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Cabinet

Monday 14 November 2022 at 10.00 am
Conference Hall - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, HA9 0FJ

Please note this will be held as a physical meeting which all Cabinet members will be required to attend in person.

The meeting will be open for the press and public to attend or alternatively can be followed via the live webcast. The link to follow proceedings via the live webcast is available HERE

Membership:

Lead Member Councillors:	**Portfolio**
M Butt (Chair)	Leader of the Council
M Patel	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources & Reform
Donnelly-Jackson	Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities & Culture
Farah	Cabinet Member for Safer Communities & Public Protection
Grahl	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools
Knight	Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security
Nerva	Cabinet Member for Public Health & Adult Social Care
Krupa Sheth	Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action
Southwood	Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy & Citizen Experience
Tatler	Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning

For further information contact: James Kinsella, Governance Manager, Tel: 020 8937 2063; Email: james.kinsella@brent.gov.uk

For electronic copies of minutes, reports and agendas, and to be alerted when the minutes of this meeting have been published visit: **democracy.brent.gov.uk**

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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 of 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

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interest

Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, the nature and existence of any relevant disclosable pecuniary or personal interests in the items on this agenda and to specify the item(s) to which they relate.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting 1 - 8

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 17 October 2022 as a correct record.

4 Matters Arising (if any)

To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

5 Petitions (if any)

To discuss any petitions from members of the public, in accordance with Standing Order 66.

6 Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committees (if any)

To consider any reports referred by the Community & Wellbeing and Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committees.

Finance & Resources reports

7 Draft Budget 2023/24 9 - 262

This report sets out the Council's budget proposals for 2023/24 and also provides a general update on the Council's overall financial position, including an overview of the current economic outlook.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform (Councillor Mili Patel)
Contact Officer: Minesh Patel, Corporate Director of Finance & Resources
Tel: 020 8937 4043
minesh.patel@brent.gov.uk

Resident Services reports

8 Update on New Affordable Housing Supply 263 - 296

This report provides an update on the New Council Homes Programme (NCHP) along with an outline of current pressures on schemes both in contract and those in the pipeline highlighting any viability gaps identified as a result and options for cross subsidisation. The report also includes an overview of the three major projects being led by the Council, South Kilburn, Wembley Housing Zone and St Raphael's Estate.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security (Councillor Promise Knight)
Contact Officer: Emily-Rae Baines, Head of Affordable Housing and Neighbourhoods
Tel: 020 8937 1131
Emily-Rae.Maxwell@brent.gov.uk

9 Future St Raphael's Estate 297 - 310

This report outlines proposals relating to the transformation of St Raphael's Estate through the investment of £30 million in relation to a programme of estate improvements.

Ward Affected:
Stonebridge

Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security (Councillor Promise Knight)
Contact Officer: Emily-Rae Baines, Head of Affordable Housing and Neighbourhoods
Tel: 020 8937 1131
Emily-Rae.Maxwell@brent.gov.uk

10 Refurbishment of Granville New Homes 311 - 328

This report updates Cabinet on the progress to remediate the housing stock known as Granville New Homes. The properties have inherent water penetration issues and poor fire protection and therefore require extensive remediation in order that they can continue to provide accommodation for Council tenants.

Ward Affected:
Kilburn

Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security (Councillor Promise Knight)
Contact Officer: Ryan Collymore, Head of Service Housing Property Services
020 8937 1204
Ryan.Collymore@brent.gov.uk

11 Cost of Living Crisis: Supporting Residents with a Warm Place in Brent this Winter 329 - 340

This report provides Cabinet with an update on the current actions and future planned activities the Council are taking to help mitigate the impact of the Cost-of-Living crisis on our residents, specifically the issue of rising energy bills this winter.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Culture (Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson)
Contact Officer: Thomas Cattermole, Director of Customer Access
Tel: 020 8937 5446
thomas.cattermole@brent.gov.uk

Children and Young People reports

12 School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 Refresh 341 - 386

This report provides Cabinet with a refresh of the School Place Planning Strategy 2019-2023 approved by Cabinet in November 2018.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools (Councillor Gwen Grahl)
Contact Officer: Shirley Parks, Interim Director Safeguarding, Performance and Strategy
Tel: 020 8937 4529
Shirley.Parks@brent.gov.uk

13 Consultation on Admissions Arrangements for Community Schools for 2024-2025 387 - 402

This report seeks Cabinet's permission to consult on changes to the Admission Arrangements for Brent Community Schools for 2024/25.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Lead Member: Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools (Councillor Gwen Grahl)
Contact Officer: Shirley Parks, Interim Director Safeguarding, Performance and Strategy
Tel: 020 8937 4529
Shirley.Parks@brent.gov.uk

Governance reports

14 Annual Procurement Strategy Report - FY 2021-22 403 - 450

This report presents the Annual Procurement Strategy Report 2021/22,

showing the progress made since Cabinet approval in October 2020 across the five pillars of the Procurement Strategy 2020-2023.

Ward Affected: All Wards	**Lead Member**: Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform (Councillor Mili Patel) **Contact Officer**: Rajesh Shori, Head of Procurement 020 8937 1598 Rajesh.shori@brent.gov.uk

15 Complaints Annual Report 2021-22 451 - 492

This annual report sets out complaints performance in Brent Council for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 and focuses on the nature of complaints and the learning they provide to inform Brent's future approach to service improvement.

Ward Affected: All Wards	**Lead Member**: Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform (Councillor Mili Patel) **Contact Officer**: Mariza Barros, Complaints and casework Manager 020 8937 1381 mariza.barros@brent.gov.uk

16 Exclusion of Press and Public

The following items are not for publication as they relate to the category of exempt information set out below, as specified under Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

Agenda Item 8:	Update on New Affordable Housing Supply – Appendix 1 (Schemes in Contract), Appendix 2 (Outcome of testing the impact on viability of unit mix changes for schemes not yet in contract), Appendix 3 (Wembley Housing Zone Update) and Appendix 4 (South Kilburn Regeneration Financial Summary) Appendices 1 - 4 are classified as exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely: "Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)"

17 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 her representative before

the meeting. Any decisions taken urgently under this heading must comply with the provisions outlined in paragraph's 12 and 39 of the Council's Access to Information Rules (part 2 of the Constitution).

Date of the next meeting: Monday 12 December 2022



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. Alternatively, it will be possible to follow proceedings via the live webcast **HERE**

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LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE CABINET
Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 17 October 2022 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Councillor M Butt (Chair), Councillor M Patel (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Donnelly-Jackson, Farah, Grahl, Knight, Nerva, Krupa Sheth, Southwood and Tatler.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Cabinet noted that Arnold Meagher (Head of Litigation & Dispute Resolution) was attending to represent Debra Norman (Corporate Director Governance) and Tom Cattermole (Director of Customer Access) to represent Peter Gadsdon (Corporate Director Resident Services).

An apology for absence was received from Phil Porter (Corporate Director Adult Social Care & Health).

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 12 September 2022 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. **Matters Arising (if any)**

None.

5. **Petitions (if any)**

There were no petitions submitted for consideration at the meeting.

6. **Reference of item considered by Scrutiny Committees (if any)**

There were no references from either the Community & Wellbeing or Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committees submitted for consideration at the meeting.

7. **Draft Borough Plan 2023-2027**

Councillor Muhammed Butt (Leader of the Council) introduced a report presenting the draft Borough Plan 2023-27 along with an outline of plans to engage with residents, partners, stakeholders and staff on the provisional outline of priorities which had been identified.

In considering the report Cabinet noted the work undertaken in developing the draft Borough Plan to capture the achievements made during the previous four-year period and also provide the context, narrative and Administrations strategic priorities and ambitions over the next four-year period in order to best support the borough and its diverse communities.

In recognising the progress made, members were keen to ensure that the Borough Plan was also designed to build on lessons learnt and reflect the impact of challenges arising from the cost-of-living crisis on the capacity and resources available to deliver services, whilst also seeking to build on the strong community spirit and foundations across the borough. Having noted the outcome of the consultation undertaken to date with a range of stakeholders, members were keen to endorse the priorities identified within the Draft Borough Plan in relation to Prosperity, Pride and Belonging in Brent; A Cleaner, Greener Future; Respect and Renewal in Brent alongside providing the Best Start in Life and A Healthier Brent.

In expressing support for the priorities outlined, members were keen to highlight the ongoing commitment to increasing the supply of safe, secure, genuinely affordable and accessible housing alongside the regeneration of the borough linked to delivery of the policies within the newly adopted Local Plan. Whilst recognising the ongoing financial challenges and increased level of demand on services, Members also welcomed the ambition within the Draft Borough Plan to continue prioritising the most vulnerable whilst also seeking to protect essential services in order to support all residents across the borough.

Having considered the report, Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

(1) To endorse the draft Borough Plan 2023-27 (as set out within Appendix A of the report).

(2) To note plans for widespread public consultation and engagement on the Draft Plan, as outlined in section 4 of the report.

(3) To note plans to develop and publish a supporting evidence base alongside the final Borough Plan.

(4) To agree that the Leader be authorised to make any final amendments to the Borough Plan before its submission to Full Council following, consideration by Scrutiny and outputs from the upcoming engagement programme.

8. Q2 Financial Report 2022-23

Councillor Mili Patel (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources & Reform) introduced a report, which detailed the current forecast of income and expenditure versus the revenue budget for 2022-23 and other key financial data.

In considering the report, Cabinet noted the current pressures being forecast for the year, which totalled £3.9m and reflected the forecast overspend within Children & Young People. This comprised of £2.2m within the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) and £1.7m within the General Fund in relation to the Localities, Looked After Children & Permanency and Placement budgets. Members were advised of the

management actions being undertaken in order to mitigate the pressures identified in these areas, which it was noted reflected national trends and challenges in the recruitment and retention of social work staff as well as the increased demand and costs for residential placements. The report also detailed the changes made in order to align the budget with the Council's new corporate structure (as detailed within Appendix B of the report) and progress in delivery of the £2.7m savings target for 2022-23 (as detailed within Appendix A of the report).

Members also noted the ongoing risks and uncertainties outlined in relation to inflationary pressures and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis both in terms of the current financial year and Council's overall Medium Term Financial Strategy, given the increased demand on services and also rising costs. Alongside this, members were also advised of the significant risks identified in relation to the Council's Capital Programme, which currently included a forecast slippage of £15.9m and overspend of £2.8m attributable to both the General Fund and HRA Housing Programme. These pressures reflected rising inflation combined with the increased cost of borrowing and a shortage of labour and materials, which it was noted had adversely impacted on the financial viability of schemes within the programme and had resulted in the Council therefore having to explore a range of options to sustain viability including pausing, reducing or reviewing the existing the scope or tenure mix of schemes to ensure funding could continue to be prioritised appropriately.

Commenting on the adverse impact of the measures included in the Governments mini budget delivered in September, members also noted the further announcement of an accompanying medium term fiscal plan now expected at the end of October alongside growth and borrowing forecasts from the Office for Budget Responsibility. Cabinet was advised that any further impact on the Council's budget arising as a result would be detailed within the Draft 2023/24 Budget Report due to be presented at the next meeting in November.

Having recognised the ongoing challenges and financial pressures being faced across the Council and work being undertaken to manage the Council's overall budget position in relation to the ongoing economic uncertainty it was **RESOLVED** to note the overall financial position and the actions being taken to manage the issues arising.

9. **Request of SCIL Allocation to Support the Delivery of Separate Projects**

Councillor Tatler (Cabinet member for Regeneration & Planning) introduced a report seeking approval for the use of Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (Strategic CIL) funding contributions towards the delivery of a number of separate projects.

In introducing the report, Cabinet were advised that proposals put forward for consideration had all been assessed as eligible for Strategic CIL funding, in accordance with the Strategic CIL Regulations. This reflected the fact the funding being sought, whilst assisting in addressing identified viability gaps, had been designed to support development and growth through delivery of the community infrastructure elements of each scheme.

Members thanked all those involved for their efforts in developing the proposals, which it was recognised would assist with the ongoing delivery of the infrastructure

required to support development for local communities across the borough and, on this basis, Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

(1) To approve the allocation of Strategic CIL funds as follows:

- £0.9m for use towards Wembley Transport Improvements.
- £413,000 for use towards Wembley Hostile Vehicle Measures.
- £559,100 for use towards Harlesden Library.
- £1,951,162 for use towards the creation of Carlton Vale Boulevard.
- £102,427.26 for use towards the creation of a new community café and external amenity space as part of the Stonebridge redevelopment.
- £1,015,684.77 for use towards the creation of a new community facility as part of the Preston Community Library redevelopment.
- £2,643,445.04 for use towards the creation of a new community centre as part of Learie Constantine Centre redevelopment.
- £2,479,770.31 for use towards the creation of a new community centre as part of the Brent Indian Community Centre redevelopment.

(2) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Finance & Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources & Reform, to agree any additional SCIL allocations to the Morland Gardens project and any SCIL allocation to the Church End redevelopment project.

10. Brent Long Term Transport Strategy Review - Final Version

Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure & Climate Action) introduced a report providing an update on the work undertaken to review the Brent Long Term Transport Strategy 2015-2035 (LTTS), including details of the feedback received from the public consultation and stakeholder engagement process.

In considering the report, Cabinet noted that the Strategy had been designed to provide the strategic direction for investment in transport across Brent with the overarching aim of improving and providing joined up transport options for all, whilst also seeking to reduce the negative impacts of travel on the borough.

Whilst noting the progress made since publication of the original strategy in 2015, members recognised the nature of the ongoing challenges to be addressed particularly in relation to congestion, air quality and road safety alongside other more recent issues in terms of tackling health and social inequalities and climate change. As a result, the strategy had been reviewed and updated to take account of the challenges and also opportunities identified and to take account of key national, mayoral and local policies and to support the wider delivery of new infrastructure and jobs across the borough.

Whilst recognising that delivery of the strategy would need to be undertaken in partnership with key stakeholders and noting the challenges this created as a result of the ongoing funding pressures being experienced by Transport for London (TfL), members welcomed the strategy and proposed transport improvements identified.

As a result, Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

(1) To agree the minor amendments, designed to strengthen the strategy (as detailed in section 3.11 and Table 3.3 of the report).

(2) Subject to (1) above, to adopt the final strategy (as set out within Appendix A of the report)

(3) To note the feedback received and suggestions made by the public and various stakeholders as part of the public consultation and stakeholder engagement exercises on the draft strategy document (as summarised in sections 3.3 – 3.10 of the report).

11. **Highways Capital Maintenance Programme 2022-23**

Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure & Climate Action) introduced a report presenting the Highways Maintenance Scheme Programme for 2022-23.

Having introduced the report, Cabinet noted the programme of works delivered as a result of the Highways Maintenance Investment Programme in 2021-22 in relation to Brent's footways, roads and highway structures, based on the allocation of £3.5m of capital investment supported by £1.67m from the Recovery Fund (as detailed within Appendix A of the report). Members were advised these works had covered approx. 1.3% of the borough's road and footway networks. This investment had also been supplemented, up to the end of 2021-22, with an additional £18.5m as part of the £20m Footway Improvement Programme. Once the final scheme within that Programme (Kilburn High Road project) had been completed it was noted that approx. 45 miles of footway would have been resurfaced, equating to about 8.5% of the borough footway network.

As a consequence of the ongoing funding pressures being experienced by Transport for London (TfL), members were also advised of the limited funding which had been made available since 2018-19 towards Principal Road (A-road) improvements, with no specific funding from TfL having been allocated to Brent for this purpose in 2021-22 and 2022-23. Given the relatively poor condition of the Principal Road Network, members welcomed the proposal outlined in the report to invest a further £15m over the next four years in support of a planned maintenance programme. This would involve the allocation of £2m in 2022-23 with the remaining £13m over the following three years and would include £4m for Principal Road maintenance with the remainder of the allocation to support footway reconstruction, which would be subject to a prioritisation process and consultation with ward councillors.

Members noted the details provided in relation to the prioritised programme for major road resurfacing; preventative maintenance; major footway reconstruction; improvements to highway structures and drainage; improvements to public realm and renewal of road markings identified for 2022-23, along with the detailed Highways Asset Management and scheme prioritisation process. Whilst expressing concern at the impact of the funding pressures and current financial settlement agreed with TfL, Cabinet **RESOLVED** to approve the proposed Highways Maintenance Scheme Programme 2022-23 as detailed in Appendix B of the report.

12. **Acquisition of 10X Buy Back Properties**

Councillor Knight (Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security) introduced a report regarding the proposed purchase of ten properties on the open market for general housing needs and informing members of a further GLA grant award from the London Mayor's fund to support the administrative costs associated with the acquisitions.

In considering the report, Cabinet noted that the proposed acquisitions had been designed to increase the stock of Council owned affordable housing which, in accordance with the conditions of the GLA grant, would be let at social rent levels.

In supporting the proposed acquisitions, Members were keen to recognise the ongoing work being undertaken to support households who were either homeless, at risk of homelessness or in housing need and in terms of increasing the supply of safe, secure and appropriately sized accommodation.

As a result, Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

(1) To approve the proposed acquisition of up to ten properties from the open market.

(2) To approve a maximum budget of £3.2m to cover the remaining balance of the acquisition.

13. **Proposals for Future Brent Carbon Offset Fund Allocations and Together Towards Zero Small Grants Scheme Criteria**

Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure & Climate Action) introduced a report outlining proposals for the allocation of two Council climate funding schemes and also providing an update on the "Together Towards Zero" small grants scheme alongside a refreshed proposal for the management of the second phase of the scheme.

In considering the report, Cabinet began by noting the proposed policy framework outlined for utilisation of the Council's Carbon Offset Fund taking account of the specific GLA guidance on its use and available discretion in terms of how funding was allocated in relation to carbon reduction activity. In recognising and commending the progress made to date in terms of the initial tranche of funding allocated and pipeline allocation policy, members were advised that approval was now being sought to extend future use of the available Fund to support energy efficiency improvements for both domestic and non-domestic properties as a means of assisting to tackle carbon emissions. This would be based on a split involving 60% for use on the Council's own housing stock; 30% on the Council's Community and Foundation school estate and 10% held in reserve for general use (which it was confirmed would include match funding for grant and other project schemes). The approach outlined would also support the opportunity available to bid for additional grant funding through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, as detailed within section 5 of the report.

An update was also provided on progress on the Brent "Together Towards Zero" small grants scheme to support environmentally friendly and green local community

projects. Having noted and welcomed the success of the first phase of the scheme, under which 35 projects had been awarded funding totalling £32,490, proposals were also outlined for the second phase of the scheme, due to launch in Autumn 2022. Members were advised that the proposals included an increase in the maximum bid amount from £1,000 to £5,000 along with an updated assessment criteria as detailed within section 7 of the report, which had been designed to further encourage applications for more visible and ambitious community environmental projects.

Members were supportive of the proposals outlined in the report, which it was felt reflected the Council's innovative approach towards the development and use of its carbon offset funding contributions in a way that sought to maximise community engagement as well as the level of funding available.

Having considered the updates provided, Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

(1) In respect of the Brent Carbon Offset Fund:

(a) To agree the future allocation policy for Brent's Carbon Offset Fund, as outlined in section four of the report (60% to own housing stock; 30% to schools; 10% held in reserve for general use), and to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Resident Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action, to have overall responsibility for the oversight and operationalisation of the policy, with an immediate opportunity to utilise as part of a bid to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

(2) In respect of the Together Towards Zero Small Grants Scheme:

(a) To approve the proposed amendment to raise the maximum amount payable to successful applicants to the Together Towards Zero Grant Scheme from £1,000 to £5,000.

(b) To delegate authority to the Director of Environment and Leisure to approve Together Towards Zero applications up to the overall value of £100k.

(c) To delegate authority to the Director of Environment and Leisure to approve any subsequent changes to the key grant documentation such as: guidance notes, application form, frequently asked questions, funding agreements, evidence of community support template and data protection and safeguarding pack.

14. Customer Access Strategy 2022-2026: Contact Brent

Councillor Southwood (Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy & Citizen Experience) introduced a report presenting the Council's Customer Access Strategy 2022 -26.

Members noted that the strategy had been designed to build upon Brent's Customer Promise by setting out the Council's commitment to enhancing the services and customer experience provided for residents involving a whole organisation approach. This recognised that customers accessed Council services in a variety of ways, not only though customer services, and therefore sought to

deliver and embed a more consistent customer experience across the whole Council providing clear expectations of what should be expected from not only staff but also customers and residents.

Members were advised that the Strategy had also been designed to run alongside the Council's Digital Strategy, recognising the need to ensure all customer contact and access to services remained as flexible and easy to use as possible.

In commending and welcoming the strategy, members noted the ambitious nature of the Key Performance Indicators developed to monitor delivery and success of the strategy along with the consultation undertaken with customers, residents and staff as part of its development.

Having recognised the commitment within the strategy to enhancing the way services were accessed and provided for residents and customers Cabinet **RESOLVED**:

(1) To approve the Customer Access Strategy 2022-2026, as detailed within Appendix A of the report.

(2) To note that progress and key performance indicators would be reported to the Council Management Team on a quarterly basis.

15. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press or public.

16. **Any other urgent business**

None.

The meeting ended at 10.35 am

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair

	Cabinet 14 November 2022
	Report from the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources
Draft Budget 2023/24	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt:	Open
No. of Appendices:	Two Appendix A Summary of new 2023/24 budget proposals Appendix B Detailed budget templates for new 2023/24 budget proposals
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Minesh Patel Corporate Director of Finance and Resources Email: minesh.patel@brent.gov.uk Tel: 020 8937 4043 Rav Jassar Deputy Director of Finance Email: ravinder.jassar@brent.gov.uk Tel: 020 8937 1487

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to set out the Council's budget proposals for 2023/24. It also provides a general update on the Council's overall financial position, including an overview of the current economic outlook.

1.2. This report renews the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which is the Council's overarching financial planning document. The MTFS contains forecasts

for the financial position of the Council's General Fund revenue budget, as well as providing a framework within which financial planning is undertaken for the Housing Revenue Account, the Dedicated Schools Grant and the Capital Programme.

1.3. It should be recognised, however, that forecasting over the medium term is extremely difficult. There is a high level of uncertainty due to high levels of inflation, economic turmoil resulting from war in Ukraine, the Government's short-term funding settlements, delays in funding reforms, the effects of the cost of living crisis on residents and businesses in the borough and the impact of Brexit.

1.4. The report outlines the approach being taken to address the budget gap expected to result from demographic and inflationary pressures. As the economic environment remains challenging, it is extremely difficult to make a full, definitive and comprehensive assessment of the potential financial impacts. The figures in this report are based upon best estimates and forecasts, which will be subject to change. The significance of the financial challenge cannot be underestimated; however, the measures outlined in this report aim to ensure that the Council continues to operate in a financially sustainable and resilient way.

1.5. As reported to Cabinet in July 2022, due to the issues identified above, the budget gap between 2023/24 and 2024/25 is estimated at £28m, which is the central case based on current budget assumptions and scenario modelling. The accuracy of this is probably at best +/- 20%, and wider variations are entirely plausible. The actual figure required will not be known until a longer term Spending Review for Local Government is announced. The budget gap is profiled £18m next year and £10m the year after.

1.6. Given the high-level of uncertainty over the economic environment and the funding of local government, the Council has decided to restrict its budget proposals to a single year, rather than the two-year programme that was customary practice.

1.7. The Council has therefore now brought forward a series of new proposals totalling £18m which, if approved following consultation and scrutiny, would be implemented in 2023/24. These new proposals, and the updates to budget assumptions set out in this report, will enable the Council to set a balanced budget for 2023/24. Any material changes to circumstances, such as a worse than expected local government finance settlement, would need to be addressed via the use of reserves; conversely, favourable changes could mean that some of the savings proposals would not need to be implemented. The new savings proposals for 2023/24 are summarised in Appendix A and full details of each of the proposals are set out in Appendix B.

1.8. There remains significant uncertainty over local government funding in the medium term in the absence of a longer term Spending Review and the outcome of other significant reforms to Local Government funding, for example the Fair Funding review and reforms to the business rates regime. In addition, at the time of despatch of this report, it is expected that the autumn statement that will be delivered on 17 November 2022 will include both tax increases and public

spending cuts. In other words, another period of austerity for the public sector. As a result, further savings could be required in future years.

1.9. The new proposals for 2023/24 are designed to limit, as far as possible, service reductions and the impact on front line services particularly during these challenging times. This does not mean that delivering these planned savings, if approved, will be managerially straightforward, or that front-line services will be entirely unaffected, or that they can be achieved without staffing reductions.

1.10. In summary, the key features of the 2023/24 budget are:

- A Council Tax increase of 2.99% (consisting of a 1.99% general increase plus 1% for the Adult Social Care Precept), making a Band D Council Tax of £1,461.96 (for the Brent element). The GLA precept is unknown at this stage and is subject to their own decision making and consultation processes.
- New budget savings proposals of £18m to be delivered in 2023/24, as set out in Appendices A and B.

1.11. The process following this Cabinet meeting is: -

- Proposals, together with any changes made by Cabinet, to form the basis of consultation between November 2022 and February 2023 with local residents, businesses and other key stakeholders;
- Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee to review the budget proposals and report accordingly;
- General Purposes Committee, in December 2022, will review the calculation of the Council Tax base; and
- After consultation, a budget report will be presented for Cabinet to recommend a final budget and Council Tax to the February 2023 Full Council meeting.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. That Cabinet notes the overall financial position.

2.2. That Cabinet agrees to consult on the new budget proposals, as set out in Appendices A and B.

2.3. That Cabinet agrees to consult on a Council Tax increase of 2.99% (consisting of a 1.99% general increase plus 1% for the Adult Social Care Precept) in 2023/24.

2.4. That Cabinet endorses the approach to the statutory process of consultation, scrutiny and equalities between November 2022 and February 2023, as set out in section eight of this report.

2.5. That Cabinet endorses the changes to the technical budget assumptions underpinning the budget, as set out in section four of this report.

2.6. That Cabinet notes the position with regard to the funding for Schools and the Dedicated Schools Grant, as set out in section nine of this report.

2.7. That Cabinet notes the rent increase for 2023/24 will be subject to the outcome of the government consultation on the proposed rent cap, as set out in section ten of this report.

2.8. That Cabinet notes the position with regard to the Capital programme, as set out in section eleven of this report.

3. Strategic Financial Overview

Financial Context

3.1. In February 2022, Council agreed the budget for 2022/23 which included £2.7m of savings. The report also forecast that savings in 2023/24 and 2024/25 would total £12m. Dramatic changes in the economic environment since then has forced the two-year savings target to rise to £28m of which £18m have been allocated to the 2023/24 Budget. These savings will be in addition to the £196m removed from the Council's budget since 2010 as a result significant reductions in government funding and the challenges posed by new legislation, at a time when demand for key services is rising and COVID-19 continues to have an impact on the Council's finances and services.

Current financial position

Uncertain Economic Environment

3.2. War in Ukraine, the enduring impact of COVID-19, Brexit, high levels of inflation, labour shortages and rising interest rates present the Council with a volatile and uncertain economic environment. The cost of living crisis will impact the residents of Brent and the Council is committed to doing what it can to support those in greatest need. Service demand continues to rise due to demographic changes which affect all age groups, with particular pressures on adults' and children's social care and the homelessness budget.

Inflation

3.3. In part as a result of the war in the Ukraine causing a spike in energy prices, inflation is running at high levels not seen since the 1980s. Besides rising energy costs other goods are also experiencing increases in prices, due to factors such as labour shortages, pay rises, logistics issues and a general trend to increase prices and restore profit margins where previously slumps in demand had suppressed price levels.

3.4. In September 2022 CPI stood at 10.1% against a Bank of England target of 2%. RPI, which is often used as the basis for indexation in contracts, was at 12.6%. The September inflation figures are important as they are normally used for the uprating of much central government expenditure including pensions (under the triple lock) and other welfare payments. The local government finance settlement sets out the governments assumptions on the level of resources available to local government, which it terms Core Spending Power (CSP). The government usually uprate local government resources by the September CPI figure and this increase applies to government grants. Should the government restrict inflation increases to the 2021 spending review levels, this will be only 3% - potentially

7% below actual inflation rates measured by CPI. For the Council this would mean CSP is £21m less than it would have been - £11m is attributable to retained Business Rates, Revenue Support Grant and other grants and £10m of Council Tax rises (if they were to increase at a rate of 10%).

Interest Rates

3.5. Having remained at 1% or less since February 2009, interest rates began rising in June 2022. Initially this was in response to rising inflation with the Bank of England using rises in borrowing costs as a means to stifle demand in the economy. More recently, the run on the pound and the potential collapse of some private sector pension schemes have prompted spectacular increases in the costs of government borrowing with gilt yields reaching their highest level since 2008.

3.6. For the Council, this translates into higher costs of borrowing which in turn will have an adverse impact on the capital programme. For Brent residents, rising interest rates will add additional costs to the holders of existing mortgages, while a higher stress test for affordability (for many mortgages as higher as 8% interest rates) and the withdrawal of higher loan to value mortgage products (meaning a higher deposit is required) will act as barriers to first time buyers.

3.7. The markets are pricing in base rate rising to between 5% and 6% over the next few months. Whilst this is uncertain, it is highly unlikely that in the near future interest rates will return to the historically low levels at which they have been for the last decade.

Cost of Living Crisis

3.8. Since late 2021, the UK has experienced a rise in the costs of living for individuals and businesses. For many Brent residents, this means having to make difficult decisions on how they spend their income, which can have a negative impact on their standard of living.

3.9. In a recent attitudes survey by YouGov for the GLA, 90% of Londoners surveyed said their cost of living had increased to some extent in the last 6 months, while 65% said their energy bills had increased a lot, and 47% said they were struggling with mortgage or rent payments. Of those surveyed, the groups that were most likely to say their costs had risen a lot included Black and Asian Londoners, social renters (from housing association or Council), and those whose daily activities were considerably limited by health problems or disabilities.

3.10. This analysis resonates with the Council's own Resident's Attitudes Survey, conducted in 2021 to inform the Borough Plan, which found almost a quarter of residents said their financial situation had got worse.

3.11. The Council has a number of initiatives aimed at supporting residents who may be struggling and enabling Brent and partner organisations to best respond to local needs. These include:

<u>Financial support</u>

- The **Brent Resident Support Fund (RSF)** has been in place since August 2020. In the period August 2020 to 15 August 2022, RSF has supported

4,045 households with a total of £8.46 million. The support provided is for help with the cost of living. This can include, but is not limited to, household bills, arrears in rent, mortgage, Council Tax, food, fuel, digital equipment and emergency funds. Urgent assistance is provided when residents are at risk of losing their home and when an application to the RSF is unsuccessful, the applicant is referred to a credit union for help with an interest-free loan. Further support is provided through signposting to other internal (e.g. Brent Hubs) and external (e.g. Citizens Advice) services.

- During 2022/23 Brent has also supported 94,000 households with a £150 rebate, funded from government grants, to help with the cost of energy bills.

- **Council Tax Support** (CTS): 27,597 households are supported through CTS of which 18,999 are working age and 8,598 are pension age. Pension age residents are entitled to full Council Tax support depending on their income, savings and household composition. The total support given to households is around £32m per annum.

<u>Food and energy support</u>

- **Brent Hubs** work with residents who find it difficult to access the support they need through mainstream services. This includes issuing vouchers to residents in need of urgent food and fuel support, as well as making referrals to food aid agencies and support schemes for utility costs. Since January 2021, over 6,500 residents have accessed Hub services. Over the same period, the Hubs provided food and fuel vouchers.

- The most common needs which residents present with at the Hubs are food and fuel support (23%), housing costs (17%), homelessness (13%), form filling – such as RSF applications - (13%), debt and money (9%), welfare benefits (8%), and other, for example, employment, general support, immigration etc.(17%).

- The Government's **Household Support Fund (HSF)** has been used to provide support to Brent households with the cost of food and fuel in the form of food and fuel vouchers, grants, and financial support to food aid organisations. The HSF is a follow-on fund from the previous COVID-19 Winter Support Fund and COVID-19 Local Support Funds, which had been in place since December 2020.

Financial Inclusion Dashboard

3.12. Measuring impact will improve the Council's understanding of the effects of the Cost of Living crisis on the borough, and will shape how effective collective efforts are in helping to mitigate any negative impacts. The main mechanism for measuring impact is a financial inclusion dashboard developed by the council. The dashboard allows strategic level staff to monitor high-level statistics, such as Housing Benefit caseload, Council Tax outstanding and Resident Support Fund granted to support operational decisions, with a ward level breakdown of each statistic, which allows senior staff to identify discrepancies between wards and highlight areas for targeted action.

3.13. The dashboard uses underlying data gathered from our source systems to match and identify residents that are known to the Council in different systems. This provides a more holistic view of demand and helps identify those residents most in need.

3.14. Phase 2 development of the dashboard will consider multiple new indicators, which will enable us to target and monitor resources with respect to the Cost of Living crisis. Proxy indicators will be used to allow the Council to make targeted decisions in mitigating the crisis using internal council data to identify residents in need.

Energy Price Cap (Consumers and Businesses)

3.15. In light of the recent increase in the cost of wholesale gas, the price suppliers need to charge per unit of energy has gone up significantly.

3.16. To help protect consumers, the Government has announced the Energy Price Guarantee which came into effect on 1 October 2022.This new scheme will reduce the unit cost of electricity and gas so that a household with typical energy use in Great Britain pays, on average, around £2,500 a year on their energy bill, for the next 2 years. [Revised by the Chancellor on 17 October to April 2023 with a Treasury review of on-going support for targeted groups beyond this point.] On average usage, a household will save £1,000 a year (based on current prices from October). Energy suppliers will be fully compensated by the government for the savings delivered to households.

3.17. For an individual customer, the amount paid under the Energy Price Guarantee will vary depending on how much energy they use, where they live, how they pay for their energy and their metering arrangement. The £2,500 figure is based on a household with typical consumption on a dual electricity and gas bill paying by direct debit.

3.18. On 1 October, the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) updated the guidance on the Energy Bill Relief Scheme for businesses and other non-domestic customers.

3.19. The scheme provides support for everyone on a non-domestic contract which is either a fixed price contract agreed on or after 1 April 2022; a new fixed contract being signed; a deemed or variable tariff; or a flexible purchase / similar contract. Local authorities fall within its scope as “public sector organisations such as schools, hospitals and care homes”.

3.20. The scheme does not cap unit costs, which include network charges and operating costs, but is applied to “the estimated wholesale portion of the unit price”, which will be capped at £211 per megawatt hour for electricity and £75 per megawatt hour for gas. The guidance notes that current forecasts for market prices this winter are £600 and £180 respectively.

3.21. The scheme applies for six months, from 1 October to 31 March and is due to be reviewed within 3 months. The guidance indicates that support will likely only continue for “the most vulnerable non-domestic customers” and highlights that “It is important that users who are less vulnerable to energy price increases

(particularly larger businesses that are not energy-intensive) use the 6 months support provided by the scheme to identify measures they can take to protect themselves against high energy prices".

3.22. Rising energy costs is a significant challenge to the Council, even with the six-month price cap. Although on a new energy contract, the impact this year is estimated at around a £2m rise in costs.

Government Fiscal Events

September Mini-Budget

3.23. The Mini-Budget confirmed many measures that had been previously announced (Corporation Tax increase from 19% to 25% will not be implemented and the Health and Social Care NIC rise will be reversed) and also included some new measures. This was the biggest tax cutting budget since 1972 – bigger than Nigel Lawson's 1988 budget by 50%, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS).

3.24. Measures to cap energy costs were confirmed, but at the same time the Chancellor introduced new welfare to work penalties on benefits for claimants who do not meet their obligations to seek employment.

3.25. Headline measures on tax were a cut in basic rate income tax to 19% from April 2023 (a year earlier than expected), abolition of the 45% additional rate tax band and the repeal of IR35 reforms made in 2017 and 2022.

3.26. The Mini-Budget was poorly received by the markets. This sparked a run on the pound and substantial increases in borrowing costs. It also forced the Bank of England to launch a £65bn scheme to buy back gilts to protect the pension funds. It has since made multiple interventions in markets to calm spooked investors. Outcry at the abolition of the additional rate tax band resulted in a U-turn reversing this measure at a saving £2bn.

3.27. The Mini-Budget was silent on public sector spending plans.

3.28. As a result of the turbulence caused by the Mini-Budget's unfunded tax cuts, government ministers indicated that they intend to cut public expenditure to bridge the original £45bn budget gap, since reduced to £43bn. This failed to head of further troubles in the financial markets and political unrest amongst the parliamentary Conservative party. As a result, Kwasi Kwarteng was dismissed as Chancellor. His replacement, Jeremy Hunt, became the fifth Chancellor of this government.

Chancellor statement on the Medium-Term Fiscal Plan (17 October 2022)

3.29. The new Chancellor announced in a major U-turn that he was scrapping virtually all of the tax measures announced in the Mini-Budget. Only those already enacted (the reversal of the NIC increase, the reduction in stamp duty and the removal of the limits on bankers' bonuses) remained in place. In a significant change of direction, the Chancellor announced that instead of bringing forward the reduction in base rate from 20% to 19% from April 2024 to April 2023 as announced in the Mini-Budget, he was putting this measure on hold "indefinitely until economic circumstances allow for it to be cut".

3.30. In a further U-turn, the energy price cap for consumers was restricted as a universal benefit to a period of six months (ending in April 2023) rather than the two years in the Mini-Budget. The Treasury will review options for future support, which may be targeted at poorer and more vulnerable households. The Chancellor's rationale for this change was that "it would not be responsible to continue exposing public finances to unlimited volatility in international gas prices".

3.31. The Chancellor brought forward no specific proposals relating to public spending, but did say that "All departments will need to redouble their efforts to find savings and some areas of spending will need to be cut." Mr Hunt added that there would be "more difficult decisions" on tax and spending. The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) estimates that the size of the cuts needed to balance the books over the next five years are only "slightly smaller" than those imposed by George Osbourne's austerity measures in 2010.

3.32. The Mini-Budget contained £45bn of unfunded tax measures; however, the IFS have calculated that substantial increases in gilt rates as a result of the market reaction to this potential funding requirement have added a further £17bn of increased government borrowing costs, taking the funding gap to £62bn. The new Chancellor has made £32bn of tax U-turns, which in turn has resulted in an improvement in gilt rates reducing the cost of borrowing by £7bn, leaving a gap of £23bn to be found from cuts to public expenditure.

Fiscal Statement (17 November 2022).

3.33. The autumn statement was scheduled for 23 November in line with customary practice, but the previous Chancellor had brought forward his plan to balance the government's finances by three weeks to 31 October in a bid to reassure the markets. This has changed again and is now scheduled to be a Fiscal Statement setting out the government's medium term financial plan on 17 November.

3.34. There has been much speculation about public sector spending. Two measures widely mooted were not to update the inflation assumptions in the 2021 spending review (SR21) and to uprate welfare benefits only by average wage rises rather than the September inflation figure. Neither of these has been officially announced and there is considerable pressure to uprate Universal Credit by inflation rather than wage rises. Pensions are expected to remain covered by the triple lock, which will see a rise in line with September's inflation rate.

3.35. It is unclear whether the government will have any further spending reviews until the next general election, due by January 2025. Currently SR21 assumes inflation of about 3%. If the government uses this as the rate for indexing central government expenditure, it represents a substantial reduction on the amount that would have been required if the September CPI inflation figure (10.1%) were used. This is in effect a real terms cut in funding. A reduction in the inflation provision of 7% represents a 'saving' of £76bn on central government expenditure. These are very broad assumptions – the government was only budgeting for 3% inflation so the 10% figure would have represented an unfunded increase that would have needed to be financed. On the other hand, the effect of higher levels of inflation is to raise government revenues, through increases in

VAT yield, extra personal taxation on higher levels of pay and additional corporate taxation on higher revenues and profits. An end result of a substantial saving may not therefore be unreasonable.

3.36. The appointment of Rishi Sunak as Prime Minister on 25 October 2025 has done much to calm the financial markets. The new Prime Minister decided to delay the medium term fiscal statement from 31 October to November 17 to allow the Chancellor to rework his plans. An analysis by the Resolution Foundation shows that the fortnight delay is expected to shrink the size of the black hole in the public finances by up to £15 billion. Without knowing the new taxation and spending policy, the Bank of England raised the base interest rate on 3 November by 0.75% to 3%. With the interest rate paid on government gilts falling rapidly - and the international gas price reducing - there is growing confidence in Downing Street that more minor changes to the public finances may be necessary.

Local Government Finance Settlement (expected in December 2022)

3.37. It is no yet known when the provisional Local Government Finance will be announced, but past experience suggests that this will happen in mid- to late-December.

3.38. The starting point of the Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) is Core Spending Power. This is a measure of the resources available to local authorities to fund service delivery. It includes Council Tax and locally retained Business Rates, a number of generally usable government grants and the Revenue Support Grant. Normally, Core Spending Power is increased in total by the September CPI rate. The government then calculates the income available to the local authority by assuming that it sets the Council Tax at the referendum limit, receives the local share of indexed Business Rates and inflated government grants (including any changes to the level of funding). The level of Revenue Support Grant is then set as the balancing figure to bring total funding in line with the Core Spending Power figure.

3.39. If the government retains the provisions of the 2021 spending review, these include a headline 3% inflationary increase in local government Core Spending Power for each year. In 2022/23 that included £3.6bn to fund social care reforms, such as the implementation of the cap on personal care costs (£86,000 lifetime cap) and the changes to the means test (free care for those with assets less than £20,000). Removing the funding for the social care reforms, the local government increase was actually 1.8% compared to 3.3% for the average government department. The Council will need to see if this pattern continues into 2023/24.

3.40. The 2022/23 headline announcement that Core Spending Power will increase by 3% each year assumed that all Council's will increase Council Tax by the maximum amount allowable of 2.99% without triggering a referendum. The Council will need to see whether the government changes the referendum limit and the extent to which any new money is tied to social care reforms, meaning other services will benefit less.

3.41. At present the MTFS assumes that government funding will increase by 3% in 2023/24 and that the Council will increase Council Tax by the maximum of 2.99% allowed by an unchanged referendum limit. Given that 1% of this will be the social

care precept, the actual increase for most Council services will be 1.99% - a real terms cut of around 8% if inflation is running at 10%. If the increase in Core Spending Power were only 2%, this would lead to a loss of around £3m in resources.

3.42. In the event that the referendum limit for Council Tax is higher than 2.99%, the proposal will be considered in the round alongside other announcements on government grant funding. As mentioned earlier in the report, the autumn statement that will be announced on 17 November 2022 may include both tax increases and public spending cuts, potentially marking a return to austerity.

Outlook for Future Government Funding

3.43. The MTFS model assumes that government funding and Council Tax will each increase by 3% in future years. If inflation remains at significantly above this level, this will cause a real terms cut in resources. Service pressures caused by increased demand resulting from the cost of living crisis and demographic pressures will put further pressure on the Council's budget leading to a need for substantial savings in future years.

Administration Priorities

3.44. The budget process is designed to ensure that it is priority led so that resources are aligned with council priorities and statutory responsibilities. A four-year Borough Plan (2023-2027) is due to be developed during 2022/23. This gives the Council the opportunity to refresh its vision and ambitions and to show how it will work with local communities over the next four years to deliver them.

3.45. The draft Borough Plan has the following Strategic Priorities and Desired Outcomes:

Prosperity, Pride and Belonging in Brent

1. *Easing the Cost of Living Crisis*
2. *Brent for Business*

A Cleaner, Greener Future

1. *A Cleaner and Safe Borough*
2. *Empowering our Communities*

Respect and Renewal in Brent

1. *Safe, Secure and Decent Housing*
2. *A Sustainable Borough and a Greener Economy*
3. *Keeping Brent on the Move*
4. *A Representative Workforce*

The Best Start in Life

1. *Raised Aspirations, Achievement and Attainment*
2. *Young People are Seen and Heard*

A Healthier Brent

1. *Tackling Health Inequalities*
2. *Localised Services for Local Needs*

3.46. Officers have developed an engagement plan which will run in November and January, ahead of finalising the Borough Plan in February. The engagement will be delivered over a period of ten weeks where the Council will target a range of

specific groups, utilising partnerships, stakeholders and Members. The engagement will also align with plans to consult on the draft budget, this is to help contextualise the draft ambitions within the resources available and to ensure the final ambitions are reflective of the resources available. The Medium Term Financial Strategy will also need to ensure it provides a framework to enable and support the delivery of the Council's ambitions, priorities and any subsequent or existing programmes, considering the significant financial pressures the Council is currently facing.

4. Review of Key Budget Assumptions

Overview of Current MTFS

4.1. The General Fund revenue budget for 2022/23 was set at the Council meeting of February 2022, where savings of £2.7m were agreed. These savings are on track to be delivered. Expenditure in 2022/23 should also be within budget for the General Fund with the exception of a projected overspend of £1.7m in the Children's and Young people's department. Work is being undertaken on management action that will bring this expenditure back in line with the budget.

4.2. Looking beyond 2022/23, there are a number of factors that need to be taken into account in setting the budget 2023/24 and determining the financial outlook for future years.

Departmental pressures

4.3. Managing ongoing demand-led pressures remains a key aspect of the MTFS. The existing annual growth assumptions are in fact estimated increases in unavoidable expenditure. Those built into the MTFS cover areas such as contract inflation, pay inflation, and demographics (by which is meant meeting the cost of providing existing services for a growing and changing population). These expenditure assumptions represent the annual costs that have to be incurred just to stand still.

4.4. As the two areas most affected by the changes in demography and increasing contractual costs, the Adult Social Care and Children's and Young People's departments undertook scenario and sensitivity analysis of the effects of different levels of inflation and demographic change. This determined a central case (that is a position between possible best and worst cases), which has been used as the basic of the contract inflation and demographic changes in these areas. A summary of these growth and cost pressures are shown in the table below.

Table 1: Existing Growth / Cost Pressures

GROWTH SUMMARY	2023/24
Demographics	
- ASC	3.73
- CYP	1.47
- Other Departments	1.30
Sub-total	6.50
Inflation	
- ASC	7.76
- CYP	3.06
- Contracts	3.83
Sub-total	14.66
Pay	6.50
Other (E.g. Public Health Grant inflation)	0.70
	28.35

4.5. The following sections provide commentary on the service pressures and other challenges faced by each department.

Adult Social Care and Health

4.6. Within Adult Social Care a key area of uncertainty is the fair cost of care and social care reforms. Work is ongoing to better understand the impact of the fair cost of care, the care cap and the number of self-funders coming forward which will create additional burdens. Whilst government funding is being made available to Brent in 2022/23 and future years, it is unknown at this moment in time whether this funding is enough to afford the market sustainability costs and implementation costs. Underfunded reforms run the risk of also exacerbating the workforce pressures being seen within Adult Social Care with staffing shortages and rising vacancy numbers across the sector. The reforms will create additional pressures on the Adult Social Care service due to the increased number of care assessments required.

4.7. By 2025/26, the budget gap between funding available and demand in ASC could be an additional £45m required to cover demographic (such as transitions and growth in elderly population) and inflationary pressures, as well as LLW commitment.

4.8. Ongoing financial government support & market sustainability is an uncertainty, particularly with the ongoing cost of living crisis and inflationary pressures. The cost of living crisis and the steep rise in inflation, heating and fuel costs are likely to have an impact on spot placement requests from providers who are looking to recover some of the additional costs they are incurring. For 2022/23, the Adult Social Care budget was increased in order to meet projected demographic

growth demand and inflationary increases, these increases are expected to continue and be a pressure in future years.

4.9. Hospital Discharge (D2A) funding is coming to an end in 2022/23. Funding was made available to continue to D2A funding for part of the current year, and there has been ongoing discussions between the LA's and Integrated Care Boards (ICB) around future funding. In September the new Health Secretary announced £500m of discharge funding but it is still unknown at this stage.

4.10. The growth set out in Table 1 is primarily based on taking the central case following a series of scenario analyses and sensitivity analyses on various budget assumptions. Specifically, they arise from demographic pressures which have been calculated by extrapolating trends over recent years and inflation where upward pressures on contract values and spot purchase prices have been used to calculate the future indexation requirement. At this stage of the budget setting process this growth is deemed as reasonable to contain the financial pressures expected in 2023/24.

Children and Young People (CYP) General Fund

4.11. There continues to be increased spend in the General Fund of the CYP department due to the impact of rising demand for placements and high inflationary cost increases, risk of loss of health contributions and the reliance on agency Social Work staff due to recruitment and retention challenges.

4.12. Across the CYP department, there has been an increase in the number of children and young people receiving support. This increased demand for services follows from a 15.2% rise in the rate of referrals for social care services in August 2022 through the Brent Family Front Door (BFFD) compared to August 2021. As a result, since the end of the last financial year, there has been an 8.4% rise in the number of cases. The number of cases increased from 2,737 in August 2021 to 2,967 in August 2022. Caseloads are exceeding the budgeted level of c2,500 by 18.7%. Alongside the increase in overall caseloads, which is also in line with national trends, there has been an increase in complex cases, evidenced by an increase in children subject of a Child Protection Plan with the current number of 413 the highest in the last 10 years in Brent.

4.13. After a period of relative stability in the Looked After Children (LAC) population at between 280 and 300 children before the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a 15.8% increase in the number of Looked After Children (LAC). Between August 2021 and August 2022, the number of LAC increased from 297 to 344. The Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) currently represents 16.9% of the LAC population. Although grant funding is received from the Home Office to mitigate the costs, pressures arise, as the funding is not sufficient to cover costs such as specialist age assessment social workers, legal costs, additional personal advisors to manage cases, and increased subsistence costs. In addition, a larger cohort of UASC are older and when they turn 18 years, the funding reduces significantly from £143 per day to £38.57 per day.

4.14. The average weekly cost of a residential placement is £4,631, which is £191 higher than the 2021/22 average. The impact of inflation is likely to see the weekly

costs increase further in 2023/24. In 2022/23, six residential placements with complex needs weekly costs, ranged from £7,300 to £13,000 and the local authority has recently placed a child in a placement at £20,000 per week. These costs reflect the challenging placements market, which is a national issue and is causing significant budgetary pressures. Due to the current economic climate, inflationary pressures are expected to be passed onto the service by providers, with 9-15% increases being requested in some cases.

4.15. Health contributions from the Integrated Care Partnership mitigates some of the placement cost pressures and pressures on support for children with disabilities. With the implementation of the North West London Integrated Care System (ICS), a review of health contributions is taking place. For example, the Continuing Health Care Team is reviewing individual children's eligibility for funding, which for some is resulting in decisions that they no longer meet thresholds. Brent is not isolated in this issue and Directors of Children Services (DCSs) from LAs across the ICS footprint have collectively escalated their concerns to the ICS about the impact on local authorities of the Continuing Health Care Team's new operating model. Consideration will be given to appropriate legal redress if a satisfactory outcome cannot be achieved through other means. Through the Joint Funding Panel, the CYP department is also challenging decisions and their timing on a case-by-case basis.

4.16. Within the Localities, Looked After Children, and Permanency (LAC&P) services, there are challenges regarding the recruitment and retention of skilled and experienced social work staff with the services relying on agency staff whose costs are more expensive than permanent staff. Across the Localities team, agency staff occupy 44% of the establishment. If demand in cases continues to grow, this could create an added pressure in these areas. Management will continue to monitor the caseload levels and the use of agency staff while continuing the drive to recruit permanent staff.

4.17. The department continues to face pressures from the national challenge for the recruitment and retention of social workers, leading to a reliance on agency staff. A shortage of social workers and other case holding staff, which has further been exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic and rising demand, is an acknowledged national issue, which requires a coordinated regional approach over the medium term. CYP management will continue to take steps to improve the recruitment and retention of social workers.

4.18. The growth set out in Table 1 is primarily based on taking the central case following a series of scenario analyses and sensitivity analyses on various budget assumptions. Specifically, they arise from demographic pressures which have been calculated by extrapolating trends over recent years and inflation where upward pressures on contract values and spot purchase prices have been used to calculate the future indexation requirement. At this stage of the budget setting process this growth is deemed as reasonable to contain the financial pressures expected in 2023/24.

Communities and Regeneration

Communities

4.19. Over the past 18 months, Brent's population has seen notable changes in the numbers of refugees and migrants into the borough. The rising numbers are in part, due to changes in national guidance on Housing and Homelessness eligibility for new arrivals from Afghanistan and Ukraine. The ever changing guidance means that Brent is mandated to accept Homelessness applications from newly arrived refugees.

4.20. In these circumstances, additional strain is put on a number of services involved in assessing need, administering applications and the ongoing support those families are entitled to. We face additional burdens with an open Landlord scheme that will also add to our population, and is outside of our control. The changing population is likely to mean we will need to employ more temporary staff to cope with demand in a number of services including, Legal, Housing and the Migration Coordination Team. The emergent need is to increase our workforce with Community Support Officers to cope with demand.

4.21. The legacy of COVID-19 has meant that demand has risen for critical services delivered by our Voluntary and Community Sector partners, e.g. Independent Advice and Guidance services. This means that Brent and our partners are having to work harder to continue to provide much needed support to residents. For example, we are having to increase the value of the Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Fund, which supports VCS development, to ensure organisations can be sustainable across this difficult time.

4.22. The impact of COVID-19 has led to a well-documented increase in the need for food support and other community led initiatives at the grass roots level. Those organisations providing this support look to our core Community Engagement and Grants offers for enabling and support. Throughout COVID-19 additional learning and understanding of how community organisations can be supported to deliver vital services has meant an increase in funding applications that are administered by the teams.

Regeneration

4.23. Within Regeneration there is some uncertainty on the Planning income that can be expected to be collected in future years. Income is currently lower than in past years, which may in part be due to the industry still recovering from the impact of COVID-19, and the imposed shutdowns on the construction industry. However, the current economic climate is also beginning to have an impact on construction, with there being little appetite for developments of all sizes. There is the potential that this could impact the income received for years to come. This is also likely to impact the income collected by the Building Control team if less developments are taking place.

Resident Services

COVID-19 scarring and demographics

4.24. Environmental Services generate a large proportion of the Council's income through fees and charges. A decrease in the level of income received due to a

slow recovery following the pandemic or decreased demand for services due to the cost of living crisis, could put a pressure on the service's budgets.

4.25. For instance, within the Parking service, whilst there is a slight increase in the number of resident permits sold as people work from home, there is a decline in the number of business permits purchased, as well as a reduction in revenue from car parks and on street parking. A reduction in penalty charge notices, and a loss of income as a result, is also likely due to people less likely to take a risk of non-compliance.

4.26. The Highways service is reliant on a reduced TfL LIP (Local Implementation Plan) funding, which is due to severe financial pressures on TfL. Typically, Brent would receive an annual allocation of c£2.2m to deliver this programme, with additional funding for Bus priority (c£0.8m). This funding was withdrawn in April 2020 following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent impact on TfL's finances. The Heathy Streets and Parking revenue budget is reliant on TfL LIP funding, which has been significantly reduced due to severe financial pressures. TfL has recently reached an agreement with the Government and confirmed the funding will be available for 2022/23 as c£1.3m, which represents a reduction of c£1m. The service has also commissioned S106 developer funding to deliver a programme of schemes, however, with reduced income and charges for staff costs, it is anticipated that this will result in a risk of under recovery of up to £0.2m. The service will seek to manage this through the reduction of agency staff, however, the risk cannot be fully mitigated as staff resources will still be needed to deliver the council funded programme and continue day to day operations. The current volatility in the energy markets mean significant uncertainties in this area. The exact details of the Government's proposed Business Energy Relief Scheme's implications to the Council at the time of the report writing are also uncertain. The Council is currently completing significant energy efficiency works, using a Government grant, across Brent's estate, which is expected to alleviate some of the pressures.

4.27. As energy costs are increasing for leisure centres, the risk of provider failure is increasing, forcing the Council to make difficult choices. An option is to support operators by subsidising their operating costs. Closing sites due to rising utility costs would also have a significant impact on both communities and income levels.

4.28. The provision of sufficient special needs home to school transport is the Council's statutory obligation and Brent Transport Service continues to experience annual net growth in net passenger numbers leading to an increase in cost of the service delivery. This obligation is recognised in the MTFS and growth is built in based on prior years' trends and demography forecasts.

Veolia and Other Contract reletting – contract value and ongoing indexation

4.29. The Redefining Local Services (RLS) programme was initiated in May 2019 to develop and implement a commissioning strategy for the outsourced environmental services. The existing contracts were synchronised so that the new service arrangements would come into place from 1st April 2023. The final delivery model was approved to operate as a "specialist contracts delivery model

with low to moderate levels of insourcing". And the procurement process is now underway for these specialist contracts.

4.30. Risks around the procurement process are being monitored and reviewed, however until the procurement processes are completed there remains a financial risk around the affordability of the contracts. In particular the rising rates of inflation and fuel costs, which could lead to increased contract prices when they commence in April 2023. The projected contract prices remain in review against the budget available, and increased contract costs have already been considered when setting savings targets for 2023/24.

4.31. Growth has been built into the MTFS to help alleviate some of the pressures associated with contracts indexation within the Environmental Services, however this continue to present a significant budget risk. There is growth currently built into the MTFS for 2023/24 to recognise a requirement for Environmental Services contract inflations, including non-recurring growth relating to the RLS programme. A growth for Housing and Leisure services Private Finance Initiative contracts is also included in the MTFS for 2023/24. Contracts are often linked to indices such as CPI or RPI and services are contractually obliged to reflect any fluctuations in annual contact payments.

Temporary accommodation

4.32. As the cost of living crisis deepens, with energy costs and day to day expenditure increasing steeply, there has been a rise in homelessness applications, resulting in an increased use of temporary accommodation. The current economic climate could also have an impact on the rent collection rates and result in increases in rent arrears.

4.33. In addition, the affordable Private Rented Sector has contracted, which means there is a lack of supply to move households on from temporary accommodation, which will put further pressures on the budget. Although, the recent opening of Anansi and Knowles house has alleviated this pressure to some extent, both schemes are now full and silted up due to the lack of move on accommodation available.

