



## Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee

**Thursday 7 February 2019 at 7.30 pm**

Conference Hall - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,  
Wembley, HA9 0FJ

### Membership:

#### Members

Councillors:

Kelcher (Chair)  
Kansagra (Vice-Chair)  
S Butt  
Gbajumo  
Gill  
Kabir  
Mashari  
Nerva

#### Substitute Members

Councillors:

Aden, Ethapemi, Hassan, Johnson, Kennelly, Long and  
Stephens

Councillors:

Colwill and Maurice

**For further information contact:** Bryony Gibbs, Governance Officer  
020 8937 1355; [bryony.gibbs@brent.gov.uk](mailto:bryony.gibbs@brent.gov.uk)

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**[www.brent.gov.uk/committees](http://www.brent.gov.uk/committees)**

**The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting**

### **Notes for Members - Declarations of Interest:**

If a Member is aware they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest\* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent and must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If a Member is aware they have a Personal Interest\*\* in an item of business, they must declare its existence and nature at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent.

If the Personal Interest is also significant enough to affect your judgement of a public interest and either it affects a financial position or relates to a regulatory matter then after disclosing the interest to the meeting the Member must leave the room without participating in discussion of the item, except that they may first make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to the matter, provided that the public are allowed to attend the meeting for those purposes.

### **\*Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:**

- (a) **Employment, etc.** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit gain.
- (b) **Sponsorship** - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of election; including from a trade union.
- (c) **Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between the Councillors or their partner (or a body in which one has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) **Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) **Licences** - Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) **Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which the Councillor or their partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) **Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

### **\*\*Personal Interests:**

The business relates to or affects:

- (a) Anybody of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management, and:

- To which you are appointed by the council;
- which exercises functions of a public nature;
- which is directed is to charitable purposes;
- whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy (including a political party or trade union).

- (b) The interests of a person from whom you have received gifts or hospitality of at least £50 as a member in the municipal year;

or

A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial position of:

- You yourself;
- a member of your family or your friend or any person with whom you have a close association or any person or body who is the subject of a registrable personal interest.

# Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Item	Page
<b>1 Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members</b>	
<b>2 Declarations of interests</b>  Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, the nature and existence of any relevant disclosable pecuniary, personal or prejudicial interests in the items on this agenda and to specify the item(s) to which they relate.	
<b>3 Deputations (if any)</b>  To hear any deputations received from members of the public in accordance with Standing Order 67.	
<b>4 Minutes of the previous meeting</b>  To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record.	<u>To Follow</u>
<b>5 Matters arising (if any)</b>  To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.	
<b>6 Chair's Report</b>  This report includes notes from the chair of the committee on the agenda for the February meeting, including reasons for the selection of topics, as well as work of the committee outside of public meetings.	1 - 4
<b>7 Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging</b>  This report informs the committee how the Council is implementing an electric vehicle charging network within the borough and also the management of larger vehicles parked on street in Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs).	5 - 22

## **8 Complaints Annual Report 2017 - 2018**

23 - 68

This annual report sets out complaints performance in Brent for the period April 2017 to March 2018 and focuses on the nature of complaints and the learning and improvements from complaints and Ombudsmen cases.

## **9 Food banks task group update**

69 - 82

This report provides an update of progress against the recommendations made by Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee Task Group, as set out in their report 'The Use of Food Banks in Brent' in Nov 2017.

## **10 Budget proposals**

To  
Follow

The Budget Scrutiny Panel reviewed the Cabinet's draft Budget proposals published in October 2018 and produced a report setting out its recommendations. The Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the Panel's recommendations at its meeting on 15 January 2019. The Committee will now consider the final Budget proposals, which are then due to be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 11 February 2019.

## **11 Any other urgent business**


Notice of items to be raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Head of Executive and Member Services or his representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 60.

**Date of the next meeting: Thursday 14 March 2019**



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.

	<b>Resources &amp; Public Realm Scrutiny Committee</b> 7 February 2019
	<b>Report from the Director of Performance, Policy &amp; Partnerships</b>
<b>Chair's Report</b>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	1 – Chair's report
<b>Background Papers:</b>	0
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Peter Gadsdon, Director of Performance, Policy & Partnerships, <a href="mailto:peter.gadsdon@brent.gov.uk">peter.gadsdon@brent.gov.uk</a>

## 1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The attached paper includes notes from the chair of the committee on the agenda for the February meeting, including reasons for the selection of topics, as well as work of the committee outside of public meetings.

## 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The committee is asked to note the observations made by the chair in his report at Appendix 1.

## 3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The group will consider a report on parking and electric car charging; the annual report on complaints and an update from the Food Banks Task Group. The final item on the agenda is the final budget report, which may take up a considerable portion of the meeting. Committee are to review the final report and make clear their views so that these can be sent back to Cabinet.

## 4.0 Legal implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications.

**5.0 Financial implications**

5.1 There are no financial implications.

**6.0 Equality implications**

6.1 There are no equality implications.

**Report sign off:**

**PETER GADSDON**

Director of Performance, Policy &  
Partnerships.

# **Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee**

## **Chair's Report – 7 February 2018**

### **By Cllr Matt Kelcher**

Good evening and welcome to our February meeting of the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee.

Our meeting this evening is taking place on a different day and time to usual and I hope this does not cause too much inconvenience to members and officers. Unfortunately, the timing was unavoidable for reasons set out at length in the Chair's Report for January.

As ever, this report seeks to update members, and the public, about the work of the committee outside of our formal public meetings, and to offer an introduction to the topics we will discuss tonight.

### **Urgent decision**

On 9 January I was contacted by Brent's Governance Department regarding an urgent decision the Chief Executive was due to take under her executive emergency powers.

The council's Access to Information rules state that proposed key decisions require 28 days' notice to be given via the forward plan. Where this is not possible, and the decision is classified as being so urgent as to prevent at least five clear days advance notice being given, the agreement of the chair of the relevant scrutiny committee (in this case Resources and Public Realm) - that the making of the decision is urgent and cannot be reasonably deferred - is required to enable the decision to be made.

This particular decision related to Brent remaining in the London business rates pooling system.

Brent agreed to be designated as a member of the pool and to participate in the 2018/19 100% business rates retention pilot. That pilot ends on 31 March and a new pilot is proposed from 1 April 2019 for the 2019-20 financial year.

The provisional local government finance settlement issued on 13 December confirmed that authorities have 28 days from this date to confirm if they wish to opt out. The government has signalled that should any of the 34 participants not continue in the pool, the 2019/20 pilot will not go ahead. This meant that Brent's had to give a response by 10 January 2019, or potential the whole city-wide pool would fold.

I therefore accepted the need for urgency in this case, and after a dialogue with officers where I asked further questions about the process of opting in or out, I was happy for the decision to proceed.

The January 2018 report of the Budget Scrutiny Panel, endorsed in full by the Resources and Public Realm committee, investigated the London-wide pooling of business rates. It was generally enthusiastic about the model, and potential benefits for Brent, and recommended that we take part.

I therefore believed that my actions here were fully consistent with the expressed view of Scrutiny in Brent.

## **Media coverage**

The local media have given some coverage to the report of the Budget Scrutiny Panel, which we reviewed at our last meeting. Reports in both the [Brent and Kilburn Times](#), and the [Ealing Times](#) focussed on the Panel's recommendation that Brent lobby for a small "tourist tax" to be levied on visitors in Wembley to help compensate local people for the extra pressure they face on event days. Such a charge is commonplace on much of the continent and in the United States, but currently not permissible in UK law. The Panel believed that Brent Council should play a leading role in lobbying for change.

Whilst it was welcome that ideas coming out of scrutiny are getting coverage, I was slightly surprised that this was the main subject of interest for journalists when the report also covered a range of recommendations about local services which could be unilaterally implemented by the council. I hope they will cover some of these further ideas in the future.

The [Harrow Times](#) also reported from our January committee meeting, and in particular on the committee's relief that library closures are "off the table" for the time being.

## **Parking and electric car charging**

The first substantive item on our February agenda is a look at what the council can do to ensure a good availability of parking places and electric car charging points in the borough. At our agenda-setting meeting at the start of the municipal year we were particularly interested in the latter point, as we felt that an increase in usage of electrical cars could help Brent to meet its clean air commitments.

At the time of writing we are also working with officers to look for other boroughs which may be examples of best practice in this regard, and to which we could conduct a reality checking visit.

## **Annual report on complaints**

Every year, this annual report is sent to the Resources and Public Realm Committee for review. At the committee meeting we will also be interested to learn more about what the team have done to learn the lessons raised from the previous year's report.


## **Food banks task group update**

A suitable period of time has now elapsed since our report into the use of food banks in Brent, and so it is appropriate to check on the progress made in implementing the recommendations in this report.

## **Budget proposals**

Overview and scrutiny, through the Budget Scrutiny Panel, has already reviewed the cabinet's draft budget proposals. However, tonight is our opportunity to review the final document. At the meeting we will need to make clear our views on the final proposals so these can be sent back to cabinet. I urge all members to come fully prepared and focus on those proposals which are most controversial, so that we can achieve this.



	<b>Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee</b> 7 February 2019
	<b>Report from the Director of Performance, Policy &amp; Partnerships</b>
<b>Parking &amp; electric car charging</b>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Non-key
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b>	Open
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	1
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Pascoe Sawyers, Head of Strategy & Partnerships, <a href="mailto:Pascoe.sawyers@brent.gov.uk">Pascoe.sawyers@brent.gov.uk</a> 020 8937 1045

## 1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. This report informs the committee how the Council is implementing an electric vehicle charging network within the borough and also the management of larger vehicles parked on street in Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs).

## 2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 The Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee note the progress with the council's plans to create and enable more electric vehicle charging points (ECVP) in the borough and on introducing a tighter restriction on the size of vehicles eligible for residents' parking permits.

## 3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The council regulates and charges for on street parking to manage demand from residents, businesses and visitors, assist the smooth flow of traffic, and reduce the number of vehicle trips, particularly at peak times. This supports the Council's aims of encouraging the uptake of sustainable travel options (including electrically powered vehicles), reducing carbon emissions and air

pollution, and reducing the number of people killed or injured on the boroughs roads.

- 3.2 Car usage makes a significant contribution to the borough's carbon emissions and air pollution. The council is seeking, through its transport and parking strategies, to encourage a greater uptake of more sustainable modes of travel for those journeys including electric vehicles.
- 3.3 In April 2017 the Council introduced a revised carbon emissions-based resident's permit scheme to encourage residents to purchase low emissions vehicles. The 2016 on street parking consultation and subsequent Cabinet report (27 June 2016) resulted in wide-ranging changes to the parking service offer and charges in CPZ's, to help address the problems associated with increasing demand for parking spaces.
- 3.4 As the number of Brent residents purchasing new electric vehicles is increasing every year, with hybrid (petrol/electric) being the most popular, the Council has to face the challenge of finding potential locations for introducing EVCP's whilst having a minimum impact on the ever increasing pressure for parking.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The report contains a number of financial implications relating to supply of equipment, installation, maintenance, electricity and annual fees.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The London Local Authorities and Transport for London Act 2013 is the enabling legislation for the Rapid Charging Infrastructure Project that is detailed in the report.

#### **6.0 Equality Implications**

- 6.1 There are no equalities implications arising directly from this report.

#### **REPORT SIGN-OFF**

**Peter Gadsdon**

Director Performance Policy & Partnerships



**Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny  
Committee**  
7 February 2019

**Report from the Strategic Director of  
Regeneration & Environment**

**Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging**

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Non-key decision
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	5
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> (Name, Title, Contact Details)	<p>Debbie Huckle Team Lead Safety and Travel Planning 020 8937 5570 Debbie.Huckle@brent.gov.uk</p> <p>Rachel Best Transportation Planning Manager 020 8937 5249 Rachel.best@brent.gov.uk</p>

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1. This report informs the committee how the Council is implementing an electric vehicle charging network within the borough and also the management of larger vehicles parked on street in Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs).
- 1.2. It provides an update on the four electric vehicle charging point (EVCP) implementation programmes: Source London, Rapid Chargers, Go Ultra Low City Scheme (GULCS) funded lamp column chargers and the Innovate UK bid.
- 1.3. The report informs how on street parking management is used to effectively manage the demand on kerb space, referencing the outcomes regarding restricting vehicle length to free up more space on the road for other uses.

## **2. Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1. That the Committee note the progress with the council's plans to create and enable more electric vehicle charging points (EVCP) in the borough and on introducing a tighter restriction on the size of vehicles eligible for residents' parking permits.

## **3. On Street Parking Regime**

### **3.1. On Street Parking Management**

- 3.1.1. The Council regulates and charges for on street parking to manage demand from residents, businesses and visitors, assist the smooth flow of traffic, and reduce the number of vehicle trips, particularly at peak times. This supports the Council's aims of encouraging the uptake of sustainable travel options (including electrically powered vehicles), reducing carbon emissions and air pollution, and reducing the number of people killed or injured on the boroughs roads.
- 3.1.2. In November 2015 the Council agreed its Parking Strategy which sets the context for on-street parking policies and charges.
- 3.1.3. Demand for parking in Brent is very high, particularly in the south of the borough where we have a number of controlled parking zones (CPZ's). Over time the Council has introduced a number of schemes to control the demand for kerb space. On-street parking in the south-eastern part of the borough, and some areas of the south-west around Wembley is managed through CPZ's. These areas are more densely developed compared to the northern part of the borough, and have better public transport links.
- 3.1.4. There are currently 40 CPZ's in the borough providing around 33,000 on-street parking places to some 56,000 households. CPZs cover around 35% of the borough with the Wembley Stadium Protective Parking Scheme (WSPPS) covering a further 35%. Approximately 30% of the borough does not have area wide parking controls.
- 3.1.5. In respect of car ownership the 2001 and 2011 censuses provide information of the pattern of residents' car ownership in the borough. Although the population of the borough grew, resident's car ownership – at just over 86,000 vehicles - remained stable between 2001 and 2011. This was due to the increased proportion of car-free households, a trend common across London as a whole.
- 3.1.6. About 50% of the borough's residents live in CPZ's. Car ownership patterns vary greatly by ward. The vast majority of households with 3+ cars live outside of CPZ's; permit records show that only around 15% of households with 3+ vehicles are residents within the borough's CPZ's.
- 3.1.7. Car usage makes a significant contribution to the borough's carbon emissions and air pollution. The council is seeking, through its transport and parking

strategies, to encourage a greater uptake of more sustainable modes of travel for those journeys including electric vehicles.

- 3.1.8. In April 2017 the Council introduced a revised carbon emissions-based resident's permit scheme to encourage residents to purchase low emissions vehicles.
- 3.1.9. The 2016 on street parking consultation and subsequent Cabinet report (27 June 2016) resulted in wide-ranging changes to the parking service offer and charges in CPZ's, to help address the problems associated with increasing demand for parking spaces.
- 3.1.10. The issue of large vehicles taking up excessive space within CPZs was one of the issues addressed during the 2016 consultation and the following two options were examined:
  - Option 1 - Restricting the size of vehicles permitted to purchase resident permits
  - Option 2 - Reducing the weight of vehicles permitted to purchase resident permits
- 3.1.11. The second option was selected for consultation with residents in 2016. This data can be easily accessed by the back office from vehicle records, whereas vehicle dimensions would require measurement by the Civil Enforcement Officer on site. Weight restrictions are therefore easier to control and enforce.
- 3.1.13. Currently the Council restricts resident permits to vehicles under 5t in weight. Informal consultation was undertaken in 2016 on whether residents would support a reduction in maximum weight to 3.5t. This proposal was supported by an overwhelming majority of respondents. Cabinet agreed to implement the weight reduction on 27 June 2016. We are now undertaking formal consultation on the associated Traffic Management Order, and it is anticipated the new weight restriction should come into force spring.

#### **4. Electric Vehicle Charging Network Development**

- 4.1. As the number of Brent residents purchasing new electric vehicles is increasing every year, with hybrid (petrol/electric) being the most popular, the Council has to face the challenge of finding potential locations for introducing EVCP's whilst having a minimum impact on the ever increasing pressure for parking.
- 4.2. The graph in Appendix A shows the number of electric vehicles registered to postcodes in Brent. From 2016 onwards the information is split into subcategories for private, fleet and business use. This information highlights there is a steady increase in privately owned electric vehicles, although there is a variation in fleet and business (this is to be expected as companies will not renew their vehicles each year). Electric fleet vehicles are not widely available and costs prevent some smaller businesses from using them due to lack of 'used' vehicles to procure from. In addition, the size of vehicle needed limits the model availability – particularly larger HGV's.

- 4.3. The 2018 figures show a decrease in the number of electric vehicles registered. This is not unique to electric vehicles as data from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) indicates that car registrations in general fell in 2018 although there was an increase in the number of people purchasing alternative fuel vehicles (including electric).
- 4.4. Currently, locations for EVCP's are identified taking into account where electric vehicles are registered in the borough, requests from residents and suggestions from Source London. The map in Appendix B indicates the locations where electric vehicles are registered in the borough by postcode sector between 2014 and 2018.
- 4.5. This map illustrates that electric vehicle registrations are relatively evenly spread across Brent although the highest numbers are in the following wards:
- Fryent/Queensbury near the Barnet border
  - Mapesbury near the Camden border
  - Stonebridge, Park Royal
  - Welsh Harp
  - Brondesbury Park
- 4.6. There is a greater demand for EVCP's in the south of the borough where there is less off street parking available and as it is not permissible to have a live electric cable running across the public highway electric vehicle owners do not have the option to charge their vehicles whilst at home.
- 4.7. Brent's Long Term Transport Strategy 2015-2035 makes a commitment to work with Ultra Low Emission (ULEV) charging network operators to enable trips to be completed by cleaner cars.
- 4.8. Brent's Air Quality Action Plan 2017-2022 was approved by Cabinet in November 2017. It gives support to the installation of on-street EVCP's throughout the borough as well as the take up of electric taxis and commercial vehicles.
- 4.9. A report was approved by Cabinet on 11 April 2016 recommending Brent enter back into the Source London scheme. Following negotiations between the Officer group and BluePointLondon Ltd (and their legal representatives, Penningtons) the contract has been signed and sealed.
- 4.10. On 15 January 2018 Cabinet agreed to Brent becoming involved in two schemes that aim to provide additional charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. The Rapid Charging Infrastructure Project and a project to deliver on-street residential charge points in lamp columns.
- 4.11. A subsequent report was submitted to Cabinet on 18 June 2018 and approval was granted to amend the procurement process that was previously agreed for a supplier of charge points in lamp columns.

## 5. Electric Vehicles Charging Point Programmes

5.1. As there is not a single overarching delivery programme for charging infrastructure the Source London, Rapid Chargers and GULCS lamp column chargers are being implemented independently under an overarching strategic umbrella by Highways and Infrastructure and Transportation Planning. This will ensure all types of electric vehicle users can access our charging network.

### 5.2. Source London

5.2.1. This is a London-wide network of EVCP's that is governed by Bluepoint London Ltd. They are located in residential streets, car parks, supermarkets, Shopping Centres and at other destination locations. The network provides an easy and convenient means of top-up charging for owners of electric vehicles.

5.2.2. Where possible the Source London EVCP's that require a dedicated bay are located at the ends of streets to minimise the inconvenience to local residents and if in a CPZ make use of shared bays.

5.2.3. The number of Source London members has increased in Brent by 22% in the last year and the number of requests from members for charging points has also increased.

5.2.4. Phase one of the programme is nearly complete and all of the charge points detailed below, except three (Douglas Avenue, Leghorn Road and Upton Gardens) are operational.

Address	Postcode	Ward	EVCP's	Passive Provision
Douglas Avenue	HA0 4DT	Alperton	1	2
Christchurch Avenue	NW6 7BH	Brondesbury Park	2	1
Donnington Road	NW10 3QR	Brondesbury Park	2	1
Leghorn Road	NW10 4PE	Kensal Green	1	2
Upton Gardens	HA3 0BT	Kenton	2	0
St Julian's Road	NW6 7UJ	Kilburn	1	2
Mora Road	NW2 6TG	Mapesbury	2	1
Walm Lane	NW2 3HD	Mapesbury	1	2
Windermere Avenue	HA9 8RB	Preston	2	1
Buller Road	NW10 3NA	Queen's Park	1	2
Kempe Road	NW10 3JL	Queen's Park	1	2
Limesdale Gardens	HA8 5JT	Queensbury	1	2
Queensbury Station Parade	HA8 5NR	Queensbury	2	1
Watford Road	HA0 3ER	Sudbury	1	2
Sylvia Gardens	HA9 6HS	Tokington	1	2
Wood Lane	NW9 8DU	Welsh Harp	2	1
Chapter Road	NW2 5NE	Willesden Green	1	2
St Pauls Avenue	NW2 5SR	Willesden Green	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>25</b>	<b>28</b>

- 5.2.5. The locations for phase one include four of the five wards that have the highest number of electric vehicle owners in the borough.
- 5.2.6. Although Stonebridge ward has the third highest number of electric vehicle registrations it has not been included in phase one as the Park Royal area is mainly industrial and we need to do further research to find the optimal solution for businesses and residents. It is proposed this is included as part of a Liveable Neighbourhood bid being submitted in November 2019. This will be a joint bid between Brent, Ealing and OPDC, with Brent as the lead authority. However there are plans to include a Source London charge point in this ward as part of phase two.
- 5.2.7. At present Officers are working with SSE Enterprise (who are managing the Source London programme and installation on behalf of Bluepoint London Ltd) to progress phase two of the programme. The sites have been reviewed by officers from Highways and Infrastructure, Transportation Planning and Parking and have been shared with Ward Councillors for their approval. The consultation papers are currently being drafted and will be circulated to key stakeholders and residents in February. The map in Appendix D indicates the proposed locations for phase two which are made up of requests from local residents and suggestions from Source London in wards without electric charging facilities.
- 5.2.8. The map in Appendix C illustrates Brent's Source London members and locations of the 25 EVCP's. This shows that most Source London members live in the south of the borough.

