fryent	£2,898	£18,419	£150,324				£30,000	£11,265	£212,907
Harlesden	£19,785	£328,142	£6,948			£55,732		£5,000	£415,607
Kensal Green	£250,664	£81,628	£20,906			£42,648		£5,199	£401,046
Kenton		£12,243	£22,629					£7,047	£41,919
Kilburn	£1,291,463	£730,388	£544,963	£2,111,488	£22,000	£492,841		£10,371	£5,203,514
Mapesbury	£98,000	£61,777	£40,286			£123,894			£323,957
Northwick Park		£7,162			£50,001				£57,163
Preston		£143,112	£158,000	£7,000					£308,112
Queens Park	£439,861	£101,104	£59,248			£141,722		£15,348	£757,284
Queensbury	£1,150,000	£1,217,997	£913,682					£38,000	£3,319,679
Stonebridge	£914,793	£312,756	£699,971	£41,301	£84,200			£415	£2,053,436
Sudbury	£26,430	£309,087	£25,896			£22,582			£383,995
Tokyington		£459,717	£277,511	£10,000	£224,578		£462,831	£5,000	£1,439,637
Welsh Harp	£15,102	£9,051	£15,701						£39,854
Wembley Central	£9,536	£199,836	£165,650		£24,287				£399,308
Willesden Green	£77,230	£98,593	£120,075		£13,009	£466,186		£23,774	£798,867
Grand Total	£5,223,075	£5,268,622	£4,479,432	£2,170,744	£578,103	£1,395,987	£704,016	£145,171	£19,965,150

Table 5: An overview of available money for Service Unit by Ward⁶ as of 1 April 2014

⁵ These figures include funds that may or will need to be paid to TfL (e.g. Queensbury, Stonebridge, Alperton); limited funds are held for community facilities and public art

⁶ For legal reasons these figures can usually only be spent on projects in the Ward (or neighbouring Wards if near to boundaries) in which the Development is situated

5.0 Proposed budget 2015/16

- 5.1 Heads of Service of units responsible for delivering relevant infrastructure projects and Regeneration Managers responsible for the borough's Growth Areas were invited in June to propose projects and/or themes for the draft budget for 2015-16, having regard to the above selection criteria (see paragraph 3.4).
- 5.2 A total of £10.43m of S106 funding is proposed for 15-16 (excluding funds to be carried forward from 14/15), following analysis by the Development Funds & Information Manager of the projects submitted by the relevant Heads of Service, including: (i) assessment of the proposal against the selection criteria; (ii) matching funds within relevant distance of the proposal; and (iii) checking suitability of available funds for the proposal (so that the terms of the relevant legal agreement(s) are met).
- 5.3 The table below shows the split of this money by the Service Unit that will be undertaking the works.

Growth Area/Service Unit	S106 allocated
Alperton growth area	£245,000
Burnt Oak growth area	£122,180
Church End growth area	£30,965
South Kilburn regeneration area	£32,000
Wembley growth area	£0
Sports & Parks	£469,895
Landscape	£79,732
Education	£4,835,101
Transportation	£630,816
Employment & Enterprise	£205,718
Affordable Housing	£1,450,782
Environment & Sustainability	£2,286,555
Community Facilities	£45,606
TOTAL	£10,434,351

Table 9: 15/16 budget by Growth Area/Service Unit (new projects)

5.4 Budget by Growth Area/Service Unit

- 5.4.1 A summary of the amounts to be committed to each Growth Area/Service Unit in 15-16 is provided below, along with a brief explanation of the main objectives for the funding. See Appendix 1 for details of all the proposed projects.

Alperton Growth Area

- 5.4.2 Four specific projects totalling an investment of £0.25m are proposed to be commissioned in Alperton in 2015/16 and are considered to be important for achieving the Council's objectives for growth in this area and to encourage further inward investment in Alperton. These projects focus on improving the public realm in the vicinity of Alperton station and making the tow path alongside the canal a more attractive route for residents.

- 5.4.3 The Operational Director for Planning and Regeneration would be the Head of Service responsible for officer-level approval in March-April 2015. These projects are derived from the Alperton Masterplan SPD and the recent Investment Plan work undertaken by the Regeneration Investments team.

Burnt Oak/Colindale Growth Area

- 5.4.4 Two specific projects totalling an investment of £0.1m to be commissioned in Burnt Oak/Colindale in 2015/16 and are considered to be important for achieving the Council's objectives for growth in this area and to encourage further inward investment in this location; these projects involve preparatory work to direct future investment in transport and public realm priorities along the A5 in particular over coming years.

- 5.4.5 The Operational Director for Planning and Regeneration would be the Head of Service responsible for officer-level approval in March-April 2015. Burnt Oak/Colindale does not have an agreed Masterplan; these projects are derived from the Burnt Oak place-making document and the emerging Investment Plan work undertaken by the Regeneration Investments team.

Church End Growth Area

- 5.4.6 One specific project totalling an investment of £0.03m is proposed to be commissioned in Church End in 2015/16 and is considered to be important for achieving the Council's objectives for growth in this area and to encourage further inward investment in Church End. The project's objective is to improve Church Road public realm and to make it a more viable commercial location.

- 5.4.7 The Operational Director for Planning and Regeneration would be the Head of Service responsible for officer-level approval in March-April 2015. Church End does not have an agreed Masterplan; this project is derived from the emerging Investment Plan work undertaken by the Regeneration Investments team.

South Kilburn Growth Area

- 5.4.8 One specific project totalling an investment of £0.03m is proposed to be commissioned in South Kilburn in 2015/16 and is considered to be important for achieving the Council's objectives for growth in this area. This project is the provision of a new urban park and is already underway and additional funding is necessary to complete the scheme.

- 5.4.9 The Operational Director for Property & Projects would be the Head of Service responsible for officer-level approval in March-April 2015. This project is derived from the South Kilburn Masterplan.

Wembley Growth Area

- 5.4.10 No specific projects are proposed to be commissioned in Wembley in 2015/16. A number of other projects are proposed in Wembley Growth Area but those will be led by the Transportation unit and details are provided below (see section 5.4.24).

Sports & Parks

5.4.11 A total of £0.47m is proposed for 10 projects across four themes (one Sports, three Parks):

- Theme 1: Increase and Improve the Provision of Facilities for Formal and Informal Participation in Sport and Physical Activity
- Theme 2: Improve the Landscape & Infrastructure
- Theme 3: Improve Play Opportunities
- Theme 4: Improve Biodiversity

5.4.12 The Operational Director for Neighbourhood Services would be the Head of Service responsible for officer-level approval in March; from April this would be the Operational Director for Community Services.

Theme 1: Increase and Improve the Provision of Facilities for Formal and Informal Participation in Sport and Physical Activity

5.4.13 Two projects are proposed totalling £0.02m, to provide additional recreation facilities. These meet Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P4 Improving health and well-being and the objectives of the Brent Sports and Physical Activity Strategy (BSPAS) 2010-2015: 1: Increase provision of appropriate facilities; 3: Get more people active; 5: Increase sports opportunities for young people.

Theme 2: Improve the Landscape & Infrastructure

5.4.14 Three projects are proposed totalling £0.28m, to increase awareness of Brent's open spaces amongst residents by providing signage throughout the borough, and improvements to existing open spaces to increase capacity. These meet Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P3 Making Brent safer, cleaner and greener and the objectives of the Brent Sports and Physical Activity Strategy (BSPAS) 2010-2015: Theme 1: Improving existing parks and open spaces; Theme 6: Mitigating climate change; Theme 7: Promoting parks and open spaces.

Theme 3: Improve Play Opportunities

5.4.15 Two projects to improve and enhance children's play areas are proposed totalling £0.15m. These meet Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P4 Improving health and well-being and the objectives of the Brent Sports and Physical Activity Strategy (BSPAS) 2010-2015: Theme 1: Improving existing parks and open space

Theme 4: Improve Biodiversity

5.4.16 One project to undertake planting to bring about biodiversity improvements is proposed totalling £0.01m. This meets Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P3 Making Brent safer, cleaner and greener and the objectives of the Brent Sports and Physical Activity Strategy (BSPAS) 2010-2015: Theme 1: Improving existing parks and open spaces; Theme 5: Maintaining and improving biodiversity in parks; Theme 6: Mitigating climate change

Landscape

5.4.17 A total of £0.07m is proposed for five projects which all focus on planting street trees. These projects are suitable for S106 funding as street trees can

make a significant and immediate improvement to a local area to mitigate the visual impact of new development and increase the area's attractiveness for additional inward investment. Street trees are also an important means of tackling local air quality and improving biodiversity. These projects are costed so that each tree is provided with two years initial maintenance as part of the total budget.

- 5.4.18 One particular project involves a long-term tree planting programme within the South Kilburn regeneration area and will rely on funds from developers which are expected to be received within 15/16; this project currently has no budget against it in anticipation of receiving those funds in year.
- 5.4.19 These projects meet the Borough Plan objectives P3 - Making Brent safer, cleaner and greener and P4 - Improving health and well-being.
- 5.4.20 The Operational Director for Planning & Regeneration would be the Head of Service responsible for officer-level approval in March-April 2015.

Education

- 5.4.21 A total of £4.8m of funding is proposed across 12 projects. The projects are derived from the schools capital programme; this S106 funding allows allocated capital funding to be re-allocated to enable further provision of new or expanded schools in the borough.
- 5.4.22 The Operational Director for Property & Projects would be the Head of Service responsible for officer-level approval in March-April 2015.
- 5.4.23 These projects meet Borough Plan objectives P1 - A stronger community and P5 - Better lives for children and families and all these projects are suitable for S106 funding as school expansion mitigates the impact of new development. Investment in schools also attracts investment into the area by supporting the school in raising standards. Schools performing well attract local investment.

Transportation

- 5.4.24 A total of £0.63m of funding is proposed across 12 projects.
- 5.4.25 The main project involves preparatory work for a scheme to reduce congestion at major pinch points along the Wembley corridor between the junction of Wembley High Road with Ealing Road to the junction of Wembley Hill Road with South Way and focussed around the pinch point at Wembley Triangle. Physical works are unlikely to commence until 16/17 and additional S106 funding will be made available for delivery at that time. Your officers are also seeking Transport for London funding for this substantial project.
- 5.4.26 In addition, three projects are proposed which fund unattended traffic monitoring cameras; the allocation of S106 funding negates the necessity to potentially fund such schemes from unsupported borrowing and the unattended nature of the cameras mean on-going revenue costs are minimised.

- 5.4.27 The Operational Director for Neighbourhood Services would be the Head of Service responsible for officer-level approval in March; from April this would be the Operational Director for Community Services.

Employment & Enterprise

- 5.4.28 Two projects to help employment and training in Brent totalling £0.2m are proposed. These projects would be led by the Employment & Enterprise team and would meet Borough Plan objectives P1 - A stronger community and P2 - Promoting jobs, growth and fair pay, utilising funds secured for these purposes.
- 5.4.29 The Operational Director, Housing & Employment would be the Head of Service responsible for officer-level approval in March-April 2015.

Affordable Housing

- 5.4.30 A total of £1.45m is proposed for providing affordable housing in the Borough. There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project; it was secured for this purpose alone.
- 5.4.31 Cabinet have recently adopted the Housing Strategy for 2014-19 which includes the objective to deliver 5,000 new affordable homes, including 700 new council homes, over the next 5 years. As the development of new affordable council homes has already started, the Operational Director of Housing & Employment would want the authority to invest these funds in financial year 2014-15 should an appropriate scheme or opportunity present itself
- 5.4.32 The Operational Director, Housing & Employment would be the Head of Service responsible for officer-level approval in March-April 2015.

Environment & Sustainability

- 5.4.33 Four projects totalling £2.3m are proposed; two relate to monitoring and improving air quality in the borough. For these two projects, the Operational Director, Environment and Protection would be the Head of Service responsible for officer-level approval in March; from April this would be the Operational Director, Planning & Regeneration.
- 5.4.34 The majority of the funding (£2.1m) is allocated to the provision of the South Kilburn Decentralised Energy Network and the expenditure is likely to be made in 16/17: this has been reported separately to Cabinet in January 2015. The S106 funding is reported here so that should any funds be required in 15/16 they will be available, however it is expected the majority will be carried forward into 16/17.
- 5.4.35 The final project is the borough-wide energy efficient street light replacement programme; the allocation of S106 funding negates the necessity to potentially fund such a scheme from unsupported borrowing and should result in ongoing revenue costs being minimised.

Community Facilities

- 5.4.36 Two projects being undertaken by the NHS are proposed to receive S106 funding totalling £0.05m; both provide a community cardiology unit and utilise funding which was specifically secured for additional healthcare provision.
- 5.4.37 The Director of Public Health would be the Head of Service responsible for officer-level approval in March-April 2015.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 As at 1 April 2014 a total of £19,965,150 was available to commission, subject to the terms of the legal agreements. Of these monies, this report proposes the allocation of £10,434,351 to the Service Units for investment in fundable schemes.
- 6.2 A number of the proposed schemes put forward include external funding sources, such as TfL LIP funding, which are essential to the delivery of the overall scheme. It is likely that should forecast external funding not be delivered then the scheme could not be supported by S106 funding.
- 6.3 The proposed schemes have been generated by, and in conjunction with, Service Units, Heads of Service and Regeneration Managers responsible for delivering capital schemes and the Borough's Growth Areas. The proposals were based on meeting the following criteria:

Essential criteria

- meets the terms of the legal agreement;
- mitigates the impact of the development from which funding is derived; and
- has Member support

Desirable criteria

- meets the objectives of the Borough Plan and the Regeneration Plan and helps to facilitate growth;
- meets Service Area objectives;
- is capable of attracting additional funding streams; and
- has local community support

However, it should be noted that the proposals are based on individual Service priorities which would not necessarily be reflected through a strategic exercise to assess the priorities in the delivery of the Council's overall capital programme.

- 6.4 This report focuses on the expenditure of Section 106 monies as there is currently no approved process for allocating CIL resources; a proposal was reported to CMT on 7 August 2014 but is yet to be reported to Members.
- 6.5 Proposals for the use of S106 funding within this report that are approved by Cabinet will subsequently be included within the Council's 2015/16 Capital Programme.

7.0 Legal Implications

- 7.1 Planning Obligations pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) (“The Act”) are legal documents under seal either entered into between the Council and developers or provided unilaterally by a developer. As mentioned above the intention of the obligation is to mitigate and off set any harmful impacts of a development. Monies paid to the Council in accordance with the s106 obligation can only be applied for the purposes set out in the relevant agreement. It is noted however, that the Council has received certain sums relating to those contributions which are due to be allocated for specific projects within the Borough, subject to employing the essential and desirable criteria at paragraph 3 of the report.
- 7.2 It should be noted that misuse of contributions not in full compliance with the terms and conditions of any s.106 Agreements will result in the Council acting unlawfully which potentially could give rise to challenge by Developers on the basis of the Council exceeding its statutory powers for recovery of such sums.
- 7.3 The Council has the power to modify S106 obligations in accordance with s106A of the Act by agreement between the Council and the parties against whom the obligation are enforceable.

8.0 Diversity Implications

- 8.1 In accordance with the Council’s Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (in force April 2011), officers who have responsibility for spending s106 contributions must ensure that the appropriate level of equality impact assessments are carried out before projects commence to ensure that improvement work does not inadvertently discriminate against any of the nine protected characteristics as more particularly detailed under section 4.
- 8.2 S106 contributions can have a positive impact on equality and diversity, as they allow the Council to make improvements to the local community which benefit disadvantaged groups the provision of affordable housing, additional community spaces, employment, education and training opportunities.

9.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 9.1 The projects above will be managed either directly or at arm’s length within existing Service Unit staffing structures.
- 9.2 Some of the funding identified above can be used to meet reasonable professional fees in designing and managing the project. What is considered reasonable is assessed on a case-by-case basis but usually not more than 20% of the S106 funding should be put towards fees.
- 9.3 No accommodation implications are anticipated.

Background Papers

None

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APPENDIX 1 - List of proposed projects 2015-16 by Service Unit

Project name	Project description	Ward	Comments	S106 budget
Growth areas				£430,145
Grand Union Canal tow path improvements	Repainting of the Ealing Road Bridge over the canal and tow path improvements from the Ealing Road bridge to Hazel Grove.	Alperton	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project: it was secured for this purpose but could also be passed to Transport for London (TfL) for bus service improvements. It meets Borough Plan objective P3 – Safer, cleaner, greener and would help to improve the environment along the canal in Alperton so that it has a greater amenity value for existing and future residents. There is potential to attract further funding from the Canal and River Trust for a related project to create a cycle quiet way.	£160,000
Wharfside Open Space public art	Open space improvements at Wharfside, potential temporary project/ biodiversity or art installation?	Alperton	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project provided it is only spent on public art: it was secured for this purpose. It meets Borough Plan objective P3 – Safer, cleaner, greener and would help to improve links to existing businesses and support local artists.	£5,000
Alperton Underground Station railway bridge improvements	Refurbishment of the railway bridge at Alperton Underground Station	Alperton	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. It meets Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P2 – Promoting jobs, growth and fair play and enhancements to the gateway to Alperton would provide improved amenity that all the community can benefit from and facilitate further investment and development activity in Alperton, potentially creating homes and jobs. Additional funding from the High Street Fund (GLA) could be sought.	£40,000

Project name	Project description	Ward	Comments	S106 budget
One Tree Hill Open Space investment plan	A detailed funding and investment plan is required for One Tree Hill which will inform future investment into this large open space. The first stage is a masterplan which will include funding and phasing.	Alperton	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. It meets Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P3 – Safer, cleaner, greener, P4 – Improving Health and Well Being. Alperton has a deficiency of Open Space and so the Masterplan SPD identifies the need to enhance existing open spaces in order to meet the demands of the growth.	£40,000
A5 (north) highway and public realm improvements phase 1: The Hyde	Feasibility and modelling work to support public realm and highway works to The Hyde Town Centre. Works to potentially include Wakemans Hill junction and crossings, improving parking facilities, de-cluttering, repaving and tree planting.	Fryent	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. It meets Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P2 – Promoting jobs, P3 – Safer, cleaner, greener and supports development in the adjacent growth area and supports local businesses through the transformation of Burnt Oak/Colindale. An initial sum is proposed to be allocated from S106 reserves in 15-16 for detailed design work with additional substantial S106 funds and potentially LIP funds being made available in 16-17 and beyond, requiring coordination between Regeneration Investment and the Transportation department. Additional funding from the LIP (2016/17) and also High Street Fund (GLA)/ERDF Funding will be sought.	£102,180
Masterplan for Capitol Valley	Masterplan for the Capitol Valley growth area	Queensbury	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. It meets Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P3 – Safer, cleaner, greener. This project would help to provide a detailed response to the vision document published in 2013.	£20,000
Church Road Public Realm	Improvements to Church Road	Dudden Hill	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. This project would help to respond to historic development in Church End which has tended not to benefit	£30,965

Project name	Project description	Ward	Comments	S106 budget
			the High Street itself. It meets Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P2 - Promoting jobs, growth and fair pay, P3 – Safer, cleaner, greener. Works proposed include improving quality and character, public realm improvements, refurbishing run down buildings, more bins, and improvements to safety and security. Whilst the amount of S106 available is limited, additional funding from the LIP (2016/17) and other funding opportunities will be sought and this project may roll over into future years as and when more funding becomes available.	
Woodhouse Urban Park	Continuing delivery of a new urban park	Kilburn	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. It meets Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P3 – Safer, cleaner, greener. This project is underway and has received £200,000 of S106 funding in 14-15. This additional funding would help to provide more trees within the park, amongst other things. The long term maintenance of any new park cannot be met from S106 funds unless specifically permitted in the legal agreement; most S106 funding can only be used on capital and not revenue expenditure.	£32,000
Sports & Parks				£469,894.74
Gladstone Park table tennis	Provide table tennis tables in Gladstone Park	Mapesbury	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. The project meets Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P4 Improving health and well-being and the objectives of the Brent Sports and Physical Activity Strategy (BSPAS) 2010-2015: 1: Increase provision of appropriate facilities; 3: Get more people active; 5: Increase sports opportunities for young people.	£10,000

Project name	Project description	Ward	Comments	S106 budget
Tiverton Green cycle area	Cycle marking and pretend road signs plus cycle stands on new children's cycle area at Tiverton Green	Brondesbury Park	As above	£10,000
Signing to Parks	Signage finger posts throughout the Borough directing people to the Borough's parks both the major parks and the smaller parks located in residential areas	Borough-wide	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. The project meets Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P3 Making Brent safer, cleaner and greener and the objectives of the Brent Sports and Physical Activity Strategy (BSPAS) 2010-2015: Theme 1: Improving existing parks and open spaces; Theme 6: Mitigating climate change; Theme 7: Promoting parks and open spaces.	£91,425
Furness Road open space	Furness Road landscaping improvements	Kensal Green	As above. This area of open space is capable of meeting the needs of some of the new population in the area if improvements are made to it. The sum allocated represents the total funding available within an 800m radius of the site.	£34,146
King Edward VII park landscaping bowling green	Landscape the disused bowling green to increase informal recreation area	Wembley Central	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. Given the importance of King Edward VII park to providing amenity space for the future occupants of the borough's largest growth area, this park is considered a priority.	£152,044
Gladstone Park middle play area	Improve and enhance play areas	Dollis Hill	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. The project meets Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P4 Improving health and well-being and the objectives of the Brent Sports and Physical Activity Strategy (BSPAS) 2010-2015: Theme 1: Improving existing parks and open space. Providing a sufficient amount of high quality play space and equipment is necessary to accommodate an increased population.	£100,000

Project name	Project description	Ward	Comments	S106 budget
Hazel Road open space play area	Improve and enhance play areas	Kensal Green	As above. The sum allocated represents the total funding available within an 800m radius of the site.	£42,359
Biodiversity improvements	Hedgerow and bulb planting at Pellats Road	Preston	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. The project below meet Borough Plan objectives P1 – A strong community, P3 Making Brent safer, cleaner and greener and the objectives of the Brent Sports and Physical Activity Strategy (BSPAS) 2010-2015: Theme 1: Improving existing parks and open spaces; Theme 5: Maintaining and improving biodiversity in parks; Theme 6: Mitigating climate change	£10,000
Gibbons Recreation Ground tree planting	Tree planting within Gibbons Recreation Ground	Stonebridge	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. Trees can help to improve biodiversity, air quality and have potential benefits for people's mental health.	£7,809
Kenton Grange & Woodcock Park tree planting	Tree planting within Kenton Grange and Woodcock Park	Kenton	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. £6,000 of the allocated funding was specifically secured for tree planting within Woodcock Park along the boundary with St Luke's Residential Hospice and so at least this much must be spent on planting in that location.	£12,112
Landscape				£79,732
South Kilburn long term tree planting	Continuing a 14/15 project for a long-term (5 yr plus maintenance) plan for new tree planting, at a range of sizes to include semi-mature specimens, mainly in streets within the South Kilburn Estate	Kilburn	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project, whilst there are not sufficient funds at present, the project is planned over the next five years and it is expected that developments within South Kilburn that are nearing completion and that have not been able to accommodate the required number of replacement trees within their boundaries will make a financial contribution towards offsite tree planting. This income is expected within the next 12	Funds yet to be received, budget unspecified

Project name	Project description	Ward	Comments	S106 budget
			months, facilitating this project. This project meets the Borough Plan objectives P3 - Making Brent safer, cleaner and greener and P4 - Improving health and well-being	
Willesden Lane Tree Planting	Planting of new substantial semi-mature specimen and smaller trees in Willesden Lane, specifically. To co-ordinate with current Transportation project improving carriageway and junctions of Willesden Lane.	Kilburn, Queens Park	As above; street trees make an important contribution to the environment and can have positive effects on air quality and mental health.	£24,332
Alperton Tree Planting	A continuation of the 2014/15 Alperton Tree Planting Project	Alperton, Wembley Central	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. Aim is to plant a number of substantial sized semi-mature trees at significant locations, also to plant smaller trees on residential streets to west of Ealing Road in response to resident requests	£35,000
Electric House/ Queens Parade, Willesden Green tree planting	Electric House/ Queens Parade, Willesden Green	Willesden Green	As above; street trees make an important contribution to the environment and can have positive effects on air quality and mental health.	£12,500
Harlesden High Street Tree Planting	Planting of new substantial semi-mature specimen trees in Harlesden town centre	Harlesden	As above; street trees make an important contribution to the environment and can have positive effects on air quality and mental health.	£7,900
Education				£4,835,101
Malorees Infant and Junior Schools	Proposed 2FE permanent expansion of infant and junior schools in September 2015	Brondesbury Park	These projects meet Borough Plan objectives P1 - A stronger community and P5 - Better lives for children and families and all these projects are suitable for S106 funding as school expansion mitigates the impact of new development. Investment in schools also attracts investment into the area by supporting the school in raising	£96,212

Project name	Project description	Ward	Comments	S106 budget
			standards. Schools performing well attract local investment	
St Robert Southwell RC Primary	Completed 0.5FE permanent expansion of primary school	Fryent	As above	£1,152,902
St Josephs RC Primary	1FE permanent expansion of primary school from September 2014	Harlesden	As above	£25,285
Carlton Vale Infant & Kilburn Park Junior	Proposed new school building for amalgamated and expanded schools: deliver a high quality 4FE new school, that will provide 840 school places and 92 nursery places to meet the demand for pupil places in South Kilburn, by September 2016	Kilburn	As above	£1,530,919
Manor School	Proposed expansion of SEN school by 44 places from September 2015	Queens Park	As above	£441,839
Islamia Primary School	Proposed new 2FE primary school building	Queens Park	As above	£252,418
Stonebridge Primary School	Proposed 1FE permanent expansion of primary school from September 2015	Stonebridge	As above	£205,797
Woodfield Special School	Expansion of SEN school by 40 places from September 2014	Welsh Harp	As above	£126,194
Alperton Community School	Proposed new school building with 1FE expansion from September 2016. This is a	Alperton	As above	£409,418

Project name	Project description	Ward	Comments	S106 budget
	PSBP project funded and managed directly by DfE but there are project costs that are likely to fall to Council which are unfunded and expected to be c. £2m.			
Wembley High Technology College	Proposed new 4FE primary school from September 2015	Northwick Park	As above	£34,680
Elsley Primary School	Proposed 2FE permanent expansion of primary school from September 2015	Wembley Central	As above	£31,336
Crest Boys and Crest Girls Academies	New school buildings and expansion by 2FE from September 2014	Dollis Hill	As above	£528,102
Transportation				£630,815.57
Wembley corridor modelling and design work	Modelling, design and costing and delivery of new junction layouts along the Wembley corridor between the junction of Ealing Road/Wembley High Road to the junction of Wembley Hill Road/South Way	Wembley Central/Tokyn gton	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. This project can provide additional highway capacity to the Wembley growth area as transport assessments have identified this as critical to supporting further development. The design provides opportunities for significant improvements to pedestrian movement and new public realm north and south of Wembley Hill Road and on Wembley Hill Road. Funds may be used as a match component to other sources or may be required to review and confirm the scope of the current design. This is a multi-year project linking into the widening of the Wembley Hill Road bridge over the Chiltern railway and the junction at South Way and will require additional funding which is anticipated to be provided by TfL. Revised junctions could	£219,513 (initial for 15/16, additional funding to be agreed for future years)


Project name	Project description	Ward	Comments	S106 budget
			relieve congestion in the town centre and unlock development sites such as Chesterfield House and Wembley West End while contribute to public realm improvements and enhanced pedestrian movement. Additional funding will be sought from TfL Pinch-Point fund	
Walm Lane public realm, public transport accessibility and cycling improvements	Public realm, public transport accessibility and cycling improvements along Walm Lane at Willesden Green Underground Station	Willessden Green, Mapesbury	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. In conjunction with construction of the Regent's Park to Gladstone Park Quietway, Sustrans have designed substantial public realm, public transport accessibility and cycling improvements along Walm Lane at Willessden Green Underground Station. This proposal includes widened footways, new cycle parking, removal of street clutter, narrowing the carriageway and reducing speed to create a safer pedestrian and cyclist environment and a widening of an existing zebra crossing to provide improved access to Willessden Green station	£149,565
Wembley Central public realm and public art improvements	Study into potential improvements to the public realm outside Wembley Central Underground Station	Wembley Central	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. This project is aimed at developing a dynamic, attractive and practical public space outside the station, including footway improvements, development of multi-modal transport interchange opportunities between pedestrians, cyclists, bus, underground and National Rail services, removal of street clutter and provision of public art to provide a central focal point to the station	£10,000
Wembley Industrial Estate two-way working	Conversion of Second Way and South Way to two-way working	Tokyngton	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project. This project will ease traffic flow in the industrial estate, particularly on Stadium Event Days, further supporting the estates role in the local and wider economy and its ability to continue to provide employment opportunities for Brent residents and attract further business investment. This will require land take from sites along the routes including the Cost Co site, which will likely be	£80,677

Project name	Project description	Ward	Comments	S106 budget
			completed in the next 2 years	
Park Royal Road/Coronation Road junction capacity improvements	Improvements to junction of Park Royal Road/Coronation Road	Stonebridge	This is a contribution to a cross-boundary scheme being delivered by Ealing with the intention of addressing a history of congestion and poor accident history.	£30,000
Old North Circular Road traffic camera	CCTV safety / enforcement camera on the Old North Circular road near the Ace Café to help smooth traffic flow	Stonebridge	This project would help public transport by preventing indiscriminate parking affecting buses on this location	£31,588
Abbey Road cycle lane	Extend the advisory cycle lane in Abbey road from the junction of Cumberland Avenue to the Coronation Road junction	Stonebridge	This project would help to encourage non-car modes of transportation.	£20,000
Alperton car club scheme	Provide a further car club bay within the Alperton area	Alperton	This project would help to reduce car ownership. This money can only be used for this purpose.	£4,991
North Circular Road traffic modelling - transfer to TfL	Funding for TfL to carry out traffic modelling in a limited location	Stonebridge	This money can only be used for this purpose.	£20,000
Blackbird Hill/Kingsbury Bridge unattended traffic monitoring	Supply, commission and install unattended traffic compliance camera	Welsh Harp	The effect of the project will be to improve public transport journey times through improving bus lane compliance and relieving congestion; the cameras will also be erected with a view to improving road safety through the enforcement of banned manoeuvres	£25,000
Kingsbury Road/Fryent Drive unattended traffic monitoring	Supply, commission and install unattended traffic compliance camera	Kenton	As above	£25,000
St Thomas's Road/St Albans Road unattended traffic monitoring	Supply, commission and install unattended traffic compliance camera	Harlesden	As above	£14,481

Project name	Project description	Ward	Comments	S106 budget
Employment & Enterprise				£205,718.00
Wembley Works	Employ two Employment Officers, and one Trainer with support from an Employer Lead who works on all projects.	Tokyington	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project; it was secured for this purpose. This project would employ staff responsible for: providing on-going recruitment support to employers at the London Designer Outlet; supporting new developers, their suppliers, and other employers who come into Wembley Park through regeneration; developing a hotel training model at Novotel in Shubette House to improve in-work progression for people in this sector. The team also targets high vacancy, growth employers in Wembley including those in the retail, hospitality, and social care sectors for apprenticeships and vacancies. The costs also cover the lease and building costs for the Wembley Works office	£138,592
Brent Works	Employ an Employment Officer with support from an Employer Lead who works on all projects.	Borough wide	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project; it was secured for employment and training purposes. This project would employ staff are responsible for: capacity building the VCS to set up and deliver a Wembley Works type model to fill vacancies arising through regeneration on the South Kilburn estate; borough wide employer engagement to generate apprenticeship opportunities and to help residents to access high vacancy and growth sectors. Focusing on employers in Alperton, Church End, Burnt Oak/Colindale, and South Kilburn; leading the recruitment of 100+ people for the employers on the Park Royal Origin site	£67,126
Affordable Housing				£1,450,782

Project name	Project description	Ward	Comments	S106 budget
New Council Housing	To develop new affordable council homes to meet local housing needs	TBC	This funding was secured for the purpose of providing affordable housing in the borough	£1,450,782
Environment & Sustainability				£2,286,555
Energy efficient street light replacement programme		Borough-wide		£53,038
South Kilburn Decentralised Energy Network	Decentralised Energy CHP	Kilburn	There are no legal impediments to using this funding for this project: it was secured for this purpose alone. It meets Borough Plan objective P3 – Safer, cleaner, greener and the funds have been secured for the connection to the district heating system proposed for South Kilburn. This funding will need to be used to pay the chosen ESCO on appointment. Majority of funding required in 16/17	£2,111,488
Maintenance of fixed and mobile air quality monitoring stations	Maintenance of air quality monitoring stations (4 no.) and mobile monitor (1 no.) and diffusion tube monitoring	Borough-wide	This funding was secured for the purpose of monitoring and improving air quality in the borough and cannot be used for other purposes.	£44,535
Pilot project to examine local impacts of poor air quality on health	Implementation of air quality action plan measures (plan to be revised)	Borough-wide	This funding was secured for the purpose of monitoring and improving air quality in the borough and cannot be used for other purposes.	£77,495
Community Facilities				£45,606
Willesden Green community cardiology unit	Contribution towards new community cardiology unit	Willesden Green	This funding was secured for the provision or improvement of healthcare facilities in the borough and cannot be used for other purposes.	£20,606
Wembley community cardiology unit	Contribution towards new community cardiology unit	Wembley Central	This funding was secured for the provision or improvement of healthcare facilities in the borough and cannot be used for other purposes.	£25,000

Project name	Project description	Ward	Comments	S106 budget

 <p>Brent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cabinet 23 February 2015</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth</p>
<p>For Action Wards Affected: ALL</p>	
<p>Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan and Budget (including Rent Proposals) for Council Dwellings for 2015/16</p>	

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report presents to Members the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) forecast outturn for 2014/15 and a proposed HRA Business Plan budget for 2015/16 as required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The report sets out budget proposals for housing management services, stock investment and new council housing development, and rent-setting proposals for 2015/16.
- 1.2 **Housing Management Services** – the housing management fee for BHP is proposed to increase by 0.3% after allowing for efficiency gains. Budgets for responsive repairs and grounds maintenance and other revenue expenditure remain largely unchanged for 2015/16.
- 1.3 **Stock Investment and Improvement** – following the procurement and appointment of an Asset Management Partner, major and cyclical works will be carried out to 2924 homes in 15/16. This will represent significant progress towards the Council’s commitment to bring all the stock up to the agreed investment standard over 7 years by 2021. Total expenditure will be £41.7m compared with forecast expenditure in 14/15 of £10.8m.
- 1.4 **New Development** – £5.47m of funding is provided to commence construction of 100 new council homes on infill sites and to undertake feasibility works for a further phase of new development. A further £1.7m will be utilised to support the development of new council housing supported by £0.5m of HRA Right to Buy receipts. The report recommends that the Council enter into a Development Services agreement with BHP for the delivery of this programme and into a grant agreement with the GLA to support the programme.

1.5 Rent and Service charge increases – the report proposes rent increases on average of 2.8% in line with the previously agreed rent policy. Service charges generally are increasing by 0.4%. Taking rents and service charges together the average increase will be 2.7%. The report also includes proposals for rent and service charge increases for the non-HRA Brent Stonebridge Dwellings and for residential traveller pitches for 2015/16.

1.6 HRA Business Plan Forecast – 2015/16. On the basis of the budgets and rent increases the HRA is projected to generate a small surplus of £400,000 in 2015/16. Additional borrowing of £4m to fund capital expenditure on stock investment and new-build is required bringing total borrowing to £140m against the borrowing limit of £200m. The larger stock investment programme in 2015/16 and the re-profiling of subsequent years will see borrowing increase to a peak of £170m in 2018/19.

2.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

2.1 HRA Business Plan Budget 2014/15:

Note the HRA forecast outturn 2014/15 (*Table 1 –Budget Outturn Table 2014/15*):

2.2 HRA Business Plan Budget 2015/16:

- A. Approve the proposals and agree the savings/budget reductions for the HRA budget for 2015/16, as set out in Table 11 of this report and agree that they be included in the overall Budget for 2015/16 for approval by Full Council in March 2015.
- B. Approve the HRA budget growth for 2015-16 of £1.434m and use of £778k of one off available resources.

2.3 Rent Setting 2015/16:

- A. Approve an average overall rent increase (excluding service charges) from April 2015 of £3.14 per week, which is an average overall increase of 2.8%.
- B. Agree to the revised HRA Council Dwelling service charges from April 2015 which results in an average increase of 0.4% and £0.03 per week for the majority of households affected.
- C. Agree an average overall rent increase from April 2015 of £2.79 per dwelling per week on the Brent Stonebridge Dwellings, which is an average overall rent increase of 2.2% as set out in Appendix 1
- D. Agree the service charges on the Brent Stonebridge Dwellings from April 2015 by an average of 2% or an average of £0.17 per dwelling per week as set out in Appendix 1

- E. Agree the rent increase for Residential Travellers Pitches from April 2015 of £2.45 per week, which is an average increase of 1% as set out in Appendix 2.
- F. Agree to consult on proposals to de-pool charges for particular services, including CCTV and Door Entry and report the outcomes of this service charge review and consultation in 2015/16

2.4 HRA Stock Investment 2015/16:

- A. Approve the HRA stock investment capital programme of £41.7m for 2015/16.