Homelessness Prevention Grant consultation

4.34. The government is reviewing the funding arrangements for the Homelessness Prevention Grant for 2023/24 onwards and launched a technical consultation seeking views on the approach to the funding arrangements and conditions for the grant. Under both of the considered options Brent would see a reduction in funding, £854k under Option 1 and £3.5m under Option 2. With a significant reduction in funding, there is an increased risk of a resulting budget gap requiring additional savings from the Council and changes to the service delivery.

Finance and Resources

4.35. There are social and economic factors which are increasingly placing pressures on the viability of the New Council Homes Programme (NCHP). Rising inflation, a continued shortage of labour and materials and events such as the COVID-19

pandemic and the war in Ukraine have had an adverse effect on project costs and increased demands for suitable housing accommodation. The Government reported an increase of 23% on materials such as steel, timber and concrete and this will impact our ability to continue working at pace to deliver affordable homes for Brent residents and other projects related to the refurbishment/maintenance of our retained estate.

4.36. The Commercial Property team is experiencing pressures in collecting outstanding debts for rent arrears from tenants that have suffered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is putting direct pressure on the department's income target and work is being undertaken in coordination with the Council's Legal and Debt Recovery teams to recover outstanding debts in a timely manner.

Employee Costs

4.37. The current financial environment is putting considerable upward pressure on pay. The pay award for 2022/23 was agreed on 1 November 2022 with a flat amount for outer London of £2,229 at all pay levels. This broadly equates to an average 6.5% increase in pay, ranging from 10% at the lowest level of pay and 1.2% at the highest level of pay. This is estimated to cost £9m in 2022/23. The Council will seek to manage this pressure in 2022/23, either by implementing mitigating actions or by use of reserves. If the latter approach needs to be taken, it will add to the budget gap for 2023/24.

4.38. The pay award for 2023/24 has yet to be agreed and the type of pay award for 2023/24 is also unknown - it could be an overall percentage or a flat amount, like 2022/23; however, the growth assumed for pay inflation has been increased to £6m, which is sufficient for a pay award of up to 4.5%. At the present £6m is deemed prudent as inflation in 2023/24 is not expected to be as high as in 2022/23. This will need to be kept under review. While it is welcome that the pay award for council staff has been agreed at a time when inflation is high and there is a cost of living crisis, the permanent increase in the Council's cost base represents a significant ongoing cost pressure.

4.39. The Brent Pension Fund is currently in the process of completing the triannual valuation and analysis of the Council's contribution rate has been completed. The results of this exercise were presented to the Pension Sub-committee in October 2022 and it was agreed that the Council's contribution rate can be reduced by 1.5% per year over the next three years from 2023/24. The reason for this is due to a significant improvement in the funding level of the pension fund, arising from better than expected investment returns.

4.40. However, the exact size of the saving is uncertain and will depend on the level of pensionable pay for employees in the pension scheme and the pay award. The pay award for 2022/23 agreed in November 2022 is for a fixed increase which averages 6.5%; the pay award for 2023/24 has yet to be agreed. If the pay award for 2023/24 is around the same level as 2022/23, the additional cost would negate the savings from lower contribution rates. A further reduction in the contribution rate of 1.5% would occur in 2024/25 and again in 2025/26. As the pay award for future years is unknown, it is not possible to estimate if further savings can be achieved from reduced contribution rates. This will be assessed every year as

part of the budget setting process and if savings can be realised they will be incorporated into the MTFS to support the overall budget and reduce the budget gap.

Voluntary redundancy

4.41. In order to minimise the need for compulsory redundancies, the Council is operating a voluntary redundancy (VR) scheme in the 2022/23 financial year. Applications under the VR scheme closed on 31 August 2022. Where an application for VR has been accepted, the individual's post will be deleted and the funding for that post will be removed from the service budgets permanently. The savings from these post reductions are expected to form part of the £18m of savings that have been put forward as part of the 2023/24 budget and as a result will reduce the need for compulsory redundancies

Fees and Charges

4.42. Setting the level of increase in fees and charges is going to be difficult this year due to high inflation and a volatile economic environment. Brent's residents are also facing a cost of living crisis, unprecedented in recent times. Whilst the Council is committed to supporting the borough's residents through this economic uncertainty, freezing all fees and charges is not an affordable option. The Council is therefore taking a balanced approach that seeks to keep down the level of increase as far as is possible and appropriate.

4.43. The outcome of the review of fees and charges and the proposed increases for 2023/24 will be set out for Full Council in February 2023.

Council Tax

4.44. Council Tax one of the most significant sources of income for the Council, making up £140.1m (or 47%) of total core funding in 2022/23.

4.45. The 2021 Spending Review allowed Local Authorities to increase Council Tax by up to 2% without a local referendum and in addition, local authorities were able to levy a 1% adult social care precept.

4.46. The current working assumption is that the referendum limit will remain the same for 2023/24. As mentioned earlier in the report, in the event that the referendum limit for Council Tax is higher than 2.99%, the proposal will be considered in the round alongside other potential cuts to government grant funding.

4.47. The Government is also likely to continue its financing assumption that all councils will act on this and increase Council Tax by the maximum amount possible. It should be noted that the additional income generated through the Adult Social Care precept alone does not cover the total growth requirement for Adult Social Care pressures.

4.48. The cost of living crisis, increasing interest rates, COVID-19 scarring and social care reforms add additional burdens to existing pressures within the Adult Social Care and housing services. This significantly impacts people's ability to live

independently, therefore the Council is seeing increased demand, particularly for more complex needs cases, which require a more comprehensive support package. The situation is exacerbated by staffing shortages across the sector and unmet demand in both the working age adults and older people mental health services for highly trained professionals. There has also been growth in the number of people approaching the Council with multiple needs which has in turn increased the number of care assessments required. This is largely connected to difficult housing conditions where self-neglect and hoarding are common problems. There has also been additional growth in Safeguarding Adults. The effects of the cost crisis, including diminishing disposable incomes and increased energy poverty, as well as long-term COVID-19 issues are expected to increase in demand for services.

4.49. Taking into account the unprecedented pressures within social care, housing and the financial position in the round, the budget has been prepared on the basis of a 2.99% increase in the Brent element of Council Tax. This will add £4.2m of recurring income to the Council's budget. While it is acknowledged that increasing Council Tax will be difficult for some households, it should also be recognised that the Council continues to invest in the Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme which provides £32m of support to around 28,000 households who are financially vulnerable. Further announcements from the government on additional funding that it may make available to help households in financial difficulty are awaited.

4.50. The GLA precept, which makes up about 22% of the overall Council Tax bill, is unknown at this stage and is subject to their own decision making and consultation processes.

4.51. When budgeting for Council Tax, there are three main factors to consider:

- Council Tax Support (CTS) expenditure,
- Short and long term collection rates, and
- Growth in the tax base.

4.52. The total cost of providing CTS has increased from £28.4m at the start of the pandemic to £31.8m as at September 2022, an increase of £3.4m, or 12% which is broadly in line with the overall increase in Council Tax. This is significant as an increase in CTS expenditure reduces the amount of Council Tax that is able to be collected.

4.53. Another factor that could affect Council Tax income is a reduction in the collection rate. Typically, in-year collection for Brent is around 96% and over a longer period of time will reach around 98%, which is built into the MTFS model and prior to the pandemic was broadly comparable to other London boroughs. The in-year collection rate in 2021/22 was 92.3%, although total collection is expected to increase in future years as debt recovery will continue to be attempted. Based on current modelling, the in-year collection rate for 2022/23 is expected at 92.5% which would result in a £5m reduction of income compared to the previous in year target of 96%. Clearly this is significant, however it is expected that through ongoing debt recovery in future years, this will reach the long-term collection rate target of 98%.

4.54. As a result of the postponement of normal debt recovery action for nearly two years during the pandemic collection assumptions were reduced in 2021/22 and 2022/23. It is too early to be able to estimate the long term impact on collection. At present the long term collection rate in the MTFS has reverted to 97.5%. This will be kept under review as there may be an impact on collection from the cost of living crisis, lower than inflation pay rises, higher interest rates and potential squeeze on benefits. It should be noted that the Council maintains provisions for writing off debt that will not ultimately be collected.

4.55. The calculation of the tax base (and likewise the collection rate) is one of the technical stages in the process of setting the Council Tax, which will be considered by the General Purposes Committee on 12 December 2022. Brent, like all Local Authorities, has to set a balanced budget by working out how much next year's band D Council Tax should be on the basis that the total tax to be collected equals the budget required to pay for its services. The tax base represents the aggregate taxable value of all residential property in Brent. The Council Tax base was previously assumed to grow at 1% per year annum (or around 1,000 properties) and contributes nearly 30% to total budgeted Council Tax income in the MTFS.

4.56. Data compiled by the Council from a number of sources, including the planning department and directly from developers, shows the number of consented schemes that are likely to complete towards the end of 2022/23. The general trend is also supported by new Council Tax registrations that are currently awaiting banding by the Valuation Office Agency. On this basis, it is recommended to keep the tax base growth for budget setting purposes of 1% for 2023/24.

Business Rates

4.57. The Council remained committed to supporting local businesses throughout the pandemic. Funded by government, the Council processed a range of reliefs for various businesses across the retail, hospitality, leisure and other sectors. This has significantly reduced the amount of rates paid to the Council with the reduction estimated at £114.1m in 2022/23. In addition, the Council has administered direct grants, funded by central government, to local businesses totalling £105.9m across over 13,500 local businesses. The Council continues to engage with the business community to ensure that eligible businesses have access to this support.

4.58. Irrespective of the range of support provided to businesses by local authorities, including the support provided directly by government (job retention scheme, loans, tax deferrals, etc.), it is inevitable that more businesses will be unable to pay their business rates: some may be unable to trade effectively and others may be impacted by a reduction in customer demand. This will lead to an increase in bad debt and a loss of income collected on behalf of the Council, the GLA and government.

4.59. The in-year collection rate in 2021/22 was 91.3% which is significantly lower than the amount collected pre-pandemic, at 98.2%.

4.60. The amount that was planned to be collected in 2022/23 was £115.6m and, as a result of mandatory reliefs funded by government, the amount that is able to be collected is now £114.1m. The in-year collection rate for 2022/23 is forecast to be around 84% of amounts due, increasing the levels of debt outstanding that will be pursued over time.

4.61. Business Rates and Council Tax income assumptions in the budgets for 2021/22 and 2022/23 were fairly cautious and reduced the overall income built into the MTFS. At this stage of the budget process, and due to the continued uncertainty in collection, it is deemed reasonable to continue with cautious budget assumptions.

Business rates - Eight authority pool

4.62. The Government designated a pan-London business rates pool in 2018/19, which piloted 100% retention in that year, and was revised to pilot 75% retention in 2019/20. For 2020/21 the Government decided not to renew the London pilot, and for London to revert back to the pre-existing 2017/18 67% retention scheme (30% borough share, 37% GLA share, 33% Government share). A voluntary pool was set up by all London Boroughs in 2020/21 which offered lower financial benefits than the previous scheme, while retaining all the strategic benefits. However, the onset of the pandemic during 2020/21 had a significant impact on the collection of business rates and the pool was not continued in 2021/22.

4.63. In 2022/23 the Council entered into a new pool with seven other London authorities on the same basis as the previous London-wide pool. There are potential benefits of £30m, which will be shared between the authorities. Brent's share was estimated at the time to be in the region of £2m based on initial forecasts from the eight authorities. The final position will not be known until a reconciliation process during 2023/24, when settlement will be made. Recent monitoring suggests the pool is on track to make expected gains. Any pooling gain that is confirmed, once the audit is complete, will be allocated to one-off projects in a future budget.

4.64. For 2023/24 a proposal has been made for the eight authority pool to continue. If accepted, further potential benefits could be generated for Brent, but at this stage it is too early to build an estimate into the base budget due to the uncertainties around the continuation of the pool and lack of clarity on central government's plans for business rates in general.

4.65. As part of the February 2022 Budget Report, decisions on entering into and remaining a member of a Business Rates pool were delegated to the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources. A decision on this is not therefore required. If there is a risk to the pool making a loss, which is currently deemed unlikely, Brent will have the ability to withdraw from the pool at any point up to 28 days after the government's provisional Local Government Finance Settlement.

Government Funding

4.66. As described earlier in the report, the precise details of any additional funding for Local Government will not be known until the Provisional Local Government

Finance Settlement, usually announced in mid-December. The Chancellor's comments on 17 October indicate that there may be real terms cuts. The expectation is that the government will use the inflation forecasts contained in the 2021 Spending Review as the indexation factor for public sector expenditure rather than the September CPI figure. For government departments as a whole, the inflation factor averaged 3.35; for local government the amount was 3%. The September CPI figure is 10.1%. It is worth noting that the 3% local government figure includes 1.2% for changes and reforms to social care, leaving just 1.8% as the general inflation uplift. It is unclear if this split will continue.

4.67. In line with the 2021 Spending Review, it is anticipated that the Revenue Support Grant, Public Health Grant, the Improved Better Care Fund and the Social Care Grant will continue to be uplifted by an inflationary indexation factor, albeit at a lower rate than the September CPI figure. 2021 Spending Review gave no commitment to maintain the level of the 2022/23 Services Grant for individual local authorities. It is believed that the government will use this to target funds to areas as part of the Levelling Up agenda with a reduction of funding to London boroughs. In anticipation of this, the MTFS assumes that this grant will fall to 80% of its current value - a reduction of £1m to £5m for 2023/24.

4.68. The overall approach assumed in the MTFS to the indexation of government funding has been cautious. The working assumption at the last update in July was for a 3% increase and this was not uprated when inflation rose substantially above this level, as there was no indication whether the government would entertain increases as very high levels. Since it has become clear that the government intends to cap indexation at around 3%, this approach means that the Council will not be required to find extra savings to cover any potential loss in indexation, as this was already assumed.

4.69. Taking into account the indexation assumptions and the expected changes in grant levels, these grants represent over £60m of funding. The core funding forecast for the 2023/24 budget remains as previously assumed.

Reserves Strategy

4.70. The Council takes a risk based approach to the management of useable reserves and as part of setting the annual budget, the s151 Officer undertakes a review of risks and known commitments to calculate a minimum level for the General Fund reserve. For 2022/23, it was determined that a level of £15.1m remained an appropriate figure – this represents 5% of net expenditure. With the exception of this reserve, which is set at the minimum prudent level expected by external auditors, all other reserves are earmarked for specific purposes and known future costs and therefore they are not readily available to fund any budget gap.

4.71. The Council does have some flexibility with some reserves to support the MTFS, as some reserves are not needed for a number of years. The Council could potentially draw down upon some reserves, subject to those reserves being replenished in time to fund future known costs to prevent budget pressures in future years.

4.72. All earmarked reserves are also being reviewed to assess the extent to which they could be repurposed; however, the vast majority of earmarked reserves are already set aside to help fund expenditure to which the Council is already committed. The use of some reserves is also ring-fenced by statute to specific purposes (Community Infrastructure Levy and Public Health are examples of this).

4.73. Best practice is to use reserves only to fund one-off items as the reserves themselves are by nature single sums that can only be used once. According to CIPFA's *Financial Management Code,* running down reserves by persistent use to support the revenue budget would be a symptom of financial stress, indicating a financial position that is not sustainable in the long run.

4.74. Any draw down from reserves in the proposed budget and future forecasts in the MTFS needs to be stress tested to determine its effect on the level of usable reserves. For instance, if a drawdown of £5m per annum (circa 5% of the net budget) were incorporated into the Council's budget plans, the General Fund balance of £15.1m would be exhausted after three years. Having no reserves is not prudent and would expose the Council to considerable financial risk and would be likely to lead to an adverse external audit opinion on financial sustainability and resilience.

4.75. Given the current volatility in the economy, the Council intends to create an Inflations Risks Reserve by the reallocation of funds from existing reserves as a buffer against major risks from rising prices and other cost pressures.

4.76. The current budget proposals are made without an assumption that reserves will be drawn down to support the budget. Should the financial position be worse than expected, for instance due to an adverse local government finance settlement, the Council will use reserves to bring the 2023/24 budget into balance. It is permissible to use reserves in the short-term to bridge gaps and cover timing differences, but only if there are clear, achievable savings in the medium term. This will be a one-off measure and the gap will need to be addressed in future years as persistent use of reserves will cause them to fall below the prudent level required to guard against risks and uncertainties, and could ultimately lead to the complete depletion of uncommitted reserves.

Overall summary of the budget position

4.77. The MTFS captures the factors that give rise to pressures on the revenue budget. As far as can be assessed in these uncertain times, the MFTS is a robust model of the financial outlook for Brent and is resilient within a range of tolerances.

5. Savings Proposals

5.1. When the 2022/23 budget was set in February 2022, this was the second year of a two year savings package. No savings were agreed for years beyond 2022/23. Since then the economic situation has deteriorated considerably and remains highly volatile. Whilst the financial impact of COVID-19 has reduced and is now much easier to quantify, new economic pressures have emerged, such as high levels of inflation, as set out early in this report. Given the high degree of

uncertainty over financial forecasts, it is hard to predict the potential budget gap beyond 2023/24. It is therefore prudent to only agree a one-year savings package at this point. The budget gap for 2023/24 is currently estimated at £18m to achieve a balanced budget. This is set out in the following table.

Table 2: Overall Financial Position

Proposed Budget	**2023/24 £m**
Expenditure	
Base Budget from 2022/23	323.1
Demographics	6.5
Inflation	14.7
Pay	6.5
Other	0.7
Total Expenditure	**351.5**
Income	
Revenue Support Grant	(26.6)
Specific Grants	(61.3)
Total funding from Central Government	**(87.9)**
Council Tax	(147.8)
Business Rates	(97.8)
Total funding from residents and businesses	**(245.6)**
Total Income	**(333.5)**
Budget Gap (Expenditure less Income)	18.0
Savings Proposals (for agreement in February 2023)	(18.0)
Budget Gap	0.0

5.2. The budget gap arises for two reasons. The anticipated government cap on the increase in Core Spending Power means that government grants, retained business rates and Council Tax rise at less than the actual value of inflation. Unless measures were in place to similarly restrict the rise in costs due to inflation, it would not be prudent to put in place a similar restriction on expenditure indexation. The inflation amounts included in the budget are robust as they are based on OBR and Bank of England forecasts. The gap arising from the differing treatment of inflation is £10.8m. The cost of providing services at existing levels also increases due to changes in the population. These demographic changes add a future £7.2m pressure to the budget, resulting in the savings target of £18m.

5.3. As part of the budget setting process for 2023/24, a number of new budget proposals have been developed in order to close the £18m budget gap noted in the table above. Throughout the process, in producing the draft budget proposals, the emphasis continues to be on delivering efficiency measures, service transformations, cost reductions and income generation with a view to protecting front line services and Council priorities as much as possible.

5.4. The table below summarises the proposals put forward to close the budget gap.

Table 3: New budget proposals

Proposal	**Saving (£m)**	**Description**
Reduction in provision	0.6	These relate to marginal reductions in service levels in a number of areas.
Service Transformation	9.3	Transformation service offer and increased level of automation.
Digital	0.9	Use digital technologies to transform processes and service delivery
Procurement	1.6	Ongoing review procurement and contract management, covering new procurement activity, re-scoping of contracts and reviewing inflationary uplifts.
Restructure	4.8	Reorganisation of staff
Income generation	0.8	Income from leasing floors of the Civic Centre to external organisations and increase in third party income
Total	**18.0**	

5.5. The table below summarises the proposals by service area.

Table 4: New savings proposals

Service Area	**Sum of savings proposed (£m)**	**No of Proposals**
Adult Social Care & Health	4.3	7
Children and Young People	2.4	8
Communities and Regeneration	0.6	8
Resident Services	4.2	18

Finance and Resources	1.8	8
Governance	0.5	11
Corporate	4.1	5
Total	**18.0**	**65**

5.6. The Officers have reviewed the proposals to ensure the plans are realistic and deliverable. Detailed budget templates have been produced, attached as Appendix B, that set out further details of each proposal while providing the overall current budget context, the key risks and mitigations and the equalities impact where relevant.

5.7. It should be noted that this report reflects the position at this point in the budget preparation and these numbers will change as the budget develops over the next two months. We also await confirmation of the Local Government Finance Settlement, expected in mid-December 2022. If the LGFS is better than expected, then it may be possible to defer some of the savings proposals; conversely, if the LGFS is worse than expected, there will be no requirement to identify further savings for the 2023/24 budget. Instead, if the situation does deteriorate, it may be necessary to use reserves to bridge any budget gap in the short term with the longer term issues tackled in a future budget. Any revisions will be reflected in the budget to be considered by Cabinet in February 2023.

5.8. While the approach to budget setting for 2023/24 is deemed reasonable under the current circumstances, the situation remains that there is still a considerable budget gap for 2024/25 expected – this is currently estimated at £10m, but is likely to be higher. The Council will therefore have some difficult decisions to take over the coming year as part of the next budget planning round.

6. Risk Management

6.1. The Council has adopted a risk-based approach to its financial planning. The earlier the Council becomes aware of a potential risk to the achievement of its Financial Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy or its annual budget, the sooner – and the more effectively – it can take action to address that risk and to mitigate its impact.

6.2. Through the financial planning and budget setting process risks have been identified and actions to control or mitigate those risks have been identified. The MTFS contains a risk register covering risks inherent in the MTFS assumptions and other factors both within the Council and externally that could have an impact on the Council's financial position. In the section covering services pressures, risks were extensively explored and in the detailed savings proposals risks are also considered.

7. Financial Resilience Assessment

7.1. In the *Financial Management Code*, CIPFA recommends that local authorities undertake a Financial Resilience Assessment (FRA) to determine the long-term financial sustainability of the authority. The Financial Resilience Assessment

looks at symptoms of financial stress (such as running down reserves as mentioned earlier) and effective financial management (for instance, having clear plans for delivering savings).

7.2. This report sets out the factors that an FRA would consider, such as the use of reserves, stress testing budget proposals and sensitivity analysis. A full FRA will be undertaken when the February Budget report is approved, as the Chief Finance Officer's assessment of the adequacy of reserves and robustness of estimates under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 should be take into account.

8. Statutory process of consultation, scrutiny and equalities

Consultation

8.1. The Council recognises consultation as a key part of policy formulation, and makes considerable effort to ensure that the views of residents, businesses and other key stakeholders are taken into account. Legally, the results of consultation are something that Members must have due regard to, alongside other relevant considerations, when making decisions.

8.2. As in previous years, it is proposed to formally consult on the draft budget via the online consultation portal, where respondents will be invited to focus their attention on the new budget proposals for 2023/24. In addition, it is proposed that a presentation on the draft budget be delivered to each of the five Brent Connects meetings in November 2022 and January 2023

8.3. There are a number of business forums and associations that the Council regularly engages with that include a wide range of both small and large local businesses. These include West London Business (a non-profit business membership organisation), the Federation of Small Businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, and a number of town centre business associations. The consultation on the budget will be published in a newsletter that is sent to a large number of Brent businesses, explaining why the views of local businesses are important and how they could have their say

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8.4. The local voluntary sector is closely engaged with Brent's communities and has considerable experience of the impact of the Council's difficult choices against a background of funding reductions. Engagement with the local voluntary sector will therefore play an important part of the consultation process and invitations to participate in the consultation will be sent to all Brent voluntary and community sector organisations. There will be additional opportunities for residents to respond to the consultation through drop in events in all Hubs in the borough. Focus group discussions will also be held with specific groups including older people, youth groups and newly arrived communities.

8.5. Overall, the main aim of this approach to consultation is to raise awareness of the Council's financial position, inform residents of how the Council spends its budget and ensure residents, businesses and other key stakeholders are aware of the opportunities to have their say, by knowing how to respond and when the consultation events are taking place. This will be delivered through a variety of

communication channels, for example through the local newspaper, publicity on the council's website, e-Newsletters, posters, media briefings and use of the Council's social media platforms, including Facebook and Twitter, to disseminate reminders and encourage residents to participate in the consultation process.

Scrutiny

8.6. The scrutiny committees will review the draft budget through their budget task group in order to carry out the statutory scrutiny of the budget. This will include scrutiny of the budget development process, the budget assumptions in the MTFS as well as the new proposals set out in appendices A and B. Following this, the chair of the committee will present a report to Cabinet commenting on the outcome of the scrutiny process and providing recommendations for Cabinet to consider as part of their decision making.

Equalities Impact assessments

8.7. The Council has a duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who don't when making decisions. This duty is set out in more detail in the Equality Implications section of this report. Each of the budget proposals attached in Appendix B have been subject to an equality impact assessments (EIA) screening to assess their potential or likely impact on service users and employees with protected characteristics. Where the EIA process identifies a disproportionate negative impact with no reasonable mitigation, the proposal will be subject to a full EIA and may need to be changed or even rejected. The consultation process outlined in this report will be an important source of information for these exercises. If a proposal involves a staffing restructure, an EIA will be conducted as part of that process, which forms part of the Managing Change policy.

9. Schools and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

9.1. The provisional DSG allocations announced in July 2022 show that Brent will receive an increase in mainstream pupil funding of £2.9 million, which represents an overall increase of 1.2%. This is lower than the national percentage increase of 1.9% and lower than the average of 1.6% for local authorities in London, primarily driven by only London experiencing a decline in pupil numbers according to the dataset underpinning the notional National Funding Formula (NFF). As in previous years, the Council will continue to set a local funding formula for mainstream schools in 2023/24, although the total funding available will be determined by the NFF.

9.2. In March 2022, the government confirmed its commitment to introduce the direct NFF. Local authorities will be required, from 2023/24, to move their local funding formula factors by 10% towards the NFF factors and must use all and only the NFF funding formula factors to calculate schools' budget allocations. The implications to Brent schools were presented to Schools Forum in June 2022 and details can be accessed via the following link: DSG Final Outturn 2021/22.

9.3. The government recently completed a consultation on the detail of the implementation of the direct NFF. The consultation included proposals for how funding for schools experiencing significant growth in pupil numbers or falling rolls could operate under the direct NFF and more importantly, the determination of SEN notional budgets for mainstream schools' and disability support within the direct NFF allocations. Results of the consultation will be published later in the calendar year.

9.4. The number of Brent schools experiencing difficulties has increased with 67% projecting an in year deficit. 23% of these schools plan to use over 50% of reserves to balance their budgets. Schools are feeling the impact of rising inflationary costs and increases in energy prices alongside the prospect of teachers pay increasing by 5% in 2022/23 and starting salaries rising by 8.9% to £30k. The DfE expects schools to manage these pressures within the allocated funding increase in 2022/23 of 3.6% and 1.2% expected in 2023/24. A number of Brent schools are also experiencing falling rolls and as a result have had significant reductions in funding. This is requiring schools to make strategic decisions to mitigate the impact of this, including the consideration of staffing restructures. Alongside measures to support schools, such as capping admission numbers, a School Place Planning Working Group will be established to review the sustainability of provision in primary planning areas.

9.5. The High Needs block (HNB) of the DSG will see a 5% (£3.5 million) increase in 2023/24. This is on par with other Outer London boroughs but lower than the national average increase of 6.3%, due to London experiencing the lowest increase across various funding factors as a result of reductions in pupil numbers.

9.6. Pressures against the HNB remain, due to increased demand for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and this is a national issue. Despite the additional funds, the demand pressures continue to grow and to set a balanced DSG budget in 2023/24 the local authority will request, via the Schools Forum, a 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block. The pressure in the HNB has led to there being a £15.1 million deficit in the DSG carried forward from 2021/22 and further forecast pressures of £2.2 million in 2022/23 will increase the deficit position to £17.3 million. The statutory override that was put in place to enable local authorities to hold deficit balances is due to end this financial year. Further guidance is anticipated from the DfE regarding the management of historic deficits going forward as this poses a risk to the general fund reserves.

9.7. The DfE requires local authorities with an overall DSG deficit to have a management plan to recover the deficit over a number of financial years. The Schools Forum have been presented with actions being taken to manage demand, improve sufficiency of places and financial management to recover the deficit in the medium to long term. These include; establishing more SEND provision in the borough including developing new Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARPs) as part of the School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 Refresh paper agreed at Cabinet in November 2021. In addition, ensuring there is full cost recovery from other local authorities that place pupils in Brent special schools including administration and other specific costs; a review of the DSG funded SEN support services and continued central government lobbying.

9.8. Brent is part of the newly introduced DfE programme called Delivering Better Value (DBV) in SEND to provide dedicated support and funding to help local authorities reform their high needs systems. The DBV programme has made a provision of £85m over 3 years from 2022/23 to support a wider group of LAs with smaller DSG deficits. Brent is in the first tranche of 20 local authorities the DfE is working with. The expected outcomes include; a comprehensive diagnostic to identify root cause cost drivers and mitigating solutions or reforms and support in developing a quality assured Management Plan.

9.9. A consultation on the Early Years funding formula and maintained nursery school supplementary funding concluded in September 2022. The main aspects of the proposals related to the need to update the funding formula for early education entitlements for children aged 2, 3 and 4. Analysis shows that a number of the proposed changes to the Early Years funding from 2023/24, if approved, could have significant financial impacts on elements of the early years' settings and will jeopardize the sustainability of some local childcare providers. The results of the consultation are expected to be published this autumn.

9.10. The key principle of allocating the funding for the Early Years Block remains the same i.e. 95% of funding received is allocated directly to providers with the remaining 5% retained for central services. Funding allocations for the Early Years Block are expected to be announced in December 2022. In the Spending Review 2021, the DfE confirmed that nationally, the block will receive additional funding worth £180 million in 2023/24 and £170 million in 2024/25, to enable local authorities to increase hourly rates paid to providers for childcare entitlement offers and reflects the costs of inflation and national living wage increases. An Early Years funding report for 2023/24 will be presented at the Schools Forum in January 2023, detailing the revised funding rates.

9.11. The recent SEND Green paper is likely to bring about reforms to the funding system, a major part being the introduction of a new national framework of banding and price tariffs for high needs funding. Bandings would cluster specific types of education provision aligned to need. Brent like most local authorities uses a banding system to allocate funding ranging from Band 1 for lower levels of need to Band 6 for the most complex needs. The introduction of tariffs would help to control high costs attributed to expensive provision. National funding bands have the potential to establish a more consistent basis for the funding of provision and all specialist providers will need to ensure the provision they offer is in line with the national SEND standards. The DfE proposes to work with local authorities and provide clarity on the process.

10. Housing Revenue Account

10.1. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a ring-fenced account, which contains the income and expenditure relating to the Council's landlord duties in respect of approximately 12,000 dwellings including those held by leaseholders.

10.2. The HRA budget is set each year in the context of the 30-year business plan. The business plan is reviewed annually allowing for horizon scanning and the identification and mitigation of risks in the short, medium and long term. Early identification of risks enables planning and implementation of mitigations to

ensure the HRA can continue to remain financially secure and deliver on its commitments:

- Expand and accelerate the development of new council homes;
- Continue to maintain and improve existing council homes; and
- Transformation and continuous improvement of front line services to tenants and leaseholders

10.3. Since 2020/21, and originally for the following four years, the Council had the power to increase rents annually up to a maximum of CPI plus 1%. However due to the rapid rise of inflation within the context of the cost of living crisis, the government is currently consulting on introducing a rent increase cap. The consultation includes proposals for capping rent increases at 3%, 5% and 7%, all of which are below CPI + 1%. A central case scenario of a 5% rents cap is being used for budget planning purposes.

10.4. In 2022/23, the average rent currently sits at £124.70 per week, after applying an uplift of CPI + 1% (a 4.1% increase overall) on the previous year. A 5% cap would result in an average rent per week of £130.94, raising an additional £2.5m per annum. This is a £3m (or a 55%) reduction in investment in the HRA when compared to continuing with the CPI + 1% policy. With a 3% rent rise cap, the level of income per annum would reduce further by £1m when compared to the 5% cap. A 7% rent cap, would be a £1m increase when compared to the 5% option.

10.5. In the context of the 30-year business plan, a CPI + 1% model helps to provide some stability and certainty over planned investment in the stock, service improvement and new development, at least in the medium term. It does however not entirely mitigate other risks which are present in the current economic climate. Factors such as the unprecedented increases in energy and material costs, repair and maintenance contracts and anticipated wage increases, mean any decision to set rents at less than the maximum permitted, provides a significant risk to the sustainability of the HRA. Local authorities still need to cover the inflationary pressures within the HRA whilst delivering on their operational requirements and strategic priorities some of which are additional legislative requirements, from repairs and maintenance, to building safety, fire safety and decarbonisation. A rent cap or lower than a CPI + 1% increase combined with increasing costs would result in even greater pressure on the HRA and a likely situation of spend exceeding income generated through rent and service charge collection.

10.6. It is illegal to set a budget that would result in negative balances on the HRA. If faced with this likely situation, significant savings will be required from the management and maintenance budgets.

10.7. Rent increases in 2023/24 do not only affect the financial year in question, but also have an impact on future rent levels. There is no provision in the current rent regulations to allow anything more than the maximum (CPI+1%) increases in future years. Therefore a lower rent increase in 2023/24 means that the base for a rent increase in 2024/25 is also going to be lower and so on for future years. For example, if CPI is 10% and 6% for the next 2 years and rents are capped at

5%, the HRA will have a budget deficit of £4m, compared to an operating balance of £2.9m if CPI+1% was implemented.

10.8. Implications of future Government regulated rent policy remain uncertain beyond April 2025. Some costs such as repairs are likely to rise significantly and remain at those levels without falling when the current economic pressures subside. Therefore, it may be necessary to reduce planned major works, along with plans for decarbonisation and new builds in order to maintain long-term financial sustainability and resilience
.

10.9. The table below shows the best and worst case scenarios' impact on the HRA budget with a 5% rent rise limitation in place.

Table 5 - HRA Budget Scenarios

	Best Case £m	**Worst Case £m**
Rent (5% rise)	(2.5)	(2.5)
Bad Debt Provision	0.5	1.0
Repairs and Major works inflation	2.1	2.7
Pay Award	0.4	0.7
Increased void costs	1.5	2.0
Increased costs of disrepairs	0.3	0.5
Budget Gap	**2.3**	**4.4**
Saving Proposals		
Reviewing void standards and active interventions to reduce costs	(1.15)	(1.15)
A reduction in staffing costs	(0.85)	(0.85)
A reduction in support services	(0.3)	(0.3)
A reduction in costs associated with contracts and external provider spend (e.g. exclusions, TMO)	(0.7)	(0.7)
Total Savings	**(3.0)**	**(3.0)**
Total Impact	**(0.7)**	**1.4**

10.10. A 5% rent limitation would result in a budget gap of between £2.3m and £4.4m. With a 3% cap, this gap widens to between £3.3m and £5.4m and with a 7% cap, it is reduces to between £1.3m and £3.4m.

10.11. Based on the scenarios modelled in the table, the central case (that is broadly in-between the best and worst case scenario) suggests that a 5% rent cap and identified savings could result in a balanced budget.

Bad Debts

10.12. It is recognised that cost of living crisis and increased rental charges can have an adverse impact on the level of rent collections. In 2021/22, 40% of rent charges were covered through housing benefit payments, which equates to £20m. The remaining 60% of income totalling £30m was paid directly by tenants who are in employment or in receipt of universal credit and would be at risk of increases levels of non-collection.

10.13. Collection rates in Quarter 1 2022/23, on average, stood at 95%. If this level of rent collection remained consistent for the year, this would result in an additional budget requirement of £2.4m in order to allow for potential non-payments. The Council's Resident Support Fund helps to alleviate some of financial hardship being faced by tenants. However, collection rates are still expected to continue to be impacted. For every 1% drop in collection, the loss of income is estimated at £0.5m. It is estimated that in 2023/24 the budget will need to increase by anywhere between £0.5m and £1m in order to account for a potential increase in non-collection.

Repairs and major works

10.14. The figures from the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, published in May 2022, suggest that high material prices are now impeding activity for 84% of construction firms. The construction industry expects further price rises, with an average estimate of 12%-13% inflation over the next 12 months, increasing the likelihood of risk that the contractor may not be able to complete or take on more work. It is estimated that inflationary uplifts on Brent's repairs contracts could potentially range between 8%-10% resulting in an additional budget requirement between £2.1m to £2.7m in 2023/24.

Pay Award

10.15. Staffing budget for 2022/23 is £10.9m, made up of 227.5 FTE's, an average of £50k per FTE. The pay award for 2022/23 has been agreed at a fixed amount of £2,229 in outer London, which is estimated to result in a budget uplift requirement of £0.5m, an average uplift of 5% on existing budgets. An inflationary uplift ranging between 4%-6% will result in a budgetary requirement between £0.4m to £0.7m in 2023/24.

Existing Budget Pressures

10.16. Over the last two years, the HRA experienced budgetary pressures associated with expenditure on void properties required to bring them to letting standards. These pressures were mitigated through underspends on staffing costs due to vacancies and reduced spend on major works. With the need to recruit to vacant positions and requirements within the major works programme to maintain a minimum baseline budget of £15m per annum, the budgetary pressures identified for void works require additional funding estimated at £1.5m - £2m per annum.

10.17. Compensation claims for disrepairs have also increased over the last few years. The rate of new claims from third party solicitors are not showing any sign of decline as an increasing number of legal claim firms are contacting tenants

directly to promote their services. Additional budget requirement is estimated to be between £0.3 and £0.5m per annum.

Saving Proposals

10.18. Difficult decisions are required to be made in order to reappraise HRA budget priorities, achieve a significant level of savings across the HRA and maintain a balanced budget. Annual saving targets are already incorporated into medium-term financial plans, however new savings are required in order contain the reduction in rental income.

10.19. In order to address a budget gap associated with expenditure on void properties closer monitoring of void specifications to ensure overspend is reduced is now in place. This will also reduce the number of major voids which have both higher specifications and longer turnaround times. Quicker turnaround times will reduce the void rent loss and Council Tax liability periods. This is expected to generate a £1.15m saving.

10.20. An estimated saving of £850k can be achieved by a reduction in staff. The vast majority can be achieved through the loss of posts that have been difficult to recruit to in Property Services and are currently vacant. The remainder would be achieved through rationalising posts where there are multiple full time employees.

10.21. A £0.3m saving is anticipated as a result of general efficiencies and a reduced expenditure associated with support services.

10.22. The HRA is carrying out an exercise to assess exclusions within the responsive repairs contract which are not included in the price per property schedule and are therefore higher cost to the HRA. This helps to ensure value for money and reduce duplication for works. The Tenant Management Organisations are now being reviewed to bring their management fees in line with the current HRA position which will result in a small saving plus recouping costs incurred by the Council such as repairs which fall under the TMO's responsibility to cover. This is expected to generate a £0.7m saving.

Tenants Service Charges

10.23. Service charges are recharges to tenants, which are based on the actual costs incurred for providing specific services, such as estate cleaning. For the purpose of the budget setting, individual service charge elements are adjusted to bring them in line with the estimated costs of providing these services to tenants. Service charges are adjusted if there is a projected over or under recovery of costs. Currently there is under recovery of costs for estate cleaning services. Therefore a phased approach to cost recovery has been modelled to allow charges to increase over a four-year period, limiting the impact on tenants.

10.24. Unmetered communal lighting, heating and hot water charges are adjusted annually in line with the forecast energy supplier inflations. Unity Place in South Kilburn hosts the energy centre for the local district heat network for metered billing. It currently supplies heat and hot water to 235 properties and tenants are billed based on actual usage.

10.25. The rent cap consultation closed on 12 October and a final decision is expected to be announced later this year. Once the rent policy changes are confirmed, the HRA draft budget and the 2023/24 HRA Business Plan will be updated to reflect the impact. Budget assumptions will continue to be reviewed and updated. The HRA budget for 2023/24 will be presented to Cabinet in February 2023 for approval by Full Council.

11. Capital Programme

11.1. The Capital Programme is spend on providing or improving assets, which include land, buildings and equipment, which will be of use or benefit in providing services for more than one financial year. The programme is funded through a combination of capital grants and contributions, capital receipts, reserves, contribution from revenue or prudential borrowing. Any borrowing must be both prudent and affordable therefore the Council must ensure the ability to repay both the interest and principal of any borrowing through the revenue capital financing budget.

11.2. Interest rates have been increasing steadily from historic lows. The Bank of England base rate was 0.25% at the start of 2022. Since then, there have been six rate increases taking the current Bank of England base rate to 2.25%. In recent months, there has been further volatility as markets question the sustainability of government borrowing in light of recent policy announcements around energy price caps and tax cuts.

11.3. The market is expecting significant interest rate increases to be required by the Bank of England in order to bring inflation under control, causing the cost of borrowing to increase significantly. For instance, if the Council were to take a new 30-year today, this would currently be at an interest rate of c6% as compared with below 3% in April.

11.4. This substantial increase in the cost of borrowing coupled with the rising construction costs from high inflation are making the viability of capital projects extremely challenging. For schemes within the Council's existing programme, work is ongoing to identify mitigations to allow delivery to continue; however, this may result in a scope reduction or pausing delivery for a further evaluation at a later date. For schemes within the pipeline and yet to form part of the main programme, updated financial assessments are being undertaken to reflect the increased borrowing costs and scheme costs and the impact on project viability.

11.5. The Capital Programme below comprises of projects approved by Cabinet at the February 2022 budget setting, new projects approved and a number of in year budget adjustments. The full details of the budget changes including options to pause schemes as well as new proposals will be reported in the budget setting report in February 2023.

Table 6 – Current Capital Programme Budget and Financing

Programme Budget	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Corporate Landlord	17.1	57.2	25.6	1.1	0.5
South Kilburn	26.4	10.4	9.9	2.8	11.5
Regeneration	9.4	81.1	63.7	28.8	-
St Raphael's	1.9	1.7	-	-	-
Public Realm	17.9	14.2	5.5	6.1	0.0
Schools	12.4	31.5	17.7	-	-
Housing GF	100.1	83.4	62.1	6.3	1.7
Housing HRA	58.0	85.4	41.6	20.3	20.2
	243.2	**364.9**	**226.2**	**65.2**	**33.9**

Programme Financing	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Grants & Other Contributions	53.6	77.2	27.6	2.1	0.0
S106 & CIL	11.0	14.8	-	-	-
Capital Receipts	6.3	9.2	9.9	2.8	11.5
Reserves	5.9	0.1	0.1	-	-
Major Repairs Allowance	11.0	11.5	12.0	0.0	-
Revenue Contribution	6.0	4.0	-	-	-
Prudential Borrowing	149.4	248.1	176.6	60.3	22.4
Total	**243.2**	**364.9**	**226.2**	**65.2**	**33.9**

11.6. Many of the demand pressures for the capital programme are further exacerbated by the cost of living crisis.

Temporary Accommodation and Social Housing

11.7. Temporary Accommodation (TA) is housing provided to homeless people within the borough whilst awaiting a permanent arrangement to house them. The demand for this type of accommodation is rising given the increased number of homelessness applications received given the current cost of living crisis. This demand drives the need for further social housing where the demand far exceeds the current supply. The housing schemes are experiencing significant viability challenges with the cost of construction rising and the increased borrowing costs. This has required an alternative approach to support the delivery of affordable housing:

11.8. A programme wide approach to support cross-subsidy between schemes in the New Council Homes Programme to ensure larger family homes can continue to be built.

11.9. Converting schemes to include alternative tenures including Shared Ownership (SO), Open Market Rent (OMR) and Open Market Sale (OMS) with a view to make schemes viable and prioritise larger homes.

11.10. Scenario analysis on build costs for schemes during their feasibility to develop plans required to maintain viability throughout the design and tender process in a high inflationary environment. If this is not achievable, an assessment will be made on whether the scheme should proceed.

11.11. Even with these considerations, it is highly likely for schemes to still not reach our viability levels so a decision will be taken on whether to reduce the scope of the scheme, pause until a future date and allow for a further assessment or cancel the project.

Supported Living

11.12. Supported Living is a specialised form of social housing that allows adults with care and support needs to maintain independence within the community as an alternative to living in residential care or a nursing home. Its demand is influenced by people's health, ageing, etc. The demand is rising given our ageing population.

School Places

11.13. It is important that the Council is cognisant of the latest demand for school places as it has a statutory duty to provide school places to residents of the borough. The Council had approved a secondary school expansion programme in 2020 but updated demographic figures in 2021 meant there was no longer the projected figures to justify the scheme.

11.14. The Programme was paused and funds were used for a new SEND expansion scheme, to meet the need for more places for Special Education Needs within borough. There are currently large revenue costs associated with funding places outside the borough.

Highways

11.15. The highways programme is reliant on Local Implementation Plan funding from TFL to support the improvement works programme however the reduction and uncertainty of this funding has applied additional pressure to the Council to fund any shortfalls in recent years. This makes it increasingly challenging to plan an affordable asset management programme of the footways and carriageways in the borough.

12. Financial Implications

12.1. The financial implications are set out throughout the report. As the budget proposals are for consultation at this stage, not agreement, there are no direct costs associated with agreeing the recommendations, other than for consultation, the costs of which are built into existing budgets.

13. Legal Implications

13.1. A local authority must budget so as to give a reasonable degree of certainty as to the maintenance of its services. In particular, local authorities are required by the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to calculate as part of their overall budget what amounts are appropriate for contingencies and reserves. The Council must ensure sufficient flexibility to avoid going into deficit at any point during the financial year. The Director of Finance is required to report on the robustness of the proposed financial reserves.

13.2. Standing Order 24 sets out the process that applies within the Council for developing budget and capital proposals for 2023/24. There is a duty to consult representatives of non-domestic ratepayers on the Council's expenditure plans before each annual budget under Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The Council also has a general duty to consult representatives of Council Taxpayers, service users and others under Section 3 (2) Local Government Act 1999.

13.3. The Council is also required to comply with other statutory and common law consultation obligations relevant to particular options being considered and with the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Council must consult at a formative stage in the decision making process and adequate time must be given for public consideration and response. The consultation information must be accurate, fair and balanced, give sufficient reasons for proposals to permit of intelligent consideration and response and the information produced by the consultation must conscientiously be taken into account in finalising the proposals.

14. Equality Implications

14.1. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in the Equality Act 2010, Brent Council is required to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not, when making decisions. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. Although socio-economic status (people on low income, young and adult carers, people living in deprived areas, groups suffering multiple disadvantage, etc.) is not a characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010, Brent Council is committed to considering the impact on socio-economic groups.

14.2. The PSED does not prevent decision makers from making difficult decisions in the context of the requirement to achieve a significant level of savings across all operations. It supports the Council to make robust decisions in a fair, transparent and accountable way that considers the diverse needs of all our local communities and workforce. Consideration of the duty should precede and inform decision making. It is important that decision makers have regard to the statutory grounds in the light of all available material, including relevant equality analyses and consultation findings. If there are significant negative equality impacts arising from a specific proposal, then decision makers may decide to amend, defer for further consideration or reject a proposal after balancing all of the information

available to them. This may mean making up the shortfall from additional reductions elsewhere.

15. Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

15.1. Section eight of this report provides more details of the statutory and the non-statutory consultation process with regards to the proposed budget setting process.

16. Human Resources

16.1. Where options included in the appendices require changes or reductions in staffing, the Council's Managing Change policy will apply.

Related Document:
Medium Term Financial Outlook, Cabinet July 2022

Report sign off:

Minesh Patel
Corporate Director of
Finance and Resources.

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APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF BUDGET SAVINGS PROPOSALS 2023-24

Department	Reference	Project/Proposal	Category	Headline Description of Savings Proposal	2023/24 £000
Adult Social Care & Health	2023-24 AH01	Homecare Reductions	Service Transformation	Post Covid increases in homecare, driven by increased need and hospital discharge, introduce new reablement service and reduce double handed care packages to manage demand and increase independence	1,200
Adult Social Care & Health	2023-24 AH02	Not in-sourcing Reablement	Service Transformation	Commission a reablement service through the market, which will deliver the same benefit for residents and for demand, but will cost substantially less to deliver than bringing the service in house	1,300
Adult Social Care & Health	2023-24 AH03	Reduction in cost of Learning Disability Placements	Service Transformation	Proposal to support more people with a Learning Disability to live as independently as possible and to continue to reduce Residential Placements	600
Adult Social Care & Health	2023-24 AH04	Extra Care Void Saving	Service Transformation	Reduce the number of care home placements, reversing the increase driven by health during Covid, re-focusing on extra care placements filling voids and new extra care schemes as alternatives that promote more independence	250
Adult Social Care & Health	2023-24 AH05	Mental Health Placements	Service Transformation	Working closely with housing and secondary MH services to improve the recovery pathway post Covid, in particular reducing supported living placements and increased access to General Needs accommodation	470
Adult Social Care & Health	2023-24 AH06	Reductions in Staffing	Restructure	Deliver the plan to increase the number of permanent staff in a very challenging recruitment market and reduce the Adult Social Care agency staffing	270
Adult Social Care & Health	2023-24 AH07	Digital / Transformation Savings	Service Transformation	ASC - online forms, single view dashboards, integration of applications with Mosaic, assistive technology. Electronic document management. Direct payments automation and reduction in overpayments; and potential for increased alignment with CYP DP team. Automation of manual case review processes.	175
Sub-total					**4,265**

Department	Reference	Project/Proposal	Category	Headline Description of Savings Proposal	2023/24 £000
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP01	Early Help	Restructure	Savings proposals will be a combination of establishment savings achieved by deleting posts and reducing some commissioned services.	240
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP02	Inclusion and Virtual School	Reduction in provision	Reducing the Supporting Young People Contract, ('Connexions').	80
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP03	Localities - Care Packages reduction	Reduction in provision	Care package reductions for families receiving support from the 0-25 children and young people with disabilities teams	365
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP05	Looked after Children and Permanency	Restructure	Review of agency worker usage and implementation of a vacancy factor	510
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP06	Forward Planning Performance & Partnerships	Procurement	Proposed savings will be made through the commissioning of placements for Looked After Children and Care Leavers	860
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP07	Safeguarding and Quality Assurance	Restructure	Savings will be made through the management of vacant posts and a reduction of the CYP training budget.	121
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP08	Setting and School Effectiveness	Restructure	Proposed savings will be made by a reduction in staffing costs within the core school effectiveness team.	34
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP09	Digital / Transformation Savings	Service Transformation	Admin - case management, RPA, Mosaic enhancement (alerts), electronic document management, removing manual processes and excel. Schools admissions chatbots/virtual agents. Direct payments automation and reduction in overpayments; potential for increased alignment with ASC DP team. CAMS dashboard.	200
Sub-total					**2,410**

Department	Reference	Project/Proposal	Category	Headline Description of Savings Proposal	2023/24 £000
Communities & Regeneration	2023-24 CR01	Planning Service Staff	Restructure	Reduce planning staff by 5% (3.5 FTE) achieved by natural turnover/deletion of vacant posts. Would impact ability to provide planning service and policy framework.	205
Communities & Regeneration	2023-24 CR02	Brent Works / Brent Start	Restructure	Proposal to combine advisors across both Brent Start and Brent Works via turnover / vacancy management	35
Communities & Regeneration	2023-24 CR03	Brent Start Programme Leader	Restructure	Proposal to merge a position with another programme to delete this provision in Brent Start via vacancy management	24
Communities & Regeneration	2023-24 CR04	Regeneration Capitalisation	Restructure	Opportunity for further capitalisation for 4 years, whilst Wembley housing zone schemes are built	75
Communities & Regeneration	2023-24 CR05	Town Centre managers	Restructure	Reduction of one Town Centre manager.	68
Communities & Regeneration	2023-24 CR06	Strategy & Engagement restructure	Restructure	Reduction in IAG Contract. Non appointment of new posts identified in the new structure	55
Communities & Regeneration	2023-24 CR07	Communications restructure	Restructure	Reduce the number of Communications Account Managers in the corporate communications team from five to three	100
Communities & Regeneration	2023-24 CR08	Digital / Transformation Savings	Service Transformation	Automation, chatbot, virtual agents. Dashboards for contract monitoring and demand management. Any changes to structures, alignment and commissioned services from Employment and Skills OBR. IoT e.g. potholes, better tech for field officers (Powerapps) to increase efficiency.	50
Sub-total					**612**

Department	Reference	Project/Proposal	Category	Headline Description of Savings Proposal	2023/24 £000
Resident Services	2023-24 RS01	Removal of first class envelopes from the Civic Centre	Service Transformation	Removal of first class envelopes from Civic Centre to reduce postage spends. First class postage will remain available in the Post Room but only for those requiring first class postage	64
Resident Services	2023-24 RS02	Staffing changes	Restructure	Staffing changes across the Improvement & Performance Team and the Digital Post Room teams. Duties to be covered by existing staff once re-evaluation of JD's and staff consultation has been carried out	86
Resident Services	2023-24 RS03	IEG and Resilience contract reduction & Staffing reductions due to systems automation	Digital	Reduction in the usage of the Resilience contract and creation of in house applications to replace IEG	262
Resident Services	2023-24 RS04	Online diary and reporting system and booking citizenship ceremonies	Digital	Online diary and reporting system equivalent to current product bought in house use of corporate. Online booking Citizenship ceremonies incorporating facility for payment for private ceremonies	11
Resident Services	2023-24 RS05	Staff reorganisation	Restructure	Staff reorganisation in the Revenue & Debt team	210
Resident Services	2023-24 RS06	Reduction in licensing, corporate printing, supplies and services, delivery of ICT roadmap, staffing	Digital	• Reduction in licensing spend through applications rationalisation • Reduction in corporate printing spend through continued move to digital options • Reduction in ICT and Transformation supplies and services spend • Reduction in Brent's contribution to the shared ICT service through realisation of savings through delivery of roadmap projects • Reduction in staffing in Transformation service	418
Resident Services	2023-24 RS07	Digital / Transformation Savings	Service Transformation	Online forms, chatbot/virtual agent, RPA, further reduction in print, aligning systems	300
Resident Services	2023-24 RS08	Libraries stock	Reduction in provision	Reduction in Libraries stock budget	62
Resident Services	2023-24 RS09	Increase Council Owned Temporary Accommodation Portfolio	Service Transformation	Build a new Temporary Accommodation scheme of up to 100 units (similar to Anansi House), providing better quality and more affordable accommodation for people who would otherwise be in private sector nightly paid accommodation	350
Resident Services	2023-24 RS11	Increase portfolio of Council Managed Temporary Accommodation (TA)	Service Transformation	Transfer HALS TA portfolio from Notting Hill Genesis (NHG) to Brent Direct Leasing (BDL)	86
Resident Services	2023-24 RS12	Street Light Dimming	Reduction in provision	Proposal for Street Light Dimming. Identify areas where lighting levels can be reduced to secure energy cost savings	60

Department	Reference	Project/Proposal	Category	Headline Description of Savings Proposal	2023/24 £000
Resident Services	2023-24 RS13	Waste disposal – Education and outreach insourcing	Service Transformation	Reduction in residual waste stream in order to secure increased recycling rates and reduced waste disposal payments to WLWA	250
Resident Services	2023-24 RS14	Review Payments to WLWA	Service Transformation	This proposal seeks to recover any over-payment of waste disposal charges made by Brent that may be retained by WLWA and held as reserves by that organisation.	100
Resident Services	2023-24 RS15	Increased use of Proceeds Of Crime Act	Restructure	Subsidise Regulatory Services area with use of POCA income	300
Resident Services	2023-24 RS16	RLS related - Environmental Services Review	Restructure	Environmental Services review staff structures as part of RLS Phase 2 review	150
Resident Services	2023-24 RS17	RLS related -Review of BTS	Service Transformation	Detailed service review, route optimisation and alternative means of transport	1,200
Resident Services	2023-24 RS18	RLS Related - Negotiate RLS cost reduction	Procurement	Potential to reduce cost as part of RLS competitive dialogue tendering approach	200
Resident Services	2023-24 RS19	RLS related - Rationalisation of Environmental service budgets	Restructure	A rationalisation of the budgets within Environmental Services has taken place in anticipation of the savings required for the RLS project.	130
Sub-total					**4,239**

Department	Reference	Project/Proposal	Category	Headline Description of Savings Proposal	2023/24 £000
Finance & Resources	2023-24 FR01	Reduction in staffing	Restructure	Savings will be made from the creation of a centralised Oracle support function in IT, a proportion of Head of Finance management oversight of master data and systems control is no longer required	252
Finance & Resources	2023-24 FR02	Digital / Transformation Savings	Digital	Digital Transformation will enable automation of transactional activity across the whole of the Finance function and improvements in management self serve as a result of Oracle Cloud enhancements which will deliver savings	250
Finance & Resources	2023-24 FR03	External support for Internal Audit activity	Procurement	Reduce use of external support to internal audit service	23
Finance & Resources	2023-24 FR04	Civic Centre Office Let	Income Generation	Lease further floors of the Civic Centre to external organisations / tenants to generate revenue	680
Finance & Resources	2023-24 FR05	Increase car park/EVCP charge	Income Generation	Considered feasible to increase civic centre parking charge and also charging rate for EVCP provision without impacting demand.	100
Finance & Resources	2023-24 FR06	Security Service Transformation	Service Transformation	Service transformation to be implemented following the detailed review of security provision across all Brent's operational buildings after staff TUPE'D across from the previous out-sourced provider in summer 2021	300
Finance & Resources	2023-24 FR07	Rationalise soft FM service	Service Transformation	Rationalising soft FM services (cleaning) to meet reduced portfolio demand	150
Finance & Resources	2023-24 FR08	Commercial Staffing Review	Restructure	Review capitalisation of staffing costs and replace interims with permanent staff	50
Sub-total					**1,805**

Department	Reference	Project/Proposal	Category	Headline Description of Savings Proposal	2023/24 £000
Governance	2023-24 GOV01	Reduction in staffing via restructure	Restructure	Proposed savings to be made from reduction in posts and more efficient allocation of tasks	89
Governance	2023-24 GOV02	Restructures in HR	Restructure	This saving would introduce a new model for advisory support in HR and reduce the number of advisory posts in HR by one in 2023/24 and by one in 2023/24.	85
Governance	2023-24 GOV03	Reduce Corporate Learning and Development Budget	Reduction in provision	Reduction in budget held by HR for Corporate training	40
Governance	2023-24 GOV04	Administrative and Miscellaneous Efficiencies	Service Transformation	Increased advert via Linkedin for recruitment advertising - reduction in publications	12
Governance	2023-24 GOV05	Increase income target for recoverable legal work costs	Income generation	S106 and other third party income increase	30
Governance	2023-24 GOV06	Reduce Legal Fees Budget	Service Transformation	Reduce the provision in the legal budget for payment of court fees and the costs of advice and representation by barristers in cases brought by or against the council	50
Governance	2023-24 GOV07	Cessation of DX Postal service	Service Transformation	This savings would involve discontinuing use of the legal document exchange service through which documents for the court, barristers chambers and solicitors firms are currently sometimes despatched	3
Governance	2023-24 GOV08	Miscellaneous expenses reduction	Service Transformation	Miscellaneous expenses reduction. This saving would remove a budget utilised for unplanned overhead expenses	19
Governance	2023-24 GOV09	Administrative and Miscellaneous Efficiencies	Restructure	This proposal concerns aligning salary budgets with the establishment	22
Governance	2023-24 GOV10	Procurement restructure	Restructure	Review structure of the Procurement team with overall impact leading to a reduction in the establishment by 1 FTE	50
Governance	2023-24 GOV11	Digital / Transformation Savings	Service Transformation	Electronic document management, further implementation of DocuSign, sharing documents with external parties via M365, chatbots for routine HR and Legal queries	75
Sub-total					**475**

Department	Reference	Project/Proposal	Category	Headline Description of Savings Proposal	2023/24 £000
Corporate	2023-24 CORP1	Digital / Transformation Savings	Service Transformation	Commissioning, Performance and Communications review	600
Corporate	2023-24 CORP4	Procurement savings	Procurement	To be managed by the Commissioning and Procurement Board. All contracts on pipeline will come to the board to review contract specifications in order to deliver savings	500
Corporate	2023-24 CORP5	CMT Savings	Restructure	Savings from June 2022 CMT Restructure	200
Corporate	2023-24 CORP6	RLS related - Environment department saving	Restructure	A rationalisation of the budgets within Environment has taken place in anticipation of the savings required for the RLS project.	1,300
Corporate	2023-24 AH08	Technical Adjustment - recurring grant funding	Service Transformation	Recognition of grants not previously budgeted for in the MTFS.	1,500
Sub-total					**4,100**

Department	Reference	Project/Proposal	Category	Headline Description of Savings Proposal	2023/24 £000
SUMMARY OF SAVINGS PROPOSALS BY DIRECTORATE					
Adult Social Care & Health					4,265
Children & Young People					2,410
Communities & Regeneration					612
Resident Services					4,239
Finance & Resources					1,805
Governance					475
Corporate					4,100
Grand Total					**17,906**

APPENDIX B

BUDGET SAVINGS PROPOSALS 2023-24

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Department	Reference No.	Project/ Proposal	Page No.
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Adult Social Care & Health	2023-24 AH05	Mental Health Placements	14-16
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Adult Social Care & Health	2023-24 AH07	Digital / Transformation Savings	20-22
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP01	Early Help	23-26
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP02	Inclusion and Virtual School	27-29
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP03	Localities - Care Packages reduction	30-33
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP05	Looked after Children and Permanency	34-37
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP06	Forward Planning Performance & Partnerships	38-41
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP07	Safeguarding and Quality Assurance	42-44
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP08	Setting and School Effectiveness	45-47
Children & Young People	2023-24 CYP09	Digital / Transformation Savings	48-50
Communities & Regeneration	2023-24 CR01	Planning Service Staff Reduction	51-53
Communities & Regeneration	2023-24 CR02	Improve efficiency - Brent Works / Brent Start	54-56
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Communities & Regeneration	2023-24 CR06	Strategy & Partnerships restructure (1FTE)	66-68
Communities & Regeneration	2023-24 CR07	Reduction in staffing via restructure	69-71
Communities & Regeneration	2023-24 CR08	Digital / Transformation Savings	72-74
Resident Services	2023-24 RS01	Removal of first class envelopes from the Civic Centre	75-77
Resident Services	2023-24 RS02	Staffing changes	78-80
Resident Services	2023-24 RS03	IEG and Resilience contract reduction & Staffing reductions due to systems automation	81-83
Resident Services	2023-24 RS04	Online diary and reporting system and booking citizenship ceremonies	84-86
Resident Services	2023-24 RS05	Staff reorganisation	87-89
Resident Services	2023-24 RS06	Reduction in licensing, corporate printing, supplies and services, delivery of ICT roadmap, staffing	90-92
Resident Services	2023-24 RS07	Digital / Transformation Savings	93-95
Resident Services	2023-24 RS08	Libraries stock	96-98
Resident Services	2023-24 RS09	Increase Council Owned Temporary Accommodation Portfolio	99-101
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Resident Services	2023-24 RS12	Street Light Dimming	105-107
Resident Services	2023-24 RS13	Waste disposal – Education and outreach insourcing	108-110
Resident Services	2023-24 RS14	Review Payments to WLWA	111-113
Resident Services	2023-24 RS15	Increased use of Proceeds Of Crime Act	114-116
Resident Services	2023-24 RS16	RLS related - Environmental Services Review	117-119
Resident Services	2023-24 RS17	RLS related -Review of BTS	120-125
Resident Services	2023-24 RS18	RLS Related - Negotiate RLS cost reduction	126-128
Resident Services	2023-24 RS19	RLS related - Rationalisation of Environmental service budgets	129-131
Finance & Resources	2023-24 FR01	Reduction in staffing	132-134
Finance & Resources	2023-24 FR02	Digital / Transformation Savings	135-137
Finance & Resources	2023-24 FR03	External support for Internal Audit activity	138-140
Finance & Resources	2023-24 FR04	Civic Centre Office Let	141-143
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Governance	2023-24 GOV1	Reduction in staffing via restructure	156-158
Governance	2023-24 GOV2	Restructures in HR	159-162
Governance	2023-24 GOV3	Reduce Corporate Learning and Development Budget	163-165
Governance	2023-24 GOV4	Administrative and Miscellaneous Efficiencies	166-168
Governance	2023-24 GOV5	Increase income target for recoverable legal work costs	169-171
Governance	2023-24 GOV6	Reduce Legal Fees Budget	172-174
Governance	2023-24 GOV7	Cessation of DX Postal service	175-177
Governance	2023-24 GOV8	Miscellaneous expenses reduction	178-180
Governance	2023-24 GOV9	Administrative and Miscellaneous Efficiencies	181-183
Governance	2023-24 GOV10	Removal of first class envelopes from the Civic Centre	184-186
Governance	2023-24 GOV11	Deletion of 2 FTE posts	187-189
Corporate	2023-24 CORP1	Digital / Transformation Savings	190-191
Corporate	2023-24 CORP4	Procurement Savings	192-193
Corporate	2023-24 CORP5	CMT Savings	194-195
Corporate	2023-24 CORP6	RLS related – Environment department saving	196-197
Corporate	2023-24 AH08	Technical Adjustment - recurring grant funding	N/A

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 AH01
Service(s):	Homecare
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Neil Nerva, Cabinet Member for Public Health & Adult Social Care

Savings Proposals:	In light on the pandemic and increased homecare packages, reviewing community based Support Packages to ensure they are commensurate with need and always maximising independence.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	20,002
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	-

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	1,200	0
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	-	-

Proposed savings

There is some evidence that Brent provides more homecare hours in community care packages than other London boroughs – potentially around 1 hour per week extra per client over the age of 75 than expected.