### **5.3. Rapid Charging Infrastructure Project**

- 5.3.1. These are much larger than traditional free standing EVCP's such as those operated by Source London and are capable of charging an electric vehicle at powers of up to 50kW to deliver an 80% charge in 30 minutes. They are mainly installed for high mileage commercial electric fleets, predominantly taxis and private hire vehicles as well as residents and visitors who need a quick 'top-up' to complete their journey. Their locations are intended to be near the strategic road network or locations where there are taxis or employment sites.
- 5.3.2. The consultation process has been completed for the following 5 locations, no objections have been received and the traffic orders are 'made' at:
- Bridge Road, Wembley
  - Christchurch Avenue, NW6
  - Ealing Road, Alperton
  - Neasden Lane, NW2
  - Station Road, NW10
- 5.3.3. Procurement for a concessionaire (to deliver, maintain and manage the service) for the rapid charging points has been tendered and evaluated. The contract has been awarded to Facility Management UK Limited.
- 5.3.4. All 5 rapid charger locations are now operational.



- 5.3.5. Brent Council will be the first London borough to procure rapid chargers using the Transport for London (TfL) framework. To date, TfL have procured the rapid chargers on behalf of London boroughs.
- 5.3.6. Working with the concessionaire, future rapid charger locations will be identified and delivered on a demand led basis at locations agreed in partnership with the Council, but at no cost to the Council.
- 5.3.7. The London Council's Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) have agreed all boroughs should have a minimum of 20 rapid chargers located in each borough. As we already have 5 rapid chargers a further 15 potential sites have to be submitted by end of January for further consideration for suitability. Should they be considered suitable consultation will be completed and procurement, using the TfL framework, of a supplier to install, maintain and deliver the rapid charging service will commence.
- 5.4. **GULCS funded lamp column chargers**
- 5.4.1. This charging facility is aimed at residents that do not have off street parking as it enables them to charge their vehicle overnight and close to home.
- 5.4.2. To date 54 requests from residents have been received for on-street charging facilities, details of these can be found in appendix E.
- 5.4.3. This map highlights the majority of requests are in the south of the borough as these wards tend to have less off street parking than in the north where electric vehicle owners would be able to charge whilst parked up at home.
- 5.4.4. Brent Council was awarded funding from London's GULCS subject to match funding and spend committed by end of December 2018. This aims to deliver a minimum of 50 lamp column chargers. Requirements of the funding stipulate installations are to be demand led.
- 5.4.5. London Councils have developed a procurement framework for all London boroughs to use. We have been working with Procurement and Legal colleagues to ensure the framework is suitable and can be used.
- 5.4.6. Funding had to be committed by end of December 2018 with work completed by end of March 2019 else the funding would be lost. A contract was awarded on 28 December 2018 to deliver the charge points.
- 5.4.7. Char.gy have been awarded the contract and an inception meeting held on 17 January. The programme will have all lamp column charge points installed and operational by 24 March.
- 5.4.8. A further bid for grant funding is being made in March from the Office of Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) On-road Charging Scheme (ORCS). As with GULCS lamp column funding the grant covers 75% of capital costs and it is intended the remaining 25% will be from Section 106 funding. Locations are currently in the process of being identified. Requirements for this grant funding are slightly less stringent than for GULCS in that it does not have to be

completely demand led but strategic planning to build on an existing network can also be considered. If Brent Council is successful this will enable the network to be expanded further north of the A406.

## 5.5. Innovate UK Bid

5.5.1. Brent Council was approached by Element Energy to be a Local Authority partner on a bid to further develop and trial a new 'flush' on street charging solution by Trojan.

5.5.2. The partners are:

- Element Energy Ltd.;
- Trojan Energy Ltd.;
- UKPN;
- Birmingham City Council; and
- Brent Council



5.5.3. The Trojan system is made up of 'flush' connector placed at the front of the footway as can be seen the photo (small lights at the kerb edge)

5.5.4. The bid was submitted on 28 August 2018 and is proposed to be delivered in two phases. Phase 1 application consists of commercial feasibility, user feasibility, urban feasibility and technical feasibility. Phase 2 is only available to successful Phase 1 applications. If successful for the Phase 2 application this would enable a trial to be designed and delivered, starting on 1 September 2019 and finishing on 28 February 2021.

5.5.5. We were informed on 5 October 2018 that our phase 1 submission was successful and a consortium agreement signed with a delivery programme agreed.

5.5.6. We are looking for resident engagement on the product itself as well as what a quality service looks like. A letter will be sent at the end of January 2019 to

those residents who have requested an EVCP for their road to ask if they would be willing to participate in a focus group as part of this project. The workshop will be held in mid-February.

- 5.5.7. Phase 1 runs until the end of March 2019. The business case will be developed for a phase 2 application. This will be submitted to determine if funding approval is granted for delivery of a trial from 1 September 2019 to 28 February 2021.

## **5.6. Promotion/Publicity**

- 5.6.1. A short sustainable travel film which includes electric vehicles and charging points has been produced and is being promoted via several social media platforms <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KF6katLlcl4>
- 5.6.2. There are plans to organise a launch event once the phase one Source London and rapid charging points are operational, this will include a photo opportunity and press release.
- 5.6.3. Following this arrangements are being made to place an article in the next Brent Magazine to promote the use of electric vehicles and to inform residents/businesses of the different types of charging points, where to find these and suggestions for additional locations.
- 5.6.4. Across west London there are many types of electric vehicle charger types. Their varying sockets, prices, technologies and locations can be a mystery for electric vehicle drivers to unravel. WestTrans partnership (sub-regional transport), represented by the six west London boroughs, have produced a brochure containing information on how EV charging works, types of charger and speed of charging, networks available, and how each borough is implementing charging infrastructure. The brochure can be viewed using the following link:  
<http://www.westtrans.org/wla/wt2.nsf/pages/WT-223>
- 5.6.5. With the increasing interest in electric vehicle charging, Transportation Planning and Highways and Infrastructure will work with our Web Team to improve the content on our website. Information about our 'electric offer' will be made available and we will investigate how requests for EVCP's can be made easier and in a 'self-serve' manner.

## **6. Financial Implications**

### **6.1. Source London**

- 6.1.1. All costs relating to the supply of equipment, installation, maintenance and electricity will be met by BluePointLondon Ltd, there will be no associated costs to the Council.
- 6.1.2. The Council will receive annual fees associated with the provision of the EVCPs which is tiered based on the London Underground tube zones:

- Zone 2 = £1,300
  - Zone 3 = £500
  - Zone 4 = £300
- 6.1.3. These fees will compensate for the loss of income from residents parking permits and pay and display machines within CPZ's.
- 6.1.4. Phase one will provide an annual income of £16,500.
- 6.2. Rapid Chargers**
- 6.2.1. Once appointed the concessionaire will become the owner of the charge point and will be responsible for the full cost of installation, operation and maintenance of the charging service. There will be no associated costs to the Council.
- 6.2.2. Under the framework Councils are expected to receive more than 6% of the revenue in addition to an annual site charge of not less than £1500. Actual income per site is not known at this stage due to lack of data regarding rapid charger usage in London.
- 6.3. GULCS funded lamp column chargers**
- 6.3.1. Brent Council has received £150,000 of funding from London's GULCS towards 75% of capital costs of procuring and installing charge points for electric vehicles in lamp columns.
- 6.3.2. Match funding of £50,000 is required. This has been secured using £16k Section 106 and £34k Neighbourhood CIL.
- 6.3.3. Under the framework Brent Council will receive 10% of the turnover generated. Actual income is not known at this time.
- 6.4. Innovate UK Bid**
- 6.4.1. For local authorities 100% of officer time can be claimed. Estimates submitted with the Phase 1 application identify Brent fees as £8,865. There are no costs to the Council in participating in this bid.

## **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1. The London Local Authorities and Transport for London Act 2013 is the enabling legislation for the Rapid Charging Infrastructure Project. Section 16 of the Act gives TfL and the boroughs the power to grant a third party licence / lease to construct and operate charge points in both on-street and off-street locations on their property. Furthermore, Section 16 of the Act permits TfL and the boroughs to request payment from the charge point operators for the permission to install and operate the charge points.

- 7.2. Rapid charge points can be installed on-street using Permitted Development rights and a licence agreement with the charge point operator. Charge points can also be installed in car parks on public or private land with Permitted Development rights so long as they are less than 1.6m tall.
- 7.3. The procurement and contractual implications of three of the four projects mentioned in paragraph 1.2 of this report have already been set out in previous Cabinet reports and for ease of reference these are appended to this report. The Innovative UK project, described more fully at paragraph 5.5, is a new initiative which due to its limited value, has not previously been the subject of a report to Cabinet. Brent Council's involvement in this project is limited to assisting with the research phases.
- 7.4. Officers are proposing to designate parking bays in locations on the highway. Accordingly, sections 45 and 46 the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (which deal with the designation of paying parking spaces on highways and charges at designated places and their regulation respectively) and the Local Authority Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1986 govern the powers to make such an order and the procedure to be followed in respect of the statutory consultation.
- 7.5. Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 states that it is the duty of a highways authority (including Brent Council) to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway.

## **8. Equality Implications**

- 8.1. The public sector duty set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its public functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share that protected characteristic. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 8.2. Proposed changes to the highway (introduction of electric vehicle charging points) will be subject to public consultation and equality screening. If the potential for adverse equality impacts is identified through screening a full equality impact assessment will be carried out and requisite mitigation action taken.
- 8.3. There are no specific diversity implications arising from this report and its recommendations at this time.

## **9. Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders**

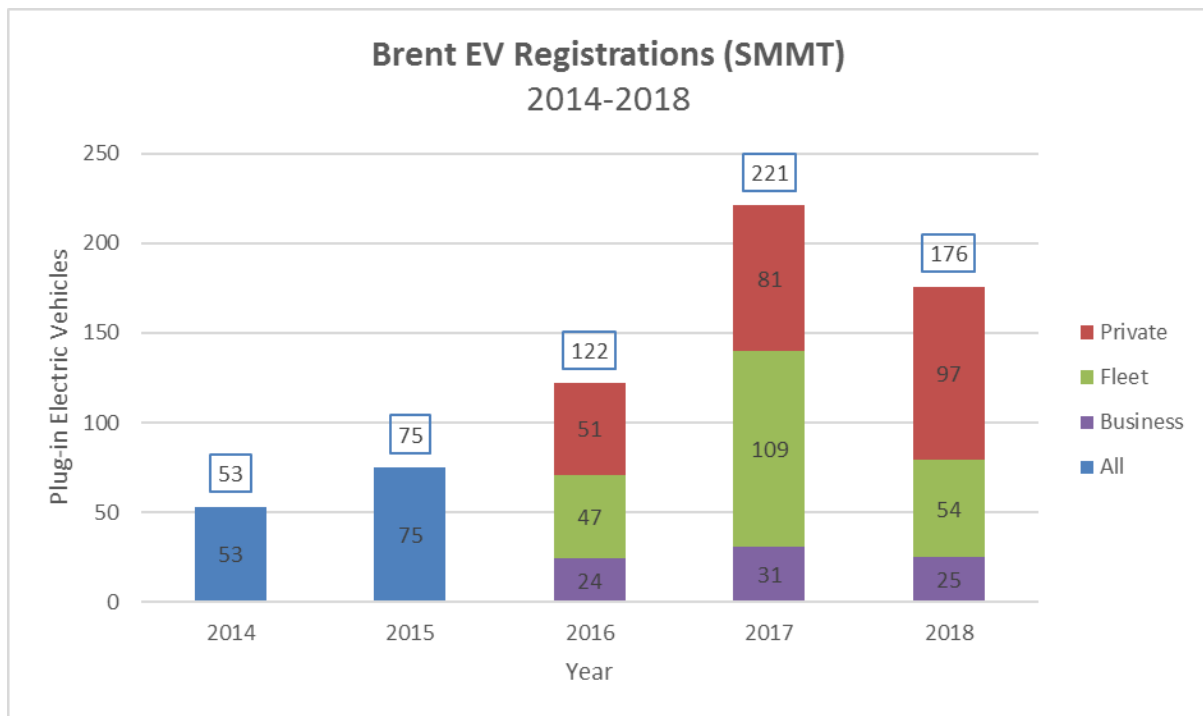
- 9.1. The on-street residential electric vehicle charge point scheme will affect many of the borough's wards and so the Lead Member for Environment has been consulted throughout the process. The Lead Member has also been consulted throughout the borough's involvement in the Rapid Charging Infrastructure Project to date.
- 9.2. The Source London and Rapid Charging Infrastructure Projects require statutory consultations for the making of Traffic Management Orders at specific locations on the highway where initial feasibility studies show the locations to be viable for the installation of rapid charge points and associated infrastructure. Designated parking bays are required and are subject to consultation with local residents and businesses. Members will also be consulted on final charge point locations before consultations are carried out and final approval is given to TfL and Source London for the commencement of preparatory works.

**Report sign off:**

**AMAR DAVE**

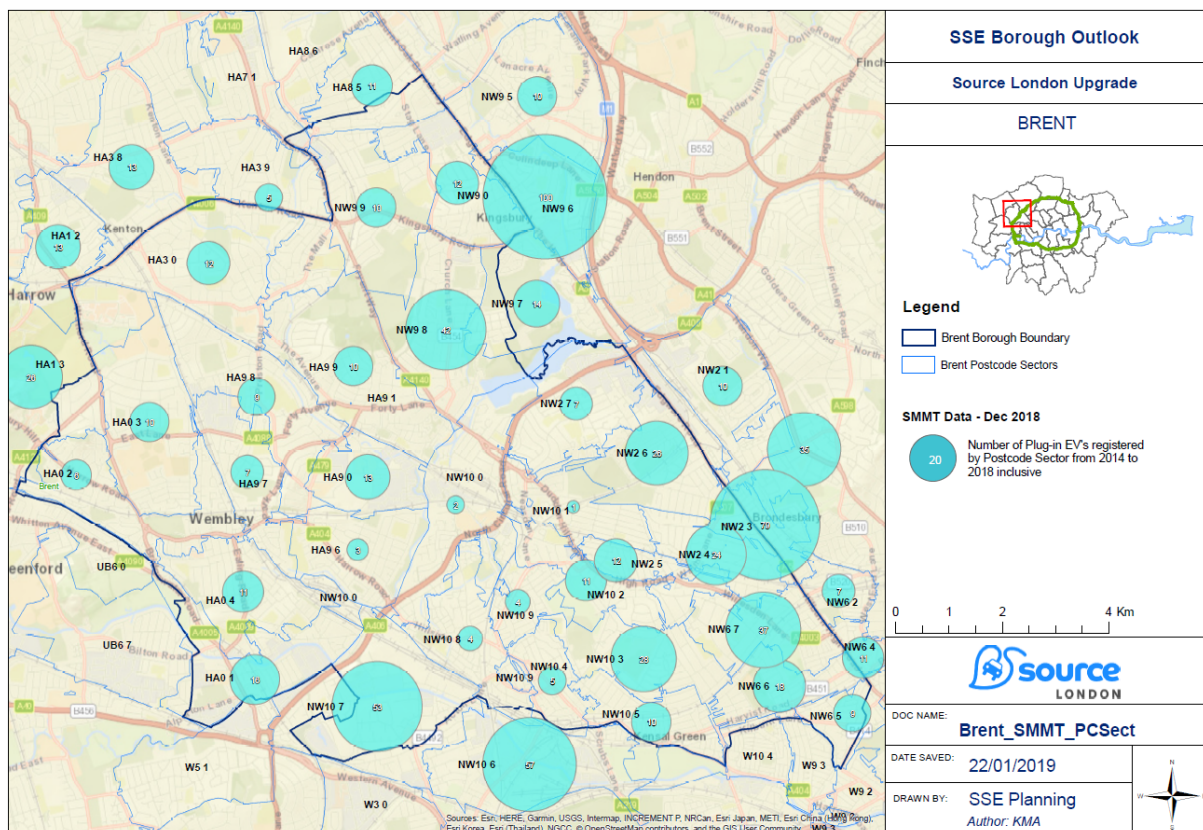
Strategic Director of Regeneration  
and Environment

## Appendix A – Electric vehicle registrations in Brent 2014 - 2018



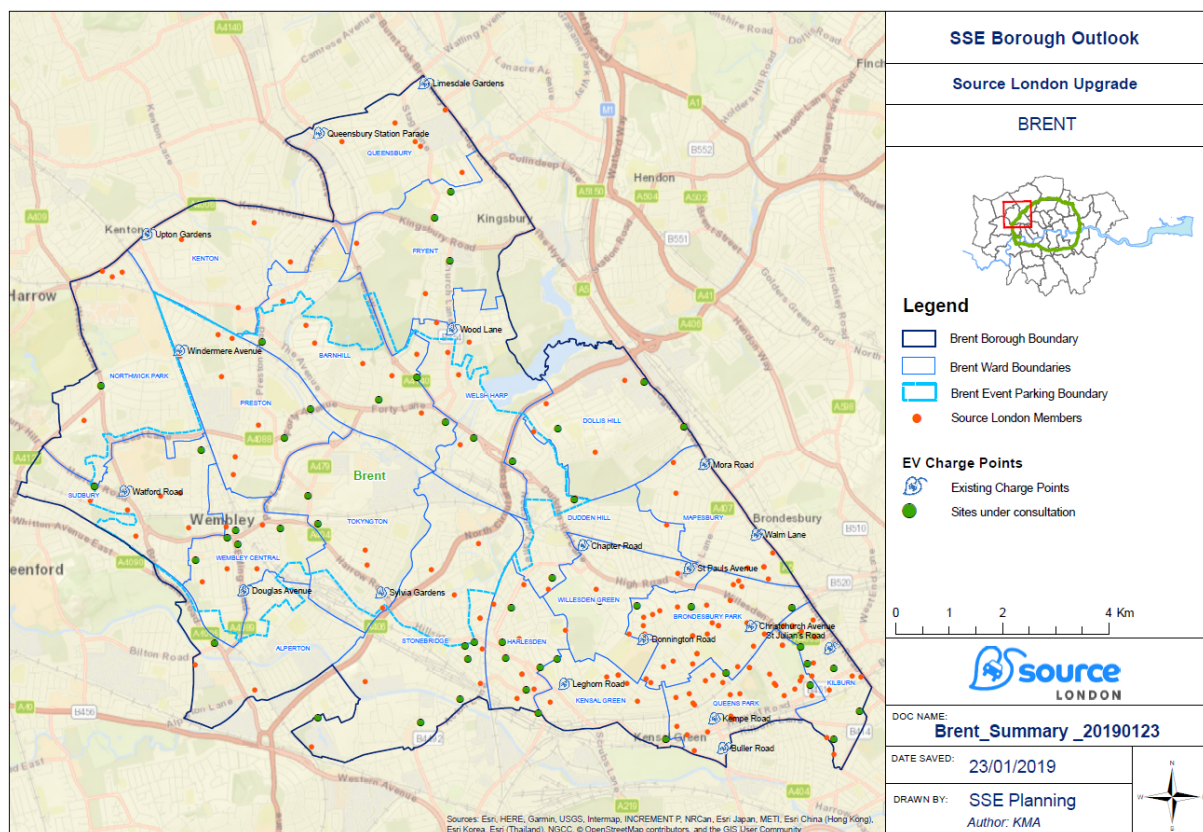
Source: Society of Motor Manufacturers & Traders (SMMT). Only the number of Plug-in EV's registered to each postcode are recorded. Data constrained to 2014 to date, prior to 2014 negligible numbers of EV's registered.