2.5 HRA Council Housing Development 2015/16:

- A. Approve the HRA Development Consultancy Fee of £1.045m and a capital new build programme of £5.447m for 2015/16 as set out in Table 10 to develop new council housing stock.
- B. Agree an exemption from the procurement requirements of Contract Standing Orders and delegates to the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Director of Legal and Procurement, the negotiation and entry into a Development Services Agreement with Brent Housing Partnership (Arms Length Management Organisation) to deliver Development Services functions in relation to the development of new council homes.
- C. Agree Cabinet delegate to the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth in consultation with the Director of Legal and Procurement, the negotiation and entry into a Funding Delivery Agreement with the Greater London Authority, securing Investment Partnering Housing Status for Brent and Social Housing Grant funding in 2015 – 2018 to enable the development of new council homes.
- D. Agree the Phase 1 Council New Build Development Programme schemes as set out in Appendix 3.

3.0 Detail

3.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA):

The Housing Revenue Account contains the income and expenditure relating to the Council's landlord duties in respect of approximately 8,372 dwellings (1st April 2014). The HRA is a 'ring-fenced' account receiving no subsidy from the Council's General Fund nor subsidising the General Fund.

3.2 Budget Outturn 2014/15

Table 1 below sets out the forecast budget outturn position for 2014/15. The primary income to the HRA is rental income. Rent collection to date (end of

quarter 3) is 98.7% against a target of 99%. It is expected that total collected rent will be met by year end.

The major variances are that an underspend of £301k is forecast against the repairs budget relating to the grounds maintenance contract and the carry forward balance from 2014/15 is greater than originally budgeted by £477k.

It can be seen that the surplus carried forward to 2015/16 is forecast to be £1,178k which is £778k more than the original budget surplus of £400k. This additional £778k will be available to support one off expenditure in the 2015/16 budget.

Table 1: Budget Outturn 2014/15

HRA Budget Summary - Probable Budget 2014-15 Vs Original Budget 2015-16 Variance				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	
	Original Budget 2014-15	Draft Probable Out Turn 2014-15	Variance	
Description	£000's	£000's	£000's	Variance Explanation
Rent Income	-51,224	-51,224	0	
Leaseholder Service Charges	-2,760	-2,760	0	
Non Dwelling Rent	-254	-254	0	
Other Income	-59	-59	0	
Gross Income	-54,297	-54,297	0	
Provision For Bad Debts	1,158	1,158	0	
Rent & Rates	1,733	1,733	0	
Services	590	590	0	
Capital Financing	8,440	8,440	0	
Depreciation (Major Repairs Allowance (MRA))	15,461	15,461	0	
General Management	11,165	11,165	0	
Special Management	4,866	4,866	0	
Housing Repairs	10,995	10,694	-301	Reduced expenditure on Grounds Maintenance element of contract
Gross Expenditure	54,408	54,107	-301	
Net Budget	111	-190	-301	
Surplus B/Fwd	-511	-988	-477	Remaining income from unused one off balances in 2014-15
Transfer From Earmarked Res		0	0	
Surplus C/Fwd	-400	-1,178	-778	
Total	0	0	0	Available balances to fund expenditure on Major Repairs

3.3 Proposed Rent Increase 2015/16:

As part of the HRA Asset Management Strategy the council agreed in November 2013 to the Rent Policy set out below, with final approval to be given by the Executive each year:

- For rents to continue to increase in line with the Rent Convergence Regime - a maximum annual increase in 2014 of RPI +0.5% plus £2 per week and from 2015 CPI+ 1% plus £2 per week for existing tenants - subject to any direction by Government.
- Following rent convergence, for the annual increase to be set at CPI+1%
- For properties to be re-let at Target Rents.
- For consideration to be given annually to restraint in rent increases for 4-bedroom and larger properties in order to assure affordability under the overall benefits cap.

3.3.1 Checks have been undertaken to identify whether there are any individuals who will be particularly affected by the proposed increases. Appendix 4 provided details on the range of rent increases and number of properties affected. In respect of rents, Table 2 below sets out the average rent per property size and the number of properties in each category.

Table 2: Proposed Rent Increases for 2015/16

Bed Sizes	Property Count	Net Rent 2014/15	Net Rent 2015/16	Increase £	Increase %
0	434	86.52	88.11	1.58	1.8%
1	2581	99.76	101.99	2.23	2.2%
2	2688	112.21	115.56	3.35	3.0%
3	2116	123.65	127.63	3.98	3.2%
4	413	134.55	139.00	4.46	3.3%
5	64	144.24	148.77	4.53	3.1%
6	9	147.85	152.59	4.74	3.2%
	8305	111.31	114.45	3.14	2.8%

3.4 Alternative Rent Increase Options for 2015/16

The impact of the proposed rent increase (as per the agreed Rent Policy) is set out below in Table 3. This Table shows the impact of other rent increase options including:

- No increase in rent in 2015/16 followed by CPI+1% thereafter
- An increase in rent of CPI+1% in perpetuity
- An increase in rent taking all rents to Target Rent in 2015/16

Table 3 : Impact of other Rent Increase Options

Bed Sizes	Net Rent 2014/15	Proposed	%age increase	No increase	%age increase	CPI+1%	%age increase	Straight to Target	%age increase
0	86.52	88.11	1.83%	86.52	0.00%	88.43	2.20%	91.64	5.91%
1	99.76	101.99	2.24%	99.76	0.00%	101.95	2.20%	106.66	5.91%
2	112.21	115.56	2.99%	112.21	0.00%	114.67	2.20%	118.84	5.91%
3	123.65	127.63	3.22%	123.65	0.00%	126.37	2.20%	130.96	5.91%
4	134.55	139.00	3.31%	134.55	0.00%	137.51	2.20%	142.50	5.91%
5	144.24	148.77	3.14%	144.24	0.00%	147.41	2.20%	152.77	5.91%
6	147.85	152.59	3.20%	147.85	0.00%	151.11	2.20%	156.60	5.91%
Average Rent	111.31	114.45	2.82%	111.31	0.00%	113.76	2.20%	117.15	5.25%

3.4.1 Effects of the above on the HRA operating account and the Capital requirement are set out below.

- No increase in rents would result in the HRA falling into deficit of almost £2m by 2016/17 and a total loss in income to the HRA over 5 years of over £3m. Rents would need to be increase or expenditure reduced in 2016/17 in order to set a legal budget. In addition borrowing would need to increase by £4.5m between 2021 and 2024.
- An increase in rents limited to CPI+1% would result in the HRA falling into deficit by 2017/18 and a total loss in income to the HRA over 5 years of c£1.5m. Rents would need to be increase or expenditure reduced in 2017/18 in order to set a legal budget. In addition borrowing would need to increase by £4.5m between 2021 and 2024.
- An increase in rents taking all to target rent would result in increasing surplus HRA resources of around £10m by 2018/19 with increased income of £3m in 15/16 increasing to £4m per year by 2018/19. This additional income would be available for reinvestment in the HRA and could be used to reduce borrowing or for additional investment subject to the limit of the Debt Cap.

3.4.2. The Department for Communities and Local Government consulted in the period October – December 2014 on proposed changes to rent policy for social housing from April 2015. The agreed change was to move from annual increases in weekly rents of Retail Price Index (RPI) + 0.5% + up to £2 for social rents, to increases of Consumer Price Index (CPI + 1%). The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) continues to advise on rent setting and whilst it remains the responsibility of the Council to set rents, there is strong encouragement to set them in accordance with the ‘National Formula’.

3.4.3 Under the National Formula rents would increase at an individual level by 2.2% (Consumer Price Index at September 2014 plus 1.0% real increase). However, there is no requirement to follow this guidance. Continuing to follow the current Rent Policy provides the additional revenue to deliver the strategic priorities as set out in the HRA Asset Management Strategy and HRA Business Plan for 2015/16 and beyond. This means that Brent’s overall average rent for 2015/16 is recommended to increase by 2.8%.

3.5 Proposed Service Charges for 2015/16:

3.5.1 BHP has undertaken a detailed review of service charges which indicates that overall the existing service charges currently contribute £3.122m to the HRA, and that they do overall recover costs.

3.5.2 It is therefore proposed that the rent formula of CPI + 1% is applied to the existing service charges where applicable, and where existing charges are forecast to over recover, they are reduced to actual cost levels. It is also proposed to consult in 2015/16 on proposals to de-pool charges for District Heating, Door Entry and CCTV from the current rent calculation and include this as a specific charge to beneficiaries of the services. A review of the Helpline Service and its charges will also be undertaken in 2015/16.

Table 4: Proposed Service Charges:

The table below shows the proposed changes to service charges.

Service Charges	Average Per Week 2015/16	£ Change	% Change
Concierge	7.94	0.50	7%
Electric Lighting & Heating	1.42	0.02	1%
Ground Maintenance	1.19	(0.68)	(37%)
Building Cleaning	6.32	0.66	12%
Fridges	0.00	(0.12)	(100%)
Laundry	2.24	(0.32)	(13%)
TV Aerial	0.70	0.00	0%
Gas Central Heating & Hot Water	10.28	1.78	21%
Helpline	1.42	0.03	2%

Table 5 – Net Rent Adjusted

The table below shows the overall combined increase in rent and service charges.

Bed Sizes	Property Count	Net Rent 2014/15	Net Rent 2015/16	Increase £	Increase %
0	434	92.92	95.37	1.42	1.5%
1	2581	106.42	109.25	2.03	1.9%
2	2688	119.62	122.82	3.12	2.6%
3	2116	131.36	134.89	3.72	2.8%
4	413	142.42	146.26	4.17	2.9%
5	64	151.92	156.03	4.22	2.8%
6	9	155.63	159.85	4.41	2.9%
	8305	118.54	121.71	3.17	2.7%

3.6 Traveller Pitch Rent Setting 2015/16:

Rent Increase for Residential Traveller Pitches has been in recent years limited to 1%. It is proposed for a second year to increase the current rents by 1% for 2015/16 as set out in Appendix 2. It is intended to undertake a further review of rents and service charges for Residential Travellers Pitches Sites in 2015/16

3.7 Hillside Rent Setting 2015/16:

In addition to the Council's dwellings contained within the HRA, the Council also continues to hold dwellings outside the HRA i.e. in the General Fund. These dwellings were formerly held by the Stonebridge Housing Action Trust (HAT) and they were transferred to Brent Council in August 2007 when the HAT was closed. The Council has the responsibility for setting rents and service charges for these Brent Stonebridge Dwellings (in consultation with Hillside Housing Trust, and in line with the terms of the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract).

3.7.1 The Council currently owns 332 properties under this scheme and Hillside Housing Trust (part of the Hyde Housing Group), manages these properties on the Council's behalf through the PFI contract.

3.7.2 Council dwellings are normally held in the HRA. However in order to avoid any negative impact of these dwellings on the Council's HRA, the Secretary of State issued a direction under section 74(3)(d) of the 1985 Housing Act, for the properties in this scheme to be held outside the HRA i.e. in the General Fund.

3.7.3 The income and expenditure associated with these Stonebridge dwellings (which will be broadly neutral in 2015/16) will be included in the Council's General Fund budget.

Last year, for 2014/15, the Council agreed an average rent increase of 3.7% and an average service charges decrease of 11.4%. The overall average increase in 2014/15 was 2.7%.

3.7.4 The framework for the annual rent setting for the Brent Stonebridge dwellings is contained in the 30 year PFI contract between Hyde Housing (Hillside Housing Trust) and the Council. As all Brent Stonebridge dwellings are now at target rent, the PFI contract sets out that rent increase/decrease for each year should be based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1.0%. This means that the rent for 2015/16 should increase by 2.2% (being 1.2% CPI (at September 2014) plus 1.0%).

Taking account of the framework set out in the PFI contract, Table 6 below, sets out the 2015/16 actual rent and the proposed rent levels for 2015/16. This Table also shows that the range of the weekly rent increase is from £2.23 to £3.30, and that the average overall rent change (excluding Service Charges) for 2015/16 will be an increase of £2.79 per week, which is an average increase of 2.2%.

This will increase the average rent (excluding service charges) from £127.02 to £129.82 per week and will result in an increase of £48k in rent income per annum (when comparing the full year effect of 332 dwellings), which will, in line with the PFI contract, be offset by an increase in the unitary charge in 2015/16. The overall impact of this will therefore be broadly neutral on the Council's budget.

Table 6 - Range of the weekly rent increase

	Rent 2014-15 £	Rent 2015-16 £	Increase £'s	Increase %	No	Total Increase £
1 Bed Flat	101.18	103.41	2.23	2.2%	85	9,857
2 Bed Flat	119.79	122.43	2.64	2.2%	44	6,040
1 S/croft Elders	101.18	103.41	2.23	2.2%	16	1,855
2 S/croft Elders	119.79	122.43	2.64	2.2%	3	412
2 Bed House	130.12	132.98	2.86	2.2%	36	5,354
3 Bed House	142.60	145.74	3.14	2.2%	77	12,573
4+ Bed House	150.12	153.42	3.30	2.2%	71	12,184
Annual Total	2,192,962	2,241,237	2.79	2.2%	332	48,275

3.7.5 Hillside Property Service Charges

All of the costs used in calculating the Hillside Service Charges are based on the estimated actual costs of providing those services.

Hillside Housing Trust has indicated that they propose to increase average service charges in 2015/16 by an average of 2.2%. Table 7 below, sets out the average proposed Service charges in 2015/16 and compares this to the Service Charges for 2014/15:-

Table 7: Average Proposed Service Charges in 2015/16 compared to Service Charges for 2014/15

	Average Service Charges 2014-15	Average Service Charges 2015-16	Increase/ (Decrease) £'s	Increase/ (Decrease) %	No	Total £
1 Bed Flat	13.83	14.13	0.30	2.2%	85	1,326
2 Bed Flat	15.64	15.98	0.34	2.2%	44	778
1 S/croft Elders	31.93	32.63	0.70	2.2%	16	582
2 S/croft Elders	31.93	32.63	0.70	2.2%	3	109
2 Bed House	0.80	0.82	0.02	2.2%	36	37
3 Bed House	0.80	0.82	0.02	2.2%	77	80
4+ Bed House	0.82	0.84	0.02	2.2%	71	74
Annual Total	136,188	139,174	0.17	2.2%	332	2,986

Table 7 shows that overall the proposals for Service Charges will be an average increase for 2015/16 of £0.17 per week, being an average increase of 2.2% over 2014/15 charges. The impact at individual level will depend upon the specific dwelling type and the service charges allocated to that dwelling. This proposal will increase the average service charge from £136,188 to £139,174 and will result in £3k more service charges income per annum (when comparing the full year effect of 332 dwellings) , which will, in line with the PFI contract, be used to pay a reduced unitary charge in 2015/16. The overall impact of this will therefore be broadly neutral on the Council's budget.

The combined effect of the proposals for rents and service charges changes at Stonebridge for 2014/15 is set out in Appendix 1. This shows the combined impact of the proposed average rent and Service Charge increase at Stonebridge for 2015/16. The net impact on tenants will an average increase of £2.97 or 2.2%, although the actual impact will depend upon the dwelling type and the specific service charges that are being incurred by that dwelling.

3.8 Revenue Budgets

3.8.1 Proposal 1-Brent Housing Partnership (ALMO) – Proposed Management Fee:

The agreement between the Council and BHP, which expires on 31st March 2023, requires each year that a management agreement fee is negotiated and agreed. The fee has to be consistent with delivery plan requirements and the general requirement to reduce operating costs on a year by year basis. In general terms the management fee negotiations have been based upon 2% to 3% efficiency savings in addition to pro rata reductions based upon loss of stock under management which has enabled continuous reductions in the management fee and helped BHP to manage future risk in a coherent manner. Under the management agreement the risk for changes to employer pension contributions remains with the Council. For 2014/15 the rate for BHP was 20.3% and the budgeted rate for 2015/16 is 23.3%.

3.8.2 Increases in Pay inflation of £122k and employer pension contributions of £181k have been offset by 3% efficiency savings of £229k and ALMO

optimisation savings of £55k leading to a small overall increase of £25k or 0.3% of the overall fee of £7.6m.

3.9 The 2014/15 management fee took account of the recommendations of the ALMO optimisation project undertaken as part of the review of the management agreement. This project led to an agreed schedule of savings and targets as set out below:

- To deliver top quartile financial performance in relation London housing providers;
- To save a minimum 13.6% over four years based on the following split;
 - 2012- 2013 8-10%
 - 2013- 2014 3%
 - 2014 – 2015 3%
- To achieve a minimum 10% budget reduction for all other special services including repairs and maintenance over a 5 year period, based on a 2.5 percentage point increments from year 2 (2013/14) onwards;
- To maximise the efficiencies associated with the co-location of the ALMO with the Council in the new Civic Centre from 2013 onwards; and
- To achieve these efficiencies without having a negative effect on service quality and customer satisfaction.

3.10 Table 8 sets out how BHP has performed against the target of reducing back-office costs in line with the targets set out above. It should be noted that this level of savings is over and above the reductions each year in the management agreement in relation to stock loss which have averaged around 3%. As can be seen these savings have been achieved with £286k worth of savings planned for 2015/16.

Table 8: Efficiency Savings Performance / Planned Efficiency 2015/16

Year	Efficiency / stock loss savings £000's	Optimisation Savings £000's	Other £000's	Total Saving in year £000's	Savings as a %age of management fee
2012/13	233	698		931	12%
2013/14	221	214		435	6%
2014/15	247		341	588	7%
2015/16	231	55		286	4%
	932	967	341	2,240	
Proposed 2015/16 Management Fee			7,649		
Savings Equivalent to			29%		
Other	Accommodation reduction			341	

Benchmarking is frequently undertaken to compare BHP costs and those of comparable providers in London. BHP fees are achieving middle to upper quartile performance of unit costs compared to similar organisations.

In 2013 an additional fee of £200,000 was added to provide additional resources to address the impact of Welfare Reform and to maintain rent collection levels. Proposed fee for 15/16 includes a continuation of this additional provision

3.11 HRA Stock Investment and Improvement Programme:

The HRA Asset Management Strategy specifically set out proposals for:

- An indicative five year capital budget of £86m for stock investment;
- An initial programme for the development of between 75 and 100 new affordable homes within the HRA;
- Ring-fencing Capital Receipts from the Disposal of HRA stock and replacement receipts arising from RTB sales for the development and acquisition of affordable housing (subject to annual approval through the capital programme)
- Further examination of approaches to maximise the provision of new affordable housing with the intention of being able to develop one thousand affordable homes, including replacement homes, from 2014-2022; and
- An additional HRA borrowing of up to £20.6m under the HRA prudential regime, to be used by March 2016

3.12 The HRA Asset Management Strategy was approved by the Executive in November 2013. This strategy sets out a long term approach to the maintenance and development of the Council’s housing in order to best meet its housing objectives. The HRA Asset management strategy encompasses plans for:-

- Stock investment – to improve and maintain the condition of the existing housing stock;
- Stock Reform – to raise the performance and improve the balance of the stock to better align with housing demand;
- Development – to provide additional affordable housing to increase the capacity to meet housing need; and
- Rent Policy – to provide the income required to fund the investment in existing and new council homes.

3.13 The Planned works for 2015/16 are budgeted at £41.7m. These include a major programme of cyclical and major works to almost 3,000 homes, energy efficiency improvements and the completion of a 3-year programme of fire safety works. The main areas of expenditure are set out below in Table 9.

Table 9: Proposed Stock Investment:

	2014/15 (Year 1) Spend	2015/16 (Year 2) Spend	Impact

M&E / Health & Safety	5,036	14,683	3377 homes H&S 818 homes boilers and district Heating
Capital & Cyclical	1,000	20,115	2924 homes 914 homes energy efficiency
Other Expenditure	3,000	3,850	Including capitalised repairs Up to 12 Lift Replacements
Works Expenditure Total	9,036	38,648	
Overheads and Contingency	1,350	3,019	Management & Contingency
Stock investment Total	10,386	41,667	

The proposed expenditure in 2015/16 on stock investment is significantly higher than for at least a decade. The major increase in the scale of the programme compared with that delivered in previous years is made possible by the additional capacity provided by the appointment of a single comprehensive asset management contractor. A range of contractual arrangements are also in place for delivery of other discrete areas of the programme. It is, however, recognised that achieving this expenditure will be challenging and rigorous performance monitoring by the Council and BHP will take place.

The expenditure of £41.7m includes an estimated £5.8m of expenditure on leaseholder properties that is rechargeable. In advance of any works proceeding detailed costing's and statutory consultation will be undertaken with leaseholders on the prospective works and rechargeable costs.

3.14 HRA Garage Strategy and Portfolio:

A separate review of the Council's HRA garage asset portfolio will be completed in the first six months of 2015/16 to consider the commercial viability and value for money to the HRA over the longer-term. A further Report will be present for Member's consideration in 2015/16.

3.15 HRA Development Services Fee and Council House Building Programme:

The delivery of new supply affordable housing is a key strategic priority underpinning the council's Housing Strategy. The council has agreed that Brent Housing Partnership will deliver new affordable council homes to support this priority. This section sets out the financial considerations, proposed budget for 2015/16 and actions required to establish the Development Services function as part of the HRA Business Plan to enable the delivery of these new council homes from 7 April 2015.

Two key agreements are required, these are:

- I) The council is required to enter into a Development Services Agreement with Brent Housing Partnership (ALMO). This Agreement may form part of the existing governance arrangements of the ALMO. It will include the provision of development services functions required to enable the development of (or remodelling of existing stock) to provide new council homes.

The Development Agreement will provide for the following development services on behalf of the council:

- site feasibility studies, including design-led appraisals for new council housing
 - financial viability appraisals to model delivery and building costs
 - management of pre-construction works, including seeking planning permission for scheme proposals
 - onsite management of building programme, including Client-side CDM regulation compliance, health and safety and sub-contractor management
 - procurement of technical support and suppliers through approved frameworks
 - carrying out local resident consultation and options appraisal
 - land and/ or property acquisitions (including s.106 homes) to increase the supply of new council housing
 - submission of grant funding proposals to support the delivery of new council homes to the GLA, HCA or other funding bodies as required and delegated
 - Maintenance of the GLA/HCA Investment Management System, including document management and all other information required as per GLA Compliance Audit guidance, Capital Funding Guide and inline with best practice standards.
 - appraisal of existing assets, as part of considerations to make the best use of stock to develop, remodel or infill to provide new council housing
- II) The council has been allocated £4.8m (as part of the Greater London Authority Mayor's Covenant 2015 -18 Housing Programme) funding for Brent Housing Partnership to deliver a Phase 1 Development Programme in 2015/16. To secure this funding from April 2015 and to access future years funding until 2018, the council is required to enter into a Funding Delivery Agreement with the Greater London Authority by 31 March 2015

3.16 Proposed Development Services Fee 2015/16:

The table below sets out the proposed Development services fee for 2015/16

Table 10: Development Services Fee:

	2015/16 (Year 2) Spend
Consultancy Fees	1,045
Works Expenditure	3,866
Feasibility	120
Overheads	416
Development Expenditure Total	5,447

The consultancy amount of £1.045m includes provision both for Brent Housing Partnership Development Management Services and any other consultant fee as required to deliver the 2015/16 council housing development programme.

It is proposed that £5.447m of HRA funding be agreed to be used to provide 100 council homes in 2015/16, including supporting design, works expenditure and feasibility study fees.

3.17 Phase 1 Council Housing Build Programme 2015/16:

Feasibility work and design for the Phase 1 programme has been undertaken on the first group of sites, with the capacity to provide 50 new homes. The sites recommended to proceed are set out at Appendix 3.

3.18 Phase 2 Costs in 2015/16 for Council Housing Build Programme 2016/17:

A Review has been undertaken of some of the existing HRA garage sites and areas of land with potential for new development. The review has investigated over 45 sites, although about half of these were assessed to be unsuitable for development.

This assessment has concluded that although the remaining sites have some constraints, Phase 2 could still yield the following potential for new homes:

Flats	175
Bungalows	21
Houses	32
Total	228

A number of the sites are very small and therefore the recommended approach is to focus resources on progressing more significant sized sites with the potential for a greater number of new homes.

Following completion of feasibility studies, Phase 2 sites will be presented to Cabinet for approval in 2015/16. It is recommended to progress to architect feasibility stage for £190,000 fee in 2015/16 to prepare (including submitting for grant funding support from the GLA) a potential of a minimum of 100 new council homes in readiness for development in 2016/17.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 This report is concerned with financial issues associated with setting the HRA budget for 2015/16 under the self financing system for council housing, and for setting the level of rents for Council dwellings in 2015/16. Cabinet are required to approve a budget that meets the statutory requirements as contained in Part VI of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Sections 76 (2) and (3) of that Act requires Members to ensure that their proposals are realistic and that the Council's Housing Revenue Account does not show a debit balance.

4.2 Estimates have been compiled on the basis of the Council's corporate guidance for budget preparation and on the basis that the spending budgets should be adjusted in relation to the stock numbers. The advantage of this approach (which ignores fixed costs) is that managers are able to reduce their expenditure on a planned basis.

4.3 BHP's accounts have until 2010/11 been published in accordance with the United Kingdom General Accepted Accounting Practice (UK GAAP). Following on from BHP becoming a Registered Social Housing Provider on 1st April 2011, their accounts have been produced under the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 10. The BHP accounts to 31st March 2014 received an unqualified audit opinion.

4.4 HRA Borrowing Limit:

In order to ensure that borrowing is affordable nationally, each local authority was set an HRA borrowing limit under self financing, and it will not be possible for that limit to be exceeded. Where a local authority's Housing Capital Financing Requirement (HCFR) is less than the limit set for self financing valuation, a headroom to increase borrowing under self financing will be created. The government determinations for self financing set out that Brent's borrowing limit will be £199.291m. As our HCFR is estimated to be £140.598m on 1 April 2015, we will have an estimated head room to increase borrowing of approximately £58.693m. The Executive agreed in November

2013 (HRA Asset Management Strategy report) to borrow up to £20.6m under the HRA prudential regime, to be used by March 2016.

4.5 Allowance for Inflation:

Budgets have been prepared on an outturn basis and include an allowance of 2.2% for pay. The budget for the Employer's Superannuation Contributions for BHP staff has been increased from 20.3% to 23.3% to reflect an estimated increase from the actuarial review although the level of increase remains subject to confirmation. For non pay price rises, a general increase of 0% has been used, except for repairs, cleaning, grounds maintenance, and gas servicing which have been increased in line with the inflation provision set out in their contracts.

4.6 Stock Loss/Efficiency Savings:

The rent budget has been updated to reflect anticipated stock loss through Right to Buy and through demolition as part of South Kilburn Regeneration Programme. Applicable expenditure budgets have been reduced by 1.5% to reflect the estimated stock loss in 2015/16, plus further efficiency savings.

4.7 The Expenditure Budget

Includes £1.434m Growth and the use of £778k one off available funding from carried forward balances to fund future capital expenditure on Major Works and provide for depreciation. The ongoing sum of £1.434m is the available unallocated resource after all other HRA budgets for 2015/16 have been compiled, and the £778k is one off useable reserves from the budgeted surplus HRA working balances brought forward from 2014/15. These additional resources will be used in line with the agreed Asset Management Strategy (2013). The Executive agreed in November 2014 to borrow up to £20.6m for HRA capital work by March 2016. The revised Business Plan now indicates borrowing of £8.4m will be required by March 2016 and a further £24.6m by March 2019 to fund the proposed investment.

4.8 The budget includes an average rent increase of 2.7% per dwelling per week including service charges. The rent yield will amount to £1,355k and the service charge yield will amount to £13k with a total yield of £1.368m.

4.9 The draft budget shows a balanced budget. The table overleaf below shows the key summary movement from 2014/15 in Table 11.

Table 11: Proposed Budget 2015/16

HRA Budget Summary - Probable Budget 2014-15 Vs Original Budget 2015-16 Variance				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	
	Draft	Draft		
	Probable	Original		
	Out Turn	Budget		
	2014-15	2015-16	Variance	
Description	£000's	£000's	£000's	Variance Explanation
Rent Income	-51,224	-52,505	-1,281	Stock reduction through right to buy sales £87k, 2014-15 rent increase £-1,355k, and 2014-15 service charges increase £-13k
Leaseholder Service Charges	-2,760	-2,760	0	
Non Dwelling Rent	-254	-254	0	
Other Income	-59	-59	0	
Gross Income	-54,297	-55,578	-1,281	
Provision For Bad Debts	1,158	1,158	0	
Rent & Rates	1,733	1,733	0	
Services	590	590	0	
Capital Financing	8,440	8,440	0	
Depreciation (Major Repairs Allowance (MRA))	15,461	17,673	2,212	Expenditure funded by one-off balances in 2014-15 £778k and Growth for HRA Major Works £1,434k
General Management	11,165	10,901	-264	Inflation £248k, stock reduction/efficiency savings -£512k
Special Management	4,866	4,866	0	
Housing Repairs	10,694	10,995	301	Reversal of one off income in 2014-15 £301k
Gross Expenditure	54,107	56,356	2,249	
Net Budget	-190	778	968	
Surplus B/Fwd	-988	-1,178	-190	Remaining income from unused one off balances in 2014-15
Transfer From Earmarked Res	0	0	0	
Surplus C/Fwd	-1,178	-400	778	
Total	0	0	0	After balances transferred to fund expenditure on Major Repairs

4.10 Entering into the Funding Delivery Agreement (FDA) with the Greater London Authority for the development of new Council Housing using the HRA:

Entering into the Funding Delivery Agreement with the GLA for stock development creates a legal financial obligation on the council to:

- i) Deliver an agreed Funding Delivery Agreement development and investment programme by 31 March 2018.
- ii) Complete Permitted Tenure Conversions within the Housing Revenue Account by 31 March 2019 in accordance with the timescale projected for such Permitted Conversions set out in the programme offer.

- iii) Provide Affordable Rent Dwellings in an equal split between those provided on Capped Rent terms and those provided on Discounted Rent terms, subject to a tolerance of one (1).
- iv) Ensure that GLA subsidy does not exceed an amount equal to the aggregated Actual Development Costs incurred in respect of the delivery of the programme.
- v) Ensure all funding is subject to the provisions of Sections 30, 34 and 333ZE of the Greater London Authority Act 1999. Any determinations made under such provisions (and the provisions of Condition 14) represent the events and principles determined by the GLA for the purposes of Sections 31-34 of the Housing Revenue Account 2008.
- vi) Ensure the council has not given rise to the making of a report under Section 114(3) or Section 114A of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 before or during the Funding Delivery Agreement period.
- vii) Retain its Investment Partnering Status with the GLA for the duration of the Funding Delivery Period.
- viii) Assets created with GLA funding if sold require the grant to be paid back to the GLA in the form of Recycled Capital Grant Fund (RCGF). RCGF is ring-fenced currently by the GLA to the authority of origin.
- ix) Interest can be charged by the GLA for funding awarded or recovered.
- x) Funding awarded is subject to adherence to the GLA Capital Funding Guide and its audit compliance arrangements, including Grant Recovery Events (as set out in the Funding Delivery Agreement).
- xi) The council cannot increase the rent in relation to a new Affordable Rent Dwelling more than once in any consecutive period of twelve months or by more than CPI + 1 per annum.
- xii) Open Book Accounting Obligations are required and if breached funding could be placed at risk.

Financial reporting and monitoring of the grant is required through the GLA Investment Management System (IMS). This IMS is required to be maintained and it is proposed this be managed by Brent Housing Partnership.

5.0 Risks

The main associated risks are set out below:-

- Performance on rent collection has remained on target, even through the period of economic uncertainty. However, there are still risks associated with the introduction of direct payment to tenants and

Welfare Reform. As a result the HRA budget for 2015-16 assumes the funding for the BHP Welfare Reform team will continue.

- The recovery of Leaseholder Service Charges (Major Works) also remains a challenge for officers and compliance with legislation is often difficult. In addition there are often differences between tenants and leaseholders in respect of works undertaken. For instance work to a communal area may well be considered favourably whilst a leaseholder may view such expenditure as not strictly necessary under the lease and thus not recoverable.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1. Legal Implications for the Housing Revenue Account and Rent Setting:

Under section 74 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (“the 1989 Act”), the Council is required to keep a separate Housing Revenue Account of sums falling to be credited or debited in respect of its housing stock. Sections 75 and 76 of the 1989 Act set out the rules for establishing and maintaining that account. Under section 76 of the 1989 Act, the Council is required to formulate in January and February of each year proposals for the HRA for the following year which satisfy the requirements of that section and which relate to income, expenditure and any other matters which the Secretary of state has directed shall be included.

In formulating these proposals the Council must secure that upon their implementation the HRA will not show a debit balance assuming that the best assumptions and best estimates it can make at the time prove to be correct. Put simply, the legislation requires the Council to prevent a debit balance, to act reasonable in making assumptions and estimates and to act prudently.

The 1989 Act also requires the authority to review the proposals from time to time and make such adjustments as are necessary to ensure that the requirements, as set out above, continue to be met. This report sets out the forecast outturn for the current financial year and also the proposals for the coming year.

- 6.2** The Council may make such *reasonable* charges as it so determines for the tenancy or occupation of their dwellings and shall review those rents and charges from time to time. In so doing the Council shall have regard to the principle that the rents for different types of houses should bear broadly the same proportion to private sector rents for those different types of houses. This means that the difference between the Local Authority rent for, say, a bedsit and a two bed house with a garden should be broadly comparable to the difference between the rents for those types of dwellings in the private sector. In making such reasonable charges officers have given consideration to the Government’s policy aims of introducing social housing rents that will ultimately produce rents being set (both in the council and Registered Provider/RSL sectors) on a nationally determined basis (whilst taking into account local factors such as the value of dwellings). This aim is not prescriptive in so much it remains the responsibility of the local housing authority to set rents.

The rent income estimates included for 2015/16 are based upon the Governments Rent Restructuring formula and adjusted for Right to Buy.

- 6.3** The decisions recommended in this report are an exercise of the Executive's rent-setting function and must take into account the implications of the Council's overall budget.

Under section 76(8) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council is required to prepare a statement of the revised estimates and new proposals within one month of the proposals and this requirement will be satisfied by Council approval of the overall budgets for 2015/16 on 2 March 2015.

The Secretary of State issued a Direction (under section 74(3)(d) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) in March 2008 which allows the Council to hold outside the Housing Revenue Account the rent accounts of the Council owned properties on the Stonebridge estate that were transferred from the Stonebridge HAT to the Council in 2007.

Section 313 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, which adds section 80B to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, makes it possible for councils and specified properties belonging to Councils to be excluded from the subsidy system subject to agreement with the Secretary of State and it allows the Secretary of State to make directions in relation to such agreements.

Once Cabinet decides on the setting of the rents in respect of the Council's housing stock that is managed by Brent Housing Partnership and the Brent Stonebridge Dwellings that are managed by Hillside Housing Trust, notices of variation will be served on the tenants pursuant to section 103 of the Housing Act 1985 to give them notification of the changes in rent which will come into effect from 7 April 2015.

6.2 Legal Implications for Developing New Council Housing using the HRA:

Entering into the Funding Delivery Agreement to develop new council housing assets requires the council to:

- Possess a Secure Legal Interest in the site to be developed.
- Obtained all Consents necessary for the lawful development of the Developable Scheme to submitted scheme standards.
- Ensure the council is not subject to any direction of the Secretary of State under Section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999.

- Ensure any applicable requirements of the EU Procurement Regime are complied with.
- Offer through the Housing Moves Service at least 5% of Affordable Rent Dwellings on each Site and at least 10% on each Site comprising 150 dwellings or more on the initial letting of such Affordable Rent Dwelling in accordance with schemes eligible as part of the Pan-London Allocations top slice.
- Not use the Affordable Dwellings created for any purpose other than GLA Agreed Purposes without the GLA's prior written consent.

It is proposed that the Council enter into a development agreement with BHP. BHP is an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) and whilst the council has delegated certain of its management functions to BHP in accordance with s27 of the Housing Act 1985, these delegations do not cover the proposed development agreement in respect of the development of new affordable council housing. Clarification will be sought with the Homes and Community Agency as to whether the consent of the Secretary of State is required under section 27 of the Housing Act 1985 for the Council to enter into the development agreement with BHP.

- 6.2.1** Contract Standing Orders provide that every Contract entered into by the Council shall be entered into pursuant to the Council's function and procured in accordance with all relevant domestic and EU legislation including the Council's Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. The Council's Contract Standing Orders require a competitive procurement process to be conducted in relation to the award of contracts including the proposed development agreement.

However, under Contract Standing Orders 84(a) Cabinet is able to approve a departure from this requirement and grant an exemption where there are good operational and / or financial reasons for doing so. The operational and financial reasons for not tendering are set out in this report.

- 6.2.2.** The EU public procurement regime, set out in UK law in the Public Contracts Regulations 2006, ordinarily requires a competitive procurement procedure to be operated for contracts subject to relevant thresholds. In the case of *Teckal s.r.l v the Commune of Viano C-107/98* the European Court of Justice recognised that if a contract were concluded between a local authority and a person legally distinct from that local authority, then the contract between them would not be a "public contract", under the EU public procurement directive if two tests were satisfied:

1. The local authority exercises over the person concerned a control which is similar to that which it exercises over its own departments (the control test);
2. In addition, that same person carries out the essential part of its activity with the local authority or authorities (the function test).

It is considered that the both limbs of the above test are met in relation to BHP and therefore it is considered that the award of a development agreement to BHP to develop new council housing is consistent with the EU public procurement regime.

7.0 Diversity Implications:

This report deals with the rent setting and budget proposals for the Council's HRA. This report does not propose any significant changes to the operation of this account. The proposals in respect of stock investment, new development and rent-setting are in accordance with the HRA Asset Management Strategy agreed by the Executive in November 2013.