There are a number of interventions that need to be delivered both in response to the pandemic and because they are good practice, which should reduce the overall levels of homecare. These include:

Double handed care reviews – partly as a result of the pandemic, and the reduced access to care homes for discharge we have seen a significant increase in double handed care packages (where 2 carers are needed to carry out care). Reducing double handed care packages, means fewer people entering someone's home, better use of community equipment and, therefore, more independence and less intrusive care.

Reablement – the new and redesigned dedicated reablement service goes live in February 2023. The new service has been designed after a full review and brings a range of new features, which have been successful in other Local Authorities, therefore, we expect to see a significant increase in the number of people supported to maximise independence and so require lower or no care packages.

High and Low costing care Packages – the purpose of social care is to assist people to live as independent a life as is possible outside the formal care system. For these cohort of service users focused reviews will be undertaken with a stronger attention on Personalisation and promoting Personal Budgets/ Personal Assistants as a means of receiving their services. For very low costing support packagers the aim will be to Promoting Independence. Looking at housing adjustment / equipment's, telecare and digital solutions to support individual's so that they will no longer require funded support.

How would this affect users of this service?

We carry out reviews at the end of the reablement process and on an annual basis. We will ensure that these reviews are strength bases reviews and with a focus on independence. This will also be true of double handed calls because although the person will not be full independent with activities of daily living, they may only require a single carer, which should be seen as a positive as it will reduce the number of carers and should improve the relationships.

Key milestones

The nature of this proposal means it will be part of all reviews on an ongoing basis. Individual reviews will be done with the person who receives the care, their family or advocates and the care agency. The only specific milestone is the implementation of the new reablement service in February 2023.

Key consultations

Service users and families will be consulted on a case by case basis – there will not be a wider consultation given the personalised aspect of this proposal.

Key risks and mitigations

- Reducing packages becomes harder to achieve in practice than in principle, because of a reliance on the care provided – social workers use their experience and understanding of the Care Act to promote a strength based approached to care, to mitigate these issues.

- Undertaking work as part of the service improvement plans to agree and benchmark our “local offer” and to help manage community expectations.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	Y
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	Y
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	Yes
EIA to be completed by:	Andrew Davies, Head of Commissioning, Contracting and Market Management
Deadline:	31 January 2023

Lead officer for this proposal:	Andrew Davies, Head of Commissioning, Contracting and Market Management Tiffany Adonis-French Head of Complex Care Direct Services and Duty

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 AH02
Service(s):	Delivery of reablement service through external providers
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Neil Nerva, Cabinet Member for Public Health & Adult Social Care

Savings Proposals:	The original plan was to create an in house reablement service from April 2022, however, it is possible to procure this service externally and deliver the same outcomes at a reduced cost.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	1,300
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	-

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	1,300	
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	N/A	

Proposed savings

Reablement is a homecare based service offered for a maximum of 6 weeks where the resident is supported to re-learn, or become confident in activities of daily living, this promotes their independence and reduces the long term cost of an ongoing package of care. Currently reablement is delivered through a number of homecare

providers, and people are allowed to stay with their reablement provider after the reablement period as a homecare client.

In November 2019 Cabinet approved the recommendation that Reablement services be brought in-house. At that time, Brent commissioned around 1,500 hours a week of reablement services (around 6% of the total hours commissioned). Following the Cabinet decision officers were instructed to develop plans to set up and implement the new service within a 12-18 month period. The aim was to set up and implement the new reablement in-house service from April 2022.

It is clear from the work on preparing to bring reablement services in house that to do this will cost the council significantly more than a commissioned service. Brent's reablement service delivers approximately 750 hours per week, which is 39,105 hours per year. The total cost of an in-house service is £2.5m (based on the current business case that has been verified by finance) compared to only £1.2m for an external homecare provider (based on £21.50 per hour – this is £2 higher than the standard homecare cost and allows for staff to be paid above LLW and have additional training). This is a difference of £1.3m.

Given that there is no external evidence, checked as part of this budget process, to suggest that an in-house service delivers better long term care outcomes than a specifically procured external service (in particular where the reablement provider does not provide ongoing care), this is proposed as a saving.

How would this affect users of this service?

As stated above the aim of a reablement service remains the same whether it is in - house or external. Therefore, not bringing the service in – house would not have an impact on service users. The key characteristics of a successful reablement model (evidence pulled together for this process) are:

- Visits are 15 minutes longer than needed to meet the 'need' to allow time for clients to maximise their independence, and are delivered by workers who are not trapped in a 'time and task' mentality.
- Paying £1-2 per hour more to reablement provider(s) to compensate for short-term care packages and less efficient routing for care workers.
- Strength based review at the end of reablement phase, including Occupational Therapy, to ensure homecare only continues when it is genuinely needed.
- Specifying that the reablement provider does not retain clients for ongoing homecare after the reablement period. This helps ensure providers have no incentive to not 'reable' (It should be noted that whether we bring the service in house or procure a separate provider, the client will not have the option to stay with the same carer.)

Key milestones

- Building on the work done to design the in-house service, designing the service specification over the next 2 months
- Procurement which is likely to take 6 months
- Implementing the new contract from February 2023
- Monitoring delivery – this will be done through the Community and Prevention Team as with homecare

Key consultations

There will be no need for formal consultation. The currently external reablement service will remain pending the procurement of the new service, which we will aim to have in place by October 2022.

Key risks and mitigations

- Delay in the procurement of the new service.
- Low levels of provider interest – this might be the case as providers would prefer the higher volumes in the core homecare contract (Lot 20 would go out at the same time), however, the homecare market is big, and this provides defined levels of work, so with the right market preparation this should be manageable.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Andrew Davies, Head of Commissioning, Contracting and Market Management

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 AH03
Service(s):	Learning Disability – Reducing Residential Placements
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Neil Nerva, Cabinet Member for Public Health & Adult Social Care

Savings Proposals:	Continue to reduce the spend on Learning Disability Residential Placements and support people to live as independently as possible.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	9,300
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	-

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	600	0
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	-	-

Proposed savings

Currently there are 127 learning disability care home placements. Even though this number is comparatively low across London, as a result of the New Accommodation for Independent Living programme, we have a very clear understanding of the individual needs of the people in care home placements and their ability to live more independently. Therefore, we are confident there are more people who could benefit from a Supported Living placement. We believe there are at least another 25 people who are currently in a care home, who could live more independently and we will work to support them to move to the right accommodation over the next two years. This will save the Council an average of £500 per week, per placement (as previously evidenced through the Brent Shared Lives / NAIL Programme to date).

How would this affect users of this service?

Service users would be moved to supported living or extra care services, increasing independence and tailoring their care and support around their needs. This is in line with our aim to use services that promote independence and choice within care, and has formed a fundamental objective of the Brent Supported Living programme. All moves are done working closely with the person and their family or advocate.

Key milestones

This is an existing and ongoing process:

- Identification of individual service users to step down
- Engagement with service users and families / LPAs and providers to plan moves
- Identification of appropriate supported living services and confirmation of care package
- Transition of service users from residential to supported living placements

The Brent Supported Living Team will use the experience gained from previous moves to put in place bespoke move on plans for each service user stepping down to supported living services.

Key consultations

Service users and families will be consulted on a case by case basis – there will not be a wider consultation given the personalised aspect of this proposal.

Key risks and mitigations

- Service users and their families choose not to move, or won't engage with this process – Social workers to use experience from previous work to engage families and service users in this process; work will start with a larger number of clients than will actually move, because some will choose not to move or it will be decided that they won't move
- Existing providers try to disrupt the move on process – this will be managed by the Commissioning Team, to work with providers to recognise the best interests of service users

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	Y
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	Y
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	Yes
EIA to be completed by:	Andrew Davies, Head of Commissioning, Contracting and Market Management
Deadline:	31 January 2023

Lead officer for this proposal:	Andrew Davies, Head of Commissioning, Contracting and Market Management

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 AH04
Service(s):	Older People – Reduction in Care Home placements
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Neil Nerva, Cabinet Member for Public Health & Adult Social Care

Savings Proposals:	Post Covid, post increased health and discharge driven residential and nursing placements, reduce the number of care home placements.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	9,274
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	-

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	250	0
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	-	-

Proposed savings

Older Adult residential care home placements have increased from 244 in October 2020 to 262 in October 2021 related to NHS discharge placements and going against previous trends where care home numbers have fallen. This savings proposal is based on reducing expenditure on care homes, by bringing numbers back to October 2020 levels by the end of 2022/23, and reducing numbers further to 230 by the end of 2023/24.

This would be done through ASC control of the discharge process, a clear focus on HomeFirst (supporting people to go back to their own homes) and the use of extra care services (filling all voids and fully utilising Honeypot Lane), saving on average £150 per placement per week (this is an estimate for the purpose of this proposal).

ASC can achieve this saving and deliver on the Council's Supported Living objective (to ensure that there is greater mix of need in extra care) because we are building new accommodation for older people, for example, Honeypot Lane, a new extra care facility coming at the end of 2022.

How would this affect users of this service?

Service users would benefit from living good quality accommodation, that provides l social care support with more choice and control over their care and support than they receive in residential care.

Key milestones

Identification of service users to step down

- Engagement with service users and families / LPAs and providers to plan moves
- Identification of appropriate supported living services and confirmation of care package
- Transition of service users from residential to supported living placements

The Brent Supported Living Team will use the experience gained from previous moves to put in place bespoke move on plans for each service user stepping down to supported living services.

Key consultations

Service users and families will be consulted on a case by case basis – there will not be a wider consultation given the personalised aspect of this proposal.

Key risks and mitigations

- Process – Social workers to use experience from previous work to engage families and service users in this process; work will start with a larger number of clients than will actually move, because some will choose not to move or it will be decided that they won't move
- Existing providers try to disrupt the move on process – this will be managed by the Commissioning Team, to work with providers to recognise the best interests of service users

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	Y
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	Y
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	Yes
EIA to be completed by:	Andrew Davies, Head of Commissioning, Contracting and Market Management
Deadline:	31 January 2023

Lead officer for this proposal:	Andrew Davies, Head of Commissioning, Contracting and Market Management

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 AH05
Service(s):	Mental Health
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Neil Nerva, Cabinet Member for Public Health & Adult Social Care

Savings Proposals:	In light of the significant increase in Mental Health referrals during the pandemic and increases in all forms of support through the pandemic, to refresh the review process for all MH service users with a view to putting in place step down plans into general needs accommodation in all but exceptional circumstances for people in residential placement and support living placements.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	1,482
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	36

	2022/23	2023/24
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	470	0
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0	0

Proposed savings

There are currently over 180 placement care packages / placements, the costs of which range from £190 to £1900 a week. We are working with CNWL as part of the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) to put in place new review capacity and capability, which ensures that we have a joined up approach across all partners which is focused on recovery and supporting people to live independently in general needs accommodation where that is possible and sustainable. Ensuring the whole system is focused on recovery will maximise independence for service users and reduce costs for the Council.

How would this affect users of this service?

It is a statutory requirement for service users to have a review of their needs and associated placement as per Care ACT 2014.

The reviews uses a strengths based approach and will focus on supporting people to develop their potential in settings that promote their autonomy and independence. With the right access to housing, the right health support whether that is in secondary care or through primary care, we should be able to provide positive opportunities as part of a wider recovery approach for service users.

Key milestones

The dedicated placement Review Care Management Team in ASCMH is in place – this is newly formed as part of the enhanced social care oversight agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding. There is an agreed work programme, which includes priority allocation of cases, and is supported by a multi-agency team, and this will report on a monthly basis in ASC, and to the ICP as necessary, so we can hold all parts of the system to account and track and update the forecasts.

Key consultations

None required. Service users and families will be consulted on a case by case basis – there will not be a wider consultation given the personalised aspect of this proposal.

Key risks and mitigations

This requires excellent social workers to take on difficult, strength based, recovery focused conversations, and for them to have access to the right accommodation. Therefore the key risks are:

- The recruitment and retention of staff that can be dedicated to this area of work within ASCMH. Currently this has been mitigated through the use of agency staff that comes at an increased cost
- Strong support from health partners and Housing, both PRS and social housing to ensure quick access to the right accommodation.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Rebecca Byrne, Head of Learning Disability and Mental Health

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 AH06
Service(s):	Reduction in Agency staffing
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Neil Nerva, Cabinet Member for Public Health & Adult Social Care

Savings Proposals:	Reduction in agency staff across the Adult Social Care (ASC)

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	21,825
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	FTE 139

The below table show the variance in cost between agency staff and permanent staff per year:

FTE	Total budget Agency staff £'000	Permanent staff £'000	Variance £'000
1	69	60	9
30	2,070	1,170	270

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Proposed saving:	270	0
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	30 agency staff	

Proposed savings

The saving will come from reducing the number of agency staff in the department by 30.

How would this affect users of this service?

This should be positive for the service and service users, less churn in staff, more permanent staff trained and developed in Brent

Key milestones

There is an active recruitment project working at the moment – this is being reviewed on a six monthly basis by Adult Social Care DMT and has support from HR and CMT

Key consultations

As this is not about a change in the delivery, model and only effecting vacant posts a consultation will not be required.

Key risks and mitigations

- Not achieving recruitment target of 30 permanent staff – initial feedback from the current recruitment drive is not positive, however, the move away from mandatory vaccination should help
- We will need to look to other (CYP and other boroughs) and identify additional things we can do to improve recruitment rates (this may include financial incentives)

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Claudia Brown, Director Adult Social Care

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 AH07
Service(s):	Adult Social Care & Health
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Neil Nerva, Cabinet Member for Public Health & Adult Social Care

Savings Proposals:	Additional digital savings to be delivered through the Digital Transformation Programme.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	21,825
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	-

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	175	N/A
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	Approx. 2.3	N/A

Proposed savings

There are a range of processes in Adult Social Care which will benefit from digital transformation, including direct payments (process automation); financial assessment (online process for people who can use this), debt process review (increased automation), hospital discharge review (streamlining mulit-agency processes) and demand management (through a more responsive front door enabled by technology). Delivering these changes will improve the customer experience, and reduce headcount through efficiencies.

How would this affect users of this service?

As stated above this is focused on back office systems and processes. It will involve further channel shift to more accessible and effective online systems (while maintaining telephone and face to face channels for those who need additional support).

Key milestones

TBC

Key consultations

All of these changes will be delivered through co-design working with services users and staff to ensure they improve the experience and reduce the cost.

Key risks and mitigations

There is a risk that work to scope, develop and implement new systems cannot be made in time to enable savings to be delivered by the start of 2023/24. This will be mitigated by bringing in additional business analysis support and capacity to backfill posts in the service area to allow them to act as SMEs.

This process will be led by operational managers to ensure that changes are made in line with natural churn in the workforce to ensure that there is no need for compulsory redundancies.

Equality impact screening

This section will be completed when detailed more proposals have been developed.

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Phil Porter, Corporate Director, Adult Social Care & Health

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-25 CYP01
Service(s):	Early Help Service (CYP)
Lead Member(s):	Councillor Gwen Grahl

Savings Proposals:	Savings proposals will be a combination of establishment savings achieved by deleting posts and reducing some commissioned services.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	5,600
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	138

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	240	
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction:	5	

Proposed savings

The savings proposals are based primarily on staffing as this constitutes the majority of the service budget. This follows previous budget reductions of £1.5m in Early Help in 2020/21 following the closure of 8 children's centres and the repurposing of the remaining sites into 8 Family Wellbeing Centres.

Some posts will be deleted as they become vacant in 2023/24 (all operate out of FWCs) with a total value of £188k:

The posts that will be selected will not carry a regular caseload but are likely to be those that offer added value and capacity for work with families across the service.

Cut commissioned services (CAB, SLT, psychotherapy, Mentoring) by 10%	-	40k
Holiday activities at Family Wellbeing Centres	-	12k
Total	-	240k

How would this affect users of this service?

Service users may see a reduced and less flexible service as key worker caseloads are re-distributed amongst existing workers. Services will need to become increasingly targeted due to the reductions and the early intervention benefits of universal access which provides opportunities for early identification of emerging issues will be lost.

Key milestones

2023/24

Notification to affected commissioned services about future reductions.

Key consultations

In line with the Council's managing change process and with providers of commissioned services.

Key risks and mitigations

Losing vacant posts could reduce the amount of overall family support available within the service. However the amount of funding from the Supporting Families programme (SFP) has been increased for 22/23 and it is anticipated that some services can continue to be funded from the additional income, assuming the SFP grant income remains at the same level beyond 22/23, with no impact to service delivery.

Some of the posts that provide added value, if deleted, would reduce capacity to deliver universal and some targeted programmes for families. The focus would be on training volunteers and partner agencies to deliver support programmes. There is now a Volunteer Coordinator who supports the work of the Family Wellbeing Centres and the number of volunteers has been increasing.

It is anticipated that the trend for reduced numbers of young people entering the criminal justice system may continue, allowing a post to be held vacant within the Youth Offending service , without significantly impacting adversely on caseloads for remaining staff. However it would reduce opportunities for greater preventative work with the existing cohort of young people.

A 10% reduction across Early Help commissioned services would result in fewer children and adults accessing support services such as CAB, speech and language therapy, mentoring and counselling. These services have already been cut by 30% and are coming near their threshold for viability to deliver effectively.

The holiday activities funding may be mitigated through continued DfE support for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programmes.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	Y
Particular ethnic groups	Y
Men or women	Y
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	Y
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	Y
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	Yes
EIA to be completed by:	Zafer Yilkan
Deadline:	31 January 2023

Lead officer for this proposal:	Zafer Yilkan/Tenidola Awoyemi

Legal Services' Comments

There is unlikely to be a legal challenge in respect of this proposal. There is a general duty under s.17 of the Children Act 1989 to provide services for children in need and their families.

As stated above, this could potentially at a later date lead to other risks such as reduced preventative work thereby reversing the current trend for reduced numbers of young people entering the criminal justice system and the outcomes of Ofsted inspections could decline as a result.

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-25 CYP02
Service(s):	Inclusion and Virtual School (CYP)
Lead Member(s):	Councillor Gwen Grahl

Savings Proposals:	Reducing the Supporting Young People Contract, ('*Connexions'*).

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	1,800
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	90

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	80	
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction:	n/a	n/a

Proposed savings

By reducing the Supporting Young People Contract by the value of £80k

There is an expected increase in the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) for the Virtual School and potentially post-16 PPG funding. This increase would be used to offset 50% of this reduction, maintaining a dedicated advisor for the Virtual School. Details of the PPG increase for 22/23 and therefore for 23/24 have not yet been released.

How would this affect users of this service?

- There should be a manageable impact on service users. Brent has a low rate of NEET currently.
- Core tracking work will be maintained through the current contract, ensuring the Council meets its core statutory duty.
- Alternative provision, PRUs and Brent schools already commission Prospects for targeted work to prevent young people becoming NEET, therefore those at risk of NEET are already being identified earlier. CYP Department will work with schools where participation post 16 is identified as an issue in order to develop their approach to addressing needs earlier.
- As noted above, an allocation of pupil premium grant for Looked After Children will be used to secure a dedicated advisor, thereby minimising the impact for looked after children.
- SEND young people will need to be supported through improved 14 + transition planning at annual reviews led by schools.
- As a Council priority there is separate, targeted work underway through the Black Community Action Plan to support and motivate young people and to provide access/exposure to employment opportunities.

Key milestones

Current contract arrangements to be reviewed to ensure appropriate break clause is triggered.

Key consultations

With the current service provider Prospects.

Key risks and mitigations

Risks that NEET levels begin to rise with more young people unable to obtain meaningful employment in adult life.

Mitigated by effective contract management and targeted approaches on those young people most at risk.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	Y
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	Yes
EIA to be completed by:	Zafer Yilkan
Deadline:	31 January 2023

Lead officer for this proposal:	Zafer Yilkan /Sharon Buckby

Legal Services' Comments

There is unlikely to be a legal challenge in respect of this proposal.

However, this proposal could potentially at a later date lead to other risks such as an increase in NEET (i.e. young people not in employment, education or training) and the outcomes of Ofsted inspections could decline as a result. However, proactive steps are being taken to mitigate this.

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-25 CYP03
Service(s):	Localities (CYP) (1)
Lead Member(s):	Councillor Gwen Grahl

Savings Proposals:	Care package reductions for families receiving support from the 0-25 children and young people with disabilities teams

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	18,600
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	195

	2023/24	2024/25
	£000	£000
Proposed saving:	365	
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0	

Proposed savings

By implementing a Resource Allocation System (RAS) in CWD a saving of c10% on Direct Payment budgets (£185,000) and 10% on Care at Home packages (£180,000) could be achieved.

How would this affect users of this service?

- The RAS should provide a fairer and more consistent allocation of care packages for families but some current high cost packages are likely to be reduced which will impact on the level of support being received by some families, both in terms of

direct payments and care at home support.

Key milestones

- RAS: Letters to families would need to be sent out 6 months before the start date to confirm details of the scheme.
- The RAS would need to be fully operational prior to April 2023 in order to make the proposed savings.

Key consultations

- RAS: Consultation with service users and the Parent Carer Forum on the specific details of the scheme will take place.

Key risks and mitigations

- RAS: Some families may have a reduced care package but these will be implemented gradually over time and families will receive significant periods of notice prior to any proposed reductions.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	Y
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	Y
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	Yes
EIA to be completed by:	Zafer Yilkan
Deadline:	31 January 2023

Lead officer for this proposal:	Zafer Yilkan / Stephen Gordon

Legal Services' Comments

There is potential for legal challenge in respect of this proposal by way of Judicial review in individual cases should a support package be significantly reduced without robust assessment of the child and family's needs. There is a general duty on local authorities under s.17 of the Children Act 1989 to provide services for children in need and their families.

In addition, consideration should be made for the following legislation:

The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014 provides the regulatory provisions about personal budgets and direct payments. The provision for reducing personal budgets is contained in section 12 as follows:

Reducing the amount of direct payments

12.—(1) Where a local authority decides to reduce the amount of direct payments it must provide reasonable notice to the recipient, and must set out in the notice the reasons for its decision.

(2) The local authority must reconsider its decision, where requested to do so by the recipient.

(3) When conducting its reconsideration, the local authority must consider the representations made by the recipient (and where the recipient is a nominee, any representations made by the child's parent or the young person) and must then provide written reasons to the recipient (and to the child's parent or young person, where the recipient is a nominee) of its decision following the reconsideration.

(4) A local authority may not be required to undertake more than one reconsideration of a decision made under paragraph (1).

(5) The local authority may reduce direct payments following reasonable notice despite the fact that a request for reconsideration has been made under paragraph (2).

SEN Code of Practice 2014 has regard for what the LA must do support children and young people aged 0 to 25 with special educational needs and disabilities.

Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 provides the regulatory provisions for the Local Authority's responsibilities to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 provides for the duties related to Education Health and Care (EHC) assessments and plans

The Care Act 2014 explains what Local Authorities must do to support adults over the age of 18. It also explains who can get support, how assessments must be made and when we can charge for support.

The Equality Act 2010 explains what schools, early years providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities, councils and other providers must do to support disabled children and young people.

The Annual Ofsted review published 7 December 2021 emphasised the decline that services during the pandemic had for SEND families; reducing the outcomes of Ofsted and CQC SEND inspections. Areas that have not addressed all significant weaknesses are determined by the Department for Education and NHS England, and may include the Secretary of State using his powers of intervention, such as the issuing of an improvement notice or statutory direction by the Department for Education.

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-25 CYP05
Service(s):	Looked After Children and Permanency Service and Localities Service (CYP)
Lead Member(s):	Councillor Gwen Grahl

Savings Proposals:	Management of vacant posts within the Looked After Children and Permanency Service and Localities Service

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	25,174
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	284

	2023/24	2024/25
	£000	£000
Proposed saving:	£510.8	
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	8	0

Proposed savings

Savings will be achieved through the management of vacant posts. This includes not recruiting to vacant posts in social work teams and realigning workload. This includes both case holding social work posts (PO2 posts at annual costs of £55,200 per post) and deputy team manager and social work practice consultant (SWPC) posts who do not hold cases, but contribute significantly to overall practice development across Children's Services (PO5 posts at £69,400 per post amount). Over a year it is anticipated that this will account to £510,800. The majority of the service budgets in both the Looked After Children and Permanency Service and the Localities Service is for staffing. An increase in vacant posts would require a redistribution of work to manage caseloads and redistribution of support for practice development.

How would this affect users of this service?

Social Workers in the Localities Service and Looked After Children and Permanency services will see an increase in caseloads for remaining staff by an average of 1 case per social worker. This will impact on the quality and consistency of social work practice with children and families at a time of higher demand for services.

SWPCs and deputy team managers provide essential support to social work teams working with Looked After Children and other vulnerable children and their families. The role provides flexibility in supporting services in responding to the dynamic needs of children and young people in care and leaving care and in services for children in need and children on child protection plans. If vacant roles were not recruited to the quality and consistency of social work practice for children and families would be impacted as the remaining service and team managers would be expected to undertake a range of tasks in addition to their existing job requirements. This includes for example, being the single point of contact with Adopt London West in relation to Permanency Planning/Family Finding, responsible for permanency planning meetings (PPMs) for children; supporting personal advisors in relation to complex care leaver cases including issues of transitional safeguarding and responsibility for return home interviews and quality of practice around vulnerable adolescents who go missing and who are in care (this area was noted as an area requiring improvement in the 2018 Ofsted inspection).

Depending on the number of vacant posts, there could be a need to re-structure services.

Key milestones

The distribution of vacant posts across grades and services would need to be monitored. Caseload analysis would need to be monitored on a monthly basis.

Key consultations

If a restructure was required, there would be consultation with affected staff.

Key risks and mitigations

- The quality of service across Children's Services will likely be impacted leading to increase in complaints, legal challenges and costs, reputational damage and a potentially negative Ofsted inspection outcome in 2023.

- To mitigate increasing caseloads in the Localities Service, it may be possible for some child in need level cases to be worked on with other services e.g. Early Help.
- A reduction in SWPC capacity could mean more pressure/stress on social workers that could result in higher rates of turnover when workforce pressures are already at a significant level.
- A reduction in social work, deputy team manager and SWPC capacity will impact on the capacity of managers to develop their team and staff as the case work pressures would be higher.
- The SWPCs provide range of support and bridge the practice/management gap and are able to co-work cases, providing experienced social work expertise alongside less experienced colleagues.
- With the creation of Adopt London West the LACP service no longer has a separate in-house Adoption/Post-Permanency team. Retaining a SWPC with expertise and knowledge in this area supports permanency planning for children and ensures timescales for children are met. There is a risk that good adoption performance will be negatively impacted without a dedicated post.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	Y
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	Yes
EIA to be completed by:	Zafer Yilkan
Deadline:	31 January 2023

Lead officer for this proposal:	Zafer Yilkan / Onder Beter

Legal Services' Comments

There is unlikely to be a legal challenge in respect of this proposal in the form of a judicial review claim. However as stated above, this proposal could potentially lead to other risks such as reduced preventative work and quality of service thereby resulting in further legal challenge in individual cases and cost implications and the outcomes of Ofsted inspections could decline as a result.

The impact of reducing social work capacity within the Localities and Looked After Children (LAC) services may have adverse effect on court proceedings, increased delays, reputational loss, wasted costs and challenge, with further pressures also increasing risk of data breaches, self-reporting to the Information Commissioner's Office under Part 3 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and enforcement.

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-25 CYP06
Service(s):	Forward Planning, Performance and Partnerships (CYP)
Lead Member(s):	Councillor Gwen Grahl

Savings Proposals:	Savings will be made through the commissioning of placements for Looked After Children and Care Leavers

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	20,000
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	66

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	£860	
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0.6	

Proposed savings

The placements budgets are demand-led. The Children and Young People Department is currently experiencing an increase in demand for services, with the number of Looked After Children and Care Leavers increasing by more than 10% over the past year. That said, opportunities to make cost avoidance savings in the placements budget have been identified in the following areas:

- Savings on placement costs for semi-independent provision;
- Savings through a reduction in placements with Independent Fostering Agencies

(IFAs) and an increase in placement with in-house foster carers and;

- PAN London commissioning opportunities.
- The Council currently commissions circa 235 placements in semi-independent provision, 60% of which are placements for care leavers. Cost avoidance savings from semi-independent placements will be pursued through the following actions:
  a) Reducing the length of time that care leavers are accommodated in semi-independent provision through an enhanced and focused life skills development programme to help young people successfully move into adulthood and independent living. Looked After Children will be introduced to this programme earlier from the age of 17. The approach will include as part of a new intensive life skills programme, including the use of the Gordon Brown Centre to undertake training weekends. If the average period of time that a care leaver is accommodated reduced by 6 months, the saving per placement would be approximately £18,000.
  b) Working with the Housing Department to ensure that care leavers can access their own tenancy, reducing the time they are accommodated. If the average period of time that a care leaver is accommodated reduced by 6 months, the saving per placement would be approximately £18,000. As part of this work, consideration will be given to commissioning a targeted service that supports young people to move into their own tenancies before they turn 19, proactively managing the risk of tenancy breakdown.
  c) Redesigning the Council's commissioning approach to semi-independent provision with Housing colleagues. Options include developing a supported housing scheme and block contracts that secure provision with a cost and volume discount, building on the current block contract model with CenterPoint. The savings generated would be subject to the market response.

- Working with the Looked After Children and Permanency Service, cost avoidance will be achieved by increasing the number of placements with in-house foster carers at the expense of IFA foster placements. There is currently an average cost difference of £500 between an in-house and IFA placement, equating to £24,000 a year. The Children and Young People's department is also exploring a collaborative project with Ealing and Harrow (the West London Fostering Collaboration Project), which as an 'invest to save' project is aimed at significantly increasing the number of in-house carers through an in-house service that would effectively compete with the IFA market. This would see fostering fees increase and establishment of an enhanced support service for in-house foster carers. The new approach would also create opportunities to recruit specialist foster carers for complex adolescents with the potential to avoid residential placements. Each residential placement avoided would generate a saving of approximately £192,000.
- Schemes to achieve cost avoidance through joint commissioning approaches PAN London and/or with other West London authorities in relation to residential placements are currently being developed. These include the potential to block contract local residential placements at cost and volume discounts. There is no guarantee, however, that this will produce significant savings due to issues around matching a young person with others in a placement and placement location.

- A temporary business support officer post in the commissioning team that is supporting a review of SGO carer payments will not be retained from 2023/24 onwards. This will generate a saving of circa £20k.

How would this affect users of this service?

No practice changes could be implemented that were not in line with the local authority's statutory duty. This includes the provision of accommodation as deemed necessary for vulnerable care leavers.

Key milestones

- Redesign of life skills programme – April 2022
- Agreement with Housing on a refreshed tenancy pathway for care leavers – September 2022
- New commissioning approach on semi-independent provision – September 2022
- Redesign of Brent in-house fostering service – January 2023
- West London and PAN London Joint Commissioning approaches – pilots through 2022/23.

Key consultations

- Consultation on the Life Skills pathway is being undertaken with young people in spring 2022.
- Initial consultation with Housing colleagues is due to take place in early February.
- Consultation with foster carers on future service design has already been undertaken as part of the West London Collaborative Fostering Project.

Key risks and mitigations

- That demand continues to increase and savings initiatives cannot keep pace with this. The 'invest to save' fostering project may mitigate this but savings may not be achieved by 2024/25.
- That market costs continue to increase due to inflation and cost of living increases, meaning savings cannot be realised via block contracts.
- That Brent Housing department does not have sufficient suitable properties for care leavers to take up their own tenancy, meaning they continue to be accommodated while waiting. Alternative housing options that would meet the Care Leaver offer to be considered by the Council.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N

Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Shirley Parks/Michelle Gwyther

Legal Services' Comments

There is unlikely to be a legal challenge in respect of this proposal.

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-25 CYP07
Service(s):	Safeguarding and Quality Assurance (CYP)
Lead Member(s):	Councillor Gwen Grahl

Savings Proposals:	Savings will be made through the management of vacant posts and a reduction of the CYP training budget.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	1,891
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	21

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	£121	
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction:	1.5	

Proposed savings

Holding vacant posts	1.5 FTE - £83,000	
Reduction of training budget		£38,000

The service will hold posts vacant as they become available to achieve the savings target – this is estimated as the equivalent of 1.5 FTE. The type of work that may be affected is advice and support for parents of children with SEND, child protection case professional advice, participation support for looked after children and care leavers as well as support for student social workers, newly qualified social workers and

supporting social workers to progress their careers through social work progression panel. Other areas in this service that could be affected include those that develop training and workshops across CYP based on improvement areas identified in reviews of serious cases and learning from audit activity. The net CYP training budget is a total of £158k and £38k will be taken from this to make these savings.

How would this affect users of this service?

Overall there will be less support and training available for learning and development – this will impact upon social workers and managers who value this support. A reduction of support and training opportunities could impact on recruitment and retention of social workers who could find a better offer in other LAs, the overall quality of services that families receive and resultant LA inspection outcomes.

Key milestones

- Throughout 2022/23, review best value for money from the CYP training budget. Training programme from 2023/24 will be developed to include £38k savings.

Key consultations

- SQA service
- CYP Heads of Service
- SENDIAS Steering Group

Key risks and mitigations

Risk – reduced support offer to hard to recruit posts such as social workers and social work team managers. Mitigation – best use of resources for remaining posts and Learning and Development budget available.

The CYP training budget is vulnerable as of the remaining £158k, £53k is DSG funded which could be impacted by the introduction of the Dedicated Schools Grant National Funding Formula

Risk – reduced participation for children with SEND. Mitigation – build this support offer into a Participation Team Restructure being put in place in 2022/2023.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	Y
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	Yes
EIA to be completed by:	Nicole Levy
Deadline:	31 January 2023

Lead officer for this proposal:	Shirley Parks / Sonya Kalyniak

Legal Services' Comments

No comment / There is unlikely to be a legal challenge in respect of this proposal.

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-25 CYP08
Service(s):	Setting and School Effectiveness (CYP)
Lead Member(s):	Councillor Gwen Grahl

Savings Proposals:	Savings will be made by a reduction in staffing costs within the core school effectiveness team.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	200
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	4

	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000
Proposed saving:	£34	
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction:	0.4	

Proposed savings

Reduction in staffing resource by two days per week.

How would this affect users of this service?

There would be less capacity to fulfil core school improvement work.

Key milestones

This will be in place by 1 April 2023

Key consultations

N/A

Key risks and mitigations

- There is a risk that pupil outcomes and school Ofsted inspection judgements could decline.
- This risk would be mitigated by best use of remaining resources.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	Y
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	Yes
EIA to be completed by:	Shirley Parks
Deadline:	31 January 2023

Lead officer for this proposal:	Shirley Parks / Jen Haskew

Legal Services' Comments

There is unlikely to be a legal challenge in respect of this proposal. As stated above, this could potentially at a later date lead to other risks such as poorer pupil outcomes and the outcomes of Ofsted inspections could decline as a result.

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 CYP09
Service(s):	CYP
Lead Member(s):	Councillor Gwen Grahl, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools

Savings Proposals:	Additional digital savings to be delivered through the Digital Transformation Programme. Detailed proposals currently being scoped but likely to be achieved through projects including implementation of digital administration and case management systems, RPA, Mosaic enhancements (alerts), electronic document management, direct payments automation and reduction in overpayments.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	62,148
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	607

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	200	N/A
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	TBC	N/A

Proposed savings

Reductions in headcount through efficiencies delivered through digital solutions. Reduction in direct payment spend.

How would this affect users of this service?

To be confirmed but likely primarily affect back office systems and processes. May also involve further channel shift to more accessible and effective online systems (while maintaining telephone and face to face channels for those who need additional support).

Key milestones

TBC

Key consultations

TBC

Key risks and mitigations

There is a risk that work to scope, develop and implement new systems cannot be made in time to enable savings to be delivered by the start of 2023/24. This will be mitigated by bringing in additional business analysis support and capacity to backfill posts in the service area to allow them to act as SMEs.

Equality impact screening

This section will be completed when detailed more proposals have been developed.

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Nigel Chapman, Corporate Director, Children and Young People

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 CR01
Service(s):	Regeneration Growth and Employment (Planning and Development Services)
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning

Savings Proposals:	Vacancy Management - Staffing reduction across planning service

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	427
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	56

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	205
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	5% or 3

Proposed savings

The proposal involves the reduction of staff across the planning function by 5% (3 staff) – based on December 2021 establishment). This can be delivered via vacancy management while ensuring that the impact of loss of numbers is mitigated in areas where capacity is required in order to effectively deliver services.

How would this affect users of this service?

Poorer service, longer response times, increased pressure on remaining staff. Lack of policy guidance to help schemes be policy compliant and for masterplan development.

Key milestones

Vacancy management – posts held vacant to March 2023.

Government consultation on increasing planning fees (autumn 2022) for implementation April 2023.

March 2023, based on increased forecast income if planning fees increase, review situation.

Key consultations

Head of Planning and Development Services and staff in planning.

Key risks and mitigations

Risks relate to decline in service provision and consequent reputational impact with longer term possibility that developers feel Brent isn't a good Borough to do business with. Reduced number of enforcement investigations. Slower rate of production of SPDs to support new Local Plan, making applications.

Increased pressure on remaining staff – morale and mental wellbeing and consequent pressures on recruitment and retention.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Alice Lester, Director Regeneration, Growth and Employment

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 CR02
Service(s):	Regeneration Growth and Employment
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Southwood, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy & Citizen Experience

Savings Proposals:	Re-structure - Vacancy Management - Brent Works / Brent Start - Combine advisors and reduce team by 1 FTE

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	-794 (Brent works 8, Brent Start - 802)
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	26

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	35
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	1

Proposed savings

The proposal involves the combining of advisors across both Brent Start and Brent Works via turnover / vacancy management.

How would this affect users of this service?

Feasible to do so without any major noticeable impact on service delivery

Key milestones

January 2023 – commence compulsory redundancy process if not achieved through a natural vacancy.

Key consultations

Head of Employment Skills and Enterprise, Brent Start and Brent Works leads. Staff.

Unions.

Key risks and mitigations

None

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
	N
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Alice Lester, Director Regeneration, Growth and Employment

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 CR03
Service(s):	Regeneration Growth and Employment
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Southwood, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy & Citizen Experience

Savings Proposals:	Re-structure - Vacancy Management - Brent Start – efficiency improvement – delete 0.5 programme leader

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	-802
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	18 (excluding teachers)

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	24
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0.5

Proposed savings

It is intended to merge this position with another programme to delete this provision. This can be achieved without negative impacts upon the service. This is very likely to be achieved via Vacancy Management.

How would this affect users of this service?

Feasible to do so without any major noticeable impact on service delivery

Key milestones

January 2023 – commence compulsory redundancy process if not achieved through a natural vacancy.

Key consultations

Head of Employment Skills and Enterprise, Brent Start and Brent Works leads. Staff.

Unions.

Key risks and mitigations

None

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Alice Lester, Director Regeneration, Growth and Employment

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 CR04
Service(s):	Regeneration Growth and Employment
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning

Savings Proposals:	Re-structure - Capitalisation of part of Regeneration team whilst working on housing zone capital projects

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	4,455
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	n/a

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	75
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0

Proposed savings

Part capitalisation of staff within the Regeneration team whilst working on the housing zone capital projects. It is projected that there will be sufficient capital project activity for 4 years (until 27-28) to capitalise £75k of staffing costs. The potential exists for further capital projects to take place within and beyond this period, enabling the Council to continue to capitalise staffing costs. However, if this is not the case it provides the time to identify alternative revenue savings proposals. This proposal is subject to review by Finance colleagues prior to confirmation.

How would this affect users of this service?

No impact

Key milestones

Implement April 2023

Review after 3 years

Key consultations

Finance

Key risks and mitigations

Short term – if decisions are made not to continue with the capital projects, capitalisation would not be appropriate.

When capital projects finish staff will need to revert to being paid from revenue.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
	N
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Alice Lester, Director Regeneration, Growth and Employment

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 CR05
Service(s):	Regeneration, Growth and Employment Employment Skills & Enterprise (Economic Development)
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Southwood, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy & Citizen Experience

Savings Proposals:	Restructure - reduce the town centre manager team (from 4 to 3)

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	795
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE): Economic Development team	9

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	66
Proposed staffing reduction	1

Proposed savings

Deletion of 1 of the 4 town centre manager posts

How would this affect users of this service?

The service offer of support to the priority town centres would be reduced by 25%. The remaining three managers would not be able to service the 9 priority town centres to the same degree. It is likely that the number of priority town centres would be reduced so those areas would not receive any focussed business support, and officers would be spread more thinly diluting the support offer. Alternatively the 3 remaining managers would work across all of the centres on a thematic basis, which would

diminish the in depth understanding of a place and remove the personal relationship between the TCM and the businesses. Activities such as ‘Small Business Saturday’ might not be able to be resourced.

The reduction would impact on the health and vitality of our town centres, risking the ongoing recovery and improvement and contribution to the economy.

Businesses could lose faith in the Council’s commitment to be business friendly and supporting the local economy.

Key milestones

July 2022 – keep a vacant post vacant

Key consultations

Lead Member for Jobs, Economy & Citizen Experience

Head of Employment Skills and Enterprise, Economic Development manager, town centre managers.

Key risks and mitigations

Risks relate to decline in service provision and consequent reputational impact. Less support for town centre businesses and initiatives, impacting on the town centre environment and economy.

Increased pressure on remaining staff – morale and mental wellbeing.

Brent not being seen as ‘open for business’ and supporting inward investment. Impact on local economy and local businesses.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
	N
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Alice Lester, Director Regeneration, Growth and Employment

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023–24 CR06
Service(s):	Strategy and Partnerships
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Donnelly-Jackson, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities & Culture

Savings Proposals:	Non appointment of new posts identified in new S & P Restructure

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	3,143
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	30.3

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	55
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	1

Proposed savings

In 23/24 savings will be achieved by:

1. Not appointing to 1 new posts identified in the forthcoming S & P restructure - £55,000 savings.

How would this affect users of this service?

The forthcoming S & P restructure identifies 6.6 new FTE posts in the VCS and Community Engagement Team. This is significant growth in headcount to deliver community engagement.

The current service operates with 2 FTE officers graded at PO3. The saving proposed will remove 1 FTE.

Reducing the appointments to 5.6 FTE will not have an impact on service users and the restructure proposal on the whole increases the number of officers available to support resident engagement.

As these posts are newly created there will be no impact as posts are not filled.

Key milestones

- Proposed restructure was launched in early February 2022
- Implemented restructure in May 2022

Key consultations

- Staff consultation on restructure has been completed

Key risks and mitigations

- There are no risks.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Lorna Hughes, Director of Communities

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023–24 CR07
Service(s):	Communications, Conference & Events
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Butt

Savings Proposals:	Saving will be delivered by moving Communications to a business partnering model

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	652
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	17

	2023/24 £000
Proposed saving:	100
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	2

Proposed savings

It is proposed to further reduce the number of Communications Account Managers in the corporate communications team from five to three.

The corporate communications team has proven its worth in building the council's reputation, managing demand and encouraging positive behaviour change during a period when many residents and businesses in Brent have been hit hard by the devastating effects of COVID-19. However, one of the lessons from the communications response during the pandemic was to prove that a streamlined way of working is possible as lower level communications that deliver less value to the council's corporate priorities can be deprioritised by corporate communications if required.

Given the need for savings across the council, it is now proposed to exclusively focus the corporate communications team on a small number of core campaigns that will be agreed corporately as part of the annual Communications Strategy discussions and solely focus the team on a specific and agreed number of core strategic aims.

How would this affect users of this service?

As the core delivery capacity of the corporate communications unit is cut by 40%, Lead Members and service directorates would need to accept significantly less support on communications that are not agreed as core campaign priorities.

Officers in service departments will need to self-serve on lower level 'business as usual' communications work so that the remaining corporate communications time can be spent on the limited number of proactive campaign priorities. Alongside the reduction in staff, there would need to be a review of the frequency and volume of communications output (e.g. e-newsletters, social media and digital content and the number of pages in the YourBrent Magazine) that will need to change as staff capacity is significantly reduced.

A review of ways of working will also take place with the work of the corporate communications team increasingly focused on quality, not quantity, and less time spent on preparing for reactive issues, including media enquiries.

Additional temporary communications capacity for any ad hoc or newly emerging strategic communications priorities that surface in year will need to be funded from the relevant service directorate's budget.

Key milestones

Development of the Borough Plan – summer 2022.

Alongside the development of the Borough Plan, the corporate communications team will engage with key stakeholders to discuss and agree where corporate communications can add value and assist with the delivery of core council aims and objectives within the limited capacity available

Service directorates and Lead Members will need to pick and choose where corporate communications effort adds the most value and where it can safely be foregone

Key consultations

Staff consultation on the proposals – spring 2022.

Key risks and mitigations

By reducing the number of Communications Account Managers from five to three we will inevitably reduce the capacity available for major campaigns. However, by

spending less time preparing for reactive issues and events, that sometimes do not materialise, and reducing the amount of time the corporate communications team spends on business as usual communications the impact can be limited.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Rob Mansfield, Head of Communications, Conference and Events

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 CR08
Service(s):	Communities and Regeneration
Lead Member(s):	Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities & Culture Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning

Savings Proposals:	Additional digital savings to be delivered through the Digital Transformation Programme. Detailed proposals currently being scoped but likely to be achieved through projects including automation and the implementation of the new IDOX Cloud solution.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	8,995
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	255.8

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	
Proposed saving:	50	N/A
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	Approx. 0.7	N/A

Proposed savings

Reductions in headcount through efficiencies delivered through digital solutions.

How would this affect users of this service?

To be confirmed but likely to primarily affect back office systems and processes. May also involve further channel shift to more accessible and effective online systems (while maintaining telephone and face to face channels for those who need additional support).

Key milestones

TBC

Key consultations

TBC

Key risks and mitigations

There is a risk that work to scope, develop and implement new systems cannot be made in time to enable savings to be delivered by the start of 2023/24. This will be mitigated by bringing in additional business analysis support and capacity to backfill posts in the service area to allow them to act as SMEs.

Equality impact screening

This section will be completed when detailed more proposals have been developed.

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Alice Lester, Director Regeneration, Growth and Employment Lorna Hughes, Head of Strategy & Partnerships

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023–24 RS01
Service(s):	Customer Access, Improvement and Performance Team
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Eleanor Southwood, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy & Citizen Experience

Savings Proposals:	Removal of first class envelopes from Civic Centre to reduce postage spends. First class postage will remain available in the Post Room but only for those requiring first class postage.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	327
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	5.83 in the DPR

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	64.4
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0

Proposed savings

Removal of first class postage from floors in the Civic Centre will result in a saving.

How would this affect users of this service?

No impact to service users, first class post will still be available for those that actually need it.

Key milestones

In place, saving carried over for 1/4/2023.

Key consultations

Already completed.

Key risks and mitigations

None

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Regina McDonald, Improvement & Performance Manager

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS02
Service(s):	Customer Access, Improvement and Performance Team
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Eleanor Southwood, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy & Citizen Experience

Savings Proposals:	Staffing changes across the Improvement & Performance Team and the Digital Post Room teams. Duties to be covered by existing staff once re-evaluation of JD's and staff consultation has been carried out.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	552
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	14.83

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	86
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	2

Proposed savings

2 x FTE posts to be deleted across Improvement & Performance Team and the Digital Post Room.

How would this affect users of this service?

No impact to service users.

Key milestones

Changes to staffing within the Improvement & Performance team to be implemented in 2023/24 and changes to staffing within the Digital Post Room to be implemented in 2023/24.

Key consultations

In line with the Council's managing change policy, all affected staff would be consulted.

Key risks and mitigations

None

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Regina McDonald, Improvement & Performance Manager

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS03
Service(s):	Customer Access, Customer Services and Assessments
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Eleanor Southwood, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy & Citizen Experience

Savings Proposals:	Reduction in the usage of the Resilience contract and creation of in house applications to replace IEG

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	8,716
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	152

	2023/24 £000
	262
Proposed saving:	IEG and Resilience Contract / Staffing
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	4

Proposed savings

2023/24 - A further reduction in the usage of the Resilience contract and creation of in house applications to replace IEG.

2023/24 - This is based on staffing reductions across all Customer Services and Assessments due to systems automation and reduction in benefits caseload

How would this affect users of this service?

Residents will receive a better customer experience and will not impact them negatively.

Key milestones

January 2023-IEG

September 2023 - Staff consultation

Key consultations

In line with the Council's managing Change Policy and Procedure, all affected staff will be consulted.

Key risks and mitigations

New Government legislation and increase in workload

Staff retention, resilience and cross training to help us cover unexpected pressures

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A
Lead officer for this proposal:	Thomas Cattermole, Director of Customer Access / Asha Vyas, Head of Customer Services & Assessments

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS04
Service(s):	Customer Access, Registration and Nationality
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Eleanor Southwood, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy & Citizen Experience

Savings Proposals:	Online diary and reporting system equivalent to current product bought in house use of corporate Online booking Citizenship ceremonies incorporating facility for payment for private ceremonies

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	0 This service is self-financing
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	0

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	10.5
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0

Proposed savings

Online diary and reporting system equivalent to current product bought in house use of corporate

Online booking Citizenship ceremonies incorporating facility for payment for private ceremonies

How would this affect users of this service?

Users of the service will have an improved online service whilst retaining a face-to-face service for those customers that are digitally challenged.

Key milestones

N/A

Key consultations

None

Key risks and mitigations

None

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Mandy Brammer, Head of Registration and Nationality

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS05
Service(s):	Customer Access, Revenue and Debt
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Eleanor Southwood, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy & Citizen Experience

Savings Proposals:	Staff reorganisation

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	4,600
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	75

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	210
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	5

Proposed savings

Staff reorganisation to provide savings of £210,000.

How would this affect users of this service?

Improved use of technology, increased volumes of self-service with reduced inbound calls will mean an improved service to customers with lower failure demand.

Key milestones

To go through the required process regarding consultation.

Key consultations

Staff side representatives, managers, members.

Key risks and mitigations

That staff feel uncertain and anxious

Ensure effective communications are in place.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Peter Cosgrove, Head of Revenue and Debt

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS06
Service(s):	Transformation
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	• Reduction in licensing spend through applications rationalisation • Reduction in corporate printing spend through continued move to digital options • Reduction in ICT and Transformation supplies and services spend • Reduction in Brent's contribution to the shared ICT service through realisation of savings through delivery of roadmap projects • Reduction in staffing in Transformation service (2xFTE)

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	11,190
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	121.7

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	£418
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	2

Proposed savings

- **Reduction in licensing spend through applications rationalisation (£45,000)**. This saving is part of the ongoing programme to deliver Brent's digital strategy and will be realised by further consolidation of back office systems
- **Reduction in corporate printing spend through continued move to digital options (£60,000).** This will be delivered through a reduction in printers in the Civic Centre (maximising the shift away from hard copy documents which has resulted from more hybrid working) and by implementing improved tracking and controls on spending through the print room and working with departments to ensure a shift to digital where possible. This saving is also part of the Digital Programme.
- **Reduction in ICT and Transformation supplies and services spend (£113,000K)**. This saving will delivered through a reduction in miscellaneous spend on IT hardware etc. Again this saving links to the Digital Programme.
- Reduction in Brent's contribution to the shared ICT service through realisation of savings through delivery of roadmap projects (£60,000). Investment in improving infrastructure via the STS Tech Roadmap will result in revenue savings, reducing the cost of Brent's contribution to the shared service. These savings relate to data centre improvements which will increase security while reducing overall cost. Other savings are also being delivered to the other two Council's in STS.
- **Reduction in staffing in Transformation service (2xFTE) (£140,000).** Reduction in two posts in the Transformation service (1 x PO8, 1 x PO1). This will be delivered through deletion of vacant posts and is enabled by the new Transformation structure which will deliver more effective cross working between project and BAU staff.