## Appendix B – Plug in electric vehicle ownership by postcode area

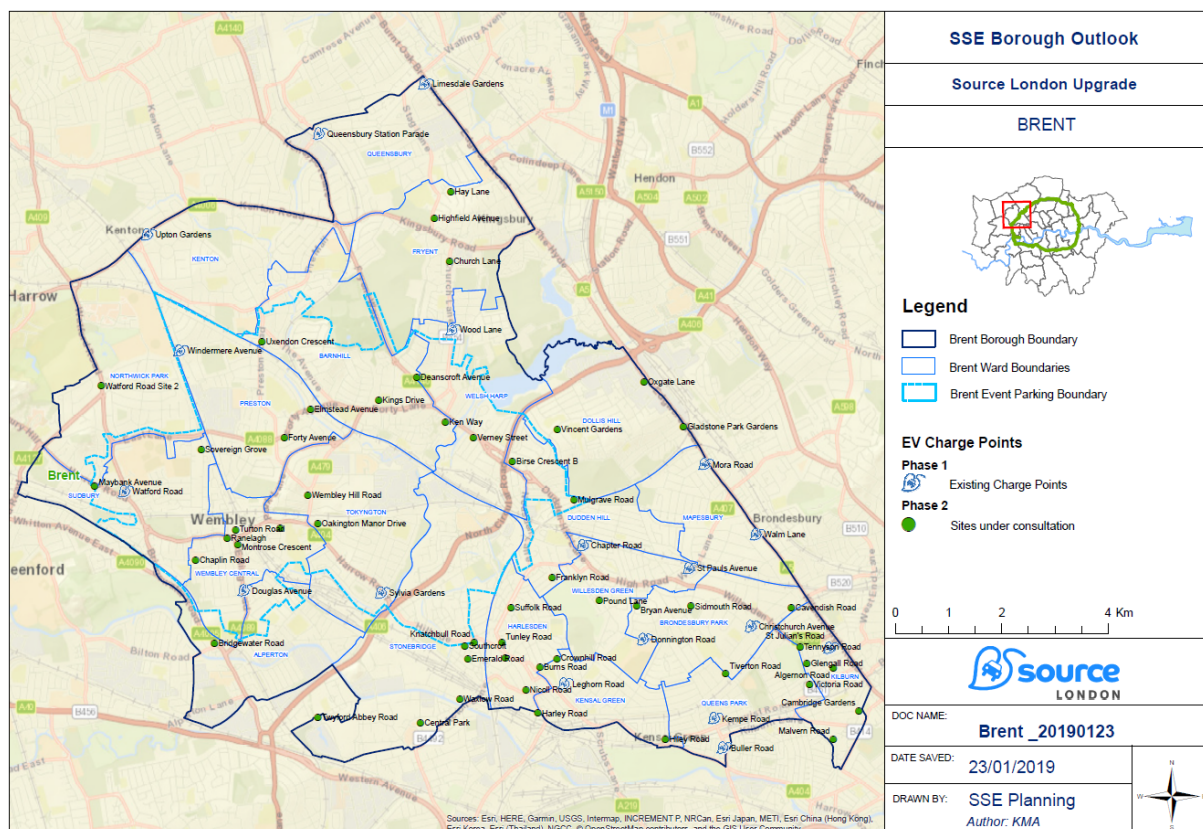




## Appendix C – Source London members and charge points

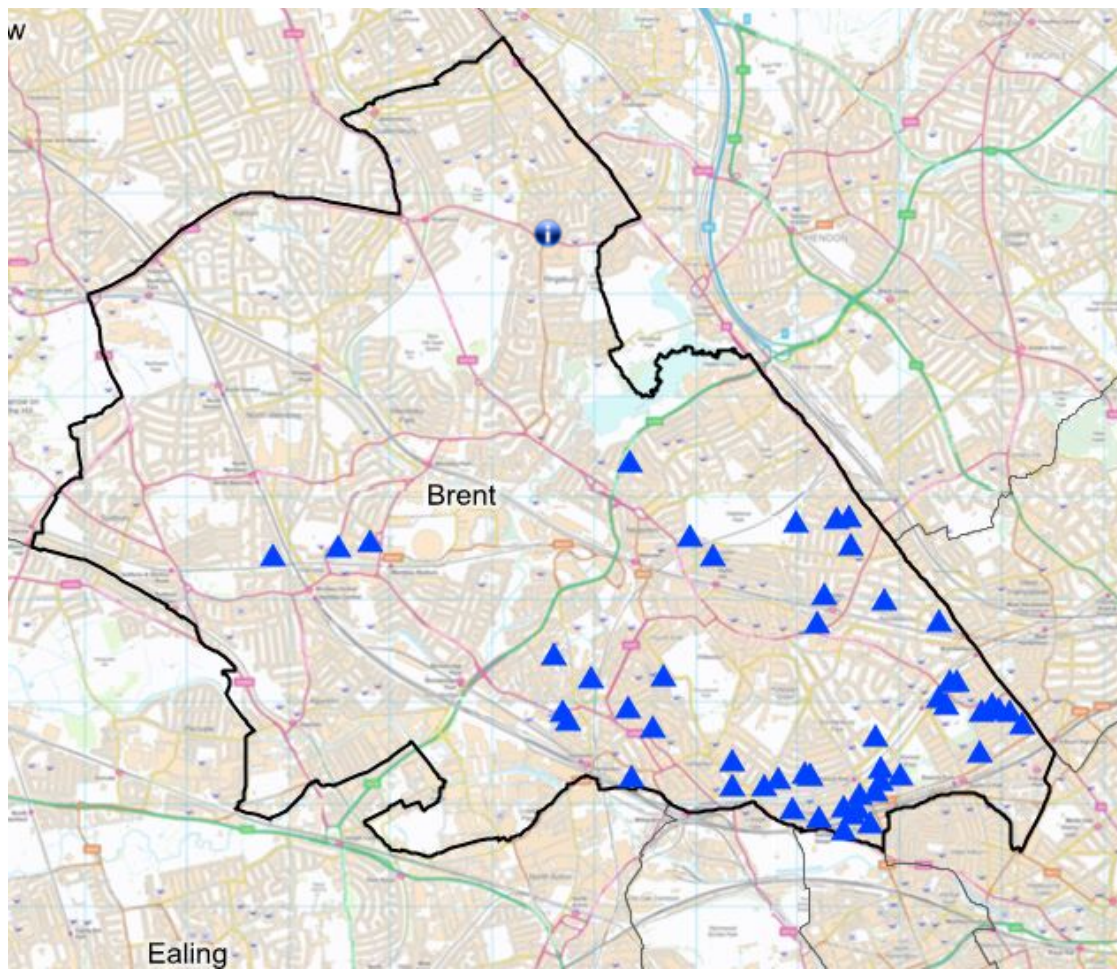


## Appendix D – Source London charge points phase one and two






Appendix E – Requests received from residents for on street charging points



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	<b>Resources &amp; Public Realm Scrutiny Committee</b> 7 February 2019
	<b>Report from the Director of Performance, Policy &amp; Partnerships</b>
<b>Complaints Annual Report 2017 – 2018</b>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Key Decision
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	Three: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appendix A – Adults Complaints Annual Report 2017/18</li> <li>▪ Appendix B – Children’s Complaints Annual Report 2017/18</li> <li>▪ Appendix C – 2017/18 Complaints Root Cause Summary &amp; Improvement Actions by Department</li> </ul>
<b>Background Papers:</b>	N/A
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Irene Bremang Head of Performance & Improvement  Peter Gadsdon Director - Performance, Policy and Partnerships Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 0FJ. 020 8937 1400

## 1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The 2017/18 Complaints Annual Report was presented to Cabinet on 10 December 2018 and variations of the report will also be presented to the Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in January 2019 and Housing Scrutiny Committee in February 2019.

- 1.2 This annual report sets out complaints performance in Brent for the period April 2017 to March 2018 and focuses on the nature of complaints and the learning and improvements from complaints and Ombudsmen cases.
- 1.3 Complaints concerning the Adult Social Care and Children and Young People departments come under separate statutory complaint procedures and separate summary reports have been provided in **Appendices A and B** respectively.
- 1.4 A summary of the root cause of complaints and improvement actions by council departments in 2017/18 is provided in **Appendix C**.
- 1.5 The key headlines from complaints performance in 2017/18 are as follows:
- All Stage 1 complaints volume (corporate & statutory – 1,614 cases) has decreased by 4% (↓)
  - All Stage 2 complaints volume (corporate & statutory – 220 cases) has decreased by 8% (↓)
  - There were 21 LGO cases upheld against Brent in 2017/18, compared with 17 cases in 2016/17 (↑)
  - The total amount of compensation paid by Brent (c£73.8k) decreased by 5% (↓)
  - The total number of cases awarded compensation (135 cases) decreased by 34% (↓)
  - The top 3 root causes of complaints in Brent were customer care (17%), repairs (8%) and parking enforcement (6%).

## **2.0 Recommendation(s)**

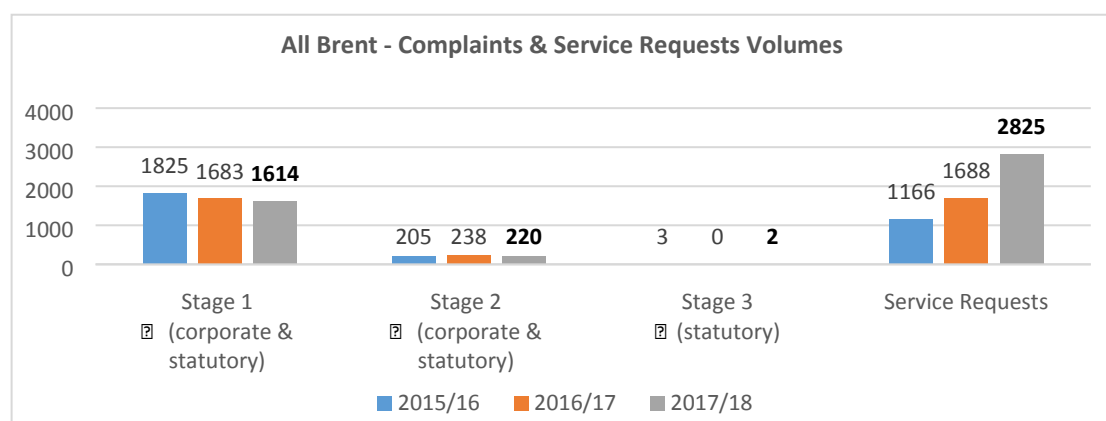
- 2.1 Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee is asked to note Cabinet has approved the Annual Complaints Report presented on 10 December 2018.
- 2.2 Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee is asked to note Brent's performance in managing and resolving complaints.
- 2.3 Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee is asked to review progress in 2017/18 with the eight agreed recommendations from previous annual report in 2016/17. This has been developed into a Complaints Service Team Action Plan and the team will continue to focus on the following areas in the year ahead:
- Ongoing monitoring of corrective actions to help ensure we keep our promises to put things right
  - Monitoring of the root cause of complaints and supporting service areas to improve complaints hotspots
  - Improving the quality of complaints handling through training, quality checks and support to service areas.

### 3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The Council operates a 2-stage corporate complaints process, 2-part Adult statutory complaints process and a 3-stage Children's statutory complaints process.
- 3.2 The complaints data and information provided in this report is based on information recorded on iCasework, the Council's complaints system, and includes housing management services (HMS). The housing management data is a composite of Brent Housing Partnership and HMS as the service was brought in house during 2017/18.

#### ***Volume of Complaints***

- 3.3 The chart below shows the volume of corporate and statutory complaints received at Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 over the past 3 years. The key points to note are that:
- Brent received **1,614 Stage 1 complaints** (corporate and statutory) in 2017/18, this was a **4% decrease** from 2016/17 and a 12% decrease from 2015/16.
  - **Stage 2 complaints** (corporate & statutory) **decreased by 8%** in 2017/18 compared with 2016/17, but increased by 7% compared with 2015/16. There were 220 Stage 2 complaints received in 2017/18.
  - **A higher proportion of cases have been escalated to Stage 2** in Brent. In 2015/16, 1 in 9 cases was escalated to Stage 2, compared with 1 in 7 cases in 2016/17 and 2017/18.



#### ***Root Cause of Complaints***

- 3.4 Departmental analysis of the root causes of complaints in 2017/18 and improvement actions is provided in Appendix C.

- 3.5 Overall, the **top 3 specific root causes of complaints** in Brent were **customer care (17%), repairs (8%) and parking enforcement (6%)**:
- Most of the customer care complaints were in housing management services but this was not a major theme in other departments across the Council. The Housing Management Service has introduced a range of measures to address staff-related complaints including tailored training and improved management oversight of staff performance.
  - Housing Management Property Services have introduced an improvement plan to improve service delivery and an access policy regarding access to fix leaks in neighbouring properties.
  - The Parking Service regularly reviews its Enforcement plan and puts in place targeted enforcement to address hotspots.

### ***Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) Decisions and Learning Points***

#### *LGO Volumes & Outcomes*

- 3.6 The LGO received 168 enquiries and complaints against Brent Council in 2017/18, this was unchanged from the previous year and was an 8% decrease from 2015/16.
- 3.7 The LGO reviewed 162 cases during 2017/18 of which 33 cases were fully investigated; 21 cases were upheld and 12 cases were not upheld against the Council. The table below shows a 3-year comparison of LGO outcomes of Brent Council cases:

Year	LGO Outcomes						
	Not upheld	Upheld	Advice given	Referred back for local resolution	Invalid or incomplete	Closed after initial enquiries	Total
<b>2015 - 2016</b>	10	<b>26</b>	11	92	7	49	195
<b>2016 - 2017</b>	8	<b>17</b>	5	84	4	43	161
<b>2017 - 2018</b>	12	<b>21</b>	5	77	6	41	<b>162</b>

- 3.8 2017/18 comparison of all 33 London boroughs showed that Brent had:
- the 7<sup>th</sup> highest number of referrals to the LGO
  - the joint 10<sup>th</sup> highest number of LGO upheld cases across London in 2017/18.
  - The 17<sup>th</sup> highest LGO upheld rate in 2017/18.

#### *LGO Upheld Cases*

- 3.9 There were 21 cases upheld against Brent in 2017/18 in the following services:
- Housing (Housing Needs) – 7
  - Housing (Private Housing Services) - 2

- Adult Care Services – 5
- Benefits & Council Tax – 3
- Concessionary Travel – 2
- Education & Children Services – 2

- 3.10 In most of these upheld cases the complainant or their family member was a vulnerable person and the LGO prescribed specific remedies according to individual needs. Additionally the LGO recommended reviews or reconsiderations of our policies, practices and communication/interactions with (vulnerable) service users.

### Learning & Improvements from LGO Upheld Cases

- 3.11 In Housing Needs, the seven upheld cases concerned the suitability of temporary accommodation and assessment of eligibility. The LGO awarded compensation totalling £10k in 5 out of the 7 upheld cases and the Council had previously awarded compensation of just over £5k across the 7 cases. The increased levels of LGO compensation reflects the impact on the families placed in temporary accommodation. As a result of the LGO's decisions the individual cases were reviewed and reassessed as required. The service area also reviewed its policies in light of the LGO's decisions and new homelessness legislation. Staff members have received feedback on the learning points from the LGO complaints as well as further guidance on policies and legislation.
- 3.12 The two upheld cases in Private Housing Services involved communication and documentation with two separate landlords. The LGO awarded £50 compensation in one case where the Council had not awarded compensation and in the other case the LGO was satisfied with the Council's £350 compensation amount. The errors made in these two separate cases were rectified and the service regularly monitors feedback from Customer Satisfaction surveys to help improve service delivery.
- 3.13 The remedies prescribed in the five upheld ASC cases focussed on the need to review assessments in individual cases and to apologise for the distress caused to service users. Compensation of £13k was awarded in only 1 of the 5 upheld ASC cases. Although this is recorded as LGO compensation, this was the reimbursement of care costs and solicitors fees already agreed by the Council and was noted in the LGO decision letter. Corrective actions were implemented in each case as prescribed by the LGO and the learning points were reviewed and discussed with staff and managers. There were no underlying systemic issues highlighted in these LGO cases.
- 3.14 Five cases were upheld in the Benefits & CTax and Concessionary Travel categories. The main issues were delays in correctly processing benefit claims and Blue Badge applications. £200 compensation was awarded by the LGO in one of these cases and the Council had paid £115 compensation in one of the other cases. The learning points from these cases were discussed with individual staff members and teams. There was a backlog of work in the Blue Badges team during the year. A new team manager has been appointed and the team was working to clear the backlog by the end of October 2018.

- 3.15 The two cases upheld in Children Services were about school places and alterations to the home of a family with a vulnerable child. Improvements were recommended, however compensation was not awarded by the LGO in either of these cases. The service area took remedial action to address the individual issues in these two cases.

### ***Housing Ombudsman (HO) Decision & Learning Points***

- 3.16 The Housing Ombudsman does not provide annual reports and data in the same way the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) does. The data provided in the table below on HO cases is taken from the information recorded on Brent's complaints system. It should also be noted that the HO has been clearing a backlog of cases and therefore there has been an increase in the number of cases decided during 2017/18.

Year	Total Cases Decided	Upheld	Not Upheld
<b>2015 - 2016</b>	21	1	20
<b>2016 - 2017</b>	13	5	8
<b>2017 - 2018</b>	20	6	14

- 3.17 There were six cases upheld by the Housing Ombudsman in 2017/18 for the following reasons:
- 2 cases about the quality of repairs - Brent awarded £800 in compensation and the HO awarded a further £1,100.
  - 2 cases about leaks and repairs – Brent awarded £650 in compensation and the HO awarded a further £2,692.
  - 1 case about the cost and quality of major works – Brent awarded £400 in compensation and the HO awarded £400 in addition to this.
  - 1 case about noise nuisance and odours – Brent awarded £250 in compensation and the HO also awarded £250.
- 3.18 Appendix C summarises the improvement action being taken by Housing Management – Property Services in addressing these issues and other causes of complaints.

### ***Compensation***

- 3.19 The table below shows compensation paid at all stages including Ombudsmen cases for corporate and statutory cases in Brent. In 2017/18, the total amount of compensation paid by Brent decreased by 5% and the total number of cases awarded compensation also decreased by 34% compared with 2016/17.

Year	Brent - Compensation	
	No. of Cases	Total Compensation
<b>2015-16</b>	170	£62,765
<b>2016-17</b>	204	£77,602
<b>2017-18</b>	135	£73,794



### ***Complaints Outcomes***

- 3.20 The table below shows the proportion of corporate and statutory complaints upheld/partly upheld at the first and second stage. There has been a small increase in the percentage of Stage 2 corporate complaints upheld/partly upheld in 2017/18. The upheld/partly upheld rate has fallen for the other types of complaints.

3.21

Year	Brent - % of Cases Upheld or Partly Upheld			
	Stage 1 - Corporate	Stage 1 - Statutory	Stage 2 - Corporate	Stage 2 - Statutory
<b>2015-16</b>	40%	54%	43%	75%
<b>2016-17</b>	54%	49%	38%	61%
<b>2017-18</b>	50%	39%	40%	48%

### ***Timeliness of Complaints***

- 3.22 The timeliness of complaints is shown in the table below. Stage 2 Statutory complaints performance has improved year on year. However, performance has dipped on first stage complaints and Stage 2 corporate complaints. The Complaints Service team is continuing to work with departments to improve complaints performance.

Year	Brent - % of Cases Closed on Time			
	Stage 1 - Corporate	Stage 1 - Statutory	Stage 2 - Corporate	Stage 2 - Statutory
<b>2015-16</b>	88%	82%	88%	29%
<b>2016-17</b>	95%	89%	82%	52%
<b>2017-18</b>	90%	88%	81%	59%

### ***Improvements Resulting from Complaint Investigations***

- 3.23 Service-specific improvements resulting from the learning from complaints have been highlighted in Appendix C.
- 3.24 Cabinet agreed 8 recommendations in the 2016/17 Annual Complaints report which was developed into an action plan by the Complaints Service team. A progress update is provided below on the 8 recommendations

Recommendation/Action	Progress
-----------------------	----------

Recommendation/Action	Progress
<p>1. Work with Service area and departmental management teams to review key service delay/failure hotspots and develop improvement plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly hotspots report introduced and discussed with the Corporate Management Team (CMT), departmental management teams (DMTs) and shared with senior managers</li> <li>The Complaints Service team have focussed on supporting HMS with improving service delivery based on identified complaints hotspots.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Develop a tailored training plan on communication and staff behaviours to be implemented for priority service areas across the Council.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hotspots analysis showed that HMS had received a significant amount of complaints regarding communication and staff behaviours. Other areas across the Council had low levels of this type of complaints.</li> <li>HMS have introduced a number of measures to address staff and communication issues including: further analysis of customer care complaints to identify and address patterns; the rollout of Mary Guber customer service and feedback on learning points given to individuals and teams.</li> <li>Other service areas have discussed the learning points from complaints with staff members and team meetings.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Support new Housing Management Service during the redesign of the repairs process in order to feed in the lessons learned from complaints.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redesign of repairs process was part of the wider Housing Transformation Programme.</li> <li>The Complaints Service team have also provided training and guidance to HMS staff and managers on effective complaints handling.</li> <li><b>Action closed</b></li> </ul>
<p>4. Review LGO referrals and identify any future opportunities for early resolution and to help minimise premature LGO referrals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Complaints Service team proactively works with complainants to minimise complaints being escalated to the Council's final review stage and to the Ombudsman stage. However, there are cases where the complainant chooses to bypass the Council's complaints process and lodges a complaint directly with the Ombudsman.</li> </ul>
<p>5. Review our internal approach to complaint decisions, corrective actions and compensation in light of LGO outcomes in 2016/17</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All LGO upheld cases were reviewed by the Complaints Service team to identify learning points and service areas put in place the appropriate remedial actions.</li> </ul>

Recommendation/Action	Progress
6. Continue to improve internal processes and working arrangements with service managers to increase the timeliness of Stage 2 responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly open case tracker sent to staff and managers and reminders sent by the Chief Executive and Complaints Service team to maintain the focus on timescales.</li> </ul>
7. Work closely with the Housing Management Service management team to establish a new and effective complaints process and implement improved working arrangements to manage Stage 2 complaints.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complaints Service team has been working closely with the HMS senior management team and staff to introduce improved complaints handling processes within the directorate. Regular feedback is provided on live issues and practical solutions agreed.</li> </ul>
8. Implement a weekly Corrective Actions Tracker for all departments to monitor the timely completion of agreed remedial actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corrective Actions Tracker sent to relevant staff twice a month. Although completion of corrective actions has improved to some extent, this still needs ongoing attention to ensure that we can keep our promises as a council and follow through on remedial actions completely and in a timely manner.</li> </ul>

### ***Compliments***

- 3.25 There were 126 compliments for Brent Council departments recorded on iCasework in 2017/18 compared with 22 compliments logged in 2016/17. Although this is a significant improvement from the previous year, there is still an under-recording of compliments on the system and staff are reminded to record this information on iCasework to give a more balanced picture of complaints as well as compliments.