This report is not concerned with operational service issues. Operational housing management issues are, in the main, the responsibility of Brent Housing Partnership (ALMO) and this service is monitored by the Housing Partnerships Service by reference to the agreements between Brent Council and its wholly owned subsidiary. As part of any change to the structure or organisation of BHP separate Equality Impact Assessments are carried out in line with the management agreement.

8.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

Decisions made by the Executive on expenditure and rent levels can materially affect staffing numbers for council officers and Brent Housing Partnership. There are no direct proposals for staffing arising from this report, however the HRA budget does fund the management fee for Brent Housing Partnership and they are implementing an efficiency savings as part of the ALMO optimisation, and some staff may be affected by that review. Also some staff that maybe affected by the Council's ongoing OneCouncil reviews. The impact on these staff will be reported separately, under the specific reviews.

9.0 Background Information

HRA Asset Management Strategy (November 2013)

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact:

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Appendix 1

Stonebridge Non HRA Dwellings Rent and Service Charges Increase 2015/16

Rents

	Rent 2014-15 £	Rent 2015-16 £	Increase £'s	Increase %	No	Total Increase £
1 Bed Flat	101.18	103.41	2.23	2.2%	85	9,857
2 Bed Flat	119.79	122.43	2.64	2.2%	44	6,040
1 S/croft Elders	101.18	103.41	2.23	2.2%	16	1,855
2 S/croft Elders	119.79	122.43	2.64	2.2%	3	412
2 Bed House	130.12	132.98	2.86	2.2%	36	5,354
3 Bed House	142.60	145.74	3.14	2.2%	77	12,573
4+ Bed House	150.12	153.42	3.30	2.2%	71	12,184
Annual Total	2,192,962	2,241,237	2.79	2.2%	332	48,275

Service Charges

	Average Service Charges 2014-15 £	Average Service Charges 2015-16 £	Increase/ (Decrease) £'s	Increase/ (Decrease) %	No	Total £
1 Bed Flat	13.83	14.13	0.30	2.2%	85	1,326
2 Bed Flat	15.64	15.98	0.34	2.2%	44	778
1 S/croft Elders	31.93	32.63	0.70	2.2%	16	582
2 S/croft Elders	31.93	32.63	0.70	2.2%	3	109
2 Bed House	0.80	0.82	0.02	2.2%	36	37
3 Bed House	0.80	0.82	0.02	2.2%	77	80
4+ Bed House	0.82	0.84	0.02	2.2%	71	74
Annual Total	136,188	139,174	0.17	2.2%	332	2,986

Combined

	Average Rents & Service Charge 2014-15 £	Average Rents & Service Charge 2015-16 £	Increase/ (Decrease) £'s	Increase/ (Decrease) %	No	Total Increase/ (Decrease) £
1 Bed Flat	115.01	117.54	2.53	2.2%	85	11,183
2 Bed Flat	135.43	138.41	2.98	2.2%	44	6,818
1 S/croft Elders	133.11	136.04	2.93	2.2%	16	2,438
2 S/croft Elders	151.72	155.06	3.34	2.2%	3	521
2 Bed House	130.92	133.80	2.88	2.2%	36	5,391
3 Bed House	143.40	146.56	3.16	2.2%	77	12,653
4+ Bed House	150.94	154.26	3.32	2.2%	71	12,257
Annual Total	2,329,150	2,380,391	2.97	2.2%	332	51,261

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Appendix 2

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL TRAVELLERS SITES - PROPOSED RENTAL INCOME

Descriptions	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 Increase	2015/16 Rent
Weekly rent	238	240	243	2	245
Total weekly Rental Income (31 lot)	7,373	7,447	7,522	75	7,597
% Increase		1%	1%	1%	
Annual Rental Income	383,414	387,251	391,120	3,911	395,031
% Increase		1%	1%	1%	

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Appendix 3

Phase 1 – Council New Build Programme 2015/16

19.12.2014							
Scheme Name	Bid Total No Of Units	Current units	Bid Unit Mix	Current Unit Mix	Current Unit size	GLA Bid Bed spaces	Current Bed Spaces
A: Ainsworth Close	3	3	3 No 3b/5pH	No change	100	15	15
B: Slough Lane	3	2	3 No 1b/2pB (SH)	2 x 2b4pH	83	6	8
C: Eskdale Close	2	2	2 No 3b/5pH	No change	105	10	10
D: Rokesby Place	2	2	2 No 3b/5pH	No change	96	10	10
E: Mead Court	2	4	2 No 3b/5pH	4 x 3b5pH	96	10	20
F: Runbury Circle	3	2	3 No 3b/5pH	2 x 3b5pH	96	15	10
G: Summit Court	11	4	11 No 2b/3pF	4 x 2b4p F	70	33	16
	3	N/A	3 No 3b/5pM	N/A	103.2	15	0
	3	N/A	3 No 3b/5pH	N/A	96	15	0
		5		5 x 3b5p F	86		25
		4		4 x 1b2p F	50		8
H: William Dromey Court	4	3	4 No 4b/6pH	3 x. 4b6p H	115	24	18
I: James Stewart House	3	4	3 No 3b5pH	4 x 3b5pH	96	15	20
J: Weston House	9	9	9 No 2b4pF	9 x 2b4pF	70	36	36
	2	1	2 No 3b/5pF	1 x 3b5p F	88	10	5
		1		1x 3b4p F	88		4
		3		3 x 1b2p F	56		6
TOTAL FIRM BID	50	49				214	211
Indicative Phase 2							
Clement Close - NAIL	N/A	10		10 x 1b2p F			
Peel Road - NAIL	N/A	10		10 x 1b2p F			
TOTAL FIRM + INDICATIVE		69					

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Appendix 4 - Rent Banding Increase for 2015/16

Rent Bandings

Banding Rent	Total
0% to 1%	33
1% to 2%	7
2% to 3%	3755
3% to 4%	4011
4% to 5%	494
Over 5%	5
Grand Total	8,305

Service Charge Banding

Banding Service Charge	Total
Below -5%	2719
-5% to -4%	125
-4% to -3%	124
-3% to -2%	69
-2% to -1%	259
-1% to 0%	2303
0% to 1%	133
1% to 2%	187
2% to 3%	145
3% to 4%	219
4% to 5%	102
Over 5%	1920
Grand Total	8,305

Combined Banding


Banding Overall	Total
0% to 1%	394
1% to 2%	1114
2% to 3%	2066
3% to 4%	3283
4% to 5%	553
Over 5%	650
Reduction	245
Grand Total	8,305

Service Charge Analysis - 2014/15 and 2015/16

Service Charges	Excluding District Heating Maintenance & Excluding Helpline 2				
	No of Tenants	Average Per Week 2014/15	Average Per Week 2015/16	£ Change	% Change
Concierge	829	7.43	7.94	0.50	7%
Electric Lighting & Heating	5583	1.40	1.42	0.02	1%
Ground Maintenance	5298	1.87	1.19	(0.68)	(37%)
Building Cleaning	4973	5.66	6.32	0.66	12%
Fridges	26	0.12	-	(0.12)	(100%)
Laundry	30	2.56	2.24	(0.32)	(13%)
TV Aerial	4003	0.70	0.70	-	0%
Gas Central Heating & Hot Water	591	8.50	10.68	2.17	26%
Helpline	54	1.39	1.42	0.03	2%

Garage Income

Cage Garages	24	0.50	2.63	2.13	425%
Half Garages	35	2.21	5.25	3.04	138%
Single Garages	597	4.41	10.50	6.09	138%
Double Garages	1	9.94	21.00	11.06	111%

 <p>Brent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cabinet 23 February 2015</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Growth</p>
<p>For Action Wards affected: ALL</p>	
<p>Authority to award contracts for Rough Sleepers' Outreach and Housing Advice & Resettlement Services.</p>	

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 At its meeting on the 16 June 2014, Cabinet approved proposals to invite tenders for the provision of the London Borough of Brent's Rough Sleepers' Outreach and Housing Advice and Resettlement Services. Subsequently the services were put out as two separate tenders namely: The Rough Sleeper's Outreach Service; and The Rough Sleepers' Housing Advice and Resettlement Service.
- 1.2 This report now requests authority to award contracts as required by Contract Standing Order No 88. This report summarises the process undertaken in tendering this contract and, following the completion of the evaluation of the tenders, recommends to whom the contracts should be awarded.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet award the contract for the Rough Sleepers' Outreach services to St Mungo Community Housing Association; and
- 2.2 That Cabinet award the contract for the Rough Sleepers' Housing Advice & Resettlement services to St Mungo Community Housing Association.

3.0 Detail

The background to the retendering and commissioning of these Services is set out in the report submitted to Cabinet on 16 June 2014, which gave authority to put these Services out to tender, which is attached as appendix 5 to this report.

- 3.1 As outlined in the 16 June 2014 report to cabinet, an independent Needs Analysis of the borough's current rough sleepers' services identified a disproportionate allocation of resources to the housing advice and resettlement element, to the detriment of the outreach element of the commissioned services. To ensure each element was allocated with the resources intended and tighten each service's focus on delivering its specific area of work, it was decided to tender the Outreach element and Housing Advice and Resettlement element of the service as two separate contracts, with separate service specifications and targets.
- 3.2 The Outreach element is mainly a service provided on the street identifying and engaging with people sleeping rough in the Borough and providing assistance to get them into accommodation, primarily by referring those eligible to the Housing Advice and Resettlement element of the Service. The full service specification of the Outreach Service is attached as appendix 7.
- 3.3 The Housing Advice and Resettlement element primarily works with rough sleepers referred to it by the Outreach element of the Service and supports them in securing and maintaining stable accommodation. The full service specification of the Housing Advice and Resettlement Service is attached as appendix 8.
- 3.4 The Rough Sleeper's Outreach Service and The Rough Sleepers' Housing Advice and Resettlement Service were tendered individually with a contract to be entered into for each respective service. Each contract will be for an initial term of three years with a possible extension for further two years.
- 3.5 Advertisements to bid for these Services were placed on the London Tenders Portal on 27 November 2014 to seek initial expressions of interest, which elicited eighteen initial enquires for the Outreach and twenty for the Housing Advice and Resettlement services. Bidders were provided with an outline specification and details of the tender approach and were invited to bid and complete qualification questionnaires using the Council's Electronic Tendering Facility. Five bidders subsequently completed the questionnaire.
- 3.6 Shortlisting was carried out on the basis of the contractors' professional conduct, financial viability, necessary insurance cover, health and safety compliance and equality practices and on 8 January 2015, four bidders successfully passed the qualification questions and their bids were fully evaluated.

Evaluation process

- 3.7 The tendering instructions stated that each contract would be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous offer to the Council and that at the tender evaluation stage, the panel would evaluate the tenders for both contracts using a 40%:60% price: quality split. The evaluation methodologies are attached at appendix 4.
- 3.8 The price of bids submitted was evaluated on the basis of a simple quotation for each of the services. For information purposes Tenderers were also asked to indicate an hourly rate for the provision of their service. This figure played no part in the evaluation of their bids.
- 3.9 The quality of bids submitted for each of the Services were evaluated on the basis of the criteria set out in the Cabinet Report namely:

3.7.1 Criteria for the Rough Sleeper's Street Outreach Service:

- 1) Proposals as to how the tenderer's previous experience will be applied to provide a high quality outreach service to rough sleepers that delivered demonstrable constructive outcomes for the rough sleepers worked with. (This criterion had a 20% weighting).
- 2) The appropriateness and effectiveness of the tenderer's proposed systems and working methods to deliver the Brent Rough Sleepers' Outreach Service. (This criterion had a 30% weighting).
- 3) The Tenderer's proposals for how they will maximise the impact of the service within the available resources. (This criterion had a 30% weighting).
- 4) Proposals with regard to partnership work with other providers to maximize the service offer to service users and improve outcomes. (This criterion had a 10% weighting).
- 5) The appropriateness and effectiveness of the tenderer's proposed systems for ensuring integration of the service offer between the Rough Sleepers Outreach and Advice & Resettlement services. (This criterion had a 10% weighting).

3.7.2 Criteria for the Rough Sleeper's Street Housing Advice and Resettlement Service:

- 1) Proposals as to how the tenderer's previous experience will be used to provide a high quality advice and resettlement service that supports single homeless people in securing

stable accommodation and sustaining it. (This criterion had a 20% weighting).

- 2) The appropriateness and effectiveness of the tenderer's proposed systems and working methods to deliver the Brent Rough Sleepers' Advice & Resettlement Service. (This criterion had a 20% weighting).
- 3) Proposals demonstrating the tenderer's ability to support Brent rough sleepers assisted into accommodation with accessing appropriate education, training or employment. (This criterion had a 20% weighting).
- 4) Proposals demonstrating the tenderer's ability to support Brent rough sleepers who have previously been assisted into accommodation to maintain their tenancies should they later experience difficulties that threaten these tenancies. (This criterion had a 20% weighting).
- 5) Proposals with regard to the partnership work with other providers to maximize the service offer to service users and improve outcomes. (This criterion had a 10% weighting).
- 6) The appropriateness and effectiveness of the tenderer's proposed systems for ensuring integration of service offer between the Rough Sleepers Advice & Resettlement and Outreach services. (This criterion had a 10% weighting).

3.10 The tender evaluation was carried out by a panel of officers from Regeneration and Growth.

3.11 All tenders had to be submitted electronically no later than midday on 22 December 2014 although, at the request of tenderers, this deadline was extended to the same time on the following day. Each member of the evaluation panel read the tenders using evaluation sheets to note down their comments on how well each of the award criteria was addressed.

3.12 The names of the tenderers are contained in Appendix 1. The scores received by the tenderers for each of the Services are included in Appendix 2 and 3. It will be noted that Tenderer C was the highest scoring tenderer for each of the services. Officers therefore recommend the award of both contracts to Tenderer C, namely St Mungo Community Housing Association.

Conclusion

3.13 Having completed an open and competitive tendering process St Mungo Community Housing Association are identified as the winning bidder for both the Rough Sleepers' Outreach and Housing Advice & Resettlement services.

- 3.14 While there remains the previously identified need to ensure the responsiveness and accountability of the two separate components of the Rough Sleeper's service, there is also the benefit of better integration between the two services through having them delivered by a single provider.
- 3.15 It has been possible to realise cost savings in the retendering of these Services through realising the reduced hourly contract rates that have resulted from market conditions and efficiency savings achieved by providers across the sector since this service was last commissioned. Officers are confident this has been achieved without detriment to the quality of the re-commissioned services.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The Council's Contract Standing Orders state that contracts for supplies and services exceeding £250k or works contracts exceeding £500k shall be referred to the Cabinet for approval of the award of the contract.

The tendered value of each individual service contract is:

- £64,985 per annum
- £194,955 over 3 years
- £324,925 if the option to extend by up to another two years is exercised

The combined tendered value for both service contracts is:

- £129,970 per annum
- £389,910 over 3 years
- £649,850 if the option to extend by up to another two years is exercised.

- 4.2 It is anticipated that the cost of these contracts will be funded from the existing temporary accommodation budget.
- 4.3 Based on the assumption that the new Services would start from the beginning of April 2015, the planned expenditure for these Services for the financial year 2015-16 would be £129,970.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The estimated value of these contracts over their lifetime (including possible extension) is higher than the EU threshold for Services and as such in excess of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (the "EU Regulations") threshold for Services. Both Services are classed as Part B Services for the purposes of the EU Regulations and therefore are subject to partial application of the EU Regulations, including the overriding EU Treaty principles of equality of treatment, fairness and transparency in the award of contracts. The award of these contracts is subject to the Council's own Standing Orders in respect of High Value contracts and Financial Regulations and the Cabinet is required to consider approval to award these contracts as set out in Standing Order 88(c).

5.2 With the contracts being awarded to a new contractor, the Transfer of Employment (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (“TUPE”) is likely to apply so as to transfer from the existing contractor to St Mungo Community Housing Association those employees who spend all or most of their working time on the activities being taken over by St Mungo Community Housing Association.

5.3 The council’s duties in connection with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 are contained in Section 8.

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment for the Services was carried out when Cabinet’s authority to retender the Services was sought and obtained last year, and a copy is attached in Appendix 6.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications)

7.1 This service is currently provided by an external contractor and there are no implications for council staff arising from the award of these contracts.

7.2 No accommodation implications arise for the council from the award of these contracts.

8.0 Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

8.1 Since 31 January 2013, the council, in common with all public authorities subject to the EU Regulations, has been under a duty pursuant to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 to consider how the services being procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area; how, in conducting the procurement process, the council might act with a view to securing that improvement; and whether the council should undertake consultation. This duty applies to the procurement of the proposed contract as Part B Services over the threshold for application of the EU Regulations are subject to the requirements of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

8.2 The Services being procured have as their primary aim improving the social and economic well being of rough sleepers, one of the most vulnerable groups in Brent. Unfortunately it was not practicable in this instance to directly consult with these service users to ascertain their views on the procuring of these services.

8.3 In addressing the needs of rough sleepers and reducing the numbers of people rough sleeping across the borough these Services will also reduce the incidence of rough sleeping related anti-social behaviour and the impact rough sleeping can have on the public domain and wider environment, in doing so improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of the wider community.

- 8.4 There is a limited market for the delivery of these services; however, Officers endeavoured to describe the scope of the Services in such a way as to best meet the requirements of the Act in the procurement process.

Background Papers

None

Contact Officer

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Street Population Coordinator
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ANDREW DONALD
Strategic Director Regeneration and Growth

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Appendix 2

ROUGH SLEEPING SERVICES OUTREACH SCORING MATRIX

		Tenderer A		Tenderer B		Tenderer C		Tenderer D		
		Out of 5	Resultant %	Out of 5	Resultant %	Out of 5	Resultant %	Out of 5	Resultant %	
RSOS1 (20%)	All on narrative.	3	12	3	12	5	20	4	16	
RSOS2 (30%)	All on narrative.	3	18	4	24	4	24	4	24	
RSOS3 (30%)	Half number, half narrative	number	2.5	7.5	4	12	5	15	4	12
		narrative	2	6	3	9	5	15	4	12
RSOS4 (10%)	All on narrative	2	4	3	6	4	8	4	8	
RSOS5 (10%)	All on narrative	3	6	4	8	2	4	4	8	
Totals:			53.5		71		86		80	
Totals moderated to be 60%			32.1		42.6		51.6		48	
Cost: Actual/Score		60,000	40	62,900	38	64,985	37	64,998	37	
Totals:			72.1		80.6		88.6		85	

Appendix 3

ROUGH SLEEPING SERVICES RESETTLEMENT & HOUSING ADVICE SCORING MATRIX

		Tenderer A		Tenderer B		Tenderer C		Tenderer D	
		Out of 5	Resultant %	Out of 5	Resultant %	Out of 5	Resultant %	Out of 5	Resultant %
RSA&RS1 (20%)	All on narrative.	3	12	3	12	4	16	4	16
RSA&RS2 (20%)	All on narrative.	3	12	2	8	4	16	4	16
RSA&RS3 (20%)	All on narrative.	2	8	2	8	3	12	3	12
RSA&RS4 (20%)	All on narrative.	3	12	3	12	4	16	4	16
RSA&RS5 (10%)	All on narrative	3	6	3	6	4	8	3	6
RSA&RS6 (10%)	All on narrative	3	6	3	6	2	4	2	4
Totals:			56		52		72		70
Totals moderated to be 60%			33.6		31.2		43.2		42
Cost: Actual/Score	60,000		40	62,500	38	64,985	37	64,830	37
Totals:			73.6		69.2		80.2		79

**THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT
REGENERATION & GROWTH DEPARTMENT
HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT
HOUSING NEEDS SERVICE**

**ROUGH SLEEPING SERVICE, ROUGH SLEEPER'S
STREET OUTREACH SERVICE CONTRACT**

DOCUMENT (i): Evaluation Methodology

Date:28/11/14

1. Overall Tender Evaluation

1.1 The Contract shall be awarded on the basis of the Tender which is the most economically advantageous to the Council.

Tenders will be evaluated in accordance with the methodology set out below.

Quality will carry 60% of the evaluation weightings and Price will carry 40%. Requirements referred to below and detailed in the Tender Response Requirements Document (k).

The quality evaluation criteria and relative weightings which will be used to evaluate quality are detailed in the Table below and in the Method Statement Requirements details in Document K of the Invitation to Tender Instructions.

Tenderers are required to complete Method Statements in accordance with the requirements in Document (k).

1.2 Evaluation of Quality (60% of total evaluation)

RSOS 1) The tenderer's proposals as to how the tenderer's previous experience will be applied to provide a high quality outreach service to rough sleepers that will deliver evidenced positive outcomes for the rough sleepers engaged with.	20%
RSOS 2) The tenderer's demonstration of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the tenderer's proposed systems and working methods to deliver the Brent Rough Sleepers' Outreach Service.	30%
RSOS 3) The Tenderer's proposals for how they propose to will maximise the effective impact of the service within the available resources.	30%
RSOS 4) The Tenderer's proposals for how they will work in partnership with other providers (Substance Misuse & Mental Health Services, ICE Teams etc.) in order to maximize the service offer to service users and improve required outcomes.	10%
RSOS 5) The tenderer's proposals for how they will ensure the best integration of service offer between the Rough Sleepers Outreach and Housing Advice & Resettlement services.	10%

1.3 Scoring system

The scoring system to be used will be as follows:

Score	Acceptability	Bidder Response Demonstrates
0	Unacceptable	Information is either omitted or fundamentally unacceptable and/or there is insufficient evidence to support the proposal to allow the Authority to properly evaluate
1	Major Reservations	The information submitted has insufficient evidence that the specified requirements can be met and/or there are significant omissions, serious and/or many concerns
2	Some Reservations	The information submitted has some minor omissions against the specified requirements. The solution achieves basic minimum standard in some respects but is unsatisfactory in others and raises some concerns
3	Satisfactory	The information submitted meets the Authority's requirements and is acceptable in most respects, and there are no major concerns
4	Good	The information submitted provides good evidence that the specified requirements can be met. It is a full and robust response, and any concerns are addressed so that the proposal gives confidence
5	Outstanding	The information submitted provides strong evidence that the specified requirements will be exceeded, and provides full confidence with no concerns

For each Method Statement requirement each bidder must score a minimum of 2 in order for the tender to be considered further.

Should a Tenderer fail to achieve a score of 55% for Quality criteria, this will preclude further consideration of the tender.

2.0 Price (40% of overall evaluation)

Price will consist of 40% of the evaluation weightings.

The tenderer with the lowest evaluated price over the potential five (5) years Contract Period will receive the highest score; other bidders will receive a proportional score to the lowest evaluated price.

The price will not take into consideration the Parent Company Guarantee costs for evaluation of the pricing element.

- 2.1 The Council shall not be bound to accept the lowest or any Tender submitted.
- 2.2 Tenderers may be required to demonstrate their ability to carry out the Services and it may be necessary for officers of the Council to visit the Tenderer's offices and, interview the Tenderer, and during the tender evaluation process the Tenderer may therefore be required to:
 - (a) attend meetings with the Council to present, explain or amplify details of its Form of Tender and tender submission;
 - (b) provide any other information reasonably required by the Council to enable a detailed evaluation of the Tenderer's submission; and
 - (c) arrange visits to other clients of the Tenderer or the provision of references.
- 2.3 Tenderers should fill in the Pricing Document in accordance with the criteria set out therein. The Council is seeking information in a manner which enables it to compare all Tenders on an equal footing.
- 2.4 All cost information must be exclusive of Value Added Tax as set out in the Conditions of Contract.
- 2.5 Tenderers' are required to indicate in the Pricing Schedule the annual cost (if any) of providing a Parent Company Guarantee (where the Tenderer has a parent company).
- 3.0 **Evaluation panel**
- 3.1 Tenderers responses will be evaluated by a team of Council officers with input from stakeholders and advisers drawn together by the Council with expertise in the delivery of these services.

**THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT
REGENERATION & GROWTH DEPARTMENT
HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT
HOUSING NEEDS SERVICE**

**ROUGH SLEEPING SERVICE, ROUGH SLEEPERS
HOUSING ADVICE AND RESETTLEMENT SERVICE
CONTRACT**

DOCUMENT (i): EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Date: 28/11/2014

1. Overall Tender Evaluation

1.1 The Contract shall be awarded on the basis of the Tender which is the most economically advantageous to the Council.

Tenders will be evaluated in accordance with the methodology set out below.

Quality will carry 60% of the evaluation weightings and Price will carry 40%. Requirements referred to below and detailed in the Tender Response Requirements Document (k).

The quality evaluation criteria and relative weightings which will be used to evaluate quality are detailed in the Table below and in the Method Statement Requirements details in Document K of the Invitation to Tender Instructions.

Tenderers are required to complete Method Statements in accordance with the requirements in Document (k).

1.2 Evaluation of Quality (60% of total evaluation)

RSA&RS 1) The tenderer's proposals as to how the tenderer's previous experience will be applied to provide a high quality advice and resettlement service that supports single homeless people in securing stable accommodation and sustaining it.	20%
RSA&RS 2) The tenderer's demonstration of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the tenderer's proposed systems and working methods to deliver the Brent Rough Sleepers' Advice & Resettlement Service.	20%
RSA&RS 3) Tenderer's proposals and evidence demonstrating the tenderer's ability to support Brent rough sleepers assisted into accommodation with accessing appropriate education, training or employment.	20%
RSA&RS 4) The Tenderer's proposals for how they will support Brent rough sleepers who have previously been assisted into accommodation maintain their tenancies should they later experience difficulties that threaten these tenancies.	20%
RSA&RS 5) The Tenderer's proposals for how they will work in partnership with other providers (Substance Misuse & Mental Health Services, ICE Teams etc.) in order to maximize the service offer to service users and improve required outcomes.	10%
RSA&RS 6) The tenderer's proposals for how they will ensure the best integration of service offer between the Rough Sleepers Advice & Resettlement service and Outreach Service.	10%

1.3 Scoring system

The scoring system to be used will be as follows:

Score	Acceptability	Bidder Response Demonstrates
0	Unacceptable	Information is either omitted or fundamentally unacceptable and/or there is insufficient evidence to support the proposal to allow the Authority to properly evaluate
1	Major Reservations	The information submitted has insufficient evidence that the specified requirements can be met and/or there are significant omissions, serious and/or many concerns
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3	Satisfactory	The information submitted meets the Authority's requirements and is acceptable in most respects, and there are no major concerns
4	Good	The information submitted provides good evidence that the specified requirements can be met. It is a full and robust response, and any concerns are addressed so that the proposal gives confidence
5	Outstanding	The information submitted provides strong evidence that the specified requirements will be exceeded, and provides full confidence with no concerns

For each Method Statement requirement each bidder must score a minimum of 2 in order for the tender to be considered further.

Should a Tenderer fail to achieve a score of 55% for Quality criteria, this will preclude further consideration of the tender.

2.0 Price (40% of overall evaluation)

Price will consist of 40% of the evaluation weightings.

The tenderer with the lowest evaluated price over the potential five (5) years Contract Period will receive the highest score; other bidders will receive a proportional score to the lowest evaluated price.

The price will not take into consideration the Parent Company Guarantee costs for evaluation of the pricing element.

- 2.1 The Council shall not be bound to accept the lowest or any Tender submitted.
- 2.2 Tenderers may be required to demonstrate their ability to carry out the Services and it may be necessary for officers of the Council to visit the Tenderer's offices and, interview the Tenderer, and during the tender evaluation process the Tenderer may therefore be required to:
- (a) attend meetings with the Council to present, explain or amplify details of its Form of Tender and tender submission;
 - (b) provide any other information reasonably required by the Council to enable a detailed evaluation of the Tenderer's submission; and
 - (c) arrange visits to other clients of the Tenderer or the provision of references.
- 2.3 Tenderers should fill in the Pricing Document in accordance with the criteria set out therein. The Council is seeking information in a manner which enables it to compare all Tenders on an equal footing.
- 2.4 All cost information must be exclusive of Value Added Tax as set out in the Conditions of Contract.
- 2.5 Tenderers' are required to indicate in the Pricing Schedule the annual cost (if any) of providing a Parent Company Guarantee (where the Tenderer has a parent company).
- 3.0 **Evaluation panel**
- 3.1 Tenderers responses will be evaluated by a team of Council officers with input from stakeholders and advisers drawn together by the Council with expertise in the delivery of these services.



Cabinet
16 June 2014

**Report from the Director of
Regeneration and Growth**

For Action

Wards affected:
ALL

**Authority to tender a contract for Rough Sleepers'
Outreach and Housing Advice and Resettlement Services.**

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The background to this report is that Brent has since 2011-12 seen a significant and above trend for London boroughs increase in rough sleeping numbers, sufficient for the borough to commission Homeless Link to conduct in November 2013 an independent Needs Analysis for Rough Sleepers in the borough (see attached background paper).
- 1.2 This report provides an overview of the current trend towards an increase in the numbers of those sleeping rough in the borough, illustrating the clear need to maintain the current level of resourcing for rough sleeping services for the foreseeable future, but identifying, in light of the Homeless Link Needs Analysis, the desirability of remodelling the structure of these services to sharpen focus and so improve quality.
- 1.3 The report requests approval to invite tenders as required by Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89 in respect of a contract for Rough Sleepers Outreach Services and a contract for Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Services.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Cabinet to approve inviting tenders for a contract for Rough Sleepers' Outreach Services and a contract for Rough Sleepers' Housing Advice and Resettlement Services on the basis of the pre - tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.21 of this report.

Meeting
Date

Version no. 1-5
Date

2.2 The Cabinet to give approval to officers to evaluate the tenders referred to in 2.1 above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 3.21 of this report.

3.0 Detail

Background and context

3.1 The council has been aligning its own housing and homelessness strategies and action plans to government led initiatives related to the prevention and alleviation of street homelessness since the first major government strategy in 1999 'Coming in from the cold'. The most recent government strategy launched in November 2011 'Vision to end rough sleeping: No Second Night Out nationwide' follows on from a Greater London Authority (GLA) initiative 'No second night out' being driven by the Mayor's Office and the London Delivery Board (LDB) established in 2009, with the aim of ending rough sleeping by December 2012. Brent has been a member of the LDB along with some other London boroughs and other key partners such as DCLG, the UK Border Agency (UKBA), Police and various voluntary sector groups. The emphasis of the current strategy is similar to previous strategies in its aim to work collaboratively and tackle the underlying causes of rough sleeping such as worklessness, addiction and mental illness. However, the most recent strategy acknowledges the complexities of completely eradicating rough sleeping and has moved towards the aim of ensuring that rough sleepers who are new to the street, do not spend a second night on the streets. Key success measures now focus on the ability to prevent those new to sleeping on the street becoming people who 'live' on the street.

Defining and quantifying rough sleeping

3.2 Definitions of 'rough sleeping' have changed over time; until 2010 rough sleeping was defined as those 'sleeping, or bedded down, in the open air, or in buildings or other places not designed for habitation'. In 2010 the definition expanded to include rough sleepers 'about to bed down' e.g. sitting or standing near their bedding but not actually lying down and to people living in tents.

3.3 Formal counts of people sleeping rough have been conducted in Brent since 2006 and the outcomes of these are set out in Table 1 below. These figures represent a snap shot of the extent of rough sleeping on a given night where known rough sleeping 'hot spots' are visited and rough sleepers counted in accordance with DCLG guidance described in paragraph 3.2 above.

Table 1: Rough sleeping street count snapshots.

Date of count	Number of rough sleepers counted
November 2007	1
November 2008	4
November 2009	4
November 2010	3
November 2011	7
November 2012	11
November 2013	6

- 3.4 While they can make a useful yardstick by which to measure year on year changes in the number of people sleeping rough in a borough, annual street counts, being a one night snapshot are not the most accurate methodology for establishing a boroughs number of rough sleepers and are subject to anomalous counts caused by poor weather or the like.
- 3.5 A more accurate picture of a borough's number of rough sleeping can be derived from data downloaded from CHAIN, the online database outreach teams use to record all their streets contacts. It's worth noting that Camden chose not to do a street count in 2013, choosing instead to make an estimate of the numbers sleeping rough in the borough based on their CHAIN data, as they believed it likely this would yield a more accurate picture.
- 3.6 Table 2 sets out the number of rough sleeper contacts (using the DCLG definitions as set out in paragraph 3.2) recorded on CHAIN for BRENT from April 2005 to March 2013. Official figures for the year 2013-14 are due to be published on 30/06/14.

Table 2: Number of rough sleeping contacts recorded on CHAIN in each year

Financial year	Total number of rough sleepers contacted.	Flow (new to rough sleeping)	Stock (living on the streets 2 plus years)	Returners (returning to the street after at least a year of settled living)
2005/2006	43	Not recorded	Not recorded	Not recorded
2006/2007	61	Not recorded	Not recorded	Not recorded
2007/2008	83	Not recorded	Not recorded	Not recorded
2008/2009	139	132	2	5
2009/2010	75	68	3	4
2010/2011	39	38	1	0
2011/2012	166	155	6	5
2012/2013	235	208	9	6

- 3.7 These figures demonstrate that while according to street count figures (Table 1) Brent experienced a 267% increase in the numbers sleeping rough in the borough over the two financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13, CHAIN data indicates that the increase over this period was nearer 500%.
- 3.8 This compares with a national average increase in the number of rough sleepers of 23% and a London average increase of 43%.
- 3.9 While official figures will not be available till 30/06/14, an interim analysis of our CHAIN data indicates that the number of verified rough sleepers recorded on CHAIN as having been contacted by outreach services in Brent for the year 2013/14 will be of the order of 325, an increase of just over a third on last year's numbers
- 3.10 Identified contributors to this increase in numbers include the impact of the recession and welfare reform and an element of under-reporting in 2010/2011, combined with additional services put in place across London from April 2012 that supplemented Brent's commissioned rough sleeping service, doubling the resources available to them and in doing so significantly enhancing their ability to identify (and work with) rough sleepers.
- 3.11 There is also growing evidence that indicates both that the numbers of Central and Eastern European rough sleepers in the borough were not accurately recorded pre 2011/12 and that these numbers are growing for Brent above trend in comparison with other London boroughs.
- 3.12 Brent has not traditionally had high numbers of people 'living on the street' but again this was an increasing trend over the financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13 with Brent having six people living on the streets at the end of 2013. The interim analysis of our CHAIN data indicates that the borough will record a similar number of people 'living on the street' for the year 2013/14. This is of concern due to the complexities associated with the reasons people live on the streets and the challenges faced in assisting people into settled living or supporting and/or removing those who have no recourse to public funds.
- 3.13 The council currently has a contract for the provision of rough sleeper services in the borough. The contract was due to expire at the end of March 2014 but has been extended to the beginning of October 2014 to tie in with the proposed start dates of the new contracts. A Needs Analysis, including a review of this contract, has recently been undertaken by Homeless Link.

Issues arising from the Needs Analysis conducted by Homeless Link.

- 3.14 While Homeless Link's Needs Analysis identified examples of innovative and good practice in the current provider's outreach practices, it also identified that the current provider, having been given the latitude to choose how to allocate resources between the outreach and housing advice and resettlement elements of its commissioned rough services, significantly biased the allocation of resources to housing advice and resettlement, to the detriment of the outreach element of the service.

- 3.15 At the time of the Needs Analysis the current provider was operating three outreach shifts a week, of three hours duration each. This represented a resource allocation to outreach services of less than one FTE post out of the four FTE Outreach and Resettlement posts the current provider receives funding for, the remaining resources being allocated to its building based housing advice and resettlement service.
- 3.16 Since the Needs Analysis was conducted, the current provider has allocated greater resources to outreach, committing to increase the length of each outreach shift from three hours to six.
- 3.17 Going forward, commissioning the street outreach and housing advice and resettlement elements of Brent's Rough Sleeping Services as two separate contracts, with separate service specifications and performance indicators would ensure that each service was allocated the resources intended and tighten each service's focus on delivering the specific area of work they were commissioned to deliver.

Conclusion

- 3.18 There is still a demonstrable need for this service and one that, if the authority is to effectively address the numbers rough sleeping rough in the borough, is resourced as a minimum with the same four FTE posts as the current service.
- 3.19 Officers consider that responsiveness and accountability of these services would be further enhanced by commissioning the Street Outreach and Housing Advice and Resettlement components of the service in two separate lots. This proposal has been discussed with the current provider when they were debriefed on Homeless Link's needs analysis.
- 3.20 It is possible that cost savings may be achieved through realising reduced hourly contract rates that have resulted from market conditions and efficiency savings achieved by providers across the sector in response to austerity.

Pre Tender Considerations

- 3.21 In accordance with Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89, pre-tender considerations have been set out below for the approval of the Cabinet.