How would this affect users of this service?

Savings related to services are corporate and internal facing so savings would not impact directly on residents. Savings through rationalisation of ICT systems and through the STS digital roadmap will not have any adverse effect on system users and are part of programmes to improve ICT systems and infrastructure.

The reduction in print spend, which is a corporate budget, will have a minor impact on departments who will be supported to continue to move towards digital channels.

The reduction in FTE in will have a minor impact on the level of support for transformation projects across the council meaning that some further prioritisation of projects being supported will be required.

Key milestones

Work is already underway which will deliver these proposals. Milestones are set out in the Digital Transformation and STS Technical Roadmaps.

Key consultations

It is anticipated that staffing reductions will be delivered without making redundancies through deletion of vacant posts but a consultation may be required if this is not possible. Services will continue to be engaged to support changes to applications and move towards new digital solutions.

Key risks and mitigations

There are minor risks in the delivery of ICT savings which are dependent on work to develop and implement new systems. There are also minor risks in the delivery of printing savings which will required changes in behaviour by other council departments as this is a corporate budget. These will be mitigated by ensuring projects are well planned and managed and that change management support is also in place.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Sadie East, Director of Transformation

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS07
Service(s):	Resident Services
Lead Member(s):	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy and Citizen Experience Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security Cabinet Member for Safer Communities & Public Protection Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Culture

Savings Proposals:	Additional digital savings to be delivered through the Digital Transformation Programme. Detailed proposals currently being scoped but likely to be achieved through projects including additional implementation of online forms, chatbot/virtual agents and RPA as well as further reductions in print.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	70,282
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	24.8

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	300	N/A
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	Approx. 4	N/A

Proposed savings

Reductions in headcount through efficiencies delivered through digital solutions. Reductions in spend on print through move to online solutions.

How would this affect users of this service?

To be confirmed but likely primarily affect back office systems and processes. May also involve further channel shift to more accessible and effective online systems (while maintaining telephone and face to face channels for those who need additional support).

Key milestones

TBC

Key consultations

TBC

Key risks and mitigations

There is a risk that work to scope, develop and implement new systems cannot be made in time to enable savings to be delivered by the start of 2023/24. This will be mitigated by bringing in additional business analysis support and capacity to backfill posts in the service area to allow them to act as SMEs.

Equality impact screening

This section will be completed when detailed more proposals have been developed.

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Peter Gadsdon, Corporate Director Resident Services

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS08
Service(s):	Library Arts and Heritage, Customer Access, Residents Services,
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Donnelly-Jackson, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities & Culture

Savings Proposals:	Reduction in the library stock budget

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	3,400
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	66.4

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Reduction of 13% in stock budget		
Proposed saving:	62	0
Proposed staffing reduction	Nil	Nil

Proposed savings

Stock Reduction Profile

Type of Stock	Saving	Impact
Online Resources	£3,600	Remove services that have yet to gain popularity (Digi Back Books). Less choice of online resources.
Adult Fiction	£13,000	HBK only at Wembley and Willesden Green, remove small language collections not issuing well Reduced issues and increased pressure requests system.
Adult-Non Fiction	£12,000	Reduce general non-fiction spend; with focus decreasing spend in less popular areas such as history and biography. Increased pressure on requests from other libraries and slower response times.
Children's Non-Fiction	£8,000	Reduction in material. Less ability to support homework clubs and increased pressure on requests system. Reduced spend on Outreach and deliveries to schools.
Children's Fiction	£14,500	Reduced spend on Board books, duplicate new fiction. Loss of issues and satisfaction for Under 5s and class visits.
Periodicals	£6,200	Stop physical magazines at all sites
DVDs	£1,500	Removal of service, loss of hire charges for adult films.
Reference Material	£1,000	Reduce to core collection at Willesden and specific titles at Wembley. Unable to support smaller libraries and partnerships such as library hubs.
Stationary	£2000	Estimated savings through less stock
TOTAL	£61,800	

No reduction is proposed in spoken word or large print collections as these would disproportionally impact upon home library users.

How would this affect users of this service?

In comparison with our geographical neighbours (Ealing and Harrow), CIPFA benchmarking indicates that Brent's higher investment in library stock will mitigate any reduction that is agreed.

Key milestones

The reductions in stock is relatively straightforward to implement in 2023-24.

Key consultations

Reduction in the stock budget has not previously been consulted upon and no consultation is proposed.

Key risks and mitigations

See above.

Equality impact screening

This section will be completed when detailed more proposals have been developed.

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Peter Gadsdon, Corporate Director Resident Services

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS09
Service(s):	Increase Council Owned Temporary Accommodation Portfolio
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Knight, Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security

Savings Proposals:	To build a new Temporary Accommodation scheme of up to 100 units (similar to Anansi and Knowles House) to use in place of emergency B&B's and Annexes

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	0
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	0

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	0	350 (half year)
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0	0

Proposed savings

The savings are based on the following cautious assumptions:

- £10M to acquire the land
- £30M to build

Based on Anansi and Knowles House the site would yield net annual income of £700k.

A site with planning permission has now been purchased and work is now ongoing to appoint a developer.

Due to the current increased cost of labour and materials, there is a potential that the estimated build cost of £30M, may increase.

New accommodation is not expected to be available until 2024.

How would this affect users of this service?

The Council has recently developed two TA schemes at Anansi House, for homeless families and Knowles House for single homeless people. These schemes are being used to provide emergency accommodation, to replace the use of B&B's. However, there are still over 100 homeless households living in emergency TA, such as B&B, provided by a private owner. This type of accommodation tends to be of a poorer quality and is expensive for the Council to use. Developing a 3rd scheme of 100 units, will help achieve the Council's strategy to reduce the use of TA, and only use Council owned or managed TA.

This will also have a positive impact on the service users, as they will be living in high quality, purpose built, emergency TA that is managed by the Council.

The need for this has recently heightened, as we are experiencing a significant increase in homelessness demand. Over the last few years, we have successfully reduced the number of households in temporary accommodation, bucking the London trend. However, we have started to experience an increase in TA use, due to exceptional increase in demand.

Key milestones

- Land acquisition/identification – Q1 22/23
- Design and planning permission – Q2 22/23
- Procurement of building contractor – Q3 22/23
- Completion and handover – Q3 24/25

Key consultations

- Implement new build engagement strategy

Key risks and mitigations

- No suitable land available
- Public resistance
- General construction risks

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Hakeem Osinaike, Director of Housing

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS11
Service(s):	Increase portfolio of Council Managed (BDL) Temporary Accommodation (TA)
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Knight, Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security

Savings Proposals:	Transfer HALS TA portfolio from Notting Hill Genesis (NHG) to Brent Direct Leasing (BDL)

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	0
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	0

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	86	0
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0	0

Proposed savings

TUPED Staff costs are included in the above. The net income generated by operating an in-house leasing scheme is £86K.

How would this affect users of this service?

In July 2020, the Council transferred the TA portfolio, formerly operated by Network Homes Housing Association, to the in house TA leasing scheme, BDL. This portfolio is generating an annual net profit of £86K.

It is therefore proposed to approach Notting Hill Genesis Housing Association, to ask if they would consider transferring their TA portfolio (circa 550 properties) to the Council.

Increasing the in house TA portfolio will help achieve the Council's strategy to reduce the use of TA, and only use Council owned or managed TA.

This will also have a positive impact on the service users, as they will be dealing directly with the Council, on issues such as repairs, instead of going through a Housing Association.

Key milestones

- In formal approach to NHG
- Consultation
- Assignment of current leases
- TUPE

Key consultations

- NHG
- Lead Member
- Staff (Brent/NHG)
- Trade Unions

Key risks and mitigations

- NHG refuse, but the numbers are reducing, so there will be a tipping point at which the service makes no sense for them, we think this is it.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
	Y/N
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Laurence Coaker Head of Housing Needs

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS12
Service(s):	Highways Management – Energy Team
Lead Member(s):	Cllr. Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action

Savings Proposals:	Reduction in Provision - Energy Cost Saving - Street Light Dimming

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	250
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	N/A

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed savings:	£60
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	N/A

Proposed savings

An additional £0.1m p.a. could be saved through a further rigorous review of lighting levels at a highly localised level across the borough.

How would this affect users of this service?

Areas for selective dimming would be identified carefully in order to ensure that the implications are minimised. Officers are cognisant of and sensitive towards ensuring that safety – particularly of Women and Girls, is not impacted as a result. There are areas where natural surveillance and other background lighting does facilitate dimming. Some users may notice lower lighting levels than expected at certain locations, especially given previous reductions have been made. Any impact must not be sufficient to affect lighting levels required for road safety, or to meet expectations of community safety.

Key milestones

- Complete review and implement detailed Lighting Plan – 2022
- Light level reduction – April 2023

Key consultations

N/A. Resident and visitor feedback on lighting levels could be acted on quickly.

Key risks and mitigations

Some users will likely notice lower lighting levels than expected at certain locations. Should the lighting level not be acceptable at a specific location the CMS does allow corrective adjustments to be made rapidly.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Chris Whyte, Director of Environment & Leisure

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS13
Service(s):	Neighbourhood Management
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action

Savings Proposals:	Service Transformation - Waste disposal – Education and outreach insourcing

Financial and Staffing Information

2021/2022	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	9,000
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	N/A

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	250
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	N/A

Proposed savings

Utilise an insourced waste education and education resource to secure a reduction in residual waste stream in order to secure increased recycling rates and reduced waste disposal payments to WLWA.

How would this affect users of this service?

Residents would receive better information regarding the services we provide. That would encourage better and fuller use of these services and would see less problems associated with the contamination of bins. Targeted interventions at difficult locations would remove long-standing problems and increase waste diversion rates thus reducing waste disposal costs overall.

Key milestones

- Agree TUPE transfer of staff – 2022 as part of RLS dialogue with Bidders
- Implementation – April 2023.

Key consultations

Residents who receive the recycling services the Council provides.

Key risks and mitigations

There is a risk that any interventions have little impact at problem locations. This is best mitigated by ensuring the intervention work is focused, data-led and that our communications are targeted very precisely to counter the problems that are relevant to each location.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Chris Whyte, Director Environment & Leisure

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS14
Service(s):	Neighbourhood Management
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action

Savings Proposals:	Service Transformation - Review Payments to WLWA

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/2023	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	9,000
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	N/A

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	100
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	N/A

Proposed savings

This proposal seeks to recover any over-payment of waste disposal charges made by Brent that may be retained by WLWA and held as reserves by that organisation. Usually, when this happens in any given year, the surplus from boroughs is retained to bolster the reserves of WLWA so that investment can be made in their services in ways that might be beneficial to all constituent boroughs. The proposal is to seek a repayment so that this can create a revenue saving for Brent. In recent years there has generally been an over-payment and £100,000 reduction is not considered unreasonable.

Negotiation would be required with WLWA as this would affect the relationship between WLW and all constituent boroughs.

How would this affect users of this service?

Residents would not be affected by this proposal.

Key milestones

- Negotiate the approach with WLWA – 2022
- Inform constituent boroughs of that intention – 2022
- Formal response to WLWA budget consultation - 2022
- Implementation – April 2023.

Key consultations

WLWA and its constituent boroughs.

Key risks and mitigations

There is a risk that there may be no available surplus in the year intended in which case this proposal may be invalid. There is also a high risk of objection by WLWA and the other boroughs, who may prefer investment in WLWA services in ways that might generate benefit for the common good. Brent will need to understand the financial position of WLWA at the appropriate time, establish the financial benefit and make a case for repayment via the formal, and annual, WLWA budget setting process.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Chris Whyte, Director Environment & Leisure

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS15
Service(s):	Regulatory Services
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Farah, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities & Public Protection

Savings Proposals:	Re-structure - Regulatory Services – use Proceeds of Crime Act to part-fund enforcement.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	1,400
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	25.8

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	300
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0

Proposed savings

It is proposed to switch the funding for two financial investigators from general council budgets to incentives received via the Proceeds of Crime Act.

Income received from the Proceeds of Crime Act relating to Trading Standards has built up in a reserve (currently at £1.1m). This income is ring-fenced and can only be used for narrow purposes. It can be used to fund future investigations.

The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) is a piece of legislation used in relation to confiscating money that had been acquired as a result of crime.

In 2012 Brent and Harrow Trading Standards Service established a dedicated Financial Investigation Team to take advantage of the opportunities offered by POCA to ensure that criminals did not financially benefit from wrongdoing and that confiscated proceeds of crime could be used towards the cost of carrying out investigations.

The Government introduced an incentivisation scheme to encourage authorities to use POCA. The scheme, administered by the Home Office, allowed local authorities to retain a percentage of all successful confiscation orders obtained, when they were paid.

The investigations team consists of two fully trained Accredited Financial Investigators (AFI) who carry out all the financial investigations, source future work for the team and assist colleagues with guidance as to investigations with potential for POCA work.

These financial investigators are currently funded by general council budgets. This proposal is for those two investigators to be funded by the POCA incentives they generate or have generated in the past. There is a £1.1m reserve which can be used to fund them in any years where the team do not receive sufficient POCA incentive payments to cover their salaries. However, based on performance over the past five years, income from POCA should be sufficient to fund two officers on an ongoing basis.

How would this affect users of this service?

No impact on service

Key milestones

This is a funding change and can be implemented on the date required.

Key consultations

Key risks and mitigations

There is a risk that the team do not receive sufficient POCA incentive payments to cover their salaries in a given year. The Trading Standards POCA reserve (currently at £1.1m) can be used to smooth incentive payments. In years where more is received, the balance would add to the reserve (due to ring-fence). In years where the incentives received do not cover the investigators' salaries, Brent can draw on the Trading Standards POCA reserve.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Chris Whyte, Director Environment & Leisure

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS16
Service(s):	Environmental Services
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action

Savings Proposals:	Re-structure - RLS Related - Review staff structures as part of RLS Phase 2 review

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/2023	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	4,000
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	N/A

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	150
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	2

Proposed savings

A £150k saving is envisaged through a comprehensive Phase 2 reorganisation that is necessary to account for the outcomes that will emerge from the Redefining Local Services programme in 2023.

A reorganisation will –

- Create services that deliver our strategies, improving synergy and collaborative working between service areas.
- Design services which support neighbourhood working, are aligned to meet current and future levels of demand, and improve efficiency.
- Prioritise the delivery of public realm improvements, from highways management to new projects and initiatives, focusing on innovation and continuous improvement.
- Support the neighbourhood approach, member and community engagement and improved customer satisfaction.
- Enable efficiencies, with new services being responsible for policy through to operational delivery.
- Strengthen the department's ability to deliver council priorities including the Climate Emergency strategy, Inclusive Growth Strategy and the Redefining Local Services Project which will establish the future delivery models for all our services so they are better integrated.

How would this affect users of this service?

Residents would not be affected by this proposal.

Key milestones

- Review of current arrangements – March 2022
- Review of outcomes of RLS programme – September 2022
- Service redesign – September 2022
- Managing Change consultation Jan – March 2023
- Implementation – April 2023

Key consultations

- All staff affected by the change.

Key risks and mitigations

Any negative impact on staff, and any compulsory redundancies, can be minimised through 'vacancy management' between now and the implementation date.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Chris Whyte, Director Environment & Leisure

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS17
Service(s):	Brent Transport Service
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action Cllr Grahl, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Schools

Savings Proposals:	Service Transformation - RLS related - Detailed service review including route optimisation and alternative means of transport

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	11,800
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	None employed directly by Brent Council

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	1,200
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0

Proposed savings

The service is currently shared with LB Harrow who lead the service on behalf of both Authorities. Despite this, Brent LBC is the larger 'client' for the service and it is estimated that costs per user for Brent are 30% higher than the cost for Harrow.

We know that there is opportunity for savings from benchmarking with other local authorities.

Edge Public Solutions has been appointed to carry out an initial review. Their first objective will be to effectively establish how well travel and transport services performs and identify cost reduction potential along with service quality and compliance improvement opportunities. They will then identify a program of change that will deliver successful implementation.

The expected efficiencies from the review are at least 10-15% of current expenditure (£1.2m - £1.8m) and are in line with efficiencies that Brent Public Solutions have identified for other local authorities.

We expect that the following key areas will provide the improvement opportunities

Strategy and policy

- Strategic and service planning for passenger transport; the fit with corporate priorities, legal requirements, and comparison to best practice.
- Culture and interaction with customers both internal and external, interaction with the Brent client team, SEN and ASC teams, parents, carers, and schools/daycentres.
- Policy improvement opportunities, eligibility and assessment practice and control
- Delivery strategy, possible alternative delivery models and options.
- Demand forecasts and management of this data for future years (including school rolls, impacts of demand management, and demographic projections).
- Opportunities to move from providing door to door transport to other travel solutions
- Opportunities to improve internal fleet and suppliers in terms of carbon emissions

Passenger transport management

- Operation structures, client management arrangements, processes, and financial control across all transport functions and processes including compliance with the Inter Authority Agreement between Brent BTS client team, Brent SEN & ASC, Brent NHS team and schools etc. including any gaps identified.
- Management capabilities and effectiveness
- Systems used and reporting functionality and effectiveness
- Accountability. Financial overview, management, control and reporting, financial trends, demand management. Including a review of the suitability of KPI's for financial and operational performance.
- Management skills and capability, including skills gaps across management, officers and front-line driver and PA's for both managed service internal routes and private hire providers.
- Performance management regime.
- Compliance regime in relation to vehicle and driver/escort provision and statutory

compliance (e.g. S19, PATS, MIDAS etc.)

- Depot arrangements with Harrow, costs, flexibility, future strategy.
- Provision of internal fleet cost model and comparison with external supply
- Contract analysis and review
- Day to day management of safe-guarding, safety, training of providers, CCTV, and specialist equipment management.

Passenger transport co-ordination and demand control

- Routing and co-ordination methodology/ protocols/ opportunities
- Examination of approach to complex and exceptional travel requirement cases in terms of how they are managed and decision made
- Suitability of service provision (routing logic, journey times, appropriateness of vehicles, relevant access requirements, route rationalisation potential etc.) and any alternatives.
- Balance of internal and external passenger transport provision
- Passenger transport procurement and options for improvement including contracts with private suppliers.
- Market supply analysis (market capacity, market engagement, strategic sourcing options, innovative ways to increase competition and drive best value)
- Focus on effective use of escorts, reduction in single person journeys and vehicle utilization improvement opportunities
- Opportunities for alternative travel arrangements including personal budgets
- Travel training and travel 'buddy' schemes to enable walking.
- Group pick up opportunities

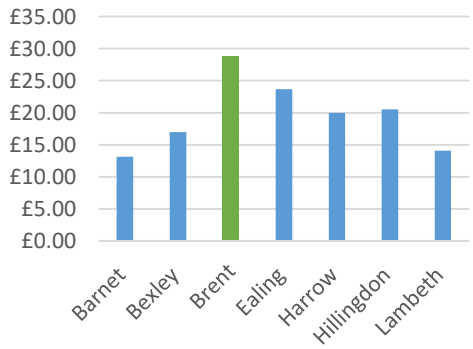
Benchmarking Harrow vs Brent Special Needs Transport

(2019 figures)	Brent	Harrow	% difference
Number of clients	1300	800	60% more in Brent
Cost per annum	£10.5m	£5.2m	Brent's expenditure is double that of Harrow
Net cost per client	£8,400	£6,500	30% higher costs per client for Brent

Scenario (2019 figures)	Service cost	Potential annual saving up to
1. As is	£10.5m	-
2. Keep the current number of clients but reduce average net cost to Harrow's level	£8.2m	£2.3m
3. Reduce the number of clients to Harrow's level (per head of population) while costs per client remain high (at Brent's current level)	£8.8m	Up to £1.7m
4. Reduce Brent's number of clients (per head of population) and the cost per client to Harrow's levels	£6.9m	Up to £3.6m

Brent has the highest SEN travel spend per head of population of the benchmarked local authorities (figure 1)

Figure 1: SEN Travel forecast spend 2019/20 per head of population



This is a combination of a high number of SEN children with travel assistance (highest per head of population, figure 2) and a high cost per child transported (second highest, figure 5)

Figure 2: Number of SEN with Travel Assistance (all forms) per 1000 head of population

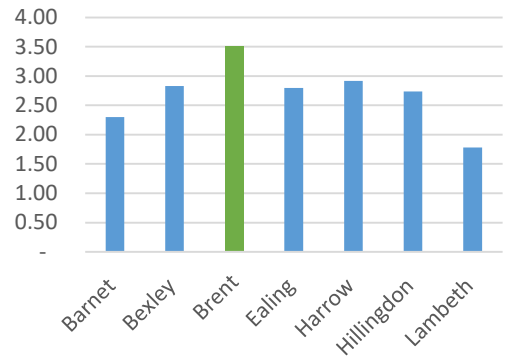
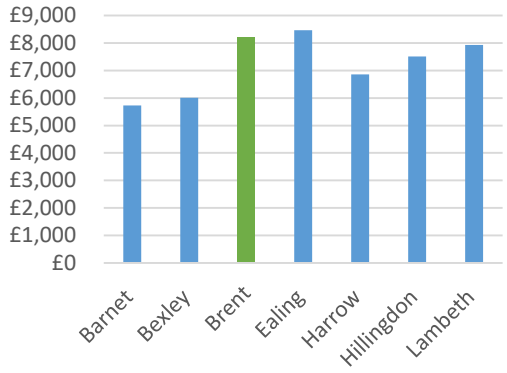


Figure 2: Average annual cost per passenger



How would this affect users of this service?

The individual proposals are not known at this stage and will be reviewed following the independent review of the service.

Key milestones

The independent review to identify savings and efficiencies has begun (funded by Recovery Initiatives). This will include a proposal for the specific transformations required.

The transformation period is 24 months, therefore there is a risk that these savings will not be fully achieved in 2023/24.

Key consultations

LB Harrow, as the delivery partner

CWB and CYP as client departments

Parents and Passengers

Key risks and mitigations

Potential impact on vulnerable service users, with mitigations to be established via a formal EIA.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	Y
Particular ethnic groups	Y
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	Y
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	Yes
EIA to be completed by:	Regina McDonald
Deadline:	31 January 2023

Lead officer for this proposal:	Chris Whyte, Director Environment & Leisure

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS18
Service(s):	Environmental Services
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action

Savings Proposals:	Procurement - RLS Related - Reduce costs as part of RLS competitive tendering approach.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/2023	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	N/A
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	N/A

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	200
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	N/A

Proposed savings

There is the potential to attach a savings target of £200k to the RLS commissioning programme to reduce costs via the various competitive tendering process that will be undertaken through 2022. This is considered a reasonable target given the number and scale of processes that are in train as part of RLS. Any that involve a change / reduction in service specification would be agreed politically as part of the competitive dialogue process.

How would this affect users of this service?

Residents would not necessarily be affected by this proposal unless the cost savings were created by a discernible reduction in service compared to the current offer.

Key milestones

- Review costs and potential savings via the competitive tendering processes – 2022.
- Secure best value for new contracts through these processes – 2022
- Consultation on any significant service changes - 2022
- Implementation 2023

Key consultations

- Consultation with elected Members and residents affected by any significant change/reduction in service.

Key risks and mitigations

There is a risk that a reduction in the cost of key front line operational services may only be created by a reduction in service levels compared with the current, baseline offer.

The key mitigation is to ensure a considered and assertive dialogue with bidders in order to secure best value.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
	Y/N
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Chris Whyte, Director Environment & Leisure

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 RS19
Service(s):	Environmental Services
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action

Savings Proposals:	Rationalisation of Environmental Services Directorate budget

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	39,313 (full ES budget)
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	198

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	130
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	N/A

Proposed savings

A rationalisation of the budgets within Environmental Services has taken place in anticipation of the savings required for the RLS project.

Included in this was a review of insourcing opportunities, where a saving was identified to bring the Cemeteries Ground Maintenance service in-house. This saving has already been achieved.

How would this affect users of this service?

The removal of this would have no adverse operational impact.

The Cemeteries GM service has already been bought in-house, so there will be no further impact related to this.

Key milestones

The budget review has been undertaken and saving achieved.

Key consultations

Budget holders

Key risks and mitigations

None

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Chris Whyte, Director Environment & Leisure

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 FR01
Service(s):	Finance and Resources
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Deletion of 3 FTE.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	8,800
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	91

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	252
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	3

Proposed savings

With the creation of a centralised Oracle support function in IT, a proportion of a Head of Finance management oversight of master data and systems control is no longer required. The remainder of the Head of Finance responsibility will be distributed across

other Heads of Finance - (no risk of redundancy as post held vacant through staff turnover).

A Senior Finance Analyst and a Finance Analyst post were created in 2016 to work specifically on Commercial ventures. Over the last few years the Council has moved away from these types of activities in general. Most recent ventures have been Housing or Treasury Management led. It is proposed to delete these posts and distribute these activities to core service specific officers within Finance. If any new substantial ventures are progressed, Finance resources will need to be funded by the programme. In essence this proposal moves from base budget resources to a project based funding - (no risk of redundancy as post held vacant through staff turnover).

How would this affect users of this service?

The proposal reduces 3 FTE Finance which dilutes the offer to the council.

Key milestones

Key consultations

Small-scale Finance department restructure maybe required.

Key risks and mitigations

No risk of redundancy as all 3 posts are held vacant through staff turnover.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director Finance & Resources

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 FR02
Service(s):	Finance and Resources
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Digital Transformation – automation of transactional and through projects including additional automation and improvements in management self-serve as a result of Oracle Cloud enhancements.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	8,800
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	91

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	250
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	4.3

Proposed savings

Over the years the Council has delivered substantial savings in Finance with technology. The Council's investment in further Digital transformation affords the opportunity to explore the use of Automation and Artificial intelligence/Machine

learning to deliver further savings in the management of transactions across the whole of the Finance function.

How would this affect users of this service?

Should be low impact

Key milestones

To be confirmed following scoping meeting with Digital Partner in March 2022.

Key consultations

TBC

Key risks and mitigations

The automation of activities will lead to some reductions in staffing. There is a risk that work to scope, develop and implement new systems cannot be made in time to enable savings to be delivered by the start of 2023/24. This will be mitigated by bringing in additional business analysis support and capacity to backfill posts in the service area to allow them to act as SMEs.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/a
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director Finance & Resources

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 FR03
Service(s):	Audit and Investigation
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Reduce use of external support to internal audit service

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	1,100
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	14

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	23
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0

Proposed savings

This saving would reduce the funding available to secure external support for Internal Audit work.

How would this affect users of this service?

The availability of capacity to undertake specialist audits (in an area of strategic risk) at the request of services through the internal audit contract would be reduced.

Key milestones

Audit and Investigations would specify a reduced expenditure target in its contractual commitment for 2023/24 at the end of 2022/23.

Key consultations

None

Key risks and mitigations

A reduction in the availability of capacity for specialist audits to be undertaken through the internal audit contract might lead to a request for additional funding should this capacity provide insufficient for audits deemed essential by the Chief Executive or Head of Internal Audit to be undertaken.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Darren Armstrong, Head of Audit & Investigation

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 FR04
Service(s):	Property & Assets
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Income Generation - Lease further floors of the Civic Centre to external organisations/tenants to generate revenue.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	0
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	N/A

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	680
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	N/A

Proposed savings

Our current tenants are:

- AIR FRANCE UK
- NHS North West London CCG
- VALUATION OFFICE AGENCY
- OPDC Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation

The total rent achieved is £446,000. Air France are moving out of their 8th floor space in Oct 2022. This space will need to be re-let in-order to re-secure the income attributed to it.

If other floors areas are let, additional re-occurring income could be secured.

Historically we have priced the floor space of the Civic Centre at circa £200-250 per sq ft.

Additional income if the balance of the 7th floor is let – circa £236,000

Additional income if a another typical floor is let – circa £446,000

An agent has been commissioned to advise the Council and to seek potential tenants.

How would this affect users of this service?

For modelling purposes we have looked at the balance of the 7th floor, currently occupied by Planning, Property & Assets and Finance (133 desks) and one whole other floor such as the 5th (242 desks) so a total of 375 desks.

Modelling would have be done to redistribute the remaining desks in the building amongst Council departments.

Key milestones

- Agreement on what areas to market for let March 2022
- Appoint a letting agent April 2022
- Look to secure tenants by end of 2022

Key consultations

- CMT regarding loss of space and the impact on team areas

Key risks and mitigations

The market. Letting activity is not guaranteed, many business are rationalising space as the effects of the pandemic on their operation footprints is still being fully understood. However, the Civic Centre represents a well-located, good value, high quality product that should be competitive to those that are looking.

Competition has now increased in the micro market as new buildings such as the Hive have come on-line. These however are much higher priced.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Tanveer Ghani, Director Property & Assets

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 FR05
Service(s):	Property & Assets – Finance & Resources
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Income Generation - Increase car park/EVCP charge for the spaces/facilities in the Civic Centre

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	369 (Income)
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	N/A

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	100
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0

Proposed savings

Increase the full day tariff (including event days) in line with local competitors. Maintain the ethos of keeping short term parking costs as low as possible; however the short term parking tariffs can also be increased if preferred. If this option is approved, all charges will also be increased annually by CPI to the nearest 20p going forwards.

This proposal is based upon the additional income generated by the historically lowest number of visitors paying the existing tariff over the past 5 years (7901 whole day parkers plus a further 1034 event day parkers) and therefore the income generated could increase above the targeted £00k

Tariff as it is currently:

Duration	Monday - Sunday	Wembley Stadium Event Days
Up to 1 hour	£1.50	£1.50
Up to 2 hours	£4.00	£4.00
Up to 3 hours	£7.50	£7.50
Whole day	£15.00	£30.00

Proposed Tariffs:

Duration	Monday - Sunday	Wembley Stadium Event Days
Up to 1 hour	£1.50	£1.50
Up to 2 hours	£4.00	£4.00
Up to 3 hours	£7.50	£7.50
Whole day	£20.00	£40.00
For short term parking (up to 3 hours) electric vehicles will qualify for a 50% discount.		

We would also introduce a revised charge for electric vehicles to continue to promote the climate change agenda, whilst also benefiting from the increased usage of electric vehicles parking at the building. The qualification of income for this is currently unavailable as options are being researched. It is likely that another £30k - £50k could be realised if the provision is used to its full capacity.

How would this affect users of this service?

Short time visits to the Civic Centre would not see an impact, only users who leave their cars for over 3 hours.

Key milestones

Agreement on what charges to increase, and then implement – April 2023.

Key consultations

Members, staff, other car park users

Key risks and mitigations

Increased tariffs could deter users from the Civic Centre facilities and push them towards other car parks. The Civic car park is very well located however, and the loss of the Yellow car park, should cement this. The usage should be closely monitored and if a decreased usage is detected, then potentially the charges could be re-revised down.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Tanveer Ghani, Director Property & Assets

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 FR06
Service(s):	Property & Assets
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Service Transformation - Security Service Review

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	0
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	N/A

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	230
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	7

Proposed Savings

A detailed review of the security provision across all Brent's operational buildings was conducted after staff TUPE'd across from the previous out-sourced provider in summer 2021.

The following will go live in Q1 2022/2023:

- Implementation of 40hr working week across all staff.
- Reduction in total number of security guards from the existing 26 guards to 20 guards, aligned to existing operational service needs (this includes the reduction of zero hour contract staff) and wider retained estate service changes in operational requirements from 1 Jan 2022.
- Service ‘Management’ realignment incorporate two existing posts of the security manager and cleaning manager in to new ‘Soft Services’ manager position.
- Hourly rates of pay to increase from existing LLW of £10.85 to £13.17- £14.15 aligning to Council pay Scale 6 (17-21). This will be subject to final role evaluation and grading.
- Reduction of all ‘Zero Hours’ contracts.
- Reduction on reliance of external agency staff.
- Shift patterns aligned to 40hr across a 5 day week (8hrs per day), with the exception of the weekends. Implementation of new rota schedules in line with the above.
- All guards to work to new contractual hours only, overtime by exception and only with prior approval from Head of FM Services.
- Ensure all licensing is up to date for all guards across the service.

How would this affect users of this service?

No noticeable effects should be noticed by the users of the operational estate buildings.

Key milestones

Implementation Q1 2022/2023.

Key consultations

Staff

Key risks and mitigations

A smaller pool of guards means monitoring operational resilience will be key. Agency staff will still be available, but will no longer be used as a regular part of the service.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Tanveer Ghani, Director Property & Assets

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 FR07
Service(s):	Property & Assets – Finance & Resources
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Service Transformation - Rationalise "soft" FM service – Cleaning Staff

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	1,240
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	74

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	150
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	5

Proposed savings

A detailed review of the security provision across all Brent's operational buildings was conducted after staff TUPE'd across from the previous out-sourced provider in summer 2021.

A similar review is proposed for the cleaning service, providing a smaller, better remunerated work force, on consistent terms and conditions – but with shift pattern flexibility.

How would this affect users of this service?

No noticeable effects should be noticed by the users of the operational estate buildings.

Key milestones

Implementation Q1 2023/2024.

Key consultations

Staff

Key risks and mitigations

A smaller pool of cleaners means monitoring operational resilience will be key. Agency staff will still be available, but will no longer be used as a regular part of the service.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Tanveer Ghani, Director Property & Assets

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 FR08
Service(s):	Property & Assets
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Re-structure - Commercial Staffing Review – Appointment of Permanent Staff and ensuring adequate resourcing for capital projects.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	326
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	N/A

	2023/24
	£'000
Propose saving:	100
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0

Proposed savings

The commercial and residential property teams are in the process of being re-organised. Currently there are two agency members of staff in the commercial structure. When these staff are replaced by permanent employees, then there will be the ability to save some revenue costs. In addition to this, 50% of one of the roles is often involved in project work so work is required to ensure these costs are

incorporated into new project budget requests going forward to allow for these costs to be capitalised.

How would this affect users of this service?

See below in key risks.

Key milestones

Implementation Q1 2023/2024.

Key consultations

Staff

Key risks and mitigations

The two agency staff are vastly experience chartered surveyors. It is likely that the permanent replacements will be of either a lower quality or more junior. Quality will have to be monitored closely to ensure service remains consistent.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or Women (include impacts due to pregnancy/maternity)	N
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
People in particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Marriage / civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment.

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Tanveer Ghani, Director Property & Assets

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023–24 GOV01
Service(s):	Executive & Member Services
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Reduction in posts and more efficient allocation of tasks

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	3,900
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	35.6

	2023/24	2024/25
	£000	£000
Proposed saving:	89	N/A
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	2.0	

Proposed savings

Reduction in posts and more efficient allocation of tasks. This saving will reduce the civic and support establishment in Executive & Member Services by 2 posts.

How would this affect users of this service?

This proposal may reduce the number of member learning and development activities we support and we may need to source extra resource to support activities during peak times (e.g. member induction following local elections). There would be little resilience at times of absence.

There is a risk that – particularly at peak times – residents who have hitherto had a quick turnaround in respect of their enquiries to the Leader and the Chief Executive experience a slower response.

Key milestones

A restructure report will be required in late 2022.

Key consultations

May need to consult the party groups regarding the changes. Consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the Managing Change policy.

Key risks and mitigations

The biggest risks will be the workload for remaining posts and a reduction in resilience in the face of absence or sickness. Review of processes and task allocation will be undertaken to mitigate this.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Natalie Zara, Head of Executive and Member Services

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 GOV02
Service(s):	Human Resources
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Restructures in HR

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	3,700
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	56

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	85
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	1

Proposed savings

This saving would introduce a new model for advisory support in HR and reduce the number of advisory posts in HR by one in 2023/24 and by one in 2023/24.

How would this affect users of this service?

It is anticipated that these changes would have no significant impact of service users. The reduction in 2023/24 would be to reflect a reduction in demand due to digital innovations, in particular the case management system planned to be introduced as part of phase 2 of the Oracle programme and the introduction of a chatbot function for straightforward HR enquiries. The change is designed to create a better career path within the service.

Key milestones

Restructure reports would be required in the autumn of 2023/24.

Key consultations

Consultation with staff would be required in the autumn of 2023/24.

Key risks and mitigations

In the event that the introduction of the case management system was delayed and/or the implementation of a chatbot function were delayed or was not feasible the reduction in capacity in in HR could result in inadequate advice and support for managers and employees.

The Case Management system is now operational and work commences on the chatbot function will begin later in this financial year and operational early in the 2023/34 period.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Martin Williams, Head of Human Resources

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 GOV03
Service(s):	Human Resources
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Reduce Corporate Learning and Development Budget

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	3,700
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	56

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	40
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	-

Proposed savings

This saving would reduce the budget held by HR for Corporate training by £40k.

How would this affect users of this service?

This would reduce the training available to staff and managers.

Key milestones

None

Key consultations

None

Key risks and mitigations

A reduction in this budget will mean some of the programmes currently offered, for example in respect of leadership and management development, could not be offered corporately without an alternative funding source being identified.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Martin Williams, Head of Human Resources

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 GOV04
Service(s):	Governance
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Administrative and Miscellaneous Efficiencies

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	14,500
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	188.4

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	12
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0

Proposed savings

This proposal concerns a shift to increased use of LinkedIn for recruitment advertising which is expected to reduce reliance on other advertising media.

How would this affect users of this service?

No significant difference in service is likely to be experience.

Key milestones

None

Key consultations

None

Key risks and mitigations

- This would make LinkedIn the main medium the council uses for attracting applicants from 2023/24. This may reduce the range and diversity of candidates for roles. It is intended to monitor the sources through which candidates apply so that by 2023/24 we have a clearer picture of the right balance between LinkedIn and more traditional job boards and can utilise the remaining budget to best effect."

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Debra Norman, Corporate Director Governance

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 GOV05
Service(s):	Legal Services
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Increase income target for recoverable legal work costs

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	5,619
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	83

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	30
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	-

Proposed savings

Legal Services provides a number or services to council departments for which the council is reimbursed by third parties. This is mostly in relation to s106 agreements and highways agreement, where the developer indemnifies the councils in respect of its legal costs and various property related services, such as agreeing lease variation documentation, where, in the same way, the external third party beneficiary of the agreement reimburses the council for its legal costs.

This saving would increase the contribution this income is recognised to have to make to the Legal Services budget.

How would this affect users of this service?

There would be no effect.

Key milestones

None

Key consultations

None

Key risks and mitigations

Although this income depends on activity by developers and other third parties, this proposed increase is considered low risk on the basis of actual income achieved in recent years.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Debra Norman, Corporate Director Governance

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 GOV06
Service(s):	Legal Services
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Reduce Legal Fees Budget

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	5,619
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	83

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	50
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	-

Proposed savings

This would reduce the provision in the legal budget for payment of court fees and the costs of advice and representation by barrister in case brought by or against the council.

How would this affect users of this service?

Based on trends in recent financial years, steps taken in Legal Services to develop expertise and increase in house advocacy, it is consider the budget can be reduced by this amount without demand exceeding the remaining budget. In this case there will be no impact on council departments.

Key milestones

None

Key consultations

None

Key risks and mitigations

There is a risk that demand may exceed the remaining budget, for example if there is a surge in cases brought against the council where representation by barristers is needed. If there is inadequate funding in this budget to meet the demand for payment of fees and support from barristers, departments would be unable to obtain specialist advice and court representation without funding this from their own resources. Currently these items are only funded by departments here they relate to cases which are not part of the routine work of the service.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Debra Norman, Corporate Director Governance

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 GOV07
Service(s):	Legal Services
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Miscellaneous expenses reduction

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	5,619
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	83

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	3	
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	-	-

Proposed savings

This savings would involve discontinuing use of the legal document exchange service through which documents for the court, barristers chambers and solicitors firms are currently sometimes despatched.

How would this affect users of this service?

None

Key milestones

None

Key consultations

None

Key risks and mitigations

This reduction relies on the postal service and on-line means of transmission being available and cheaper for the sending of these documents which may change over time.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Debra Norman, Corporate Director Governance

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 GOV08
Service(s):	Legal Services
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Miscellaneous expenses reduction

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	5,619
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	83

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	19.2
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	-

Proposed savings

This saving would remove a budget utilised for unplanned overhead expenses.

How would this affect users of this service?

None

Key milestones

None

Key consultations

None

Key risks and mitigations

This reduction would reduce scope in Legal Services to manage unexpected budget pressure.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Debra Norman, Corporate Director Governance

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 GOV09
Service(s):	Human Resources
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Administrative and Miscellaneous Efficiencies

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	3,700
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	56

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	21.7
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0

Proposed savings

This proposal concerns aligning salary budgets with the establishment.

How would this affect users of this service?

No significant difference in service is likely to be experienced.

Key milestones

None

Key consultations

None

Key risks and mitigations

- Election of TU representatives on higher grades might mean a future increase in the associated salary budget.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Debra Norman, Corporate Director Governance

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 GOV10
Service(s):	Procurement
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Review structure of the Procurement team with overall impact leading to a reduction in the establishment by 1 FTE – Approximate saving £50k

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	1,284
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	14.6

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	50
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	1

Proposed savings

Review structure of the Procurement team with overall impact of reduction in the establishment by 1 FTE – Approximate saving £50k.

How would this affect users of this service?

These roles gather data and develop intelligence and training tools, this will be mitigated by absorbing some of these aspects across the team.

Key milestones

Q1 Restructure complete.

Key consultations

With the staff affected.

Key risks and mitigations

These roles gather data and develop intelligence and training tools, this will be mitigated by absorbing some of these aspects across the team.

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Rajesh Shori, Head of Procurement

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 GOV11
Service(s):	Governance
Lead Member(s):	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Additional digital savings to be delivered through the Digital Transformation Programme. Detailed proposals currently being scoped but likely to be achieved through projects including electronic document management, further implementation of DocuSign, sharing documents with external parties via M365, chatbots for routine HR and Legal queries

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	14,500
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	188.4

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	75	N/A
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	Approx. 1.	N/A

Proposed savings

Reductions in headcount through efficiencies delivered through digital solutions.

How would this affect users of this service?

To be confirmed but unlikely to impact on external service users. May involve new ways of working for other council departments who are customers of this service.

Key milestones

TBC

Key consultations

TBC

Key risks and mitigations

There is a risk that work to scope, develop and implement new systems cannot be made in time to enable savings to be delivered by the start of 2023/24. This will be mitigated by bringing in additional business analysis support and capacity to backfill posts in the service area to allow them to act as SMEs.

Equality impact screening

This section will be completed when detailed more proposals have been developed.

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from *staff intranet*

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Debra Norman, Corporate Director, Governance

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 CORP1, 2 and 3 combined
Service(s):	Cross department – commissioning services, performance and data analysis, communications and engagement services
Lead Member(s):	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Thematic review of commissioning services, performance and data analysis, communications and engagement services across the council to identify opportunities for savings through improved alignment and effective, efficient services.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	N/A
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	N/A

	2023/24	**2024/25**
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	600	
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	6 (estimate)	

Proposed savings

Reduction staff in commissioning roles based on estimate of 2 x PO4 posts. Reduction staff in performance and data analysis roles based on estimate of 2 x PO4 posts.

Reduction staff in communications and engagement services roles based on estimate of 2 x PO4 posts.

Capacity to be realised by better alignment of services and/or additional use of technology to increase efficiency. More detailed proposals will be developed as part of the review process.

How would this affect users of this service?

To be determined, but unlikely to directly impact on external service users

Key milestones

TBC

Key consultations

TBC

Key risks and mitigations

These will be identified as part of the review process.

Equality impact screening

This section will be completed once more detailed proposals have been developed as part of the review.

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from staff intranet

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Sadie East, Operational Director, Transformation

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 CORP4
Service(s):	Cross department – procurement
Lead Member(s):	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	Procurement savings

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	N/A
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	N/A

	2023/24	**2024/25**
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	500	
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	Nil	

Proposed savings

All contracts on pipeline will come to the Commissioning and Procurement board to review contract specifications in order to deliver savings. This will be managed by the Commissioning and Procurement Board.

How would this affect users of this service?

To be determined, but unlikely to directly impact on external service users

Key milestones

TBC

Key consultations

TBC

Key risks and mitigations

These will be identified as part of the review process.

Equality impact screening

This section will be completed once more detailed proposals have been developed as part of the review.

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from staff intranet

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	Debra Norman, Corporate Director, Governance

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 CORP5
Service(s):	Cross department – CMT Review
Lead Member(s):	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform

Savings Proposals:	These savings result from the changes to the Council's officer structure and senior management posts agreed by Cabinet in June 2022.

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	N/A
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	N/A

	2023/24	**2024/25**
	£'000	£'000
Proposed saving:	200	
	FTE	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	1	

Proposed savings

These savings arise from the changes to the Council's structure agreed by Cabinet in June 2022 as part of the report *Officer Structure of the Council and Senior Management.* The changes deleted four Strategic Director posts and the posts of Assistant Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Director of Legal HR, Audit and Investigations. They were replaced by six Corporate Director posts who together with the Chief Executive form the Council's Management Team (CMT). This is a net reduction of 1 CMT post.

How would this affect users of this service?

There is no direct impact on external service users.

Key milestones

None – this restructure has already been completed

Key consultations

No further consultations are required.

Key risks and mitigations

None – this restructure has already been completed.

Equality impact screening

This section will be completed once more detailed proposals have been developed as part of the review.

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from staff intranet

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	N/A

Budget Options Information

Reference:	2023-24 CORP6
Service(s):	Corporate
Lead Member(s):	Cross Directorate

Savings Proposals:	Efficiency savings from the former Regeneration & Environment Directorate budgets

Financial and Staffing Information

2022/23	
Total budget for the service(s) £'000:	50,763 (full R&E service)
Total post numbers in the services(s) (FTE):	439.9

	2023/24
	£'000
Proposed saving:	1,300
	FTE
Proposed staffing reduction	0

Proposed savings

A review of budgets across the whole Directorate has been undertaken to take a top-slice of budgets. This has been in anticipation of the requirement to deliver savings in relation to the RLS programme contract awards in 2023.
As the savings has been delivered early, the budget has been taken corporately and included in overall package of savings for full transparency.

How would this affect users of this service?

This exercise was intended to remove funds that have been deemed to be surplus to the structural revenue requirement of the directorate and so their removal would have no adverse operational impact.

Key milestones

The budget review has been undertaken and saving identified.

Key consultations

Budget holders

Key risks and mitigations

None

Equality impact screening

Is there potential for the proposed saving to have a disproportionate adverse impact on any of the following groups? Please indicate Y/N below:	
Disabled people	N
Particular ethnic groups	N
Men or women	N
Particular sexual orientations	N
People who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N
Particular age groups	N
Groups with particular faiths/beliefs	N
Pregnancy/maternity	N
Marriage/civil partnership	N

If the screening has identified a potentially disproportionate adverse impact, you will need to complete an Equality Impact Assessment. Template and guidance available from staff intranet

EIA required?	No
EIA to be completed by:	N/A
Deadline:	N/A

Lead officer for this proposal:	N/A

Brent	**Cabinet** 14 November 2022
	Report from Corporate Director, Resident Services

Update on the supply of New Affordable Homes

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Part Exempt: Appendices 1,2, 3 & 4 contain exempt information as classified in Para 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely: "Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
No. of Appendices:	Five Appendix 1 (Exempt) Schemes in Contract Appendix 2 (Exempt) Outcome of testing the impact on viability of unit mix changes for schemes not yet in contract Appendix 3 (Exempt) Wembley Housing Zone Appendix 4 (Exempt) South Kilburn Regeneration Financial Summary Appendix 5 St Raphael's map
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Emily-Rae Baines Head of Affordable Housing and Neighbourhoods 020 8937 1131 Emily-Rae.Maxwell@brent.gov.uk Emma Sweeney Head of Estates Regeneration 020 8937 1650 Emma.Sweeny@brent.gov.uk Jonathan Kay Head of Regeneration 020 8937 2348 Jonathan.Kay@brent.gov.uk

	Hakeem Osinaike Director of Housing 020 8937 2023 hakeem.osinaike@brent.gov.uk

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the New Council Homes Programme (NCHP) and outline current pressures on schemes, both in contract and in the pipeline. This report specifically outlines viability gaps across 10 schemes, which are not yet in contract and sets out options for cross subsidisation where possible for the Council's consideration.

1.2. It also includes an overview of the three major projects being led by the Council, South Kilburn, Wembley Housing Zone and St Raphael's Estate:

- For South Kilburn, this report shows how current market pressures may impact regeneration and presents an alternative option, which the Council could utilise in order to mitigate schemes that become unaffordable;
- For Wembley Housing Zone developer procurement, the budget for which was agreed by Cabinet August 2021, and for which bids are due in October 2022; and
- For St Raphael's, consideration of the current financial viability of phase one.

1.3. Throughout this report, the options presented for consideration take into account the growing pressure on the Council to meet increasing demand on the housing needs service and the implications of this on the Council's ability to fulfil its statutory duties but also the financial pressure created as a result.

2. Recommendations

2.1. That Cabinet note the content of the report and agree the following:

- Officers to convert schemes to include alternative tenures, either shared ownership or open market sale, with a view to making schemes viable and prioritise delivery of larger homes;

- Officers to utilise conversion in larger schemes to address financial pressures on schemes currently in contract;

- Officers to utilise conversion in larger schemes in order to address viability gaps for schemes not yet in contract but would provide much needed larger family sized accommodation.

2.2. That Cabinet note the update provided for the Wembley Housing Zone.

2.3. That Cabinet note the update provided for St Raphael's estate.

2.4. That Cabinet approve all new planning permission applications submitted as part of the New Council Homes Programme (NCHP) going forward commit to 50% affordable housing with a view to delivering above this wherever possible.

2.5. That Cabinet approve a capital budget allocation of £44m (including 10% contingency) for the development at Edgware Road.

2.6. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Resident Services, in consultation with the Corporate Director for Finance & Resources and Lead Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renter Security, to agree pre-tender considerations, invite tenders, evaluate tenders and thereafter to award development/construction contracts with developers/contractors for Edgware Road to the value of £40m + 10%.

2.7. That Cabinet approve the use of Modern Methods of Construction for a minimum of 25% of all homes built under the second Homes for Londoners Programme as required by the GLA.

2.8. That Cabinet agree to commission a report into shared ownership demand in Brent and examples of best practice in order to influence a new 'Brent shared ownership offer'.

2.9. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Resident Services, to make an application to seek Secretary of State's consent under section 19 of the Housing Act 1985 to appropriate any part of St Raphael's Estate necessary to progress the development for planning purposes so that part of the Estate is no longer held for the purpose of Part II of the Housing Act 1985 as set out in Appendix 5.

2.10. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Resident Services in Consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security to consider the impact of the Public Sector Equalities Duty implications and to ensure compliance with that duty and to consult with those affected by the appropriation of areas within St Raphael's Estate and to consider the responses of the consultation and thereafter and where appropriate to appropriate the relevant parts of the St Raphael's Estate for planning purposes in order to facilitate the development pursuant to section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 as set out in Appendix 5.

2.11. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Resident Services in consultation with the Lead Member Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security to appropriate part of the open space at St Raphael's Estate s necessary to progress the development pursuant section 122 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 and prior to doing so to advertise for two consecutive weeks in a newspaper circulating in the area in which the land is situated and consider any objections to the proposed appropriation which may be made to them.

2.12. To approve the reduction of the affordable homes to be built at Neville and Winterleys on behalf of the Council from 101 units to 95 units in line with the

proposal set out in section 6.5 to 6.7 of this report. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director, Resident Services, any further changes up to a 5% tolerance.

3. Context

3.1. The Council set out its ambition to play a leading role in tackling the housing crisis by building social housing and taking a more active role in shaping developments to genuinely meet the housing need of Brent residents.

3.2. This approach has proved successful in that the borough is seeing more family sized accommodation being developed. However, the impact of Covid-19 and now the cost of living crisis has resulted in a continued increase of demand on the housing needs service. The Housing Needs service has seen a 22% increase from families and single people who are either threatened with homelessness or homeless approaching the Council. The ability to secure suitable accommodation for these residents is a legislative requirement the Council must fulfil.

3.3. One particular cohort, which is becoming a greater risk is those households who require an adapted property. As reported in September 2022, there were roughly 68 households needing an adapted property and these types of homes are in short supply in both the social and the private rented sector. It should be noted that the risk of not being able to fulfil the duty of providing suitable accommodation to those persons whom the Council has accepted a duty to provide temporary accommodation could involve having to defend judicial review proceedings in which the Court can order the Council to find and provide a suitable property as required under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 within a set period of time (e.g. 3 months) and the consequences of not doing so could result in having to pay a significant sum in damages and reputational damage.

3.4. Another risk could involve an investigation and adverse findings from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, which involves a longer complaint process and could also result in reputational damage and the payment of compensation.

3.5. Due to the demand on the Housing Register, typically any homeless household that approaches and is accepted as eligible, homeless and in priority need would be provided with Temporary Accommodation (stage 1) and then if the main duty is accepted they would be offered Temporary Accommodation (stage 2) or made an offer in the private rented sector.

3.6. There are significant changes occurring in the housing market that are reducing both the supply of social homes for rent and affordable rented homes within the Private Rented Sector (PRS) (rent levels set at the Local Housing Allowance levels). For social housing providers, many are reporting having to rationalise their development programmes in order to meet new building safety legislation and net zero carbon targets. One large Housing Association that operates in Brent confirmed their organisation has realigned its business plan to refocus on bringing existing homes up to standard rather than building new homes. This is

a positive step for Brent residents already living in social housing but does mean the potential for new supply coming through is reduced.

3.7. For the PRS, landlords having experienced the risks of renting first hand throughout the pandemic, coupled with rising mortgage rates including those with buy to let mortgages and growing pressures for standards within the rented sector means landlords are now exiting the market. The lack of availability does then pose the risk of households competing to rent a property and therefore bidding wars and price increases could follow making this accommodation even less accessible for those on a limited income.

4. New Council Homes Programme (NCHP) progress update

4.1. The Council has a current target to develop 1,000 new council homes by 2024. To date, the Council has developed and let 684 new Council homes to Brent households and there are a further 639 homes being built on site, all of which are currently on track to be completed before 2024, meaning the Council will exceed its target. Due to the success of the New Council Homes Programme (NCHP) and the evident need for affordable housing in Brent, the Council committed to delivering an additional target of 700 homes by 2028 and was awarded a further £111m in grant funding from the Greater London Authority (GLA) to deliver these homes.

4.2. Whilst the Council is confident in its ability to continue delivering affordable homes for Brent residents, there are social and economic factors, which are increasingly placing pressure on both current schemes that are on site and those in the Council's pipeline. Rising inflation, a continued shortage of labour and materials and events such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine have had an adverse effect on costs and therefore the financial viability of each scheme. The Government reported an increase of 23% on materials such as steel, timber and concrete last year alone. It should be noted that in 2019/20, the Council was using a build cost of circa £2000 - £2500 per sqm to test financial viability. For 2022/23, the Council is now using a build cost of £3000 - £3500 per sqm to test viability of schemes in the NCHP.

4.3. For schemes that are currently in contract and being delivered, the Council is already seeing contractors seeking to re-negotiate due to the cost of materials with the Federation of Master Builders reporting 74% of builders feeling pressure to pass increased costs onto the consumer and generally increasing their prices.

4.4. For those not yet in contract, the Building Cost Information Service is currently reporting an increase of 6.5% in the Tender Price Index. From a procurement perspective, this risk could be somewhat offset by using a single stage tender. This is where the Council issues a tender for a whole scheme with all relevant information fixed and is intended to secure a competitive build price. The market however is overwhelmingly favouring a two stage tender process, which means for the Council the full details of the project are finalised in collaboration with the contractor using a Pre-Construction Services Agreement and then price is agreed prior to formal entry into the construction contract. The two-stage

process is currently being favoured as contractors have less certainty of costs and where costs are agreed, they are unable to hold these prices for extended periods of time.

4.5. Each of these challenges is a risk and places pressure on the NCHP. There are however actions the Council can take to protect the ability to continue delivering much needed affordable homes.

4.6. Previously, when a scheme was appraised to determine whether it was financially viable or not, the Council would model it against a 60 years pay back and if the pay back was positive it would be considered financially viable. In June 2022, the Council reduced this payback period to 55 years to mitigate against the expected cost variations as a result of the two-stage tender process and rising costs during the project build.

4.7. This change in payback period however will not resolve schemes not yet in contract that are showing a deficit. This means the Council must now consider cross subsidising the much needed social housing by converting some homes to other tenures including shared ownership (SO), open market sale (OMS) or rents at Local Housing Allowance via the Council's wholly owned subsidiary company i4B. Appendix 2 provides further details on the scale of conversion required and what this would mean for the number of homes delivered under the NCHP. Members already agreed this methodology for Watling Gardens. Watling Gardens now includes 24 SO homes which ultimately protected the Council's ability to continue delivering 45 homes for Extra Care, 56 homes at London Affordable Rent (12 of which are actually set at social rents for returning residents).