### ***Benchmark Data***

- 3.26 A corporate Complaints team representative attends the North West London Complaints Forum where complaint performance and best practices are discussed. The corporate team also share information and learning with the London Complaints Managers Group.
- 3.27 Comparative complaints data for Adult Social Care and Children and Young People can be found in the respective appendices to this report. Some London councils do not publish annual corporate complaints data (as there is only a legal requirement to publish the statutory social care complaints report). Therefore limited comparative data from four other London boroughs in 2017/18 has been provided below. It should be noted that the complaints stages and timescales may differ with other councils; e.g. Brent has a 2-stage corporate complaints process and Lewisham has a 3-stage process.

- 3.28 Brent has a lower volume of Stage 1 complaints compared to the other boroughs. Overall performance is good with a high timeliness response rate and a lower level of upheld/partly upheld cases.

Stage 1 Corporate Complaints – 2017/18 Benchmarking Data					
Complaint Criteria	Brent	Merton	Croydon	Westminster	Lewisham
Volumes	1,475	1602	1490	1007	3983 (includes enquiries)
Timeliness %	90%	67%	88%	82%	68%
Upheld/ Partly upheld	50%	38% (complaints at all stages)	75%	45%	N/A

- 3.29 Compared to the other boroughs, Brent has a larger proportion of Stage 1 complaints escalated to Stage 2; however the timeliness rate has remained high. Lewisham has a 3-stage stage process so the volumes are difficult to compare. From the 205 Stage 2 cases Lewisham received, 105 were escalated to Stage 3.

Stage 2 Corporate Complaints – 2017/18 Benchmarking Data					
Complaint Criteria	Brent	Merton	Croydon	Westminster	Lewisham
Volumes	197	110	127	115	205 (includes enquiries)
Timeliness %	81%	86%	39%	55%	N/A
Upheld/ Partly upheld	40%	38% (complaints at all stages)	39%	22%	N/A

- 3.30 Brent remain consistent with other boroughs when it comes to decisions made by the LGO and the upheld rate.

LGO Decisions – 2017/18 Benchmarking Data					
Complaint Criteria	Brent	Merton	Croydon	Westminster	Lewisham
Volumes Decided	33	19	51	35	24
Upheld	21	12	33	20	16
Upheld Rate	64%	63%	65%	57%	67%

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Instead, the details provided on compensation payments reflect the monetary impact of not getting things right first time as an organisation and the need to improve the customer experience and therefore minimise the financial penalties incurred by the Council.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 Complaints concerning the Adult Social Care and Children and Young People departments come under separate statutory complaint procedures. It is a legal requirement to produce annual reports for these areas and these are included in appendices A and B with reference to the statutory frameworks for the management of these statutory complaints.

#### **6.0 Equality Implications**

- 6.1 None

#### **7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders**

- 7.1 None

#### **8.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)**

- 8.1 None

**Report sign off:**

**PETER GADSDON**

Director of Performance, Policy & Partnerships

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## **Complaints Annual Report 2017 – 2018**

### **Appendix A – Adult Social Care Complaints**

#### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of complaints made about Adult Social Care (ASC) during 2017 – 2018 as required under The Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009, the Health and Social Care (Community Health & Standards Act 2003 and the Local Authority Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006 and the Council's Corporate Complaint process for all other complaints.

#### **2. Statutory Complaints Process**

- 2.1 The Department of Health defines a complaint as, “an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet about the actions, decisions or apparent failings of a council's adult social care provision which requires a response”.
- 2.2 Anyone who has received a service, is currently receiving a service or is seeking a service from us can make a complaint. This includes anyone affected by decisions we make about social care, including a service provided by an external provider acting on behalf of the Council. In such a case they can complain directly to the provider or to us. External providers are required to have their own complaints procedures and must comply with them. They are also required to share this information on complaints and outcomes with the Council.
- 2.3 There is only one stage in this statutory process which allows for a provisional and then final decision. All complaints made to the Council are logged and acknowledged. The Council will try to resolve the complaint as soon as possible, and no later than within 20 working days. If delays are anticipated, the complainant is consulted and informed appropriately. All responses, whether or not a timescale has been agreed with the complainant, must be made within six months of receiving the complaint.
- 2.4 All complaints are signed off by the Head of Service and complainants are given the opportunity to have their complaint reviewed by the Operational Director, Adult Social Care. In some cases, some complaints may need to be passed on to the Safeguarding Leads as appropriate, where the complaints process may be suspended in order to allow the safeguarding process to be completed. In cases where the complaint is across several organisations, one organisation will act as the lead and co-ordinate a joint response to the complainant. The final complaint response must set out the Council's standard paragraph advising of their right to approach the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) should the complainant remain dissatisfied.

### 3. Corporate Complaints Process

- 3.1 The Council's corporate complaints process has two stages
- Stage 1: responded to by the Head of Service
  - Stage 2: review/investigation by the Complaints Service team on behalf of the Chief Executive

### 4. Headlines

- 4.1 The main headlines from ASC complaints performance are:
- 97 complaints received at the initial stage in 2017/18 (exactly the same as the previous year) - 68 Statutory and 29 Corporate cases
  - Highest volume service areas for first stage complaints – Complex Care 42%, Urgent Care 28%, and Commissioning, Contracting & Market Management 22%
  - 45% of Stage 1 cases were upheld or partly upheld.
  - 95% of Stage 1 complaints were responded on time, year on year improvement

### 5. ASC Service Users

- 5.1 To be able to put some context to the complaints, ASC received 3,607 contacts from individuals with at least one contact through Brent Customer Service (BCS) or the Duty Team. ASC assessed 2,625 service users for Homecare Services and 1,010 assessed for Residential / Nursing Services. There were 2,166 individuals who received section 5 hospital discharge assessments. This means that **2.7% of ASC service users or someone acting on their behalf raised a complaint** about a service that they had received in 2017-18.

### 6. Complaints Received

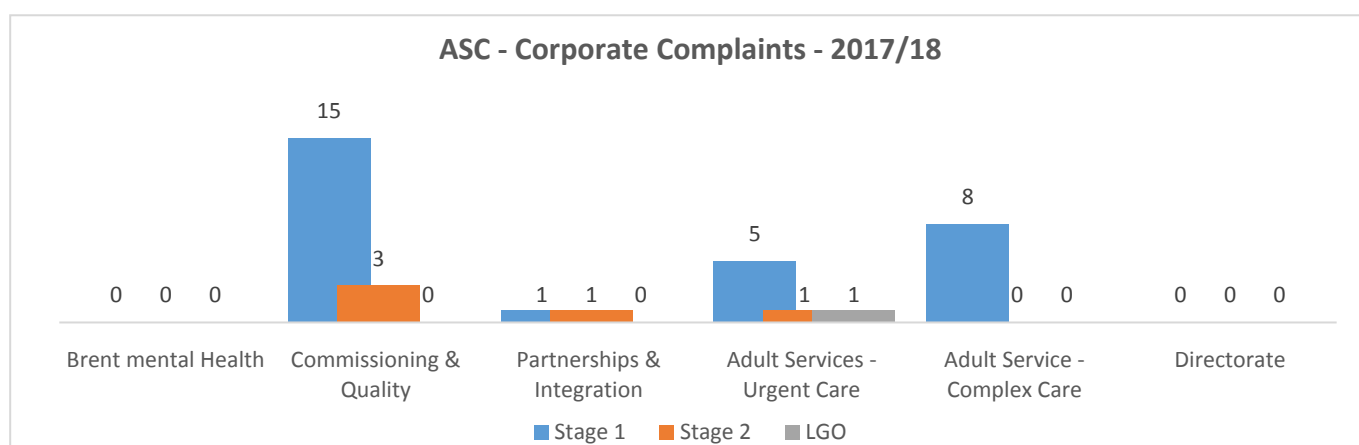
- 6.1 **ASC received 68 Statutory Complaints and 29 Corporate Complaints, a total of 97 complaints.** There has been a decrease in statutory complaints of 18%; these are complaints that centre around the Care Act and more than likely to relate to a service users care needs assessment or provision of social care needs. However, this has been offset by a 100% increase in corporate complaints. On reviewing these complaints there are no particular patterns or themes, the complaints ranged from invoicing, supported living, phones and homecare companies. The total number of complaints remained exactly the same as 2016/17. Alterations in the staffing structure of ASC may have impacted on complaints being assigned to the correct teams. On reflection the complaint levels remain well below the levels of complaints when the new ASC complaint procedure was introduced in 2010.
- **Complex Care:** received 42% of the complaints made to ASC which is 2% down compared to last year. This team handles the more complex support cases and annual reviews and have to manage the realistic expectations of families and service users. The complaints received by the team mainly consist of disagreements with the care package the service user has been assessed to receive. These complaints also often relate to disagreements in the type of accommodation that is most suitable for the service user. For example: can the



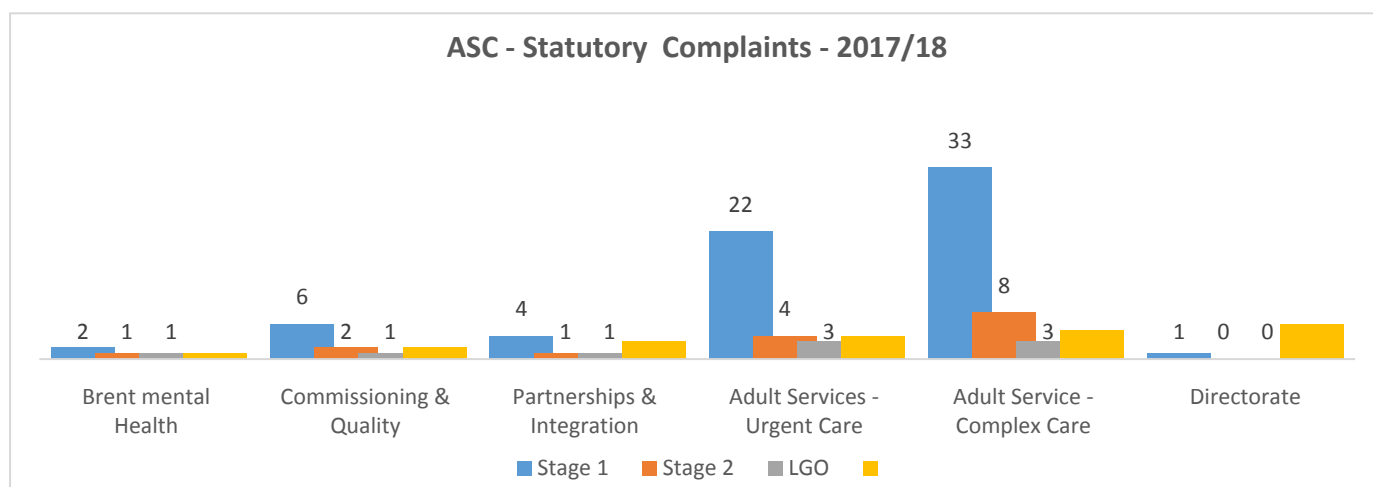
service user reside at home with homecare support; do they need to be placed in a residential care home or live in extra sheltered accommodation? The service user may have an expectation that the Council will provide 24 hour homecare. The Council also has to consider value for money, as well as the needs of the service user when providing services. These are complex and sensitive matters and can lead to disputes.

- Commissioning Contracting and Market Management:** this team manage the residential nursing home contracts, homecare providers and supported living. There is a perception that the Council receives a lot of complaints about its home care providers however this is not borne out in the statistics. There were 21 cases received (22%). The Council does a lot of work with our providers at the first point of contact to resolve any problems. The majority of concerns received are reported directly to the home care provider and resolved by them. Concerns are also raised directly with the Commissioning team who will resolve such matters directly with the provider. The service user is made aware of the complaints process if they wish to use that route as a possible resolution to their concerns. In the coming year the Complaint Service team will work with the Commissioning team to quantify the work being completed to resolve such complaints. A number of complaints were also received around supported living accommodation and the move on to further accommodation
- Urgent Care:** this includes the Reablement team, Safeguarding team and Hospital Discharge team and accounted for 28% of complaints for ASC, which is down on 2016/17. The complaints centred on the Safeguarding team and Hospital Discharge team. Issues for the Safeguarding team related to the difficulties in managing the expectations of families who are often in dispute with each other over the financial / welfare of the service user. With regard to Hospital Discharge this generally centres on the assessed needs of the service user and the expectations of their families after the service user has been discharged from hospital.

6.2 The chart below shows the number of ASC corporate complaints received in 2017/18. Of the 29 corporate complaints, 5 were escalated to the final stage.

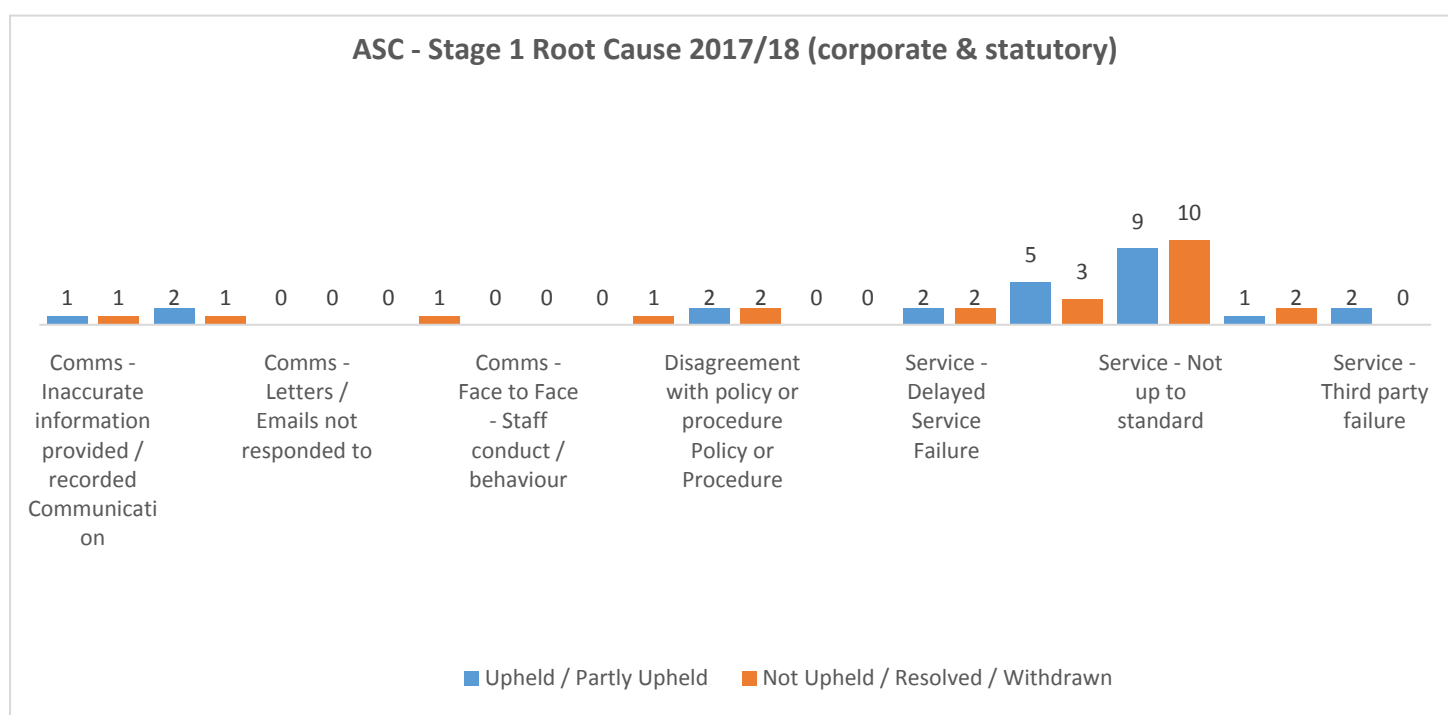


- 6.3 The chart below shows the number of ASC statutory complaints received in 2017/18. Of the 68 statutory complaints received, 16 were escalated and were reviewed at the final stage which is comparable with last year



- 6.4 In total there is a 22% escalation rate as compared to 19% in 2016/17. This figure is slightly higher than expected, but does show that our service users are confident in using the complaints process. Outcomes from these cases are discussed later in the report. ASC does actively try to resolve problems or concerns, however this can only be in relation to our policies and procedures. The Complaint Service team continue to work with the Operational Director and her team in ensuring complaints are proactively responded to. The Complaint Service team held regular training sessions for ASC managers and staff throughout the year and also regularly attended management meetings to present complaint data and hotspots.

## 7. Nature / Reasons for Complaints



7.1 Complaints about service failure accounted for three quarters of the complaints received (36 out of 47 cases). Of these 36 cases, 40% complained that the service received was not up to standard and in just under half of these some fault was found. The cases that were upheld were across all the teams in ASC and the reasons for cases being upheld ranged from: identifying that a client was on section 117 mental health funding; delay in arranging a Direct Payment; increasing a care package; and not contacting the family when an assessor visited the user. The overriding theme is that communication with the service user and family is key. A number of complaints have highlighted that failure to communicate early, increases the service user's frustration and leads to complaints about the underlying problems. Examples of this are delays in assessments, direct payment applications being processed and choice of care home for a client discharged from hospital.

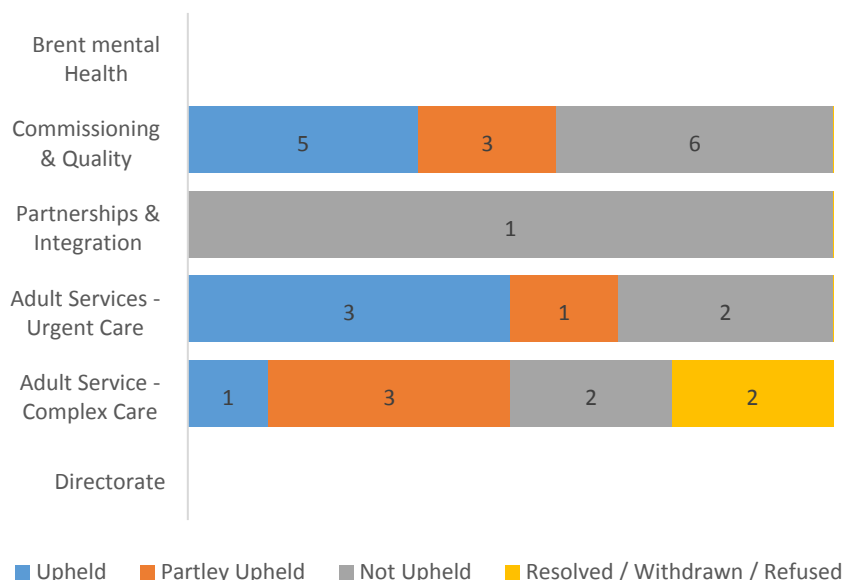
7.2 Other examples of the types of issues that lead to complaints are listed below:-

- **Delay/failure to provide a service** – concerns raised about delays with care needs assessments.
- **Poor communication** - a number of complaints were received regarding telephone calls not being answered and failure to respond to messages.
- **Incorrect action taken** – when advising a client of their financial assessment the team had backdated the assessment to an incorrect date.