Ref.	Requirement	Response
(i)	The nature of the service.	A contract for a Rough Sleepers' Outreach Service and a contract for a Housing Advice and Resettlement Service
(ii)	The estimated value.	The estimated value of the Rough Sleepers' Outreach Service is £65k per annum, £195K over the 3 year initial term, or £325k over the potential 5 year term. The estimated value of the Housing Advice and Resettlement Service is £65k per annum, £195K over the 3 year initial term, or £325k over the potential 5

Ref.	Requirement	Response	
		year term.	
(iii)	The contract term.	Both contracts will be let for an initial period of 3 years with an option to extend by up to a further 2 years.	
(iv)	The tender procedure to be adopted.	A single stage tender process.	
v)	The procurement timetable.	Indicative dates are:	
		Adverts placed	16/06/14
		Invite to tender	23/06/14
		Deadline for tender submissions	16/07/14
		Panel evaluation and shortlist for interview	21/07/14
		Interviews and contract decision	28/07/14
		Report recommending Contract award circulated internally for comment	30/07/14
		Cabinet approval	August 2014
		Cabinet call in period of 5 days	Following Cabinet Approval
		Contract Mobilisation	September 2014
		Contract start date	06/10/14
(vi)	The evaluation criteria and process.	<p>At tender evaluation stage, the panel will evaluate the tenders for both contracts using a 40%:60% price:quality split.</p> <p>Price of both lots will be evaluated on the basis of a price prospective provider's quote for delivering the specified service using a comparative scoring methodology.</p> <p>Quality for the contracts will be evaluated against the</p>	

Ref.	Requirement	Response
		<p>following criteria:</p> <p><i>Criteria for the Rough Sleeper's Street Outreach Service;</i></p> <p>RSOS 1) Proposals as to how the tenderer's previous experience will be applied to provide a high quality outreach service to rough sleepers that delivered demonstrable constructive outcomes for the rough sleepers worked with</p> <p>RSOS 2) The appropriateness and effectiveness of the tenderer's proposed systems and working methods to deliver the Brent Rough Sleepers' Outreach Service,</p> <p>RSOS 3) The Tenderer's proposals for how they will maximise the impact of the service within the available resources.</p> <p>RSOS 4) Proposals with regard to partnership work with other providers to maximize the service offer to service users and improve outcomes.</p> <p>RSOS 5) The appropriateness and effectiveness of the tenderer's proposed systems for ensuring integration of service offer between the Rough Sleepers Outreach and Advice & Resettlement services.</p> <p><i>Criteria for the Rough Sleeper's Street Housing Advice and Resettlement Service;</i></p> <p>RSA&RS 1) Proposals as to how the tenderer's previous experience will be used to provide a high quality advice and resettlement service that supports single homeless people in securing stable accommodation and sustaining it.</p> <p>RSA&RS 2) The appropriateness and effectiveness of the tenderer's proposed systems and working methods to deliver the Brent Rough Sleepers' Advice & Resettlement Service.</p> <p>RSA&RS 3) Proposals demonstrating the tenderer's ability to support Brent rough sleepers assisted into accommodation with accessing appropriate education, training or employment</p>

Ref.	Requirement	Response
		<p>RSA&RS 4) Proposals demonstrating the tenderer's ability to support Brent rough sleepers who have previously been assisted into accommodation maintain their tenancies should they later experience difficulties that threaten these tenancies</p> <p>RSA&RS 5) Proposals with regard to the partnership work with other providers to maximize the service offer to service users and improve outcomes,</p> <p>RSA&RS 6) The appropriateness and effectiveness of the tenderer's proposed systems for ensuring integration of service offer between the Rough Sleepers Advice & Resettlement and Outreach services.</p>
(vii)	Any business risks associated with entering the contract.	No specific business risks are considered to be associated with entering into the proposed contract. Financial Services and Legal Services have been consulted concerning this contract.
(viii)	The Council's Best Value duties.	This procurement process and on-going contractual requirement will ensure that the Council's Best Value obligations are met.
(ix)	Consideration of Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012	See section 8 below.
(x)	Any staffing implications, including TUPE and pensions.	This service is currently provided by an external contractor and there are no TUPE or pension implications for the council arising from retendering this contract.
(xi)	The relevant financial, legal and other considerations.	See section 4 and 5 below,

3.3 The Cabinet is asked to give its approval to these proposals as set out in the recommendations and in accordance with Standing Order 89.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 The estimated value of each of the service contracts is £65k per annum (£130k for both contracts combined), £195k over the initial three year term of the contract (£390k for both contracts) and up to £325k if the council exercises its option to extend the contract by up to another two years (£650k for both contracts).

- 4.2 It is anticipated that the cost of these contracts will be funded from the existing temporary accommodation budget.
- 4.3 The cost of the current contract with the current provider for the current service is £154k per annum.
- 4.4 Since the service was last commissioned market conditions/efficiency savings across the sector have resulted in reduced hourly contract rates, it is anticipated that this will be reflected in the pricing of the new contract. This is the basis for the projected reduced annual cost of £130k per annum for both contracts of for the retendered services.
- 4.5 Based on the assumption that the new services will start from the beginning of October 2014, the planned expenditure for these services for the current financial year is £142k.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The estimated total values of the contract for a Rough Sleepers' Outreach Service and the contract for a Housing Advice and Resettlement Service are both £325k and as such in excess of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (the "EU Regulations") threshold for Services. Both Services are classed as Part B Services for the purposes of the EU Regulations and as such are subject to partial application of the EU Regulations, including non-discrimination in the technical specification and notification of the contract award to the EU Publications Office. Whilst the contract is not therefore subject to the full tendering requirements of EU Regulations, it is however subject to the overriding EU Treaty principles of equality of treatment, fairness and transparency in the award of contracts. 5.2 The estimated total value of each contract is in excess of £250,000 making the contracts High Value Contracts under the council's Constitution. As such the contracts are subject to the Council's own Standing Orders and Financial Regulations in respect of High Value Contracts and the Cabinet is required to consider approval of the pre-tender considerations as set out in paragraph 3.21 above (Standing Order 89) and the inviting of tenders (Standing Order 88).
- 5.2 Once the tendering process has been undertaken, Officers will report back to the Cabinet in accordance with Contract Standing Orders, explaining the process undertaken in tendering the contracts and making recommendations for their award.
- 5.3 In the present case if the contracts are awarded to a new contractor the Transfer of Employment (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 ("TUPE") is likely to apply so as to transfer from the current to the new contractor those employees of the current contractor who spend all or most of their working time on the activities taken over by the new contractor.
- 5.4 The council's duties in connection with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 are contained in Section 8.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment for the services has been carried out and a copy of it is attached as Appendix A.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications)

- 7.1 This service is currently provided by an external contractor and there are no implications for council staff arising from retendering the contract.
- 7.2 No accommodation implications arise for the council out of the retendering of this contract.

8.0 Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

- 8.1 Since 31 January 2013, the council, in common with all public authorities subject to the EU Regulations, has been under duty pursuant to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 to consider how the services being procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area; how, in conducting the procurement process, the council might act with a view to securing that improvement; and whether the council should undertake consultation. This duty applies to the procurement of the proposed contract as Part B Services over the threshold for application of the EU Regulations are subject to the requirements of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.
- 8.2 The services being procured have as their primary aim improving the social and economic well being of rough sleepers, one of the most vulnerable groups in Brent. Users are as far as is practicable, considering the degree of personal crisis they are often experiencing when engaging with these services, consulted to ensure they best meet their needs and the views of users will be taken into account in these procuring services.
- 8.3 In addressing the needs of rough sleepers and reducing the numbers of people rough sleeping across the borough these services will also reduce the incidence of rough sleeping related anti-social behaviour and the impact rough sleeping can have on the public domain and wider environment, in doing so improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of the wider community.
- 8.4 There is a limited market for the delivery of these services; however, officers will endeavour to describe the scope of service in such a way as to further meet the requirements of the Act during the procurement process.

Background Papers

Homeless Link Rough Sleeping Needs Analysis.

Contact Officer

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ANDY DONALD
Strategic Director Regeneration and Growth

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2012

Equality Analysis Guidance and Form



Brent Council Equality Analysis Form

Please contact the Corporate Diversity team before completing this form. The form is to be used for both predictive Equality Analysis and any reviews of existing policies and practices that may be carried out.

Once you have completed this form, please forward to the Corporate Diversity Team for auditing. Make sure you allow sufficient time for this.

1. Roles and Responsibilities: please refer to stage 1 of the guidance	
Directorate: Regeneration & Growth Service Area: Housing Needs Service	Person Responsible: Name: Adam Salmon Title: Street Population Coordinator Contact No: 020 8937 2459 Signed:
Name of policy: Rough Sleepers' Support Services Retendering	Date analysis started: 16/05/14 Completion date Review date:
Is the policy: New <input type="checkbox"/> Old <input type="checkbox"/>	Auditing Details: Name: Elizabeth Bryan Title: Equality Officer Date : Contact No:0208 937 1190 Signed:
Signing Off Manager: responsible for review and monitoring Name: Fidelis Ukweno Title: Service Manager, Housing Options Date: Contact No: 020 8937 4219 Signed:	Decision Maker: Name individual /group/meeting/ committee: Date:

2. Brief description of the policy. Describe the aim and purpose of the policy, what needs or duties is it designed to meet? How does it differ from any existing policy or practice in this area?

Please refer to stage 2 of the guidance.

This equalities analysis is on the retendering of Brent's Rough Sleepers' Support Services as the current contract expired at the end of March 2014, we have extended the contract with the current provider to cover the period of time it will take to retender the service, it is anticipated that the service will be put out to tender, at the latest, by the beginning of July 2014, so that it can be completed by the end of August 2014, so that the new contact can be mobilised in time to start from 06/10/14.

The existing service is provided by Ashford Place (previously Cricklewood Homeless Concern). It is commissioned to deliver outreach shifts, where outreach workers go out on the streets to find and meet with people sleeping rough to conduct an initial assessment of them and establish a relationship with them, so that they can then introduce them to the other commissioned component of the service, the building based resettlement team, which works with rough sleepers to take them off of the streets and resettle them into stable accommodation.

Currently the service is commissioned as a single, unified, Rough Sleepers' Outreach and Resettlement service, with funding for four FTE posts, with no stipulation for how hours/resources should be allocated to the Outreach or Resettlement components of the service. It is intended to recommission the service as two separate lots that might be commissioned from the same or different providers, with funding for two FTE posts allocated to the Outreach lot and funding for two FTE posts allocated to the Housing Advice and Resettlement lot. This change in the structure of how the service is commissioned is both to better ensure an appropriate split in the allocation of resources between outreach and housing advice and resettlement and to maximise the potential for providers to present innovative proposals for how to maximise the impact of the available resources.

The principal aims of the Rough Sleepers' Support Service scheme are to:

- Meet and engage with rough sleepers.
- Work proactively with rough sleepers to resettle them, through the provision of a structured Rough Sleepers Resettlement Pathway, into suitable stable accommodation, including, where appropriate, reconnection to their home country/area.
- Work with rough sleepers holistically, addressing issues that contributed to their homelessness and impair their ability to maintain stable accommodation once resettled.
- Contribute to community safety and minimise both rough sleeping related anti-social behaviour and its impact on the wider community.

3. Describe how the policy will impact on all of the protected groups:

The primary goals of the Rough Sleepers' Support Service are to ensure that, irrespective of age, disability, gender, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy or gender identity, rough sleepers are rapidly made contact with, engaged and assisted off the streets and into accommodation.

Age

Rough sleepers will not be discriminated against because of their age. Analysis indicates that the greatest number of people contacted sleeping rough in Brent are aged 26-35 (37%) (87 individuals), followed by the age groups 36-45 (24%) (57 individuals), 18-25 (19%) (43 individuals) 46-55 (15%) (35 individuals) and 55+ (5%) (11 individuals). These figures are comparable to the demographic of rough sleepers in other boroughs

Disability

We have no data on this protected characteristic with respect to rough sleepers as this information isn't recorded on CHAIN (the Combined Homeless and Information Network database). To ensure that rough sleepers supported by the service are not discriminated against on the basis of disability the providers of the retendered services will be required to provide the council with monitoring data on the incidence of disability among service users contacted by the outreach team and supported by the housing advice and resettlement team and the council will review such monitoring data for any evidence of discrimination/barriers to access of services. A particular area of concern is the provision of support for rough sleepers with mental health problems that are severe enough to limit their engagement with support services, but insufficiently severe to make them sectionable under the Mental Health Act. The issue is that community mental health teams in Brent (in common with every other borough) are structured and resourced to primarily work with service users in office hours and from fixed locations, while Community Mental Health Teams have demonstrated a willingness to exercise a degree of flexibility to work alongside outreach workers, outside of their core hours and coming out onto the streets to meet with such clients, there are significant resource limitations that inhibit their ability to do so. This gap in provision, while affecting a very limited number of service users, (no more than 1-2 rough sleepers in the borough at any one time), is nonetheless one which we need to further explore to ensure these people receive equal access to services. Addressing this need will require resources and partnerships that go beyond the scope of the retendering of the Rough Sleepers' Support Service.

Gender

Rough sleepers will not be discriminated against because of their gender. Analysis indicates a gender split of the people contacted sleeping rough in Brent of 86% male and 14% female (200 men, 33 women), again these figures are comparable to the demographic of rough sleepers in other boroughs, with the overwhelming majority of rough sleepers being men. As part of their initial assessment of service users both teams will record their reasons for becoming homeless. The council will ask both teams to report on this data as part of their regular monitoring and will review this for evidence of people being made homeless as a result of discrimination or harassment, e.g. victims of domestic violence or hate crimes.

Race

The majority of people contacted sleeping rough in Brent in 2012-13 were from BAME households (specifically the Black African community). In 2012-13 42% of contacted rough sleepers from the Black community (African, Caribbean, Somalian, Other) (97 individuals), 38% from the White community (Irish, UK, Other) (88 individuals) and 20% from the Asian community (Indian, Pakistani, Chinese, Other) (46 individuals). Although we don't yet have the year end figures for 2013-14, available data indicates that the demographic distribution of race for rough sleepers in 2013-14 will have been significantly shifted by the large increase in the number EEA (European Economic Area citizen) rough sleepers in the borough. Many of these EEA rough sleepers have restrictions on their entitlement to benefits that significantly limit their options for escaping rough sleeping, often their only option being to accept the assistance offered to return/reconnect them to their country of origin. Many EEA rough sleepers choose to continue to sleep rough rather than accept offers of reconnection. It is deemed likely that this situation will be further exacerbated by the further restriction on entitlement to JSA and Housing Benefit introduced by the changes in regulations that came into force on the 01/04/14. Brent is participating in a dialogue between the rough sleeping leads of the London boroughs to explore innovative responses to the envisaged increase in the number of EEA citizens who sleep rough as a result of these benefit entitlement changes, these include greater cooperation with these citizens' governments' representatives in London to explore what services can be developed for them and low cost, minimal provision of accommodation, that could be provided with entitlement to housing benefits. Such initiatives will not be without their challenges and we are at the very early stages of exploring them.

Religious Belief

We have no data on this protected characteristic with respect to rough sleepers as this information isn't recorded on CHAIN. To ensure that rough sleepers supported by the service are not discriminated against on the basis of their religious belief the providers of the retendered services will be required to provide the council with monitoring data on the religious belief of service users contacted by the outreach team and supported by the housing advice and resettlement team and the council will review such monitoring data for any evidence of discrimination/ barriers to access of services.

Sexual Orientation

We have no data on this protected characteristic with respect to rough sleepers as this information isn't recorded on CHAIN. To ensure that rough sleepers supported by the service are not discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation the providers of the retendered services will be required to provide the council with monitoring data on the sexual orientation of service users contacted by the outreach team and supported by the housing advice and resettlement team and the council will review such monitoring data for any evidence of discrimination/ barriers to access of services. Providers will also be expected to develop links with local LGBT services to enhance their capacity to meet the particular needs of LGBT service users.

Pregnancy and Maternity

We have no data on this protected characteristic with respect to rough sleepers as this information isn't recorded on CHAIN. The primary reason for this is that as

pregnant women or parents with dependant children are a priority housing need group to whom there is a statutory duty, they very rarely sleep rough/make contact with rough sleeping services. The expectation would be that where the Rough Sleepers' Support Service did encounter a pregnant woman or parents with dependent children they would actively put them in touch with statutory services and, if appropriate, make a safeguarding referral.

Gender Identity

We have no data on this protected characteristic with respect to rough sleepers as this information isn't recorded on CHAIN. In the wider context the Housing Needs Department has recognised that it both needs to review the monitoring data it collects on transgendered applicants and its service offer to this service user group to ensure that it is best meeting their needs and ensuring they do not experience discrimination. The Rough Sleeping Support Service will be included in this wider review to ensure that rough sleepers are not discriminated against on the basis of their gender identity. To ensure that rough sleepers supported by the service are not discriminated against on the basis of gender identity the providers of the retendered services will be required to provide the council with monitoring data on the gender identity of service users contacted by the outreach team and supported by the housing advice and resettlement team and the council will review such monitoring data for any evidence of discrimination/ barriers to access of services.

Please give details of the evidence you have used:

The information the above analysis is based on was abstracted from the CHAIN database and CHAIN's 2012-13 annual report on rough sleeping in Brent. We had to rely on the 2012-13 report as the 2013-14 report will not be available until 30/06/14.

4. Describe how the policy will impact on the Council's duty to have due regard to the need to:

(a) Eliminate discrimination (including indirect discrimination), harassment and victimisation;

Brent's stated commitment to Equality and Diversity in procurement clearly states the commitment we expect from providers to promote equality and diversity, taking into account the needs of the people protected under the Equality Act 2010 in respect of the Protected Characteristics. The evaluation of bidding provider's tender submissions for the Rough Sleepers' Support Service will include a critical assessment of their demonstrable commitment to actively promoting diversity and equality.

The specification of the Rough Sleepers Support Service contract/s will include a requirement that bidders demonstrate their competence and experience to deliver the service by providing examples of how they have successfully delivered

equivalent outreach and support services, including examples of linking and partnering with community or specialist services that demonstrate the providers awareness of how and ability to draw on their relationships with these services to better enable the generic outreach service they deliver to meet the specific needs of disadvantaged and potentially discriminated against groups. This would include provision of support for the LGBT community, people with substance misuse issues and/or engaged in prostitution and the provision of language and culturally sensitive support for immigrants who have a first language other than English and may be unfamiliar with the social structures and institutions of the United Kingdom. The panel will also assess providers' bids to ensure they recruit appropriate staff, including ensuring that they are DBS checked.

Providers will also be contractually required to have a complaints procedure that as well as providing service users with a formal mechanism for expressing any concerns they may have about the service they receive will also contribute to preventing unlawful discrimination and promoting equal opportunities/access for all. In the event of service users having queries or complaints in relation to providers' conduct with regard to issues of discrimination or fair access to services Brent Council will provide advice and assistance to the enquirer/ complainant to ensure a timely and satisfactory resolution.

The number of complaints will be one of the performance indicators upon which providers' performance is monitored. All complaints of harassment or discrimination will be dealt with by the Provider in the first instance in line with their complaints procedure. Where the service user is not satisfied with the outcome, they will then able to contact Brent's Street Population Coordinator the council officer responsible for managing this contract.

Regular performance monitoring will allow the Council to ensure there is a consistent approach to complaints and that support is being provided with a caring and responsive approach with regards to complaints of harassment.

(b) Advance equality of opportunity;

People who have to resort to sleeping rough, irrespective of the other challenges or disadvantages they face, are some of the most excluded and marginalised members of society. In addressing their needs and supporting them to access accommodation and escape from rough sleeping this service will advance equality of opportunity. The overriding priority of the retendering of this service is to incorporate the recommendations of the Rough Sleepers Needs Analysis conducted for Brent by Homeless Link, the principle objectives of these recommendations being the refocusing of the service's street based outreach practise and the asserting of a stronger and more responsive rough sleepers resettlement pathway. While neither of these actions are specifically targeted at advancing the equality of opportunity for protected groups, these groups will, like all others, benefit from the envisaged improvement in the service that the retendering is intended to deliver.

(c) Foster good relations

In addressing the needs of rough sleepers and reducing the numbers of people

rough sleeping across the borough these services will also reduce the incidence of rough sleeping related anti-social behaviour and the impact rough sleeping can have on the public domain and wider environment, in doing so improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of the wider community and fostering good relations.

5. What engagement activity did you carry out as part of your assessment?
Please refer to stage 3 of the guidance.

i. Who did you engage with?

The retendering of this service has been informed by an external Needs Analysis for Rough Sleepers that the council commissioned Homeless Link to conduct on its behalf. As an integral part of this Needs Analysis the consultant Homeless Link employed met with a wide range of stakeholders including the current service provider, Lift, a local user led homelessness charity, the boroughs supported housing providers and specialist rough sleeping services, such as No Second Night Out and London Street Rescue that interact with Brent rough sleepers and rough sleeping services as part of their broader pan-london services. The consultant also joined an outreach shift and consulted with service users directly. As the previous director on the Places of Change programme and other central government rough sleeping initiatives the consultant was both expert in issues of rough sleeping and experienced in interacting directly with service users. As this piece of work conducted as recently as November 2013 it was felt that a further consultation process would repeat much of the work undertaken in the Needs Analysis and as such would both represent a poor allocation of resources and needlessly delay the tendering process.

ii. What methods did you use?

An externally commissioned needs analysis.

iii. What did you find out?

Primarily the need to review Brent's Rough Sleeping Pathway and the manner/speed with which rough sleepers access accommodation, a piece of work which is being conducted in parallel with the retendering of the Rough Sleepers' Support Service and an understanding that, going forward, commissioning the street outreach and housing advice and resettlement elements of the Rough Sleeping Support Services as two separate contracts, with separate service specifications and performance indicators would ensure that each service was allocated the resources intended and tighten each service's focus on delivering the specific area of work they were commissioned to deliver.

iv. How have you used the information gathered?

To inform the revised structure of the way these services are commissioned.

v. How has it affected your policy?

It has resulted in us separately specifying the two elements of the service, with separate service specifications, with the aim of tightening the focus of each element on their specific remits/roles.

6. Have you identified a negative impact on any protected group, or identified any unmet needs/requirements that affect specific protected groups? If so, explain what actions you have undertaken, including consideration of any alternative proposals, to lessen or mitigate against this impact.

Please refer to stage 2, 3 & 4 of the guidance.

It is recognised that provision for rough sleepers with mental health problems that are severe enough to prevent their full engagement with services, but insufficiently severe to make them sectionable under the Mental Health Act could be improved. The issue is that community mental health teams in Brent (in common with every other borough) are structured and resourced to primarily work with service users in office hours and from fixed locations, while Community Mental Health Teams have demonstrated a willingness to exercise a degree of flexibility to work alongside outreach workers, outside of their core hours and coming out onto the streets to meet with such clients, there are significant resource limitations that inhibit their ability to do so. This situation will not be made any worse by the retendering of these services, but the new provider of the outreach service will be required to review how this element of the service offer could, within the limited available resources, be improved.

We also recognise that the resettlement options that can be offered to EEA rough sleepers are severely limited as a consequence of the restrictions on their entitlement to JSA and Housing Benefit, meaning often the only service offer available to them is return/reconnection to their home country. Our experience is that many EEA rough sleepers, despite their only alternative being to sleep rough, refuse this offer. This does result in EEA rough sleepers experiencing more prolonged rough sleeping as compared to other rough sleepers who are entitled to JSA and Housing Benefit.

Please give details of the evidence you have used:

Examples of practise/casework with current rough sleepers with these mental health needs.

7. Analysis summary

Please tick boxes to summarise the findings of your analysis.

Protected Group	Positive	Adverse	Neutral
------------------------	-----------------	----------------	----------------

	impact	impact	
Age			X
Disability		x	
Gender re-assignment			X
Marriage and civil partnership			X
Pregnancy and maternity			X
Race		X	
Religion or belief			X
Sex			X
Sexual orientation			X

8. The Findings of your Analysis

Please complete whichever of the following sections is appropriate (one only). Please refer to stage 4 of the guidance.

No major change

The tender terms will ensure that all rough sleepers accessing the service will receive the best possible support in accordance with their individual needs and requirements.

The tender process will also include method statements which allow the panel to assess how well the provider/s are able to meet the needs of those sleeping rough in the borough. Bidders will be required to demonstrate their experience by providing examples of how they have successfully delivered equivalent outreach and support services. Particular attention will be paid to examples of anti-discriminatory practise and examples of linking and partnering with community or specialist services that demonstrate the providers awareness of how and ability to draw on their relationships with these services to better enable the generic outreach service they deliver to meet the specific needs of disadvantaged and potentially discriminated against groups, especially with regard to the protected groups. The panel will also assess provider's bids to ensure they recruit appropriate staff, including ensuring that they are DBS checked.

The tender specification will also include Brent's commitment to Equality and Diversity in Procurement and will state clearly the commitment we expect from providers to promote equality and diversity, taking into account the needs of the people protected under the Equality Act 2010 in respect of the protected characteristics.

Regular performance monitoring, in the form of monthly targeting and tasking meetings and formal quarterly reviews will allow the Council to ensure that the service is delivered in a manner that promotes Equality and Diversity, is consistent with best practice and provided with a caring and responsive approach with regards to service users needs.

Adjust the policy

This may involve making changes to the policy to remove barriers or to better advance equality. It can mean introducing measures to mitigate the potential adverse effect on a particular protected group(s).

Remember that it is lawful under the Equality Act to treat people differently in some circumstances, where there is a need for it. It is both lawful and a requirement of the public sector equality duty to consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary.

If you have identified mitigating measures that would remove a negative impact, please detail those measures below.

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion, the information that you used to make this decision and how you plan to adjust the policy.

Continue the policy

This means adopting your proposals, despite any adverse effect or missed opportunities to advance equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not amount to unlawfully discrimination, either direct or indirect discrimination.

In cases where you believe discrimination is not unlawful because it is objectively justified, it is particularly important that you record what the objective justification is for continuing the policy, and how you reached this decision.

Explain the countervailing factors that outweigh any adverse effects on equality as set out above:

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion and the information that you used to make this decision:

Stop and remove the policy

If there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, and if the policy is not justified by countervailing factors, you should consider stopping the policy altogether. If a policy shows unlawful discrimination it must be removed or changed.

Please document below the reasons for your conclusion and the information that you used to make this decision.

9. Monitoring and review

Please provide details of how you intend to monitor the policy in the future. Please refer to stage 7 of the guidance.

As well as monthly targeting and tasking meetings there will be on-going performance monitoring via quarterly contract meetings with Providers and by review of reported their KPIs. The number of complaints will also be used as a monitoring mechanism to ensure service users have been treated fairly and have not experienced discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin, age, gender, faith, sexuality and disability.

Brent Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in the delivery of all of its services. Brent Council will seek to ensure that the Rough Sleepers' Support Service is delivered in a manner that is fair to all sections of the community regardless of nationality, ethnic origin, marital status, age, gender or disability.

Brent Council and its partners will be responsive, accessible and sensitive to the needs of all rough sleepers, irrespective of nationality, ethnic origin, marital status, age, gender or disability, will not tolerate prejudice and discrimination and will actively promote equality.

The Rough Sleepers' Support Service provider/s will record client contact data on CHAIN, an online database used across London by rough sleeping and outreach services. CHAIN monitors the demographics of engaged rough sleepers by ethnicity, nationality, age and gender. The provider/s will need to monitor for faith, sexuality, disability, pregnancy, marital status and gender identity by other means. Diversity data will be examined with providers as an integral part of contract management to ensure that the service does not operate in a manner that disadvantages or discriminates against any group/s of service users.

10. Action plan and outcomes

At Brent, we want to make sure that our equality monitoring and analysis results in positive outcomes for our colleagues and customers.

Use the table below to record any actions we plan to take to address inequality, barriers or opportunities identified in this analysis.

Action	By when	Lead officer	Desired outcome	Date completed	Actual outcome
Establish working group to establish better local partnerships to better meet the needs of rough sleepers with complex mental health needs.	Within six weeks of the mobilisation of the new Rough Sleepers' Support Service contract.	Street Population Coordinator.	Better arrangements to meet the needs of rough sleepers with these needs significantly outside of the usual operating hours of community mental health services and meeting with them on street based outreach sessions.		

Please forward to the Corporate Diversity Team for auditing.

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**THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT
REGENERATION & GROWTH DEPARTMENT
HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT
HOUSING NEEDS SERVICE**

**ROUGH SLEEPING SERVICE, ROUGH SLEEPER'S
STREET OUTREACH SERVICE CONTRACT**

**DOCUMENT (b): SPECIFICATION FOR THE
PROVISION OF A ROUGH SLEEPER'S STREET
OUTREACH SERVICE**

Date: 28/11/2014

SPECIFICATION

This specification is for the Street Outreach component of Brent's wider Rough Sleepers' Support Service for people sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough in the borough.

The Rough Sleepers' Support Service is being commissioned as two distinct but inter-dependent service elements, this, a Rough Sleepers' Street Outreach Service and the other, a Rough Sleepers' Housing Advice and Resettlement Support Service. While the two elements are individually specified and are being put out to tender separately, it is the council's intention that they should be delivered with sufficient integration that service users accessing them experience them as a cohesive service offer.

The two service elements may be commissioned either from a single or different provider, should the two services be delivered by different providers, one of the council's central expectations of both providers would be that they establish a sufficiently close working partnership to ensure service users experience the desired integrated service offer.

Both services are being tendered for a period of three years with an option to extend for up to another two years.

1. BRENT ROUGH SLEEPERS' SUPPORT SERVICE OVERVIEW

1.1 The two service elements to be commissioned are:

A Street Outreach Service, to identify and engage with people sleeping rough in Brent and in need or want of assistance with getting into accommodation and off the streets. This service will not target the relatively newly observed phenomenon of migratory economic migrants without support needs who choose to sleep rough to save money in order to maximise the income they can remit home.

&

A Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Service to primarily assist rough sleepers referred to them by the Street Outreach Service, but on occasion also people referred to them by a designated referrer as being at risk of sleeping rough, to secure and maintain appropriate and stable accommodation. (Designated referrers will be as determined by the council) The Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement service will also gate keep Brent's Rough Sleepers' Pathway accommodation.

1.2 It is envisaged that both service elements will work with a range of service users, some of who may present with considerable needs but have limited or no engagement with other support services, so presenting potential risks to themselves and/or others. Both service elements will support clients with chaotic lifestyles, including those who may have had or still have ongoing drug and alcohol issues and/or mental health issues and may present with significant vulnerability as a consequence of these needs.

1.3 The provider/s of both service elements will be expected to work with other local support services and partners including but not restricted to: Brent Council's Housing Options and START Plus teams, care managers, social workers, community psychiatric and substance misuse services, Ashford Place, Lift, the boroughs supported housing and floating support providers, the London Street Rescue and No Second Night Out services, probation services, registered social landlords (RSLs), and private landlords.

1.4 The provider/s of both services shall participate in monthly targeting and tasking meetings chaired by Brent's Street Population Coordinator to plan and review actions for individual rough sleepers and/or emerging rough sleeping issues in the borough.

2. UNDERLYING SERVICE VALUES

2.1 This is an outcomes-focused specification and as such leaves scope for providers to organise service delivery in a range of ways to achieve the required outcomes. However, Brent Council has defined a set of underlying values that organisations including the provider of the services (and service) under this contract will be expected to adhere to in delivering such services.

2.2 The values guiding this service will be:

- to treat individuals with dignity and respect;
- to promote maximum independence; not doing things for people but helping people to do things for themselves to prevent dependency;
- to focus on a person-centred and individualised approach to address the specific and changing needs of individuals;
- to support and promote individual choice and control to assist service users to realise their aspirations and full potential;
- to be preventative and proactive; responding to emerging problems and preventing them from escalating;
- to involve people who use the service in shaping it and to seek their views and act upon their feedback; and
- to achieve a balanced approach to risk which gives individuals control and the support if they make mistakes without serious implications for their security and safety.

3. BRENT ROUGH SLEEPERS' SUPPORT SERVICE'S STREET OUTREACH SERVICE

3.1 This service is being commissioned as an outreach service to go out onto the streets primarily early in the morning, but also late at night if required, to contact people where they are or appear to be sleeping rough. The service provider shall as part of the provision of its services and the service required of it:

1. in response to Streetlink referrals and other intelligence proactively find and engage with rough sleepers;
2. verify individual's rough sleeping;
3. establish and build relationships with rough sleepers;
4. undertake an initial assessment of their needs;
5. where practicable arrange immediate placement in accommodation e.g. where appropriate refer to the No Second Night Out and No One Left Sleeping On the Streets services;
6. where immediate accommodation is impracticable, refer on to the Rough Sleepers' Housing Advice and Resettlement Service;
7. provide support while the rough sleeper remains on the street and, if appropriate, maintain tapering contact once they move into accommodation;
8. assertively challenge rough sleepers engaging in anti-social behaviour, highlighting the potential consequences of such activity; and
9. assertively challenge rough sleepers presenting with unrealistic expectations, highlighting their unsustainability, e.g. EU nationals with support needs seeking to remain in the UK without exercising their treaty rights and persist in rough sleeping unchallenged.

3.2 The provider shall also attend and participate in relevant meetings with the key partnership agencies and forums such as the Local Joint Action Groups (LJAGs).

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STREET OUTREACH SERVICE

4.1 As the Street Outreach element of Brent's Rough Sleeping Services the Rough Sleepers Street Outreach Service will make contact with and engage the boroughs rough sleepers (or those identified as being at acute risk of sleeping rough), referring them onto the Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement service, supporting and encouraging them to engage with the service to support their making the transition from a chaotic street lifestyle to sustaining stable accommodation in the social or private rented sectors. The service will, where appropriate, reconnect individuals from outside the borough to their home area.

4.2 It will, working with partners, coordinate action around each rough sleeper to bring them in and off the streets. It will establish with individual rough sleepers a support plan which addresses both their needs and future aspirations and ensures they establish and sustain stable accommodation that serves as a firm foundation for the realisation of their aspirations.

4.3 The service will address the needs of the wider community by reducing to the minimum the number of people sleeping rough in the borough and by addressing and minimising rough sleeping related anti-social behaviour.

5. SERVICE USER ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND SERVICE ACCESS

5.1 The Rough Sleepers Street Outreach Service is being commissioned to provide support services to people who are sleeping rough in Brent and in need of housing related support.

5.2 Potential service users' eligibility for the service will be based on the service's verification of their rough sleeping through meeting them on Street Outreach shifts and establishing they meet the criteria to be verified as rough sleeping.

5.3 While the service will be accessible to rough sleepers with no recourse to public funds, their further onward referral options, beyond reconnection, may be severely limited.

6. STREET OUTREACH SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

6.1 The Rough Sleepers Street Outreach Service will deliver:

- a high quality, cost effective support service with appropriately trained staff, with skills including the abilities to develop relationships with rough sleepers and partner agencies, to motivate vulnerable people, assess their needs, keep accurate records and deal with issues associated with rough sleeping, mental illness and substance abuse.
- a service that is flexible and responsive to the service users' needs, ensuring continuity of appropriate support from the street to the sustainment of stable accommodation.
- a service that works proactively with service users to identify and resolve issues.
- a service which links with agencies in a way that promotes partnership working.

6.2 The service will have in place robust needs and risk assessment processes, proactively mitigating risk and will use SMART support planning processes to best support its service users in meeting their short and long term goals and realising their aspirations.

6.3 The service will provide a support service tailored to the individual as appropriate allocating service users a named key worker who will engage and support the service user placing them at the centre of their individual support plan.

6.4 The service will work creatively to enable service users to engage with other services and will build relationships with partner agencies to ensure effective referrals and joint work to ensure health, rehabilitation and development needs are met.

6.5 The service will through effective record keeping facilitate support, manage case work, support joint working and produce data to inform policy.

6.6 The service will ensure it is responsive to the needs of BME groups and in accordance with the council's equal opportunities policy.

6.7 The service will for those people who do not have English as a first language, or are unable to communicate using English ensure access to appropriate translation services and promote access to ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses.

6.8 The service will input relevant monitoring information to the CHAIN database in a timely manner, provide Brent Council and other organisations as appropriate with up to date monitoring information and assist in using this information to develop services that better support clients towards becoming independent self sufficient members of society.

6.9 The service will ensure any data which is supplied to third parties is in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Examples of organisations including but not being limited to:

- Other Advice Agencies
- Contact details of local GP's, Health Centre etc.
- Support services
- Training providers and other classes
- Employment agencies
- Income support and or benefits

6.10 The service will ensure that services are carried out in compliance with legislation, to include revision of/or relevant additional legislation.

6.11 So that the provider's staff can better make contact with rough sleepers the provider shall ensure that the outreach service will mainly operate early shifts that start before 5.00 a.m. or late shifts that continue until at least 1.00 a.m.

6.12 The balance of early and late shifts will generally be left to the discretion of the service provider provided that the performance requirements of this specification and the contract are met, and the shift pattern will be dependent on the weather, season and the local pattern of rough sleeping. Note that Brent's Street Population Coordinator is entitled (as necessary in his/her opinion), to direct and require that the service provider and it staff conduct or work to specific shifts or shift pattern, or vary their regular pattern of shifts to work a greater proportion of early or late shifts.

6.13 The team's regular weekly shifts will have a minimum length of five hours, with the specific length and frequency of outreach shifts being determined by the provider's method statement in their service tender submission.

6.14 The services will provide a combination of responsive and proactive work with rough sleepers. Where rough sleepers are failing to engage the provider will deploy a variety of approaches to help ensure that each service user is supported effectively. These will include using a persistent or assertive approach with entrenched rough sleepers

6.15 Once rough sleepers/service users have been placed in accommodation as part of the service provision, the provider shall ensure the service provider has means to maintain contact

with those persons, and with entrenched rough sleepers it has established a relationship with, whom (being particularly isolated and vulnerable find difficulty in forming and maintaining relationships of trust). The provider and the service shall support such persons and specifically those who are particularly vulnerable to having their initial placement in accommodation breakdown or otherwise end, without such ongoing support from the provider and its service staff.