Schemes in contract

4.8. An initial assessment of the most recent project costs of schemes currently in contract was carried out as part of this reports full review of the NCHP. This assessment found an initial gap of £22.7m as shown in Appendix 1. There are social and economic factors that are placing financial pressures on our mixed development schemes such as the Learie Constantine Centre, Preston Community Library and Brent Indian Community Centre redevelopments. Rising inflation, a continued shortage of labour, the Covid-19 pandemic and war in Ukraine have had an adverse effect on construction costs. Energy intensive materials have been severely impacted by recent energy price rises, with steel, cement, bricks and glass particularly affected. All of these factors have contributed to increased projects costs whereby the housing provision can no longer cross subsidise the delivery of the new community facility provision(s). Therefore a further review has been carried out and £10m of Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL) has been identified for schemes that are eligible. Subject to Cabinet approval, this means there is now a reduced gap of £12.7m for schemes currently in contract

4.9. Once the Council has been through procurement for a new build scheme, it is expected that costs should remain in keeping with the price submitted at the point of tender. Any cost increases are a direct result of post-contract variations,

some of which are standard practice. An example of this is additional requirements for adapted homes, which could not possibly be identified at the point of specification due to each household having bespoke needs. Another example of a reasonable variation is unforeseen complexities with a site such as contaminated ground conditions and/or unexploded objects, which means additional unplanned work is required to deliver the specification. Unreasonable variations are factors that could have been avoided such as the specifications being incorrect or needing to change or the contractor not pricing the job correctly. The Council does have controls in place to avoid these types of variations, such as experts who assess tender prices to identify any concerns such abnormally low pricing.

4.10. Due to the volatile market, labour and material shortages, supply chains are struggling to hold their prices for long after the tender period. This is largely what has contributed to the £12.7m viability gap. This can be somewhat mitigated going forward by strengthening the tender documents and subsequent contracts to include fluctuation clauses where reasonable and expediting contract negotiations so that contracts are signed quickly and therefore prices locked in.

4.11. There are however concerns that even after build costs being locked once the contract is signed, prices can and are continuing to rise. This is specifically for materials such as timber, concrete and steel. If these costs increases result in the contractor being at a loss, they will approach the Council to re-negotiate and if a compromise is not achieved, it could result in the contractor withdrawing from that scheme.

4.12. For all NCHP projects on site, the Council has appointed an Employers Agent (EA) and a Quantity Surveyor (QS) to administer the build contract and ensure that any variations to the original form of contract (including time and cost implications) are approved by Brent prior to any formal instruction. Furthermore, it should be noted that all contractor invoices are validated by the EA/QS prior to payment to ensure accuracy with on-site delivery programme and this helps reduce any disagreements when settling the final account with each appointed contractor.

4.13. Tier 1 contractors (e.g. Wates, Kier, Hills Partnership, United Living, Willmott Dixon) deployed on schemes such as Stonebridge, Honeypot Lane and Preston Community Library have been instructed to pre-order large quantities of key material such as steel, timber, windows, glass at the earliest opportunity and store them on site/at their depots. This bulk purchase approach helps avoid time delays for getting material to site and allows contractors to avoid constant cost inflation.

4.14. The contractor appointments for the Learie Constantine Centre, Brent Indian Community Centre and Preston Community Library have been undertaken via the NEC3 Fixed Price Form of Contract. This allows Brent to enter into a fixed price contract for construction and variations must be administered via the Early Warning Notice (EWN) especially when dealing with any risk that could have an impact on the time, cost and quality of a project.

4.15. All other on-site projects have been procured using the JCT Design & Build Contract. In order to address any contract variations that could be attributed to Covid/Brexit, the Council has agreed a standard clause amendment that allows time extensions for the contractor without any further cost liability on the Council. To further protect the Council, a review of the JCT Design and Build Contract will be carried out to ensure they are fit for purpose given the increase of inflation and energy costs.

4.16. Section 4.17 onwards outlines current schemes in the pipeline and the opportunity to convert homes from London Affordable Rent to alternative tenures such as shared ownership. It is proposed to meet this £12.7m gap, that the Council maximise conversion on larger schemes in the NCHP pipeline to not only meet the viability gap of the individual scheme but also the gaps created by schemes currently in contract.

Schemes not yet in contract

4.17. Ten of the schemes within the NCHP are not yet in contract. The Council has already applied a 10% contingency to each of the schemes estimated build costs in order to mitigate against inflationary rises when assessing their viability. All ten of these schemes are unviable in their current form.

4.18. To better understand the Council's options, officers have reviewed all 10 of these schemes to explore possible options for making schemes viable. This in real terms means the conversion of some social rented homes to shared ownership or other tenures in order to cross subsidise the scheme.

4.19. Appendix 2 sets out a summary table of this assessment and overall, there are four schemes which allow for conversion of some homes (50% or under in keeping with planning requirements) and result in a positive net present value which mean they are financially viable. These schemes are:

- Kilburn Square
- Windmill Court
- Seymour Court
- Rokesby Place

4.20. Across these four schemes, there were 204 affordable homes due for delivery either at Social Rent or London Affordable Rent. This conversion would see this number reduce to 145 homes for London Affordable Rent and 59 homes for Shared Ownership.

4.21. For Kilburn Square and Windmill Court, the inclusion of either SO or OMS would work well with both schemes having excellent transport links and part of a larger development. These homes would be solely contained to 1 and 2 bedroom properties.

4.22. Seymour Court is a much minor scheme totalling five homes. It's make up includes; 2 x 2 bedroom, 2 x 3 bedroom and 1 x bedroom homes. In order to protect the much needed family homes, the 2 bedroom properties would be

converted to SO. For Seymour Court, the conversion of the 1 x 1 bedroom and 1 x 2 bedroom property did not lead to a viable scheme which is why both proposed properties for conversion were included in this test.

4.23. For Rokesby place however, though viable if one property is converted, as a scheme it is just 2 x 4 bedroom homes meaning the Council would need to convert one to gain one. Additionally, shared ownership at 4 bedroom home price would likely not be a price someone seeking an affordable home ownership product could pay. If this scheme was to go ahead therefore, the Council would be better considering other options such as OMS or whether it could be made viable through i4B, as they are able to charge a higher rent. Large family sized homes at low rent, remain a priority for the Council, as other social landlords are very unlikely to consider building them and we continue to have much need for them.

4.24. There are three schemes that the conversion option does not work for, these are:

- Edgware Road
- Morland Gardens
- Lidding Road

4.25. Edgware Road is a Temporary Accommodation scheme and therefore already set at higher rent rates i.e. Local Housing Allowance. Due to the type of accommodation and the use of the building, options such as shared ownership are also not practical. Currently the scheme (as shown in Appendix 2) is showing a deficit, this is inclusive of the 10% contingency. Whilst there is a deficit, there is still an argument for the Council to consider plugging the gap as there will be financial implications elsewhere by not building the additional 110 temporary accommodation homes. The Housing Needs service in September 2022 reported on increased pressure from residents experiencing homelessness. Due to increased demand and lack of supply in the private rented sector, the Council's state of the art temporary accommodation buildings Knowles and Anansi House are full and residents are not moving on as intended meaning the Council is becoming increasingly reliant once again on bed and breakfast hotels to provide emergency accommodation. Bed and Breakfast hotels meet the immediate need for a roof over a residents head, but in terms of quality of life, extended stays in this type of accommodation only exacerbate the poor living circumstances and often push residents into further poverty due to the lack of cooking facilities meaning their day to day cost of living is still high. The Housing Needs service currently has a significant reserve fund, bearing in mind the increasing costs of providing temporary accommodation, it might be prudent to use some of the reserve fund to plug this gap. The current financial appraisal shows that the Council requires circa £40m to build out the Edgware Road Temporary Accommodation scheme. As with all schemes now in the pipeline the Council is also adding 10% to these costs as a contingency.

4.26. Similarly for Morland Gardens, the conversion of 32 of the 65 homes to SO results in a deficit. Based on property values, alternative options such as OMS may not reduce the viability gap as property prices in this location are similar to the build cost meaning the Council would be better off purchasing properties in

this particular area than building them. This scheme was originally conceived as a mixed development to provide a new teaching and learning facility for Brent Start, affordable housing, a community café and affordable workspace to support students in their learning and subsequent business opportunities. It should also be noted that this particular scheme, though technically not in contract, is in a Pre-Construction Service Agreement (PCSA). The Council will need to consider opportunities to value engineer the scheme during the PCSA process. This potentially could remove certain provisions such as the community café or affordable workspace and increase the amount of housing, subject to planning consent. Officers will continue to monitor the viability of the scheme and update Members during the PCSA process.

4.27. For Lidding Road, this is a minor development scheme of 8 homes consisting of 1 x 1 bedroom, 2 x 2 bedroom and 5 x 3 bedroom homes. In the conversion test, four properties were converted to SO, the 1 x 1 bedroom, 2 x 2 bedroom and 1 x 3 bedroom property. As highlighted in Appendix 2, the results showed a scheme deficit. For Lidding Road, the Council could cross subsidise through a larger scheme that is viable e.g. Windmill Court, which still has a further 14 x 1 bedroom properties even after conversion in order for the Council to maximise the number of 3 bedroom family homes in the programme.

4.28. The final three schemes presented in Appendix 2 are one off homes to be built on existing estates, these are:

- Townsend Lane
- Sutherland Court
- Minterne Road

4.29. Townsend Lane and Minterne Road are 1 x 4 bedroom home schemes and Sutherland Court is a 1 x 3 bedroom home scheme. These schemes are at an early stage of the process and currently show a deficit. Whilst this is a financial pressure on the programme, there is an argument to be considered that these properties could be designed and adapted to meet the needs of a specific household that would otherwise not be available on the open market. Therefore saving money on the cost of providing temporary accommodation and/or additional care packages for these households.

4.30. As demonstrated, the majority of schemes outlined above can become viable through a conversion of homes to an alternative tenure such as shared ownership and those that do not achieve viability; there is a need to proceed as not delivering schemes such as the Edgware Road Temporary Accommodation scheme will lead to even greater costs elsewhere in the Council. Any changes to schemes in the pipeline, particularly those with planning permission will require a variation to the planning permission to enable conversion of tenure to take place. Whilst the Council will continue to maximise the amount of affordable housing it directly delivers through the NCHP, going forward, it is recommended that all schemes are submitted in-keeping with the policy compliant requirements i.e. 50% affordable housing, 50% other tenures. This would allow the Council to utilise all tenures including OMR (subject to legal constraints) and OMS to achieve the greatest return across the NCHP. Where

it is achievable to do so, the Council will deliver above 50% as the priority remains to deliver affordable homes for Brent residents.

Alternative routes for delivering New Council Homes

4.31. As building costs begin to rise, the Council is actively pursuing the acquisition of section 106 (s.106) packages and where possible, negotiating with developers to increase the number of affordable homes. There are number of opportunities currently in the pipeline and these opportunities can provide the Council better value for money that direct development. This is however dependent on the scheme meeting the housing need and the cost of purchase.

4.32. Where viable and suitable, it is recommended the Council includes acquisition of s.106 packages as a more prominent source of new Council homes as this will reduce the risk of increasing build costs on the Council. Additionally, as 4.33 outlines Registered Providers' are reviewing their own development programmes meaning there will be less competition in the market for s.106 packages.

4.33. As part of the £111M grant, the GLA requires that 25% of the 701 homes to be delivered must be through Modern Methods of Construction (MMC). The main benefit of MMC is that homes can be built in a matter of weeks as opposed to years meaning residents who need homes are housed significantly more quickly. Financially, this means the Council is able to collect rent on these homes much earlier than if the development was built through traditional methods. It is also argued that MMC delivers greater consistency in both quality and compliance as the homes are constructed offsite in a factory controlled setting minimising any room for error. The final key benefit of MMC is the level of sustainability achieved, with many MMC homes there is little waste as the requirements for each element are pre-calculated and developed using precision engineering. It is recommended that MMC be utilised for both small and large infill schemes as it minimises disruption experienced by existing residents.

Delivery against Brent's targets

4.34. As stated in section 4.1, the Council has already built and let 684 homes and there are a further 639 homes already on site being developed. This means the Council is already on track to deliver 1323 homes by 2024. Appendix 2 focuses on the confirmed pipeline totalling 392 homes and based on commentary provided from section 4.17, the overall number of homes for rent that could be delivered would reduce to 333 new Council homes.

4.35. This report focuses on 10 sites not yet in contract as they are fully designed schemes and give a great understanding of what conversion would mean. There is a larger pipeline of sites on the Council's programme at various stages and this number at present totals 2,316 homes. Based on the success to date and the extensive pipeline, the Council's overall target to directly deliver 1,700 homes for affordable rent is possible. Once the Council has a committed position on the use of other tenures to cross subsidise schemes, then it is

recommended that the programme as a whole is reviewed and those schemes that work best when converting some homes should be prioritised for delivery first (subject to grant conditions from the GLA).

4.36. Registered Providers (RPs) continue to play a significant role in the delivery of new affordable homes in the Borough. The table shows the new homes that are anticipated to be delivered over the next two financial years from RPs funded by the GLA.

Table one: Registered Providers number of homes expected to be delivered in Brent.

Developer	**Financial Year 22/23**	**Financial Year 23/24**
Arneway	0	6
Clarion	226	0
Home Group	0	121
L&Q	176	0
MP Living	0	13
Network	156	158
Octavia	125	0
OPDC	52	0
PA Housing	40	0
Quintain	0	66
Sapphire Housing	0	19
Total	**775**	**383**

4.37. Whilst these homes are onsite and likely to be delivered, through the Council's relationships with Registered Providers (RPs), as previously mentioned, it is apparent many are reviewing their future development programmes and prioritising investment in existing stock as well as seeking to navigate the challenges affecting the NCHP. It should also be noted that these homes are a mix of affordable rent and home ownership.

4.38. It should therefore be noted that if the Council does agree to include alternative tenures such as SO, then these homes would still contribute to the overall target of 5,000 affordable homes in Brent by 2028.

4.39. Where Brent has proved successful in shaping the supply of homes for affordable rent offer to meet genuine need, this can be replicated for shared ownership. The Affordable Housing and Partnerships service has played an integral role in developing a clear evidence base that captures current and future demand and the types of affordable housing to meet need. It is therefore recommended that the Council also commission a report specifically looking at the demand and interest in shared ownership inclusive of best practice in the sector in order to ensure this is a product of both interest and benefit to Brent residents.

5. Wembley Housing Zone: Cecil Avenue and Ujima House

5.1. Following Cabinet resolution in August 2021, officers have advanced competitive procurement of a delivery partner for the Wembley Housing Zone (WHZ). The vision and opportunity is to regenerate the eastern stretch of Wembley High Road. High quality housing-led development, commercial and community uses, and an improved public realm, will link the established Wembley Central town centre with the new Wembley Park.

5.2. Procurement is currently ongoing and an update for Cabinet is provided at (Exempt) Appendix 3 – Wembley Housing Zone.

6. Regeneration of South Kilburn

6.1. The South Kilburn regeneration programme is approximately 50% complete and will deliver over 2,400 new high quality homes, of which will be 50% affordable homes. The programme aims to transform the area into a sustainable and thriving neighbourhood creating a real sense of place and belonging.

6.2. Ten blocks have already been delivered or are on site, and seven sites remain to be developed, including the provision of a new primary school building, enhanced public realm and open spaces.

6.3. In August 2020, Cabinet agreed that Brent Housing Management were to be the preferred provider of social housing in future South Kilburn developments rather than the current contractual arrangement, whereby developers partner with a Registered Provider for the management of the affordable homes.

6.4. If the Council is to be affordable housing provider in future schemes, there are cost implications, as the Council has to pay for the construction of the affordable homes. And enter into a development agreement in relation to the construction or alternatively enter into an agreement for sale and purchase of the built homes. Some assumptions have been set out below to illustrate what these costs are likely to be with an inflation scenario that increases the price by 10%. See Appendix 4 (exempt) and please note costs have been based on a blended unit price of £186,463.88, recently used at Neville and Winterleys.

6.5. A report was taken to Cabinet on the 11th April 2022 where Cabinet approved the acquisition of 101 affordable homes at 1 – 8 Neville House, 1 – 64 Winterleys, 113 - 128 Carlton House and Carlton Hall (“NWCC”). The entire development is delivered under the terms of a Development Agreement (DA). The mechanism under which the council will purchase the affordable homes is the Affordable Homes Sales Agreement, this is appended to the DA.

6.6. Since the recent acquisition of 235 units at Unity Place by the Council, the vast majority of residents who needed a 1 bedroom property have been rehoused. This means those who remain in South Kilburn and require decanting need family sized homes.

6.7. The forthcoming NWCC scheme creates an opportunity for the Council to increase the number of larger homes by reducing the number of 1 bedroom properties within the scheme. Since Cabinet decision on 11th April 2022 this has been further refined and is outlined in the table below:

	Original consent	Current scheme	Proposed scheme updated
1B2P	52	30 (-22)	18 (-34)
2B4P	38	38 (0)	37 (-1)
3B6P	20	24 (+4)	31 (+11)
4B6P	2	9 (+7)	9 (+7)
Total	112	101	95

6.8. Procurement present 2 options which allow a Developer to partner with:
a) Brent Housing Management to be the registered provider, or
b) A Housing Association.

6.9. Option b would be at zero cost to the Council and will not jeopardise any promises made to residents regarding housing delivery. It should be noted however, once handed over management of South Kilburn becomes increasingly difficult with more providers, specifically management of the public realm and so such a decision would not assist in resolving ongoing issues between housing providers.

6.10. Ability to purchase the affordable schemes/pay for the construction of the units (at the Developers risk) in South Kilburn, presents an opportunity for the Council. Based on the current blended rate (as stated in 6.4 above), it also presents an opportunity to deliver these homes at a lower cost compared to other models of delivery.

6.11. Based on the relatively lower cost and the opportunity to reduce housing providers on the estate, to mitigate the issues identified in 6.9 above, it is proposed that the Council continues to be the preferred social housing provider on the estate.

6.12. One way of mitigating the programme management and financial challenges to future developments is to move from the current model of procuring different developers for each site, to a single delivery model. This is also based on recent experience of it being more challenging to attract delivery partners and when they have been appointed, there has often been a requirement, (based on their sales expertise) to amend schemes via revised planning consents, which adds to delivery timescales. Viability is becoming more challenging due to a combination of market uncertainty, absence of GLA grant and inflationary linked cost pressures.

6.13. These factors, along with looking for efficiencies across the programme, has led officers to conclude that there are financial risks to the ability of the programme to ‘pay for itself’ and the current procurement approach is a factor in this. As a result, the procurement of a single developer partner for the

remaining phases is being considered. A high level view from Deloittes and early soft market testing has concluded that the single delivery partner model provides a suitable option for delivering the outstanding phases of activity. Authority to proceed with procuring a single delivery partner is being progressed.

7. St Raphael's Estate

7.1. The infill masterplan consists of clusters of new homes in the north and south of the estate, facing the river, along the western edge of the existing homes, in addition to homes in underused pockets of land within the estate. The total scheme (phases 1.2 & 3) is designed to deliver 370 new homes; 334 flats and 36 houses but the detail is subject to change as the phased design is developed.

7.2. Initial build costs estimates for phase 1 and the community centre have been provided by Bailey Garner (Cost Consultants and employers agents for the scheme) and are reported at circa £100M. This is a viability gap of £60m for phase one alone and whilst rationalising the design and the scheme could reduce this cost somewhat, it is the groundworks and foundations required to make the phase 1 site fit for development that creates the biggest pressure. These costs are not fully confirmed and only when actual tenders are issued and contractors respond would the Council know the full extent of the cost to deliver this scheme.

7.3. The Council has committed £30m to the improvement of the existing St Raphael's estate and delivering these improvements as quickly as possible is a priority. The delivery of these works are intertwined however with the ability for the Council to deliver new Council homes also.

7.4. If the Council were to proceed in getting planning permission for the estate improvement works independently and deliver these works whilst the market remains volatile, planning permission for the homes is then compromised. This is because the homes result in a loss of open space and if delivered post the estate improvement works under a separate planning application, the Council would still be required to compensate the community for that loss of space, over and above the estate improvement works.

7.5. Another challenge facing the St Raphael's estate is the potential use of alternative tenures such as OMS. Whilst OMS would assist in further reducing the viability gap on the estate, the loss of open space is currently justified as the scheme delivers 100% affordable housing. Conversion within the St Raphael's scheme could potentially compromise planning permission.

7.6. It is therefore recommended that the Council pause the infill programme for St Raphael's and review the options for phase 1, 2 and 3, in the new financial year.

7.7. In the meantime, the Council can utilise the time to finalise designs for the estate improvement works with residents and separate works into three clear categories:

- Works that can be delivered independently of any homes being developed that will not compromise future planning applications;

- The community centre and any surrounding works;

- Any remaining works that are linked to the delivery of new Council homes on the estate.

7.8. For the first two, it is recommended the Council proceeds with planning permission and procure necessary contractors to deliver these works and the community centre.

7.9. For the third category, the Council is reviewing the overall plan for the delivery of new homes and whether sub-phases can be created that are financially viable. The Council is also carrying out a high-level review of designs to identify any features that can be amended to reduce costs. As mentioned, the greatest costs are associated with the groundworks and foundations required for the phase one scheme. The appointed architects for phase 1 Karakusevic have indicated this is likely to be a challenge for phase 2 & 3 also.

7.10. Additionally, though a scheme which is not 100% affordable may not be considered appropriate for the loss of space it is recommended if the Council proceeds with submitting planning permission, this is submitted at 50% affordable housing to allow for future flexibility and assist with closing the viability gap. Again, the priority will be to deliver the highest possible amount of affordable housing. Accordingly, 2.9 and 2.10 of the recommendations delegates authority to the Corporate Director, Resident Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security to appropriate the parts of the open space required for this development and to develop other areas of St Raphael's Estate as set out in Appendix 5.

8. Legal Implications

8.1. Various measures are being taken by Officers to mitigate programme risks to ensure prudent financial management of council resources. The various options to improve scheme viability proposed in this report will all require detailed consideration to ensure that such measures can be implemented legally in respect of individual schemes. For example, where land is held within the Housing Revenue Account, whether the Council is able to provide shared ownership homes may require the Secretary of States Consent pursuant to section 32 of the Housing Act 1985, although the Secretary of State has provided in the General Housing Consent 2013 the ability to grant shared ownership homes without the need to obtain direct consent.

8.2. The General Consent 2013 provides in A3.1.1 of the consent that a local authority may, dispose of land for a consideration equal to its market value. The General consent provides a definition of disposal which includes shared ownership leases and the grant of a lease for any duration.

8.3. Sale of a shared ownership unit, a freehold interest or leasehold interest should be at market value. The General Housing Consent 2013 defines market value as the amount for which a property would realise on the date of the valuation on a disposal between a willing buyer and a willing seller in an arm's-length transaction after proper marketing where the parties had each acted knowledgeably, prudently, and without compulsion and where the market value is assessed not earlier than 3 months before the buyer applies or agrees to an offer in writing.

8.4. Where the Council wishes to charge a market rent the Council is seeking further legal advice. This is due to OMR at present deviates from the Council's allocations scheme, which dictates the types of tenures we can allocate homeless households too.

8.5. Also, the proposal regarding partnership working with development/construction companies to provide cross subsidies and more competitive build costs is likely to require the competitive procurement of a partner although whether such procurement is subject to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 will be dependent on the exact nature of the arrangements.

8.6. Significant grant funding has been secured from the GLA. The Council has entered into grant agreements with the GLA governing the award of such funding to include the requirement to deliver specified numbers of new homes. Failure to observe grant conditions or achieve specified delivery numbers may lead to a requirement to repay grant funding and therefore efficient and timely delivery approaches are essential to mitigate the risk.

8.7. Development of sites detailed in this report, requires the Council to enter into a range of construction contracts and development agreements, many of which are classed as High Value Contracts under the Council's Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Cabinet approval is required to procure and award contracts with a value over £10,000,000 For development or construction contracts with an estimated value of less than £10,000,000 Lead Member or Corporate Director/Operational Director approval is required. In these cases, Members will receive information via the six-monthly update and therefore will be updated as to what measures are being taken to progress schemes.

8.8. The Council's statutory duties relating to homelessness are set out in Part VII of the Housing Act 1996. When providing temporary accommodation to homeless applicants, whether it is on an interim basis under section 188(1) & (3) of the Housing Act 1996 pending further enquiries or any reviews or on a more medium term basis where the Council has accepted a duty to provide temporary accommodation and discharges that duty under section 193 of the Housing Act 1996, the Council has to provide suitable temporary accommodation, which can be challenging when housing families with disabilities who require alternative accommodation involving adapted properties.

8.9. In relation to the development of open space, Section 122 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that prior to the appropriation of any land consisting or forming part of an open space, the Council must advertise its intention to appropriate the open space and must consider any representations or objections made by the public in response to the advert. Accordingly, the Council is required to advertise its intention to appropriate the open space for two consecutive weeks in a local newspaper circulating in the area in which the land is situated. Section 241 of the Town and Planning Act 1990 provides for the development of open space.

8.10. Following the advertisement of the Council's intention over two consecutive weeks, there must be a two week period for consultation during which the public may make and submit representations (objections) to the Council. After the two week consultation period, the Corporate Director, Resident Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for, will decide whether the appropriation of the open space should occur, having taken into consideration the representations made in response to the advertisement and consultation, together with consideration of matters set out in the paragraph below.

8.11. In considering whether or not the Council-owned land should be appropriated for planning purposes, thereafter engaging the powers conferred by Section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016, the Corporate Director, Resident Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for [ ] will consider:

- Whether the land which is to be appropriated is already owned by the Council (this is a prerequisite to appropriation);
- Whether the land which is to be appropriated is no longer required by the Council for the purposes it is currently held (this is a prerequisite to appropriation);
- Whether the purposes for which the Council would be appropriating the land is a purpose authorised by statute (in the case of land to be appropriated for planning purposes, the relevant purposes would be authorised by sections 226 and 227 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990);
- Whether the proposed redevelopment of St Raphael's Estate would be in the public interest;
- Whether the public interest benefits which would arise from the redevelopment of the site would be sufficient to justify the interference with any private rights, such that the interference was proportionate;
- Whether the Council could (in the alternative) acquire the land compulsorily for the purposes of the redevelopment;
- Whether any related financial liabilities of the Council would be indemnified; and
- Whether prior consultation had taken place (as outlined above).

8.12. St Rafael's Estate is currently held for Housing purposes pursuant to part II of the Housing Act 1985. According, prior to appropriating the sites the Council must seek the consent of the Secretary of State pursuant to section 19 of the Housing Act 1985, Appropriation of part of St Raphael's Estate for planning purposes would facilitate the carrying out of the development. There is a

compelling case in the public interest to appropriate St Raphael's Estate for planning purposes, as developing the Estate would serve the public interest by providing new and improved housing and accordingly, such development outweighs the effect of the appropriation on the private rights of individuals. In addition, the carrying out of the proposed development and improvement of the Estate will ultimately contribute to the promotion and improvement of the economic and social wellbeing of the Council's area – and these benefits could not be realised within a reasonable timescale (in the context of the GLA Deadlines) without interference with the private (third party) rights affected by the appropriation.

8.13. If a third party is able to establish that it has an easement or a right over the Estate or part thereof (such easements could include but not limited to a right of way or a Right of Light) then the third party could potentially obstruct the redevelopment of the Estate by applying for an injunction to prevent the delivery of the development. The effect of appropriation, and the resulting engagement of the powers in section 203 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016, is therefore to facilitate the re-development and improvement of the Estate despite interference with the existing third party rights over the site (subject to the payment of compensation as required by statute). It should be noted that third parties may be entitled to compensation for loss of their rights. Such compensation would be awarded for injurious affection (compensating for any depreciation in the value of the land or property arising from the interference with the right) rather than on a reinstatement or ransom basis.

8.14. Section 204 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 provides for compensation payable to third parties in respect of the diminution in value of the third party's land. A specialist valuer will need to be undertake assessment to confirm the amount of compensation payable in respect of such loss.

9. Financial Implications

9.1. The proposed change in subsidy to Shared Ownership, Open Market Rent and Open Market Sale include assumptions around the market values for the associated sites. A market assessment has been undertaken by officers however due diligence will take place to verify these assumptions as well as identifying future market trends given the multi-year nature of schemes.

9.2. The Council is exploring the appropriate mechanism to execute the subsidy options including Shared Ownership, Open Market Rent and Open Market Sale. This may include ownership and or management of some of the units by our wholly owned housing companies, which will be subject to a separate governance process.

9.3. Work is also ongoing to assess the impact of the previous cross-subsidy of the housing for the community spaces on the mixed development sites. Given the inflationary price increases, the housing element is not providing sufficient cross-subsidy so other funding sources including CIL are being reviewed to support the viability of the schemes.

10. Equality Implications

10.1. The Council must, in the making of decisions in exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, pursuant to s149 (1) Equality Act 2010. This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:
- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

10.2. The Public Sector Equality Duty 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.

10.3. The November 2018 Cabinet Paper on the St Raph's master planning included an Equalities Analysis (EA) which provided an assessment of the impact of the proposed masterplan on residents.

10.4. The judgement to date on the potential impact of the proposal on groups with each protected characteristic, both within and outside the red line master planning area, is based on the intention that housing, transport, environmental and community improvements, and development opportunities will on the whole have a positive impact, however until the options are developed this cannot be analysed. Equality monitoring information will be examined for those living in St Raph's Estate and the needs of groups will be considered throughout the development of the options.

10.5. Further reviews and updates will be carried out in tandem with the development of the masterplan options and the landlord offer. Detailed equality monitoring

information will be collected through the Housing Needs Assessment and via equalities monitoring at all public events to which all residents will be invited.

11. Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

11.1. This report has been written in consultation with key members of Cabinet, the Greater London Authority, and Contractors delivery for the NCHP and key officers across the Council.

11.2. Subject to Cabinet approval, the Affordable Housing and Partnerships service will brief ward members in full on any changes to schemes in their ward.

Report sign off:

Peter Gadsdon
Corporate Director, Resident Services

Report sign off:

Peter Gadsdon
Corporate Director, Resident Services

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Appendix 4 – St Raphael's Map

The following graphic shows where all infill homes are planned across the St Raphael's estate including where blocks will be built on existing open space.

The new infill blocks and houses are presented in dark grey.


Lovett Way
Hardie Close
St Raphael's Way
River Brent
Owen Way
Garden Way
Rainborough Close
Lilburne Walk
Pitfield Way
Mitchell Way
Tillett Close
North Circular Road

Brent	**Cabinet** 14 November 2022
	Report from Corporate Director, Resident Services

The future of St Raphael's Estate – 2022 Update

Wards Affected:	Stonebridge
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	Two Appendix A St Raphael's Estate Improvement spending proposal Appendix B St Raphael's Estate Graphic
Background Papers:	Cabinet Report – Future of St Raphael's Estate
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Emily-Rae Baines Head of Affordable Housing and Neighbourhoods 020 8937 1131 Emily-Rae.Maxwell@brent.gov.uk Hakeem Osinaike Director of Housing 020 8937 2023 hakeem.osinaike@brent.gov.uk

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1. In June 2022, officers outlined a guideline plan and estimated costs for transforming the St Raphael's Estate through the investment of £30 million. Since then the Council has refined these proposals and the purpose of this report is to formalise how the £30 million will be spent, so that existing residents living on the estate can realise their aspiration for St Raphael's to be a place residents feel safe, a place underpinned by a strong sense of community and place they can be proud to call home.

1.2. It should be noted that whilst the £30 million improvement works are part of the wider plans for the estate, specifically the delivery of new council homes, this

report solely focuses on the estate improvements. A further report will be presented on the delivery of new homes.

1.3. This report is supported by Appendix A – St Raphael's Estate Improvement spending proposal and Appendix B – St Raphael's Estate Graphic.

2. Recommendations

2.1. That Cabinet note and approve the £30m budget and spending proposal.

2.2. That Cabinet delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Resident Services in consultation with the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources and Lead Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security, to approve any procurement of services and spend to successfully deliver all improvements outlined in Appendix A, in accordance with the budgets set out in the proposal.

3. Delivery to date

3.1. Whilst work to finalise the plan for the £30 million has been ongoing, the Council has ensured that action on the St Raphael's Estate has continued. The Council recognises that for residents to volunteer their time and their voices to consultation and design plans, they need to see the tangible results delivered. Residents also need to feel the increased presence from the Council on the estate.

3.2. The Affordable Housing and Partnerships Service has established the twice weekly drop in sessions for residents and these sessions have been running successfully since June 2022. Brent Housing Management also re-located one of its experienced Housing Officers to the estate. The purpose of this re-location was to give residents a dedicated point of contact for concerns that they can rely on. Since being in the post, this Housing Officer has worked closely to resolve complex housing management cases including longstanding anti-social behaviour on the estate.

3.3. A number of events took place in July which assisted in shaping the proposals for the £30 million further. This included a tour for existing St Raphael's residents to visit examples of community centres and a follow up meeting dedicated to addressing community safety concerns. These two events are highlighted specifically, as the top two priorities for St Raphael's residents are and have consistently been, community facilities and resident safety.

3.4. The estate also saw the opening of the new temporary community building. This building is designed to self-generate electricity due to the exterior being solar panelling, with wider benefits being realised by the neighbouring foodbank who utilise the excess electricity meaning bills are subsidised. This design is particularly notable given the current cost of living crisis and rising energy bills. The Council is now working with residents to ensure the building is utilised to its full potential, this includes supporting them to establish effective governance and building management processes.

3.5. The Council has delivered on its promise to work with residents and police to identify crime hotspot areas and have now deployed a portable camera, which links back to the control centre. Additionally, warning notices have been placed across the estate in areas identified as fly tipping hotspots and weekend clearances of rubble on the estate have been carried out by BHM's caretaking service.

3.6. An agreement has also been reached regarding the meadow and the area this covers which balances the biodiversity benefits but also reduced the level of concern raised by residents it was creating opportunities for criminals to conceal contraband.

3.7. In terms of waste management, BHM is working with waste management consultants MetroSTOR who visited the estate and are in the process of finalising their recommendations for a new waste disposal model designed to be most effective for the St Raphael's estate. The aim is to reduce overflowing and or contaminated waste, increase recycling and reduce the number and types of bins across the estate to make it easier for residents to dispose of their waste. Once the proposal is complete a consultation will be held with residents and delivery of the new bin stores can take between 10-12 weeks. The intention is to deliver the new bin stores this financial year.

4. Community Priorities

4.1. Consultation on how the £30 million should be spent has been extensive and the insight from both the St Raphs Voice resident group and individuals attending the various events has resulted in a clear plan, which is already underway. Appendix A sets out the full plan for the £30 million and all of the commitments listed will be delivered no later than June 2025 (36 months). As promised the Council's internal working group compromising of officers from all service areas required to deliver this plan has been established and is meeting on a three weekly basis to accelerate delivery and monitor progress.

4.2. The overall purpose of the £30 million investment is ultimately to address the longstanding concerns of St Raphael's residents. These include; improving guardianship and feelings of ownership of the estate and security, reducing maintenance costs of their homes, improving parking, reducing rat running, improving connectivity to and through the park and the wider area and supporting travel for pedestrians and cyclists. The plan has been categorised into four key areas, connectivity, green spaces and play, infrastructure improvements and a new community hub. Highlights under each of these themes are summarised below:

Connectivity-

4.3. The Council will invest £3.9m into connecting the estate with surrounding areas by upgrading landscaping and pedestrian routes, making crossing points safer and improving key access points to and from the estate. The intended outcome of these improvements is to tackle residents' feelings of isolation and feeling

forgotten and create a place that feels more connected to surrounding local services such as schools, shops, health facilities.

Green Spaces and Play-

4.4. The proposed spending plan commits £7m to making outdoor spaces places everyone can enjoy by installing both play and gym equipment, outdoor furniture such as picnic tables and benches and increases the soft landscaping on the estate. Particularly following periods of national lockdown, residents expressed how much they value the green space and want these areas to make them more welcoming and enjoyable to use. The Council will also review the amenity land that borders so the land can be used as an extension of the SUFRA edible garden e.g. by planting fruit trees or bushes. Details will be developed in partnership with residents.

Infrastructure Improvements-

4.5. Concerns about the estate infrastructure and residents feeling unsafe has been raised at a number of resident meetings, including the community safety meeting which was held following a fatal stabbing on the estate in June 2022.

4.6. Residents and Police advised that lighting in some areas across the estate is poor and needs to be improved/enhanced to create a safer environment and to discourage anti-social behaviour. Feedback from female residents and young girls in particular is that they are fearful when moving around the estate at night. The safety of women and girls in the borough is a priority and so the spending proposal includes £2 million towards improving lighting across the estate.

4.7. An investment of £3.5 million towards pavement and road resurfacing, plus the introduction of traffic calming measures will seek to improve safety for pedestrians. This is particularly important to residents with young children and those whose mobility is restricted who feel the uneven surfaces limit their ability to move around the estate.

4.8. Building on the request to make the estate greener, the plan commits £1.5 million to estate wide cycle storage, something that will benefit residents, particularly those living in blocks of flats who have limited storage for bulky items like bicycles. It is expected the cycling is likely to increase when delivered in conjunction with the traffic calming measures and road resurfacing.

A New Community Hub

4.9. St Raphael's has a strong sense of community, and high on the list of priorities is a dedicated space for the community to come together. £4.4 million has been committed to deliver a new permanent community space, including community café, affordable workspace and rooms for community usage as well as other improvements to key locations within the estate such as the shops.

5. Legal Implications

5.1. Section 216 of the Planning Act 2008 provides the following: “CIL regulations must require the authority that charges CIL to apply it, or cause it to be applied, to supporting development by funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure

5.2. Section 216 defines infrastructure as comprising (a) roads and other transport facilities; (b) flood defences; (c) schools and other educational facilities; (d) medical facilities; (e) sporting and recreational facilities, and (f) open spaces.

5.3. Accordingly, the application of SCIL funding should be put towards infrastructure that comes within categories listed in (a)-(f) inclusive.

5.4. Section 209 of the Planning Act provides that “development” means — (a) anything done by way of or for the purpose of the creation of a new building, or (b) anything done to or in respect of an existing building.”

5.5. Therefore, it is necessary to show clearly how the infrastructure being funded with SCIL supports development as defined by section 209.

6. Financial Implications

6.1. The range of initiatives produced to improve connectivity, green spaces and play, infrastructure improvements and the new community hub are expected to support the existing and future residents at the estate and local area. The estate improvement works are expected to cost £30m with a detailed breakdown included in Appendix 1.

6.2. A 10% programme contingency has been included due to the current inflationary environment. The Council will utilise SCIL and other contributions from capital receipts and capital reserves to fund the programme of works (subject to development on the estate).

7. Equality Implications

7.1. The Council must, in the making of decisions in exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;

- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and

- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, pursuant to s149 (1) Equality Act 2010. This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty.

- Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

- encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

7.2. The Public Sector Equality Duty 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.

7.3. The November 2018 Cabinet Paper on the St Raph's master planning included an Equalities Analysis (EA) which provided an assessment of the impact of the proposed masterplan on residents. This EA has been reviewed and updated (see Appendix F).

7.4. The judgement to date on the potential impact of the proposal on groups with each protected characteristic, both within and outside the red line master planning area, is based on the intention that housing, transport, environmental and community improvements, and development opportunities will on the whole have a positive impact, however until the options are developed this cannot be analysed. Equality monitoring information will be examined for those living in St Raph's Estate and the needs of groups will be considered throughout the development of the options.

7.5. Further reviews and updates will be carried out in tandem with the development of the masterplan options and the landlord offer. Detailed equality monitoring information will be collected through the Housing Needs Assessment and via equalities monitoring at all public events to which all residents will be invited.

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8. Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

8.1. Ward Members and members of St Raph's Voice (Chair and Vice Chair) have been consulted on the recommendations in this report.

Report sign off:

Peter Gadsdon
Corporate Director, Resident Services

Appendix A

SUMMARY:

CONNECTIVITY	£3,944,250.00
GREEN SPACES & PLAY	£7,041,220.00
INFRASTRUCTURE	£11,748,740.00
NEW COMMUNITY HUB	£4,405,600.00
CONTINGENCY	£3,000,000
TOTAL	**£30,019,810.00**

CONNECTIVITY:

No.	Description	Total
1.	Additional Bus slip road	£810,000.00
2.	Improve landscape around existing bridge - mix of soft and hard landscape	£315,000.00
3.	Hard landscape improvements and planting. Ie Safe crossing point	£401,280.00
4.	Improve existing bridge. Make it wider to allow cycles and pedestrians	£230,520.00
	Improve area with a mix of soft and hard landscape	£329,940.00
5.	Improve pedestrian route to North Circular: 80% Hard surface 20% Soft landscape & SUDs	£630,000.00
	Improve crossing point with raised table - Hard landscape	£192,000.00
6.	Improve soft landscape adjacent	£151,200.00
7.	Hard landscape improvements. ie raised table/crossing point	£348,000.00
	Soft landscape Improvements	£41,310.00
8.	Improve adjacent area with a mix of soft and hard landscape	£495,000.00
		£3,944,250.00

GREEN SPACES & PLAY:

PARK STRATEGY		
No.	**Description**	**Total**
1.	General soft landscape improvements throughout the park, allow some for path re-surfacing. (The area excludes Phase1 and previously costed areas)	£3,150,000.00
	Benches	£66,000.00
	Picnic tables	£30,000.00
2.	New light structure open pavilion for outdoor sport	£150,000.00
3.	Informal play area	£88,500.00
4.	Improve existing MUGA and introduce outdoor gym space	£325,000.00
5.	Informal play area	£88,500.00
6.	New light structure open pavilion for outdoor sport	£572,620.00
7.	Informal play area	£88,500.00
8.	Refurbish existing pavilion	£529,600.00

ESTATE WIDE STRATEGY			
Scheme	**No.**	**Description**	**Total**
Residential Courtyards: Light touch improvements including:	1.	70% Soft landscape 10% SUDs 20% hard landscape - paths	£1,170,000.00
	2.	Seating Areas (3/plot)	£29,700.00
	3.	Small doorstep informal play areas (1/plot)	£90,000.00
Public Green: Public realm improvements including:	4.	Community Square - hard landscape	£156,000.00
	5.	Public realm in front of shops	£50,400.00
	6.	2 large play areas	£336,000.00
	7.	Soft landscape	£16,000.00
Allotments	**8.**	Community Allotments	£104,400.00
			£1,952,500.00

INFRASTRUCTURE:

STREET IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY			
Scheme	**No.**	**Description**	**Total**
Pedestrian priority areas	1.	Hard landscape: Traffic calming measures such as raised tables or crossing points	£1,440,000.00
	2.	Soft Landscape - SUDs	£154,000.00
General Street Improvements (Assumption of improvements over 50% of roads)**:**	3.	Hard landscape Pavement improvements	£780,000.00
	4.	Street planting and SUDs	£340,000.00
	5.	Resurface road	£860,000.00
			£3,574,000.00

PATHS IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY			
Scheme	**No.**	**Description**	**Total**
3 x Play streets (similar approach to Phase1)	1.	Introduce planting, informal play elements and re paving where needed	£671,400.00
Light touch Improvements	2.	Re-surfacing where needed	£195,000.00
			£866,400.00

LIGHTING STRATEGY		
Description	**No.**	**Total**
Park Lighting	1.	£1,000,000.00
Public Open Spaces	2.	£145,800.00
Streets and Paths	3.	£701,680.00
Residential Courtyards	4.	£164,460.00
		£2,011,940.00

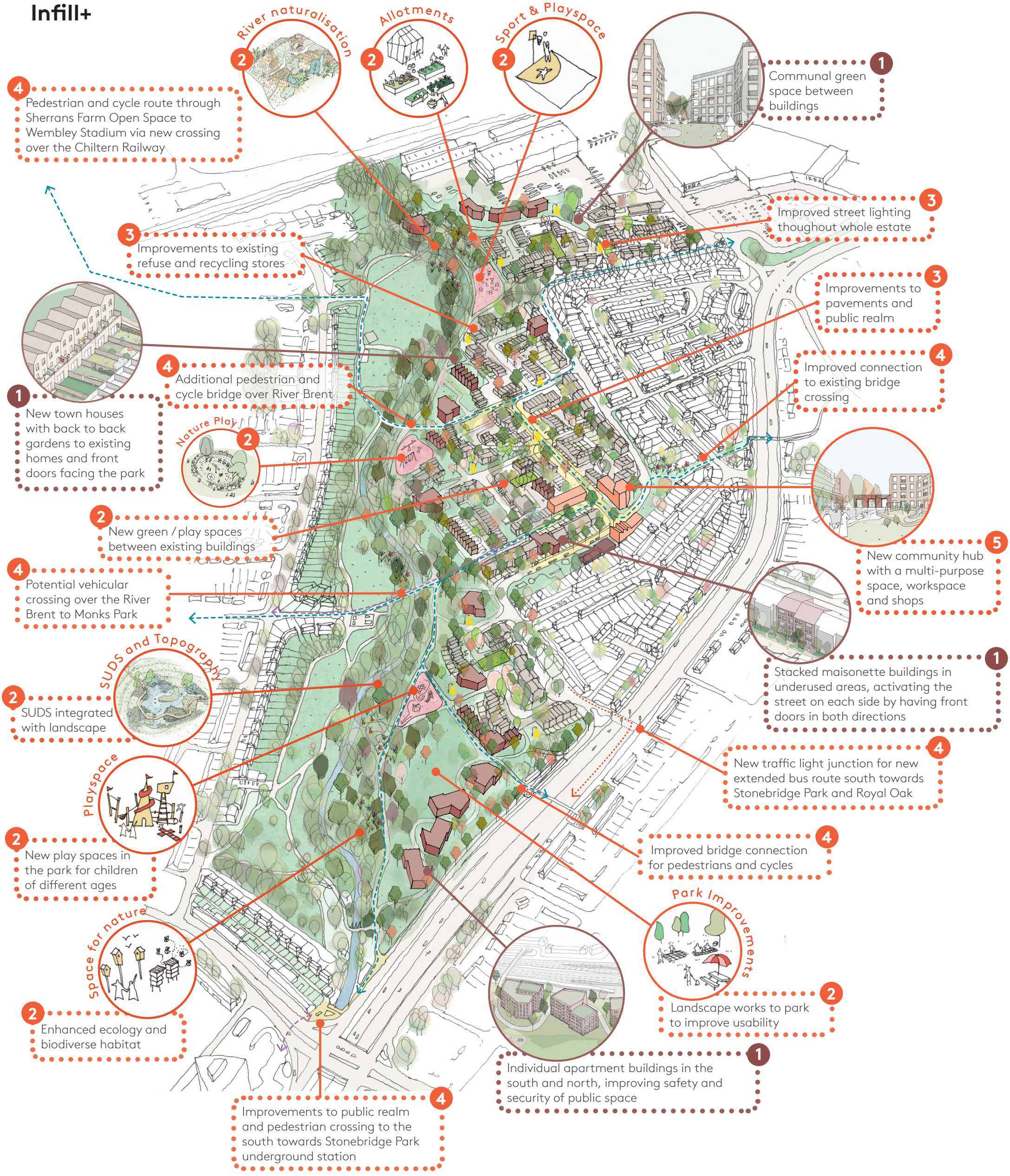
COMMUNAL FACILITIES STRATEGY		
Description	**No.**	**Total**
Communal refuse storage	1.	£3,219,000.00
Bulky Waste Room	2.	£932,400.00
Estate-wide Cycle storage	3.	£1,145,000.00
		£5,296,400.00

NEW COMMUNITY HUB:

Site	No.	Description	Total
Existing Commercial Units and Temporary Community Centre	1	Temporary Community Centre	£186,000.00
	2	Improve 5 existing shop	£1,263,000.00
	3	Improve back of the shops - hard landscape	£132,600.00
New Community Centre Building	4	1 and 2 storey building including: • Community Cafe • 3 flexible rooms • Affordable workspaces/offices • Ancillary	£2,457,000.00
Public Realm	5	Play and sports facilities area	£238,000.00
	6	New Community Square	N/A
	7	Landscape in front of shops - play and benches	N/A
	8	Street Improvements: Raised table	N/A
	9	Street Improvements: Extension of Henderson Close	£129,000.00
	10	Improve pedestrian route to North Circular (Hard surface and lighting)	N/A
			£4,405,600.00

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Future St Raph's Infill+



1	Current Infill Option	
2	Landscape and Play	£3.60m
3	Infrastructure Improvements	£3.00m
4	Connectivity	£19.25m
5	Community Amenities	£7.25m

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Brent	**Cabinet** 14 November 2022
	Report from the Corporate Director, Resident Services

Refurbishment of Granville Homes

Wards Affected:	Kilburn
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	One Appendix 1 Key Decision Report – Transfer of Granville New Homes
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Giuseppe Coia, Major Works and Refurbishments Manager 07776 665790 Giuseppe.coia@Brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report is to update Cabinet on the progress to remediate the housing stock known as Granville New Homes. The properties have inherent water penetration issues and poor fire protection. They therefore require extensive remediation in order that they can continue to provide accommodation for 110 Council tenants.

2.0 Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:

2.1 Agree the criteria for the works as set out in section 4 of the report.

2.2 Approve the inviting of tenders and awarding the contract to a suitably experienced Technical Consultancy that will manage the design, procurement and delivery of the refurbishment works to the properties based on the pre - tender considerations set out in paragraph 8.4 of the report.

2.3 Delegate of the award of the contract for Technical Consultancy to the Corporate Director, Residents Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security.

2.4 Delegate approval of the procurement, pre tender consideration, evaluation and contract award to a suitably experienced Contractor that will undertake the refurbishment works to the properties, to the Corporate Director, Residents Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security.

2.5 Approve the allocation of £26.4 Million inclusive of VAT from capital to fund the Works and Technical Consultancy services in accordance with the detail set out in the report.

3.0 Background

3.1 In February 2021, First Wave Housing (FWH) commissioned a consultant to investigate water penetration, cladding and window issues at FWH's Granville Road, Princess Road, and Canterbury Road blocks (otherwise known as Granville New Homes). The consultant produced a report that recommended that works be carried out at the blocks to remediate these issues. The consultant's report estimated that the cost to FWH of carrying out remediation works would be £13.5m. With the addition of VAT, management fees, contingency, and fire safety works that have already been carried out, the total estimated cost was £18.5m, which was unaffordable for FWH.

3.2 Within these constraints, in collaboration with the Council as Guarantor, FWH carried out an analysis into options for funding and carrying out remediation works. The results of the options analysis were presented in a report to Cabinet on 11 October 2021. The report highlighted excluded options and the reasons for their exclusion.

3.3 The reported recommended disposing of the blocks to the HRA – subject to a consultation with residents. The report presented options for structuring a disposal to the HRA. The recommended option, which was agreed by Cabinet, was to transfer the freehold for the blocks including the 84 social housing units, one leaseholder, and Tabot Community Centre to the HRA and 25 intermediate units to i4B and to refinance FWH's debt. This option best balances the costs between the Council's General Fund, HRA and housing companies and ensures the works are carried out as rapidly as possible.

3.4 On the 6 December 2021, the Strategic Director of Community Wellbeing, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Director of Finance, gave his approval for (FWH) to dispose of the following properties which make up the blocks at Granville Road, Princess Road and Canterbury Road which are collectively known as Granville New Homes:

(i) 25 intermediate rented properties to i4B Holdings Limited (i4B).
(ii) 84 social rented units to the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
(iii) One leasehold property to the Council's HRA.

(iv) The freehold interest of the site to the Council's HRA (including the Tabot Centre).

4.0 Survey Findings

4.1 There are two main issues with the blocks. These are the water ingress at various locations in the blocks and uncertainty about the fire rating of the external and internal walls and floors. These two issues are interlinked as they are generally related to the same construction elements. Thus, both issues will be resolved in tandem.

Fire Safety

4.2 The fire risk assessment for the blocks, and the subsequent intrusive investigations have identified that the construction is poor. The blocks have two distinct methods of cladding. One is formed of cementitious panels and the other is of brick effect panels. Both of these appear to have a variety of insulation materials, including expanded polystyrene, mineral wool and void spaces. Because of this, the fire rating of the blocks is uncertain. However, they will certainly not comply with current building regulations and are unlikely to have complied with the class 0 requirements at the time of construction.

4.3 The panels and insulation will require to be removed and replaced with A1 or A2 rated materials to comply with building regulations.

Water Penetration

4.4 The properties have suffered from water penetration for many years. Attempts at remediation have been unsuccessful.

4.5 Ridge Consultants were commissioned to undertake an intrusive survey of the blocks and to identify any significant areas of defect.

4.6 Ridge's findings are as follows:-

- The external envelopes on these buildings have been constructed from relatively inexpensive materials and there is evidence of poor-quality workmanship.

- There is a lack of information available, relating to the original build and it is clear that what has been installed on site has not worked.

- The doors and windows are suffering rot and timber decay, which is not, a defect readily associated with buildings of this age.

- The horizontal surfaces to the external envelopes (roofs, balconies and walkways) have been poorly finished.

- A further note is that none of the components that have been installed should have failed because of age.

4.7 Ridge's recommendations are as follows:

- The defects noted in relation to the buildings' external envelopes are not easily repairable in a way that will offer a guaranteed and satisfactory solution. On this basis, the only available option is to replace the facades, roof coverings and balcony waterproofing systems.

- All specified systems and products will have long insurance backed guarantees. All designers and the main contractor will provide warranties. The Council's legal team will review these before making any appointments.

4.8 A key to being able to complete these works without decanting residents is being able to work without disturbing the internal blockwork leaf of the system. It is likely that once the cladding is removed, the blockwork wall behind it will remain intact. This may mean that not all residents require being decanted. Only vulnerable residents may require decanting.

Energy Efficiency

4.9 As a consequence of the fire safety works specification. The energy efficiency rating of the properties will also be improved.

5.0 Works undertaken to Date

5.1 It was identified that the blocks have suffered from a number of defects, which included fire safety issues, water penetration, window and cladding defects.

5.2 In addition to the above the Fire Brigade served FWH with Enforcement Notices, which led to a waking watch to be introduced in the blocks.

5.3 A comprehensive communal and dwelling interlinked fire alarm system has been installed into the properties. This has now been set up with alarm monitoring arrangements.

5.4 In addition, combustible materials have been removed from communal areas and additional fire stopping has being installed. The waking watch has been removed as the alarm monitoring has been commissioned and now in use.

5.5 The fire alarm system will be monitored in order that any suspected smoke or fire is alerted to the London Fire Brigade.

6.0 Budget Requirements

6.1 The nature of the works is significant and therefore costly. The estimated cost of the works and associated works and consultancy services is £19,870,804. This includes costs associated with supporting more vulnerable residents such

as respite care and temporary decanting, inflation and a contingency. The works are high risk and the market is currently extremely volatile in terms of costs and pricing, hence the large contingency. In addition, it is prudent at this stage to make provision for the potential decant of a significant number of residents who may not be vulnerable but who may not be able to stay in their homes during some or all of the works. Therefore, Cabinet is requested to allocate £22M plus VAT to this project.

6.2 The difference in cost from the 6 December Cabinet report is due to ongoing uncertain market cost conditions, and the addition of VAT. Some allowance has been made for ongoing building cost inflation. However, due to several uncertainties in the marketplace and world events, there may be further building cost increases. Cabinet will be advised of this should this become apparent during the course of the project.

			Original Cost	Estimated Inflation to 2024	Updated Cost
	Peel Block		£ 4,550,000	£ 910,000	£ 5,460,000
	Pilgrim		£ 4,435,000	£ 887,000	£ 5,322,000
	Granville West		£ 2,475,000	£ 495,000	£ 2,970,000
	Granville East		£ 2,185,000	£ 437,000	£ 2,622,000
	Sub Total		£ 13,645,000	£ 2,729,000	£ 16,374,000
	Technical Consultancy and Procurement				£ 654,960
	Resident Support Costs				£ 250,000
	Sub Total				£ 17,278,960
	Contingency	15%			£ 2,591,844
	Grand Total				£ 19,870,804

6.3 i4B as a leaseholder of 25 of the units will be required to make a contribution to the works as determined by the lease. The Council will be required to consult with I4B on the cost of the works and on the procurement process. This will include VAT, which is not shown above. There will also be the cost of the internal project delivery team within Housing Management Property Services.

6.4 More detailed budget costs will be calculated once the project team are established.

6.5 There are 26 leaseholders on the estate, 25 of which are i4B dwellings. Due to the circumstances of how the works arose, it is recommended that no leaseholder recharge is applied to the non i4B leaseholder. The expected recharge to i4B is covered in section 9 below.

7.0 Programme

7.1 This project is likely to take circa 3 years to complete.

The outline programme is:

Cabinet, decision-making, funding, risk register, etc. – Sep 2022 to Dec 2022.

Procurement of consultant - Nov 2022 to Mar 2023.

Consultation event Mar 2023.

Preparation of specification, planning requirements – Feb 2023 to Jul 2023.

Resident profiling and draft individual household plan – Jun 2023 to Sep 2023

Procurement of contractor (via a framework) – Jun 2023 to Nov 2023.

Resident profiling and finalised individual household plan – Dec 2023 to Feb 2024.

Construction phase – Jan 2024 to Dec 2025.

7.2 A detailed programme for extensive resident consultation and resident profiling will be prepared. This will determine the support that each household requires, including the option of temporary decant if necessary.

8.0 Procurement

8.1 A procurement options appraisal was undertaken by HCIB.

8.2 This concluded that an experienced technical consultant should be procured to undertake the design, specification, and tendering and contract administration.

8.3 It also concluded that the contractor should be procured from an existing framework agreement.

8.4 In accordance with Contract Standing Orders 88 and 89, pre-tender considerations for the procurement of the contract for Technical Consultancy for the Refurbishment of Granville Homes (the “Contract”) have been set out below for the approval of the Cabinet.

<table>
<tr><th>Ref.</th><th>Requirement</th><th colspan="2">Response</th></tr>
<tr><td>(i)</td><td>The nature of the services / supplies / works.</td><td colspan="2">Technical Consultancy for the Refurbishment of Granville Homes</td></tr>
<tr><td>(ii)</td><td>The estimated value.</td><td colspan="2">£654,960 plus 15% contingency £98,244 = £753,204, plus VAT.</td></tr>
<tr><td>(iii)</td><td>The contract term.</td><td colspan="2">Procurement of consultant - Nov 2022 to May 2023.

Preparation of specification, planning requirements – Feb 2023 to Aug 2023.

Procurement of contractor (via a framework) – July 2023 to Dec 2023.