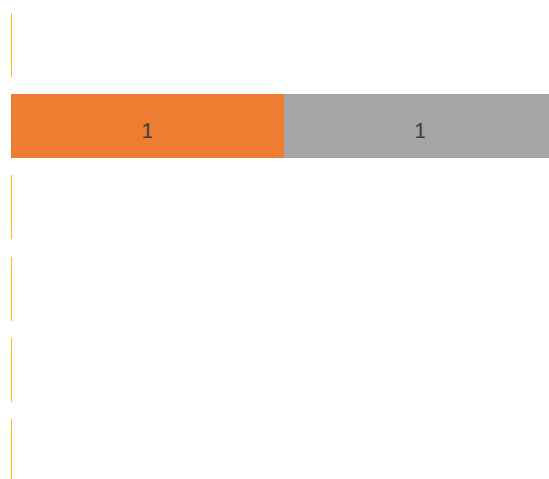
## 8. Complaint Outcomes

8.1 The chart below shows the outcome of complaints at Stage 1 and final review stage:

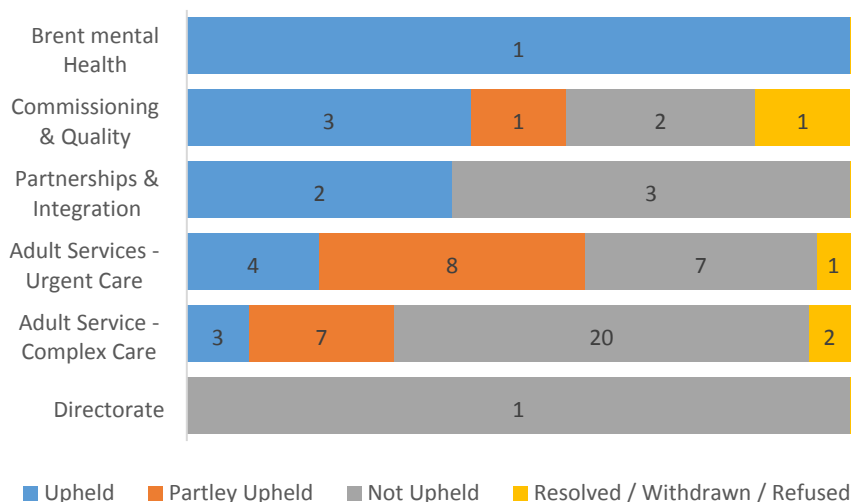
ASC - Corporate Stage 1 Outcomes - 2017/18



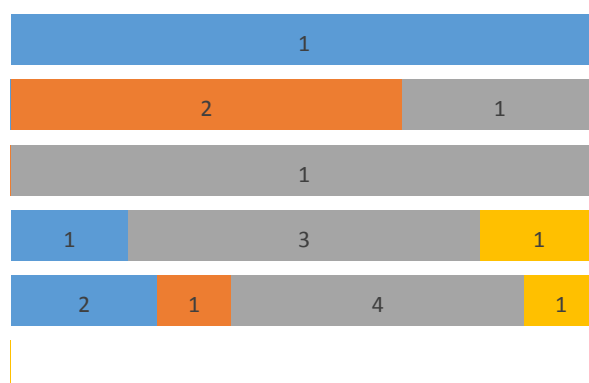
ASC - Corporate Stage 2 Outcomes - 2017/18



### ASC - Statutory Complaint Stage 1 Outcomes - 2017/18



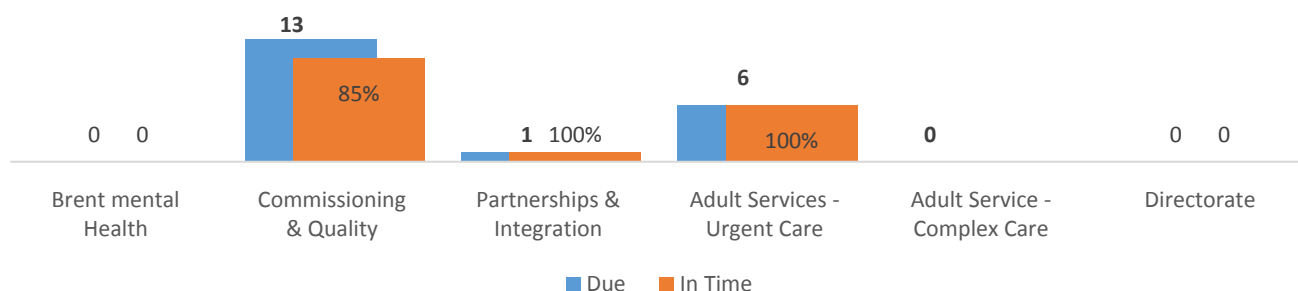
### ASC - Statutory Complaint Stage 2 Outcomes - 2017/18



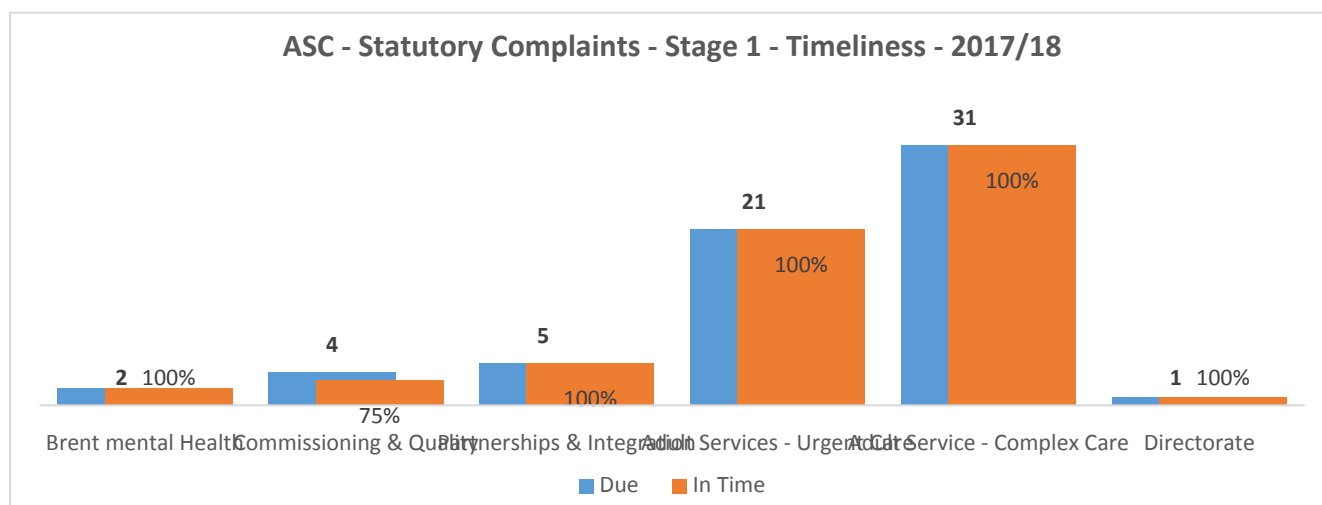
- 8.2 Complaints received for both Corporate and Statutory at the first/provisional stage shows that some fault (upheld or partly held) by the Council was found in 45% of cases. This compares to 48% in 2016/17.
- 8.3 At the final review stage some fault has been found in 42% of cases, which is down from 55% in the previous year 2016/17. This shows that although the escalation rate from the initial stage has risen, the Complaint Service team is finding fewer faults. Generally service users use the complaint process to protect their services.
- 8.4 The Complaints Service team is working with managers in ASC to ensure the quality of the complaint investigation and the explanations provided to the complainant addresses all the issues raised. The very nature of these cases is complex and service users and their families will sometimes proceed through the complaint process and escalate to the final stage.

## 9. Timeliness of Responses

### ASC - Corporate Complaints - Stage 1 - Timeliness - 2017/18



- 9.1 The chart below shows Stage 1 complaint response times across the various ASC service areas in 2017/18:



- 9.2 ASC responded to 95% of all complaints within timescales as compared to 92% in 2016/17, this was an improvement of 3% points on the preceding year and over the last 3 years performance has improved by 38% points. Although this is still below the council's target of 100% it shows year on year improvement and there is a continued focus within the department to achieve the council's target of 100%.

## 10. Compensation

- 10.1 ASC paid £13,945 in compensation for the year, which comprised of three cases. However, of this payment, £12,500 was a refund of care charges that the family had paid. The actual compensation accounted for £1,445, which is a reduction on previous years. No compensation payments were made at Stage 1. Two cases were paid compensation at the final review stage. The LGO also awarded compensation in one case. As part of the training carried out by the Complaints Service Team an emphasis has been placed on remedies which includes considering when compensation should be awarded. The Council follows the guidelines that are published by the Local Government Ombudsman.

## 11. Local Government Ombudsman Decisions in 2017/18

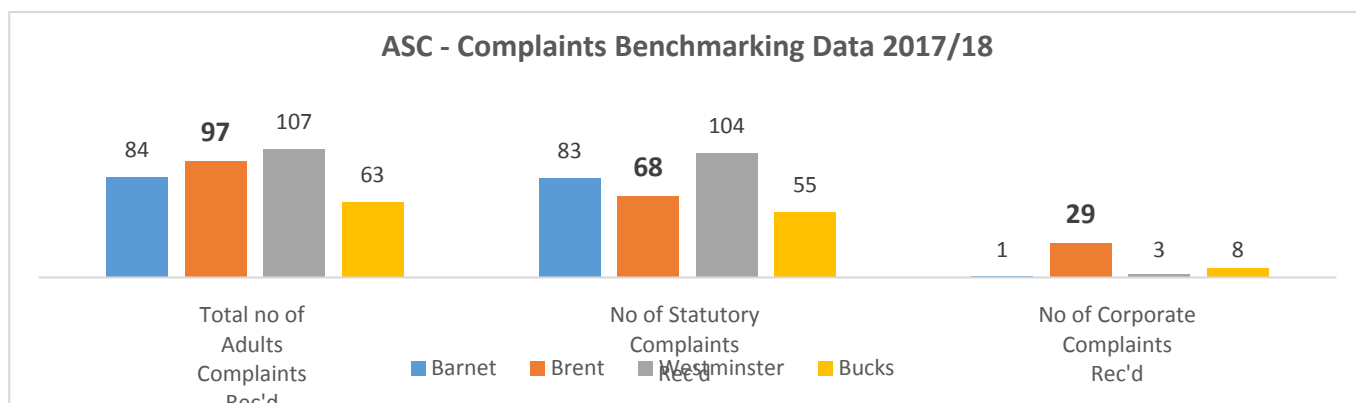
- 11.1 The Local Government Ombudsman reviewed 27 cases for ASC, which is down from 35 cases the previous year. Of the decisions made, 12 cases were referred back to the Council as they had not completed our complaints process. A further 7 cases were closed after initial enquiries with no further action to be taken. Of the remaining 8 cases, no fault was found in one case and fault was found in 7 cases. Of the seven cases in which mal-administration was found two of these concern blue badges which the LGO classify as ASC however these are reported under the Resources department in the council. The remaining cases are detailed as follows:

- **Case 1:** the Council & NHS Trust had failed to provide appropriate services – the client has been difficult to engage with and the trust has completed an assessment on behalf of ASC. However the LGO decided the appropriate services were not provided and we agreed to an apology and a new care assessment.
- **Case 2:** this concerned a safeguarding investigation where a relative had been removed abroad. The Council's investigation had identified some faults in the safeguarding investigation and this was acknowledged with the complainant. The complainant was happy with the Council's investigation, but was not happy that we did not consider her distress. The LGO decided that the Council had not considered her distress and ASC agreed to apologise to the complainant.
- **Case 3:** the Council accepted fault that there had been a delay in assessing a client following their income reducing below the threshold. The complainant had a private Homecare provider and continued to pay until their savings were depleted. ASC agreed to refund all payments to the homecare provider £12,500 and we agreed to apologise and pay compensation of £1,212.
- **Case 4:** this concerned section 117 responsibility under the Mental Health Act. Our client transferred to Kent in 2006 and we transferred the case to Kent Council. However in 2015 they transferred to Bedfordshire, and there were problems obtaining services. Legislation states that the authority that assessed that the client met the criteria for section 117 funding remains the responsible authority until the person is assessed as no longer meeting the criteria. Although we had no contact with the complainant for 10 years the LGO decided we were responsible. The LGO recommended that we pay compensation which we successfully managed to argue against. However the case was still classed as maladministration against Brent.
- **Case 5:** following a hospital discharge, a care package was put in place without appropriate advice that the service user would have to make a contribution to the cost. The council had already cancelled the care package and agreed to apologise and waive the charges.

11.2 The learning points from these complaints were: in the event of long term staff sickness, cases need to be identified and reallocated; and improved liaison with NHS and clients when discharge from hospital occurs.

## 12. Benchmarking

12.1 Brent Council belongs to the North West London Social Care Complaint managers group. The Council has benchmarked the volume of complaints received against five of our Central and West London neighbours in 2017/18. With regards to statutory complaints we have come second in the table behind Buckinghamshire; an improvement on the previous year. With regards to all complaints we have come third behind Barnet and Buckinghamshire.



### 13. Customer Feedback and Engagement

- 13.1 The majority of customer contact with the Complaints Service team is reactive in that the team responds to direct contact from customers and their representatives when they report a problem with a service. Through the initial contact the team has managed with ASC managers to resolve a number of complaints at the point of contact e.g. Delayed OT assessments / care assessments finding early resolutions to invoicing / billing queries that could have turned into more formal complaints. The team have also made contact with the Brent Carers Association and will be meeting with them shortly. The Complaints Service team has recently attended meetings with Brent Health Watch and various provider and community organisations to introduce themselves and provide advice on the ASC complaint processes.

### 14. Compliments

- 14.1 Customers and their representatives are encouraged to tell the Council if they are satisfied with their care or to highlight good service. People can send feedback to the Complaints Service team or ASC directly. In 2017/18, ASC and the Complaints Service team received 25 compliments about ASC. The Complaint Service team still does not capture all the compliments received by the Council and some of these compliments have not been logged on iCasework (complaint database). We are working with ASC to improve the logging of compliments on the system. Three examples of compliments are as follows:

- **From a wife:** *"I just wanted to send you my heartfelt gratitude for finding my husband a more suitable placement so quickly. I understand how stressful this must have been and I cannot thank you enough. I am certain my husband will settle in the new home. We highly appreciate your tremendous effort and will never forget your support of us".*
- **From the family of a service user** - *the father was in hospital and the family felt the Occupational Therapist (OT) provided an outstanding quality of service and a level of professionalism that was absolutely superb. The family thought the OT was always there for them and would be the one to initiate calls and would always call back if required. They took pride in their work.*

- **From a service user:** *“I would like to say a few words about my social worker. She has helped me so much for the past few years that I don’t know how I could ever thank her. She is an Angel. She is caring, considerate person, a good listener, and would always answer my calls. I consider myself lucky to have had her and the support she has given me”.*

## 15. Learning from Complaints

15.1 Learning from complaints provides opportunities for services to be improved and shaped by customer experience. ASC managers are encouraged not only to respond to complaints fully but to identify learning points that can help improve services. Here are some examples of how customer feedback has changed and improved service delivery:

Customer Feedback - ‘You Said’	Service Area Changes - ‘We Did’
You told us that when decisions were made about care support you did not want to use the complaint process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have introduced an appeals process for any decisions made about a service users care support.</li> </ul>
You have told us that you had requested an Occupational Therapy (OT) assessment but there is a long delay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASC presently has a waiting time of 14 weeks for an OT assessment. ASC have reviewed their services and recruited an additional OT for the Duty Team, and are presently working on the backlog. Generally OT’s are in demand and can be extremely difficult to recruit. A Principal OT has been appointed within the service and presently working with OT’s generally across the Council to improve services.</li> </ul>

**Martin Beasley**  
**Complaints Investigation Officer**  
 Corporate Complaints Team



## Complaints Annual Report 2017 – 2018

### Appendix B – Children & Young People Complaints

#### 1. Summary

- 1.1 The Social Services statutory complaints procedure requires that an annual report must be produced for children's social care complaints. This report provides information about complaints made during the twelve months between 1 April 2017 and the 31 March 2018 under the complaints and representations procedures established through the Local Authority Social Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2006, the Representations (Children) Regulations 2006 and the Council's corporate complaints procedure.
- 1.2 The guidance "Getting the best from Complaints" produced by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) provides advice for local authorities on implementing the Children Act 1989 complaints procedure for children and young people and defines a complaint as: ***'A complaint may be generally defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child or young person, which requires a response.'***

#### 2. Who Can Make a Complaint

- 2.1 Section 26(3) and section 24D of the Children Act, 1989 and section 3(1) of the Adoption and Children Act, 2002 require councils to consider complaints made by:
- any child or young person (or a parent of his or someone who has parental responsibility for him) who is being looked after by the local authority or is not looked after by them but is in need
  - any local authority foster carer (including those caring for children placed through independent fostering agencies)
  - children leaving care
  - special guardians
  - a child or young person (or parent of his) to whom a Special Guardian order is in force
  - any person who has applied for an assessment under section 14F (3) or (4)
  - any child or young person who may be adopted, their parents and guardians
  - persons wishing to adopt a child
  - any other person whom arrangements for the provision of adoption services extend
  - adopted persons, their parents, natural parents and former guardians
  - such other person as the local authority consider has sufficient interest in the child or young person's welfare to warrant his representations being considered by them.

### 3. Statutory Complaints Process

3.1 There are two types of complaint processes followed by the Children & Young People (CYP) department. The Children Act 1989 Representation Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 for all complaints relating to actions taken under the Children Act (statutory complaints) and the Council's complaint process for all other complaints.

3.2 The Children's Act 1989 Representation Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 has three stages:

- **Stage 1: Local Resolution** – this is the most important stage of the complaint procedure. The heads of service and external contractors provide services on behalf of the Council and are expected to resolve as many complaints as possible at this initial point. The statutory social care complaints procedure requires complaints to be responded to within 10 working days; however heads of service can apply for an extension of a further 10 working days where a complaint is complex.
- **Stage 2: Independent Investigation** – this stage commences when the complainant is dissatisfied with the findings of the Stage 1. The Complaint Service team will consider mediation as a complaint handling tool to resolve ongoing concerns at the end of the Stage 1 process and before commencing the Stage 2 process. Stage 2 is an investigation by an "Independent Investigator" a person external to the service usually independent of the Council. We also have to appoint an "Independent Person" who is independent of the Council and not related to any member or officer of the Council and who represents the complainant in the process. The stage 2 investigation report is then adjudicated by the Operational Director. Stage 2 complaints falling within the statutory process must be dealt with in 25 working days but can be extended to 65 working days.
- **Stage 3 Review Panel** – where complainants wish to continue with their complaint about statutory social services functions, the Council is required to establish a complaint Review Panel. The Panel consists of three Independent Panellists who have no connection to the Council, these are appointed by the complaint service team. The Panel makes recommendations through a panel report which the Strategic Director CYP will then adjudicate their decision on the complaint.

### 4. Corporate Complaints Process

4.1 *Council's Corporate Complaints:*

- Stage 1: responded to by the Head of Service within 20 working days.
- Stage 2: Review / Investigation by the Complaints Service team on behalf of the Chief Executive within 30 working days.

## 5. Headlines

5.1 The main headlines from CYP complaints performance are:

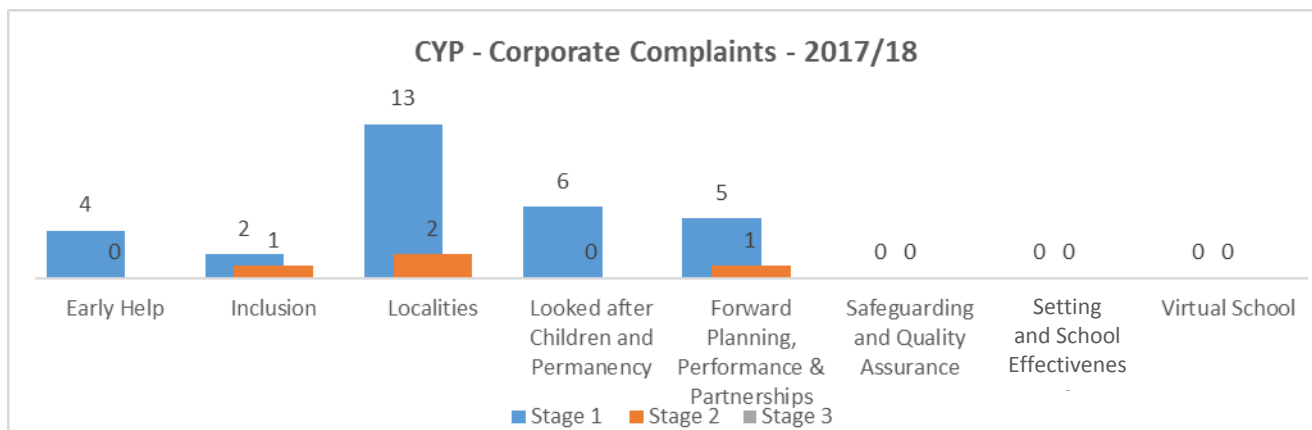
- Stage 1 complaint numbers decreased by 12% (↓)
- 71 statutory stage 1 complaints and 30 corporate stage 1 complaints
- Low 10% escalation rate to stage 2 for corporate and statutory complaints
- Main reasons for complaints received in 2017/18 were poor communication, delays or failure to provide a service, incorrect action taken and staff attitude
- 82% of all complaints responded to within target in 2017/18 (compared with 88% on time in 2016/17) (↓)
- £2,750 compensation paid in 2017/18 on four cases, a 66% decrease in the amount paid in the previous year (↓),

## 6. CYP Service Users

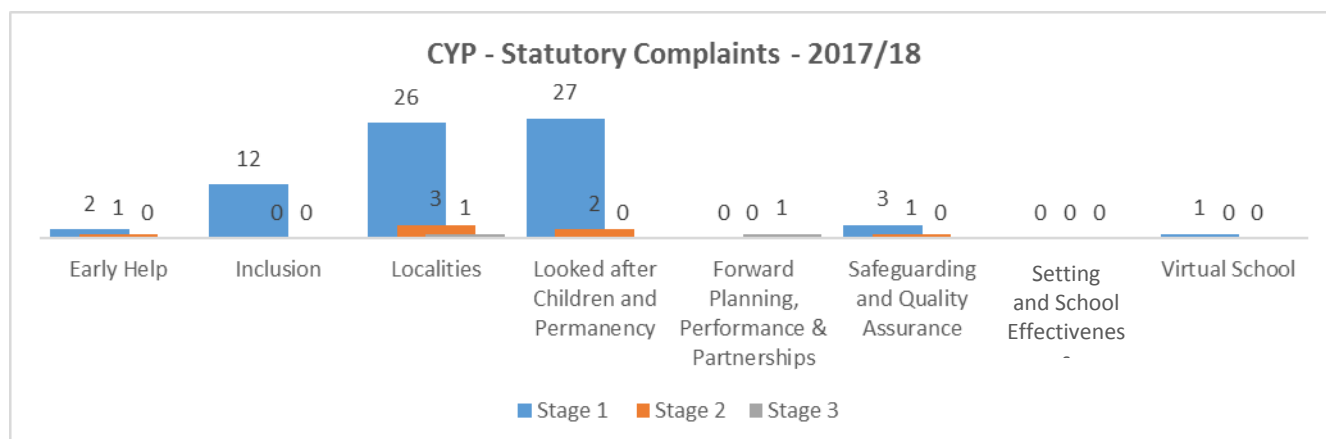
6.1 To be able to put some context to the volume of complaints that we receive, CYP in 2017/18 received 5,346 referrals and completed 5,125 Child & Family Assessments. The Council has 2,852 open children in need cases and 325 children subject to a child protection plan. There were 318 looked after children for the year and we had 354 care leavers aged 17-25. If you take complaints as a percentage of the number of referrals, 1.8% of CYP service users or someone acting on their behalf raised a complaint about a service that they were receiving in 2017/18.