6.16 The service will support the local authority/council and the police and other agencies in tackling rough sleeping related antisocial behaviour in Brent.

7. SERVICE USER INVOLVEMENT AND FEEDBACK

7.1 So that service users are supported to engage in making their own choices, including being fully involved in the running of the service and achieving as great a level of independence as possible; the service provider will have in place policies and working practices such as a customer care/service user's charter and a service user involvement strategy that demonstrably promotes service user involvement and feedback.

8. STAFFING AND MANAGEMENT

8.1 The service provider is required to employ sufficient, competent, suitably qualified, DBS checked and trained staff to provide the service commissioned.

8.2 The service hours delivered per week will be determined by the provider's method statement in their service tender submission. Provided that the service is resourced and staff perform as required under the specification and the contract, paid staffing levels for the Street Outreach Service will be as described in the provider's method statement in their service tender submission.

8.3 For this contract, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 ("TUPE") is expected to apply. Information in relation to this is as detailed in the council's invitation to tender for the contract. The provider has been referred to this in the council's ITT. The provider acknowledges and agrees that London Borough of Brent does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of any TUPE or employment related information.

9. LOCATION OF SERVICES

9.1 The expectation is that the street outreach service will be provided to people rough sleeping across the London Borough of Brent. As there is not a specific need to have an office base within the borough to meet this requirement, the council will not require the outreach service provider to have premises within the borough. However the requirement is that should the provider not maintain premises in the borough that it make appropriate provision for outreach workers to be

able, as required, to conduct confidential one-to-one work with the rough sleeping clients with which it engages in the borough.

10. OUTCOMES

10.1 This service specification is outcome-focused and does not tightly prescribe how and what a provider should do to achieve the specified outcomes. Outcome-focused services aim to achieve the goals, aspirations and priorities of the individuals they serve. The service should be delivered in a way that is right for the individual and designed to achieve what the person desires. Outcome-focused services are fundamentally person-centred and individualised in their approach, recognising that each individual is unique so has different requirements.

10.2 Brent Council wants to be able to assess how a service is assisting individuals to achieve their goals and positive outcomes, and evidence how, whilst they are receiving the service, they progress relative to their position on first accessing the service. The council requires the service provider to provide outcome data to evidence such progress as part of its performance obligations under the contract.

11. TARGETS

11.1 The service provider will be required to submit accurate performance data both monthly and quarterly; this frequency may be reviewed with the agreement of both the provider and the Council.

11.2 General targets for the service are detailed below, specific targets for the service will be agreed with the provider by the Council within 8 weeks of contract start date or in the absence of agreement will be determined by the council via its representative the Street Population Co-ordinator (or other council nominated representative) and will be subject to annual review through which they may be amended by agreement or through decision by the Council.

Outcome	Target
New clients with development/action plans	100%
Existing clients with development/action plan to be kept open until successfully transferred to Rough Sleepers' Housing Advice and Resettlement Service	100%
Eligible new clients referred into the No Second Night Out Service	100%
Clients referred to Rough Sleepers' Housing Advice and Resettlement Service	80%
Clients assisted through the provision of advice, information and referral to other agencies to return/reconnect to originating borough or country	20%

Clients assisted to claim benefit if not already claiming	100%
Clients assisted to access mental health or drug and alcohol services as well as medical assistance if needed through referral to CRI or other CCG services	100%

11.3 In order to assess operational efficiency of service performance the provider will be expected to submit reports on the following information:

Information	Frequency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report of serious incidents 	Within 12 hours of incident
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report of safeguarding alerts 	Within 24 hours of incident
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PI Performance Indicator, Outcome and Target Reports and Returns 	Monthly/Quarterly (as agreed or determined by the Council)

12. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

12.1 The Council will utilise a risk-based approach to monitoring this service. The focus will be to assess the achievement of outcomes and performance to targets. This will be achieved through a range of methods including submission of quantitative and qualitative outcome data.

12.2 It is expected that the service provider will maintain high levels of performance through their own internal quality assurance processes.

12.3 With the use of a risk based monitoring approach a provider who is performing well will likely need less monitoring than one whose performance is deemed poor.

12.4 A Service Performance Assessment will be completed for the service, at least annually by the council's Street Population Coordinator. Following this, a service monitoring plan will be devised by them and agreed with the provider.

12.5 However, independent of the service performance assessment the performance areas outlined in this specification and in Appendix 1 attached must be complied with by the provider. The performance requirements are intended to achieve positive outcomes for service users and provide information and data to evidence this to the Council.

12.6 The Council will monitor and review the effectiveness of these services and service user views will be an integral part of this review process.

13. PERFORMANCE MONITORING RETURNS

13.1 The service provider shall complete and submit electronically a Performance Indicator Workbook, the format of which will be provided by the council, at the end of each quarter (June, September, December and March) within 15 working days of the end of each quarter.

14. HEALTH AND SAFETY

14.1 The provider will ensure the provision of the service, which includes the provision of staff resources, premises and facilities, and all agents of the provider comply with all relevant Health and Safety requirements. The provider must submit all Health and Safety information and data, which is required by the Council in order to ensure the safety of service users and staff and agents of the provider.

15. INCIDENTS

15.1 Serious and untoward incidents must be reported to the Council within 12 hours of them occurring. The report and information provided must comply with local procedure.

16. SAFEGUARDING

16.1 The provider must report safeguarding incidents or allegations to the Council within 24 hours and must liaise with appropriate agencies including social work teams, police, probation and health professionals in line with local procedure, and at all times take necessary action to protect individuals (vulnerable adults and children at risk) from immediate and future harm.

17. CONCLUSION

17.1 The aim of this service specification is to set out a clear and measurable benchmark of the quality of Rough Sleeping Street Outreach Service.

17.2 Any changes to the service must be agreed with the London Borough of Brent's Street Population Coordinator before they are made.

**THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT
REGENERATION & GROWTH DEPARTMENT
HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT
HOUSING NEEDS SERVICE**

**ROUGH SLEEPING SERVICE, ROUGH SLEEPERS
HOUSING ADVICE AND RESETTLEMENT SERVICE
CONTRACT**

**DOCUMENT (b): SPECIFICATION FOR THE
PROVISION OF A ROUGH SLEEPERS' HOUSING
ADVICE & RESETTLEMENT SERVICE**

Date: 28/11/2014

SPECIFICATION

This specification is for the Advice and Resettlement component of Brent's wider Rough Sleepers' Support Service for people sleeping rough or at risk of sleeping rough in the borough.

The Rough Sleepers' Support Service is being commissioned as two distinct but inter-dependent service elements, this, a Rough Sleepers' Housing Advice and Resettlement Support and the other, a Rough Sleepers' Street Outreach Service. While the two elements are individually specified and are being put out to tender separately, it is the council's intention that they should be delivered with sufficient integration that service users accessing them experience them as a cohesive service offer.

The two service elements may be commissioned either from a single or different provider, should the two services be delivered by different providers, one of the council's central expectations of both providers would be that they establish a sufficiently close working partnership to ensure service users experience the desired integrated service offer.

Both services are being tendered for a period of three years with an option to extend for up to another two years.

1.1 The two service elements to be commissioned are:

A Street Outreach Service, to identify and engage with people sleeping rough in Brent and in need or want of assistance with getting into accommodation and off the streets. This service will not target the relatively newly observed phenomenon of migratory economic migrants without support needs who choose to sleep rough to save money in order to maximise the income they can remit home.

&

A Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Service to primarily assist rough sleepers referred to them by the Street Outreach Service, but on occasion also people referred to them by a designated referrer as being at risk of sleeping rough, to secure and maintain appropriate and stable accommodation. (Designated referrers will be as determined by the council) The Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement service will also gate keep Brent's Rough Sleepers' Pathway accommodation.

1.2 It is envisaged that both service elements will work with a range of service users, some of whom may present with considerable needs but have limited or no engagement with other support services, so presenting potential risks to themselves and/or others. Both service elements will support clients with chaotic lifestyles, including those who may have had or still have ongoing drug and alcohol issues and/or mental health issues and may present with significant vulnerability as a consequence of these needs.

1.3 The provider/s of both service elements will be expected to work with other local support services and partners including but not restricted to: Brent Council's Housing Options and START Plus

teams, care managers, social workers, community psychiatric and substance misuse services, Ashford Place, Lift, the boroughs supported housing and floating support providers, the London Street Rescue and No Second Night Out services, probation services, registered social landlords (RSLs), and private landlords.

1.4 The provider/s of both services shall participate in monthly targeting and tasking meetings chaired by Brent's Street Population Coordinator to plan and review actions for individual rough sleepers and/or emerging rough sleeping issues in the borough.

2. UNDERLYING SERVICE VALUES

2.1 This is an outcomes-focused specification and as such leaves scope for providers to organise service delivery in a range of ways to achieve the required outcomes. However, Brent Council has defined a set of underlying values that organisations including the provider of the services and service under this contract will be expected to adhere to in delivering such services.

2.2 The values guiding this service will be:

- to treat individuals with dignity and respect;
- to promote maximum independence; not doing things for people but helping people to do things for themselves to prevent dependency;
- to focus on a person-centred and individualised approach to address the specific and changing needs of individuals;
- to support and promote individual choice and control to assist service users to realise their aspirations and full potential;
- to be preventative and proactive; responding to emerging problems and preventing them from escalating;
- to involve people who use the service in shaping it and to seek their views and act upon their feedback;
- to achieve a balanced approach to risk which gives individuals control and the support if they make mistakes without serious implications for their security and safety.

3. BRENT ROUGH SLEEPERS' HOUSING ADVICE AND RESETTLEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE

3.1 This service is being commissioned as a housing advice and resettlement service to work with the rough sleepers referred to them by the Street Outreach Service and people referred to them by designated referrers as at risk of sleeping rough and requiring a service to prevent this. The service provider shall as part of the provision of its services and the service required of it:

1. complete a timely and comprehensive assessment of all service users referred to it;
2. identify realistic, appropriate and sustainable housing options for service users and any barriers to their accessing or sustaining this;

3. for all service users formulate in a timely manner and execute a support plan that addresses their housing and other related needs and any identified barriers to their accessing or sustaining accommodation;
4. where appropriate refer service users on to supported accommodation and support them while they wait to access this accommodation;
5. where appropriate support service users in accessing private rented sector accommodation and provide them with the necessary pre-tenancy support to ensure they are able to remain in this accommodation;
6. act as the gatekeeper for Brent's Rough Sleeping Pathway accommodation;
7. support previous rough sleepers who, having previously been assisted into accommodation so that they can re-approach the service seeking assistance if they are experiencing difficulties in maintaining their tenancies or remaining in the allocated accommodation; and
8. support previous rough sleepers in accessing appropriate education, training or employment, increasing their financial independence and stability, so better securing their continuation of their tenancy or accommodation arrangements.

3.2 The provider shall also attend and participate in relevant meetings and forums to promote close working relationships and joint work with the key partnership agencies.

4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE HOUSING ADVICE AND RESETTLEMENT SERVICE

4.1 The Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Service will provide rough sleepers, referred into the service by the Street Outreach Service, with high quality, advice and structured support with the objective of assisting them to make the transition from a chaotic street lifestyle to sustaining appropriate stable accommodation. The service will, where appropriate, reconnect individuals from outside the borough to their home area.

4.2 The Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Service will for each rough sleeper it works with, establish an individual resettlement plan which addresses both their needs and future aspirations and ensures they establish and can sustain stable accommodation arrangements that serve as a firm foundation for the realisation of their aspirations.

4.3 The Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Service will, working with partners, coordinate action around each rough sleeper to execute their individual resettlement plan, reviewing and if necessary revising resettlement plans as required, in line with each rough sleepers changing needs.

5. SERVICE USER ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND SERVICE ACCESS

5.1 The Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Service is being commissioned to provide support services to people who are sleeping rough in Brent and in need of housing related support.

5.2 Potential service users' eligibility for the service will be based on the verification of their rough sleeping by the rough sleeping outreach service or through referral to the service by a designated referrer who has assessed them as being at risk of sleeping rough and in need of the service to prevent this.

5.3 The service will be accessible to rough sleepers who have no recourse to public funds, though their further onward referral options, beyond reconnection, may be severely limited.

5.4 Service users previously known to the Rough Sleeper's Housing Advice and Resettlement Service shall be able to re-approach the service for further support, should this be required to sustain their tenancy.

6. HOUSING ADVICE AND RESETTLEMENT SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

6.1 The Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement Service will deliver:

- a high quality, cost effective support service with appropriately trained staff, with skills including the abilities to develop relationships with rough sleepers and partner agencies, to motivate vulnerable people, assess their needs, keep accurate records and deal with issues associated with rough sleeping, mental illness and substance abuse.
- a service that is flexible and responsive to the service users' needs, ensuring continuity of appropriate support from the street to the sustainment of stable accommodation.
- a service that works proactively with service users to identify and resolve issues.
- a service which links with agencies in a way that promotes partnership working.

6.2 The service will have in place robust needs and risk assessment processes, proactively mitigating risk and will use SMART support planning processes to best support its service users in meeting their short and long term goals and realising their aspirations.

6.3 The service will provide a support service tailored to the individual user as appropriate allocating service users a named key worker who will engage and support the service user placing them at the centre of their individual support plan.

6.4 The service will work creatively to enable service users to engage with other services and will build relationships with partner agencies to ensure effective referrals and joint work to ensure health, rehabilitation and development needs are met.

6.5 The service will through effective record keeping facilitate support, manage case work, support joint working and produce data to inform policy.

6.6 The service will ensure it is responsive to the needs of BME groups and in accordance with the council's equal opportunities policy.

6.7 The service will for those people who do not have English as a first language, or are unable to communicate using English ensure access to appropriate translation services and promote access to ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses.

6.8 The service will provide up to date monitoring information to CHAIN, Homeless Link and Brent Council and other organisations as appropriate and assist in using this information to develop services that help clients towards becoming independent self sufficient members of society.

6.9 The service will ensure any data which is supplied to third parties is in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Examples of organisations including but not being limited to:

- Other Advice Agencies
- Contact details of local GP's, Health Centre etc.
- Support services
- Training providers and other classes
- Employment agencies
- Income support and or benefits

6.10 The service will ensure that the services are carried out in compliance with legislation, to include revision of/or relevant additional legislation.

6.11 The service will establish and maintain good working relationships with the Private Rental Sector (PRS) organisations, accommodation providers and current knowledge of the PRS market such that it is able to procure PRS tenancies for those rough sleepers for who PRS accommodation is the most appropriate housing option, providing the necessary pre-tenancy support to ensure rough sleepers sustain this accommodation.

6.12 The service will establish a close working partnership with Brent Council's START Plus Team and the boroughs hostels and supported housing providers such that it is able to refer into supported housing those rough sleepers for who this is the most appropriate housing option.

6.13 The service will act as the gatekeeper for Brent's Rough Sleeping Pathway accommodation and support the rough sleepers accommodated in this temporary accommodation until they are resettled to more permanent accommodation.

6.14 The service will establish and maintain good working knowledge of the education, training or employment opportunities available to previous rough sleepers, so it can best support them in accessing these, to increase their financial independence and stability, so better securing the continuation of tenancies and accommodation arrangements of service users.

6.15 The service will provide a pre and post tenancy support service to rough sleepers to best promote their living independently in the community and tenancy sustainment, ensuring then take responsibility for their health needs, are aware of and access relevant and appropriate specialist services and are engaged in meaningful day time activities.

6.16 The service will to prevent individuals from returning to rough sleeping through appropriate sign posting to specialist medical, support, detoxification and housing services.

6.17 The service will support previous rough sleepers who, having previously been assisted into accommodation, who may re-approach the service seeking assistance, for example if they are experiencing difficulty with maintaining their tenancies.

7. SERVICE USER INVOLVEMENT AND FEEDBACK

7.1 So that service users are supported to engage in making their own choices, including being fully involved in the running of the service and achieving as great a level of independence as possible, the service provider will have in place policies and working practices such as a customer care/service user's charter and a service user involvement strategy that demonstrably promote service user involvement and feedback.

8. STAFFING AND MANAGEMENT

8.1 The service provider is required to employ sufficient, competent, suitably qualified, CRB checked and trained staff to provide the service commissioned.

8.2 The service hours required per week will be seventy five hours and provided that the service is resourced and staff perform as required under the specification and the contract, paid staffing levels for the service will be 75 hours per week.

8.3 For this contract, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 ("TUPE") is expected to apply. Information in relation to this is as detailed in the council's invitation to tender for the contract. The provider has been referred to this in the council's ITT
The provider acknowledges and agrees that London Borough of Brent does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of any TUPE or employment related information.

9. LOCATION OF SERVICES BASE and OPENING HOURS

9.1 It is an essential requirement that the Rough Sleepers Housing Advice and Resettlement support provider have and maintain an appropriate office base in the London Borough of Brent for its staff to operate out of which is accessible to service users. Minimum requirements during which this office should be open and accessible to service users and referrals from the Outreach service provider, are Monday to Friday 8.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

10. OUTCOMES

10.1 This service specification is outcome-focused and does not tightly prescribe how and what a provider should do to achieve the specified outcomes. Outcome-focused services aim to achieve the goals, aspirations and priorities of the individuals they serve. The service should be delivered in a way that is right for the individual and designed to achieve what the person desires. Outcome-focused services are fundamentally person-centred and individualised in their approach, recognising that each individual is unique so has different requirements.

10.2 Brent Council wants to be able to assess how a service is assisting individuals to achieve their goals and positive outcomes, and evidence how, (whilst they are receiving the service), they progress relative to their position on first accessing the service. The council requires the service provider to provide outcome data to evidence such progress as part of the provider's contract obligations.

11. TARGETS

11.1 The service provider will be required to submit accurate performance data both monthly and quarterly. This frequency may be reviewed with the agreement of both the provider and the Council.

11.2 General targets for the service are detailed below, specific targets for the service will be agreed with the provider by the Council within 8 weeks of contract start date or in the absence of agreement will be determined by the council via its representative, the Street Population Co-ordinator (or to the council nominated representative), and will be subject to annual review through which they may be amended by agreement or through decision by the Council.

Outcome	Target
New clients with resettlement / action plans	100%
Existing clients with resettlement / action plan to be kept open until successfully transferred to other services i.e. to a hostel provider, private rented accommodation or statutory providers but to be reviewed as and when appropriate.	100%
Clients' support needs assessed and referred to hostel accommodation through START + referral or referral to another borough	30%
Clients' support needs assessed and referred for privately rented accommodation through referral to the, Single Housing Advice Service	55%

or by providing advice about renting privately	
Clients assisted through the provision of advice, information and referral to other agencies to return/reconnect to originating borough or country they originated from	15%
Clients assisted to claim benefit if not already claimed	100%
Clients assisted to seek training and employment within 6 months of commencing resettlement through referral to BACES or CHC's own capacity building programme.	65%
Clients assisted to access mental health or drug and alcohol services as well as medical assistance if needed through referral to CRI or other CCG services	100%

11.3 In order to assess operational efficiency of service performance the provider will be expected to submit reports on the following information:

Information	Frequency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report of serious incidents 	Within 12 hours of incident
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report of safeguarding alerts 	Within 24 hours of incident
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pi Returns 	Monthly/Quarterly

12. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

12.1 The Council will utilise a risk-based approach to monitoring this service. The focus will be to assess the achievement of outcomes and performance to targets. This will be achieved through a range of methods including submission of quantitative and qualitative outcome data.

12.2 It is expected that the service provider will maintain high levels of performance through their own internal quality assurance processes.

12.3 With the use of a risk based monitoring approach a provider who is performing well will likely need less monitoring than one whose performance is deemed poor.

12.4 A Service Performance Assessment will be completed for the service, at least annually by the council's Street Population Coordinator. Following this, a service monitoring plan will be devised by them and agreed with the provider.

12.5 However, independent of the service performance assessment the performance areas outlined in this specification and in Appendix 1 attached must be complied with by the provider. The performance requirements are intended to achieve positive outcomes for service users and provide information and data to evidence this to the Council.

12.6 The Council will monitor and review the effectiveness of these services and service user views will be an integral part of this review process.

13. PERFORMANCE MONITORING RETURNS

13.1 The service provider shall complete and submit electronically a Performance Indicator Workbook, the format of which will be provided by the council, at the end of each quarter (June, September, December and March) within 15 working days of the end of each quarter.

14. HEALTH AND SAFETY

14.1 The provider will ensure the provision of the service, which includes the provision of staff resources, premises and facilities and all agents comply with all relevant Health and Safety requirements. The provider must submit all Health and Safety information and data, which is required by the Council in order to ensure the safety of service users and staff and agents of the provider.

15. INCIDENTS

15.1 Serious and untoward incidents must be reported to the council within 12 hours of them occurring. The report and information provided must comply with local procedure and requirements for reporting of serious incidents.

16. SAFEGUARDING

16.1 The provider must report safeguarding incidents or allegations to the Council within 24 hours and must liaise with appropriate agencies including social work teams, police, probation and health professionals in line with local procedure, and at all times take necessary action to protect individuals (vulnerable adults and children at risk) from immediate and future harm.

17. CONCLUSION

17.1 The aim of this service specification is to set out a clear and measurable benchmark of the quality of Rough Sleeping Housing Advice and Resettlement Service.

17.2 Any changes to the service provision arrangements (as specified in this specification) must be agreed with the London Borough of Brent's Street Population Coordinator before they are made and all changes should be agreed in writing.

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Cabinet
23 February 2015

**Report from the Strategic Director of
Regeneration and Growth**

For Action

Wards affected:
ALL

**National Non-Domestic Rates – Applications for
Discretionary Rate Relief**

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The Council has the discretion to award rate relief to charities or non-profit making bodies. It also has the discretion to remit an individual National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR) liability in whole or in part on the grounds of hardship. The award of discretionary rate relief is based on policy and criteria agreed by the Executive in September 2013. New applications for relief have to be approved by the Cabinet.
- 1.2 The report details new applications for relief received since the Executive last considered such applications on 26 August 2014.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the applications for discretionary rate relief detailed in Appendices 2 and 3 to this report be approved.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Details of the Council's discretion to grant rate relief to charities, registered community amateur sports clubs and non-profit making organisations are contained in the financial and legal implications' sections (4 and 5).
- 3.2 Appendix 1 sets out the criteria and factors to consider for applications for NNDR relief from Charities and non-profit making organisations. This was agreed by the Executive in September 2013.
- 3.3 Appendix 2 lists new applications from local and non local charities that meet the criteria. These receive 80% mandatory relief, where they meet the criteria the council will award local charities up to 100% discretionary relief in respect of the remaining 20% balance and will award non local charities 25% relief in respect of the remaining 20% balance. It also shows the cost to the Council if discretionary relief is awarded.
- 3.4 Appendix 3 list new applications from non profit making organisations that meet the criteria for awarding relief. As these organisations are not registered charities they do not receive 80% mandatory relief. The Council's usual policy is to award 25% relief to organisations that meet the criteria. It also shows the cost to the Council if discretionary relief is awarded.
- 3.5 The criteria for awarding discretionary rate relief focuses on ensuring that the arrangements are consistent with corporate policies and relief is directed to those organisations providing a recognised valued service to the residents of Brent, particularly the vulnerable and those less able to look after themselves. Further detail is set out in Appendix 1. Should relief be granted entitlement will remain until 31 March 2017 unless there are any changes to the organisation. During 2016/17 it has been agreed that the council will review its criteria for awarding relief.
- 3.6 Charities and registered community amateur sports clubs are entitled to 80% mandatory rate relief and the council has discretion to grant additional relief up to the 100% maximum
- 3.7 Non-profit making organisations do not receive any mandatory relief, but the Council has the discretion to grant rate relief up to the 100% maximum. However the council's policy limits relief for these to 25%

4.0 Financial Implications

Discretionary Rate Relief

- 4.1 Charities and registered community amateur sports clubs receive 80% mandatory rate relief. The Council has the discretion to grant additional relief up to the 100% maximum. Prior to 1 April 2013 75% of the cost of this would have been met by the council, however from 1 April 2013 30% is met by the council with 50% being met by central government and 20% by the GLA.

- 4.2 Non-profit making organisations do not receive any mandatory relief, but the Council has the discretion to grant rate relief up to the 100% maximum. Prior to 1 April 2013 the Council met 25% of the cost of any relief granted, however this has also changed with 30% being met by the council with 50% being met by central government and 20% by the GLA.
- 4.3 The Council, where it has decided to grant relief, has followed a general guideline of granting 100% of the discretionary element to local charities and 25% of the discretionary element to non-local charities. Any additional awards of relief will reduce income to the Council by 30%.
- 4.4 In respect of non profit making organisations the council has agreed where the organisation meets the criteria to award 25% discretionary rate relief. The cost to the council of awarding this relief is 30% of the amounts granted..
- 4.5 The costs therefore of awarding relief to the charitable organisations detailed in Appendix 2 is £1,355.47 for 2014/15. The costs of awarding relief to the non profit making organisation detailed in Appendix 3 is £150.20. This will be reduce the council's projected income from Business Rates Retention in 2014/15.

5.0 Legal Implications

Discretionary Rate relief

- 5.1 Under the Local Government Finance Act 1988, charities are only liable to pay 20% of the NNDR that would otherwise be payable where a property is used wholly or mainly for charitable purposes. This award amounts to 80% mandatory relief of the full amount due. For the purposes of the Act, a charity is an organisation or trust established for charitable purposes, registration with the Charity Commission is conclusive evidence of this. Under the Local Government Act 2003, registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs also qualify for 80% mandatory relief.
- 5.2 The Council has discretion to grant relief of up to 100% of the amount otherwise due to charities, Community Amateur Sports Clubs, and non-profit making organisations meeting criteria set out in the legislation. These criteria cover those whose objects are concerned with philanthropy, religion, education, social welfare, science, literature, the fine arts, or recreation. Guidance has been issued in respect of the exercise of this discretion and authorities are advised to have readily understood policies for deciding whether or not to grant relief and for determining the amount of relief. Details of the current policy are contained in Appendix 1
- 5.3 The Non-Domestic Rating (Discretionary Relief) Regulations 1989 allow Brent to grant the relief for a fixed period. One year's notice is required of any decision to revoke or vary the amount of relief granted, if in the case of a variation, it would result in the amount of rates increasing. The notice must take effect at the end of the financial year.

- 5.4 The operation of blanket decisions to refuse discretionary relief across the board would be susceptible to legal challenge on grounds that the Council would be fettering its discretion. The legal advice provided to officers and Members is that each case should be considered on its merits.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 Applications have been received from a wide variety of diverse charities and organisations, and an Impact Needs Analysis Requirement Assessment (INRA) was carried out in 2008 when the criteria were originally agreed. As there were no changes made to the criteria in September 2013 an Equality Impact assessment was not required. All ratepayers receive information with the annual rate bill informing them of the availability of discretionary and hardship rate relief.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 7.1 None

Background Papers

Report to Executive 16 September 2013 – National Non-Domestic Relief – Review of Discretionary Rate Relief Policy

Contact Officers

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Andrew Donald
Strategic Director Regeneration & Growth

Appendix 1

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR APPLICATIONS FOR NNDR DISCRETIONARY RELIEF FOR CHARITIES & FROM NON PROFIT MAKING ORGANISATIONS

Introduction

The following details the criteria against which the Local Authority will consider applications from non profit making organisations. In each case the individual merits of the case will be considered.

- (a) Eligibility criteria**
- (b) Factors to be taken into account**
- (c) Parts of the process.**

(a) Eligibility Criteria

- The applicant must be a charity or exempt from registration as a charity, a non-profit making organisation or registered community amateur sports club (CASC).
- All or part of the property must be occupied for the purpose of one or more institutions or other organisations which are not established or conducted for profit and whose main objects are charitable or otherwise philanthropic or religious or concerned with education, social welfare, science, literature or the fine arts; or
- The property must be wholly or mainly used for the purposes of recreation, and all or part of it is occupied for the purposes of a club, society or other organisation not established or conducted for profit.

(b) Factors to be taken into account

The London Borough of Brent is keen to ensure that any relief awarded is justified and directed to those organisations making a valuable contribution to the well-being of local residents. The following factors will therefore be considered:

- a. The organisation should provide facilities that indirectly relieve the authority of the need to do so, or enhance or supplement those that it does provide
- b. The organisation should provide training or education for its members, with schemes for particular groups to develop skills
- c. It should have facilities provided by self-help or grant aid. Use of self-help and / or grant aid is an indicator that the club is more deserving of relief
- d. The organisation should be able to demonstrate a major local contribution.

- e. The organisation should have a clear policy on equal opportunity.
- f. There should be policies on freedom of access and membership.
- g. It should be clear as to which members of the community benefit from the work of the organisation.
- h. Membership should be open to all sections of the community and the majority of members should be Brent residents
- i. If there is a licensed bar as part of the premises, this must not be the principle activity undertaken and should be a minor function in relation to the services provided by the organisation.
- j. The organisation must be properly run and be able to produce a copy of their constitution and fully audited accounts.
- k. The organisation must not have any unauthorised indebtedness to the London Borough of Brent. Rates are due and payable until a claim for discretionary rate relief is heard

(c) Parts of the process

No Right of Appeal

Once the application has been processed, the ratepayer will be notified in writing of the decision. As this is a discretionary power there is no formal appeal process against the Council's decision. However, we will re-consider our decision in the light of any additional points made. If the application is successful and the organisation is awarded discretionary rate relief, it will be applied to the account and an amended bill will be issued.

Notification of Change of Circumstances

Rate payers are required to notify any change of circumstances which may have an impact on the award of discretionary rate relief.

Duration of award

The new policy will award relief to 31 March 2017. Prior to the end of this period applications will be sent inviting recipients to re-apply, this will ensure the conditions on which relief was previously awarded still apply to their organisation. This will help ensure that the Council's rate records remain accurate.

Withdrawal of relief

One years notice has to be given by the Council for the withdrawal of relief

Unlawful activities

Should an applicant in receipt of discretionary rate relief be found guilty of unlawful activities for whatever reason, entitlement will be forfeited from the date of conviction.

	Type of Charitable/Non-Profit Making Organisation	Current Policy
		Discretionary Relief Limited to
1	Local charities meeting required conditions (80% mandatory relief will apply)	20% (100% of remaining liability)
2	Local Non-profit-making organisations (not entitled to mandatory relief)	25%
3	Premises occupied by a Community Amateur Sports Club registered with HM Revenue & Customs. (80% mandatory relief will apply)	20% (100% of remaining liability)
4	Non-Local charities (80% mandatory relief will apply)	25% (of remaining liability)
5	Voluntary Aided Schools (80% mandatory relief will apply)	20% (100% of remaining liability)
6	Foundation Schools (80% mandatory relief will apply)	20% (100% of remaining liability)
7	All empty properties	NIL
8	Offices and Shops occupied by national charities	NIL
9	An organisation which is considered by officers to be improperly run, for what ever reason, including unauthorised indebtedness.	NIL
10	The organisation or facility does not primarily benefit residents of Brent.	NIL
11	Registered Social Landlords (as defined and registered by the Housing Corporation). This includes Abbeyfield, Almshouse, Co-operative, Co-ownership, Hostel, Letting / Hostel, or YMCA.	Nil
12	Organisations in receipt of 80% mandatory relief where local exceptional circumstances are deemed to apply.	Up to 20% (100% of remaining liability)

Appendix 2

New Applications for Discretionary Rate Relief – Local Charities

	100% Relief to be awarded	Charge	Bill net of statutory relief	Cost to Brent at 30%
	<u>Organisation</u>			
33015559	Iraqi Welfare Association 7 Rutherford Way, Wembley HA9 0QD 19/5/2014 – 31/3/2015	£8,372.27	£1,674.45	£502.33
30308015	Brent Citizens Advice Bureau 270-272 High Road Wembley NW10 2EY	£14,219.00	£2,843.80	£853.14
Total		£22,591.27	£4,518.25	£1,355.47

Appendix 3

New Applications for Discretionary Rate Relief – Non Profit Making Organisations

	25% Relief to be awarded	Charge	Amount of relief (25%)	Cost to Brent at 30%
	<u>Organisation</u>			
33023484	Ultra Security Solutions CIC Unit G01, 20 Osram Road East Lane Business park Wembley 1/4/2014 – 31/3/2105 1/6/2013 – 31/3/2014	£1,102.25 £900.35	£275.56 £225.09	£82.67 £67.53
	Total	£2,002.60	£500.65	£150.20

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 Brent	Cabinet 23 February 2015 Report from the Strategic Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods
For Action	Wards affected: ALL
Libraries Stock Contract	

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report sets out the process for re-tendering of the stock contract for the Library Service. The current framework agreement with the Central Buying Consortium ends in March 2016. There are two potential new frameworks that Brent could join. This report addresses that and also suggests a contingency arrangement, should the setting up of the frameworks be delayed.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the Council should express an interest in joining both the new Central Buying Consortium (CBC) and London Libraries Consortium (LLC) frameworks, while reserving the right to tender independently should the new frameworks not meet our requirements.

2.2 That, while the new frameworks are being renegotiated, the Council enters into an agreement with a stock supplier for six months from April 2016 to September 2016.

3.0 Detail

3.1 The current libraries stock contract, for up to £550,000, commenced in April 2012 and is with the Central Buying Consortium (CBC) for the purchasing of library stock. The CBC is administered by West Sussex County Council and consists of 45 local authority library services across the country (mainly in the south east).

3.2 By combining buying power with 45 other local authorities, the Council is able to ensure a higher discount from book suppliers and therefore better value for money.

The consortium is able to provide:

- Electronic data invoicing linked to our library management system. This enables a more streamlined process, saving staff time.
- Shelf ready stock processed to include library barcode, security tag, jacket protection and identifying label. When books arrive at the library they are ready to be put on the shelves immediately.
- Required titles in required formats and headings most notably: adult fiction, adult non-fiction, children's fiction, children's non-fiction, reference material, DVDs, spoken word material and periodical subscriptions.

3.3. The contract does not include specialist items, such as stock in other languages, e-books or downloads. These are purchased outside of the contract from specialist suppliers.

3.4. The current contract and framework ends in March 2016.

3.5 The current contract offers the following benefits to Brent:

- Significant discounts negotiated with suppliers through buying power of the consortium.
- Shared procurement and monitoring of suppliers between members of the consortium, meaning the process of tendering can be shared across Councils.
- Shared performance indicators between services, allowing for greater scrutiny of supplier performance.
- Joint meetings to discuss and decide on actions on issues as and when they arise.

3.6 Two routes have been identified:

Option 1 – Undertake an independent procurement exercise

Brent could undertake a formal tender on the open market, detailing the specific requirements for the Council.

Option 2 – Access a compliant Framework Agreement

Frameworks provide an opportunity for local authorities to aggregate their purchasing requirements and jointly contract for specific commodities, with a view towards achieving improved procurement terms that may not otherwise be available to a single contracting authority independently.

3.7 There are two major existing frameworks which Brent could access in order to fulfil the requirements in this commodity area.

These are outlined below:

- 3.7.1 Central Buying Consortium – a collection of 45 local authorities. This is the current framework accessed by the Council for supply of library stock. This framework expires in March 2016 and is currently being re-negotiated. The proposed timeline for the award of contract is November 2015 allowing four months mobilisation period for any slippage. CBC consortium has been in place since early 2000 and there has been a good track record of the framework being put in place before it relapses.
- 3.7.2 London Libraries Consortium – a collection of 7 London boroughs. As the Council is a member of LLC for its library management system (LMS), it is considered that the authority is already benefiting from external aggregation and collaboration. Clearly, if Brent's LMS membership continues, it would be beneficial for the Council to explore the LLC stock consortium membership as well. This framework also expires in March 2016 and is currently being negotiated.
- 3.8 While the two frameworks (CBC & LLC) are being renegotiated there is a risk that these frameworks may not be ready by March 2016. This delay could potentially cause a break in the supply of library stock from April 2016 onwards. Officers will begin negotiation with the suppliers in April 2015 to establish an arrangement to ensure continuity of stock supply to libraries.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1. The current budget for library stock amounts to £550,000 and the majority of this budget is spent on purchasing items through the CBC Consortium contract.
- 4.2. A savings proposal to reduce the Council's spend on library stock by £100,000 will be considered by Cabinet in February 2015. Entering into a new contract provides a timely opportunity to increase purchasing power and source efficiencies to minimise the impact of the reduction in the budget.
- 4.3. As the contract value is above OJEU requirements, a formal procurement process will be required in order to make the spend legislatively compliant and reduce the risk of challenge.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, section 7, states; 'It shall be the duty of every library authority to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof'. The duty arises in relation to persons who are resident, work in or are in full time education in the borough. In fulfilling its duty the Council shall in particular have regard to the desirability of:

- i) securing, by the keeping of adequate stocks, by arrangements with other library authorities, and by any other appropriate means, that facilities are available for the borrowing of, or reference to, books and other printed matter, and pictures, gramophone records, films and other materials, sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general requirements and any special requirements both of adults and children; and
- ii) securing that facilities are available for borrowing books, records, films etc sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the needs of all, and the special requirements, of adults and children.
- iii) encouraging adults and children to make full use of the service and provide advice .

6.0 Diversity Implications


The library service is a universal service for all residents. Specifications are carefully drawn up, monitored and reviewed using demographic and service usage data to ensure that the needs of all residents are identified. When we are unable to use the CBC to buy stock in community languages or for other identified groups, a proportion of the stock budget is retained and used to purchase the books from specialist suppliers.