Contract administration phase – Jan 2024 to Dec 2025.</td></tr>
<tr><td>(iv)</td><td>The tender procedure to be adopted.</td><td colspan="2">Existing third party framework agreement.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="8">v)</td><td rowspan="8">The procurement timetable for the consultant.</td><td></td><td>Indicative dates are:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Adverts placed</td><td>Dec 2022</td></tr>
<tr><td>Expressions of interest returned</td><td>Jan 2023</td></tr>
<tr><td>Shortlist drawn up in accordance with the Council’s approved criteria</td><td>Jan 2023</td></tr>
<tr><td>Invite to tender</td><td>Feb 2023</td></tr>
<tr><td>Deadline for tender submissions</td><td>Mar 2023</td></tr>
<tr><td>Panel evaluation and shortlist review</td><td>Mar 2023</td></tr>
<tr><td>Interviews (if any) and contract decision</td><td>Mar 2023</td></tr>
</table>

Ref.	Requirement	Response	
		Report recommending Contract award circulated internally for comment	Apr 2023
		Corporate Director, Residents Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security approval	May 2023
		[Minimum 10 calendar day standstill period – notification issued to all tenderers and additional debriefing of unsuccessful tenderers (contracts covered by the full requirements of PCR 2015 only)]	May 2023
		Contract Mobilisation	May 2023
		Contract start date	May 2023
(vi)	The evaluation criteria and process.	1. At selection, stage shortlists are to be drawn up in accordance with the Council's Contract Procurement and Management Guidelines by the use of a selection questionnaire to identify organisations meeting the Council's financial standing requirements, technical capacity and technical expertise. 2. At tender evaluation stage, the panel will evaluate the tenders against the following criteria: 60% Price / 40% Quality and Social Values Quality; 1. Relevant experience of this type of work. 2. Resources and personnel. 3. Preparation of tender documents – design and specifications 4. Programme management. 5. Contract administration.	

Ref.	Requirement	Response
		6. Health and safety, and quality management including fire safety. 7. Compliance with the Building Safety Act. 8. Resident consultation and engagement.
(vii)	Any business risks associated with entering the contract.	The following business risks are considered associated with entering into the proposed contract. 1. Cost of the works increasing. 2. Cost of full decant. 3. Design risk. 4. Other Financial Services and Legal Services have been consulted concerning this contract [and have identified the risks associated with entering into this contract set out sections below.
(viii)	The Council's Best Value duties.	Procuring the contract via a framework will enable the Council to meet its Best Value duties.
(ix)	Consideration of Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012	In accordance with then Social Value Policy, 10% of the overall marks will be awarded for Social Value benefits
(x)	Any staffing implications, including TUPE and pensions.	None.
(xi)	The relevant financial, legal and other considerations.	See sections 9 and 10 below.
(xii)	Sustainability	Appropriate Sustainability provisions will be included in the contract in accordance with the Council's sustainability policy.

Ref.	Requirement	Response
(xiii)	Key Performance Indicators / Outcomes	Appropriate Key Performance Indicators / Outcomes will be included in the contract.
(xiv)	London Living Wage	The Contract will require the payment of the London Living Wage.
(xv)	Contract Management	A contract manager will be appointed and appropriate contract management provisions will be included in the contract.

9.0 Financial Implications

9.1 The HRA operates with a break-even budget, with limited financial capacity to absorb cost pressures without identifying offsetting budget mitigations. HRA currently faces competing pressures from investment requirements in its existing stock.

9.2 The estimated share of £19.9m total net spend on remediation cost to the HRA is valued at £15.4m, this works out as 77% (85 out of 110 properties) of net cost, resulting in an increase of £4.2m (38%) from previous cost estimate provided in 2021, due to projected construction cost inflationary uplifts and contingencies. The recharge to i4B will be as set out in the lease.

9.3 The remediation cost valued at £15.4m for the HRA can be part funded from provisions set aside of £6.1m, with the remaining balance of £9.3m funded through borrowing. The interest cost is estimated to be £0.47m per annum based on an assumed 5% borrowing rate in 2024.

9.4 Due to cost inflations and interest rate rises, there is an anticipated budget shortfall in the HRA, as rental income from Granville Homes is not projected to keep pace with expenditure requirements for the following 32 years. On average, the cost to the HRA is calculated at £0.14m per annum, which will be met through efficiency savings within support services.

9.5 Gross cost to i4B including VAT is valued at be £5.4m (£4.5m exc VAT) for remediation works.

10.0 Legal Implications

10.1 The proposed procurement of the two contracts is above the threshold for contracts for works and also for services under the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (“PCR 2015”). The estimated value of the consultancy contract is £753,204 and for the works contract is £26m.

10.2 The contract for consultancy services would be classed as a Medium Value Contract under the Council’s Constitutions. Corporate Directors have delegated authority to approve the Pre Tender Considerations (Standing Order 89) set out in paragraph 8.4 above. However, as the matter is part of the

refurbishment project for Granville Homes, Cabinet is asked to approve the Pre Tender Considerations and once the tender process has been undertaken delegate the award of the contract to the Corporate Director, Residents Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security.

10.3 The Contract for works will be tendered and awarded following the recommendations of the consultancy contract. The value of the works contract would be classed as a High Value Contract. Officers are requesting that Cabinet delegate the authority to tender and subsequent award in accordance with Contract Standing Order 88 to the Corporate Director, Residents Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security.

10.4 As both contracts are subject to the full application of the PCR 2015, the Council must observe the requirements of the mandatory minimum 10 calendar standstill period imposed by the PCR 2015 before the contract can be awarded. The requirements include notifying all tenderers in writing of the Council's decision to award and providing additional debrief information to unsuccessful tenderers on receipt of a written request. The standstill period provides unsuccessful tenderers with an opportunity to challenge the Council's award decision if such challenge is justifiable. However if no challenge or successful challenge is brought during the period, at the end of the standstill period the Council can issue a letter of acceptance to the successful tenderer and the contract may commence.

10.5 There are leaseholder implications for i4B. There will be a requirement to consult with i4B in connection with the procurement process.

11.0 Equality Implications

11.1 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,

pursuant to s149 Equality Act 2010. This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty.

11.2 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.

11.3 The Public Sector Equality Duty 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.

11.4 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and Officers believe that there are no adverse equality implications.

12.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

12.1 The Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security has been consulted in regards to this report.

12.2 Ward members will be consulted in regards to this report.

13.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

13.1 There are no implications.

Report sign off:

PETER GADSDON
Corporate Director, Resident Services

	Strategic Director for Community Wellbeing – Delegated Key Decision 6 December 2021
	Report from the Chief Executive

Transfer of Granville New Homes

Wards Affected:	Kilburn
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	Appendix 1 Consultation Plan Appendix 2 Residents Letters Appendix 3 Equality Impact Assessment
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Sadie East, Director of Transformation, Sadie.East@Brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To present the results of the consultation into the proposed change in landlord at First Wave Housing's Granville New Homes Blocks.

1.2 For the Strategic Director of Community Wellbeing, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and the Director of Finance, to make a final decision regarding the proposal to transfer Granville New Homes pursuant and further to the decision of the Cabinet dated 11 October 2021.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 The Strategic Director of Community Wellbeing notes the positive outcome of the consultation with residents on the proposed change in landlord at First Wave Housing's Granville New Homes Blocks.

2.2 Following the positive consultation, the Strategic Director of Community Wellbeing, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Director of Finance, gives his approval for First Wave Housing (FWH) to dispose of the following properties which make up the blocks at Granville Road, Princess Road and

Canterbury Road which are collectively known as Granville New Homes:

(i) 25 intermediate rented properties to i4B Holdings Limited (i4B).
(ii) 84 social rented units to the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
(iii) One leasehold property to the Council's HRA.
(iv) The freehold interest of the site to the Council's HRA (including the Tabot Centre).

3.0 Background

3.1 In February 2021, FWH commissioned a consultant to investigate water penetration, cladding and window issues at FWH's Granville Road, Princess Road, and Canterbury Road blocks (otherwise known as Granville New Homes). The consultant produced a report that recommended that works be carried out at the blocks to remediate these issues. The consultant's report estimated that the cost to FWH of carrying out remediation works would be £13.5m. With the addition of VAT, management fees, contingency, and fire safety works that have already been carried out, the total estimated cost is £18.5m), this is unaffordable for FWH.

3.2 Within these constraints, in collaboration with the Council as Guarantor, FWH carried out an analysis into options for funding and carrying out remediation works. The results of the options analysis were presented in a report to Cabinet on 11 October 2021. The report highlighted discounted options and the reasons for their exclusion. Table 2 contains a list of the discounted options.

Table 2 – Discounted options for funding and carrying out remediation works

Option	Comment	Reason for exclusion
Rebuild at higher density	The blocks would be demolished and rebuilt at a higher density to offset demolition and rebuilt costs.	Not possible at sufficient scale to be affordable due to planning constraints, and would require temporary decanting of residents.
Market sale	The blocks would be sold on the open market. This would require vacant possession and therefore require residents to be permanently re-housed.	Would require permanent decanting of residents and would not be an option that could be implemented rapidly due to the decant process.
Transfer to the General Fund	Under this option, the blocks would be disposed of to the General Fund.	The General Fund cannot operate permanent tenanted accommodation (at least not without the consent of the Secretary of State); therefore a full permanent decant would be required.
Disposal to i4B	The blocks would be disposed of to i4B. i4B would carry out remediation works to the block.	i4B cannot afford remediation works. Therefore, this option would require £18.5m equity funding from the General Fund.
Disposal of all FWH stock to the HRA and wind up of FWH	Under this option, all of FWH's 326 properties would be transferred to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).	This option has not been excluded but is not recommended at this stage as it would delay rectifying the issues in the blocks. The transaction would be highly complex and would require specialist advice and a full audit on a final set of company accounts. This option could still be pursued at a later date.

3.3 The reported recommended disposing of the blocks to the HRA – subject to a consultation with residents. The report presented options for structuring a disposal to the HRA, these options are outlined in Table 3. The recommended option, which was agreed by Cabinet, was to transfer the freehold for the blocks including the 84 social housing units, one leaseholder, and Tabot Community Centre to the HRA and 25 intermediate units to i4B and to refinance FWH's debt. This option best balances the costs between the Council's General Fund, HRA and housing companies and ensures the works are carried out as rapidly as possible.

3.4 Under this option the total cost would be £14.7m. This figure is inclusive of management fees and contingency. The HRA's apportionment of this is £11.2m and i4B's share is £3.5m. This is less than the £18.5m that would be spent if FWH carried out works. The reason for this is that the FWH £18.5m figure includes VAT and fire safety works that have already been carried out and paid for by FWH. These costs would not applicable to the HRA/i4B.

Table 3 – Options for transferring blocks to the HRA

Option	Description
1A	Transfer 84 social housing units and one leaseholder and write off associated debt of £9.1m
1B	Transfer 84 social housing units and one leaseholder and refinance the debt
1C	Transfer the 84 social housing units and one leaseholder to the HRA and 25 intermediate units to i4B and refinance the debt
2A	Transfer all 110 units and write off associated debt of £11.6m
2B	Transfer all 110 units and refinance the debt

3.5 At its meeting on 11 October 2021, Cabinet agreed to carry out a consultation with residents on the proposed change in landlord (Option 1C) as well as the other discounted options. Cabinet delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Community Wellbeing, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Director of Finance to review the results of the consultation and make a final decision regarding the disposal of the properties.

3.6 This report presents the results of the consultation and recommends that the blocks are disposed of to i4B and the Council's HRA.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 In line with guidance from the Regulator of Social Housing, a consultation has been carried out with residents on the proposed change in landlord. Brent Housing Management (BHM), as the managing agent for both FWH and i4B, led on the delivery of consultation with the support of FWH and i4B representatives. The consultation aimed to provide residents with details of the options considered, inform on how the transfer would affect them directly, and give an opportunity to inform the process for transferring the homes to both the HRA and i4B. Appendix 1 contains the full consultation plan.

4.2 The consultation launched on Monday 25 October and completed Tuesday 16 November 2021. The residents were consulted through a variety of methods to ensure they had an opportunity to express their views, this included:

- The hand delivering of letters to all residents outlining the proposals and the consultation. Letters were issued twice: once at the start of the consultation and then midway through informing residents of how to submit their views. Appendix 2 contains the letters that were sent to residents.
- Door knocking was carried out by the patch housing officer. All homes were visited (although not all residents were in). Out of the 110 homes, 37 individual tenants were spoken to. The housing officer received no objections to the proposed changes.
- To ensure that tenants who were unavailable during standard working hours were also contacted, officers called all tenants that had not been visited in person. 72 residents were called of which eight confirmed they were happy for the changes to go ahead and 23 expressed a want to attend the virtual meetings scheduled.
- An online residents meeting for FWH tenants being consulted on becoming Council tenants was arranged. Of the 23 that signed up to attend five residents attended.
- An online residents meeting for FWH tenants being consulted on becoming i4B tenants also was arranged. This was attended by one resident.
- A letter was also received by one resident who was supportive of proposals.
- The focus of questions and comments raised by residents at these events was on the works to the building rather than any objections to changing the landlord.

4.3 An equalities impact assessment (EIA) has been carried out. This can be seen in appendix 3. Further details can be found in section 6, in particular paragraph 6.2.

4.4 The consultation ended on 16 November 2021. The outcome of the consultation is as follows:

- No objections were received from FWH residents who under the proposed change of landlord would become Council tenants.
- No objections were received from the FWH leaseholder who under the proposed change of freeholder would become a Council leaseholder
- No objections were received from FWH residents who under the proposed change of Landlord would become i4B tenants.

4.5 All residents who participated in the consultation expressed a keenness for works to start as early as possible.

5.0 Next steps

5.1 The final decision is due to be made on 6 December. The decision will be subject to a five day call in period. If the recommendation is approved the target transfer day will be at the end of February. A project plan has been developed with the relevant departments including housing and legal to carry out the necessary actions required.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 The financial implications are included in the 11 October 2021 Cabinet Report and they remain pertinent in respect of this report. The Strategic Director for Community Wellbeing is asked to read and consider those implications as set out in paragraphs 11.1 to 11.5 and 14.1 of the report that was presented to Cabinet on 11 October 2021 before making the decisions which this report is inviting him to make.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 The legal implications are set out in section 13 in paragraphs 13.1 to 13.16 of the 11 October 2021 Cabinet report and they remain pertinent in respect of this report. The Strategic Director for Community Wellbeing is asked to read and consider the legal implications as set out in section 13 of the report that was presented to Cabinet on 11 October 2021 and also Appendix B to that report, which was exempt from publication on the grounds of legal professional privilege, before making the decisions which this report is inviting him to make.

6.0 Equality Implications

6.1 An EIA was undertaken during the consultation to review how the transfer of properties would impact residents especially those with protected characteristics. The consultation period enabled residents to voice concerns to officers through door knocking exercises, letters, calls to residents and virtual consultations. It also provided officers with the opportunity to assess how the proposed change would affect those under the Equality Act.

6.2 The assessment found the impact to residents of Granville New Homes would be minimal. Those with protected characteristics were not found to be disadvantaged by the proposed changes. There will be potential positive health benefits for all tenants once the remediation work is completed. Any First Wave Housing tenants that would become a Council tenant would receive enhanced tenancy rights.

6.3 The full EIA can be seen in appendix 3.

7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

7.1 Ward members have been consulted.

8.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

8.1 N/A

Related documents:

11 October Cabinet Report - Proposal for ownership and refurbishment of Granville New Homes blocks

Report sign off:
Carolyn Downs
Chief Executive

Brent	**Cabinet** 14 November 2022
	Report from the Corporate Director of Resident Services

Cost of Living Crisis: Supporting Residents with a Warm Place in Brent this Winter

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	One Appendix 1 Draft Library Lounge Leaflet
Background Papers:	Cost of Living Crisis & the Resident Support Fund Report made to Cabinet by the Strategic Director of Customer and Digital Services (20 June 2022)
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Thomas Cattermole, Director of Customer Access 020 8937 5446 Thomas.Cattermole@brent.gov.uk Peter Baxter, Library, Arts and Heritage Manager 020 8937 6676 peter.baxter@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report provides Cabinet with an update on the actions the Council is taking to help mitigate the impact of the Cost-of-Living crisis on our residents, specifically the issue of rising energy bills this winter.

1.2 Resources of the Council and its partners are being made available to offer temporary refuge, respite and support for Brent residents in “Library Lounges” for residents who may be struggling with fuel poverty this winter as part of the national “Warm Welcome Campaign”.

1.3 The Council is working closely with the voluntary, faith and community sectors to ensure a joined-up approach across the Borough.

1.4 Furthermore, this report updates Cabinet on future planned activities to support residents and outlines how officers will monitor the ongoing impact of this aspect of the Cost-of-Living crisis on people in Brent through reviews with key partners across the borough.

2.0 Recommendations for Cabinet

It is recommended that:

2.1 Cabinet note that the Council network of "Warm Welcome Spaces" has commenced with the Council's libraries registered on the warm welcome national website.

2.2 Cabinet note that work is under way to develop a cohesive joint offer for residents to access support, advice, warmth and temporary refuge or respite through the network of "Warm Welcome Spaces".

2.3 Cabinet note that the Council will work with partners across Brent to maximise impact and map where offers of support meet the needs and demands of Brent residents.

2.4 Cabinet note that a Council Project Group has been established reporting to the Council's Cost of Living Crisis working group, to monitor the take up and impact of the Warm Welcome Spaces approach. Representatives include Customer Access, Public Health, Strategy and Partnerships, CYP: Early Help, ASC, and the Communications Team.

2.5 Cabinet note that meetings of the Group will take place as the autumn and winter season progresses; in order that the impact of actions can be (re)worked, (re)considered and monitored.

2.6 Cabinet note that Facilities Management will prioritise maintenance of heating systems across the Council's estate to maintain the Council's public offer.

2.7 Cabinet note the proposal to progress the action plan tasks to the proposed timetable.

2.8 Cabinet note that pursuant to and within the exercise of the delegated authority of the Corporate Director of Resident Services, limited financial support will be made available in the form of "Warm Welcome Spaces Grants" to community, faith and voluntary groups who make space available throughout the winter season and meet the criteria to offer a Warm Welcome spaces that is inclusive, non-judgmental, and where everyone can expect a warm welcome from staff and volunteers.

2.9 Cabinet delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Resident Services in

consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Culture to set the eligbility criteria in respect of the funds available within the Council's current budget for a "Warm Welcome Spaces Grant".

3.0 Background

3.1 Since late 2021, the UK has experienced a rise in the cost of living for individuals and families. For many Brent residents, this means having to make difficult decisions on how they spend their income, which can have a negative impact on their standard of living and can mean making difficult choices. "between heating and eating."[1]

3.2 In a recent attitudes survey[2], increased energy bills were a major concern for people already struggling with mortgage or rent payments. Of those surveyed, the groups that were most likely to say their costs had risen a lot included those on low incomes, Black and Asian residents, those renting from a council, and those with a health problem or disability. For full details, see the "Cost of Living Crisis & the Resident Support Fund Report" made to Cabinet by the Strategic Director of Customer and Digital Services (20 June 2022).

3.3 As was seen during the pandemic, local community groups and organisations have or are beginning to rise to the challenge and support their neighbours through the cost of living crisis in particular those who are or who will struggle to heat their homes or cook food. This includes groups with spaces, or those who are able to provide furnishings, activities, advice and support.

3.4 The Council starts from a good position by already having in place a number of physical resources and mechanisms to support residents who may be struggling financially with utility bills or are unable to heat their homes when they need to. These include:

- **Brent Libraries,** including a museum and gallery spaces, are often a vital first point of contact for vulnerable groups. Staff and volunteers have experience of welcoming people into warm public library spaces. The service will continue to lead by example by ensuring that those visitors and residents who need it most, will feel comfortable in using the library spaces without any stigma. Libraries are using the guidance in "A Warm Welcome"[3] which maps out six key areas of 'hosting' in this crisis: "serving, maintaining the big picture, taking responsibility, caring, knowledge and dialogue."

- **Brent Libraries Outreach / Home Library Service Volunteers** Will help identify and refer residents who are in hardship or in need of any financial

[1] Martin Lewis in "A Warm Welcome" - guidelines compiled by CILIP and written by Marsha Lowe, Oxygen Arts and Ayub Khan MBE, Warwickshire County Council, funded by a personal donation from the Martin Lewis charity fund. © CILIP 2022

[2] Source: YouGov (for GLA). Sample:1188 adults. Fieldwork 21-26 Jan 2022 - carried out online. The figures were weighted to be representative of all London adults (aged 18+). Data available on GLA datastore.

[3] "A Warm Welcome" © CILIP 2022

assistance with heating or fuel costs. Staff will ensure volunteers are supported with the information they need to refer residents they visit in their home to relevant services, e.g. Brent Hubs. Staff and volunteers have received training from **Make Every Contact Count.**

- **Brent Hubs** have in place mechanisms to issue vouchers to residents in need of urgent food and fuel support. This is in addition to referrals to food aid agencies and schemes for support with the cost of utilities.

  The Brent **Resident Support Fund** (RSF), is focused on supporting residents to address their financial problems. Financial support received through the RSF will be contingent on residents agreeing to engage with support services. Furthermore, the Government's Household Support Fund (HSF) has been used to provide support to Brent households with the cost of food and fuel in the form of food and fuel vouchers, grants, and financial support to food aid organisations. These are used to support families with supermarket vouchers during the school holidays, grant funding provided to food banks operating in Brent to support them in meeting increased demand as a result of the Pandemic and cost of living crisis.

- A **Fuel Poverty Toolkit** is available for all staff to access via the intranet. The toolkit provides an overview of local, national and independent support schemes and agencies, along with details as to how support can be accessed. Staff attended stakeholder briefings sessions which helped to raise awareness of the options that are available to residents who need help with the rising energy costs.

- A **Financial Support leaflet** was delivered to all households within the borough to help increase awareness of the schemes and mechanisms available to residents who are struggling with the cost of living. These will continue to be offered in libraries and partner organisations.

- The delivery of a number of Borough Plan funded **Financial Inclusion projects**, including a financial capability upskilling programme targeting community leaders, training to upskill Brent hubs staff and residents in debt management, and the delivery of a financial inclusion learning programme for residents.

- The **Employment, Skills and Enterprise** service help upskill residents to support them moving into work. This includes gaining qualifications via Brent Start (ESOL, English, Maths & Digital Skills), digital equipment loans, and financial support towards childcare.

- **Digital Inclusion** supports households or Brent pupils with access to a digital device and digital skills training. There are digital cafes at three Brent Hubs and with 100 digital champions in place. Brent continues to work with internet providers to improve access to fibre through social tariffs.

- **Libraries Connected,** the independent charity representing public libraries, has outlined how libraries plan to help those struggling with household bills this winter. Libraries Connected has called on Government for dedicated funding for the whole winter so that library services can provide targeted help to those most in need.

- **Martin Lewis**, Money Saving Expert, commissioned the **Charted Institute of Library and Information Professionals** (CILIP). They researched and collated best practice information on how libraries, and any organisation wanting to set up a warm space, could respond to the soaring rise in energy bills. They released guidance in mid-October 2022 and is being used by libraries to ensure best practice in welcoming everyone and identifying those who might need extra support.

- Universal support from the UK **Government** to help with energy bills. Implementation began in October 2022 with no requirement for individuals to re-pay. Pensioner households who receive winter fuel support will also get a one-off payment. The government will make these payments directly to pensioner households. Recipients of disability benefits will also receive a one-off payment.

- Brent colleagues are working on an **Affordable Warmth Provision** developing an advisory service to support those effected by fuel poverty; providing impartial energy advice to help residents stay warm, save money and live greener. This work builds on the offer set out in the Fuel Poverty toolkit, including referral pathways to organisations such as independent advisory agencies. It involves exploring how front line services (especially those who go into homes) might help to identify and refer residents who are in hardship and developing a central referral point though Brent Hubs. Any financial assistance with heating or fuel costs will be contingent on a visit by this team.

- On 1 October 2022, the Government launched the **Energy Bills Relief Scheme**, which will provide support with energy costs relief to eligible organisations until the 31 March 2023. In parallel, the Government has also launched a three-month review, which will identify businesses and organisations most at risk from higher energy costs that will still require support after 31 March 2023. As part of this review of the Energy Bills Relief Scheme, the Government will engage with businesses, organisations and trade associations across the UK so that we can better understand energy needs, including through the use of a survey.

4.0 A Warm Welcome Network in Brent

4.1 The Warm Welcome Campaign exists to support and champion the community response to the Cost of Living crisis. Working with partners of all kinds, they equip thousands of organisations across the country to network with other organisations who are able to provide a warm welcome to everyone who might need it this winter.

The campaign was started by the ChurchWorksCommission. https://www.warmwelcome.uk

4.2 A project group Customer Access, Public Health, Emergency Planning, CYP: Early Help, ASC: Health, the Communications Team, has begun marketing and promoting the offer. This will be expanded to include other partners and colleagues working across Brent.

4.3 Customer Access will develop this group into an operational practitioners' network, bringing together key staff and volunteers from across the council and its partners who are able to – or able to support the provision of - a space or activity to help mitigate the rising cost of domestic energy bills. The outcome is to share learning and respond appropriately.

4.4 In addition, the Council will work with the Council's thematic Consultative Forums to ensure the borough wide offer is inclusive.

- Brent Disability Forum
- Service User Consultative Forum - Equality
- Service User Consultative Forum - Pensioners
- Service User Consultative Forum - Private Sector Housing
- Service User Consultative Forum - Voluntary Sector

4.5 A warm welcome space should be free to use and encouraging for residents to stay as long as they want. It needs to be a friendly, comfortable environment where people feel at ease and at home.

4.6 Much of the work outlined in this paper – completed, ongoing and planned aligns with an exigent and tentative approach that seeks to build a coalition of support across the borough. It is acknowledged that simply providing a warm space is far from the answer. Not everyone will be able to get to warm spaces; not everyone will want to, and people will still need to heat their homes. The offer is based on encouraging human kindness and communal approaches to a crisis that can provide crucial extra help to ensure a decent number of vulnerable residents will be able to get through the winter.

October to December	• Libraries liaise with Libraries Connected, CILIP (the the UK's library and information association and the London Libraries Network • Create additional spaces in libraries, museum and galleries to respond to any increase in demand • Develop communication resources • Libraries liaise with FM to ensure heating/boiler functions • Customer Access initiate Council officer with CABINET
	• Mapping the emerging offer of organisations on https://www.warmwelcome.uk/ across the borough and the country stepping forward to support people experiencing difficulties • Review and develop – scale-up or scale-down
January to	• Monitor and review need and take up.

March	

4.7 Limited financial support will be made available in the form of Council "Warm Welcome Spaces Grants" to community, faith and voluntary groups who make space available throughout the winter season and meet the criteria to offer a Warm Welcome spaces that is inclusive, non-judgmental, and where everyone can expect a warm welcome from staff and volunteers. The eligibility criteria will be defined by the the Corporate Director of Resident Services in consultation the Lead Member as set out in paragraph 2.9 above with eligible Groups able to apply for one off funding.

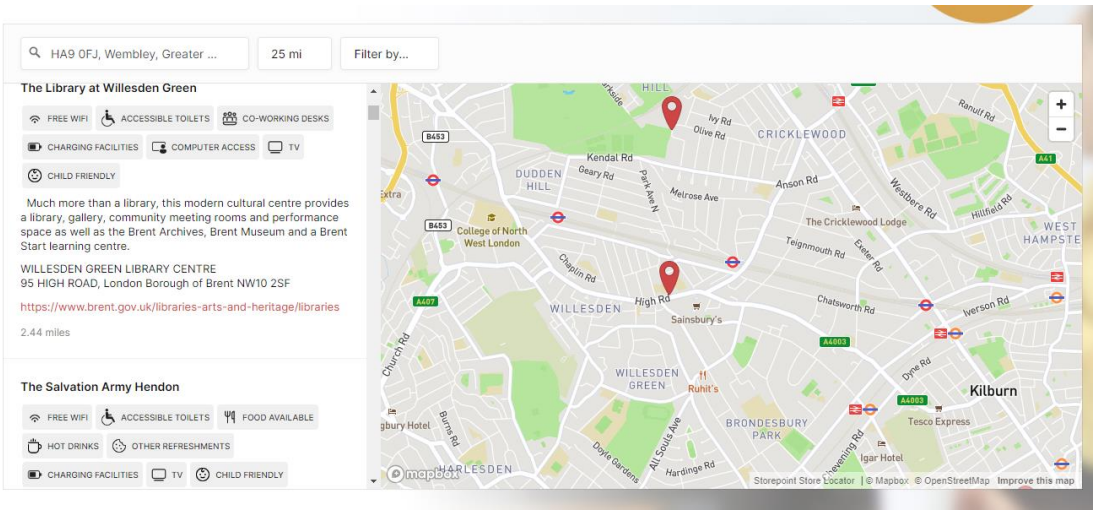
5.0 Next Steps

5.1 The Cost of Living Crisis is a national issue. As outlined in section 3, the Council already has a number of resources and mechanisms in place to support residents experiencing financial difficulties. The next step is to work with a range of partners and external organisations to ensure mapping of emerging offers of support and encourage those who can help to do so.

6.0 Mapping Offers of Help in Brent

6.1 All six of Brent's libraries will be welcoming warm spaces where people are invited to gather and spend time in the warmth, without having to put their heating on at home. The libraries will be mapped and publicised on warmwelcome.uk website, which shows locations, where residents can visit to stay warm. The websites has a number of organisations across the borough and the country offering similar services.

An example of how each offer is mapped can be seen below:



6.2 The national website has already been launched by the ChurchWorks Commission. It includes an interactive map of Warm Welcome spaces. The websites has over 1,600 registered organisations that have opened or are opening up free, warm, welcoming spaces for the public over the winter across the UK. Organisations in Brent have also began to emerge on the website.

6.3 All six of Brent's libraries with information about the Hubs and other services have been uploaded to the site. The Web Team will be able to update this link onto Brent's website for residents to view.

6.4 Developing a marketing leaflet to explain its offer will encourage others with buildings to register with the national warmwelcome.uk website. See Appendix One using the national warm welcome.

7.0 Improving access to existing services

7.1 There is likely to be significant demand for spaces especially at peak times. The library opening times are a key part of helping to mitigate the cost of living crisis.

7.2 There are currently no plans to extend opening hours beyond our current closing times (see below). The Libraries services will monitor the take-up and consider any amendments.

7.3 Trusted partners may be able to help with after core hours access.

Library	**Opening hours:**
Ealing Road Library	Monday to Friday: 10:30am to 6pm Saturday: 10:30am to 5pm Sunday: 12pm to 5pm
Harlesden Library - Designworks	Harlesden Library will be closed for building works between 29 August and February 2023.
Kilburn library	Monday to Friday: 10:30am to 6pm Saturday: 10:30am to 5pm Sunday: 12pm to 5pm
Kingsbury Libraray	Monday to Friday: 10:30am to 6pm Saturday: 10:30am to 5pm Sunday: 12pm to 5pm
The Library at Willesden Green	Monday to Friday: 10:30am to 8pm Saturday: 10:30am to 5pm Sunday: 12pm to 5pm
Wembley library	Monday to Friday: 10:30am to 8pm Saturday: 10:30am to 5pm Sunday: 12pm to 5pm

8.0 Monitoring

8.1 The project group will network and liaise with the Cost of Living Crisis working group who are responsible for monitoring any impact indicators related to this crisis in order to inform appropriate cross-council responses.

9.0 Financial Implications

9.1 Limited financial support will be made available in the form of "Warm Welcome

Spaces Grants" to community, faith and voluntary groups who make space available throughout the winter season and meet the criteria to offer a Warm Welcome spaces that is inclusive, non-judgmental, and where everyone can expect a warm welcome from staff and volunteers.

9.2 The eligibility criteria for the award scheme will be determined by the Corporate Director of Resident Services in consultation with the Lead Member as set out in paragraph 2.9 of this report and payments of the grants will be made within the Corporate Director's current delegations to allocate Cost of Living Support Grants within the Council's current budget.

10.0 Legal Implications

10.1 The Corporate Director of Resident Services has the power to make the grants that are set out and proposed in paragraph 2.9 of this report. Under paragraph 9 in the Table under paragraph 9.5 in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution, the Corporate Director for Resident Services (and any Corporate Director) has the power "to make grants or give other financial or other assistance to organisations" subject to the following restrictions:

(a) Provided that if the grant or other financial assistance involves the grant of funds from Council's own resources (i) the relevant Director is satisfied that no adverse capital finance or other negative implications would arise, unless written consent of the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources is obtained. (ii) no grant shall be made by officers if it amounts to more than £25k per annum except in the case of Neighbourhood Infrastructure Level grants which may be made by the Corporate Director of Communities and Regenertion up to the value of £100k. (iii) no grant shall be withdrawn or reduced by officers if the receiving body has received a grant from the Council for each of the last five years for the same purpose unless such withdrawal is due to the fact that the body no longer meets the relevant grant criteria or conditions of grant. (iv) the grant criteria has been approved by the Cabinet other appropriate body or person with appropriate authority. (v) no grant shall be made by officers from the council's Voluntary Sector Initiative Fund except with the prior approval of the Cabinet.

(b) Provided that where the grant or other financial assistance involves the distribution of funds received from a third party the grant or other financial assistance complies with the conditions under which the funds have been received by the Council.

10.2 Further legal advice will be provided in relation to individual projects as and when necessary and appropriate.

11.0 Equality Implications

11.1 Equality implications will be considered for individual projects at the appropriate time.

Related Documet:
Cost of Living Crisis & the Resident Support Fund Report made to Cabinet by the Strategic Director of Customer and Digital Services (20 June 2022)

Report sign off:

Peter Gadsdon
Corporate Director of Resident Services

Appendix 1

DRAFT LEAFLET PROPOSAL



Brent libraries are places you can come together, stay warm and socialise.

Library locations in Brent

Ealing Road Library
Kilburn Library
Kingsbury Library
Wembley Library
The Library at Willesden Green (including Brent Museum, Willesden Galley and the Exhibition Space)

For further information such as contact details, venue accessibility, parking and public transport routes go to **www.brent.gov.uk/libraries**.

Can your organisation offer a warm space?

If so, join the growing number of organisations signing up to the Warm Welcome Campaign.
www.warmwelcome.uk

Get help and advice from the Brent Hubs

Brent Hubs work across the borough with a range of local organisations and Brent services to provide information, advice and support for housing, benefits, Council Tax, employment, digital support and much more. They can also provide emergency support for residents in urgent need, including food and fuel vouchers.

Visit **www.brent.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help-and-advice** for more information.

Brent

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	Cabinet 14 November 2022
	Report from Corporate Director, Children and Young People

School Place Planning Strategy 2019–2023 Refresh

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	One: Appendix 1 Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 November 2022 Refresh
Background Papers:	N/A
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Shirley Parks Interim Director, Safeguarding, Partnerships and Strategy 020 8937 4259 Shirley.parks@brent.gov.uk Michelle Gwyther, Interim Head of Forward Planning, Performance and Partnerships 020 8937 2499 Michelle.Gwyther@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report provides Cabinet with a refresh of the School Place Planning Strategy 2019-2023 approved by Cabinet in November 2018.

2.0 Recommendations

That Cabinet:

2.1 Approves the refresh of the School Place Planning Strategy 2019-2023 provided as Appendix 1.

2.2 Notes that Planning Areas have been reviewed to align with the new ward boundaries and that Planning Area 5 has been divided into two Planning Areas to support analysis of school places in the south of the borough.

2.3 Notes current forecasts for primary and secondary places indicate a fall in demand the short term, with larger impacts on some planning areas than others.

2.4 Notes there remains significant and increasing demand for places that meet the needs of children and young people with SEND aged 0-25, and the planned strategies for addressing this need (including the SEN Capital Programme of £44.19m approved by Cabinet in January 2022).

2.5 Notes the reported impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Early Years provision and the strategies to support recovery in the sector.

3.0 Detail

3.1 In November 2018 Cabinet approved the Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2019-2023. The annual refresh of the strategy is provided as Appendix 1.

3.2 The School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 presents the objectives and operating principles that underpin the Council's approach to school organisation to deliver high quality education provision to support the best outcomes for Brent children. The Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2019 - 2023 sets the following expectations:

- All Brent schools are good or outstanding, with an increased proportion of schools outstanding over the duration of this strategy
- All Brent schools thrive in effective partnerships with other schools, promoting resilience and mutual support
- The Council and schools work together to meet the challenge of providing sufficient school places
- The delivery of sufficient school places enables the achievement of the aims and objectives of the Brent Strategic Framework for School Effectiveness 2017-2022
- All schools operate in good quality, safe premises
- Children are educated close to home
- Schools work with the local communities they serve
- The Council and schools work in partnership to effectively meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- The Council and schools make efficient use of resources.

3.3 The refresh of the Brent School Place Planning Strategy 2019-2023 provides an updated assessment of school place demand across the borough based on the latest pupil projections from the Greater London Authority (GLA). The GLA population projection models are updated and revised annually as new methods or data become available, to ensure projections provide the best estimates of future population based on current available inputs.

3.4 The GLA projections are informed by centrally held demographic data, such as the Office of National Statistics (ONS) census data and fertility and birth rates, as well as locally held information such as migration patterns and planned housing growth provided by the Local Authority. The methodology also takes account of the percentage of children who historically move into the following academic year in an area and are therefore driven by the number of pupils on roll in the January 2022 school census. The GLA projections are an indicator of need refreshed annually, taking into account changes in any key factors such as the birth rate, the new housing trajectory or migration patterns. The projections will therefore reflect the impacts of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic on local populations. Given that it is difficult to predict migration patterns, the GLA has provided Brent with variant population models to consider in planning places. Of the variant models, the School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 November 2022 refresh includes the projections that assume the highest in-migration.

3.5 This is the final refresh of the 2019-2023 School Place Planning Strategy. The local authority will develop a new five-year School Place Planning Strategy for 2024-2028.

4.0 Planning Area Review

4.1 The Council has a duty to provide a “reasonable offer” of a school place to all children residing in the borough. In the primary phase a “reasonable offer” is one within 2 miles of home for children under 8 years old and three miles for secondary aged children. By dividing the borough into planning areas officers can more easily ensure places are provided near to where children live and therefore to meet our statutory duty. However, they are only a guide to help officers and in reality children can travel across planning areas to attend school, and children may also attend school in a different borough to the one in which they live. Demand for school places can also be highly localised as parents seek entry to schools perceived as popular.

4.2 Five Planning Areas have been used to date for planning primary school places, using major roads such as the North Circular, East Lane and Forty Lane as boundaries since 2005. Although geographically similar in size, the planning areas varied in terms of the number of primary schools they covered. Three larger secondary planning areas were set in 2019 predominantly aligned to the five Primary Planning Area borders.

4.3 In line with DfE guidance ‘Local Authority Pupil Planning Areas Guide for local authorities September 2021’, the boundaries of all planning areas (primary and secondary) have been revised to adhere to the new 2022 ward boundaries rather than major roads. Aligning the planning area boundaries to the new 2022 ward boundaries will support more reliable forecasting of school place demand, as the GLA projections are based on ward data.

4.4 A new Primary Planning Area 6 has been established by splitting Primary Planning Area 5 into two planning areas. Primary Planning Area 5 is the most populous of the five Planning Areas with 25 primary schools, compared to an

average of 10 in other areas. Dividing schools in the south of the borough into two Primary Planning Areas will allow improved analysis of supply and demand, in particular of the schools closest to inner London and the Camden/Westminster borders and the South Kilburn regeneration area.

5.0 Primary Place Need

5.1 Primary demand has been reducing since September 2017. The latest Greater London Authority (GLA) projections (based on January 2021 school census) indicates demand for Reception will continue to decrease over the next few years. At a borough level, Brent has sufficient capacity to meet forecast demand for mainstream primary places and maintain 5% spare places to ensure there are sufficient places to respond to in-year movement and migration or any unforeseen increase in demand. However, all planning areas are showing sustained lower demand than available places, resulting in a significant number of spare places in some areas. While this means that overall parents will have an increased choice of places, reduced intakes can present organisational challenges for schools.

5.2 Over the past few years, the local authority has been working with schools to put in place strategies to manage changing demand and to support schools to ensure the sustainability of provision. Measures to support reduced intakes include temporarily reducing admission numbers or placing an informal cap on admission numbers and repurposing spare capacity, for example, to provide Additionally Resourced Provision for children with Special Educational Needs (SEND).

5.3 The sustained reduction in primary demand and the resulting level of spare places means that ad-hoc measures may not be sufficient to support the sustainability of schools longer term and a more formal review of supply and demand by Planning Areas is required to identify solutions. A School Place Planning Working Group is being established that will include officers and school representatives to lead this work.

6.0 Secondary Place Need

6.1 The latest GLA secondary forecasts project a fall in demand for year 7 places in the short term before demand returns to current levels. The 2022 forecasts confirm the position there will be sufficient capacity to meet forecast demand and provide the required 5% spare places in Year 7 to manage any forecast in-year growth and any unforeseen increase in demand up to at least 2030/31. This includes capacity that will be provided by The North Brent School (180 places per year group). The school will move to its permanent site in Neasden in 2023, and has set its Published Admission Number (PAN) as 60 since 2020 to manage on a temporary site.

6.2 Across Brent in-year demand for secondary places is expected to continue to increase. Brent is working with secondary schools who admit fewer children or have published admission numbers lower than the capacity their building could support to ensure these children can be offered places.

7.0 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision Place Need

7.1 Despite overall lower pupil projections, demand for places that meet the needs of children and young people with SEND is continuing to increase. This is in part due to overall population growth, but also increasing diagnosis and the extension of services to children and young people aged 0-25 with SEND.

7.2 In January 2022, 2938 children and young people had ECHPs compared to 2784 the previous year. During the last two academic years a focus has been on developing the capacity of mainstream schools in Brent to identify pupils with SEN needs earlier through the Brent graduated approach framework and the development of the capacity of school staff to meet needs through the SEN Intervention Fund. The impact of this is beginning to gain traction as the numbers of pupils on SEN support is beginning to increase and requests for an EHCP rose by only 5% in 2021 compared to 15% in 2020. Furthermore, in February 2022 69% of pupils with SEND were in mainstream settings, compared to 48% in 2020. This work is being extended into early years settings, ensuring needs are identified earlier and enabling more effective specialist place planning.

7.3 In 2021 the highest number of new EHC Plans were issued to children age 5 to 10, who represent 39.9% of the whole Brent cohort of children and young people with an EHC Plan. This means that increased cohorts of primary children with EHC Plans will be moving through to the secondary phase over the next five years.

7.4 Despite an increase in special school places over the past three years, there remain insufficient local places for Brent children with SEND for children of both primary and secondary age. In January 2022 Cabinet approved a capital investment programme of £44m to provide an additional 400 special places, including a new Special School, expansions of existing special schools and new Additionally Resourced Provisions. Until these come on stream, Brent will continue to be reliant on sourcing places in out-of-borough maintained special schools or independent schools or colleges.

7.5 There is a need to develop additional 16-25 SEND provision to meet the needs of young people aged 16-25 with complex learning difficulties. Working with parents, young people and partners including Further Education colleges, consideration is being given to a 16-25 Skills Resource Centre that would support young people locally to develop their independence and participate in Brent community life.

7.6 The Council has a statutory duty to provide an appropriate full-time education for pupils who have been permanently excluded from school or who are otherwise without a mainstream school. The council provides support to Brent schools to reduce the number of exclusions, with a focus on early identification and prevention strategies working closely alongside pastoral teams in mainstream settings. Where pupils have been excluded or require provision

that includes a vocational element to best meet their needs, Brent and local schools commission places for children and young people in Alternative Provision both in and out of the borough. Alongside Brent River College and Ashley College, the Roundwood School and Community Centre that opened in January 2021, is providing places for secondary aged children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs that cannot be met within mainstream schools.

8.0 Early Years

8.1 Under the Childcare Act 2006, local authorities have a statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare for the needs of most working parents/carers in their area. There are 300 early years providers in the borough and a good balance of free entitlement places across 248 providers of different types. Take-up of free entitlement places in 2022 for Brent has increased at 57% for eligible 2 year olds (compared with 49% in 2021), and 77% for the 3 and 4 year old entitlement (compared to 74% in 2021, against a national average of 92%).

8.2 Settings have reported reduced demand for private hours and while take up of the free entitlements has increased this year compared with 2021, numbers have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels and are being affected by cost of living concerns. This is continuing to cause concern among some Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) providers, with many worried about their long-term financial viability. A number of actions are planned to support provider recovery. These include a provider business support programme with monthly workshops covering pressure points such as recruitment and retention and how to market a business. Ward level outreach work across the borough is promoting the take-up of free entitlements to families.

8.3 There continues to be evidence of increased numbers of children with SEND accessing specialist nursery places. Alongside the specialist places at Willow Nursery School, the Council is continuing to work with partners to ensure flexibility in the early years system to help meet the needs of parents of children with SEND, alongside the challenge of the 30 hour offer.

9.0 Financial Implications

9.1 Mainstream school places are funded from the annual Dedicated School Grant (DSG) based on pupil numbers as per the October school census in the preceding year. This means that, although there is a time lag, the revenue cost of mainstream pupil growth is recognised and funded by the DfE.

9.2 School budgets are devolved to respective school governing boards but are under pressure from real terms funding reductions to the Dedicated School Grant (DSG). As schools are funded on the basis of pupil numbers, it is likely smaller schools and those with falling numbers on roll will find it most difficult to balance their budgets in the medium term. Larger and growing schools are more likely to successfully manage the funding reductions.

9.3 Expanding funded high needs provision will have revenue implications, as it is funded from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). In order to help manage the financial pressure on the High Needs block, new in-borough provision must replace current out-of-borough arrangements at lower cost. Reducing out-of-borough provision will also help mitigate the financial pressure on the transport budgets held in the General Fund to transport children and young people to out of borough provisions.

9.4 The SEN Capital Programme is expected to deliver 427 SEND places and reduce the need to send children to schools out of borough, which will reduce the financial pressure on the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant by £5.9m each year. The projects within the programme are expected to be completed by 2024.

9.5 Basic Need capital grant and the Special School Capital Grant are not time bound or ring-fenced and can be used for any capital purpose. However, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) has stated it is expected to be used for investment in schools, joining up with other capital resources when it is beneficial for schools to do so.

9.6 The nature of SEND education means the development of additional places presents additional complexities, and thus higher costs than primary expansions. Predicting the future costs of providing places remains inherently difficult to forecast. The nature of any construction work required to provide additional school places, combined with the site location and layout all affect the cost per place. As proposals to address the forecast demand set out in the School Place Planning Strategy are developed, further reports will be provided to Cabinet with relevant financial information as required.

10.0 Legal Implications

10.1 The council has a general statutory duty under Education Legislation to ensure there are sufficient school places available to meet the needs of the population in its area. The council must promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential and increase parental choice. To discharge this duty, the council has to undertake a planning function to ensure the supply of school places balances the demand for them.

10.2 In addition to securing school places for pupils aged five to 16, the local authority has related statutory responsibilities in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) up to the age of 25, where the council has to make suitable provision to meet their needs and early years provision, has responsibility for childcare sufficiency, for provision for disadvantaged two year olds and all three and four year olds, as well as children's centers, and ensure all overlaps with school provision.

10.3 As a contingency, to support the admission to school of children as quickly as possible, the In Year Fair Access Protocol allows for the admission of children over schools' planned admission numbers in the event a school place is not

available. Schools are not required to maintain classes over the planned admission number (PAN) but revert to the usual admission number when children leave.

10.4 Statutory processes should be followed for any proposed enlargement of the school premises that would increase the capacity of the school by both more than 30 pupils and 25 per cent or 200 pupils (whichever is the lesser). Governing boards can propose smaller expansions without the need to follow the statutory process. Proposals may also be required for some cumulative expansions. A review of any earlier enlargements that were made without the need for statutory proposals would need to be made before determining if the statutory process should be followed. This means adding those enlargements made:

- in the 5 year period that precedes the proposed expansion date
- since the last approved statutory proposal to enlarge the school (within this 5 year period)
- exclude any temporary enlargements (i.e. where the enlargement was in place for less than 3 years)
- add the making permanent of any temporary enlargement.

10.5. The above provision, which appeared in 2007 legislation, has been removed from 2013 regulations. The status of this change has not been tested in the courts. It is therefore advisable the Council still takes such earlier enlargements into account in order to avoid the risk of a public law challenge until the legal position is clarified.

10.6. Under the current admissions code children can be admitted above the Published Admission Number (PAN). For community/voluntary controlled schools the council as the admission authority must consult the Governing Board of the school where it proposes to either increase or keep the same PAN.

10.7. Under Section 19 of the Education Act 2006 and School Organisation Regulations, the council can decide to propose an enlargement or amalgamation, follow the statutory process and resolve to do so without requiring the consent of the Governing Board whose redress would be to object to the Schools Adjudicator.

10.8. Under section 37 of the Education Act 2011 if the council considers a new school needs to be established in its area, the council must seek proposals for the establishment of an academy.

10.9. Given there is a presumption any new school site provided by a local authority would be for a sponsored academy, the council would in general be expected to grant a 125-year lease at a peppercorn rent to the academy. This approach is intended to be consistent with the existing guidance on community schools converting to academies where a local authority grants to the new academy a 125 lease of the community school site at a peppercorn rent. If the council is asked by the Department of Education to provide a new site for a free school, it would also be expected to grant a peppercorn lease to the free school in accordance with Department of Education Guidance updated January 2014.

11.0 Equality Implications

11.1. Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a duty 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; advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between those who share a "protected characteristic" and those who do not. This duty is known as the public sector equality duty (PSED). The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. All providers commissioned to deliver public services on behalf of or in partnership with Brent Council are required to comply with the PSED and the Council's Equality and Diversity policies.

11.2. Having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.

11.3. There is no prescribed manner in which the council must exercise its public sector equality duty but having an adequate evidence base for its decision is necessary.

11.4. The School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 aims to ensure there are sufficient and suitable school places for all Brent children and their diverse and changing needs are met including special education needs. It also aims to raise the education standards for all and address inequality due to social disadvantage, disability (including multiple complex needs) and/or other protected characteristics, and contributes to the delivery of the Council's equality duties.

11.5. The findings and the equality analysis screening of the School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 show a slowdown in demand for primary school places and a short term increase for secondary school places before returning to current levels. Demand for Special Education Needs school places in the borough is also increasing and the strategy identifies the need for additional local places to meet their needs.

12.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

12.1 The Lead Member for Children, Young People and Schools has been briefed about school place planning issues.

12.2 Ward members will be consulted on the impact of this strategy where mainstream planning area capacity is reviewed or where additional SEND places are being considered.

12.3 School representatives will be involved in discussions about school places through the School Place Planning Working Group.

12.4 Any proposed changes to provision would be subject to public consultation with parents and stakeholders.

13.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

13.1 Any future changes to provision could impact on staffing and the use of school buildings.

Report sign off:

Nigel Chapman
Corporate Director Children & Young People

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT
SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING STRATEGY

2019 - 2023

Refresh - November 2022

BRENT SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING STRATEGY 2019 – 23

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1. Introduction

As the champion for all children and young people in the borough, Brent Council has statutory duties to promote the wellbeing, safety and achievement of Brent children and to promote high standards that help all children to fulfil their potential. Brent Council also holds the statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places for Brent children.

This strategy sets out how Brent will deliver sufficient school places in the context of the Council's statutory duties, ensuring school place delivery supports the achievement of the best outcomes for Brent children.

1.1 Brent Context

Brent is one of the most culturally diverse areas in England. The dynamic mix of communities continues to enrich and inform the social, economic and cultural make-up of the borough. The largest ethnic groups of statutory school in Brent age are: Asian Indian (18%), White British (9%), White Eastern European (7%), Black Somali (7%), Black Caribbean (5%), Asian Pakistani (4%) and Afghan (3%). In addition to new arrivals, socio-economic pressures placed on many of Brent's families combined with a housing stock which relies heavily on privately rented accommodation, contribute to relatively high levels of pupil turnover in many of our schools. The proportion of Brent pupils in primary and secondary schools who are disadvantaged is 21%, below the national figure of 25% and London average of 28% (based on pupil premium allocations).

1.2 School Effectiveness in Brent

Over the last five years, Brent's self-improving system has become firmly embedded in the borough, with a shared responsibility for school effectiveness and improvement between the Local Authority and schools.

As a result, the quality of education provision is high. At the end of the 2021-22 academic year, Ofsted had judged the overall effectiveness of 96.5% of Brent schools as good or outstanding. This put Brent 9.5% percentage points above the national average of 87% and 3.5% percentage points above the London average of 93%. All nursery and pupil referral units and secondary schools including all-through schools have been judged good or outstanding. 96.7% of Brent primary schools and 75% of special schools are judged good or outstanding.

In 2017, Brent's Strategic School Effectiveness Partnership Board approved a 'Strategic Framework for School Effectiveness in Brent 2017-20'. The Framework was updated and extended to 2022 in the context of the anticipated Education White Paper. The Framework sets the following priorities which will be supported by the delivery of this Place Planning Strategy:

- Sustaining Ofsted good and outstanding judgements for all schools
- Raising the standards and progress of pupils at the lowest performing schools
- Raising the attainment of priority groups
- Maintaining high quality education provision for all pupils

Within this context, the School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 presents the objectives and operating principles that underpin the council's approach to school organisation to deliver the best quality of education provision to support the best outcomes for Brent children. The

strategy outlines the projected demand for school places in Brent based on the latest forecasts. These are updated annually to ensure any new factors that impact on pupil forecasts are taken into account and refine the council's understanding of future place need.

The original School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 set the following expectations:

School Place Planning Strategy Measures of success

- All Brent schools are good or outstanding, with an increased proportion of schools outstanding, over the duration of this strategy
- All Brent schools thrive in effective partnerships with other schools, promoting resilience and mutual support
- The Council and schools work together to meet the challenge of providing sufficient school places
- The delivery of sufficient school places enables the achievement of the aims and objectives of the Brent Strategic Framework for School Effectiveness 2017-2022
- All schools operate in good quality, safe premises
- Children are educated close to home
- Schools work with the local communities they serve
- The Council and schools work in partnership to effectively meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- The Council and schools make efficient use of resources.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 Demand for Mainstream Provision

Much of the focus on demand for mainstream provision is on places in Reception for infant and primary schools and Year 7 for secondary schools. These year groups reflect key points when demand patterns can shift. However, planning for school places also takes into account in-year growth as a result of in-migration and new housing.

2.1.1 Demand for Primary Places

Following unprecedented growth in demand for primary school places in Brent from 2006-2015, demand for Reception places across the Borough plateaued in September 2016 and has reduced since September 2017. The latest Greater London Authority (GLA) projections (based on January 2022 school census) indicate demand will fall slightly over the next five years.

This means Brent will continue to have a high number of spare places across the system. While at a borough-level there is sufficient capacity to meet any unforeseen increase in demand for mainstream primary places, some schools are increasingly feeling the impact of low demand. The local authority will continue to support particular schools and groups of schools where necessary in managing the impacts of reduced pupil numbers with measures such as temporarily reducing admission numbers or repurposing accommodation. The School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 identifies a number of Primary Planning Areas that will be reviewed over the next year due to their particularly high level of spare places to identify solutions that will ensure provision is sustainable over the next five years (see Section 6).

In other areas, where there are a number of new housing developments, growth in demand is anticipated that could change school place demand patterns. Brent's housing target as set by the London Plan has increased by over 50%, requiring the delivery of 23,250 new homes by 2028/29. To meet this target, new growth areas have been identified including at Northwick Park, Neasden Stations and Staples Corner. These areas, together with the existing growth areas (Alperton, South Kilburn, Wembley, Church End and Burnt Oak Colindale), will see the vast majority of housing and population growth. As such, these areas are being kept under close review, as well as Wembley Park where demand is expected to continue to grow as new housing becomes occupied. Additional demand is also likely to be generated from growth happening outside of Brent, notably at the London Plan Opportunity Areas including the Old Oak Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC), Colindale, Kensal Canalside and Brent Cross.

The Council will continue to work closely with its neighbouring authorities to ensure any localised increased demand for school places can be met. Forecasts from previous years throughout the lifespan of this strategy projected demand overall increasing as a result of these growth areas. However this has now been offset somewhat by a reduction in the birth rate (which is common across London) as well as higher levels of out-migration due in part to Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.1.2 Demand for Secondary Places

Demand for places in Year 7 has been increasing steadily since 2017 and this was expected to continue as the significant growth in pupil numbers in the primary phase in Brent progressed into the secondary phase. However, the latest GLA forecasts indicate demand will fall over the next three years before returning to the current level. Previous updates of the School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 identified the need for additional secondary school capacity beyond that being provided by the new North Brent School, which opened in September 2020 and will provide 900 secondary places when it moves to its permanent site (at Chancel House in Neasden) in 2023. The 2022 forecasts confirm the position that there will be sufficient secondary school places to meet forecast demand up to 2028/29 in all year groups, including a 5% operating margin to meet forecast growth in-year and any unforeseen demand.

A number of secondary schools previously expressed interest in expanding should the position as set out in the current forecasts change and additional places be required to meet demand. It is not anticipated, however, that any further expansion of secondary capacity will be required to meet future demand.

2.2 Special Provision

Despite lower pupil forecasts for mainstream places, demand for places that meet the needs of children and young people with SEND is increasing due to increased diagnosis and the expansion of the age range to 25. The prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) continues to rise (currently 43% of all children and young people with an EHCP) and, as more children survive premature birth or severe disabilities, the number of children of school age presenting with significant additional needs has been increasing year on year since 2017.

During the last two academic years a focus has been on developing the capacity of mainstream schools in Brent to identify pupils with SEN needs earlier. Through the Brent graduated approach framework and through the development of the capacity of school staff

to meet needs through the SEN Intervention Fund, earlier support is being provided to children. The impact of this is beginning to gain traction as the numbers of pupils on SEN support is beginning to increase and requests for EHCP rose by only 5% in 2021 compared to 15% in 2020. Furthermore, in February 2022 69% of pupils with SEND were in mainstream settings, compared to 48% in 2020. This work is being extended into early years settings, ensuring needs are identified earlier and enabling more effective specialist place planning.