## 7. Complaints Received

7.1 The chart below shows the number of corporate complaints received at Stage 1, Stage 2 and Local Government Ombudsman for 2017/18.



7.2 The chart below shows the number of statutory complaints received at Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 for 2017/18.

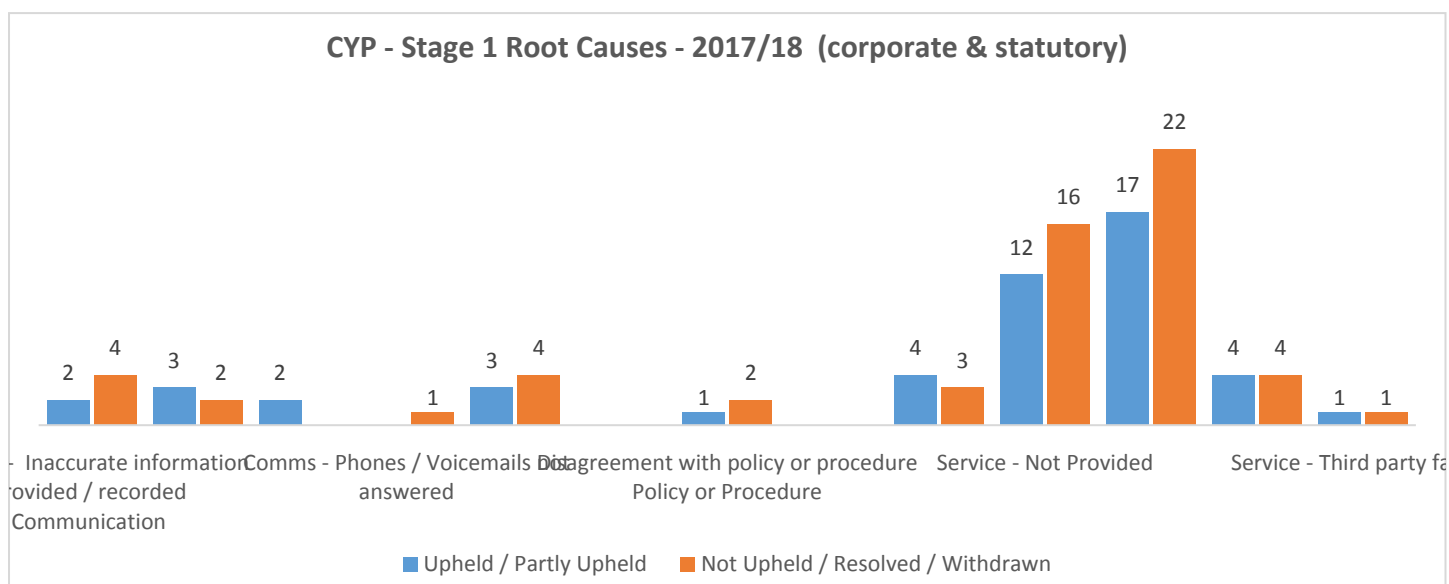


7.3 **A total of 101 statutory and corporate stage 1 complaints were received in 2017/18.** Following an increase in 2016/17 this shows a reduction of 12% in complaints received. Of the 101 complaints received, 71 were statutory complaints and 30 were corporate complaints. There has been a decrease in both types of complaints on the previous year 2016/17. The majority of complaints listed under Early Help and Inclusion teams were corporate complaints with the remaining complaints falling under the Children's statutory complaint procedure. As the chart above indicates the majority of statutory complaints are from the Localities and Looked after Children teams.

7.4 The Council received ten Stage 2 requests which is a reduction on the previous year and an escalation rate of 10% which is comparable with the previous year. However, in line with the split of complaints at the first stage, 6 of the stage 2s were statutory and 4 were corporate final reviews.

7.5 Under the Children's statutory procedure the complainant has a right for their complaint to be heard by an Independent Review Panel at Stage 3. In 2017/18 there were two stage 3 review panels held. In both the cases escalated to the review panel the complainants were determined to go through the complaint process. Both of these Stage 3 panel cases were partially upheld by the respective panels, with some recommendations changing from Partially Upheld to Upheld.

## 8. Nature / Reasons for Complaints



8.1 The main reasons for complaints received in 2017/18 were: delays or failure to provide a service, poor communication, incorrect action taken and staff attitude.

8.2 Social care makes intervention in the best interest of the child, however families do not always agree with the action that has been taken and as a result may choose to make a complaint about this. Similarly the most common reasons for complaints against staff members are when they disagree with a decision that has been made, or alleged general poor service. There has been an increasing number of complaints received from partners or service users. Most often this has been from one of the partners not living in the family home (or they are not the primary carer for their children) and felt that social care services had not communicated with them enough.

8.3 It is probably true to say that many of the Stage 1 complaints reflect the unhappiness of parents and carers about some of the decisions made by social care staff acting in the best interest of the child. Whilst the feelings and views of parents and carers about these decisions are often understandable most of these complaints were not upheld.

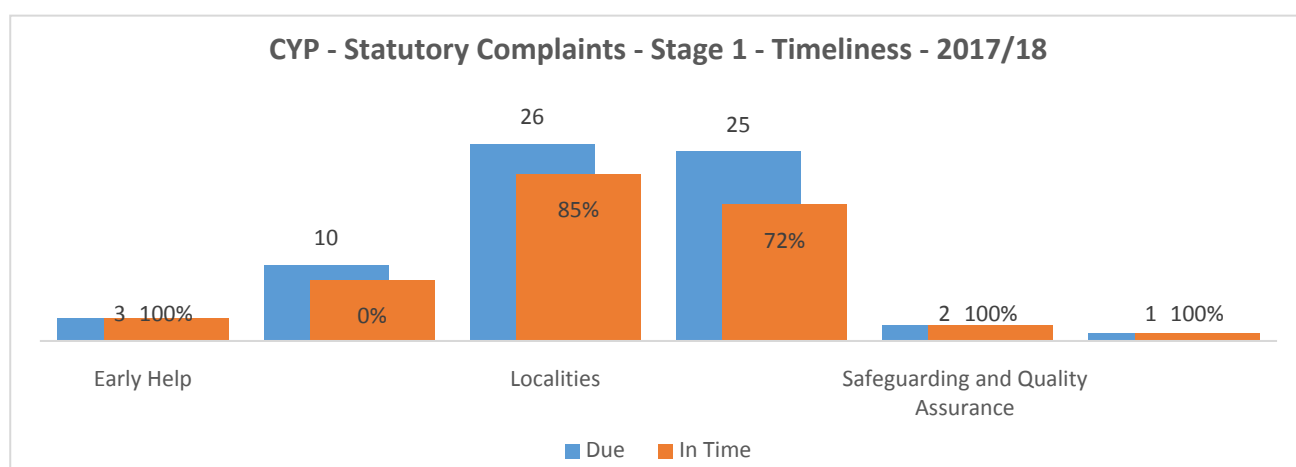
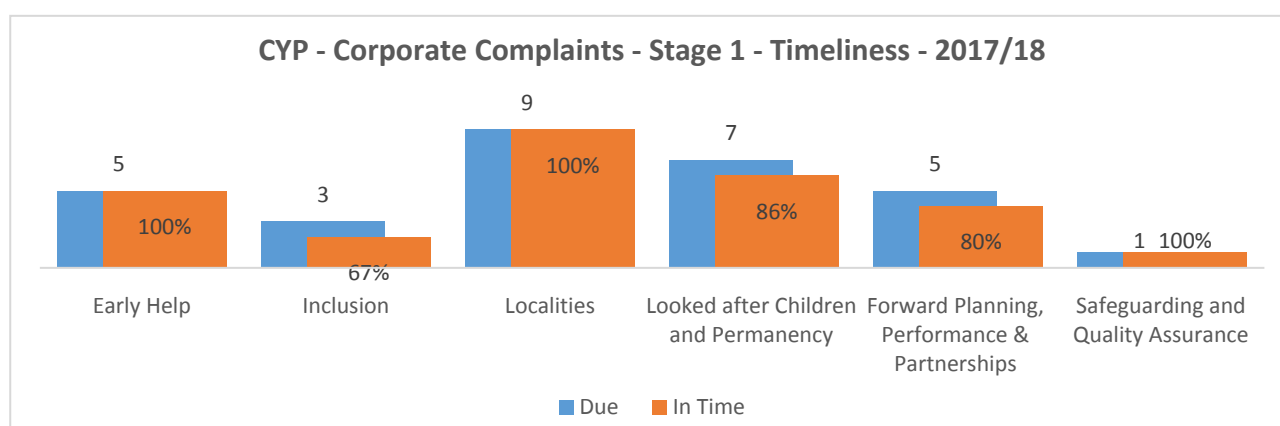
8.4 Examples of the types of issues that fall under each of the main reasons for a complaint are listed below:-

- ***Alleged poor staff attitude*** - much of the work of Localities staff involves them taking actions in connection with highly sensitive child protection or child in need issues, which parents or carers may not be in agreement with. This has for example led to complaints concerning the alleged partiality of assessments.
- ***Poor communication*** - on completion of a child and family assessment CYP had not kept all the interested parties up to date with the completed assessment.
- ***Care Leavers*** - in relation to care leavers the main area of complaints were about leaving care and the main bulk about their entitlements and the support

they had requested. This is evidence that young people are aware of their entitlements and that they can challenge decisions.

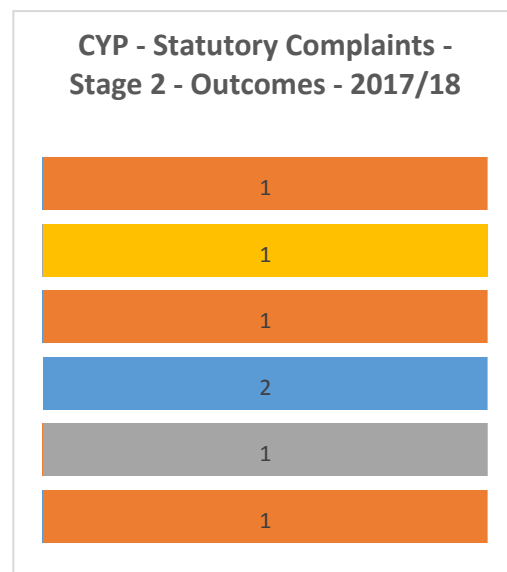
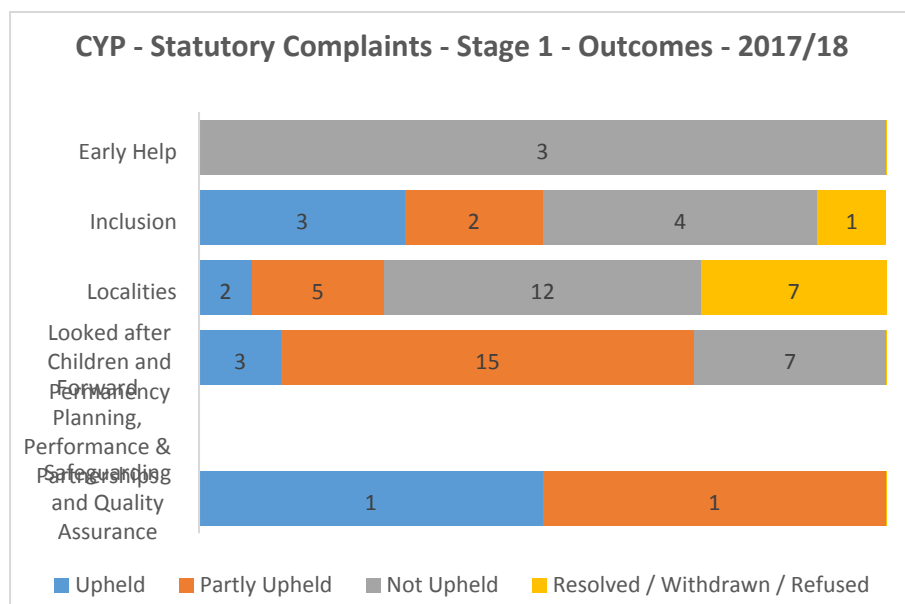
## 9. Timeliness of Responses

- 9.1 The chart below shows Stage 1 complaint response times by service area in 2017/18. CYP responded to 82% of all complaints within appropriate timescales. This is a reduction of 6% points in performance on the previous year and is below the target of 100%. In total 80% of statutory complaints and 87% of corporate complaints were answered within time. There has been a drop in performance of 6% points on statutory complaints. The statutory legislation does allow us in complex cases to extend the target by 10 working days. To improve performance CYP are carrying out weekly monitoring of complaints due to ensure timescales are improved.



## 10. Complaint Outcomes

10.1 The chart below shows the outcome of complaints at Stage 1 And Stage 2



- 10.2 There were 95 cases decided during the year and in 46% of Stage 1 complaints CYP fully or partly upheld the complaint which is similar to last year. This does demonstrate a willingness by the service areas to admit errors or mistakes and to remedy the concerns raised.
- 10.3 A further 12% of complaints were resolved following the initial approach to the Complaints Service Team, who worked with managers in Localities and Looked after Children to resolve the service users concerns.
- 10.4 The Council received 7 statutory stage 2 complaints and 5 corporate stage 2 complaints during 2017/18. Some fault was found in 58% of cases and 33% of cases were not upheld. One case was resolved prior to an investigation. The Complaints Service Team are working with managers in CYP, to improve investigation, complaint handling and correspondence skills.
- 10.5 Of the cases in which fault was identified at Stage 2, there were 2 cases which progressed to Stage 3. Detailed below are examples of the complaints that were decided and their learning points / service improvements that have been identified. The Council wishes to learn from its complaints and improve the service we provide to our clients. Cases are described below:



- In a number of cases, the complaint was concerned with the way the Council had completed the Child & Family assessment and the inconsistencies of the social workers when completing this assessment. These cases concluded that the child and family assessments were incomplete and that clear notes should record details of information recorded on the assessments. The investigations also concluded that there were delays in sending assessments to the families and that communication could be clearer.
- The complaint concerned a Family support worker where one of the parents was claiming bias. The complaint was partially upheld and it was agreed that the council should improve record keeping and write to confirm actions agreed.
- This complaint was that the Council had not followed the Staying Put Policy. The complaint was upheld and the council held a briefing workshop for fostering support social workers and the Staying Put arrangements were updated on the web site. The council met with the complainant to agree payments.
- The complaint related to the actions of the Council when receiving a request from the Police for overnight secure accommodation, whilst the young person was in custody. The complainant alleged that secure accommodation should have been available. This was not upheld at stage 2
- Some of the stage 2 complaints identified issues with delays in the complaint handling process and the quality of complaint responses at the first stage. The complaint service team have introduced quality checks of complaint responses which are being referred back to management teams. Training courses are being arranged for CYP managers and staff around complaint handling and investigation. Complaint service team officers are attending team meetings to upskill staff on complaint handling and provide regular feedback to management teams.

## **11. Compensation**

- 11.1 CYP paid out £2,750 compensation in 2017/18 on four cases. This is a decrease of £5,000 from 2016/17. At Stage 1 the Council made one payment of £600, which was paid to a Care Leaver in regards to a fee for a course. The remaining three payments were awarded at Stage 2. A payment of £1,500 was made due to our delay in progressing appropriate adaptations to an offer of permanent accommodation. A payment was made due to a delay in responding to a complaint and a further payment for deficiencies in social work practice when completing a child and family assessment.

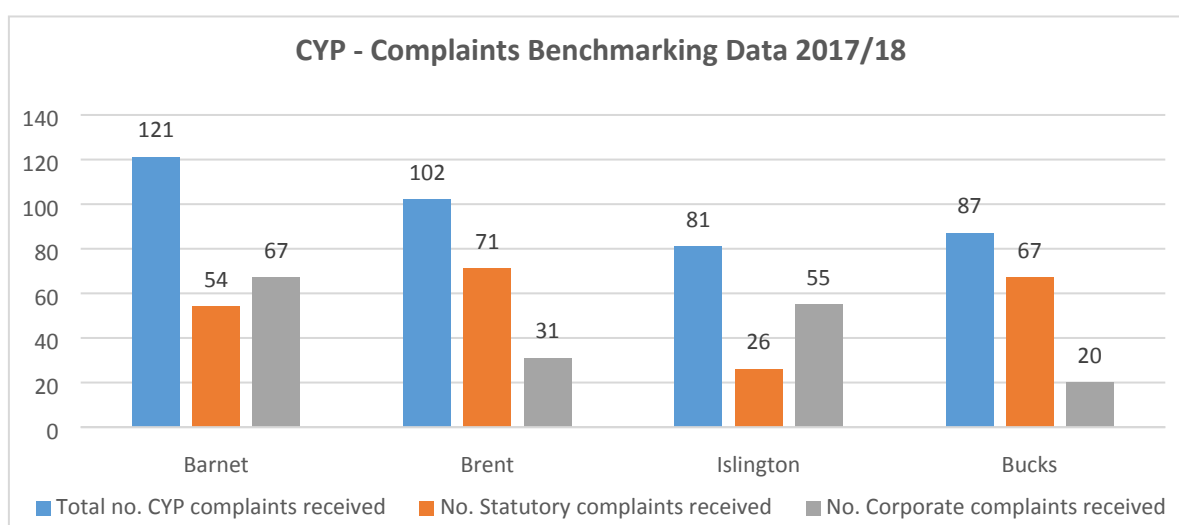
## 12. Local Government Ombudsman

12.1 The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) received 11 referrals for CYP throughout the year and made decisions on 10 cases. This is a reduction of 38% on the preceding year. Of the cases decided, 1 referral was closed after initial enquiries, 2 were referred back to the Council's own complaint procedure, 1 closed with advice given, 2 were incomplete, 1 was not upheld and 3 upheld. The three complaints that were upheld were as follows:

- **Case 1:** the council was at fault when it delayed a request for a child to delay their entry into the school reception year. The complainant had believed the Council had agreed to the request when it had not considered it. The Council agreed to apologise and accept a late appeal for their preferred school option.
- **Case 2:** the Council failed to consider the complainant's concerns around a child with SEND going missing from the home. The LGO agreed that the action the Council had already taken provides a suitable remedy.
- **Case 3:** the council was at fault when it provided accommodation which was too small for the complainant and family and too far away from the secondary school. The LGO awarded £800 compensation, advised the council to review its practices, apologise to the family and begin a search for a more appropriate property. (Compensation recorded under housing).

## 13. Benchmarking

13.1 Brent Council belongs to the North West London Social Care Complaint managers group. The Council has benchmarked the volume of complaints received against five of our Central and West London neighbours for 2017/18. With regards to statutory complaints we have come fourth in the table behind Islington; Barnet and Bucks. In regards to all complaints we have come third behind Islington and Bucks.