Contact Officers

Sue Mckenzie: Head of Libraries, Arts and Heritage

Tom Jeffrey: Interim Operational Director, Neighbourhoods

SUE HARPER
Strategic Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

 <p>Brent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cabinet 23 February 2015</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Strategic Director, Adults</p>
<p>For Action Wards Affected: ALL</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Adult Social Care Day Opportunities Provision – Direct Services</p>	

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The report identifies the need to begin a statutory consultation period on the future delivery model for day opportunities currently delivered from the New Millennium Day Centre and Kingsbury Resource Centre. The report additionally identifies the need to carry out a co-production exercise and options appraisal process in parallel to the statutory consultation to ensure we make best use of existing resources, support the re-modelling of day opportunities services within the community and ensure the current service users eligible needs continue to be met.
- 1.2 The decision to consult on the future of New Millennium Day Centre and Kingsbury Resource Centre was based on the current cost of the service and the need to make efficiency savings. The unit cost of providing the day centre service at New Millennium and Kingsbury Resource Centre is higher than the unit costs for similar services provided in the independent sector. The Council is required to identify £54m of savings over the next two years, at the same time as managing additional demand, and therefore must ensure that the services and support it pays for deliver value for money.
- 1.3 The decision to consult also reflects the predicted future needs of service users and the national policy imperative (including the Care Act) to offer more personalised forms of care. Consideration was also given to the inflexibility of the current service and requests from adult social care service users and their families for increased options for day services. Day opportunities services are

currently delivered through a range of commissioned independent providers as well as three council run centres (Millennium Day Centre, Kingsbury Resource Centre and John Billam Resource Centre). There is currently excess capacity for delivery across commissioned provision in the independent sector.

- 1.4 Users of these services are almost exclusively people with assessed and eligible social care needs. While some progress has been made in moving away from traditional building based services, the services currently offered does not make best use of existing available community assets and services, and does not encourage inclusion into the wider community. There is also a need to review how day services are delivered to ensure that we deliver identified efficiency savings.
- 1.5 Because demand for buildings based services such as those provided at the New Millennium Day Centre and Kingsbury Resource Centre is decreasing, and is predicted to decrease further in the future, there is an imperative to consider how services can best be delivered that both meet existing service users needs and future service users needs to ensure long term sustainability in the market place. Unless work is undertaken now to identify new models of delivery for day opportunities, it is likely that the current service will not be viable in the longer term.
- 1.6 Co-production provides the opportunity to work with both users and organisations that currently provide alternative forms of day opportunities to identify where there are gaps in current market provision, the types of services that people are likely to want in the future and the potential opportunities for using New Millennium Day Centre and/or Kingsbury Resource Centre in a more sustainable way. The goal will be to develop a service, in conjunction with key stakeholders, which is both sustainable and commercially viable in an increasingly competitive marketplace. This could include offering services to people who do not meet the councils eligibility criteria, self-funders, or working in partnership with existing voluntary and community sector organisation, for example through a social enterprise.
- 1.7 It is important to be clear that the recommendation is to consult on how day opportunities are delivered for people using New Millennium Day Centre and Kingsbury Resource Centre in Brent, in the context of the needs of future service users and the wider market for day opportunities services. People who are assessed as having an eligible need and whose needs will best be met through some form of day opportunities service will continue to receive a service. How that service is delivered and by whom is subject to change and is the focus of this consultation process.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet agrees to a 90 day statutory consultation on the future of New Millennium Day Centre and Kingsbury Resource Centre.
- 2.2 To agree that a co-production process will be carried out alongside the statutory consultation. Co-production will involve working collaboratively with the people who use, deliver or are most affected by proposed changes to day services

provision to redesign opportunities within the borough to better support local need, to be more personalised and innovative and to be more cost effective.

- 2.3 To agree that an options appraisal will be undertaken to establish potential future use of the Kingsbury Resource Centre and New Millennium Day Centre buildings in conjunction with stakeholders based on input from the consultation and the co-production.
- 2.4 To note that the individual needs of current service users will be thoroughly reviewed following any decision to change the way day services are delivered to ensure that their needs continue to be met and to reduce any negative impact on their wellbeing.
- 2.5 To note that a consultation with affected staff will be carried out with a view to minimising or avoiding compulsory redundancies following any decision to change the way services are delivered.

3.0 National and local policy context

- 3.1 Recent social care policy has focussed on the need to develop more personalised services for adults, which will provide greater choice for individuals, help to promote their independence and enable them to improve their quality of life.
- 3.2 This philosophy is central to the values and principles advocated in *Putting People First: a shared vision for the transformation of adult social care* (2007) and other recent policy such as *Our Health, Our Care or Say* (2006); *Living Well with Dementia: A National Dementia Strategy* (2008) and *Valuing People Now: a new three year strategy for people with learning disabilities* (2009). In addition, the Care Act 2015 advocates that people who receive care and support from the council will have more say over what sort of help they get and how that care is provided. The proposals within this paper further promote this right of choice and control within care provision.
- 3.3 Local policy also supports the delivery of more personalised services. The Day Opportunity Strategy 2010 which was implemented for people with learning disabilities in 2010 focuses on supporting people to be independent and giving more choice and control in how they spend their day. This strategy is equally relevant today and the principles of personalisation apply equally to older people and people with physical disabilities.
- 3.4 In addition, the Local Account 2013/14, agreed at Cabinet January 2014, set out the financial challenges the Council and the department faces and the need to build a new relationship with communities and families to ensure we are clear not only about what the council can do, but also what we expect people to do themselves, hence the focus in this paper on co-production. The Local Account also set out the Council's commitment to support people to remain independent and prevent or reduce the need for publicly funded care and support services, but if someone needs publicly funded services to ensure there is a choice of high quality and appropriate services and support that meets the needs of our diverse community.

3.5 In line with national and local policy, the council would like to develop a wider range of options for individuals who require support to access day opportunities, such as further developing a wider range of commissioned services and supporting service users to access existing community facilities through greater use of direct payments and personal budgets, so that people can decide where they want to go and what they want to do instead of the Council simply just directly providing care and support.

4.0 New Millennium Day Centre

4.1 This Centre is a purpose built day centre situated in close proximity to Willesden Centre for Health and Care. The building and site is owned by Health and the Council hold a 90 year lease.

4.2 The Centre provides day care services to 87 people who have a physical disability, 28 people who have a learning disability, of which 8 are between the ages of 55 and 77 and could be considered eligible for older people and dementia services. On average 35 people use the day centre on any given day. Some of the service users have been attending for up to 30 years and have become very attached to the centre. However, there is an opportunity to support users to access alternative existing provision and to involve them in a co-production process to develop new services which will not only meet existing needs but will also support greater independence. We know that most younger people with disabilities newly coming to the council for support choose not to access this service, choosing rather to access a range of community based provision at colleges, third sector organisations and mainstream activities with support. Therefore, over time, there will be a reduction in numbers attending this centre and a drop in activity.

4.3 The current service is provided Monday to Friday with operating times from 9.00am to 4.00 pm. Service users attend on average six hours per day, five days per week. There are currently 14 full time staff.

5.0 Kingsbury Resource Centre

5.1 Kingsbury Resource Centre provides day care services to older people age 65+. The service is located in Stag Lane, which is in the north of the borough. It is a council owned site which adjoins a Pupil referral Unit.

5.2 Currently the service supports an average of 60 service users with a maximum daily attendance of 25 individuals (to include 4 wheelchair users). 8 service users have a learning disability. The majority of service users are frail, physically or mentally disabled and have an age related illness and experience social isolation.

5.3 The current service is provided Monday to Friday with operating times from 9.00am to 4.00 pm. Service users attend on average six hours per day, five days per week. There are currently 8 staff (7.2 FTE).

6.0 The Proposal

- 6.1 The proposal is to consult on the future of Kingsbury Resource Centre and New Millennium Day Centre and to run a co-production and option appraisal process in parallel to identify future options for delivery of day opportunities.
- 6.2 A number of options for the future delivery of day services will need to be considered during the consultation process. Options to be considered will need to reflect the desire to move towards a wider range of more personalised services which are also more cost effective and are likely to include:
- a. Recognising the over capacity in the market, for one centre to be closed with current service users being supported to access alternative commissioned provision in the independent sector;
 - b. development of a social enterprise in one or both centres;
 - c. for users and their families to be offered a direct payment to be able to purchase their own form of day activity.
 - d. for the conversion of one or both centres into resource centres which may cater for a wider range of service users or offer additional services to the community;
 - e. further development of commissioned options in the voluntary, independent or private sector; or
 - f. development of community asset transfer and the use of local area co-ordination to enable the development and better co-ordination of community based services.
- 6.3 If the council decides to go ahead with any of the identified options for New Millennium and Kingsbury Resource Centre after the end of the statutory consultation period, then all users of Kingsbury Resource Centre and New Millennium Day Centre will need to be reassessed to enable the affected individual and the council to be clear about their existing and future needs. Reassessment will make clear the impact of any changes on the individual and will enable the council to support users to better understand the range of options available to them. A person centred approach will be used to ensure that users have maximum choice and control over the services they eventually receive, and to ensure that the most appropriate support is secured to achieve the outcomes individuals want. This process will be supported by care management and will involve service user's families and friends as appropriate to ensure a holistic approach to meeting and supporting need. Consideration will be given to existing friendship groups and the aim will be to ensure service users are able to access new services and activities together with the friends they have made at their current day centre.
- 6.4 Those assessed as requiring a building base service will continue to be supported within provision that minimises travel time and maximises time spent at their day activity. However, this service may be provided in a different way to the service that they currently receive, for example, through commissioned provision rather than directly provided and delivered by the council.

7.0 The proposed process

Meeting
Date

Version no.
Date

Consultation

- 7.1 It is proposed that there is a 90 day consultation period with service users, carers and all relevant stakeholders on the proposal to re-provide day services currently delivered through New Millennium and Kingsbury Resource Centre. Consultation will start in March 2015 and conclude in May 2015.
- 7.2 The consultation process will be delivered through a series of meetings held at the centres. It is proposed that two meetings per month are run at each centre at different times of the day to enable as many people as possible to attend if they wish. Meetings will be structured in the form of a short presentation explaining the process, the reasons that the council wishes to consult on the future of the day centres and the options that we are considering. Meetings will also be an opportunity for stakeholders to understand more about and to ensure they can get involved in the options appraisal and co-production processes.
- 7.3 The purpose of the meetings is to gather views from all affected parties which can be collated and included in a final report to cabinet at the end of the process. This will allow elected members to understand the views and wishes of the people who use the day centres when making any decisions about their future. Full minutes will be taken at each meeting and these will be made available to members alongside the cabinet report so that members can understand the views of the people most affected by any proposed changes in their own words when making any decisions about their future.
- 7.4 Advocacy, translators and signer services will be commissioned to support service users and carers to contribute fully to the consultation process. If necessary, individual sessions will be arranged to ensure that all service users have an opportunity to contribute to the consultation in a meaningful way. This may include the use of independent advocates or other support staff as appropriate.
- 7.5 In addition to the series of proposed meetings (an indicative programme of meetings is set out at Appendix 1), people will have the opportunity to tell us their views via a consultation questionnaire or through directly contacting officers involved in the consultation process in the way which best suits their needs. For example, officers will offer individual appointments and will take feedback via e-mail, telephone or by letter.
- 7.6 Consultation work will be structured according to the following principles:
1. We will provide open and clear information/ communication to individuals and groups of customers and staff throughout the process, even when messages might be difficult to give.
 2. There will be an individual response to service users and carers needs and situations at all times, ensuring we not only meet our statutory obligations but get the best outcomes for service users.
 3. Senior staff representatives will regularly meet and inform service users, carers, and staff of the key project activity and progress.

4. Service users, carers, and staff will have their views accurately represented throughout the process so that key decision makers are fully informed when making any decisions.
5. We will set up a project group including relevant staff and other stakeholders as appropriate to oversee the process and ensure all actions are agreed and completed on time.
6. We will be clear about all the options that we are considering and ensure that service users and carers are supported to understand these options in the most appropriate way for them. This may include the use of independent advocates, translators or other communications specialists
7. We will work with staff to be clear and supportive at this time as they are critical in maintaining the service and giving reassurance to service users.

Co-production

- 7.7 Alongside the statutory consultation process, Adult Social Care will work with service users, carers, the voluntary and independent sectors and other local partners to co-design future options for the delivery of day opportunities.
- 7.8 National evidence and best practice shows that where services users and partners are involved in developing alternative services, those services better meet the needs of both individuals and the community and are often more cost effective than statutory services.
- 7.9 Co-production is a collaborative process, allowing services users dedicated time to discuss all the options available to them and to identify what other options might best meet their identified needs and deliver good outcomes. Through working with the people who use the services and the people who are likely to deliver them, evidence suggests that any new services designed and developed are likely to be more person centred, offer users better outcomes and are often more sustainable in the long term. Co-production offers service users a way to be truly in control of the services they receive and to work in genuine partnership to deliver the best outcomes for the people of Brent.
- 7.10 Co- production work will involve a review of services in Brent to rationalise and consolidate existing services whilst remodelling services to better support local care needs. The aim is to look at alternative care solutions working closely with stakeholders to develop a range of more personalised options. Co-production work also focusses on making the best use of existing community assets and available services and supports users to become fully integrated into their communities rather than isolating them in more institutionalised settings.
- 7.11 Work to take this forward has commenced with early discussions with service users, parents, carers representatives and Brent CVS. A working group will be developed to take these early discussions forward and it is envisaged that any alternative options put forward will be presented to Cabinet along side the findings of the consultation process.

Options Appraisal

- 7.12 The aim of the options appraisal is to make sure that any proposed options (ideas from the consultation and the co-production and any other sources) make the best, most innovative and most cost effective use of the resources the council already has. The process will involve working jointly with users of the service as well as carers, health partners and other council departments, for example property services, to develop options for utilising the buildings the two day centres currently occupy in a more flexible and responsive way.
- 7.13 The options appraisal will involve a working group of service user and carer representatives, key external stakeholders (e.g. voluntary sector and health) and professionals from across the council who will determine the costs, benefits and potential alternative uses for existing centres, and will identify whether there is sufficient demand for a different type of service such as a resource centre in the locations of the existing centres to provide benefits to both the council and the wider community.
- 7.14 All options will be appraised against a range of agreed criteria. The criteria will include the need to tackle the fact that the current unit costs of the services are higher than similar services provided in the independent sector. They will also have to recognise that currently there are a number of commissioned day centres within the borough that have been identified as running below capacity. This is evidence that the local day care market is over saturated and that some form of rationalisation which takes on board the care needs of residents would be appropriate. However, there will also be an opportunity through the co-production process to ensure the criteria also reflect the priorities of the service users and carers and other stakeholders.
- 7.15 The results of the consultation, options appraisal and co-production work will be presented to the Cabinet in June with recommendations and all supporting documentation, such as meeting minutes and consultation responses.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The exact financial impact is dependent upon the outcome of the consultation. The option to closure of Kingsbury Resource Centre would contribute a saving to the council were this option to be agreed.
- 8.1 The 2014/15 budget for New Millennium is £726,000 and for Kingsbury Resource Centre is £537,000 including Brent Transport budgets. Based on the unit costs at other similar day services, it has been estimated that closing Kingsbury Resource centre and New Millennium Day Centre and re-providing the same service in the independent sector would achieve a saving of £302,000. Those estimates are based on a reduction in building, operational and transport costs.
- 8.2 In terms of Kingsbury Resource Centre the council recognises that in order to develop a sustainable model of care using a co-production approach, it is necessary to ensure an appropriate level of budget is available. Therefore, the indicative savings target outlined in the Council's budget report is £147,000.

8.3 Any suggestions for alternative models of service delivery proposed as a result of the co-production and options appraisal process (such as the development of a community resource centre) will need to take into consideration the savings target identified in 8.2 as well as setting out the long term financial sustainability in the context of the day opportunities market in Brent. In addition, all options will also need to clarify 'one off' and implementation costs as well as ongoing revenue savings.

9 Legal

9.1 Consultation is the term generally applied to the process by which a decision maker seeks the views of the public, or a section of the public, on a proposal that may have general impact, before it decides whether to implement that proposal. It differs from the process by which an individual or a small number of individual are afforded a fair opportunity to make representation in relation to a decision that may have a direct impact on them personally

9.2 There is no general public law duty to consult. It is an aspect of common law fairness. The duty to consult arises out of the concept of legitimate expectation, occurring where an individual has an interest in retaining some ultimate benefit which he hopes to retain

9.3 A public body also has a duty to carry out a sufficient inquiry prior to making its decision Equality Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 introduced a single unified equality duty, superseding and expanding upon previous statutory duties in respect of race, sex and disability. It provides that:

- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

10.0 Diversity Implications

10.1 Traditionally society has taken a paternalistic view of the needs of older people and people with disabilities and tried to "look after" them rather than supporting them to develop independence, and to access community based facilities that we all take for granted.

10.2 The proposals in this paper will ensure that all people who are eligible for a service continue to receive one; however, this service may be delivered in a different way to the services that they currently access. It is important to note that any of the proposed options for consideration in this paper will be considered on the basis that the council has a statutory duty to provide an appropriate service for those people who are assessed as eligible to receive one.

10.3 The proposed options for consideration and assessment as set out within this

report will create a more positive approach to diversity, ensuring that individual needs, whatever they may be, are addressed in a more personalized manner. Proposals will give people more control over the way they live. This is also reflected in the focus on person centered planning as the foundation of the implementation of any major changes to the service

- 10.4 The co-production work will ensure that a diverse range of issues are discussed, this will include all the protected characteristics highlighted within the Equalities Framework and will inform any plans for future day opportunities provisions.
- 10.5 Equality Impact Assessments will be completed as part of the consultation process. They will reflect the preferred options being proposed to the Cabinet in June at the end of the consultation, co-production and options appraisal processes.

11.0 Staffing Implications

- 11.1 This paper sets out a number of potential options for the future, and is clear that different options could be taken forward in the two centres. In addition, further options are likely to be generated through the consultation period. As there is no 'do nothing' option, there will be an impact on staff, but until we have been through the consultation, co-production and options appraisal the impact will not be clear. It could range from re-training and re-focusing to TUPE transfer to a new provider to potential redundancy.
- 11.2 The co-production process will include staff representatives and we will ensure there is regular communication with staff and Trade Unions about all three elements of the process during the public consultation period. Trade Unions will be briefed prior to the start of any formal HR consultation process and we will work with trade unions to ensure staff understand the range of support that is on offer to them during the process.

Background Papers

Putting People First: DH Policy December 2007

Living Well with Dementia: A National Strategy for Dementia Services, Department of Health, February 2009

Valuing People Now: A New 3 year Strategy for people with learning disability, Department of Health 2009

Day Opportunities Strategy 2010

Care Act 2014

Council Saving Plans

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Appendix 1: Indicative Consultation Timetable

Date	Stakeholder Group/ Meetings/ Activities	Purpose
W/C 2 nd March	Pre-consultation process briefings to staff and service users	The purpose of these briefings is to explain to staff and service users face to face the process that we are beginning and to allow for questions
2 nd March	Consultation questionnaire produced and agreed internally	The questionnaire will be available in easy read format and will be made available in a range of settings, including on the website and at the affected centres
2 nd March	Staff consultation and SWOT analysis form produced and agreed	Staff may contribute to the consultation in whichever way they feel is most appropriate, but a separate form will be developed for those staff who wish to contribute in a more detailed way
9 th March 2015	Consultation letter to service users	The initial letter to service users will provide a brief explanation of the aims of the consultation process, an overview of the process and how they can become involved as well as a point of contact for questions(easy read format)
9 th March 2015	Consultation (letter to staff)	To explain aims of the proposed change and points of contact for questions.
9 th March 2015	Letters to families	Brief explanation of aims, point of contact for questions)
9 th March	Consultation letter to partners	Brief explanation of aims, point of contact for questions)
12 th March 2015	Advocacy & Signer Appointed	To support users to effectively contribute towards the consultation discussions
12 th March	Identification of further communication needs with staff	To support all users to contribute in a meaningful way to the process.
17 th March 2015 (One meeting during the day, one meeting in	Consultation first meeting with service users (New Millennium)	Purpose of the meeting is to explain the consultation process and give a brief overview of the proposals


Meeting
Date

Version no.
Date

the evening)		being considered and to answer questions.
18 th March 2015 (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation with Service users (Kingsbury Resource Centre)	Purpose of the meeting is to explain the consultation process and give a brief overview of the proposals being considered and to answer questions.
19 th March 2015 (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation with families New Millennium	Purpose of the meeting is to explain the consultation process and give a brief overview of the proposals being considered and to answer questions.
20 th March 2015 (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation with Families Kingsbury Resource Centre	Purpose of the meeting is to explain the consultation process and give a brief overview of the proposals being considered and to answer questions.
23 rd March	Consultation (First meeting with all staff)	Purpose of the meeting is to explain the consultation process and give a brief overview of the proposals being considered and to answer questions.
14 th April 2015 (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation (Second meeting with service users (New Millennium)	Follow up to explain any additional information and further discuss views about the proposals.
15 th April 2015 (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation (Second meeting with service users (Kingsbury Resource Centre)	Follow up to explain any additional information and further discuss views about the proposals.
20 th April 2015 (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation with Families New Millennium	Follow up to explain any additional information and further discuss views about the proposals.
21 th April 2015 (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation with Families Kingsbury	Follow up to explain any additional information and further discuss views about the proposals.
22 nd April 2015	Consultation meeting with staff	Follow up to explain any additional information and further discuss views about the proposals.

7 th May 2015 (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation (third meeting with service users (New Millennium))	Follow up to explain any additional information, including updates from the options appraisal and co-production work.
8 th May 2015 (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation (third meeting with service users (Kingsbury Resource Centre))	Follow up to explain any additional information, including updates from the options appraisal and co-production work.
13 th May 2015 (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation with Families New Millennium	Follow up to explain any additional information, including updates from the options appraisal and co-production work.
14 th May 2015 (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation with Families Kingsbury	Follow up to explain any additional information, including updates from the options appraisal and co-production work.
9 th June 2015	Report back to Cabinet	To feedback consultation outcomes And allow for a decision to be made.
W/c 15 th June (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation feedback and decision meeting with service users (New Millennium)	Purpose of the meeting is to explain the outcomes of the consultation and the next steps.
W/c 15 th June (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation with Service users (Kingsbury Resource Centre)	Purpose of the meeting is to explain the outcomes of the consultation and the next steps.
W/c 15 th June (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation with families New Millennium	Purpose of the meeting is to explain the outcomes of the consultation and the next steps.
W/c 15 th June (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation with Families Kingsbury Resource Centre	Purpose of the meeting is to explain the outcomes of the consultation and the next steps.
W/c 15 th June (One meeting during the day, one meeting in the evening)	Consultation (First meeting with all staff)	Purpose of the meeting is to explain the outcomes of the consultation and the next steps.

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 Brent	<p style="text-align: center;">Cabinet</p> <p style="text-align: center;">23 February 2015</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from Strategic Director of Adult Social Care</p>
<p>For Action Wards Affected: ALL</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Tudor Gardens – Supporting Independent Living</p>	

1.0 Summary

1.1 Tudor Gardens is a registered residential care home that Brent Council, adult social care, directly provides for adults with learning disabilities. This paper provides an overview of the service and the proposal to de-register the residential care home and re-provide it as supported living accommodation in line with the department's objectives to support people to have increased choice and control to live as independently as possible.

1.2 The report also sets out the consultation process that will need to take place and highlights the potential issues that will need to be resolved as we go through that consultation process.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Cabinet is requested to note the contents of this report and:

- a) Approve the consultation on de-registering Tudor Garden residential home, and
- b) Note the process for consulting with Tudor Garden residents and their families and/or advocates and the potential implications for the directly provided care which would result from agreeing the move to Supported Living.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Care Act 2014 will be implemented in April 2015 and reinforces Brent Council's focus on what people can do, rather than what eligible needs they have, and on this basis the importance of promoting independence, choice and control in order to make a difference to people's wellbeing.
- 3.2 A key part of Brent's implementation of the Care Act is set out in the Council's Market Position Statement 'Care and Support Closer to Home' agreed by the Cabinet in January 2014. The aim of the Market Position Statement, and the New Accommodation for Independent Living (NAIL) project is to create a more diverse accommodation based care and support market and ensure that the council is able to meet people's individual needs in the least restrictive environment, reducing the reliance on institutional care (residential and nursing care) and increasing access to other forms of accommodation such as supported living.
- 3.3 Residential and Nursing care is an expensive care option and often discourages independence. Supported Living, on the other hand, provides service users with a tenancy, their own front door (self contained living environment) and encourages a different model of care and support which is focused on maximising the independence, choice and control individual service users have and, therefore, improving their quality of life.

4.0 Tudor Gardens: the service

Current

- 4.1 Tudor Gardens is a relatively new residential care home, which replaced Melrose House four years ago. Most of the staff and residents moved from Melrose House to Tudor Gardens. It is the one remaining in-house, directly provided, residential care home. It currently provides support to 14 people who have a learning disability, but it has capacity for 15 residents. There are 24 staff who provide this support.
- 4.2 The home was built in partnership with the housing department under a PFI scheme and comprises three separate buildings, each containing 5 units. Each of the buildings is made up of self contained studio flats. Each studio flat has an en suite bathroom, a kitchenette and a living and sleeping area. Each building also has a shared bathroom, laundry room, communal area and kitchen. In other words, the building and accommodation is ideal for supported living.
- 4.3 The levels of need and support vary across the 3 buildings, but only one of the buildings supports residents who have relatively high care

needs and require 24 hour care support. The service is well regarded by service users and commissioners and has been inspected by the Care Quality Commission on a number of occasions and has always met all standards.

Proposed

- 4.4 Since 2010 the Council has been developing alternatives to placing people in registered residential care services. This has focused on external services. We have worked with external providers to develop new supported living accommodation and we have worked with other providers to de-register existing registered residential care homes and turn them into supported living accommodation.
- 4.5 The proposal set out in this paper builds on the work we have done in the past with independent sector homes. It is, therefore, clear that success is not just about the registration status of the care provision with the Care Quality Commission, it requires a number of other changes (contractual and cultural) to ensure this change delivers improvements for the people living there. Each of these will be addressed during the consultation process.
- 4.6 Firstly, de-registering Tudor Gardens and creating supported living accommodation with rights of tenure to the residents who are living in the studio flats currently. This gives the residents greater security, and it also means they can access a wider range of benefits, including housing benefit. The ability to access housing benefit to pay for their accommodation also significantly reduces the cost of support for adult social care, which is set out in more detail in the financial implications section. It also creates the need for a new service to manage the building and landlord responsibilities. The options for delivering this service will be explored with a final recommendation coming back to the Cabinet at the end of the consultation.
- 4.7 Secondly, it also creates additional opportunities to work with the residents to identify new support and services tailored to their individual needs to enable them to be as autonomous and independent as possible. In order to do this we will work with the current residents and their families, carrying out individual reviews of needs and support plans, and working with the residents and their families as groups, to co-produce the revised service and support needs. This in depth understanding of individual and collective needs will ensure we are able to commission the right range of care and support to help people to live more independently.
- 4.8 Finally, de-registering also raises a more pragmatic issue about who provides the care and support. The Care Quality Commission are clear that in supported living there must be a genuine separation between the care and the accommodation. The clearest response to this would be for the Council to contract with the independent sector for the regulated care rather than directly providing the care itself. Whether

this is the only or best solution will be explored with the Care Quality Commission, based on the reviews of service users need through the consultation.

5.0 Consultation and co-production

- 5.1 It is proposed that there is a 90 day consultation with residents, families and all stakeholders on the proposal to de-register Tudor Gardens Care Home. Consultation will start in March 2015 and conclude in May 2015.
- 5.2 Advocacy, translators and signer services will be commissioned to support service users and families to contribute fully to the consultation process.
- 5.3 Consultation will be based on principles of co-production, specifically:
1. Open and clear information/ communication to individuals, service users, their families, advocates and staff
 2. There will be an individual response to service users and carers needs and situations at all times, ensuring we not only meet our statutory obligations but get the best outcomes for service users
 3. Senior Staff representatives will regularly meet and inform service users, carers, and staff of the key project activity and progress.
 4. Service users, carers, advocates and staff will have access to key staff members who have decision making responsibilities to ensure clear and well considered decisions are made.
- 5.4 The process is set out in detail in the table in appendix 1 and will be overseen by a project group including staff from direct services, Learning Disability Support Planning Team and Commissioning to oversee the process and ensure all actions are agreed and completed on time. We will carry out full reviews of individual service users' needs and review their support plans, and we will engage with service users on an individual and group basis to identify their needs, wishes and what are there overriding priorities in this process.
- 5.5 Finally, we will work closely with staff recognising the uncertainty this period of consultation will cause them and their importance not only in continuing the service, but also supporting service users during the consultation.
- 5.6 The results of the consultation will be presented to the Cabinet with recommendations for implementation in June 2015.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The 2014/15 budget for Tudor Gardens is £928,000. Under the existing arrangements the Council's adult social care department pays for all costs, including hotel costs, which includes food, council tax and utility bills. However, if Tudor Gardens is de-registered and becomes Supported Living accommodation, the 'hotel costs' e.g. food, council tax and utility bills are payable by the residents, from benefits or other income. The tenants would also pay rent, again through housing benefit and other income. If Tudor Gardens is de-registered then all residents would be given support with accessing the appropriate benefits, and the Council's fairer contributions policy would apply which ensures that people only pay for what they can afford.
- 6.2 Also, as set out in section 4, de-registering Tudor Gardens would bring in a number of other changes, including reviewing support arrangements and introducing housing related management support.
- 6.3 The indicative estimates for the savings these changes could deliver is £300k. However, the consultation period and the specific package of changes that come from that process will provide further detail, including any costs (one off or ongoing) of implementing the changes.
- 6.4 Any savings will be monitored as part of the council's budget monitoring process.

10.0 Legal

- 10.1 There is no specific legislation governing the de-registration of care homes.
- 10.2 However, the Care Homes Act 2000 ("the Act") provides the definition of a care home and a domiciliary care agency for registration purposes. Section 3, in so far as it is relevant, provides as follows:
- "(1) For the purposes of this Act, an establishment is a care home if it provides accommodation together with nursing or personal care..."
- 10.3 In August 2002 the Department of Health issued guidance on registration of care homes which sets out how to distinguish between care homes and supported living arrangements. Essentially the distinction is between whether personal care is provided to an individual in an establishment or within their own home. This is a question of fact for the Care Quality Commission ['CQC'] to determine. The guidance does state that it is not determined by whether the care element is provided by a different company from the accommodation provider. Rather what is required is that the service user has autonomy akin to those living in ordinary accommodation and that this will include a choice in the care provider.

11.0 Diversity Implications

January 2015

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- 11.1 The age of the current residents in Tudor Gardens ranges from 30 – 70 and as such a number of them are experiencing age related health issues. They all have a learning disability and some have a physical disability. The majority of residents are White and White Irish. Many have been living together within a residential care establishment for more than 30 years and see themselves as one family.
- 11.2 The proposals in this paper will support the current residents to continue to live in Tudor Gardens with greater security of tenure and greater choice and control in how they live their lives. However, if change is agreed, then it will also create some uncertainty.
- 11.3 A draft Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed, but a full equalities impact analysis will be completed in accordance with our duties under the Equality Act 2010 through the consultation process.

12.0 Staffing Implications

- 12.1 Tudor Gardens currently employs 24 staff across a day and night rota. The proposed de-registration will have an impact on staff. If the Council continues to provide the care, then a significant cultural change will be required to respond to the new service model. If, as identified in Section 4, an external provider takes over the care provision then the current staff at Tudor Gardens may qualify for a TUPE transfer, and the Council would seek to ensure that London Living Wage was applicable.
- 12.2 The detail of any required changes will not be clear until this period of consultation on de-registration is complete and the Cabinet has agreed the way forward in June 2015. At that point, a full consultation on any proposed changes would be undertaken with staff and trade unions in accordance with HR policy.

Background Papers

- Putting People First: a shared vision,
- Valuing People Now: a new three year strategy for people with learning disabilities (2009)
- Care Act 2014
- Nail Project 2014

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Appendix 1 - Consultation Timetable

Date	Stakeholder Group/ Meetings	Purpose
9 th March 2015	Consultation letter to service users	The aims of the initial letter to service users is to provide a brief explanation of aims, point of contact for questions(easy read format)
9 th March 2015	Consultation (letter to staff)	To explain aims of the proposed change and points of contact for questions.
9 th March 2015	Letters to families	Brief explanation of aims, point of contact for questions)
12 March 20105	Advocacy & Signer Appointed	To support Residents to effectively contribute towards the consultation discussions
16 th March 2015	Consultation (First meeting with service users)	Purpose of the meeting is to explain what supported living is, discuss advocacy, etc.)
17 th March 2015	Consultation with families (First meeting meeting)	Purpose of the meeting is to explain what supported living is, discuss advocacy, etc.)
18 th March 2015	Consultation (First meeting with staff)	To explain what SL(Supported Living) is and how this will impact on T&Gs)
13 th April 2015	Consultation (Second meeting with service users)	To establish wishes re: care provider; discuss transport arrangements, environmental modifications. Provider shares in house policies in relation to medication management, staff expenses, lone working. Shared expenses discussed.)
20 th April 2015	Consultation with commissioner	(Shared expenses agreed and shared with AS Commissioner)
24 th April	Communicate with families	To inform families about

	via letter	staffing arrangements to family / advocates
27 th April 2015	Consultation (Decision making meeting)	To agree service provision.
18 th May 2015	Consultation meeting with staff	To discuss last concerns and queries, skill gaps.
9 th June 2015	Report back to Cabinet	To feedback consultation outcomes with service users, families and staff on motions of the

De-registration of Residential Home Tudor Gardens

Department

Adults Social Care

Person Responsible

Aga Ambroziak

Created

2nd February, 2015

Last Review

2nd February, 2015

Status

Screened

Next Review

2nd February, 2016

Impact Assessment Data

5. What effects could your policy have on different equality groups and on cohesion and good relations?

5.1 Age (select all that apply)

- Neutral

AGE- The clients age range is:

30-40- 2 service users

40-50- 2 service users

50-60 - 6 service users

60-70 2 service users

70+ 2 service users

Some older clients may find the change difficult as they may become more worried and resistant to a change.

Younger clients who haven't reside in Tudor Gardens for a long time in the home may be less affected by change and if they choose to leave, they may find it easier and they may become more adaptable to a new changing status of the home. In relation to Brent's Diversity Profile the biggest population was the 30 to 44 year old with a quarter of Brent's population. Majority of service users in Tudor Gardens are between age 30 - 70.. This policy may have more positive impact on older clients who may not embrace with change in their older years. It will therefore have a negative impact upon this group. There are only two clients from the biggest population age range.

5.2 Disability (select all that apply)

- Negative

DISABILITY- all service users who currently reside in Tudor Garden have moderate or severe learning disability. Some of the clients will have no capacity to make a judgment and a decision about their future without help of others. This would be exercised through Mental Capacity Assessments, Independent Advocates, Guardians and Deputyship arrangements for clients who have no families or any other relatives. The change to supported living may affect some of the clients as the consultation process progresses. All clients will received an individualised assessment that will ensure all their needs are taken in consideration. Each clients needs will reflect in personal budgets and a level of care that will be arranged for each individual. This Policy will have negative impact on clients who have no capacity to make decision whether they wish to remain in the current home or if they wish to move.

5.3 Gender identity and expression (select all that apply)

- Unknown

We are unable to collect the evidence in this characteristic, therefore we are unable to specify of the policy will have negative or positive impact on the group.

5.4 Marriage and civil partnership (select all that apply)

- Neutral

None of the service users who reside in Tudor Gardens are married or have been in civil partnership, therefore this policy has a neutral effect on the group.

5.5 Pregnancy and maternity (select all that apply)

- Neutral

This policy has neutral effect on the group.

5.6 Race (select all that apply)

- Negative

RACE- The current profile of service users who reside in Tudor Gardens is following:

- 2 residents African Caribbean
- 3 residents White Irish
- 1 resident African
- 6 resident White UK
- 1 resident white Others

All service user have reside in this country from their early lives and also have been born in United Kingdom. White British and Irish are in majority of all clients who reside in the home. All the clients have lived together for almost 30 years. Brent remains a majority Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) borough with 63.7% of the population being non-White. In England and Wales the figure is 14% and 40% in London. The largest single ethnic group in Brent is the Asian/Asian British: Indian or British Indian group with 18.6% of the borough's population, followed by the White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British group with 18%. In England and Wales the Asian/Asian British: Indian or British Indian group makes up 2.5% of the population, rising to 8.8% in Outer London. 80% of Tudor Gardens service users are White, therefore the proposal will disproportionately negatively impact upon white service users.

5.7 Religion or belief (select all that apply)

- Neutral

The policy should have no negative impact on service users or believes religion or believes. The Policy aims to provide more independent life for all service users. The Policy aims to continue to support service users accordingly to their faith and religion and any other spiritual needs they may have during the process.

At present we have no date on religion or belief of the current service users waiting list. The NAIL project may start gathering information of clients waiting list, therefore more detailed information in relation to clients religion and belief may be available in a later stage of the process.

5.8 Sex (select all that apply)

- Neutral

There are currently 7 males and 7 females residing in Tudor Gardens. The number of male and female clients does not reflect the wider Brent Population. There is unlikely to be a positive impact upon sex.

5.9 Sexual orientation (select all that apply)

- Unknown

We are unable to collect the evidence in this characteristic, therefore we are unable to specify of the policy will have negative or positive impact on the group.