There remains insufficient local places for Brent children with SEND for children of both primary and secondary age and the 16-25 age group. There is a need to meet this demand and reduce dependence on out-of-borough independent special schools, which are expensive and can mean stressful journeys for vulnerable children and limit the access of children and their families to support networks. In January 2022 Brent Council approved £44m of capital investment for 427 additional specialist places across mainstream and specialist provision, including a new secondary special school. The expectation is that these places will be made available over the next two academic years.

There is a need for the borough to develop post-16 SEND provision to meet demand for places for young people with SEND, in particular young people aged 16-25 with complex learning difficulties. Working with parents, young people and partners, including FE colleges, consideration is being given to developing a 16-25 Skills resource provision that would support young people locally to promote their independence and participation in community life (see section 8.5).

Alongside Brent River College and Ashley College, the Roundwood School and Community Centre that opened in January 2021 provides places for secondary aged children with social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) that cannot be met within mainstream schools. This provision offers access to mental well-being therapeutic support, and vocational options alongside a core academic curriculum. Brent commissions places for primary aged pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMHD) from an independent school, the Corner School, which opened in 2018 to cater for up to 35 primary aged children. The school provides access to mental well-being therapeutic support and helps reduce the number of primary aged children with SEMH needs being placed out of the borough.

2.3 Childcare and Early Education

Alongside the statutory duty to provide school places the Council has an allied duty to secure sufficient childcare and early education. In addition to the existing entitlements of 15 hours of free early education for eligible two year olds and all 3 and 4 year olds, in September 2017, a statutory entitlement to 30 hours of free childcare and early education for all 3 and 4 year olds from working families was introduced. Monitoring and review of sufficiency of provision and take-up is key, not only to maintain the momentum of recovery following the pandemic, but also to monitor the impact on existing 15 hour places for two, three and four year olds as take-up of these has not followed the upward trajectory of the extended entitlement.

Since September 2017, the Council has administered the free entitlement for both schools and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers. This enables a full overview of early years provision, including take up across the Borough and at ward level and allows development of targeted actions to address gaps. While many PVI providers have shown signs of recovery following the pandemic, they are now reporting the impact of the cost of living crisis and this could affect overall sufficiency in the months to come as many settings are concerned

about their long-term financial viability. Implementation of the new entitlement in Brent has been successful and Section 9 of this strategy provides more detail.

2.4 Post-16 Provision

The Education and Skills Act 2008 requires all young people in England to continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday. The Council works in partnership with schools and the local Further Education college, the College of North West London (part of United Colleges), to ensure young people aged 16-18 and up to the age of 25 for those who have an Education, Health and Care Plan have access to a range of opportunities to continue their education or training at a wide range of post-16 providers or through apprenticeships.

3. School Place Planning - Frequently Asked Questions

3.1 The Council's Role in School Place Planning

1. What is the Council's role in providing school places?

In addition to the statutory duties set out in the introduction above, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to act as commissioners, rather than providers of schools places. The Council has a statutory responsibility to ensure there are sufficient school places available for all Brent children and young people who need one. The Council also has overarching responsibilities for school admissions, co-ordinating admissions at Reception, Year 3 (from infant to junior school) and at secondary transfer in Year 7, as well as in-year admissions and ensuring that a school place is offered for any child is not already on roll at a suitable school.

In addition to securing school places for pupils aged five to 16, the Council has related statutory responsibilities in relation to:

- **Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities** (SEND) where the Council has to make suitable provision to meet their needs
- **Early years provision**, where the Council has responsibility for childcare sufficiency and for provision for disadvantaged two year olds and all three and four year olds
- **Post 16 education and training** where the Council leads the local 16 to 19 partnership and takes overall responsibility for the sufficiency and suitability of provision, so all young people can stay in education or training until at least their 18th birthday.

The Local Authority works with all schools and multi-academy trusts to deliver its statutory duties, as well as local trusts and Dioceses and the Regional Schools Commissioner where this involves academies and free schools.

2. Can the Council open new schools?

It is not possible for the Council to open new community schools, unless the school is formed by an amalgamation of existing infant and junior schools (Education Act 2011). All new schools are now academies or free schools approved by the Secretary of State. Once the Council identifies a need for a new school it may use one of the following two routes to establish it:

- The **academy presumption** route whereby the Council would put forward a school proposal which it would advertise and promote to potential academy sponsors. Under this route, the Council would supply the site and use its own capital to build the school.

- The Council could 'support' a **free school** promoter to apply to the DfE to build a school, which could be on a Council owned site, depending on whether the DfE has an open application round for specific types of school. The decision would be entirely at the discretion of the DfE.

3. Who decides if a school will close, expand or amalgamate?

The Council has the power to instruct community schools to expand, but not academies, foundation or voluntary aided schools. The Council also has the power to close community schools or to require them to amalgamate. These are not powers Brent has exercised hitherto as the aim, wherever possible, is to work collaboratively with schools. In the case of Academies any expansion must be approved by the Regional Schools Commissioner.

3.2 Pupil Projections

1. Where do the projections come from?

The projections Brent and most other London authorities use to inform place planning are provided by the Greater London Authority (GLA):

- The GLA projections are informed both by centrally held demographic data, such as census, fertility rate and birth rate data provided by the Office of National Statistics (ONS), together with locally held information on migration patterns and planned housing growth (ward level housing development data provided by the Borough).
- The projection model calculates the number of children resident in each ward who are expected to attend each school by each national curriculum year from Reception to Year 11. The number of children projected for each new intake is calculated as an average of the proportion of children in those wards that attended the school in the previous 3 years multiplied by the ward level age population data. This helps to smooth out any unusual variations that are unlikely to reoccur each year. For other year groups the model calculates the current proportion of children in the ward attending the school and applies this to the ward level population data. School level projections are then aggregated to planning area projections and Borough totals.
- The methodology also takes account of the percentage of children who historically move into the following academic year in an area. This is particularly important in Brent where there is a high level of pupil mobility and migration to schools in other boroughs.

2. Are the projections accurate?

The GLA projections are a good indicator of place need, but they remain a statistical model which should be seen as a valuable tool rather than a definitive position. There are a number of factors which can lead to the projections being revised up or down:

- Underlying data, such as birth rates and migration patterns and the impact of local regeneration projects can change significantly in a short period of time.
- Secondary projections are more secure as they largely take account of children already in the system. However, the percentage of children who historically move into the following academic year is a particularly important factor in Brent which is currently a net exporter of secondary pupils. This may change if pressures on secondary places in neighbouring boroughs lead to an increase in demand beyond those in the current projections.

- The Local Authority monitors both current and emerging local and national factors, such as Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic that can impact on school place demand by changing migration patterns. It is difficult to predict the impact of these factors on demand for school places and in particular demand from families of Eastern European origin. Demand at schools that serve these communities are closely monitored.

3. What are primary planning areas and why do we have them?

The Council has a duty to provide a "reasonable offer" of a school place to all children. In the primary phase a "reasonable offer" is one within 2 miles of home for children under 8 years old. By dividing the Borough into six primary planning areas officers can more easily ensure places are provided near to where children live. However, they are only a guide to help officers. In reality children can travel across planning areas to attend school, particularly when they live close to the borders.

4. What are secondary planning areas?

Secondary aged children can be expected to travel longer distances to school. A reasonable offer for a secondary place is one within 3 miles of home, which given the size of Brent and the good transport links mean children can travel to any school. However, secondary planning areas allow the Council to understand localised pressures for schools and where additional places would help more children attend a school near to where they live.

5. What do the projections indicate in the secondary phase?

The January 2022 projections indicate demand for Year 7 places, across the borough, will decrease over the next two years followed by a gradual return to the current demand level. Demand has effectively plateaued after a gradual rise over recent years.

6. How does the Council forecast demand for special provision?

In order to understand demand for special school places, the Council analyses current and historical data to track trends in the number of children and young people aged 0-25 with EHCPs. This includes assessment of pupil numbers by year group and type of need, as well as the type of provision attended. Analysis of trends is used to predict likely future patterns of demand.

3.3 Providing Additional Places

1. Is it better to provide temporary or permanent classes?

Generally it is more cost effective to provide permanent places if they are needed for the longer term, but there are times where site and time constraints mean this is not possible. There are also occasions where the bulge in numbers only applies to one cohort of students. In these circumstances, it is better to provide a temporary bulge class.

Expansion in the secondary phase is more complex than primary, partly because specialist facilities (e.g. sport, science, technology) may need to be provided alongside standard classrooms. Students also need to access these facilities during the building process which makes decant more challenging and can impact on cost.

2. Is it better to expand existing schools or provide new schools?

Where additional school places are needed, the Council seeks to provide places that provide high quality provision. This could be through expanding existing schools or through new schools. There are benefits to both:

- Expanding existing schools that are judged to be good or better by Ofsted gives the Council greater confidence that provision will be good and it will be popular. It also helps to maintain stability in the existing school system. However, it is important the challenges of expansion are well managed to avoid impacting on standards in good or outstanding schools and on any particular groups of children and young people who are under-achieving.
- New schools offer a chance to provide new learning environments and to attract high quality providers. However, the Council does not control the provision of free schools. The Regional Schools Commissioner, acting on behalf of the Secretary of State, decides if a school should open. In a borough such as Brent there are also considerable challenges in finding sites for new schools.
- Expansions of existing provision are funded by the Council from Basic Need grant funding or the Special Provision Capital Fund for Additionally Resourced Provision and SEND units for pupils with EHCPs. New free schools are largely funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

3.4 Spare places

1. How does the Council manage spare places?

When demand for school places falls significantly and the number of spare places increases, this can cause difficulties for individual schools in particular with regards to managing school budgets. Where this occurs, the Council analyses a range of local data, including recent intakes, parental preferences, availability of places within the local area and school standards, before recommending strategies that support schools within a local area to ensure the sustainability of provision. Strategies could include reducing admission numbers on a temporary basis, encouraging schools to work collaboratively to support the efficient use of budgets and repurposing spare capacity, for example to establish Additionally Resourced Provision to support children with SEND. From autumn 2022, a School Place Planning Working Group, comprising officers and headteacher representatives, will be leading reviews in Primary Planning Areas where the number of spare places are particularly high.

4. Brent's Operating Principles for School Organisation

The following operating principles underpin Brent's approach to school place planning.

Principle 1: We will work with schools to put in place strategies to manage changing demand and support schools within a local area to ensure the sustainability of provision.

Principle 2: We will promote federations between schools, both to address any quality issues and to address the future viability of one form of entry primary schools, and will work towards the amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools.

Principle 3: We will build inclusive provision into expansion and new school proposals and into area reviews of capacity and work with neighbouring authorities on the planning of special school places.

Principle 4: We will only undertake expansions at high quality schools where leadership is secure.

Principle 5: We will seek to expand schools that have high levels of parental preferences for admission, in particular schools regularly oversubscribed.

Principle 6: We will seek to minimise disruption to schools during any changes to provision, paying particular attention to impacts on vulnerable groups, and will support school leaders to manage the challenges.

Principle 7: We will expect expanded and re-structured schools generally to meet government guidance on space standards but will be prepared to consider innovative design solutions to achieve this.

Principle 8: We will develop local capacity to sponsor or promote new schools, working with academies in all phases.

Principle 9: We will consider how community benefits from school facilities can be maximised when we expand or build new schools and when we review provision.

Principle 10: We will consult with local communities as part of the planning process to minimise/mitigate the impact of new school developments.

Principle 11: We will plan secondary school places by planning area, but also on a borough wide basis to make sure the offer meets community needs.

Principle 12: We will continue planning primary places using planning areas.

Principle 13: We will actively consider two-site schools and large schools where there is leadership and management capacity and where this is a genuine expansion and not a new school.

Principle 14: We will not currently seek to develop more all-through schools.

Principle 15: We will consider expanding voluntary aided schools only where there is local Brent demand, working with the relevant partners.

Principle 16: After assessing educational suitability, schemes for expansion or new schools will be judged in terms of value for money, deliverability and strategic fit with wider investment programmes.

5. The Need for Secondary Places

5.1 Demand Overview

The significant growth seen in the primary phase since 2010 began to move through to the secondary phase in 2016. Table 1 shows secondary projections by year group against capacity. Year 7 intakes are forecast to decrease gradually over the next few years before returning to their current level. The forecasts continue to indicate individual cohorts will grow as they move through the school system. This has been a consistent pattern in Brent and therefore capacity in all year groups will continue to be monitored to ensure there are sufficient available places.

Table 1: Secondary projections 2022 and capacity

		Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
2022/2023	Capacity	3568	3568	3628	3508	3508
	Projection	3250	3249	3333	3243	3257
	Surplus/Deficit	318	319	295	265	251
2023/2024	Capacity	3688	3688	3688	3688	3688
	Projection	3283	3254	3253	3353	3265
	Surplus/Deficit	405	434	435	335	423
2024/2025	Capacity	3688	3688	3688	3688	3688
	Projection	3165	3285	3259	3277	3384
	Surplus/Deficit	523	403	429	411	304
2025/2026	Capacity	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688	3,688
	Projection	3135	3171	3289	3288	3320
	Surplus/Deficit	553	517	399	400	368
2026/2027	Capacity	3688	3688	3688	3688	3688
	Projection	3151	3149	3184	3319	3336
	Surplus/Deficit	537	539	504	369	352
2027/2028	Capacity	3688	3688	3688	3688	3688
	Projection	3216	3162	3166	3219	3367
	Surplus/Deficit	472	526	522	469	321
2028/2029	Capacity	3688	3688	3688	3688	3688
	Projection	3221	3227	3178	3201	3271
	Surplus/Deficit	467	461	510	487	417
2029/2030	Capacity	3688	3688	3688	3688	3688
	Projection	3200	3232	3241	3212	3248
	Surplus/Deficit	488	456	447	476	440
2030/2031	Capacity	3688	3688	3688	3688	3688
	Projection	3195	3211	3243	3272	3263
	Surplus/Deficit	493	477	445	416	425

The local authority's school place planning assumptions include an operating margin of 5% spare places to ensure there is sufficiency to support in-year pupil movement and forecast growth in pupil cohorts as they move through the system, as well as any unforeseen increase in demand. The planning assumption that all schools will fill to their current Published

Admission Numbers (PAN) or build capacity underpins the assessment of any need for additional places across the borough.

Table 2 shows Year 7 forecasts against current capacity and capacity to be provided by the North Brent School (from 2023/24). The School Place Planning Strategy 2019-23 update in November 2019 identified the need for an additional 4 forms of entry beyond that being provided by the North Brent School. However, since 2021 forecasts suggest there is no need for any additional secondary school capacity and there will be sufficient secondary school places to meet forecast demand up to 2030/31 in all year groups, including a 5% operating margin.

Table 2: Year 7 projections and planned capacity

Year	Year 7 projected intake	Year 7 places available	Surplus	Surplus
2022/23	3250	3568	318	9%
2023/24	3283	3688	405	11%
2024/25	3165	3688	523	14%
2025/26	3135	3688	553	15%
2026/27	3151	3688	537	15%
2027/28	3216	3688	472	13%
2028/29	3221	3688	467	13%
2029/30	3200	3688	488	13%
2030/31	3195	3688	493	13%

5.2 Actions to increase capacity

The North Brent School, which was approved by DfE in 2016 to provide 180 places per year (6 Form Entry), opened in September 2020 offering 4 forms of entry on the Wembley High Technology College site. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the construction industry, completion of the school's new permanent building site has been delayed. This has necessitated a temporary reduction to the published admission number for 2021/22 and 2022/23 from 180 to 60 places. The school expects to relocate in 2023 to its permanent site, the Chancel House site, close to the North Circular, which was selected by the ESFA after an extensive site search.

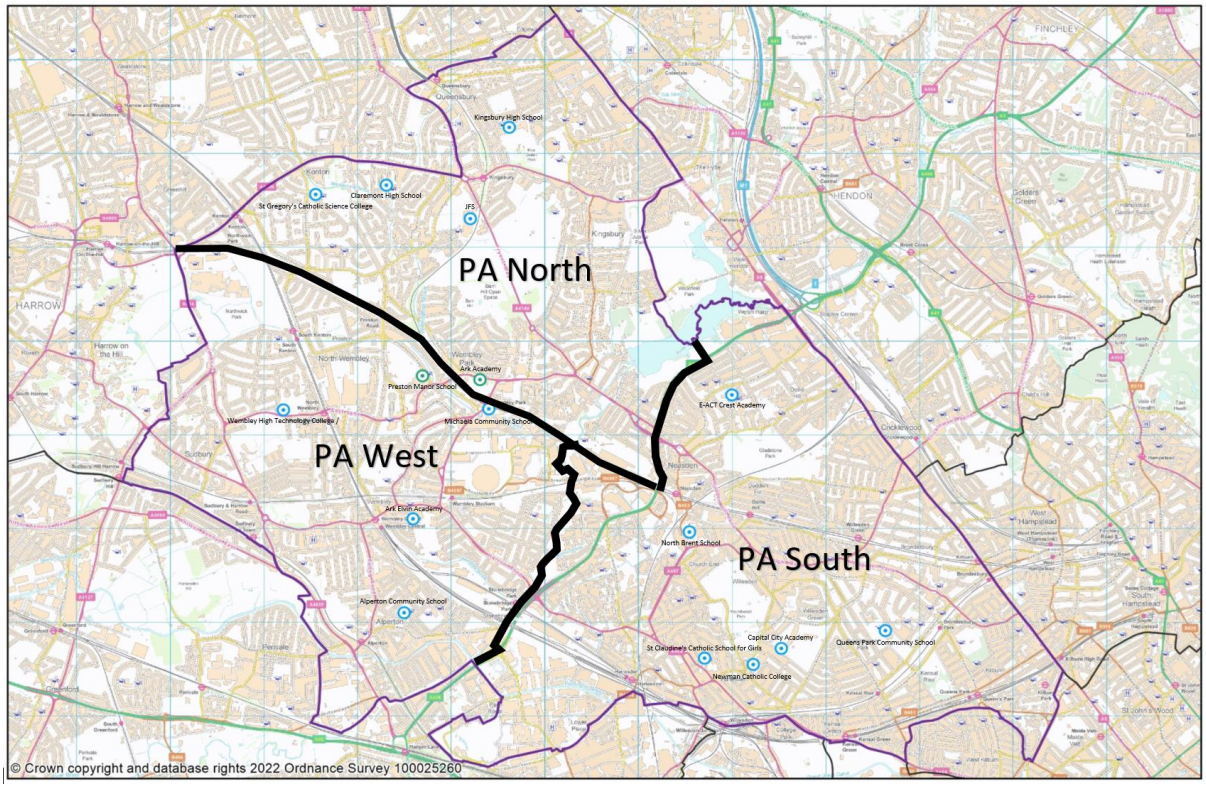
A number of secondary schools have previously expressed an interest in expanding should additional places be required to meet demand.

5.3 Secondary Planning Areas

Brent divides its secondary schools into 3 planning areas that reflect geographical groupings of schools – Secondary Planning Area North, Secondary Planning Area West and Secondary Planning Area South (Figure i).

The data by planning area suggest the greatest pressure on Year 7 places will be in the planning areas in the North and West, rather than in the South where the North Brent School will be located. However, this analysis reflects historical preference and school attendance patterns are expected to change in the future with the establishment of the North Brent School.

Figure i: Secondary Planning Areas



Secondary Planning Area North

Wards	Barnhill, Kenton, Kingsbury, Queensbury and Welsh Harp
Schools	Ark Academy, Claremont High School, JFS, Kingsbury High School and St Gregory's Catholic Science College

Demand: Based on historical preference patterns, demand for Year 7 places is expected to be at or around the capacity for the area. While a small shortfall is forecast in some years in some year groups, in reality pupils will travel to other secondary schools across the borough which will mitigate this. Planning Area North includes the Burnt Oak Colindale and Northwick Park growth areas.

Planned action: Currently there are no plans to expand mainstream provision in this area.

Table 3: Secondary Planning Area North 2022 projections and capacity

		Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
2021/2022	Capacity	1098	1098	1098	1098	1098
	Projections	1113	1069	1092	1081	1079
	Surplus/Deficit	-15	29	6	17	19
2022/2023	Capacity	1098	1098	1098	1098	1098
	Projections	1115	1113	1068	1099	1083
	Surplus/Deficit	-17	-15	30	-1	15
2023/2024	Capacity	1098	1098	1098	1098	1098
	Projections	1066	1113	1111	1076	1102
	Surplus/Deficit	32	-15	-13	22	-4
2024/2025	Capacity	1098	1098	1098	1098	1098
	Projections	1073	1068	1111	1121	1077
	Surplus/Deficit	25	30	-13	-23	21
2025/2026	Capacity	1098	1098	1098	1098	1098
	Projections	1062	1072	1068	1124	1123
	Surplus/Deficit	36	26	30	-26	-25
2026/2027	Capacity	1098	1098	1098	1098	1098
	Projections	1084	1061	1073	1081	1126
	Surplus/Deficit	14	37	25	17	-28
2027/2028	Capacity	1098	1098	1098	1098	1098
	Projections	1084	1085	1063	1086	1084
	Surplus/Deficit	14	13	35	12	14
2028/2029	Capacity	1098	1098	1098	1098	1098
	Projections	1075	1084	1085	1076	1086
	Surplus/Deficit	23	14	13	22	12
2029/2030	Capacity	1098	1098	1098	1098	1098
	Projections	1078	1073	1084	1097	1078
	Surplus/Deficit	20	25	14	1	20

Secondary Planning Area West

Wards	Alperton, Northwick Park, Preston, Sudbury, Tokyngton, Wembley Central, Wembley Hill and Wembley Park
Schools	Alperton Community School, Ark Elvin Academy, Michaela Community School, Preston Manor School and Wembley High Technology College

Demand: Secondary Planning Area West includes two major growth areas in Wembley Central and Alperton and demand for Year 7 places is expected to remain at or around capacity in this area. Wembley is set to drive the economic regeneration of Brent as a high quality, urban, connected and sustainable city quarter. Up to 15,000 new homes are planned around Wembley National Stadium and Wembley town centre up to 2041. Alperton is being promoted for mixed-use regeneration, which will include over 5000 new homes.

Planned action: Alperton Secondary School expanded by 2 forms of entry in 2018 using the school's Stanley Avenue site. Ark Elvin's school building provides accommodation for an admission number of 270. The school has recently reduced its PAN to 210, but has agreed to increase intake in response to demand. Surplus capacity in Secondary Planning Area South can be used where there is a small deficit in this planning area.

Table 4: Secondary Planning Area West 2022 projections and capacity

		Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
2021/2022	Capacity	1356	1356	1356	1356	1356
	Projections	1333	1327	1309	1331	1312
	Surplus/Deficit	23	29	47	25	44
2022/2023	Capacity	1356	1356	1356	1356	1356
	Projections	1359	1340	1334	1320	1351
	Surplus/Deficit	-3	16	22	36	5
2023/2024	Capacity	1356	1356	1356	1356	1356
	Projections	1321	1366	1349	1352	1353
	Surplus/Deficit	35	-10	7	4	3
2024/2025	Capacity	1356	1356	1356	1356	1356
	Projections	1302	1331	1374	1369	1393
	Surplus/Deficit	54	25	-18	-13	-37
2025/2026	Capacity	1356	1356	1356	1356	1356
	Projections	1314	1317	1343	1395	1413
	Surplus/Deficit	42	39	13	-39	-57
2026/2027	Capacity	1356	1356	1356	1356	1356
	Projections	1347	1329	1331	1366	1440
	Surplus/Deficit	9	27	25	-10	-84
2027/2028	Capacity	1356	1356	1356	1356	1356
	Projections	1359	1362	1343	1354	1411
	Surplus/Deficit	-3	-6	13	2	-55
2028/2029	Capacity	1356	1356	1356	1356	1356
	Projections	1347	1373	1376	1364	1399
	Surplus/Deficit	9	-17	-20	-8	-43
2029/2030	Capacity	1356	1356	1356	1356	1356
	Projections	1355	1363	1386	1397	1410
	Surplus/Deficit	1	-7	-30	-41	-54

Secondary Planning Area South

Wards	Brondesbury Park, Cricklewood & Mapesbury, Dollis Hill, Harlesden & Kensal Green, Kilburn, Roundwood, Queens Park, Stonebridge and Willesden Green
Schools	Capital City Academy, E-ACT Crest Academy, Newman Catholic College, North Brent School, Queens Park Community School and St Claudine's Catholic School for Girls

Demand: Planning Area South includes the Neasden Station, Staples Corner, Church End and South Kilburn growth areas. There are currently spare places in this planning area. Planning assumes all schools in this area with spare capacity will fill to their current Published Admission Numbers before any further additional capacity is required.

Planned action: The North Brent School opened in 2020 on a temporary site in Secondary Planning Area West offering 4 forms of entry. The school will provide 6 forms of entry when it moves to its permanent site in Secondary Planning Area South in 2023. The school is sponsored by the Wembley Multi-Academy Trust that includes Wembley High Technology College, an oversubscribed school. It is anticipated current preference patterns will change as pupils will travel from other areas to the school.

Table 5: Secondary Planning Area South 2022 projections and capacity

		Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
2021/2022	Capacity	1114	1114	1174	1054	1054
	Projections	804	852	933	830	864
	Surplus/Deficit	310	262	241	224	190
2022/2023	Capacity	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234
	Projections	809	801	851	934	831
	Surplus/Deficit	425	433	383	300	403
2023/2024	Capacity	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234
	Projections	777	804	800	849	930
	Surplus/Deficit	457	430	434	385	304
2024/2025	Capacity	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234
	Projections	762	772	802	797	849
	Surplus/Deficit	472	462	432	437	385
2025/2026	Capacity	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234
	Projections	776	759	774	800	799
	Surplus/Deficit	458	475	460	434	435
2026/2027	Capacity	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234
	Projections	784	771	761	773	802
	Surplus/Deficit	450	463	473	461	432
2027/2028	Capacity	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234
	Projections	777	780	772	761	775
	Surplus/Deficit	457	454	462	473	459
2028/2029	Capacity	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234
	Projections	778	774	781	771	763
	Surplus/Deficit	456	460	453	463	471
2029/2030	Capacity	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234
	Projections	763	773	773	779	773
	Surplus/Deficit	471	461	461	455	461

5.4 Cross-border movement

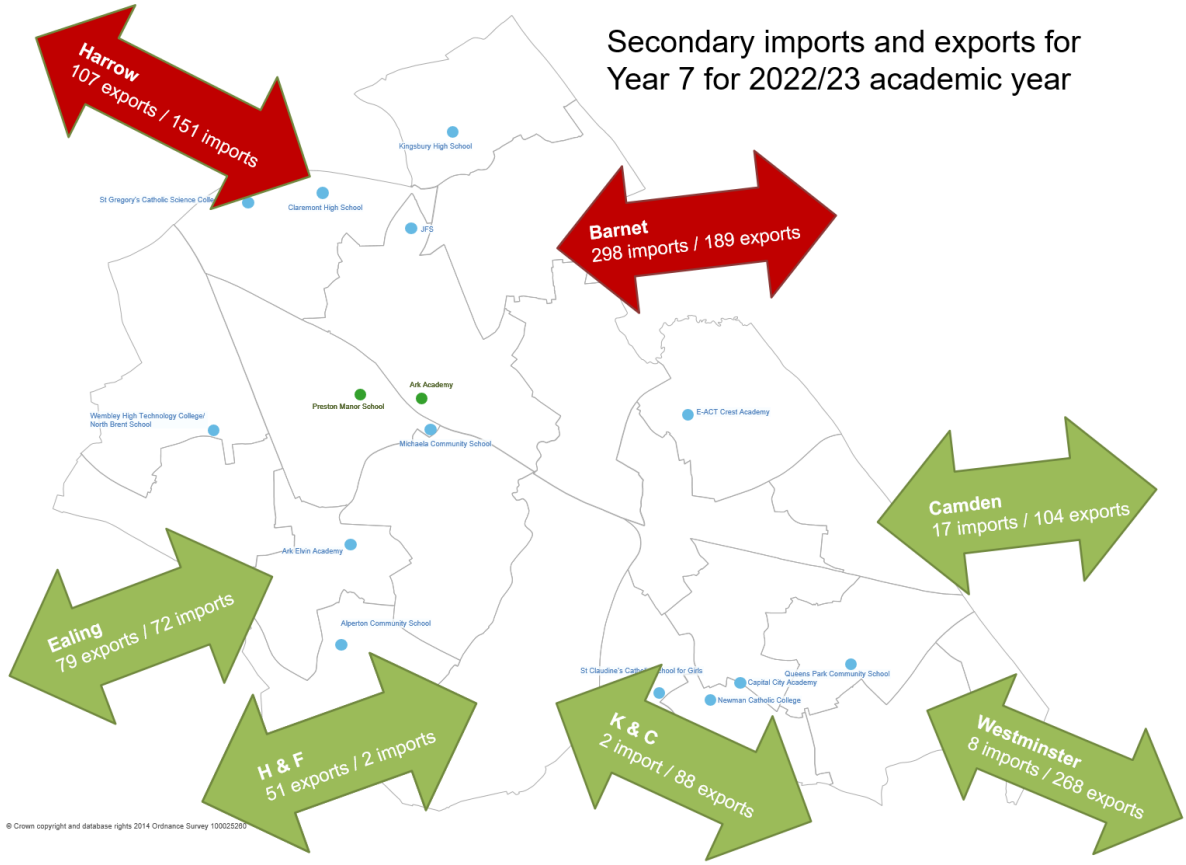
The GLA projections reflect the percentage of children who historically move from Year 6 to Year 7 in the following academic year. Brent has traditionally been a net exporter of pupils, in part due to Brent's proximity to other boroughs. In the south of the Borough 41.4% of Brent parents chose out-of-borough secondary schools for their children starting school in September 2022 (Table 6), which is similar to 2021 (41.6%). Some neighbouring boroughs have been facing increased demand for secondary school places and it is possible Brent parents will find it increasingly difficult to access places in out-of-borough secondary schools. Additionally, parental perception of Brent secondary schools is changing now that all secondary schools are judged as good or outstanding by Ofsted. The combination of these factors could mean the demand for places in Brent secondary schools may increase beyond that currently shown in Table 2.

Table 6: Secondary offers by secondary planning area for Brent residents (Sept 2022)

LA of Offered School 2022	Brent Resident School Planning Area			
	PA North	PA South	PA West	Total
Brent	703	930	943	**2576**
Brent %	81.2%	58.6%	89.1%	**73.3%**
Barnet	74	96	19	**189**
Camden		103	1	**104**
Ealing	1	51	27	**79**
Hammersmith and Fulham		49	2	**51**
Harrow	64	15	28	**107**
Hertfordshire	8	4	3	**15**
Hillingdon	3		1	**4**
Hounslow	2	4	3	**9**
Kensington and Chelsea	1	79	8	**88**
Lambeth	1	1		**2**
Slough	1	1	7	**9**
Sutton	2		4	**6**
Westminster	4	254	10	**268**
Other LAs	2	1	2	**5**
Non-Brent Total	163	658	115	**936**
Non-Brent %	18.8%	41.4%	10.9%	**26.7%**
Grand Total	**866**	**1588**	**1058**	**3512**

Figure ii below shows Year 7 allocation cross-border flows with directly neighbouring authorities (based on national offer day data 2022). The LA is engaging with neighbouring boroughs to understand their planning assumptions about cross-border movement, which could impact on demand for places in Brent. 936 out-of-borough offers were made to Brent residents in 2022, whereas 614 offers at Brent schools were made to out-of-borough residents (net -322). This compares to 1002 out-of-borough offers and 593 offers to out-of-borough residents in 2021 (net -409).

Figure ii



6. The Need for Primary Places

6.1 Overview

Between 2006 and 2017, Brent saw an unprecedented increase in the demand for primary school places. The primary pupil population (Reception to Year 6) increased from 20,822 in January 2006 to 26,823 in January 2017, an increase of 28.8% (Graph 1). This trend changed in 2017 when the number of children admitted to Reception reduced for the first time in 11 years, followed by lower intakes in subsequent years. Graph 1 shows the total primary population based on the latest projections is expected to reduce up to 2028. Projections beyond 2028 are not published as they become increasingly less reliable into the future by virtue of the children not having yet been born.

Graph 1: Primary numbers on roll and projections as at January each year

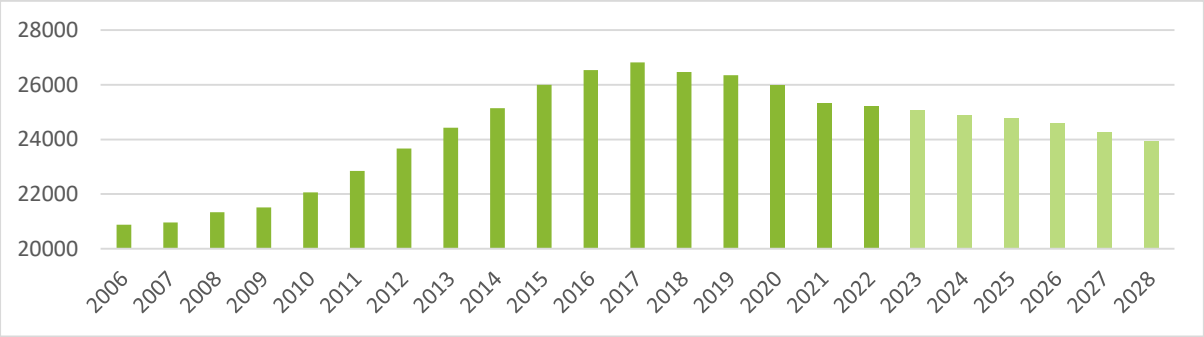


Table 7 shows borough-wide, there is sufficient capacity to meet anticipated demand across all year groups up to 2027/28 and to manage in-year pupil mobility. However, spare capacity is not evenly distributed across all planning areas (see pages 23 – 27).

Table 7: Primary forecasts 2022 and capacity

		Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2022/2023	Capacity	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247	4252	4247
	Projection	3538	3551	3568	3581	3542	3599	3693
	Surplus/Deficit	709	696	679	666	705	653	554
2023/2024	Capacity	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247	4252
	Projection	3539	3493	3552	3579	3588	3548	3604
	Surplus/Deficit	708	754	695	668	659	699	648
2024/2025	Capacity	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247
	Projection	3563	3482	3491	3542	3578	3583	3546
	Surplus/Deficit	684	765	756	705	669	664	701
2025/2026	Capacity	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247
	Projection	3415	3490	3480	3489	3548	3576	3589
	Surplus/Deficit	832	757	767	758	699	671	658
2026/2027	Capacity	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247
	Projection	3305	3355	3488	3479	3500	3540	3585
	Surplus/Deficit	942	892	759	768	747	707	662
2027/2028	Capacity	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247	4247
	Projection	3292	3260	3358	3483	3497	3504	3549
	Surplus/Deficit	955	987	889	764	750	743	698

Table 8 shows forecast Reception intakes against capacity. The latest pupil forecasts suggest over the next six years, Reception cohorts will remain steady in the short term before demand falls steadily as a result of a significant projected fall in birth rates as seen in Table 9.

Brent aims to have a minimum of 5% spare places to manage in-year migration and to ensure the authority can respond to any sudden increase in demand. This avoids the need to open temporary provision or bulge classes, which is neither educationally desirable nor cost effective. Based on current forecasts, there will be around 20% spare primary places at borough level, but rising as high as 29% in 2026/27 and 2027/28.

This level of spare capacity across the system will place significant budgetary strain on small schools. The LA has been supporting schools experiencing reduced intakes through measures such as temporarily reducing or placing an informal cap on admission numbers and repurposing spare capacity, for example to provide Additionally Resourced Provision for children with SEND. While the LA is working with schools to put in place strategies to manage changing demand and to support schools to ensure the sustainability of provision, the level of spare places means that reviews of provision are required in some areas (see below).

Table 8: Reception forecasts against capacity

Year	Reception projected intake	Reception capacity	Spare places	% spare places	Spare places as forms of entry
2022/23	3538	4247	709	20%	23
2023/24	3542	4247	705	20%	23
2024/25	3560	4247	687	19%	22
2025/26	3414	4247	833	24%	27
2026/27	3305	4247	942	29%	31
2027/28	3288	4247	959	29%	31

Table 9: Births in Brent (by academic year)

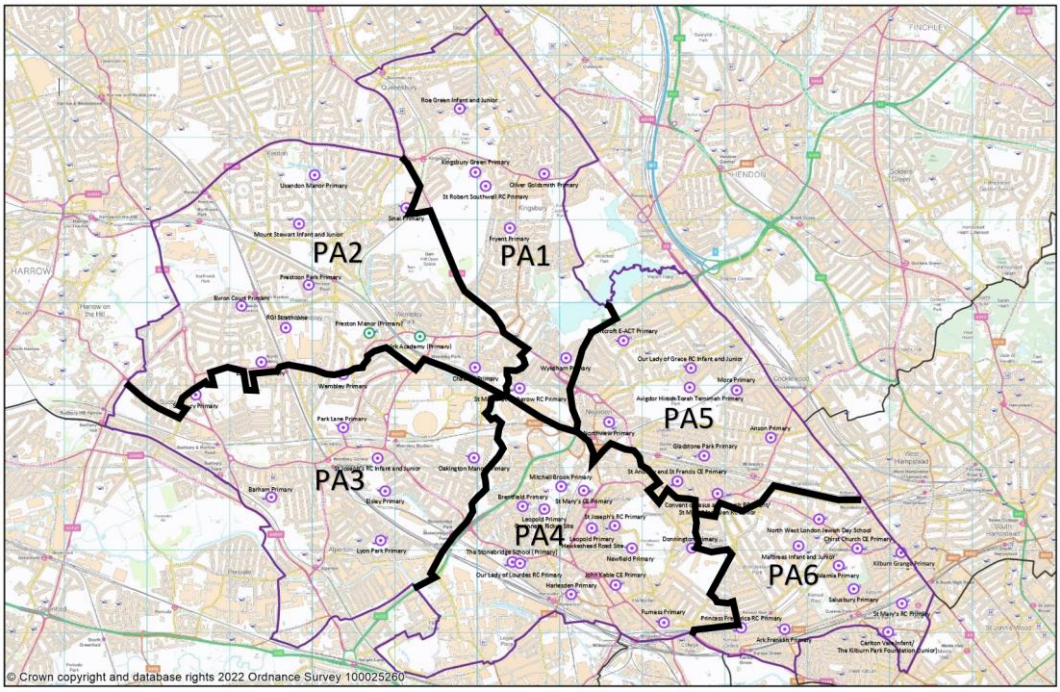
Academic Year	Number of births in Brent (Source ONS mid-year estimates)	Reception entry (September following 4th birthday)
2014/15	5157	2020/21
2015/16	5236	2021/22
2016/17	5161	2022/23
2017/18	4894	2023/24
2018/19	4804	2024/25
2019/20	4867	2025/26
2020/21	4414*	2026/27
2021/22	4466*	2027/28

*** Projection**

6.2 Primary Planning Areas

The Borough is divided into six Primary Planning Areas (see Figure iii). This supports the Council in providing a school place within a reasonable travelling distance for primary children (2 miles walking distance for children under 8 and 3 miles for older children). The match of demand to the supply of places varies across planning areas and year groups.

Figure iii: Brent Primary Planning Areas



Primary Planning Area 1

Wards	Kingsbury, Queensbury and Welsh Harp
Schools	Fryent Primary School, Kingsbury Green Primary School, Oliver Goldsmith Primary School, Roe Green Infant School, Roe Green Junior School, St Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School, St Robert Southwell RC Primary School, Wykeham Primary School

Demand: The January 2022 forecasts show Reception intakes rising slightly before falling from 2025/2026 to below their current level. At times the number of surplus places in the planning area will be below the 5% target. However it is anticipated places in neighbouring planning areas will accommodate these pressures. Planning Area 1 includes the Burnt Oak Colindale growth area.

Planned action: There are no plans to change capacity in Planning Area 1. Intakes at Fryent Primary School have been lower than the school Published Admission Number over the past few years. An Additionally Resourced Provision for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at Fryent has been developed in temporary spare accommodation. The local authority is working with other schools in the area that have seen falling demand.

Table 10: Planning Area 1 2022 projections and capacity

		Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2022/2023	Capacity	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
	Projection	500	505	506	475	484	477	488
	Surplus/Deficit	40	35	34	65	56	63	52
2023/2024	Capacity	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
	Projection	500	492	502	505	475	486	471
	Surplus/Deficit	40	48	38	35	65	54	69
2024/2025	Capacity	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
	Projection	517	493	489	505	502	475	473
	Surplus/Deficit	23	47	51	35	38	65	67
2025/2026	Capacity	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
	Projection	486	504	489	488	503	503	461
	Surplus/Deficit	54	36	51	52	37	37	79
2026/2027	Capacity	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
	Projection	460	476	499	488	486	503	486
	Surplus/Deficit	80	64	41	52	54	37	54
2027/2028	Capacity	540	540	540	540	540	540	540
	Projection	453	454	471	496	486	488	485
	Surplus/Deficit	87	86	69	44	54	52	55

Primary Planning Area 2

Wards	Barnhill, Kenton, Northwick Park and Preston
Schools	Ark Academy, Byron Court Primary School, Chalkhill Primary School, East Lane Primary School, Mount Stewart Infant School, Mount Stewart Junior School, Preston Manor Lower School, Preston Park Primary School, Sinai Jewish Primary School, Uxendon Manor Primary School,

Demand: The January 2021 forecasts indicate Planning Area 2 will have a high number of spare places across all year groups over the next 5 years and between 4FE and 6FE spare places in Reception. Planning Area 2 includes the Northwick Park growth area and this may generate additional demand at some point in the future.

Planned action: This planning area is adjacent to Planning Areas 1 and 3 and spare capacity could absorb any increase in demand in these areas. This Planning Area will be reviewed in academic year 2022/23 to identify measures to ensure schools are sustainable. This could include additional temporary reductions to published admission numbers and considering how schools can come together to manage resources.

Table 11: Planning Area 2 2022 projections and capacity

		Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2022/2023	Capacity	870	870	870	870	870	870	870
	Projection	688	720	716	690	710	662	717
	Surplus/Deficit	182	150	154	180	160	208	153
2023/2024	Capacity	870	870	870	870	870	870	870
	Projection	705	682	721	712	691	710	660
	Surplus/Deficit	165	188	149	158	179	160	210
2024/2025	Capacity	870	870	870	870	870	870	870
	Projection	693	704	683	718	712	689	700
	Surplus/Deficit	177	166	187	152	158	181	170
2025/2026	Capacity	870	870	870	870	870	870	870
	Projection	671	690	702	686	719	709	680
	Surplus/Deficit	199	180	168	184	151	161	190
2026/2027	Capacity	870	870	870	870	870	870	870
	Projection	651	674	693	704	689	717	702
	Surplus/Deficit	219	196	177	166	181	153	168
2027/2028	Capacity	870	870	870	870	870	870	870
	Projection	651	656	673	693	705	690	711
	Surplus/Deficit	219	214	197	177	165	180	159

Primary Planning Area 3

Wards	Alperton, Barnhill, Sudbury, Tokyngton, Wembley Central, Wembley Hill and Wembley Park
Schools	Barham Primary School, Elsley Primary School, Lyon Park Primary School, Oakington Manor Primary School, Park Lane Primary School, St Joseph's RC Infant School, St Joseph's RC Junior School, Sudbury Primary School, Wembley Primary School

Demand: Planning Area 3 includes two major growth areas in Wembley Central and Alperton. Wembley is set to drive the economic regeneration of Brent as a high quality, urban, connected and sustainable city quarter and up to 15,000 new homes around the Wembley National Stadium and Wembley town centre area up to 2041. Alperton is being is set to provide up to 6,000 new homes. As a result of new housing, Reception intakes are expected to increase over the next 5 years. As the new housing comes on-stream, demand for places may exceed supply.

Planned action: The January 2022 GLA projections indicate a small increase in demand for Reception places in Planning Area 3. Spare places in other adjacent planning areas will be able to absorb any short-term pressures in demand. As this is an area of major growth, the local authority is carefully monitoring projection changes and census population figures to ensure there continues to be sufficient places to meet demand.

Table 12: Planning Area 3 2022 projections and capacity

		Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2022/2023	Capacity	820	820	820	820	820	820	820
	Projection	758	784	779	808	788	826	830
	Surplus/Deficit	62	36	41	12	32	-6	-10
2023/2024	Capacity	820	820	820	820	820	820	820
	Projection	779	765	789	784	813	792	834
	Surplus/Deficit	41	55	31	36	7	28	-14
2024/2025	Capacity	820	820	820	820	820	820	820
	Projection	811	788	771	791	789	816	808
	Surplus/Deficit	9	32	49	29	31	4	12
2025/2026	Capacity	820	820	820	820	820	820	820
	Projection	796	820	792	772	795	791	835
	Surplus/Deficit	24	0	28	48	25	29	-15
2026/2027	Capacity	820	820	820	820	820	820	820
	Projection	778	806	824	793	780	797	809
	Surplus/Deficit	42	14	-4	27	40	23	11
2027/2028	Capacity	820	820	820	820	820	820	820
	Projection	788	789	811	823	802	787	817
	Surplus/Deficit	32	31	9	-3	18	33	3

Primary Planning Area 4

Wards	Harlesden & Kensal Green, Roundwood and Stonebridge
Schools	Brentfield Primary School, Donnington Primary School, Furness Primary School, Harlesden Primary School, John Keble CE Primary School, Leopold Primary School, Mitchell Brook Primary School, Newfield Primary School, Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary School, St Joseph's RC Primary School, St Mary's CE Primary School, The Stonebridge School

Demand: The January 2022 projections forecast Planning Area 4 to have high levels of spare places over the next five years. In the longer term, demand may increase in this area as new housing comes on stream as Planning Area 4 includes the Neasden Station and Church End growth areas and the area is close to the Old Oak redevelopment scheme. While current plans are for 1399 additional units between 2021 and 2027, the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) has indicated numbers and timescales are subject to revision as new sites are added to the masterplan. The LA is in dialogue with the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation OPDC to understand the likely impact on provision in Brent.

Planned action: This are will be reviewed in 2022/23 to identify measures to ensure schools are sustainable. This could include additional temporary reductions to published admission numbers and considering how schools can come together to manage resources.

Table 13: Planning Area 4 2022 projections and capacity

		Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2022/2023	Capacity	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Projection	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Surplus/Deficit	291	306	297	247	281	236	207
2023/2024	Capacity	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Projection	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Surplus/Deficit	311	302	306	294	244	278	227
2024/2025	Capacity	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Projection	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Surplus/Deficit	298	329	303	305	291	244	267
2025/2026	Capacity	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Projection	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Surplus/Deficit	332	322	328	301	300	290	227
2026/2027	Capacity	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Projection	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Surplus/Deficit	341	351	322	324	293	301	272
2027/2028	Capacity	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Projection	855	855	855	855	855	855	855
	Surplus/Deficit	344	359	348	317	312	294	284

Planning Areas 5

PA5 Wards	Cricklewood & Mapesbury, Dollis Hill and Willesden Green
PA5 Schools	Anson Primary School, Avigdor Hirsch Torah Temimah Primary School, Braintcroft E-ACT Primary Academy, Convent of Jesus and Mary Infant School, Gladstone Park Primary School, Mora Primary School, Northview Primary School, Our Lady of Grace Infant and Nursery School, Our Lady of Grace RC Junior School, St Andrew & St Francis CE Primary School, St Mary Magdalen's RC Junior School,

Demand: Even though the January 2022 forecasts show Reception intakes reducing over the next few years, at times the number of surplus places in the planning area will be below the 5% target. However there are spare places in neighbouring Planning Areas.

Planned action: Provision in this area will be kept under review.

Table 14: Planning Area 5 2022 projections and capacity

		Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2022/2023	Capacity	557	557	557	557	557	562	557
	Projection	532	524	531	532	508	523	542
	Surplus/Deficit	25	33	26	25	49	39	15
2023/2024	Capacity	557	557	557	557	557	557	562
	Projection	528	522	523	535	531	506	523
	Surplus/Deficit	29	35	34	22	26	51	39
2024/2025	Capacity	557	557	557	557	557	557	557
	Projection	517	515	521	517	532	527	503
	Surplus/Deficit	40	42	36	40	25	30	54
2025/2026	Capacity	557	557	557	557	557	557	557
	Projection	498	507	517	523	515	532	525
	Surplus/Deficit	59	50	40	34	42	25	32
2026/2027	Capacity	557	557	557	557	557	557	557
	Projection	478	485	505	516	518	512	530
	Surplus/Deficit	79	72	52	41	39	45	27
2027/2028	Capacity	557	557	557	557	557	557	557
	Projection	474	472	486	504	514	517	512
	Surplus/Deficit	83	85	71	53	43	40	45

Planning Area 6

PA6 Wards	Brondesbury Park, Kilburn and Queens Park
PA6 Schools	Ark Franklin Academy, Carlton Vale Infant School, Christchurch CE Primary School, Islamia Primary School, Kilburn Grange Primary School, Malorees Infant School, Malorees Junior School, North West London Jewish Day School, Princess Frederica CE Primary School, Salusbury Primary School, St Mary's RC Primary School, The Kilburn Park Foundation School

Demand: The January 2022 projections show reducing Reception intakes and an increasing number of spare places in Planning Area 6 over the next 5 years. Many children living in this planning area attend schools in neighbouring authorities, such as Camden and Westminster. Planning Area 6 includes the Staples Corner growth area and South Kilburn and the South Kilburn regeneration region. It is anticipated the South Kilburn master plan will maximise housing developments, which will lead to an increase in pupil demand as new housing comes on stream.

Planned action: As part of the South Kilburn regeneration programme, school place demand in Planning Area 6 will be kept under review. Plans are progressing for Carlton Vale Infant School and Kilburn Park Junior School to come together in readiness to move into a new school building as part of the South Kilburn Regeneration Scheme in 2026.

The Governing Board of Islamia Primary School is consulting on a relocation of the school to the Strathcona site in Wembley. This would reduce capacity in Planning Area 6 and would be likely to impact on demand patterns and spare places.

Table 15: Planning Area 6 2022 projections and capacity

		Rec	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
2022/2023	Capacity	605	605	605	605	605	605	605
	Projection	497	469	480	468	478	491	465
	Surplus/Deficit	108	136	125	137	127	114	140
2023/2024	Capacity	605	605	605	605	605	605	605
	Projection	485	481	472	480	465	476	485
	Surplus/Deficit	120	124	133	125	140	129	120
2024/2025	Capacity	605	605	605	605	605	605	605
	Projection	465	459	475	456	480	467	473
	Surplus/Deficit	140	146	130	149	125	138	132
2025/2026	Capacity	605	605	605	605	605	605	605
	Projection	441	436	455	465	457	476	460
	Surplus/Deficit	164	169	150	140	148	129	145
2026/2027	Capacity	605	605	605	605	605	605	605
	Projection	424	414	433	449	464	462	470
	Surplus/Deficit	181	191	172	156	141	143	135
2027/2028	Capacity	605	605	605	605	605	605	605
	Projection	415	393	410	429	447	461	453
	Surplus/Deficit	190	212	195	176	158	144	152

7. The Need for SEND and Alternative Provision Places

7.1 Brent SEND Overview

Brent is a borough that has high aspirations for all children and young people with special, educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Services, schools and settings are needs-led and follow the ethos of early identification and early intervention. Brent recognises SEND is not a fixed or permanent characteristic. At a specific time a child might have additional learning needs that require tailored or additional support to fully participate in everything the school has to offer, or they may require more specialist support in school for the whole of their education. Therefore, wherever possible a child or young person should be educated in their local mainstream school. The majority of pupils' additional needs can be met within one of the following contexts with only those not able to access their education in a mainstream school being met through a special school.

A FULL RANGE OF PROVISION			
Fully inclusive mainstream provision (no support)	Mainstream with support	Additionally resourced mainstream provision	Brent special school provision

There is a rich range of high quality specialist provision in Brent encompassing 3 specialist nurseries, 1 primary special school, 2 special school academy trusts, that each operate 2 schools, and a number of Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARP) in both primary and secondary mainstream schools. Many young people with additional learning needs can make better and more sustained progress when they attend mainstream schools. An ARP is designed to provide specialist and targeted support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities who can function well in a mainstream school and where the school has appropriate teaching and learning strategies and staff with the skills, knowledge, and expertise in a particular area of SEND. ARPs also provide specialist environments which support the learning needs of each pupil.

An ARP is an integral part of the school. Pupils spend time within the designated ARP classroom and time in their mainstream class. This approach enables each individual to receive the particular support they need, at the appropriate age-related level and in the most appropriate setting for them to succeed. For some pupils more time-limited EHCPs and/or temporary placements in ARPs without an EHCP are sometimes appropriate. This allows for pupils to experience more intensive short term targeted intervention that supports them to achieve their expected progress. Table 16 provides the details of current provision available in Brent.

Table 16: Special School PAN and Additionally Resourced Provision places 2022/23

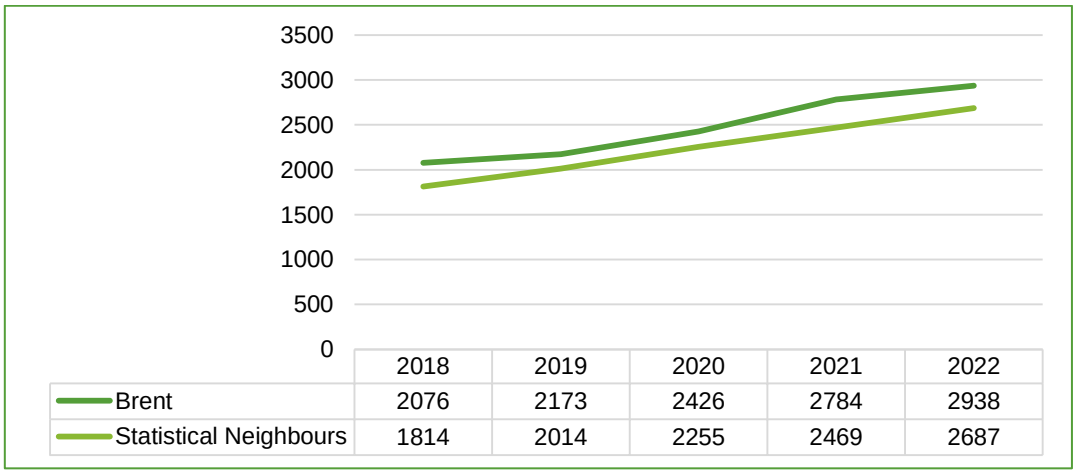
School	Type of Provision	Type of School	Special Need	Specialist places 2022-23
*The Manor School	Special	Primary	Communication and Interaction	216
*The Avenue	Special	All-through	Communication and Interaction	28 (100 from
Phoenix Arch School	Special	Primary	Communication and Interaction	55
+The Village School and Hope Centre	Special	All-through	Communication and Interaction and additional learning difficulty	310
+Woodfield School	Special	Secondary	Communication and Interaction	188
Kingsbury Green Primary	ARP	Primary	Hearing Impairment	18
Oakington Manor Primary	ARP	Primary	Communication and Interaction	23
Fryent Primary School	ARP	Primary	Communication and Interaction	42
Preston Manor High School	ARP	Secondary	Communication and Interaction	12
Preston Manor High School	ARP	Secondary	Communication and Interaction	12
Kingsbury High School	ARP	Secondary	Hearing Impairment	7
Carlton Vale Infant School	ARP	Primary	Communication and Interaction	10
Kilburn Park Junior School	ARP	Primary	Communication and Interaction	14

*The Manor and The Avenue schools form the RISE Academy Trust.
+The Village and Woodfield schools form the Compass Learning Partnership Multi-Academy Trust.

7.2 Demand for special provision

Demand for special provision in Brent has been growing and this is forecast to continue (Graph 2 and Table 17). However, direct work with schools and settings to better meet the needs of children with SEND has seen a reduction in the trajectory of EHCP growth and an increase in the number of children remaining within mainstream education. Brent's maintained cohort has increased by 5.5% from 2021 and has seen an annual growth rate of 8.3% since 2018. Nationally the number of maintained EHC Plans is up 9.9%, from 430,697 in 2021 to 473,255 in 2022 while our statistical neighbours saw a similar rise of 8.8%. At January 2022 Brent had 2938 children and young people with an ECHP compared to 2784 at the same time the previous year.

Graph 2: Number of EHC Plans (and former Statements) since 2018



Changes in Brent population demographics for children and young people with an EHCP highlight future pressures on special provision. Between 2021 and 2022 Brent has seen a 4.5% reduction in the number of young people aged under 5 with an EHCP and a 0.2% decrease in those aged 16 to 19. All other age groups have seen increases. Children with an EHCP in the 5 - 10 age group increased by 4.3%, those in the 11 - 15 age group increased by 11.0% and those in the 20 - 25 age group increased by 10.7%. This means there is significant pressure in the secondary phase, and this will continue until at least 2027, and that additional special places in both primary and secondary are needed as EHCP numbers increase.

Table 17: Actual and forecast number of EHCPs by age group

Timeline	Total	Under 5s	05-Oct	11 - 15	16 – 19	20 - 25
2015	1653	61	675	710	207	0
2016	1804	105	754	703	238	4
2017	1960	100	836	681	285	58
2018	2076	114	907	696	306	53
2019	2173	99	926	704	377	67
2020	2426	137	1001	745	376	167
2021	2784	134	1124	839	490	197
2022	2938	128	1172	931	489	218
2023	3232	140	1289	1024	538	240
2024	3555	154	1418	1126	592	264
2025	3910	169	1560	1239	654	290
2026	4301	186	1716	1363	719	319
2027	4731	205	1889	1499	791	351

Source: SEN2 2022. Forecast based on 10% increase.