## 14. Learning from Complaints

- 14.1 Lessons learned from complaints can help shape and improve our services and the customer experience and there is a commitment in CYP for managers and staff to use this learning to improve services.
- 14.2 A few examples of how the learning points from complaints helped to improve services are provided below:

Customer Feedback - 'You Said'	Service Area Changes - 'We Did'
You told us about delays that had occurred in progressing appropriate adaptations following the offer of permanent accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment of a second Children's OT has successfully been achieved.</li> <li>Joint operational supervision and clinical supervision has been pre-planned with both OTs and the Team Manager, and with the Clinical Supervisor.</li> <li>Remedial action has been taken in ensuring minimum delays in progressing adaptation cases during periods of staff turnover.</li> </ul>
Two Care Leavers told us about our failure to properly deal with bank accounts for looked after children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We reviewed our processes which highlighted the need to tighten arrangements. New systems were put in place to commence from April 2018.</li> </ul>
A care leaver told us about the quality of support around immigration status and support required for LAC without British Citizenship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We reviewed the status and support required for all LAC without British citizenship.</li> <li>We increased management oversight and supervision on individual cases.</li> <li>As of March 2018 all LAC had their immigration status and relevant support reviewed.</li> </ul>

## 15. Compliments

- 15.1 CYP logged 8 compliments on the ICasework complaints and compliments database. This is up on last year but lower than other Councils that we were benchmarked with. However this is not to say that we do not receive more compliments but we are not capturing them on the system. Managers are being encouraged to log any compliments. Here is an example of the compliments received in 2017/18.

- "I would like you to know how grateful and blessed my family and I were to have a SW. I was apprehensive when the SW contacted me for first time. However he showed understanding, empathy and willingness in helping us. I remember going home that day and telling my son and my husband about the conversation I had with him. I remember how nervous and anxious we all felt as we did not know what to expect from the visit. We, as a family, knew that*

*we needed to openly discuss our personal issues and concerns with a total "stranger" but the SW made it easier. His effective communication skills, his patience, his caring nature, his ability of being sensitive to other people's emotions, his ability to analyse situations and achieve the best outcome enabled us to fully trust him and express any worries or doubts. The SW was always very professional and organised in keeping accurate records of our conversations and gave constructive advice and we never felt judged or criticised".*

- *"The SW is a good listener, action/result orientated person with a high level of communication skills. Thank you for all the support to my daughter and my family wholeheartedly. The great role you have played in my daughter's case was immeasurable. I'm grateful for all your help and continued support. I don't agree with the way of handling my daughter's case but would like to thank you for being open-minded and your positive approach. I count myself lucky that you have been involved in my daughter's case".*

## Appendix C – 2017/18 Complaints Root Cause Summary & Improvement Actions by Department

### Community Wellbeing Department - Housing Directorate (778 cases including BHP and HMS)

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Customer Care – 237 cases; 181 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor communication – 101</li> <li>• Service failure - 54</li> <li>• Other - 34</li> <li>• Incorrect action/advice - 30</li> <li>• Attitude – 17</li> <li>• Correspondence – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Repairs &amp; Voids – 126 cases; 85 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delays in job being raised/completed – 66</li> <li>• General enquiry – 21</li> <li>• Unfinished works/repairs - 19</li> <li>• Reporting a matter for investigation – 9</li> <li>• Service failure - 9</li> <li>• Inspection information/quality - 2</li> </ul> <p><b>Housing Options – 69 cases; 29 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officer not answering calls/emails/letters/conduct - 24</li> <li>• Delay in processing application - 19</li> <li>• General enquiry – 12</li> <li>• Reporting a matter for investigation - 7</li> <li>• Housing application refused – 6</li> <li>• Interim Accommodation Refused - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>TA Support – 45 cases; 20 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitability of TA - 18</li> <li>• Length of time in B&amp;B/TA - 12</li> <li>• Band Assessment – 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>HMS – Property Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HMS - Property Services carries out over 30,000 repairs a year.</li> <li>▪ The service has introduced the following measures to help improve service delivery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integrated Assessment Management Contact Improvement plan focused on rectifying service issues identified in customer satisfaction surveys;</li> <li>- Access policy covering access to council and leaseholder properties to fix leaks and other repairs;</li> <li>- Scaffolding protocol for all scaffolding contracts and weekly management of scaffolding arrangements (Wates ceased using two scaffolding sub-contractors because of poor performance).</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Customer service training rolled out for service staff from October 2018.</li> </ul> <p><b>HMS - Customer Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HMS - Customer Service manages over 8,000 tenants and leaseholders in Brent.</li> <li>▪ Service improvements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customer Care complaints analysed to identify any themes/issues with Brent staff or contractors;</li> <li>- customer service training for staff;</li> <li>- new CRM system to improve case management and performance monitoring/management oversight;</li> <li>- Service Charge Dispute Resolution process;</li> <li>- duty officer system implemented;</li> <li>- Housing Service Promise and Customer Experience Panel launched.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Root Cause	Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Officer not answering calls/emails/letters/conduct - 44</li> </ul> <p><b>Building Services – 34 cases; 29 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delays in job completion – 24</li> <li>Service failure - 9</li> <li>Insurance claims – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Rehousing – 34 cases; 13 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Band assessment – 15</li> <li>Application – delays/progress - 9</li> <li>Locata – bids/waiting times 5</li> <li>Application review – 2</li> <li>Priority date – 2</li> <li>Property availabilities - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Leasehold Services – 33 cases; 13 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 20 notice - 8</li> <li>Repairs – 7</li> <li>Tenants / Leaseholders - 5</li> <li>Right to buy – 4</li> <li>Service charge – 4</li> <li>ASB from council sub-letting – 2</li> <li>Leasehold Services - 2</li> <li>Communal upkeep - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Tenancy - 18 cases; 9 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Anti-Social Behaviour – 16 cases; 7 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Enforcement - 15 cases; 1 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Start Plus – 13 cases; 8 upheld/partly upheld</b></p>	<p><b>Housing Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing Needs received over 5,000 homelessness approaches in 2017/18.</li> <li>An Outcome Based Review of Domestic Abuse support was carried out during the year and as a result a specialist post was created. A second specialist officer is being recruited because of the increasing level of demand for specialist advice and support.</li> <li>Other service improvements include: individuals and households provided with a tailored housing plan (statutory requirement of the new Homeless Reduction Act); trainees attending a central government HRA Training Academy; service managers supported and given increased responsibility for managing service requests and complaints.</li> <li>Planned improvements include the introduction of CRM case management and customer service training for staff).</li> </ul> <p><b>Private Housing Services (PHS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private Housing Services (PHS) manages 8,000 licenced properties, carries out 1,500 enforcement inspections annually, and carries out approximately 450 Small Works Grants (SWG) jobs and 300 Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) jobs each year</li> <li>Feedback from customer satisfaction surveys is used to improve service delivery.</li> <li>The service has ISO 9000 quality system accreditation and complaints are discussed regularly with individuals and at team meetings.</li> </ul>

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Planned Maintenance – 12 cases; 6 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Rents – 12 cases; 4 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Public Realm – 11 cases; 7 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Accommodation Services – 10 cases; 1 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Customer Response Team – 10 cases; 3 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Disabled Facilities Grant – 10 cases; 5 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b><i>Less than 10 root cause themes identified in the following cases:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All – 2; Appointments – 4; Cleaning - Internal/External – 4; Communal trees – 2; Communication – 6; Compliance &amp; Risk – 2; Decant – 3; Housing advice – 2; Lettings – 5; Mechanical &amp; Electrical – 4; Member / General Enquiry – 7; Parking – 2; Process / Procedures – 8; PRSO – 5; Rent Income – 1; Resident Involvement – 1; SWG – 6; Telephony – 3; Workmanship - 6</li> </ul>	

## Community Wellbeing Department – Adult Social Care Directorate (45 cases)

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Service – 25 cases; 15 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor Service – 13</li> <li>• Service not up to standard - 5</li> <li>• Service not provided – 3</li> <li>• Wrong Service Provided – 2</li> <li>• 3rd party contractor issues – 2</li> </ul> <p><b>Customer Care- 11 cases; 5 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorrect action taken - 6</li> <li>• Rudeness – 2</li> <li>• Contact Issues – 1</li> <li>• Correspondence issues – 1</li> <li>• Poor Attitude – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Adults Transitions Assessments – 2 cases; 1 partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Safeguarding – 3 cases</b></p> <p><b>Physical disabilities – 2 cases</b></p> <p><b>Hospital discharge – 1 case; upheld</b></p> <p><b>Member / General Enquiry – 1 case</b></p>	<p><b>Adult Social Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In 2017/18, Adult Social Care directorate received over 3,600 contacts, made over 3,600 assessments for homecare, residential or nursing services, and also carried out over 2,100 hospital discharge assessments.</li> <li>▪ Service improvements included the introduction of appeals process.</li> <li>▪ The feedback/learning from complaints is discussed with individual staff members, at team meetings and management meetings to help improve service delivery.</li> </ul>



## Community Wellbeing Department - Culture Directorate (63 cases)

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Libraries – 52 cases; 23 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>premises / environment - 15</li> <li>customer service – 9</li> <li>other service - 8</li> <li>computer provision – 6</li> <li>other customers – 6</li> <li>events and exhibitions - 4</li> <li>book loans – 1</li> <li>membership applications – 1</li> <li>online access – 1</li> <li>support for schools - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Sports facilities – 11; 7 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff / Customer service - 4</li> <li>Bookings / Classes – 1</li> <li>Courts – 1</li> <li>Other Service - 1</li> <li>Pricing / Policies - 1</li> <li>Health Suite – 1</li> <li>Pricing / Policies – 1</li> <li>Swimming Pool - 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>Culture Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Culture Services within the Public Health &amp; Culture directorate had over 36,000 active library borrowers and over 1.7m sports centre visits in 2017/18.</li> <li>Service improvements during the year included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ongoing staff training and performance management;</li> <li>regular discussion of complaint issues with individual staff, teams and management teams;</li> <li>Bridge Park facilities issues addressed with the contractors;</li> <li>heating and lighting issues at libraries addressed by the Facilities Management team;</li> <li>staff training/guidance provided regarding customer behaviour or managing noise levels in library spaces.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Parking &amp; Lighting – 175 cases; 73 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking Enforcement – 96</li> <li>• Parking Permit - 36</li> <li>• Parking Bay/Other – 17</li> <li>• Parking Bays – 10</li> <li>• Trees – 8; Car Parks – 4; Lighting – 2; Highways – 1; Member / General Enquiry – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Environmental Improvement – 94 cases; 27 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member / General Enquiry – 17</li> <li>• Parks and Open Spaces – 15</li> <li>• Recycling – 14</li> <li>• Refuse Collection - 14</li> <li>• On Street / Cleaning / Nuisance Control - 8</li> <li>• Cemeteries – 7</li> <li>• Customer Care - 4</li> <li>• Service – 3; Special Collection – 3; Vehicles – 3; Allotments – 2; Domestic – 2; BCS Contact Centre – 1; Trade - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Planning, Transport and Licensing – 68 cases; 22 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Application / Decision / Enforcement - 61</li> <li>• Member / General Enquiry – 3</li> <li>• Service – 2</li> <li>• Building Control – 1</li> <li>• Customer Care - 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>Parking &amp; Lighting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ During the year the Parking &amp; Lighting Service issued approximately 190,000 penalty charge notices (PCNs), processed 34,000 parking permits and administered 270,000 visitor parking bookings</li> <li>▪ Service area improvements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- review of Enforcement plan and targeted enforcement activity put in place to address hotspots;</li> <li>- replacement programme of pay and display parking machines underway;</li> <li>- parking contractor given clear timetable of parking suspensions and signage required and related PCN review process in place;</li> <li>- permit complaints addressed by system changes or customer advice;</li> <li>- tree maintenance requests/complaints considered against a planned schedule of tree maintenance across the borough and budget consideration</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Environmental Improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Environmental Improvement service responsibilities include Council parks, open spaces and cemeteries; and management of refuse and recycling services for approximately 119,000 households in the borough.</li> <li>▪ The majority of complaints were about a policy decision to reduce grass cutting in parks and grass verges during the year and feedback was provided on individual complaints.</li> <li>▪ Missed refuse and recycling bins collections were also addressed on an individual basis and there were no systemic issues with waste collection identified this during the year.</li> <li>▪ The discovery of a trace amount of asbestos at Paddington Cemetery led to a rise in the number of cemeteries related complaints</li> </ul> <p><b>Planning, Transport and Licensing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Planning service processed over 5,500 planning applications during 2017/18.</li> <li>▪ The main causes of complaints were planning applications, decisions, or enforcement (61 cases) and member/general enquiry (3 cases).</li> <li>▪ It is recognised that planning decisions can be unpopular or controversial at times and complaints about planning decisions are managed through a separate appeals process.</li> </ul>

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Highways and Infrastructure – 44 cases; 12 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dropped Kerbs/Illegal Drop Kerbs – 11</li> <li>• Footway Defects /Information / Relay Schemes - 7</li> <li>• Carriageway Defects/Potholes/ Resurfacing Schemes – 5</li> <li>• Road Signs/Markings/Closures &amp; Diversions – 3; Dangerous Road Junctions – 2; General enquiry – 2; Highways information and advice – 2; Parking Scheme Issues – 2; Reporting a matter for investigation – 2; Traffic Calming – 2; Disabled Parking Bays – 1; Double Yellow Lines – 1; Enforcement Not Taking Action – 1; Insurance Claims – 1; Other highways issue – 1; Vibrations to Property - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Safety and Public Protection – 21 cases; 5 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nuisance – 12; Service – 3; Customer Care – 3; Member / General Enquiry – 2; Community Safety - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Standards and Enforcement – 9 cases; 1 partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service – 4; Planning/Planning Enforcement – 3; Parking Enforcement – 1; Customer Care – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Civic Enterprise – 7 cases</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Control – 5; Member / General Enquiry – 1; Pest Control - 1</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Less than 5 root cause themes identified in the following cases:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Kilburn Programme – 4</li> <li>• Employment, Skills and Enterprise/Service Delivery – 2</li> </ul>	<p>Service errors in the administration of planning applications are discussed at an individual and team level to help improve service delivery standards.</p> <p><b>Highways and Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Highways &amp; Infrastructure service is responsible for roads and pavements in Brent and the service also handles approximately 240 drop kerb applications a year.</li> <li>▪ Service area improvements include: simplifying dropped kerb application forms; improved joint working with dropped kerb contractors; new Highways Enforcement team investigating illegal dropped kerbs; targeted 8-week pothole injection patching programme.</li> </ul>

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Housing Benefit/Council Tax Scheme – 45 cases; 25 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reconsiderations/appeals – 16</li> <li>• change of circumstances – 10</li> <li>• Housing benefit - current claim - 8</li> <li>• Overpayment decisions - 4</li> <li>• New claims – 3</li> <li>• My Account portal - 2</li> <li>• Discretionary housing payment - 2</li> </ul> <p><b>BCS Contact Centre – 25 cases; 7 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Centre - enquiry handling – 9</li> <li>• Contact Centre - officer behaviour - 9</li> <li>• Contact Centre - information and advice – 3</li> <li>• Contact Centre - waiting times – 3</li> <li>• Customer services – signposting –1</li> </ul> <p><b>Council tax/recovery - 18 cases; 10 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council tax – banding/billing, discount, queries, customer service, portal – 10</li> <li>• Council tax – recovery – 8</li> </ul> <p><b>Client Affairs – 15 cases; 7 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invoicing – 10</li> <li>• Assessments – 5</li> </ul> <p><b>Service – 12 cases, 5 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor Service – 5</li> <li>• Service not provided – 1</li> <li>• Service not up to standard - 6</li> </ul>	<p><b>Brent Customer Service (BCS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ BCS includes the Customer Contact Centre, Revenues &amp; Benefits service, Registration &amp; Nationality service, Client Affairs team, and Blue Badges team. The scale of BCS operations during 2017/18 included: 164,000 Contact Centre phone calls; 65,000 Contact Centre emails/web chat/tweets; over 121,000 live council tax accounts; over 10,000 Council Tax support awards and over 7,000 new Housing Benefit claims with over 130,000 changes in circumstances; 3,000 financial assessments; over 4,200 Blue Badge/Taxi Cards/Freedom pass applications.</li> <li>▪ A significant proportion of Housing Benefit complaints are about the benefit calculations and appeals are then dealt with through a separate statutory process. Feedback and learning points from complaints are discussed with individuals, teams and by the management teams across the department.</li> <li>▪ The department has recently been restructured and staff changes include the appointment of new manager for the Blue Badge service. Whilst there have been a few teething problems with staff changes and a few genuine mistakes, there have not been any significant systemic issues identified across the BCS during the year.</li> </ul>

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Customer Care – 12 cases; 5 partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attitude/ Poor Attitude/ Rudeness – 5</li> <li>• Contact Issues – 2</li> <li>• Correspondence issues – 4</li> <li>• Incorrect action taken – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Client FM – 12 cases; 5 upheld</b></p> <p><b>Overpayments/SD/AR – 12 cases; 1 upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recovery – 11</li> <li>• Invoicing / Billing – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Member / General Enquiry – 10 cases; 5 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Registration and Nationality – 8 cases; 5 partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Benefit – General – 7 cases; 2 partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Accounts Payable – 5 cases; 3 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <p><b><i>Less than 5 root cause themes identified in the following cases:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent Travel Team – 4; Customer Services – 2; Local Welfare Assistance – 2; Business rates – 1; Concessionary Travel – 1; Finance – 1; General/ Customer Service – 1; Legal Services – 1; Parks and Open Spaces – 1; Payments – 1; Welfare rights – 1</li> </ul>	


## Children & Young People Department (110 cases)

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Social Workers – 18 cases; 8 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Failure - 12</li> <li>• Communication – 6</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessments – 10 cases; 2 partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service not provided/not up to standard – 9</li> <li>• Communication – 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Leaving Care – 10 cases; 7 partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Failure – 6</li> <li>• Communication – 3</li> <li>• Policy or Procedure - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Corporate Parenting – 8 cases</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service not provided/not up to standard – 5</li> <li>• Communication – 3</li> </ul> <p><b>Family Social Work – 8 cases; 4 upheld/partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service not provided/not up to standard – 7</li> <li>• Communication delays - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Customer Care – 7 cases; 1 partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correspondence issues – 3</li> <li>• Poor attitude/rudeness – 3</li> <li>• Incorrect action - 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Service Failure – 7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service not provided – 6</li> <li>• Service delay - 1</li> </ul>	<p><b>CYP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CYP received over 5,300 referrals and completed over 5,100 Child &amp; Family assessments in 2017/18.</li> <li>▪ Learning points from complaints are discussed with individual staff and in team meetings and there is ongoing work with managers to improve service delivery.</li> </ul>

Root Cause	Actions
<p><b>Visits – 6 cases</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication/inaccurate/behaviour – 4</li> <li>• Service not provided/not up to standard – 2</li> </ul> <p><b>Placements – 5 cases; 3 partly upheld</b></p> <p><b>Finance/LAC Finance – 5 cases; 2 partly upheld</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service not provided/not up to standard – 4</li> <li>• LAC Finance - 1</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Less than 5 root cause themes identified in the following cases:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care Package – 3; Personal Advisors – 3; Family Support – 2; In Year Admissions – 2; Transfer Admissions – 2; Referrals – 2; Member/General Enquiry – 2; Child protection – 1; CP Conferences – 1; Communication – 1; Court Reports – 1; General enquiry – 1; Hardship and Subsistence – 1; LAC Reviews – 1; Reviews – 1; Quality Assurance – 1; Travel Arrangements – 1 case.</li> </ul>	

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	<b>Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee</b> 7 <sup>th</sup> February 2019
	<b>Report from the Director of Performance, Policy and Partnerships</b>
<b>Update Report ‘The Use of Food Banks in Brent’</b>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Non-key
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b>	Open
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	None
<b>Background Papers:</b>	One
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Pascoe Sawyers, Head of Strategy and Partnerships, <a href="mailto:Pascoe.Sawyers@brent.gov.uk">Pascoe.Sawyers@brent.gov.uk</a> 020 8937 1045

## 1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. This report provides an update of progress against the recommendations made by the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee Task Group as set out in their report about ‘The Use of Food Banks in Brent’. In November 2017, the task group made 36 recommendations for the council and other organisations including the NHS, foodbanks, the West London Business Alliance and the Department for Work and Pensions and central government.

## 2.0 Recommendation

The Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee to review the progress made against the recommendations.

## 3.0 Summary

- 3.1. Overall the council has made good progress on recommendations where they have oversight. Recommendations for other organisations have been forwarded to the relevant teams and recommendations for foodbanks will be reviewed through the foodbank network. It should be noted that some

recommendations are more complex and ongoing work and good partnership working is required in order to fully implement them.