5.10 Other (please specify) (select all that apply)

6. Please provide a brief summary of any research or engagement initiatives that have been carried out to formulate your proposal.

What did you find out from consultation or data analysis?

Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal?

How did your findings and the wider evidence base inform the proposal?

It is proposed that a full consultation process is undertaken with service users, families and staff. This is likely to happen in March 2015 and conclude in May 2015. The results of consultation will be presented to Cabinet with recommendations.

7. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010? Prohibited acts include direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failure to make a reasonable adjustment.

- No

No. Adults Social Care ensures that all residents are treated with dignity, respect and equality. We also aim to ensure we take any actions for discriminatory behaviours. We ensure all residents are treated fairly and the backbone of this work is the right to independence and control the lives of vulnerable people.

8. What actions will you take to enhance the potential positive impacts that you have identified?

This is not applicable as no positive impacts have been identified.

9. What actions will you take to remove or reduce the potential negative impacts that you have identified?

Our aim is to ensure people are treated equally despite their age, disability, gender, race, religion or beliefs or sexual orientation. We ensure that all service users have the same access to information and ensure they adapted in a format they can understand.

o ensure discrimination is eliminated we will put in place following:

1. Residents will be consulted on the change with a support of an independent advocate
2. Residents will be given choice whether they wish to remain in residential care or supported living scheme
3. Residents will be given time to understand the consultation and easy read forms will be introduced to them
4. For residents who have no capacity an Independent Mental Capacity Assessment will be arranged
5. We will make appropriate adaptations in their flats to ensure they can live more independently
- 6 Occupational Therapy (OT) assessments will be arranged to ensure people can achieve and maintain independence in all aspects of their lives
7. Residents will have the same rights and responsibilities as other citizens.
8. We will make sure that we will work closely with other organisations e.g advocacy
9. We will work closely with families and friends
10. We will work closely with other Council's departments
11. We will work closely with health representatives e.g. GP, Psychiatrist and Pharmacist

10. Please explain how any remaining negative impacts can be justified?

The negative impacts can only really be justified by acknowledging that the Council is tasked with finding large financial savings across all service areas, and departments are tasked with making extremely difficult decisions to enable these budget reductions to happen.

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 Brent	<p style="text-align: center;">Cabinet</p> <p style="text-align: center;">23 February 2015</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Strategic Director of Adult Social Care</p>
<p>For Action Wards Affected: ALL</p>	
<p>Authority to award contract for Housing Related Support Services</p>	

Appendix 1 is Not for Publication

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report requests authority to award a Floating and Accommodation Housing Related Support Services contract as required by Contract Standing Order No 88. It also summarises the process undertaken in tendering this contract and, following the completion of the evaluation of the tenders, recommends to whom the contract should be awarded.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Cabinet award the contract for Floating and Accommodation Housing Related Support Services for Physical Disabilities, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Sensory Impairment to Look Ahead Care and Support Limited.

3.0 Detail

Background

- 3.1 In November 2012 the Council's Executive approved the award of a Supporting People Framework Agreement (SPFA) to ensure that the national preventative programme, which aims to enable vulnerable people to live independently in the community through providing housing-related support services, could be delivered with a range of

providers who had met quality and cost standards. A total of 13 providers were appointed to the framework across the following four Lots:

Lot 1 - Accommodation based services (5 providers)

Lot 2 - Floating support based services (6 providers)

Lot 3 - Accident prevention and handyperson services (1 provider)

Lot 4 - Social activity co-ordination services (1 provider)

- 3.2 The Executive also approved five (5) separate call off contracts from the Framework two (2) of these were for Lot 1 and 2 with Riverside being awarded a 2+1+1 year contract to deliver FAHRS Services for Physical Disabilities (PD), Learning Disabilities (LD), Mental Health (MH) and Sensory Impairment (SI). The contract commenced in February 2013 and, with a plan to exercise the full extension options, was planned to end in January 2016. However, in November 2014 Riverside informed Council Officers that it was their preference to not extend the contract due to a resourcing gap on their part. The contract will therefore end in its third year in March 2015 and be replaced by the proposed within this report.
- 3.3 As the future services requirements are ongoing Officers recognise that the way in which they are delivered is subject to change dependent on the outcomes of the wider accommodation based care and support services review. The proposed contract is therefore for a shorter 1 + 1 year period which provides the flexibility to adapt the delivery model.

The tender process

- 3.4 Using its SPFA the Council undertook a mini competition using Lots 1 and 2 to procure a single new provider. In order to ensure that the eventual provider had the ability to deliver the required services only those that had been awarded agreements for the full service types across both Lots were invited to quote. Of the 4 that were not invited, one was only awarded Older People and HIV services for Lot 1, the second only HIV for Lot 2, the third Offenders only across Lot 2 (and no award to Lot 1) whilst the fourth, as the incumbent provider, was not invited as they had made it clear that they did not wish to bid for the contract.
- 3.5 In accordance with SPFA Call Off Protocol, quotes were requested on the basis of revised pricing with TUPE and the London Living Wage (LLW) factored in.
- 3.6 Bidders were informed that the contract would be awarded on a 70% Price and 30% Quality basis. As the specification had not changed the scores that were used to evaluate quality were those that were granted when the bidders were selected to the Framework. These were added to the Price scores which were calculated upon their revised costs.

3.7 All quotes were submitted via the Councils eTendering portal.

Evaluation process

3.8 As stated in 3.6 above only revised pricing was scored and added to the bidders original quality score to achieve an overall score per bidder.

3.9 On the 23rd January 2015 representatives from the Adult Social Care Commissioning and Change team reviewed the scores and confirmed that highest ranking bidder should be recommended for contract award.

3.10 The names of the tenderers are contained in Appendix 1. The scores received by the tenderers are included in Appendix 2. It will be noted that Tenderer A was the highest scoring tenderer. Officers therefore recommend the award of the contract to Tenderer A, namely Look Ahead Care and Support Limited.

3.11 The contract will commence 1st April 2015 with handover and implementation to start in late February 2015.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 The Council's Contract Standing Orders state that contracts for supplies and services exceeding £250k or works contracts exceeding £500k shall be referred to the Cabinet for approval of the award of the contract.

4.2 The estimated value of this contract is £1.6m based on the average demand under this contract over the last 2 years and the rates submitted by the successful bidder.

4.3 There is a potential cost implication in terms of one-off redundancy and severance costs with the award of this new contract. This cost has been estimated at £35,792. Further early retirement costs may also be applicable though this has not been quantified at present. The full redundancy and early retirement cost would be contained by the Adult Social Services budget for 2015/16 should another funding source not be identified.

4.3 It is anticipated that the cost of this contract will be funded from within the overall budget for Supporting People contracts and that this and other contracts will be proactively managed in order to ensure that targeted savings planned for 2015/16 are achieved.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 The Care Act 2014 ("the Act") sets out Local Authorities responsibilities to provide care and support for persons in their local community who by

reasons of age, illness, disability or any other circumstances are in need of care and attention which will not otherwise be available to them. The Act requires local authorities, in so doing to aim to reduce individual's needs, promote individual well-being, health related housing accommodation, and to take steps such as, providing and arranging for services (including commissioning from others) which are intended to prevent, reduce or delay needs for care and support for all local people including adults and carers. Local Authorities must also have regard to how it could make the best use of community facilities to prevent, delay and reduce needs for care and support and identifying adults and carers in their area who have unmet needs for care and support, when providing or arranging for preventative services.

- 5.2 Under the EU procurement rules, provision of supporting people services is categorised as health and social services which falls within Part B of Schedule 3 to the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (the EU Procurement Regulations”) and as such is only subject to partial application of the EU Procurement Regulations, to include requirements in relation to technical specifications and the need to publish a contract award notice. Contracting authorities should also to adhere to the principles of the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union with regard to non discrimination and transparency in awarding a contract.
- 5.3 As detailed in paragraph 3.9, Officers selected the preferred tenderer following a mini-competition using the SPFA which was let by the Council.
- 5.4 The total value of the contract, over its lifetime, is in excess of £250,000, which classifies it as a High Value Contract under the Council's Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and therefore the award of the call-off contracts requires Cabinet approval.
- 5.5 As a Part B service, the Council is not obliged to follow the observation of a mandatory minimum ten 10 calendar day standstill period before the contract can be awarded. Therefore all the tenderers will be issued with written notification of the contract award decision on the expiry of the call in period (provided there has been no call in) following Cabinet approval to award the contract to the successful tenderer. .

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 There are no diversity implications however the proposed contract will require the provider to deliver services which are:

- culturally sensitive by providing cultural awareness training for all staff, matching specific language requirements where possible, and;
- able to provide training for all staff in areas that will raise awareness of issues faced by vulnerable people from different ethnic groups.

6.2 The provider will be monitored to ensure they are complying with these requirements through checking of their records, regular review of services provided to individual service users where feedback will be sought from service users, monthly monitoring meetings and provision of quarterly performance information to the Council.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

7.1 Riverside is the current provider. CNWL is subcontracted to provide services to Riverside under the current contract. The council second 10 council staff (six full time and four part time) to CNWL. The new contract will be awarded to Lookahead. Full time Staff currently working on the contract (albeit through a secondment) will potentially be subject to TUPE. Those who are assigned for 40% of their time would not be therefore they will need to be redeployed within the council or subject to redundancy.

8.0 Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

8.1 The Council at the pre-procurement stage of this contract also considered the requirements of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, i.e how the services to be procured may improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Brent. The service under this contract has as its primary aim, the improvement of the social wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable groups in Brent.

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Strategic Director, Adults, Adults Social Care

APPENDIX 2

HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT SERVICES CONTRACT

TENDER EVALUATION OUTCOME

	Cost (70%)	Quality (30%)	Total
Tenderer A	68.50%	21.75%	90.3%
Tenderer B	70.00%	16.13%	86.1%

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Cabinet
23 February 2015

**Report from the
Assistant Chief Executive**

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

Promoting Electoral Engagement (IER) Task Group

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report brings to the Cabinet a report which contains findings and recommendations of the scrutiny task group's investigation into how to manage a successful transition to Individual Electoral Registration (IER). The IER system went live in July 2014 and is expected to fully supplant the current Household Electoral Registration system on 1st December 2015 with the aim of making the process of registration more convenient and secure.
- 1.2 The task group was established because members were concerned about the transition to IER, in particular, that a large number of Brent's residents may not be successfully transferred to the new system and thus removed from the electoral register. This could undermine civic engagement in the borough and negatively impact upon Brent's residents in a number of other ways such as making it difficult to undergo a credit check.
- 1.3 A number of demographic 'risk factors' which could lead to large number of people being accidentally removed from the electoral register have been identified. These include; high rates of population churn, large numbers of people living in the private rented sector and high numbers of students, all of which are prevalent in Brent.
- 1.4 In this context, the task group wanted to better understand the how the different service areas across the council are preparing for the changes and examine what could be done to ensure a successful transition to IER.
- 1.3 Given the timeframe for the roll-out of IER, it is hoped that the task group's work may assist service areas by providing timely recommendations to improve outreach with residents and ensure a smooth transition to the new system.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Cabinet endorse the recommendations in the report.

Meeting: Cabinet
Date: 23 February 2015

2.2 That the members of the task group be thanked for their work.

3.0 Detail

3.1 IER is different from the current system in that it requires each person to register individually, instead of one person in a household supplying the details of everyone living at that address. Online registration will be available from the start of IER and it is hoped this will help everyone who is eligible to vote to have control over their own process of registration.

3.2 The task group drew on a wide range of sources throughout the course of its work, which can be broadly grouped into four categories:

- **Quantative:** drawn from a range of sources such the DWP, the credit referencing agency Experian and the Office for National Statistics. Support has also been provided by Brent's Research and Intelligence team;
- **Qualitative - evidence given:** face-to-face evidence and presentations given to the task group by relevant experts and stakeholders;
- **Qualitative - consultation:** telephone and face-to-face consultation with relevant organisations such as the Electoral Commission; and
- **Qualitative – secondary research:** desktop-based collation of various pieces of policy literature and examples of best practice from elsewhere.

The task group's report would not have been possible without the help of a wide-range of internal and external contributors, who were an invaluable source of information and knowledge.

Brent Council:

- James Diamond (Communications)
- Sean O'Sullivan (Electoral Services - ERO)
- Peter Goss (Democratic Services)
- Dr John Birkett (Research and Intelligence)
- Jo McCormick (Partnerships and Participation)
- Tessa Awe (CVS Brent)
- Freda Owusu (Brent Housing Partnership)
- Tony Hirsch (Policy and Performance)
- Carl Holloway (Media Relations)
- Cllr Michael Pavey (Deputy Leader of the Council)
- Thomas Cattermole (Member Services)
- Nicola Mclean (Brent Youth Services)
- Dr Melanie Smith (Director of Public Health)
- Phillip Porter (Director of Adult Social Care)

External Partners:

- The Electoral Commission
- Francis Henry (Daniel's Estate Agents)
- Ann O'Neil (Brent Mencap)
- Lesley Spencer (Manchester City Council)
- Elisabeth Pop (Hope not Hate)
- Manpreet Chhokar (Hope not Hate)
- Chris Ruane MP (Political and Constitutional Reform Committee)

3.3 The work of the task group has encompassed the following three themes:

- The need to develop a comprehensive IER roll-out programme and communications strategy;
- The need for more effective working with partners including the voluntary sector, housing and other statutory and non-statutory partners; and
- The need for enhanced civic engagement with the community (e.g. improved civic education and greater outreach by elected members).

3.4 Grouped into the three themes outlined above, the report then makes the following recommendations:

Theme 1: the need for a comprehensive IER roll-out programme and communications strategy

1. Carry out further work to establish key target groups so that bespoke tactics may be used to reach more eligible voters. This would include an assessment the audiences attitudes, opinions and motivations as well as any potential language barriers there may be;
2. When developing the IER roll-out programme, the lowest matched polling districts and wards should be primarily targeted during canvassing;
3. The Electoral Services team should work with all council departments and partners to adopt an 'every contact counts' approach to ensure contact with residents is maximised, including email footers, automated messaging and library card and blue badge applications;
4. Proximity and broadcast messaging and social media should be considered as part of the communications strategy;
5. The communications team should engage young people to be actively involved in the development of communications materials aimed specifically at young people;
6. The communications team should develop messages around the benefits of civic participation and why it is important to register as well as the negative consequences of not being listed on the register;
7. Leaflets and posters about IER should made clearer and the headings made bold, snappy and straightforward to better communicate with residents with learning difficulties and visual impairments. A QR code¹ could also be placed on leaflets to direct people to the website;
8. Postal communications with electors should include a covering letter that is straightforward and easy to understand;
9. It should be made clear in the council's covering letter that unique identifiers other than an National Insurance (NI) number can be used to, details about unique identifiers should also be placed on the website; and
10. Brent's website should have a link directing people to the Jobcentre Plus website where they can obtain a NI number if they do not have one.

Theme 2: the need for more effective working of partners including the voluntary and community sector, housing and other statutory and non-statutory partners

¹ A code that by read by any imaging device (e.g. a smartphone) which links to further information.

11. Electoral Services should engage Adult Social Care (ASC), Public Health and external partners such as the NHS and Brent Mencap to ensure that potentially vulnerable residents are successfully registered;
12. Electoral Services should work with ASC to develop clear guidelines to inform both residential and domiciliary carers of their civic duties regarding those under their care, they must also inform residents under their care about IER as part of the 'making every contact count' programme;
13. The council's Public Health function should encourage sign-up to IER through its commissioned services;
14. The council should ensure that polling stations are fully accessible to disabled residents and that staff are appropriately trained;
15. Full advantage is taken of the opportunities presented by landlord licensing and that the information gleaned from licensing is fed directly into the IER roll-out programme;
16. Clear guidelines for canvassing Brent Housing Partnership (BHP) properties must be developed, the names and numbers of tenancy officers obtained and confirmation letters provided to canvassers by BHP;
17. Canvassers should also include visits to specialty shops catering to residents from different backgrounds;
18. Commonwealth, EU and new citizens should be encouraged to sign-up to IER by incorporating information and forms about IER into a welcome pack;
19. The Electoral Services team work with GP practices, dentists, opticians and pharmacies to encourage voter registration;
20. Electoral Services and Housing should monitor the developments around 'right to rent' for any impact it might have on information gathering and communication with residents;
21. Electoral Services should scope the possibility of working with estate agents in Brent to incorporate IER registration into potential welcome packs alongside council tax forms and utility company registration forms;
22. Electoral Services should scope the capacity to work with The University of Westminster and other higher education institutions such as the College of North-West London to be integrated into enrolment processes similar to a model used by Manchester City Council;
23. Brent Council should work with the Greater London Authority (GLA) to lobby Parliament to introduce legislation similar to the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA); and
24. Electoral Services should work with Brent Youth Services and Bite the Ballot to register young people.

Theme 3: the need for enhanced civic engagement with the community (e.g. improved civic education and greater outreach by elected members)

25. Electoral Services should work closely with Brent's Partnerships and Engagement team and CVS Brent to take full advantage of the VCS sector, both in terms of delivering registration services and in providing information to the council about outreach work in the community; and
26. The council and elected members work closely with Hope not Hate (HnH) to better engage with local VCS organisations and elected members should support Electoral Services to do this.

4.0 Implementation to the task group's recommendations

In further consultation with stakeholders, an action plan has been developed by the relevant service areas. This action plan sets out the council's response to the

recommendations made by the task group's report and will be used to monitor progress made at service level. It will also be used to report back to the Scrutiny Committee at regular intervals or when requested.

5.0 Financial Implications

The Government has acknowledged that local authorities may be put under increased pressure to deliver the changes to implement the new system. The Cabinet Office, therefore, has made it clear that any activities which create additional costs will be met by top-up funding to support the transition to IER. There is some concern that the new system will lead to a long-term increase in work which will not be matched by government funding. The task group has been told that such additional funds have been made available through yearly ring-fenced Cabinet Office grants to support the transition to IER. So far, these include the following:

- £11,000 in August 2013; and
- £217,641 in 2014/15.

Although funding arrangements have not yet been disclosed for 2015/16, Brent's Electoral Services team are expecting a similar level of grant funding for further work.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 The change to IER comes as result of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013. The Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 requires councils in England and Wales to appoint an Electoral Registration Officer. The RPA also requires that the council's Electoral Registration Officer be responsible for compiling and maintain the council's electoral role and administering an annual canvass.

7.0 Diversity Implications

7.1 Throughout the course of the task group's work, a number of community groups potentially at-risk were identified, these include:

- Young people turning 18;
- Those aged 18 – 24 (including students);
- Tenants in the private rented sector (PRS);
- Postal voters;
- People whose first language is not English; and
- People with learning disabilities.

7.2 Ensuring that these groups are engaged is at the core of this task group's recommendations. However, of the above at-risk groups, only young people and people with learning disabilities are covered by the Equalities Act 2010. The task group recommended that further demographic research into under-represented groups covered by the Act should be undertaken to obtain clearer picture of diversity implications. It is hoped that these implications will be revealed in greater detail by the completed communications strategy and it's subsequent Equalities Impact Analysis.

8.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

8.1 Brent's Electoral Services team is set to take on temporary staff to aid with canvassing in the run-up to the election.

9.0 Contact Officers

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Promoting Electoral Engagement

A Scrutiny Task Group Report

November 2014

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Chair's Foreword



This task group was established in response to the challenges posed by the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration (IER), the most significant change in the electoral system for 100 years. The right to vote is fundamental to democracy and it is for this reason that Brent Council's new administration has made this issue a corporate priority.

Brent has always had a significant level of under-registration. However, the transition to IER presents an opportunity to better understand how significant the problem is, and more importantly, offer practical proposals as to how Brent, and our partners, can improve registration.

To ensure a successful transition to IER, the council must also change the way we work, the way we engage with partners and to engage more with community groups and residents. The council must champion voter registration, by making the case for civic participation. As we have subsequently found out, however, not being included on the electoral register could also mean being unable to undergo a credit reference check which can significantly impede an individual's ability to access financial services, including a mortgage or even a mobile phone contract.

Brent is an incredibly diverse borough; no two wards look alike. Through our investigations, we have discovered that even within neighbourhoods and polling districts, there is a large variance in voter registration. This means that we need to a bespoke plan to target those most at-risk of not registering and to concentrate efforts in the areas most in need and make best use of communications tactics that target those who are hardest to reach.

Consequently, a successful transition to IER is not something that the council can do on its own. It will require a huge joint effort across council services and local stakeholders, partner agencies and community organisations.

Unlike previous scrutiny task groups, the approach taken in this instance has shown that by working more collaboratively with service areas, issues and findings can be actioned much more quickly.

I would like to thank the numerous officers and councillors who sat on the task group and the many witnesses who kindly devoted their time to contribute to this report.

Cllr Neil Nerva

Chair, Individual Electoral Registration Scrutiny Task Group

November 2014

Task group membership

- Cllr Neil Nerva (chair)
- Cllr Tom Miller
- Cllr Janice Long
- Cllr Tayo Oladapo
- Cllr Arshad Mahmood
- Cllr Rita Conneely
- Cllr Aisha Hoda-Benn

Policy support has been provided by James Curtis (Policy Officer) and Christopher Young (Senior Policy Officer).

In order to complete the work, the task group gathered evidence from a number of internal and external partners. We would like to thank the following colleagues from within Brent Council and our partners, who have provided invaluable insight throughout this process.

Brent Council:

- James Diamond (Communications)
- Sean O’Sullivan (Electoral Services - ERO)
- Peter Goss (Democratic Services)
- Dr John Birkett (Research and Intelligence)
- Jo McCormick (Partnerships and Participation)
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- Elisabeth Pop (Hope not Hate)
- Manpreet Chhokar (Hope not Hate)
- Chris Ruane MP (Political and Constitutional Reform Committee)

Executive Summary

Individual Electoral Registration (IER) was introduced through the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 and, from June 2014, all newly registered voters must be registered under the new system. IER requires each person to register individually rather than having one person in the household supply the details of everyone living at a particular address. In addition to a current address, it also requires two personal identifiers - further proof of identity and eligibility – in the form of a National Insurance (NI) number and a date of birth.

The introduction of IER, therefore, presents the council with significant challenges as well as a range of opportunities to improve voter registration across Brent, as uncovered by the task group's investigations. One of the more unique opportunities presented by the transition to IER is that, over the course of this process, a much clearer picture of under-registration may be developed and, in turn, targeted through an intelligence-led communications strategy.

This task group was established with the over-arching aim of ensuring that as many of Brent's residents are transferred to the new system as possible. Further outcomes include the following:

- To ensure that a clear and coherent IER roll-out programme and communications strategy is developed for promoting electoral engagement in the borough, with a particular focus on under-represented groups;
- Ensure that the council and elected members are engaging with local communities around civic participation and voter registration;
- Harness the expertise of local VCS organisations to reach out to residents;
- Ensure that the maximum people in the borough are successfully transferred to the new system with a target rate of 95%; and
- Increase the proportion of local people on the electoral register.

Prior to the first revised register being published on 1 December 2014, a confirmation 'dry-run' data-matching exercise, which cross-referenced data from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) with local electoral registers was undertaken to confirm electors' addresses. In Brent, 67.6% of electors were successfully matched; this is significantly below the national average of 79% but just below the London average of 68%.

A Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating has been assigned to each individual to indicate the extent to which they have been successfully matched. Red indicates that no-one at the property has matched, Amber indicates discrepancies at the property (e.g. someone whose name has recently changed), whereas Green indicates a full match.

The matching exercise has allowed the council to identify what the lowest matching polling districts are. Consequently, the report recommends the Electoral Services team make a concerted effort to target the polling districts with the highest overall number of Amber and Red matches. Whilst the matching exercise has revealed the geography of under-registration, the demographics of under-registration have been more difficult to establish. Therefore, the report recommends that more work is required to establish the demographic trends of under-registration as these may have implications for the IER roll-out.

After considering evidence taken from key officers from Brent Council's services, voluntary and community sector organisations and other key stakeholders, this report advocates a threefold approach for improving voter registration as a whole and for targeting the lowest-matching polling districts:

1. The need for a comprehensive IER roll-out programme and communications strategy which is characterised by intelligence-led targeting of areas and at-risk community groups. The strategy should use clear and effective messaging;
2. The need for more effective work with partners including the voluntary and community sector, housing and other statutory and non-statutory partners; and
3. The need for enhanced civic engagement with the community (e.g. improved civic education and greater outreach by elected members).

The risk of under-representation due to the shift to IER remains considerable. In previous years Brent's Electoral Services team, through their registration drives and canvasses, have achieved registration rates of 95%. What the matching, therefore, tells us is that – even as snapshot – voter registration is not as accurate as we would like to think. Moreover, the Electoral Commission estimates that some 7.5 million eligible voters nationally will not be registered to vote in more is not done to promote electoral registration.

Recommendations

In light of the facts and findings highlighted in this report, the task group makes the following recommendations. These recommendations, which can be broadly grouped into three themes, include:

Theme 1: the need for a comprehensive IER roll-out programme and communications strategy

1. Carry out further work to establish key target groups so that bespoke tactics may be used to reach more eligible voters. This would include an assessment the audiences attitudes, opinions and motivations as well as any potential language barriers there may be;
2. When developing the IER roll-out programme, the lowest matched polling districts and wards should be primarily targeted during canvassing;
3. The Electoral Services team should work with all council departments and partners to adopt an 'every contact counts' approach to ensure contact with residents is maximised, including email footers, automated messaging and library card and blue badge applications;
4. Proximity and broadcast messaging and social media should be considered as part of the communications strategy;
5. The communications team should engage young people to be actively involved in the development of communications materials aimed specifically at young people;
6. The communications team should develop messages around the benefits of civic participation and why it is important to register as well as the negative consequences of not being listed on the register;
7. Leaflets and posters about IER should made clearer and the headings made bold, snappy and straightforward to better communicate with residents with learning difficulties and visual impairments. A QR code¹ could also be placed on leaflets to direct people to the website;
8. Postal communications with electors should include a covering letter that is straightforward and easy to understand;
9. It should be made clear in the council's covering letter that unique identifiers other than an National Insurance (NI) number can be used to, details about unique identifiers should also be placed on the website; and
10. Brent's website should have a link directing people to the Jobcentre Plus website where they can obtain a NI number if they do not have one.

Theme 2: the need for more effective working of partners including the voluntary and community sector, housing and other statutory and non-statutory partners

11. Electoral Services should engage Adult Social Care (ASC), Public Health and external partners such as the NHS and Brent Mencap to ensure that potentially vulnerable residents are successfully registered;
12. Electoral Services should work with ASC to develop clear guidelines to inform both residential and domiciliary carers of their civic duties regarding those under their care, they must also inform residents under their care about IER as part of the 'making every contact count' programme;

¹ A code that by read by any imaging device (e.g. a smartphone) which links to further information.

13. The council's Public Health function should encourage sign-up to IER through its commissioned services;
14. The council should ensure that polling stations are fully accessible to disabled residents and that staff are appropriately trained;
15. Full advantage is taken of the opportunities presented by landlord licensing and that the information gleaned from licensing is fed directly into the IER roll-out programme;
16. Clear guidelines for canvassing Brent Housing Partnership (BHP) properties must be developed, the names and numbers of tenancy officers obtained and confirmation letters provided to canvassers by BHP;
17. Canvassers should also include visits to specialty shops catering to residents from different backgrounds;
18. Commonwealth, EU and new citizens should be encouraged to sign-up to IER by incorporating information and forms about IER into a welcome pack;
19. The Electoral Services team work with GP practices, dentists, opticians and pharmacies to encourage voter registration;
20. Electoral Services and Housing should monitor the developments around 'right to rent' for any impact it might have on information gathering and communication with residents;
21. Electoral Services should scope the possibility of working with estate agents in Brent to incorporate IER registration into potential welcome packs alongside council tax forms and utility company registration forms;
22. Electoral Services should scope the capacity to work with The University of Westminster and other higher education institutions such as the College of North-West London to integrate into enrolment processes similar to a model used by Manchester City Council;
23. Brent Council should work with the Greater London Authority (GLA) to lobby Parliament to introduce legislation similar to the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA); and
24. Electoral Services should work with Brent Youth Services and Bite the Ballot to register young people.

Theme 3: the need for enhanced civic engagement with the community (e.g. improved civic education and greater outreach by elected members)

25. Electoral Services should work closely with Brent's Partnerships and Engagement team and CVS Brent to take full advantage of the VCS sector, both in terms of delivering registration services and in providing information to the council about outreach work in the community; and
26. The council and elected members work closely with Hope not Hate (HnH) to better engage with local VCS organisations and elected members should support Electoral Services to do this.

1.0 Introduction – the scope and purpose of the task group’s work

Individual Electoral Registration (IER) has been described as the most significant change to the electoral system in the last 100 years. The IER system went live in June 2014 and is expected to fully supplant the current Household Electoral Registration system on 01 December 2015 with the aim of making the process of registration more convenient and secure. IER is different from the current system in that it requires each person to register individually, instead of one person in a household supplying the details of everyone living at that address. Online registration will be available from the start of IER and it is hoped this will help everyone who is eligible to vote to have control over their own registration. Another key difference is that registration will now become an annual process, meaning voters will have to re-register prior to each election.

The introduction of IER has highlighted the challenge of low levels of voter registration and civic engagement, both of which have been significant issues in Brent for a number of years and need addressing. Consequently, a number of issues raised in this document would be of relevance in spite of the introduction of IER. At this point, it is unclear how many eligible voters there are in Brent who, for a number of reasons, may not be registered to vote.

The purpose of this particular task group is to ensure that all of Brent’s residents are successfully transferred onto the new electoral roll. Therefore, the task group’s intended outcomes are:

- To ensure that a clear and coherent IER roll-out programme and communications strategy is developed for promoting electoral engagement in the borough, with a particular focus on under-represented groups;
- Ensure that the council and elected members are engaging with local communities around civic participation and voter registration;
- Harness the expertise of local VCS organisations to reach out to residents;
- Ensure that the maximum people in the borough are successfully transferred to the new system with a target rate of 95%; and
- Increase the proportion of local people on the electoral register.

After considering evidence taken from key officers from Brent Council’s services, voluntary and community sector organisations and other key stakeholders, this report advocates a threefold approach for improving voter registration as a whole and for targeting the lowest-matching polling districts:

1. The need for a comprehensive IER roll-out programme and communications strategy which is characterised by intelligence-led targeting of areas and at-risk community groups. The strategy should use clear and effective messaging;
2. The need for more effective work with partners including the voluntary and community sector, housing and other statutory and non-statutory partners; and
3. The need for enhanced civic engagement with the community (e.g. improved civic education and greater outreach by elected members).

So far, the London Borough of Brent is the only local authority that we are aware of to undertake scrutiny work on Individual Electoral Registration. The new administration in Brent has made scrutiny of electoral registration a corporate priority. The transition to IER also raises issues of equality and diversity, many of which are addressed within this report’s findings and recommendations. The council must ensure it is fulfilling its public sector equality duties and this extends to civic participation and voter registration.

2.0 Methodology

The task group drew on a range of quantitative and qualitative data for this project which can be broadly grouped into four categories:

Quantitative: drawn from the DWP and collated by Brent's Research and Intelligence team. Data has also been obtained from the credit referencing agency Experian and the Office for National Statistics;

Qualitative – evidence given: consisting of face-to-face evidence and presentations given by relevant experts and stakeholders to the task group;

Qualitative – consultation: consisting of telephone and face-to-face consultation with relevant organisations such as the Electoral Commission; and

Qualitative – secondary research: consisting of the desktop-based collation of existing pieces of policy literature on the subject and examples of best practice from elsewhere.

3.0 Background and Policy Context

Individual Electoral Registration (IER) was introduced through the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 and from June 2014 all newly registered voters must be registered under the new system. IER requires each person to register individually rather than having one person in the household supply the details of everyone living at a particular address. It also requires further proof of identity and eligibility in the form of a National Insurance (NI) number, date of birth and current address. Online registration will be available from the start of IER and it is hoped this will help everyone who is eligible to vote to have control over their own registration. Another key difference is that registration will now become an annual process, meaning voters will have to re-register prior to each election.

Low levels of voter registration and civic engagement have been significant issues in Brent for a number of years and, consequently, a number of issues raised in this document would be of relevance in spite of the introduction of IER. At this point, it is unclear how many eligible voters there are in Brent who, for a number of reasons, may not be registered to vote and the transition to IER underscores this more important, ongoing issue which needs addressing.

The Electoral Commission has mandated that local authorities - and their Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) - set a timetable for local strategies to be developed in order to transition to the new system. Prior to the first, revised, register being published on 1 December 2014 a data matching exercise, known as the confirmation 'dry run', was undertaken to confirm existing local electoral registers with addresses taken from a database at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). This was done to accurately match individuals to their addresses.

A Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating system was assigned to each individual on local registers to illustrate the extent to which they matched. Red indicated no-one at the property was successfully matched; Amber indicated discrepancies at the property (e.g. someone who goes by a shortened or nickname); Green indicated a full match.

As well as the confirmation dry run, the Electoral Commission also requested that local authorities cross-reference DWP data with local records, such as Council Tax databases.

Brent was one of the local authorities which the Electoral Commission reported as having not done this. However, having consulted with Electoral Services, this was not undertaken due to IT problems and the Commission was subsequently informed.

All electors who have been successfully matched in this process will be automatically transferred to the new role and have been written to with confirmation of their status. For households that have been matched Red or Amber, the council has sent out a household inquiry form; this is, in effect, the equivalent of the traditional canvass form. Following the return of the household inquiry form, an invitation to register must be sent out to each eligible person requesting their date-of-birth and national insurance numbers.

Two reminders will be sent and followed up by household visits if necessary. It remains a civil offence not to return the forms and Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) may impose a civil penalty of £80 for not doing so. The first revised electoral register will then be published on 01 December 2014, after which there will be a follow-up canvass of those who initially failed to register.

Following this, an order will be laid before Parliament in August 2015 to fully conclude the transition to IER when the full register is expected to be published on 01 December 2015. However, if no order is laid by Parliament, the transition period could extend to 2016. At this point those who have not provided the correct documentation will be removed from the electoral roll.

The risk of under-representation due to the transition to IER remains considerable, particularly when there is already a high level of under-registration in the UK as a whole. As of July 2014, the Electoral Commission estimated the figure to be as high as 7.5 million voters, some 15% of people eligible to vote.

In introducing IER a year earlier than scheduled, the government acknowledged that local authorities may be put under increased pressure to deliver the changes to implement the new system. The Cabinet Office, therefore, has made it clear that any activities which create additional costs will be met by top-up funding to support the transition to IER. As is the case elsewhere, there is some concern in Brent that the new system will lead to a long-term increase in work which will not be matched by government funding. The task group has been told that such additional funds have been made available through yearly ring-fenced Cabinet Office grants to support the transition to IER. So far, these include the following:

- £11,000 in August 2013; and
- £217,641 in 2014/15.

Although funding arrangements have not yet been disclosed for 2015/16, Brent's Electoral Services team are expecting a similar level of grant funding for further work.

4.0 Key Facts and Findings

- IER came into law in June 2014, from which point electors must register individually through the new system;
- Key features of IER include:
 - The traditional method of household registration will cease and all electors will be required to make an annual separate individual application;
 - All applicants will have to supply two personal identifiers, usually their date of birth and national insurance number (see Appendix A); and

- The need for handwritten signatures has been removed, thus allowing applicants to register online using an electronic signature.
- Brent's Electoral Services produced a Public Engagement Strategy in the Spring of 2014 (see Appendix B) and the communications team are in the process of developing a strategy which will be informed by the new register to be published in December 2014;
- Electoral services currently employ 3.5 full-time members of staff² and two temporary fixed-term staff. This number, however, is increased at key moments in the electoral cycle from within Democratic Services. Based on benchmarking done by the department across 15 London boroughs, the Electoral Services capacity in Brent is considerably smaller when compared with the other boroughs. Brent currently has a ratio of 00.32 members of Electoral Services staff relative to the size of the electorate, compared with an average of 00.69 across the other boroughs surveyed;
- The electoral services team has a budget of £217,000 in 2014/14 from a Cabinet Office grant allocated for the transition to IER. Similar levels of funding are expected for 2015-16;
- There is a lack of clarity around e-registration and the potential for registration fraud and identity theft;
- Nationally, the matching exercise revealed 79% Green matches, 3% Amber and 18% Red.
- Overall 67.6% of electors in Brent were successfully matched, just under the London average of 68%;
- Brent is an incredibly diverse borough and no two wards are the same. Something which further highlights the need for a bespoke approach to engaging with key community groups and areas;
- There is a need for greater engagement with vulnerable residents and their representative groups (VCS organisations);
- Similarly, there is a need to increase engagement on civic participation in the borough, particularly amongst Brent's young people and minority ethnic groups;
- Large numbers of Brent's residents speak English only as a second language;
- The Electoral Commission's (statutory) registration form is not as clear as it could be and important information is missing;
- There are a number of internal and external partners within the housing sector and higher education that are ideally placed to feed into the strategy and to help with voter registration;
- Thirty-two per cent of Brent's residents are now living in the PRS which is characterised by short-term tenancies and, therefore, are at an increased risk of not registering;
- There are a number of negative consequences of being removed from the electoral register besides not being able to vote, of which residents need to be aware; and
- The committee is pleased to hear that Electoral Services are looking to recruit an additional staff member to assist in implementing IER.

5.0 Emerging themes from evidence taken by the task group

Given the scope of the reforms to electoral registration and likely impact of not preparing well for the transition to IER, the task group felt that it was important to take evidence from as wide a range of council officers, voluntary and community groups and other local and national stakeholders. This section draws on these discussions and highlights

² Here 3.5 members of staff means three full-time and one part-time.

recommendations in line with the evidence and best practice as it was heard by task group members.

Throughout the course of the task group's work three recurrent themes emerged from which the task group's recommendations have been drawn, including:

1. The need for a comprehensive IER roll-out programme and communications strategy which is characterised by intelligence-led targeting of areas and at-risk community groups. The strategy should use clear and effective messaging;
2. The need for more effective work with partners including the voluntary and community sector, housing and other statutory and non-statutory partners; and
3. The need for enhanced civic engagement with the community (e.g. improved civic education and greater outreach by elected members).

6.0 Development of a comprehensive IER roll-out programme and communications strategy

The development of a comprehensive IER roll-out programme and communications strategy must take into account the fact that data collected and used through the dry-run matching exercise provides only a snap-shot in time picture of low matching households.

Having consulted with colleagues in the Research and Intelligence team, the engagement strategy has identified the highest (and lowest) matching wards as well as those best and worst performing polling districts. This breakdown will guide efforts to target those areas where matches are lowest.

Allied to this place-based approach of targeting particular polling districts, an effective communications strategy must be at the heart of the IER roll-out programme. It must convey the appropriate messages about IER to the groups identified as most at-risk and be tailored to the demographics of the borough. Crucially, this will be dependant on producing clear and effective communications products and utilising the most appropriate mediums to reach these demographics.

6.1 Place-based targeting

Representatives of Electoral Services and Research and Intelligence teams told the task group that they have conducted a full breakdown of the results and highlighting the lowest and highest matching wards and polling districts. This is important because it will enable Electoral Services and Communications colleagues to target specific polling districts and wards with the highest overall number of Amber and Red matches.

Based on a weighted average³ the highest matching wards in Brent were Kenton (79%); Queensbury (76%); Welsh Harp and Dollis Hill (74%) and Fryent and Stonebridge (73%). With the exception of Stonebridge, these wards share similar characteristics that typically characterise high voter registration, such as higher relative affluence, owner-occupancy and low levels of transiency.

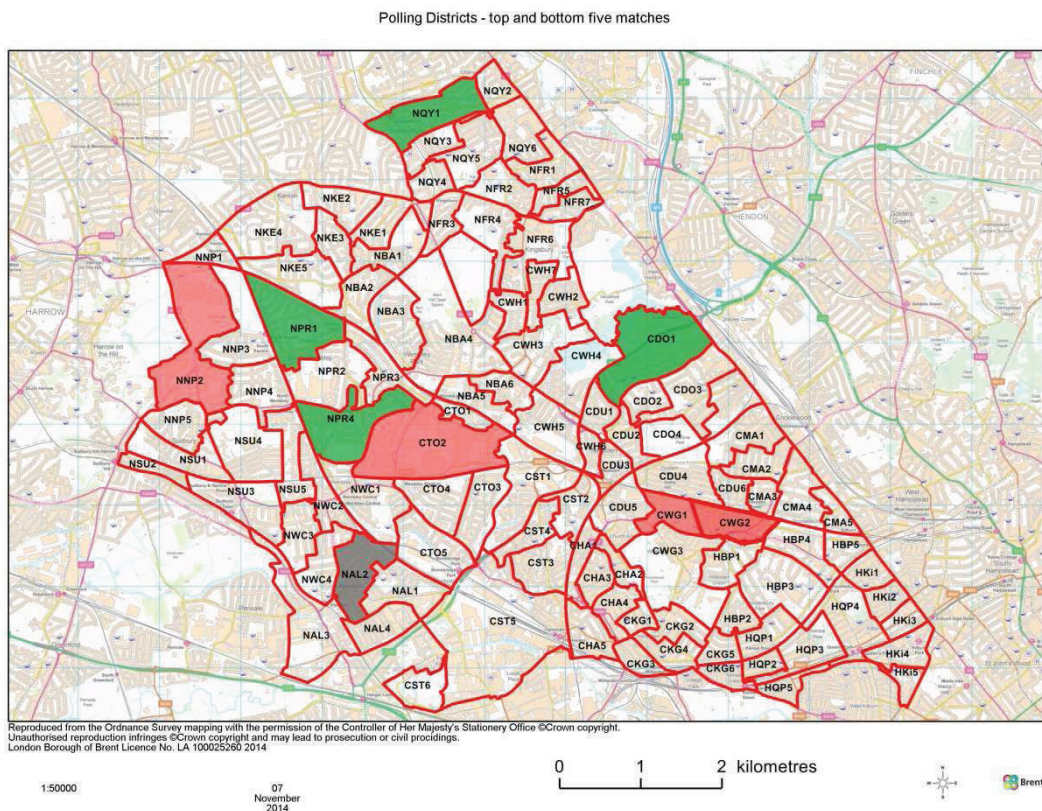
³ It is important to note that some of the lowest matching wards may be attributed, in part, to the fact that there are fewer people within these particular polling districts, making like-for-like comparisons difficult.

The lowest matching wards (Amber and Red) in Brent are: Willesden Green and Mapesbury (56%); Kilburn (58%); and Kensal Green and Brondesbury Park (61%). These wards tend to contain more mixed demographic trends.

Interestingly, both the highest and lowest matching polling districts are not necessarily located within either the highest or lowest matching wards as a whole. A breakdown of postal voters who have not been successfully matched is also included as Appendix C.

Figure one, below, illustrates the top five highest and lowest matched polling districts in the borough.

Figure 1: Top five highest and lowest matching polling districts



The highest matching polling districts in Brent are:

- NAL2 - Alperton (3037);
- NPR1 - Preston (2771)
- CDO1 – Dollis Hill (2695);
- NPR4 - Preston (2612); and
- NWC1 – Wembley Central (2574).

The lowest matching polling districts (Amber and Red) in Brent are:

- CTO2 - Tokyngton (1675);
- CWG2 – Willesden Green (1528);
- CWG1 – Willesden Green (1326);

- NNP2 – Northwick Park (1262); and
- NAL2 – Alperton (1165).

Interestingly, one polling district (NAL2) located in Alperton which is highlighted above in grey has the highest number of Green matches (highlighted in green) and the fifth highest number of Amber and Red (highlighted in red) matches. This is due to this polling district having the largest population of any polling district in Brent.

The task group recommends that when developing the IER roll-out programme, the lowest matched polling districts and wards are targeted.

6.2 Targeted communications

The Electoral Services' Public Engagement Strategy, which has identified some general demographic characteristics prevalent in low matching wards which may be helpful in developing a robust and inclusive communications strategy. However, the diverse and changing nature of the borough as a whole means that no assumptions may be made about the low-matching wards and polling districts as a factor leading to households from these backgrounds not being registered to vote. **The task group, therefore, recommends further work be carried out to establish key target groups so that bespoke tactics may be used to reach more eligible voters. This would include an assessment of what, if any language barriers there may be.**

6.2.1 Every contact counts - maximising council contacts with residents

Throughout the work of the task group, it became apparent that one of the simplest forms of communication with residents has largely been over-looked. Members questioned why information on the changes to voter registration were not displayed on emails and automated messaging services, such as those used by customer services when a resident places a call to council and is held a queue.

Brent's libraries and leisure centres are another great point of contact between the council and residents. These facilities not only distribute information but also accept applications from residents, particularly from those new to the area. Applications for library cards, blue badges and leisure centre memberships would be ideal contact points for registering new voters. Likewise, private leisure centres and gyms could also be contacts to engage new voters.

The task group, therefore, recommends the Electoral Services team adopt the NHS' 'every contact counts' approach to ensure contact with residents is maximised to include email footers, automated messaging, library card and blue badge applications. This approach should also be extended to council and private leisure centres and gyms.

6.2.2 Proximity, broadcast messaging and social media

Communications officers told the task group that the tactics of the strategy were yet to be decided on as officers in electoral services were still registering electors through the national campaign and the letters sent out over the summer. However, officers did say that there are a number of ways of targeting the hard-to-reach groups, mentioned above and one method that may be employed is broadcast messaging. Broadcast messaging differs from text messaging in that it does not require specific phone numbers but can be sent to all mobile

phones within a given area. The broadcast messaging service is always available, as the network is not used for other messages and only mobile phone operators can send messages. The US-based broadcast messaging service 'Nixle' which is widely used by a range of law enforcement agencies and municipal departments to inform citizens could serve as an example of best practice here. This kind of service could be used much more widely by the council if it is successful.

A further challenge encountered by the task group was how to canvass Brent's residents who reside in private, gated developments that are often difficult to access and frequently have strict security rules about who can enter. Broadcast messaging could help to reach residents in these kinds of properties. It could also help to inform people in the PRS who may still be registered at a previous address.

In giving evidence to the task group on potential tactics, the communications officers suggested that broadcast messaging in the form of texts and emails, within a given proximity of Red and Amber polling districts, could be an effective means of reaching certain groups such as young professionals and other target groups who might be otherwise missed.

Communications officers also suggested utilising social media marketing to target residents in this kind of housing as well as young people (18-24) who are often more technologically aware than our older residents.

Given the potential for the use of proximity and broadcast messaging, the task group recommends that any communications strategy consider these potentially powerful tactics as well as social media platforms to reach out to target groups.

6.2.3 Promoting the positive and negative effects of not being on the register

From the outset, the task group has been keen to learn from colleagues as to what messages may reach those who may not engage through the national campaign. As such, members were keen to emphasise that the council ought to be promoting electoral registration and the positive benefits of civic participation.

In addition to the positive benefits to civic engagement, members also wanted to establish what other, non-democratic, reasons there were for registering to vote and being included on the register. According to both the Electoral Commission and Experian⁴, the primary consequence of being removed from the register is that it can make it difficult to undergo a credit check and, in-turn, significantly impede an individual's ability to access financial services, including the following:

- Bank accounts (both current and savings);
- Mortgages;
- Mainstream consumer credit;
- Utility contracts (gas, electricity etc.);
- Mobile phone and internet contracts;
- Insurance;
- Access certain public services such as obtaining a passport;
- Apply for certain jobs, particularly in financial services; and

⁴ Experian, "Credit Report Basics"

- Rent a property (a credit check is sometimes required in the referencing stage).

Therefore, the task group recommends that the communications strategy develop messages around the benefits of civic participation and why it is important to register, as well as any negative consequences of not being listed on the register.

6.2.4 Advertising and the registration form

When discussing the communications materials sent out to residents, representatives from Electoral Services showed members of the task group the letters and registration form, as noted above.

Ann O’Neil, CEO of Brent Mencap, stated that individuals with learning difficulties may not be able to understand what the messages are and what is required of them. Specifically, the advertisement with hands (see Appendix D) contained too many, small-font words. The statutory registration form, developed by the Electoral Commission (see Appendix E) and the Household Enquiry Form (see Appendix F), could also be more straightforward. In particular, members believed that it was not immediately obvious that the form still has to be returned even if there is no-one in the household that is eligible to vote. Members of the task group also commented that the registration form could be improved in a similar way to the advertising materials.

In line with the suggestion made by representatives from Brent Mencap, the task group recommends that any advertising is made clearer and that headings are kept bold, snappy and straightforward to better communicate with residents (see appendices G and H for examples of best practice from other local authorities). It is also recommended that the covering letter sent out by Brent’s Electoral Services be made more straightforward and easy to understand.

A further issue raised by the task group was that it is not immediately clear on the registration form that identifiers such as a driving licence and passport can be used to register as well as an NI number. This has implications for Brent as there are certain groups, such as some Muslim women and older Irish men, the latter who mainly worked informally in the construction industry who never applied for an NI number.

Therefore, the task group recommends that it is made clear in the council’s covering letter that unique identifiers other than an NI number can be used to register (see appendix A for further information); details about unique identifiers should also be placed on the website. In addition to this, it is recommended that the council places a link on the website directing people to the Jobcentre Plus website where they can obtain a NI number if they do not have one.

7.0 Need for effective use of partners including the voluntary and community sector, housing and other statutory and non-statutory partners

7.1 Increased engagement through the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)

Brent’s VCS organisations are often very successful at communicating with some of the borough’s hardest-to-reach groups and frequently offer unique services to communities in Brent. For this reason, they are ideally placed to feed into the roll-out of IER, specifically by working more closely with Electoral Services during the canvassing periods. In giving

evidence to the task group, officers in Partnerships and Engagement suggested that Brent VCS organisations could play a threefold role:

- Reach those least likely to register: this element of the IER roll-out programme and communications strategy would centre on engaging particular groups of residents through targeted and group-specific outreach. It is also hoped that engagement through Brent's VCS will help to engender trust as independent bodies amongst marginalised groups in the borough. In this capacity, VCS organisations will be able to represent particular communities allowing them to interface better with the council.

Given that VCS organisations are embedded in particular communities, they are ideally placed to work with the council to focus and deliver services for the strategy in particular neighbourhoods and utilise existing networks of funded projects or places.

- Highlight barriers to trust: In this capacity, Brent's VCS organisations can feed into the strategy by advising where resident issues are not resolved and where barriers to trust between the council and Brent's residents exist. In this capacity, Brent VCS organisations are also well placed to lobby the council and central government on issues and gaps in provision. More generally they are likely to reach communities that are less likely to engage.
- Share experiences of civic participation projects: Local VCS organisations such as Brent Mencap can use their local knowledge and expertise to feed-in relevant information. Local democracy events may also provide an ideal opportunity for such experiences and expertise to be fed into the IER roll-out programme.

Brent's Partnerships and Engagement team work with CVS Brent to interface with Brent VCS organisations across the following:

- Neighbourhood and community intelligence networks;
- Alternative models of engagement and successful projects;
- Voluntary sector intelligence and networks;
- Opportunities to work with funded organisations; and
- Knowledge from funding projects and co-producing services.

It was also suggested by Tessa Awe of Brent CVS that there may be scope for co-production of the strategy with representatives from Brent's VCS organisations. The most relevant VCS organisations is included as Appendix I to this report for ease of access.

As such, the task group recommends that the council work closely with Brent's Partnerships and Engagement team and CVS Brent to take full advantage of the VCS sector, both in terms of delivering registration services and in providing information to the council about outreach work in the community.

7.2 Increased engagement through adult social care contracts, public health and disability networks

The task group took evidence from officers in Public Health, Adult Social Care (ASC) and Brent Mencap about the potential role that all three could play in feeding into the roll-out of IER through core frontline services.

7.2.1 Adult Social Care (ASC)

Representatives from Brent's Adult Social Care told the task group that nationally under-registration is particularly high amongst residents with learning difficulties, with approximately only 10% being registered to vote. Despite this 79.8% of residents in A1 social care in Brent are on the electoral register, which is higher than the general Brent population of 67.6%.

The types of care may receive can be broadly grouped into the following two categories:

1. Service users; and
2. Those outside the reach of formal services.

Service users can be informed and encouraged to register directly when they come into contact with formal council services. The second group is harder to reach; it was suggested by officers from ASC that reaching the second group would require partnership working with local VCS organisations such as Brent Mencap. **Therefore, the task group recommends that Electoral Services works with both ASC and external partners such as Brent Mencap to ensure that residents with learning difficulties are successfully registered.**

Representatives from ASC also told the task group that the IER roll-out could make use of the NHS' 'Making Every Contact Count' programme which encourages all staff to engage in conversations about healthy living on a day-to-day basis whenever they come into contact with service users. **It is, therefore, recommended by the task group that ASC staff inform residents about IER as part of the 'making every contact count.'** **To counteract such difficulties, the task group recommends that the council develops clear guidelines to inform both residential and domiciliary carers of their civic duties regarding those under their care.** This would ensure that they are aware that those in care have the same voting rights as everyone else. This should be integrated into contracts.

The guidelines and contract clauses must also inform carers that people in both residential and domiciliary care often:

- **Need someone else to help them interpret and understand any written information. This could include letters, leaflets, flyers, or surveys posted through their doors;**
- **Need support to fill in any forms, or other requests for information. This could be registering to vote, or filling in a ballot paper;**
- **Need support to access and find out about information that is of interest to them. This could be finding out what a political party thinks about a key issue, or what different candidates in an election are saying; and**
- **Need support to understand the democratic process and to engage in it. This could be contacting their political representatives about something that is important to them.**

7.2.2 Public Health

The Director of Public Health told the task group that two of the main commissioned services that would be most appropriate to engage with are the substance misuse and mental health services.

The Director of Public Health said:

“Civic engagement is promoted by Public Health for residents in recovery from substance misuse and mental health problems. Whilst this is a relatively small proportion of Brent’s residents, service users could be registered when they come into contact with health services, both as part of the IER roll-out and their recovery process.”

Brent’s Director of Public Health also told the task group that for those in formal services, registering to vote may not be a priority for patients during an acute illness or the early stages of recovery. However, the informal service pathway provides an opportune time to integrate civic participation into an individual recovery programme.

The task group recommends that the council’s Public Health function should encourage sign-up to IER through its commissioned services.

A further issue raised was that there may be a correlation between not being on the electoral register and not being registered with a GP. Working with NHS England would enable the council to establish accurate figures about the number of residents who are registered with GPs and who may or may not be on the electoral roll; the council could then encourage GPs to sign up residents to IER when they register with a new practice.

Therefore, the task group recommends that the Electoral Services team work with GP practices, dentists, opticians and pharmacies to encourage voter registration.

7.2.3 Disabilities

Residents with disabilities are also identified as being at risk of failing to register. Ann O’Neil, the Chief Executive of Brent Mencap, told the task group:

“Thirty-three per cent of people with a learning disability in the borough are not registered to vote. Two to three percent of Brent’s population of 312,000 people have learning difficulties – this is a substantial number of people not on the electoral register.”

There are two primary reasons for this; the first is that many people with learning disabilities incorrectly believe that they don’t have the legal right to vote. The second is the way in which political parties communicate – using complex jargon can make it difficult for residents with learning difficulties to engage and understand the issues. In addition to this, one in five people in England have low literacy levels and may also find it hard to engage for similar reasons.

The task group further recommends that the council ensure that polling stations are fully accessible to disabled residents and that staff are appropriately trained.

Ann O’Neil, CEO of Brent Mencap, also made the following suggestions:

- That the council prepares an accessible short article and info sheet for inclusion in Brent newsletters which could also be distributed via social media;
- IER could be raised as an issue at Brent Connects forums in the near future;

- Newsletters could be sent by the council to tenants and residents groups, including the multi-faith forum and other partnership groups;
- Messages could be placed on council transport buses;
- All voluntary sector groups with grants or contracts could be mandated to prove they were registering clients and include it in their procurement gateway questions;
- Have members attend Annual General Meetings for VCS organisations to raise the issue of IER;
- Involve CCG partners and use their engagement events such as the next Health Partners Forum; and
- Place leaflets at health centres and GPs and ask community nursing teams to hand them out to people who are housebound.

7.3 Housing

The task group met with officers from Housing to discuss the changing nature of Brent's housing sector and what impact it might have on voter registration, as well as the potential to improve registration through landlord licensing in the Private Rented Sector (PRS).

Given the demographic trends associated with those who are at risk of not registering, the task group has identified a number of partners in the borough who may be ideally placed to feed into the IER roll-out programme. As the electoral register ties people to a specific address, any effective strategy must take into account Brent's housing context. There are a number of housing factors in the borough that present challenges for the roll-out of IER, including:

- High levels of population turnover means people are often registered at the wrong address; and
- Large numbers of people in Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) which often have short leases and short-term residents. There is also the potential for overcrowding and sub-letting and there could be properties where people are in the UK illegally or have overstayed their visa.

7.3.1 Estate agents and private landlords

A new and significant phenomenon for Brent is the vast growth of the PRS during the last decade, with 32% of residents now living in the sector. This is primarily concentrated in the south of the borough but is increasing in the north. Francis Henry, from Daniels Estates who have several branches in Brent, was asked to give evidence to the task group on the potential role that private landlords and estate agents could play in informing residents about IER. He told the task group that:

“Council tax forms are one of the first things we ask new tenants to complete if they have not yet done so. We have a checklist of things to do, but electoral registration is not on it. We could build IER into a welcome email that we send out to new tenants. I think many estate agents would be happy to do this as it would make both them and the landlord look professional. Email is the cheapest way of doing this.”

Therefore, the task group recommends examining the possibility of working with estate agents in Brent to incorporate IER registration into potential welcome packs alongside council tax forms and utility company registration forms etc.

Francis Henry also raised a few issues that might occur once this process commences:

“Overcrowding and agency fees mean that people are more likely to give false information on their tenancy agreements as fewer tenants mean fewer fees payable to estate agents.”

The impact of this is that both estate agents and the council do not have exact information on how many people are actually living in any given property. Francis Henry suggested that the way to combat this is for a single, fixed fee regardless of the number of tenants. This would provide a greater accuracy in knowing who is living in each property as the incentive to illegally sub-let or not declare additional tenants is reduced.

To provide further incentive for private landlords to do this, it may be an idea to remind them that from an immigration perspective, landlords are responsible for who occupies their property even if they are not signed up to the tenancy agreement i.e. a sub-let.

In addition to this, encouraging private landlords to register their tenants could be further incentivised by highlighting the dangers of identity theft to private landlords who do not register their tenants.

There is also the question of whether estate agents are renting or officially managing the property. Francis Henry told the task group that if an estate agent is collecting the rent then they are effectively managing the property, but this may cause confusion as to who is checking to see if tenants are on the electoral register. **Consequently, the task group recommends that, as part of the licensing procedure, clear guidelines are developed around this issue.**

7.3.2 Landlord Licensing

In order for the council to better cope with this increase in the PRS, licensing is being introduced in January 2015 which is mandatory for larger HMOs, some smaller HMOs and all PRS properties in Wembley Central, Harlesden and Willesden Green. Landlord licensing presents a number of opportunities for improving voter registration, including:

- A more complete and up-to-date record of PRS housing;
- Coverage of high-risk properties;
- Better knowledge of, and contact with landlords;
- Better informed landlords and the ability to work with them to encourage registration; and
- Encouragement of longer-term tenancies, improved conditions and greater market stability.

The task group recommends that full advantage is taken of the opportunities presented by landlord licensing and that the information gleaned from licensing is fed directly into the IER roll-out programme.

7.3.3 Brent Housing Partnership (BHP)

BHP, Brent Council's Arms Length Management Organisation, manages the 13,600 council properties in Brent; BHP has a direct role in encouraging residents to live independently whilst providing a range of services such as repairs, collecting rent and managing disputes between neighbours. Therefore, they are ideally placed to inform their residents about the

changes to IER. Officers from BHP gave evidence to the task group and suggested the following possibilities:

- Include IER registration forms in the welcome pack sent out to all new BHP tenants welcoming them to their property. To do this BHP require a number of registration forms from Electoral Services;
- BHP publish a quarterly magazine in which they could place an advert informing their residents about the changes to voter registration;
- BHP run resident talkback sessions as well as other consultation forums where they could raise the issue;
- BHP hold resident communication group meetings where they help clients to engage civically – this could also be an ideal forum for raising the issue; and
- A recent restructuring of the customer response team has opened up the opportunity to engage residents over the phone which we could potentially examine.

The task group recommends that the above suggestions are adopted. At the same time it is recommended that clear guidelines for canvassing BHP properties are developed, the names and numbers of tenancy officers obtained and confirmation letters provided to canvassers by BHP. BHP has said that they are happy to allow canvassing in their properties provided security guidelines are adhered to.

7.3.4 Right to Rent

Under Right to Rent, private landlords will have to check the right of prospective tenants to be in the country; failure to do this could lead to landlords being fined up to £3,000. By legally requiring that landlords obtain evidence of identity and citizenship prior to letting to new tenants, the council should be able to build up a clearer picture of two of the groups most at risk of not signing up to IER and where they are concentrated, these are:

- New migrants; and
- People in the PRS.

A clearer picture of these two groups could subsequently inform a more accurate and targeted IER roll-out programme. **Therefore the task group recommends that the council monitor the developments around right to rent for any impact it might have on information gathering and communication with residents.**

7.4 Universities and Colleges

Given that young people and people in short-term accommodation are two of the groups identified as being at risk of not registering, it has been suggested that a high number of students will be too.

The University of Westminster has two halls of residence in Brent; Victoria Hall and Student Court which are managed by an external provider. At present neither the University nor the external provider are taking any steps to register students in either of the halls. Electoral Services, however, have attended fresher's week at local higher education institutions to register students.

Manchester City Council (MCC) has worked with both the University of Manchester (UoM) and Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) in order to make sign-up to IER part of their enrolment process.

This system works well, as many of the same questions required for university enrolment are similar to the questions required for sign-up to IER. Whilst this has been fully integrated into the enrolment process, it is not compulsory and, as such, students can opt out if they wish.

A major caveat is that IER as part of university enrolment is far easier to do if the university has an internal enrolment system. If the university has an external enrolment system this cannot be done without the possibility of incurring significant costs. For this reason, MCC has had far more success in working with MMU than UoM as the former has an internal enrolment process but the latter an external one.

MCC has covered the costs incurred by universities, as it was established that it would be more cost effective to do this than alternative methods of student enrolment to IER. MCC is also engaged in a large communications campaign throughout Manchester universities utilising leaflets and other forms of communications to inform people about the transition to IER.

Therefore, the task group recommends that the council scopes the capacity to work with The University of Westminster and other institutions with high numbers of students such as the College of North-West London to potentially develop a student model of IER registration that could be integrated into enrolment processes similar to the Manchester model.

7.5 Other public services

A wider question raised by the task group was the role that public bodies can play in registering people with whom they come into contact.

In the United States the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) 1993 serves as the framework for individual US states' registration laws. The aim of the Act is to increase registration and turnout in US elections. The NVRA does this by mandating that other public bodies register people who are unregistered whenever they come into contact with them.

The most common public body to provide registration services under the NVRA in the US is the state-level motor vehicle registration and licensing agencies – as such, NVRA came to be known as the 'motor-voter law' and some 37.1% of registrations in the US now come from this.⁵

Labour have said they will implement a similar system if they win power at the next general election.⁶ Chris Ruane MP, who sits on the cross-party Political and Constitutional Reform Committee, told the task group that:

“This could serve the dual purpose of not only registering people, but also building a better demographic profile of those not registered with the potential for developing a single cross-service database.”

The task group recommends that Brent Council and the GLA effectively lobby Parliament to introduce legislation similar to the NVRA.

⁵ The Electoral Reform Society (09/12/13) “Electoral Registration – Order and Regulations briefing”, House of Lords Grand Committee

⁶ Mason, Rowena (20/02/14) “Labour is considering allowing voters to register on election day”, *The Guardian*

8.0 Enhanced civic engagement with the community

8.1 Young people

Young people (16-24) are one of the groups identified as being at risk. Brent Youth Services are currently working with an organisation called 'Bite the Ballot' that is aiming to boost registration. Bite the Ballot is a non-partisan organisation that seeks to boost the civic engagement of young people. Electoral Services could potentially work with Bite the Ballot to engage with young people in the borough.

The Bite the Ballot Community Engagement Officer (CEO) programme was created in 2013 with the purpose of placing young and inspirational individuals in local authorities to engage, inform and register all young people in the area so that they can fully participate in civic life. Candidates will have to be embedded in their communities to take account of differing local characteristics. The CEO will undertake the following key activities:

- Visit schools, youth groups and student unions in the area to deliver sessions and encourage registration;
- Develop relationships with local educational establishments and community groups;
- Engage young people on a peer-to-peer basis; and
- Assist the council with their youth outreach work.

An officer from Brent Youth Services told the task group that working with Bite the Ballot, Brent Youth Services are planning to:

“Undertake decision/policy-making exercises with young people aimed at illustrating the trade-offs that are inherent in policymaking. We will also try to make it clear to Brent’s young people that when they don’t vote they do not have a voice – we will illustrate this by pointing out that the cuts to public spending have fallen disproportionately on young people precisely, because young people vote less.”

The task group was also informed that young people involved in the Brent Youth Parliament could potentially engage in focus groups to inform the communications strategy. **The task group recommends that the council work closely with Bite the Ballot to register young people and that young people be actively involved in the development of communications materials aimed specifically at young people.**

8.2 Hope not Hate

Members of the task group met with representatives from the anti-racism advocacy group 'Hope not Hate' (HnH) to discuss voter registration which is part of HnH's national strategy particularly amongst disenfranchised groups. Elisabeth Pop from HnH described how working with external partners such as trade unions and faith groups had led to a number of successes in the north of England and could, therefore, be replicated in London.

In addition to this, Elisabeth Pop told the task group how HnH had worked closely with universities on the University of Manchester campus where they recently signed-up over 150 university students on a typical day of canvassing. She also described how HnH are planning to canvass with Westminster University (which has a hall of residence in Brent) in November.

Manpreet Chhokar from HnH, who has been involved in community engagement in Brent, told the task group:

“One of the problems I constantly encounter in Brent is disengagement on the frontline and this is a problem as it is people on the frontline who have the power. We need to kick-start a campaign focussing on civic engagement – informing and reminding people of the value of civic engagement.”

When asked by a member of the task group what three things she would like to see in Brent, Manpreet Chhokar suggested the following:

- Aspirations to be met through positive change in the community;
- More VCS organisations heading into communities to engage with them; and
- More community engagement by council members.


The task group recommends that Brent Council and elected members work closely with HnH to better engage with local VCS organisations and that elected members support Electoral Services to do this. As HnH are planning to canvass in the borough, it is also recommended that the council scope out suitable canvassing locations such as Kilburn market or the London Designer Outlet shopping centre in Wembley.

8.3 European Union, Commonwealth subjects and new citizens

European Union (EU), Commonwealth and other new citizens are identified as one of the groups most at risk of not registering. **As such, the task group recommends that we encourage Commonwealth citizens to sign-up to IER by incorporating information and forms about IER into a welcome pack.** This could be done through the council’s Community Access Strategy.

The task group also recommends that sign-up to IER be integrated into citizenship ceremonies for new citizens. Voter registration could form part of citizenship ceremonies as a key aspect of such ceremonies is promising to respect the rights and freedoms of the UK.

It is also recommended that canvassers also include visits to specialty shops catering to residents from these and other diverse backgrounds. Elected members could help with this by placing posters in shops catering specifically to EU, commonwealth and new citizens and work directly with larger employers in the borough such as Ikea and Tesco to canvass large numbers of residents. Community notice boards could also be an ideal place to display flyers about IER.

 <p>Brent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cabinet 23 February 2015</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Chief Finance Officer</p>
For Action	Wards Affected: ALL
Authority to tender a contract for pre-paid Card Services	

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report concerns the procurement of pre-paid financial services for clients (principally adult care clients and carers of children) who are allocated personal care budgets, in order to allow them more independence in the management of their financial affairs. This report requests approval, as required by Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89 to invite tenders for the renewal of this contract from 1st October 2015.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That Cabinet gives approval to invite tenders for the provision of pre-paid financial services on the basis of the pre - tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.3. of the report.
- 2.2 That Cabinet gives approval to officers to evaluate the tenders referred to in paragraph 2.1 above on the basis of the evaluation criteria set out in paragraph 3.3. (vi) of the report.

3. DETAIL

Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to invite tenders for the provision of a three year contract for the provision of prepaid card services to the council from the 1st October 2015. This follows expiry of the current contract (with Pre Paid Financial Services) on 30th September 2015. The current tender was due to end on February 28th 2015, with an option to extend for up to a further two years. However given the current value of the contract it is now considered appropriate to go out to the market to see if better value can be achieved. Therefore the contract has been extended for seven months

to 30th September 2015, to allow time for an effective tendering exercise to be carried out.

- 3.2. The contract involves the provision of pre-paid cards for use by clients to enable them to manage their affairs more effectively and to give them more independence. Each client is given a card with an amount loaded on to it, which the client can then use to purchase services agreed as part of their care plan. The amount on the card cannot be exceeded, and use of the cards is monitored. Records of transactions are automatically maintained and updated by the software system, making it much easier for Council staff and clients to monitor. As well as adult care and child care clients, cards are also used for payments of Welfare Loans, corporate staff cards (for essential expenses such as emergency expenditure in relation to clients) and for purchase of season tickets (for staff taking out a season ticket loan). Use of the cards for these purposes avoids security issues and additional costs and time relating to using cash, and because transactions can be closely monitored, helps prevent fraudulent expenditure .
- 3.3. In accordance with Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89, considerations have been set out below for the approval of Cabinet.
- 3.3.1. Officers are proposing to conduct a further competition exercise under the Framework Agreement for Pre Paid Accounts and Associated Services established by Surrey County Council (“the Framework”). This Framework was tendered in 2014, and the framework contracts are currently being finalised with the successful suppliers. The scope of the Framework meets the requirements of Brent (a detailed specification for Brent will need to be drawn up). There are four approved suppliers under this Framework, including Brent’s current supplier.
- 3.3.2. The suppliers were appointed to the Framework on the basis of quality and price.
- 3.3.3. Given that the Framework covers Brent’s requirements for these services, use of the Framework will enable a faster procurement process, and will save considerable officer resources, as the suppliers have already been prequalified under the Framework. There is no charge to the Council for using the Framework.

Ref.	Requirement	Response
(i)	The nature of the service.	Provision of services relating to pre-paid cards.
(ii)	The estimated value.	£75,000 per annum
(iii)	The contract term.	An initial term of three (3) years from October 1 st 2015, with an option to extend for up to a further (1) year
(iv)	The tender procedure to be	Further mini competition exercise from the Surrey County Council Framework

Ref.	Requirement	Response	
	adopted.		
v)	The procurement timetable.	Indicative dates are:	
		Invite to tender	10 th April 2015
		Deadline for tender submissions	20th May 2015
		Panel evaluation and shortlist for interview	3rd June 2015
		Interviews and contract decision	8th June 2015
		Report recommending Contract award circulated internally for comment	15th June 2015
		Cabinet approval	July 2015
		Cabinet call in period of 5 days	July 2015
		Contract Mobilisation	4 th August 2015
		Contract start date	October 1 st 2015
(vi)	The evaluation criteria and process.	<p>At tender evaluation stage, the panel will evaluate the tenders against the following criteria: Price 40% , Quality 60%, (as per the Framework) with quality criteria to include</p> <p>Operational issues and ease of use Customer support Security issues Flexibility</p>	
(vii)	Any business risks associated with entering the contract.	The main risk in entering a new contract for this solution is business disruption during the service transition to a new supplier. This risk will be mitigated through the planning, setting up a dedicated project team, effective communication and training of all clients impacted by these changes	
(viii)	The Council's	The council has a duty to make arrangements to	

Ref.	Requirement	Response
	Best Value duties.	secure continuous improvements in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. This procurement will assist the council in fulfilling these duties.
(ix)	Consideration of Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012	Not applicable
(x)	Any staffing implications, including TUPE and pensions.	See section 7.1. below.
(xi)	The relevant financial, legal and other considerations.	See sections 4 and 5 below.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The estimated value of this service is £225,000 over a three year period, or £300,000 if the contract is extended to four years.
- 4.2 It is anticipated that the cost of this contract will be funded from the existing budget for this service. It is expected that the contract price will be no higher than for the existing contract.
- 4.3 The value for the seven month extension period is approximately £45,000.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The estimated value for the proposed pre-paid card services are higher than the EU threshold for Services and the nature of the service means that it falls within Part A of Schedule 3 of the Public Contract Regulations 2006 (as amended) ("the EU Regulations"). The tendering of the service is therefore governed in full by the EU Regulations. As the estimated value of the proposed service contract, over a four (4) year period is likely to be in excess of £250k, the procurement and award of the contract is subject to the Council's own Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- 5.2 However, Officers have identified a newly established Framework Agreement set up by another local authority offering similar services to which the Council intends to procure. Ordinarily, prior approval is not required of Members where Officers intend to undertake a competitive mini competition exercise from an EU compliant Framework; subsequent award of a call-off contract, however, if a High Value Contract would require prior Cabinet approval. In any event Officers will need to ensure that they forward all relevant documentation

relating to the Framework, to the Council's Legal Services department prior to undertaking any mini competition, so as to ensure that the council is entitled to call-off services and does so in accordance with the rules governing further competition under the Framework, in addition to give assurance that the Framework was set up in accordance with EU Regulations.

5.3 Although, the proposed service is subject to the full application of the EU Regulations, provided the Framework was procured in accordance with those regulations and a 10 day mandatory standstill period was observed prior to appointment of the suppliers, Officers need not observe a standstill period for any subsequent call-offs under the Framework, should Members be minded to approve the pre-tender considerations within the body of this report.

5.4 Subject to the recommendations of this report, once the tendering process is undertaken, Officers will report back to Cabinet in accordance with Contract Standing Orders, explaining the process undertaken in tendering the contract and recommending award.

6. DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no diversity implications arising from it.

7. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

7.1. None arising directly from this report.

8. Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

8.1 Since 31st January 2013, the council, in common with all public authorities subject to the EU Regulations, has been under duty pursuant to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 to consider how the services being procured might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area; how, in conducting the procurement process, the council might act with a view to securing that improvement and whether the council should undertake consultation. This duty applies to the procurement of the proposed contract as Services over the threshold for application of the EU Regulations are subject to the requirements of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

8.2 Given the nature of the services being delivered under the contract and the limited market for the delivery of these services, Officers have concluded that it is not appropriate to undertake any consultation and that the only measures appropriate to meeting the requirements of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 are to operate the Council's usual procurement processes.

9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

None applicable

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