- 3.2 The Council will continue to work closely with its partners to mitigate the impact that surrounds food insecurity and related issues. There are already great initiatives and partnership working underway including the partnership work between the council and local food aid providers. Council services make regular referrals to food banks and provide welfare advice and guidance via the Employment and Skills Advisors at Sufra. Moreover, Sufra have placed food donation boxes on the ground floor of the Civic Centre, enabling regular donations from staff and visitors to the council.
- 3.3 The Health and Wellbeing Board, the Adult Safeguarding Board and Child Safeguarding Partnership will explore the issues in the context of neglect and maintaining good health.
- 3.4 The Policy and Scrutiny Team have a number of activities planned ahead which will require co-ordination amongst several services throughout the council and with partner organisations including food banks. The Policy and Scrutiny Team supported the facilitation of the creation of the network of food banks and its first meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2019. The Policy and Scrutiny Team will provide further support by arranging training by the council's Regulatory Services on food safety. A mapping exercise is also underway to determine food aid providers in Brent which will help identify organisations for the food bank network.
- 3.4 The Food Bank Network is a key step that will enable the sharing of best practice and greater collaborative working between food aid providers and their partners. This includes the development of an offer for local food businesses to facilitate donations or in-kind assistance which the council can then promote via its communication channels and to the Park Royal Business Group.
- 3.5 The progress against all the recommendations are set out in the table below.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from the outcome of this report.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee has a statutory right to make recommendations to Council, Cabinet and certain partner authorities e.g. Health bodies or crime and disorder bodies to which the recipient must have regard. The committee can make recommendations to other organisations if it chooses but in such a case the recipient organisation is not be under any obligation to take account of the recommendation.

## **6.0 Equality Implications**

- 6.1 The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, s149 Equality Act 2010. The update report on 'The Use of Food Banks in Brent' demonstrates a commitment to that duty as it highlights the progress the council is making in order to have due regard to that duty.
- 6.2 The s149, Public Sector Equality Duty (outlined above) covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

### ***REPORT SIGN-OFF***

**Peter Gadson**

Director Performance, Policy and Partnerships

#### 4. Update on progress to date

- 4.1. There were 36 recommendations made to the council and a number of other organisations. The progress from the recommendations are below. Other recommendations have been forwarded to the relevant partners where appropriate.

No.	Recommendation	Progress Update
1	The council should formally respond to DWP's assessment that delays in benefit payments or disruption are not a contributory factor to food bank use by allocating the time of a council officer to work with front line agencies to collect data that will demonstrate this link once and for all.	The view of officers is that evidence gathered by the task group and its communications with the DWP over the course of its work was a powerful rebuttal of the DWP's position. There has not been the resource available since the task group reported to undertake a dedicated piece of additional work on this, though Customer Services has committed to collate relevant data to make this case to DWP.
2	The Government should begin monitoring and recording food bank referrals centrally with immediate effect. In the meantime, the local DWP and council should take steps to formally record this data.	<p>Referrals to foodbanks are made through the customer services team and Adult Social Care. Customer Services has historically made referrals to foodbanks and has recently begun to do the same with the Trussell Trust (Brent Food Bank). Customer Services records the name of the applicant and the number of clients per referral.</p> <p>Adult Social Care have a good partnership with foodbanks and referrals are usually made through the Learning Disabilities Team, Rehab and Reablement Team and Mental Health Service. The Rehab and Reablement Team are also a part of the NHS Food Aid scheme and hold a small stock of food parcels in the office to provide emergency assistance for residents.</p> <p>The Children's and Young Peoples Services (CYP) have not identified any referrals to foodbanks over September and October. CYP also anticipate that no referrals are coming from foodbanks and it is likely that statutory organisations are making them. The CYP Service will raise awareness of referring families to foodbanks with other organisations.</p>
3	The Government, council and Mayor of London must accelerate efforts that aim to provide jobs at or above the London Living Wage as calculated by the Living Wage Foundation, create avenues for skills and training for the users of food banks. Many are	Brent Council is a London Living Wage employer via the Living Wage Foundation. Council staff are paid the Living Wage or above with the exception of Level 2 Apprentices who start on the National Living Wage. The London Living Wage accreditation is being promoted to employers of the borough through the business rates bill letter and annual events in Living Wage Week. There are also communications to celebrate when accreditation is reached. However, uptake on the accreditation is limited across London including Brent despite the Business Rates Discount

No.	Recommendation	Progress Update
	willing to work to improve their family income but often have additional and complex needs.	Scheme. This may be due to the nature of the Brent labour market, which consists of large health and social care, retail, hospitality and warehousing and logistics sectors. Employment and skills advisors also spend time in Sufra to offer support around employment and training to residents of Brent.
4	Local DWP offices should make provision to visit food banks to assess the level of hardship these users face with a view to providing assistance with employment, benefits and skills and improving policy and practice	No response received from the Department of Work and Pensions.
5	The council's review of the Volunteering Brent contract in 2018 should consider support for a core group of trained volunteers able to accompany and advocate for vulnerable residents to DWP appeals, particularly for ESA cases. There is currently a need for this level of support but no adequate, coordinated provision	The contract with Volunteer Brent ends on 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2019 and there are currently no plans in place to provide an alternative service. However, Brent Council has a contract with Citizens Advice Brent to provide information and advice services to residents this includes casework. The provision of advice and support with court or appeal or tribunal cases. A number of other advice organisations are either sub-contracted or grant funded to provide advice and support to Brent residents across a number of areas including; welfare, benefits, housing immigration and employment. All the advice giving organisations have a pool of trained, knowledgeable and skilled volunteers working with services users. Sufra received funding in 2018 for AQS accreditation to provide information and guidance to services users.
6	The Government should develop a policy on food banks to acknowledge the increasing role they play in our communities. More and adequate funding should be offered to the food banks to support core service costs immediately while government develops more long term policies and solutions	No response requested from the Government.
7	Given the scale of this problem and likelihood that need will increase, all local public sector organisations should develop an official	The Customer Services Team has undertaken communication and actions to prepare residents and stakeholders for the impacts of the rollout of universal credit and to ensure a smooth handover. Crisis payments and discretionary housing payments will continue, along with

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Page 74	<p>policy on foodbanks within the next six months, including the council, local NHS and DWP. This policy should formalise best practice in dealing with food banks and their users and seek joined up, targeted solutions to prevent and address hunger and chronic poverty in the borough. We recommend that the Council bring forward a policy for sign off by cabinet ahead of the extended roll out of Universal Credit</p>	<p>referrals to foodbanks.</p> <p>The council and its partners will explore different ways to support the issues that surround food poverty. The Health and Wellbeing Board will explore issues in the context of maintaining good health. Furthermore, the Adult Safeguarding Board and Brent Child Safeguarding Partnership will also be exploring this in the context of neglect.</p> <p>There are a number of activities planned ahead that will require coordination amongst services including foodbanks. The Policy and Scrutiny team will play an active role in supporting some of these activities, which will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facilitating the creation of the foodbank network meeting</li> <li>- Arranging training by the council's regulatory services on food safety and exploring the feasibility of training around customer care</li> <li>- Promoting the use of foodbanks and their services to service users</li> <li>- Arranging visits to food banks by relevant council services</li> <li>- Agreeing an offer from foodbanks to businesses to facilitate donations and in-kind assistance</li> <li>- Arranging training by Housing Needs staff for food banks</li> <li>- Mapping food aid providers in Brent and encouraging them to join the network</li> <li>- Exploring the development of case management systems and approaches by food banks</li> </ul>
	<p>Council services should assist food aid providers to comply with legislation by acquiring food safety qualifications for all staff and volunteers, to ensure guests and users receive food of an adequate standard. The council with CVS Brent should proactively offer and promote formal training on safeguarding, food safety and customer care be offered to food bank volunteers</p>	<p>The council's regulatory services is able to provide training for food banks on food safety. Through the foodbank network, the Policy and Scrutiny team can explore the training that would be appropriate and feasible in terms of customer care. The Employment, Skills and Enterprise Team may be able to develop a bespoke training course on a relevant area of development. Organisations can also apply via the Brent Advice Fund for a capacity building grant to ensure organisations have the appropriate accreditation.</p> <p>CVS Brent also provides training on infrastructure needs i.e. fund-raising, governance, health and safety and GDPR amongst others.</p>
9	<p>The council should take a proactive approach in highlighting the negative impacts of universal credit and welfare reforms on Brent residents. We recommend that the Cabinet Member for Housing and Welfare Reform write to the Secretary of State at the DWP outlining the problems caused by UC and</p>	<p>Communicating the impact of universal credit has been a major focus for customer's services for a number of years. Customer Services are prepared to provide the Lead Member with relevant information should they wish to write to the Work and Pensions Secretary to outline the problems caused by universal credit and other welfare reform and request central government to formally track and monitor food bank usage.</p>

No.	Recommendation	Progress Update
	other welfare reforms and request for central Government to formally track and monitor food bank usage	
10	We recommend that the Leader of the Council coordinate a response with other affected boroughs on universal credit and the increase in residents seeking emergency food assistance. The Leader should advocate for change in this area via the LGA, LEP and West London Alliance and London Councils and report back in writing to the Scrutiny Committee on progress within six months.	Customer Services are prepared to provide the Leader with any information should they wish to advocate in this way.
11	The council should explore how they can cut costs for foodbanks, for example, by covering the costs of waste and recycling removal, in recognition of the increasing scope and importance of the services that food banks provide to residents in the borough	Environmental Services is unable to resource the implementation of this recommendation to cover the cost of waste and recycling removal. Officers also express the concern that such a concession is not proportionate to the need of food banks and not doing so for other voluntary organisations would be unfair and potentially open to challenge.
12	Developing a sharing network for emergency food aid providers in the borough to support each other in good practice measures and a joint policy framework. This could possibly be supported financially by a consortium funding bid. Encouraging greater collaboration between food aid providers to avoid duplication and service overlap and joint promotion of services to similar target groups. We recommend that the council helps to facilitate the first meeting of this group within the next three months	<p>The Policy and Scrutiny Team have undertaken the facilitation of the initial Food Bank Network on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2019 chaired by the Food Bank Champion Cllr Roxanne Mashari and attended by Cllr Eleanor Southwood and four other emergency food aid providers in the borough.</p> <p>This Network enables the exploration and implementation of several other recommendations including training for volunteers and better partnership working with local businesses to facilitate donations and in-kind assistance.</p>
13	Ensuring relevant council departments share data and opportunities for collaborative working and referrals (for example, when	Food bank referrals are part of the general response to mitigating welfare reform. There is considerable collaboration between council departments particularly Customer Services, Housing, Employment and Skills, Adult Social Care and Troubled Families.

No.	Recommendation	Progress Update
	families are moved into temporary accommodation such as B&Bs with limiting cooking facilities, officers should offer publicity material for our Community Kitchen as standard practice)	Housing needs have also indicated their intention to provide information in relation to the food banks to homeless households who are on low incomes or development on benefits as part of their initial assessments. Customer Services are open to incorporating specific advice and materials provided by the food banks and community kitchens, and this can be facilitated through the food bank network once developed. The food bank network can also support in collating and providing advice and materials for clients.
14	The council to coordinate visits for relevant teams to local food banks in order to better understand the scale and severity of need. At a minimum, these visits should include the housing, social care and benefits teams and include senior managers and directors.	A number of staff including those from Customer Services have visited food banks in order to better understand the scale and severity of need. The Director of Performance, Policy and Partnerships has volunteered multiple times at Sufra and staff from Housing Support and Enforcement also volunteered at Sufra over the Christmas period. Additional visits can be co-ordinated through the Food Bank Network once established.
5 Page 76	The council should proactively use its influence to encourage more local food businesses to work in partnership with emergency food aid providers and reduce food wastage by making donations or providing targeted in-kind assistance. This should include permanent food bank collection stations in supermarkets, and greater opportunities for food bank shopping lists to be offered to shoppers. The Cabinet Member for Employment and Skills should report back in writing on progress within the next 12 months	The food bank network will allow for better partnership working, both with food aid providers and other organisations. Through the food bank network, food banks can be asked to work with local businesses to facilitate donations or in-kind assistance. The council can then promote this through its communication channels and to the Park Royal Business Group where many food business are based.
16	Council officers with specialist expertise to share knowledge on housing or benefits by delivering training for staff and volunteers of food aid providers (this could be part of the	Customer Services regularly provide training and briefings on benefits matters to partner organisations, including food banks. Training events on the Homeless Reductions Act and other housing related issues can be provided by the Housing Needs Service for staff and volunteers of food aid providers. This can be facilitated by the Food Bank Network.



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	two volunteering days offered by the Council to its employees).	
17	Local employers should ensure internal policies are in place, such as advance loans, to support their staff who may experience financial hardship to prevent the need for people in work to use food banks. West London Business (WLB) should initiate these conversations among members as well as the issue being formally raised as an agenda item at the next Brent Business Board. This could also be raised with appropriate pan-London/ national groups such as London First, CIPD and BITC	<p>This proposal will be discussed with West London Business and other business membership groups to test employers' interest. It would likely require development and resource to conduct the creation, marketing and management of the scheme, which would need to be delivered by a business membership group in order to be owned and bought into by the business community.</p> <p>The CEO of West London Business suggests that a short advice note could also be added to the Brent for Business website and it could be raised as an item at the Brent Business Board for discussion.</p>
18	Park Royal Business Group should host a meeting with the Brent food businesses and food banks to discuss a coordinated response to food bank donations within the next six months. This meeting should also explore: a) whether there is a particular online platform that should be recommended for food donations; and b) whether creative responses can be found to improving cold storage capacity in local food banks and distribution channels	Council officers will make the suggestion to the Park Royal Business Group (PRBG). For this to progress, PRBG would need to agree to this being part of their annual event plan.
19	The council should resurrect its project with WLB and CVS Brent in creating a (or preferably identifying an existing) one-stop online platform for businesses to donate to local charities and causes. A proposal for this online platform should be brought forward to Cabinet within the next six months	No plans are currently in place to create a platform for Corporate Social Responsibility activity in partnership with West London Business and CVS. This would also have to be built into a future agreement with organisations providing support and assistance to the voluntary and community sector. An assessment to the cost and time required would need to be conducted and funding identified for delivery of the service/platform. The grant to the current provider ends 31 March 2019 and it is most likely dependent upon Cabinet approval that the Council will be retendering the grant for this service.
20	Brent and its partners should do all they can	If there is clear demand for additional food bank capacity in Brent, an ask can be made to

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	to ensure adequate spaces are available to food banks as guest numbers surge on a daily basis. The Council's property and regeneration teams should report to the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee within the next six months on the possibility of extra space for food banks, both in terms of floor space for services and off-site storage	developers locally in case they are able to provide any in-kind or low cost space as part of their social value offer. The council could assess whether it has any available properties within its ownership, and consider this case in relation to other plans or demands for the buildings.
21	Food banks should offer holiday food parcels to children eligible for free school meals in line with the approach taken by St Laurence's Larder. The Cabinet Member for Children and Families, along with the Strategic Director of Children & Young People and her department, should consider how they can facilitate schools to do the same	Regular information about foodbanks and other relevant support will be sent out to head teachers and governors through their respective bulletins over December and January. The Children's and Young Peoples Operational Director, Safeguarding, Partnership and Strategy will act as a main contact for schools.
22	The Strategic Director of Children & Young People and her department should discuss with schools opportunities for them to visit local food banks as per best practice led by Brent Trussell Trust Food Bank. The task group heard how this approach has helped to break down stigma and increase understanding of how food banks operate and the services they provide	<p>The CYP Operational Director will be available to attend co-ordinated visits where appropriate. In addition, CYP Brent Family Front Door staff and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be writing to local foodbanks offering awareness raising sessions in the new year.</p> <p>The foodbank network will also allow for better co-ordination and awareness raising of foodbanks and council services. Through the network discussions could take place about how partners could work together to breakdown the stigma and increase understanding of the services that foodbanks provide and how they operate.</p>
23	Brent mental health services should provide a named contact to local food bank managers and seek to develop closer working to tackle the numerous cases of low level and severe mental health issues presenting at food banks	<p>The Mental Health Service has good partnership with local foodbanks. There is a named officer responsible for coordinating referrals, who has developed good working relationships with local foodbanks, making referrals for the past 12 months.</p> <p>The Brent Talking Therapy Steering Group will provide contact details of relevant organisations to food bank managers so that patients can self-refer for mental health support. These details will be shared via the Task Group's distribution list to food bank managers. Further support information can also be shared via the network.</p>

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24	The council should nominate a member as a 'Food Champion' to oversee the implementation of the task group recommendations and provide coordination and political impetus behind driving solutions to food poverty and food bank usage across the borough. The Council should agree the number of hours of officer support the Food Champion is able to receive	A Food Champion has now been nominated. Cllr Roxanne Mashari will chair the foodbank network and oversee the implementation of the recommendations through the Network.
25	The council should facilitate a comprehensive mapping of the borough to determine all the local sources of dry food and cooked food available to those in the greatest need, and access routes. This would include food banks, community kitchens, places of worship, the voluntary sector, schools, etc	This is currently being undertaken by the Policy and Scrutiny Team. Relevant organisations identified through the mapping exercise could also be invited to the join the network.
26	Local statutory service providers, Brent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Children's Trust should make efforts to be aware of the food aid services available and actively propose that more GPs and schools register as referral agencies. Brent CCG and the Children's Trust should report on progress with this recommendation within the next 12 months	Information about foodbanks and accessing support will be sent out to head teachers and governors through their respective bulletins over December and January. The Head Teachers Bulletin will also highlight how schools can register as a referral agency. The Operational Director, Safeguarding, Partnerships & Strategy, Children and Young People Service, will be a main contact for queries from schools. The Health and Wellbeing Board will explore the issues surrounding food banks in the context of maintaining good health. Brent Children's Trust and NHS Brent CCG also report to the Health & Wellbeing Board when working with Public Health on health promotion/ illness prevention.
27	The council should profile the work of food aid providers through its communications	The council's communications team has issued tweets on social media and ran a prominent 'Food for thought' feature on food banks in the December edition of The Brent Magazine which

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	such as the Brent Magazine or on social media to assist in reaching vulnerable residents unfamiliar with available services	coincided with the roll-out of Universal Credit in Brent. This feature was also promoted on social media and in other channels such as the council website and 'YourBrent' e-newsletter.
28	Food banks should follow the example of Sufra food bank in providing a simple guide to food bank users on the range of support available locally on areas such as housing, skills, legal support and employment including relevant contact details	This recommendation can be discussed at the Food Bank Network once established and progressed where appropriate.
29	Food banks should work towards formalising case management systems that provide better data collection and enable the development of a tailored action plan for each food bank user to help identify a pathway out of poverty. The council, CCG and local DWP should work with food banks to support the development of these action plans and case management systems	Once established, the Food Bank Network will allow its partner agencies to discuss case management systems in more detail. This will also align with the Financial Inclusion Strategy.
30	Organisations operating food banks should consider changing the name from food bank (which unfortunately carries a stigma and is limiting), to another name that reflects the multiple services they provide. This may encourage those people who do not come to the food bank because of the stigma, but have an essential need, to take advantage of the multiple services that will benefit them and their families.	This recommendation can be discussed at the Food Bank Network once established and progressed where appropriate.

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31	The Council and its partners should consider how access to food banks and community kitchens are included in the development of the Brent Community Hub Models.	<p>The core Harlesden Hub team have been set up to make client referrals to Sufra. Harlesden Hub has established close links and client referral pathways with the Harlesden Weekly Fresh Foodbank, run from Tavistock Hall.</p> <p>Sufra was a key partner in the prototyping of the Hub model in Central Middlesex Hospital in early 2018. Local partners, including foodbanks, will continue to be engaged as the hub model is expanded to new locations, ensuring the hub offer is tailored to local needs.</p>
32	The council should actively challenge the stigma associated with emergency food aid externally through positive media coverage and internally by assisting providers with training and support to offer a welcoming and compassionate service	<p>The communications the council has issued on food banks has actively challenged the stigma associated with emergency food aid and encouraged people to seek help from a number of registered foodbanks including Sufra NW London, Brent Foodbank, St Laurence's Larder, Open Kitchen and the Granville Community Kitchen.</p> <p>The Policy &amp; Scrutiny team will also be exploring the feasibility of commissioning customer care training for food banks.</p>
33	A joint education campaign should be developed and run by the Council and voluntary sector. This should include the educating guests about the impending roll out of Universal Credit in Brent and should be included in the work of food banks, kitchens, etc	The council's preparations for the introduction of Universal Credit have involved trainings and briefings for all relevant partner organisations including food banks. Due to resource limitations, this work has mainly provided partners with all the information and support they require to support and educate their clients.
34	The quality of food used by food banks should be monitored by food bank staff to make sure they met a legal standard. This will be both voluntarily donated and bought in by providers.	Good practice measures can be shared and discussed through the Food Bank Network once established.
35	The task group recommends a member development training session for councillors on dealing with residents in severe hardship and how to make food bank referrals	This session was held on 17th April 2018, with participation by Cllr Roxanne Mashari (the chair of the task group), the council's Director of Performance, Policy & Partnerships, Brent Foodbank, Sufra NW London, St Laurence's Larder, Granville Community Kitchen, and the council's Head of Customer Services. Materials from the session were distributed to members afterwards.
36	Donations from individuals are also	As mentioned above under recommendation 27, the council's Communications team helps to

No.	Recommendation	Progress Update
	important, and the council should help publicise the types of donations that food banks need, such as the Trussell Trust and Sufra shopping lists	promote local food banks, and encourages those who are able to make food donations. Donation boxes from Sufra are also placed on the ground floor of the Civic Centre, enabling regular donations from staff and visitors to the council.