69% of children and young people issued an EHC Plan in 2021 are in mainstream settings compared to just 48% in 2020. This is comparable with England rates of 73%. Children and young people issued an EHC Plan and in special schools account for 18% of Brent's newly issued EHC Plans compared to 14% of new plans issued in England. Statistical neighbours have reported similar, with 77% of new EHC Plans to children in mainstream schools and 12% in special schools.[1]

Table 18 shows the prevalence of identified need in children and young people's Education, Health and Care Plans.

Table 18: Number of children and young people with an EHCP by identified need

	2021 Numbers	2021 %	2022 Numbers	2022 %
Total	2784		2938	
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	895	32.1%	1097	40.6%
Hearing Impairment	70	2.5%	68	2.3%
Moderate Learning Disability	479	17.2%	506	17.2%

[1] SEN2 February 2022

Multi-Sensory Impairment	8	0.3%	7	0.25%
Other difficulty	19	0.6%	13	0.4%
Physical Disability	108	3.9%	115	5.3%
Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty	82	2.9%	89	3.2%
Social Emotional, and Mental Health	275	9.9%	294	12%
Speech Language and Communication Needs	565	20.3%	447	15.2%
Severe Learning Difficulties	204	7.4%	219	0.3%
Specific Learning Difficulty	42	1.5%	48	2.1%
Visual Impairment	37	1.4%	35	1.2%

7.3. Where Brent children with special needs and EHC Plans attend school

Special schools in the borough cater for a wide range of children and young people with complex SEND, but there are not enough local places to meet need. As a result 1066 Brent pupils with EHC Plans attend out of borough special school places, of whom 158 attend independent placements at a cost of over £7m. Notwithstanding the financial case, there is a strong educational and social rationale for the council to place students in schools closer to home and within the borough.

Once children are placed out-of-borough or in an independent non-maintained special school (INMSS) it is very difficult to bring them back to local provision. This has meant a long term reliance on out-of-borough and independent placements which continue often until children and young people are 19 years of age or older. While some children have such specific needs that cannot be met other than in very specialist provision, there is considerable scope to reduce expensive and distant out-of-borough placements.

7.4. Planned Action

In developing additional places for children and young people with EHCPs, Brent is engaging with parents and carers of children and young people with SEND to ensure services meet their needs and achieve the best outcomes. The LA is developing an Inclusion Plan that will capture all settings, including mainstream, specialist and independent schools, appropriate to meet children and young people's needs. The LA is currently undertaking a £44m capital expansion programme approved by Cabinet in January 2022 to develop a new special school, new ARPs in mainstream schools and expansions at Brent special schools. This will result in more places available within Brent. Tables 19 and 20 set out the schedule of projects.

Table 19: Planned new ARP provision due to complete 2023

School	Places
Elsley Primary School	10
Newfield Primary School	10
Mount Stewart Schools	21
Preston Park Primary School	21
St Margaret Clitherow RC Primary School	7
Newman Catholic College	25
St Gregory's Catholic Science College	28

Table 20: Planned Special School Expansions due to complete 2025

School	Places
Phoenix Arch	13
Manor School Key Stage 3	36
The Village School Key Stage 3 and 4	20
Woodfield School Key Stage 3 and 4	40
New Special Secondary Free School	150

7.5. Post 16-25 Provision

To mitigate a shortfall in provision for young people aged 16-25, the Council is exploring the potential for a 16-25 Skills Resource Centre. The intention is that proposals will be considered during 2022/23. Working with FE colleges, Brent special schools, Brent adult learning, third sector organisations and in collaboration with local businesses, the focus will be on developing work related training pathways for young people aged 16-25.

7.6. Alternative provision

The Council has a statutory duty to provide an appropriate full-time education for pupils who have been permanently excluded from school or who are otherwise without a mainstream school place.

The overall exclusion figures for all Brent pupils in July 2022 when compared to pre-pandemic exclusions have reduced for both fixed term and permanent exclusions. 21 Brent residents pupils were excluded in 2021/22 compared to 28 in 2018/9. The new Roundwood School and Community Centre opened in January 2021 and, along with Brent River College and Ashely College, provides respite for pupils to reduce the number of exclusions. Brent retains a significantly lower rate of permanent exclusions when compared to national rates, due to the focus on early identification and prevention strategies working alongside teams in mainstream school settings.

8. Childcare and Early Years Education

8.1 Early Years provision

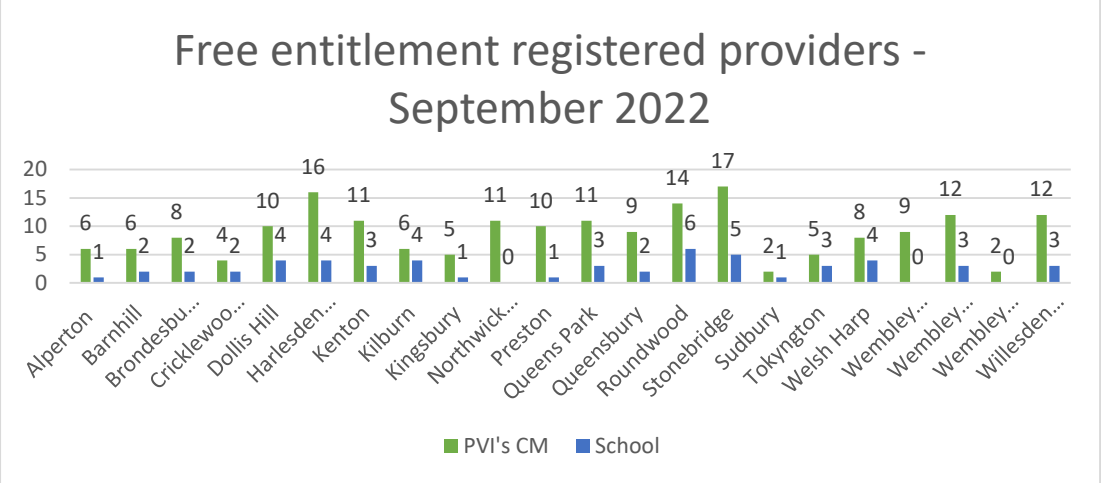
Under the Childcare Act 2006 local authorities have a statutory duty to secure sufficient childcare for the needs of most working parents/carers in their area. Brent has a mixed economy of 0-5 childcare provision in the borough that includes private, voluntary, independent (PVI) and maintained settings.

The Brent Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) 2021-2023 showed an overall increase in the number of PVI providers in the borough and a reduction in places in maintained and childminder provision. As of September 2022, there are 300 early years' providers in the borough. The overall quality of active provision judged as good or outstanding by Ofsted as of 1 September 2022 was 97.6% across the PVI and childminder sector.

248 providers are offering free entitlement places for under-fives across all wards. As at the second headcount in summer 2022, the proportion of 3 and 4 year old places being delivered in maintained settings increased to 43% with the remaining 57% of places being delivered in

the PVI sector. The local authority will continue to monitor the distribution of places across the sectors.

Graph 3: Type of registered childcare provider by ward September 2022



8.2 Demand for Early Years provision

Take-up of free entitlement places in 2022 for Brent was below both the London and national averages at 57% for the 2 year entitlement (compared with 49% in 2021), and at 77% for the 3 and 4 year entitlement (74% in 2021, against a national average of 92%).

Free childcare for 30 hours per week for 3 and 4 year olds with working parents became a statutory entitlement in September 2017 and implementation of this continues to be successful, with 92% take-up achieved in the summer term 2019 in Brent (most recent available data from the Department for Education).

There continues to be evidence of increased numbers of children with special education needs and/or disabilities accessing specialist early years provision. The 30 hour offer is also continuing to place additional pressure on existing specialist places for children with SEND. As of September 2022 the majority of places in the specialist nurseries are full for the 2022/23 academic year. There is an increase in Early SEND. Early Years Inclusion Support Team caseload was 534 children in 2021/22, a 31% increase on the previous year and 7% higher than pre-pandemic figure.

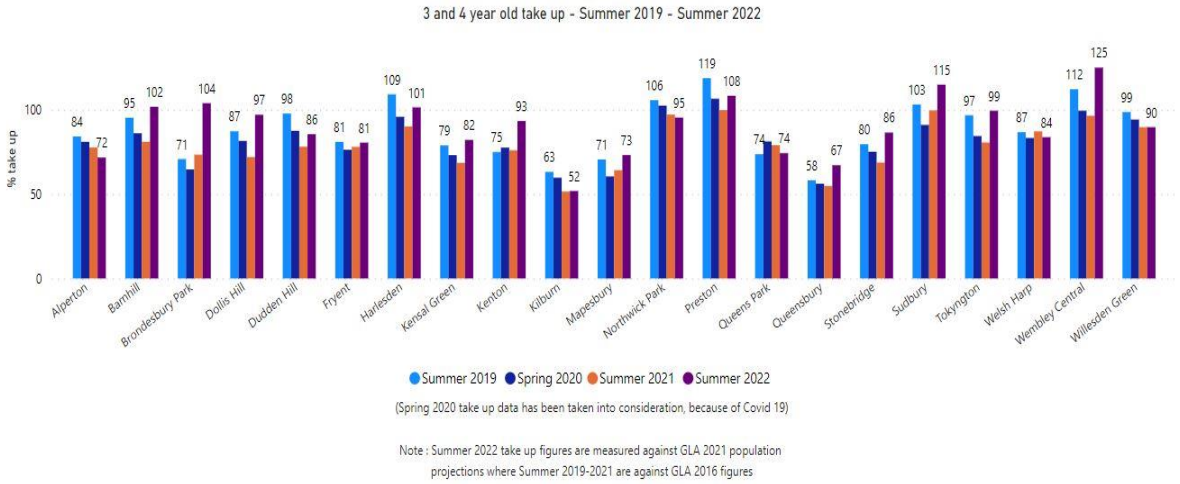
8.3 Early Years recovery following the pandemic

Settings have reported a reduced demand for private hours and while take-up of the free entitlements has increased this year compared with 2021, numbers have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. The maximum number of children aged 0-5 attending in July 2022 was 5236, compared to over 5669 free entitlement funded 2, 3 and 4 year olds alone attending at a similar point in 2019.

Sufficiency of places continues to be monitored on a monthly basis. Overall numbers of places with childminders are lower than pre-pandemic levels, which is reflective of a reduction in available childminders. Between September 2021 and September 2022, there have been 35 setting closures and 19 setting openings in Brent with a net loss of 156 places (a reduction of 623 places against a gain of 467).

Raising take-up levels for eligible 2 year olds and all 3 and 4 year olds of their entitlement to 15 hours free early education remains a key priority for the borough to ensure all children benefit from high quality early years education. This also supports providers to remain financially viable. Graph 4 shows the take up of early years provision over the past four years.

Graph 4: Take-up of early years provision, summer 2019 - 2022



8.4 Next steps

The significant loss of income from fee-paying parents during lockdown periods, particularly for PVI providers, left many in a precarious position with an uncertain future. The impact of the cost of living crisis is also likely to impact many Early Years providers, with the ramifications of this affecting not only those in the sector, but also other people dependent on local childcare for their own employment.

The following are key areas of focus to support financial viability to ensure the Council can meet its statutory sufficiency duty:

- Real time sufficiency and take up tracking
- Tailored, bespoke support for providers
- Persuading parents to take up places
- Encouraging innovative and agile approaches across teams.

9. Conclusion and Future Actions

This document represents the final refresh of the Brent 2019 – 2023 School Place Planning Strategy. It sets out the responsibilities the Council holds with regard to school place planning for mainstream, special and early years provision. A new strategy will be developed over the to cover the period from 2024 – 2028. Although it is too early to say with certainty what the focus of the new Strategy will be, the falling demand in mainstream, the rising demand in special and the ongoing recovery in the early years sector are likely to be key themes.

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Brent	**Cabinet** 14 November 2022
	Report from Corporate Director, Children and Young People

Consultation on Admission Arrangements for 2024/25

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	Three Appendix 1 List of Primary Community Schools in Brent Appendix 2 Determined Oversubscription Criteria for Brent Community Schools in 2023/2024 Appendix 3 Proposed Oversubscription Criteria for Brent Community Schools in 2023/2024
Background Papers:	N/A
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Shirley Parks Interim Director, Safeguarding, Partnerships and Strategy 020 8937 4259 Shirley.parks@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report seeks Cabinet's permission to consult on changes to the Admission Arrangements for Brent Community Schools for 2024/25.

2.0 Recommendations

That Cabinet:

2.1 Agrees to consultation on the following changes to the Admission Arrangements for Brent Community Schools for 2024/25:

2.1.1 the removal of all admission criteria determined by catchment area, and their replacement with criteria for all siblings and all other children;

2.1.2 a change to lift the priority of the children of staff criterion to before siblings;

2.1.3 expansion of the Medical and Social Needs criterion to include consideration of the medical or social needs of family members with caring or parental responsibility for an applicant.

3.0 Detail

3.1 This report relates to the admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria of Brent community primary schools only. Brent Council is the Admission Authority for 30 community primary schools in the borough (listed in Appendix 1 below). Voluntary aided (VA) and foundation schools, academies and free schools are their own Admission Authority and determine their own admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria.

3.2 The School Admissions Code issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act is the legal framework for school admission matters. The Admissions Code requires that Admission Authorities have a mechanism to rank applications in order of priority. All schools and Admission Authorities must have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the school. Admission arrangements for Brent community schools are determined by the Council as the Admission Authority.

3.3 Admission authorities are only required to consult on their admission arrangements if they are proposing any changes, or if seven years have passed since the last consultation. Brent Council last consulted on a change to its admission arrangements in 2019 for the 2020/21 offer year. Cabinet is being asked to agree to consultation on admission arrangements for 2024/25 because changes are proposed.

3.4 The current Oversubscription Criteria for Brent Community Schools for 2023/24 are included as Appendix 2.

3.5 Any consultation to amend or maintain admission arrangements must last for a minimum of 6 weeks and must take place between 1 October and 31 January in the determination year (which is the school year immediately preceding the offer year).

3.6 Admission authorities are required to determine their admission arrangements by 28 February in the determination year.

4. Amendments to existing admission arrangements

4.1 Three main amendments are proposed to the existing admission arrangements (these proposals are not inter-dependent and can be agreed individually):

a) The removal of all admission criteria determined by catchment area, and their replacement with criteria for all siblings and all other children

b) A change in priority for the children of staff criterion so that this is a higher priority

c) Expansion of the social and medical needs criterion to include consideration of the social and medical needs of family members with parental or caring responsibility for an applicant.

4.2 Other minor drafting changes will be made to the full admission arrangements text which do not require consultation, such as updates to the dates throughout the document. The proposed oversubscription criteria for 2024/25 are included as Appendix 3.

5. Removal of Catchment Areas

5.1. Catchment areas have been utilised as part of the admission arrangements for community schools in Brent for over 17 years, with the most recent street level review taking place in 2010. Catchment areas are defined in the School Admissions Code 2021 as 'A geographical area, from which children may be afforded priority for admission to a particular school.' In Brent each community primary school has a catchment area which has been set by using roads, railways and other geographical boundaries. Schools are not necessarily always located towards the centre of their catchment area.

5.2. Existing admission arrangements give priority at each community primary school to children with or without a sibling living within the catchment area over children with or without a sibling living outside the catchment area. The purpose of a catchment area is to ensure, as far as possible, that each child has access to a local school and their chances of admission to that school are not hampered by children living further away who may have sibling priority.

5.3. The School Admissions Code 2021 requires that, in drawing up their admission arrangements, Admission Authorities **must** ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair, clear, and objective. Parents should be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated.

5.4. Analysis of National Offer Day data from 2018 to 2022 shows that only two children have benefitted from the catchment area criterion where they were offered a place at a school under the 'Children living in the catchment area' criterion at the expense of siblings living outside the catchment area. This school was Northview Primary. Over the same period, a total of 9305 offers were made to community primary schools, an average of 1861 each year. These figures suggest that catchment areas currently have no real impact on the offer of places and as such are ineffective and redundant.

5.5. To put these figures into further context, over the same time period, only two children have appealed against the decision not to offer a place at a school

where they lived outside the school's catchment area, but where it was their nearest community primary school. Both appeals were unsuccessful. This represents 9% of all Reception appeals heard over the past five years.

5.6. Since the catchment areas were last fully reviewed in 2010, several community schools have converted to Academy status. Academies are under no obligation to maintain the local authority's catchment areas. While a few schools have chosen to do so (e.g. Sudbury Primary School), others have developed their own admission criteria without a catchment area (e.g. Braintcroft E-ACT Primary School). The original purpose of catchment areas when they were introduced was to ensure that every child in Brent lived within the catchment area of a local school. With the ongoing academisation of schools, there are areas of the Borough which are no longer covered by any catchment area.

5.7. Catchment areas work well where there is high demand and low availability of local school places. The latest primary school pupil projections indicate that demand for primary school places in Brent will continue to fall over the next 5 years. If there is an increase in demand in the future, the local authority could consider reintroducing reviewed or revised catchment areas.

5.8 Removal of the catchment areas will make the oversubscription criteria clearer and easier to understand. Furthermore, parents will no longer be disadvantaged by not living in the catchment area of a school they would like their child to attend, particularly where they may live nearer to that school than other children who do live within the catchment area.

6. Change in priority to children of staff criterion

6.1. In 2015 the local authority consulted to introduce a criterion to give priority to children of staff. The response was positive and this criterion was introduced with the admission arrangements for 2017/2018, remaining in place ever since.

6.2. Priority for children of staff has been given after siblings living in the catchment area, but before other children living in the catchment area, other siblings and other children.

6.3. As the purpose of this criterion is to support recruitment and retention of staff in schools, and as the number of children who meet this criterion is low, it is proposed that Brent increases the priority level for this criterion so it is above that for all siblings (regardless of whether the previous proposal is agreed).

6.4 This will have a minimal or negligible impact on the admission of siblings (due to the low number of staff children), yet would provide greater reassurance to staff that they will be have a chance to enrol their children. It would also bring further clarity to the admission arrangements as the majority of children admitted would fall under the final two criteria (if the first proposal is agreed, or the final four criteria otherwise).

6.5 The following amended wording is being suggested for the children of staff criterion to ensure that it is clear and complies with the requirements of paragraph 1.40 of the School Admissions Code 2021:

Children whose parent is a member of staff:

- *who has been employed by the school and has worked predominantly on the school site for two or more years at the time of application; or*
- *who has been recruited to fill a vacancy at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.*

7. Medical or Social needs criterion

7.1. The Medical or Social needs criterion gives priority where a child demonstrates an exceptional medical or social need that necessitates a placement at one particular school.

7.2 The local authority considers that each primary school is equally well equipped to meet the needs of any children who do not have an Education, Health and Care plan. Therefore this criterion has always been predominantly used where a child's needs may be met due to a school's location or particular characteristics (such as the design or lay-out of the building, for example that the school is single storey).

7.3. On this basis it is recommended that consultation is undertaken on extending this criterion to allow medical or social consideration to be given for other family members with caring or parental responsibility, not just consideration of the child's medical or social needs.

7.4. The wording for this criterion would be amended so that it is clear that the criterion may also be applied where the medical or social needs of a family member with caring or parental responsibility necessitate a child's placement at one particular school. For example, this would allow consideration of a parent or a carer with a disability who would find it difficult to travel on a bus to a school further away from their home.

7.5 The local authority does occasionally receive requests to consider the medical or social needs of a family member when making offers at community primary schools. Expanding the definition for the social and medical criteria would allow the local authority to consider these requests on a case by case basis.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 There are no specific financial implications for this report.

9.0 Legal Implications

9.1 The School Admissions Code has been issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act. The proposed admission arrangements (appendix 1) and oversubscription criteria (see section 5 and 6) adhere to the requirements of the Admissions Code, revised September 2021.

9.2 Admission Authorities are responsible for admissions and must act in accordance with the Code, the School Admission Appeals Code, other laws relating to admissions and relevant human rights and equalities legislation.

9.3 The local authority must agree ("determine") admission arrangements for 2024/2025 by 28 February 2023.

9.4 No other amendments are proposed to the admission arrangements which require consultation. Minor drafting amendments and date updates will be made as required.

10.0 Equality Implications

10.1 The Admission Criteria ensure fair access to school places.

11.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

11.1 The Lead Member for Children, Young People and Schools has been consulted on the proposed consultation

11.2 As this report affects all wards, consultation with specific ward members has not been conducted.

12.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

12.1 There are no human resources or property implications.

Report sign off:

Nigel Chapman
Corporate Director Children & Young People

Appendix 1: List of Primary Community Schools in Brent

Anson Primary School
Barham Primary School
Brentfield Primary School
Byron Court Primary School
Carlton Vale Infant School
Chalkhill Primary School
Donnington Primary School
Elsley Primary School
Fryent Primary School
Harlesden Primary School
Kingsbury Green Primary School
Leopold Primary School
Lyon Park Primary School
Malorees Infant School
Mitchell Brook Primary School
Mora Primary School
Mount Stewart Infant School
Mount Stewart Junior School
Newfield Primary School
Northview Primary School
Oliver Goldsmith Primary School
Park Lane Primary School
Preston Park Primary School
Roe Green Infant School
Roe Green Junior School
Salusbury Primary School
The Stonebridge School
Uxendon Manor Primary School
Wembley Primary School
Wykeham Primary School

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Appendix 2: Determined Oversubscription Criteria for Brent Community Schools in 2023/2024

The criteria set out below apply to the 30 Brent community schools listed on Appendix 1.

Voluntary aided or religious faith schools, foundation schools, free schools and academies have their own admission policies. Parents should visit the website of these schools for a copy of their admission arrangements or visit www.brent.gov.uk/admissions

Applications for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are made by Local Authority SEN teams. The placement of such children is made after a process of consultation between parents, the school and the Local Authority. Children with an EHCP receive priority over others for admission to the school named on their EHCP. An EHCP is a plan made by the Local Authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education provision required for that child.

Schools should not admit more than 30 pupils in each class for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. This is to enable the Local Authority to meet its statutory duty of having no more than 30 pupils in each class at Key Stage 1. Three-year-old children should not be admitted to Reception classes.

The following criteria are clear, fair and objective. It is illegal for schools to discriminate against a pupil on the basis of his/her ethnicity.

Whenever and wherever possible, children are offered a school of their parents' preference and in practice the majority of children go to the school which their parents select for them.

Sometimes, however, there are more applications for a particular school than there are places available. This is described as oversubscription. Whenever this happens, pupils are offered places in the following order of priority:

1. Looked After Children or Previously Looked After Children (including Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Children)

A looked after child or a previously looked after child, including those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

- A 'looked after child' (LAC) is a child who is in the care of a local authority, or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions at the time of making an application to a school.
- A 'previously looked after child' (PLAC) is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order).
- An 'internationally adopted previously looked after child' (IAPLAC) is a child who appears to Brent Council to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

2. Linked infant school

Children attending an infant school on the same site as a junior school.

- This criterion only applies to Year 3 applications to Mount Stewart Junior School (for children attending Mount Stewart Infant School) and Roe Green Junior School (for children attending Roe Green Infant School).

3. Medical or Social needs

Exceptional circumstances to do with significant medical needs and or social needs which necessitate a child's placement at one particular school.

This criterion relates to the child's medical and/or social needs. The application must be supported by written evidence (see below) that sets out the particular reasons why the school in question is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. The recommendation for this specific school should demonstrate knowledge of the school in terms of location, resources and organisation which deems it essential that the named pupil be admitted to the specific school. The Council will not give higher priority to children under this criterion if the required documents have not been submitted. Decisions on whether to allow the criterion will be made by an admission panel, based on all the evidence available, and will be consistent.

- *Medical Needs*

  Applications made on the child's medical grounds must be accompanied by compelling medical evidence from a GP/hospital consultant at the time of application. The letter from the GP/hospital consultant must provide information about the child's medical condition, the effects of this condition and why, in view of this, the child needs to attend the parent's preferred school.
  If the school is not the closest to home, the consultant must set out in detail the wholly exceptional circumstances for attending this school and the difficulties that may exist if the child had to attend another school. Medical claims will only be considered for one school and this should be named by the GP/hospital consultant. In assessing these applications, advice will be sought from relevant professionals as required.

- *Social Needs*

  Applications made on the child's social grounds must be accompanied by compelling evidence at the time of application. Social needs claims will be considered where there is involvement from a social worker, or other professional and where it can be demonstrated that the child has exceptional social needs that cannot be met at any other school than the named school. Parents' circumstances can have an impact on a child's social needs and evidence of this will be considered. In assessing these applications, advice will be sought from relevant professionals as required.

4. Siblings in catchment area

Brothers or sisters of a child who attends the school, or an infant or junior school on the same or adjoining site, *living in the catchment area of the school* and who will continue to do so on the date of admission.

- This includes half and step brothers and sisters and foster children so long as they live at the same address - but **not** cousins. Siblings attending the same school should have priority over those attending a separate school on the same site.

5. Children of staff

Children whose parent is a member of staff who has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time of application or has been recruited to fill a vacancy for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

6. In catchment area

Children living within the school's catchment area.

7. Siblings outside catchment area

Brothers or sisters of a child who attends the school, or an infant or junior school on the same or adjoining site, and who will continue to do so on the date of admission.

- This includes half and step brothers and sisters and foster children so long as they live at the same address - but **not** cousins. Siblings attending the same school should have priority over those attending a separate school on the same site.

8. All other applicants.

'Tie-break' Distance Measurement

Where pupils meet the same criteria, places will be offered in order of the distance from home to school which will be measured by straight-line, from the address point in the property to the address point in the school, as determined by LLPG (Local Land Property Gazetteer) data. Those living nearer the school will have the higher priority. The measuring system is an integral part of the admission software produced by Servelec Synergy Ltd, uses Ordnance Survey maps and LLPG data and is accurate to 1 centimetre.

Where two or more children, sharing the same priority, live equidistant from a community school and only one place remains, the local authority will use a computerised random allocation to determine which child should be given priority.

Catchment Area

The catchment area is the defined neighbourhood in which the school is sited. It is generally bounded by major roads and/or railway/tube. The catchment area is defined by the Local Authority and is designed to ensure that each address in the borough falls into the catchment area of one school. Information on which streets make up a catchment area can be obtained from the Local Authority, the school, the Local Authority's website and the Local Authority's composite prospectus.

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Appendix 3: Proposed Oversubscription Criteria for Brent Community Schools in 2024/2025

The criteria set out below apply to the 30 Brent community schools listed in Appendix 1.

Voluntary aided or religious faith schools, foundation schools, free schools and academies have their own admission policies. Parents should visit the website of these schools for a copy of their admission arrangements or visit www.brent.gov.uk/admissions

Applications for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are made by Local Authority SEN teams. The placement of such children is made after a process of consultation between parents, the school and the Local Authority. Children with an EHCP receive priority over others for admission to the school named on their EHCP. An EHCP is a plan made by the Local Authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education provision required for that child.

Schools should not admit more than 30 pupils in each class for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. This is to enable the Local Authority to meet its statutory duty of having no more than 30 pupils in each class at Key Stage 1. Three-year-old children should not be admitted to Reception classes.

The following criteria are clear, fair and objective. It is illegal for schools to discriminate against a pupil on the basis of his/her ethnicity.

Whenever and wherever possible, children are offered a school of their parents' preference and in practice the majority of children go to the school which their parents select for them.

Sometimes, however, there are more applications for a particular school than there are places available. This is described as oversubscription. Whenever this happens, pupils are offered places in the following order of priority:

1. Looked After Children or Previously Looked After Children (including Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Children)

A looked after child or a previously looked after child, including those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

- A 'looked after child' (LAC) is a child who is in the care of a local authority, or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions at the time of making an application to a school.
- A 'previously looked after child' (PLAC) is a child who was looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order).
- An 'internationally adopted previously looked after child' (IAPLAC) is a child who appears to Brent Council to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

2. Linked infant school
Children attending an infant school on the same site as a junior school.

- This criterion only applies to Year 3 applications to Mount Stewart Junior School (for children attending Mount Stewart Infant School) and Roe Green Junior School (for children attending Roe Green Infant School).

3. Medical or Social needs
Exceptional circumstances to do with significant medical needs and or social needs which necessitate a child's placement at one particular school.

This criterion relates to the child's (or a family member with caring and/or parental responsibility's) medical and/or social needs. The application must be supported by written evidence (see below) that sets out the particular reasons why the school in question is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. The recommendation for this specific school should demonstrate knowledge of the school in terms of location, resources and organisation which deems it essential that the named pupil be admitted to the specific school. The Council will not give higher priority to children under this criterion if the required documents have not been submitted. Decisions on whether to allow the criterion will be made by an admission panel, based on all the evidence available, and will be consistent.

- *Medical Needs*
  Applications made on medical grounds must be accompanied by compelling medical evidence from a GP/hospital consultant at the time of application. The letter from the GP/hospital consultant must provide information about the child's or family member's medical condition, the effects of this condition and why, in view of this, the child needs to attend the named school.
  If the school is not the closest to home, the consultant must set out in detail the wholly exceptional circumstances for attending this school and the difficulties that may exist if the child had to attend another school. Medical claims will only be considered for one school and this should be named by the GP/hospital consultant. In assessing these applications, advice will be sought from relevant professionals as required.

- *Social Needs*
  Applications made on social grounds must be accompanied by compelling evidence at the time of application. Social needs claims will be considered where there is involvement from a social worker, or other relevant professional and where it can be demonstrated that there are exceptional social needs that cannot be met at any other school than the named school. Familial circumstances can have an impact on a child's social needs and evidence of this will be considered. In assessing these applications, advice will be sought from relevant professionals as required.

4. Children of staff
Children whose parent is a member of staff:
- who has been employed by the school and has worked predominantly on the school site for two or more years at the time of application; or
- who has been recruited to fill a vacancy at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

5. Siblings
Brothers or sisters of a child who attends the school, or an infant or junior school on the same or adjoining site. Sibling is defined in these arrangements as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.

6. All other applicants.

'Tie-break' Distance Measurement

Where pupils meet the same criteria, priority will be given in order of the distance from home to school which will be measured by straight-line, from the address point in the property to

the address point in the school, as determined by LLPG (Local Land Property Gazetteer) data. Those living nearer the school will have the higher priority. The measuring system is an integral part of the admission software produced by Servelec Synergy Ltd, uses Ordnance Survey maps and LLPG data and is accurate to 1 centimetre.

Where two or more children, sharing the same priority, live equidistant from a community school and only one place remains, the local authority will use a computerised random allocation to determine which child should be given priority.

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Brent	**Cabinet** 14 November 2022
	Report from the Corporate Director Governance

Annual Procurement Strategy Report 2021-22

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	One Appendix 1 Annual Procurement Strategy 2021-22
Background Papers:	N/A
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Rajesh Shori Head of Procurement 020 8937 1598 rajesh.shori@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To provide Cabinet with the Annual Procurement Strategy Report 2021/22, showing the progress made since Cabinet Approval in October 2020 across the five pillars of the Procurement Strategy 2020-2023, which is aligned with the remaining term of the Borough Plan 2019 – 2023.

2.0 Recommendations for Cabinet

2.1 Cabinet is asked to review and comment on the Annual Procurement Strategy report 21/22 as set out in Appendix 1.

3.0 Annual Procurement Strategy Report 2020-21.

3.1 This Annual Procurement Strategy report sets out the work that was already in motion prior to and subsequently since Cabinet agreement of the Procurement Strategy in October 2020.

3.2 The Procurement Strategy aligned to Brent Council's strategic themes builds further on Brent's commitment to support Community Wealth Building and reviving the local economy.

3.3 It comprises of five pillars, which will be central to delivering better procurement of goods, services and works contracts over the next three years. The five core Pillars are:

- Active Procurement
- Social Value and Ethical policy
- Sustainability
- Circular Economy
- Community Wealth building

3.4 It also sets out how the Council will promote effective procurement across the Borough, by having regard to local employment and skills shortage, social value, localisation and ensuring wherever possible contracts are Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) friendly.

3.5 The report considers each of the pillars, setting out what are the key KPI/ Outcomes that we are looking to achieve, followed by the progress made against each of the stages within the Pillar.

3.6 **Active Procurement**

3.6.1 Please refer to pages 4 to 12 of the Annual Procurement Strategy for further detail. Active Procurement consists of four main areas of focus, Active Communication, Learning, Analysis and Contract Management. Highlighted below is a summary of each step.

3.6.2 Active Communication: Engaged widely across Directorates to highlight how working together will deliver the pillars of the strategy bringing together the various pieces of the work conducted under each pillar into this annual report.

3..6.3 Active Learning and Development: Working with Directorates and Members on knowledge share events, engaging with the local supplier base to make participation in our procurement process easier to understand.

3..6.4 Active Analysis: A significant effort in dissecting how we spend our money has identified the following. In financial year 2021-22 Brent has spent c£440m across a variety of areas from supporting our vulnerable adults, young people and children to regenerating key areas, providing affordable housing and ensuring our footways and highways are maintained to an appropriate level.

The table below splits out our third party spend per directorate.

Department Name Total Spend 21-22**:**	
Community Wellbeing	£169m
Regeneration & Environment	£145m
Children & Young People	£52m
Chief Executive (LHRA Fin &ACE)	£40m
Customer Digital Services	£35M
Total	£441m

The analysis then goes through further detail on the main categories of spend and highlights how much of our local authority spend is with local Brent based suppliers. This currently stands at £70m per annum.

3..6.5 Active Contract Management: The procurement Team have been working with directorates to create a contracts register of all known contracts. Aligning spend data showing actual in year spend against contracted spend.

Procurement have been actively working with all its stakeholders across the council in building a comprehensive contracts register and our register currently stands at 400 contracts. The vast majority of the database is made of contracts that have followed a procurement process conducted by the Procurement team or the team have been involved in an advisory capacity and hence have knowledge of these contract awards

The register highlights when contracts are coming to an end and Procurement have commenced an exercise identifying all contracts that are due to end by March 2024, working with stakeholders across the Directorates to understand our future plans and how best to see if there are opportunities to extract any efficiencies.

3.7 **Social Value and Ethical Policy.**

3.7.1 Please refer to pages 13 -30 of the Annual Procurement Strategy for the detail but highlighted below is a summary of the key areas.

3.7.2 Procurement have been collating information from the submissions received from suppliers who have been awarded contracts based in part from the benefits they will bring over and above to the community through their Social Value submissions.

3.7.3 The table below sets out how suppliers are supporting the Council priorities.

3.7.4 The breakdown confirms that our suppliers are delivering social value across the priorities in the borough plan. The suppliers have set out the financial value they are willing to pass back to the council if they do not deliver the Social Value committed as part of the contract, which equates to £1.28m of Social Value looking to be delivered through our procurements for FY 21-22.

3.7.5 Breakdown of SV pillar Total value all years Percentage:

1. Strong foundations	£281k - 27%
2. Every opportunity to succeed	£467k- 38%
3. A future built for everyone, an economy fit for all	£195k - 24%
4. A cleaner, more considerate Brent	£217k - 7%
5. A borough where we can all feel safe, secure, happy and healthy	£125k - 4%
Total commitment among 21 received files	£1.28m - 100%

3.8 **Sustainability**

3.8.1 Please refer to pages 31-32 for the detail but highlighted below is a summary of the key areas

3.8.2 Brent now have a Procurement Sustainability Policy to align to our commitment to the Green agenda. The annual direct spend on goods and services is over £380 million, so the scope to influence is significant and far-reaching. Improving environmental sustainability throughout our supply chain is an essential component of our commitment to reduce our environmental impact and lead by example.

3.8.3 The policy's aim is to stretch across all aspects of sustainability and includes Brent's commitment to support Fairtrade and help suppliers with support to their understanding so they can deliver sustainable goods and services within their own organisation and across their supply chains.

3.8.4 The Procurement team have worked across the council to agree a set of principles and an initial range of key performance indicators to understand how the environmental impact will be mitigated which forms part of the policy.

3.8.5 Some of the Sustainability KPI's and Outcomes will be captured in the Social Value capture template under the priority - A more cleaner considerate Brent. Where there are specific KPI's / Outcomes that fall outside of this we are ensuring these are included in future Annual Procurement Strategy reports.

3.8.6 Sustainable procurement practices is an area that boroughs both sub-regionally in West London and in London as a whole are considering as part of their efforts to tackle the climate and ecological emergency. We are part of a sub-regional working group, working with other West London Alliance Boroughs to create a unified set of policies across the sub-region – therefore making it easier for suppliers to understand their requirements for bidding for services in West London, and ensure that West London Alliance boroughs are committed to similar ambitions and aims.

3.9 **Circular Economy.**

3.9.1 Please refer to pages 33-34 of the Annual Procurement Strategy for the detail but highlighted below is a summary of the key areas

3.9.2 The creation of the Procurement Sustainability policy underpins the need for Brent to move towards a low carbon, circular economy. This will involve a radical shift away from our current linear economy and 'throwaway culture' where products are made used disposed to one in which resources and products are kept in use for as long as possible. Brent is well placed to enhance its low carbon circular economy over the next 10 years as it is already amongst the top London boroughs with the highest rates of employment in this sector.

3.9.3 There are around 860 businesses in the borough involved in the circular economy. We will aspire to continue to build this sector and support this economic model of operation as a key mechanism for tackling the climate and

ecological emergency. This will also be at the centre of green economic recovery efforts following the COVID-19 pandemic and aid the transition away from our current linear economy.

3.9.4 Within our tenders we will start to include quality questions specific supporting circular economy principles so Suppliers that are bidding for tenders will required to explain what happens at the end of the product life. They will need to detail how they will support the circular economy principles to avoid waste by arranging for products to be re-used, recycled or upcycled.

3.9.5 By leading by example and championing the importance of a reduction in the environmental impact of our supply chain, it is hoped to have a positive impact within the council and community, and to encourage other organisations to do the same and adopt new sustainability procurement practices.

3.10 **Community Wealth building**

3.10.1 Please refer to pages 35-37 for the detail but highlighted below is a summary of the key areas

3.10.2 Procurement have specific KPI's to help support and develop our links with the local supplier base and ensure all our suppliers based in London pay their staff the London Living Wage and in the last financial year surpassed all the KPI's set.

3.10.3 Spend with our local supplier base is a key focus for Brent and the strategy is looking to increase our spend year on year as we progress the various pillars of the strategy. Currently approximately £70m of our third party spend is conducted with local suppliers registered within a Brent postcode. This is across over 1376 local suppliers with the top 50 local suppliers making up 69% of that spend mostly across social care.

3.10.4 The goal is to understand at a micro level the make-up of Brent businesses by ward. Review the type of suppliers we need against what we have and identify developing opportunities for new suppliers where we lack those skills and ability to spend more locally.

3.10.5 Under the Active Procurement pillar the analysis shows through our procurements we have achieved the targets agreed for the last financial year with local suppliers either being awarded contracts directly or be used within the supply chain of larger organisations.

3.11 **Next Steps**.

3.11.1 **Active Procurement Pillar**

The deliverables of each part of the pillar remain but during 2022/23 financial year we will continue to focus on building our understanding of our spend data and start to look at focussing on developing relationships with key suppliers.

Active Analysis: Continue to build on developing our knowledge of third party spend. Work with Oracle Cloud implementation to put mechanisms in place to ensure we are capturing our third party spend in the most effective way allowing Procurement to extract the data to further support intelligence led decision making with particular focus on tail spend.

Target Date March 2023

Active Contract Management: Continue building and sharing the intelligence gathered from the Contracts Register so the Council can proactively look at using the data where contracts will be expiring by March 24 and agree the appropriate methodology of how any savings will be captured and realised.

Target Date Q3 2022.

3.11.2 **Social Value and Ethical Pillar**

Building on the work already set out, Procurement will continue to work across each of the Directorates ensuring that we explore every opportunity to be more innovative and creative in the types of social value we can deliver through our contracts and feeding back on successes and lessons learnt with further training and knowledge share sessions.

Target Date: Q4 2023

Brent's Social Value Commitments: Develop and share the list of possible opportunities Brent would be looking to extract from our procurements as part of Brent's Social Value Commitments in addition to the suggested indicators already part of the Social Value and Ethical Policy.

Target Date March 2023.

3.11.3 **Sustainability Pillar**

Highlight and report on what specific Sustainability criteria is being measured through our procurements.

Target date March 2023

Continue to be part of the wider sub regional group supporting ensuring we are aligned and following best practice.

Target Date: Ongoing

3.11.4 **Circular Economy Pillar**

Conduct further training and knowledge shares across the Directorates.

Target Date: Ongoing

Identify the types of suppliers that operate within the Circular economy in Brent which could support forthcoming procurements.

Target Date: March 2023.

Identify specific procurements that would realise Circular Economy benefits for the borough and report on the progress made on delivering procurements with Circular Economy benefits.

Target Date: March 2023

3.11.5 **Community Wealth building Pillar**

Complete as far as practicable the gap analysis identified. Understand at a micro level the make-up of Brent businesses by ward. Review the type of suppliers we need against what we have.

Target Date: March 2023.

Continue on building on the work already taking place and move to reporting specifically on the number of opportunities that have been created for local suppliers within Brent.

Target date – Ongoing.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

4.1 Not applicable

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no specific financial implications in accepting the recommendations in this report.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 This report seeks Cabinet's review and comment on the Annual Procurement Strategy report. The Procurement Strategy must comply with and be delivered in accordance with all applicable UK legislation and guidance, to include the Public Contract Regulations 2015, the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and the Equality Act 2010.

6.2 Officers in Legal Services will continue to provide support and guidance in the implementation of the Procurement Strategy and any necessary amendments to contract and tender documents.

7.0 Equality Implications

7.1 The Procurement Strategy is designed to help promote equality and Officers believe that there are no adverse equality implications

8.0 Any Other Implications (HR, Property, Environmental Sustainability - where necessary)

8.1 Not applicable

9.0 Proposed Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

9.1 Not applicable

Report sign off:

Debra Norman
Corporate Director Governance

Procurement Strategy
Annual report 21-22













Brent

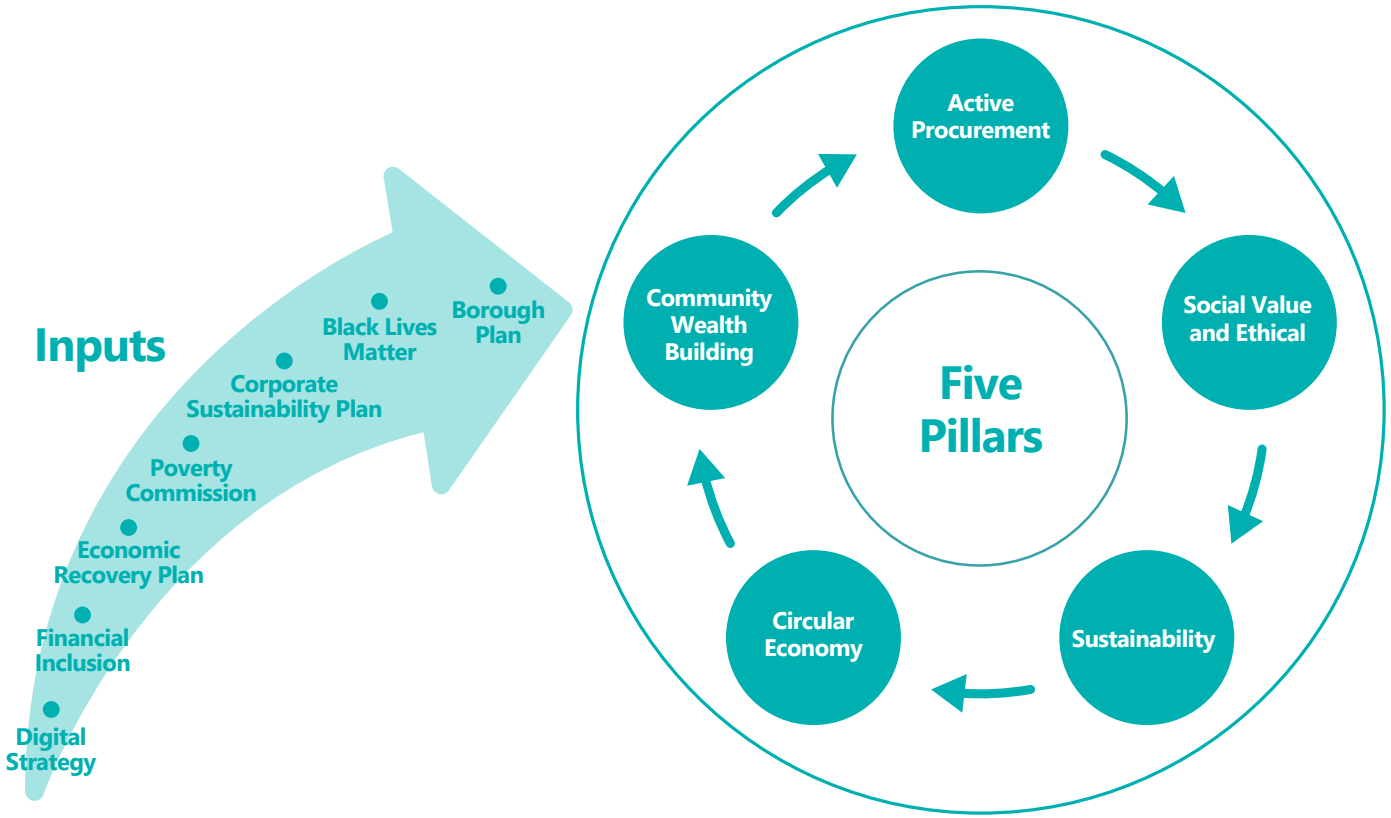
Foreword



Last year's Annual Procurement Strategy plan was set against the backdrop of the pandemic and the work were doing during 20-21 to support our local communities and businesses recover from the impact. The 2nd Annual Procurement Strategy report continues to build on the previous year and highlights the progress made across each of Brent's Five Pillars of the Procurement Strategy from April 21-March 22.

The report starts with the Active Procurement pillar and shows how the council is spending its money with our supplier base and across which categories and then continues to highlight the ongoing work achieved on our contracts register through to how the Social Value pillar is now a key element of our procurements evidencing the work that has been achieved. The report then continues to show the progress made supporting the Sustainability and Circular Economy pillars finishing off with the work currently being undertaken, building up and developing our engagement with the local suppliers in support of our Community Wealth building pillar.

Brent's Procurement Strategy comprises of five pillars.



As Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Finance and Resources, as well as a proud resident of Brent I am pleased to present the second annual report on the progress and impact of the Procurement Strategy across its Five Pillars in line with the Council's strategic objectives.

Each Pillar starts with the key performance indicator (KPI) / Outcomes that we are looking to achieve followed by the progress made against each of the stages highlighted within the Pillar. I encourage you all to take some time to read this report and join us on this journey as we continue make Brent a great place to live and work.

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22



Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

The Procurement Strategy was approved by the council in October 2020 where it set out five key pillars that successfully delivered would support Brent Council's strategic priorities in providing greater opportunities for its communities and local businesses alongside taking significant steps in contributing to a greener more sustainable environment.

As set out within the key performance indicators and outcomes this report provides an update on the progress and achievements across each the five pillars

Active Procurement

Social Value and Ethical Policy

Sustainability

Circular Economy

Community Wealth building



Active Procurement

Active Procurement lays the foundation for all the other pillars.The two main KPI's are to generate savings throughout the period of the strategy and ensure we are achieving value for money.

KPI/Outcome Delivery

Deliver a reduction in procurement spend during the period of this strategy – target £2m

KPI/ Outcome delivery

Provide commercial intelligence to ensure we are achieving value for money

Indicators

- Spend analysis: Producing annual reports showing how we spend our money identifying opportunities of leveraging decommissioning and commissioning activities to best support the Council strategic priorities.
- Effective contract management: Maintain a contracts register and work with Directorates/ Sections to identify opportunities to bring different services together under one contract.



Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

The focus for this report will be the Active Analysis and Active Contract Management stages of the pillar but will highlight progress on the following:

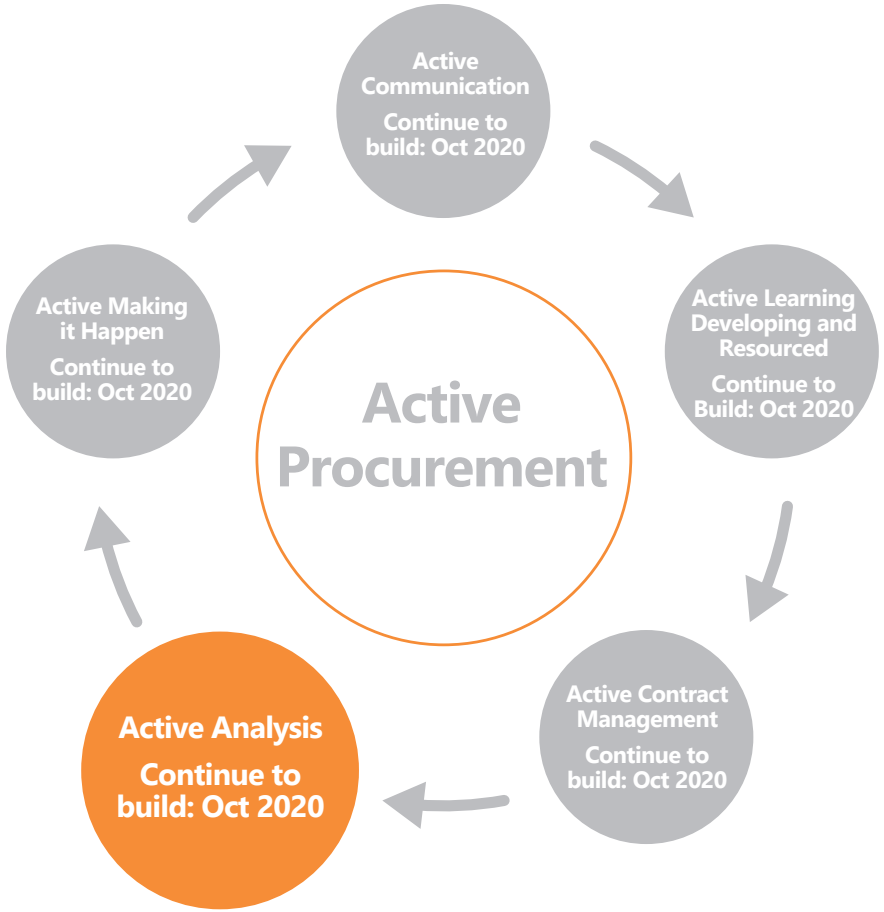
Active Communication: Engaged widely across Directorates to highlight how working together will deliver the pillars of the strategy bringing together the various pieces of the work conducted under each pillar into this annual report.

In the last year, the procurement team have carefully considered how Active Communication can be used to better support the council with delivering Brent Council's strategic priorities. Procurement are preparing a communication strategy to engage with Directorates across the Council via a number of different methods. This includes:

- Publication of a Procurement Newsletter
  -Will highlight outcomes of key strategic procurement projects and provide guidance and general information to help officers within Brent council. Yammer will also be used to supplement information sharing.
- Continue to engage with Directorate Management Teams

Active Learning and Development: Working with Members and Directorates on knowledge share events, engaging with the local supplier base to make participation in our procurement process easier to understand.

Procurement working with the council's Transformation and Commissioning team have delivered 3 sessions during 21/22.



1. Commissioners Network Session - Value for Money in Commissioning - Tue 13/07/2021
2. Commissioners Network Session – Theme Reflection - Tue 09/11/2021
3. Procurement & Legal Essentials Network Session - Thu 24/03/2022

All sessions were well attended with positive feedback on the information received and interaction.

- Deliver a programme of Member briefings - Consisting of training sessions on key council priorities that relate directly to Procurement Strategy

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

- Procurement have considered how it can best engage with suppliers, particularly those local to Brent to encourage participation in procurement processes to supply to the council. This engaging with the local supplier base should help to make participation in our procurement process easier to understand.
- Procurement will support officers within the Council via the delivery of training sessions for the organisation providing an overview of Procurement including a run through the main highlighting the contract standing orders and our governance processes.
- Build on any lessons learnt from Procurements undertaken and obtain feedback from suppliers and stakeholders. This will inform an action plan that will address any issues highlighted, reviewed quarterly.





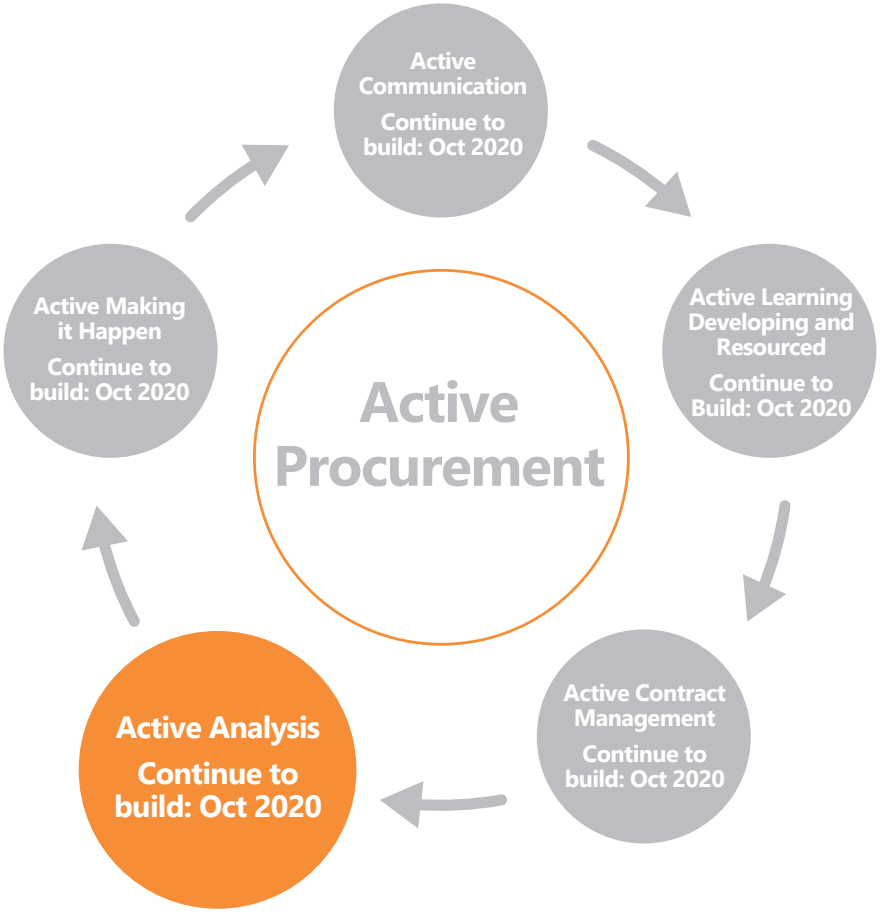


Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Active Analysis: We need to have a good understanding on what the council spends with its suppliers across each of its Directorates alongside building and maintaining an accurate contracts register, which in turn will help focus on our key contracts to understand if they are delivering the right outcomes along with providing the right level of return on the spend.

This work also needs to reflect the requirements of the Medium Term Financial Plan balancing the need to produce actual savings either through value engineering of our specifications to considering where appropriate, in-house and decommissioning opportunities.





Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

What the council spends on suppliers.

Spend Analysis.

A significant effort in dissecting how we spend our money has identified the following. In financial year 2021-22 Brent has spent c£440m across a variety of areas from supporting our vulnerable adults, young people and children to regenerating key areas, providing affordable housing and ensuring our footways and highways are maintained to an appropriate level.

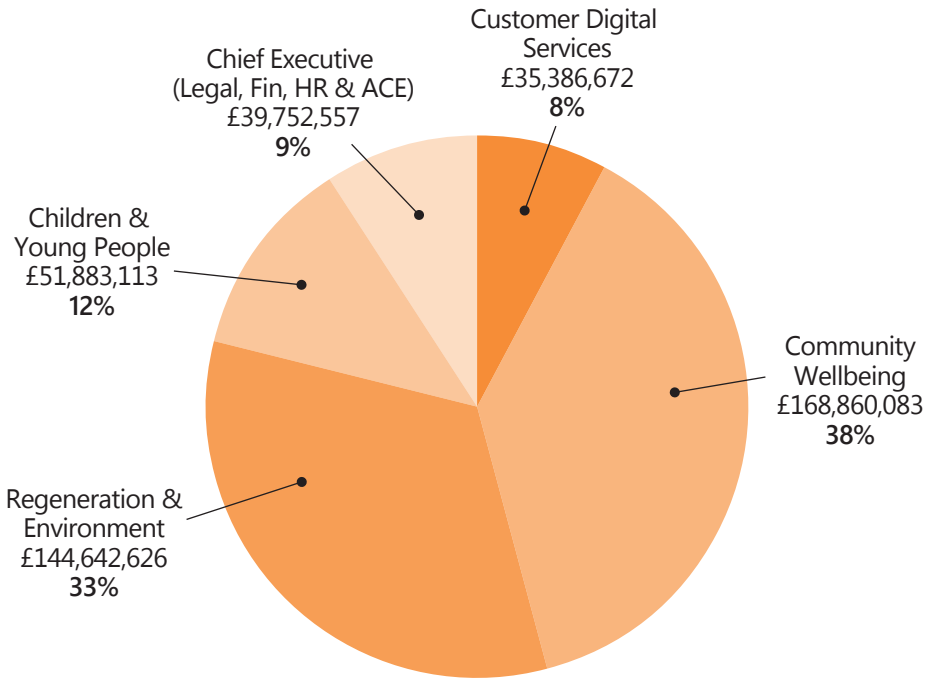


Community Wellbeing which covers the care and support we provide to our most vulnerable adults across Social Care, Public Health and our joint working with the Clinical Commissioning Groups/Integrated Care Systems makes up one of the two largest Directorates of spend. This Directorate is also responsible for maintaining our affordable housing for council tenants. The other major area of spend is Regeneration and Environment Directorate, this area builds new homes and regenerates our local areas as well as maintaining our highways, footpaths, parks and collecting the waste we generate.

The chart and table below splits out our third party spend per directorate.

Department Name	Total Spend 20-21
Community Wellbeing	£168,860,083
Regeneration & Environment	£144,642,626
Children & Young People	£51,883,113
Chief Executive (Legal, Fin, HR & ACE)	£39,752,557
Customer Digital Services	£35,386,672
	£440,525,051

Spend per Departments 21-22
£440M



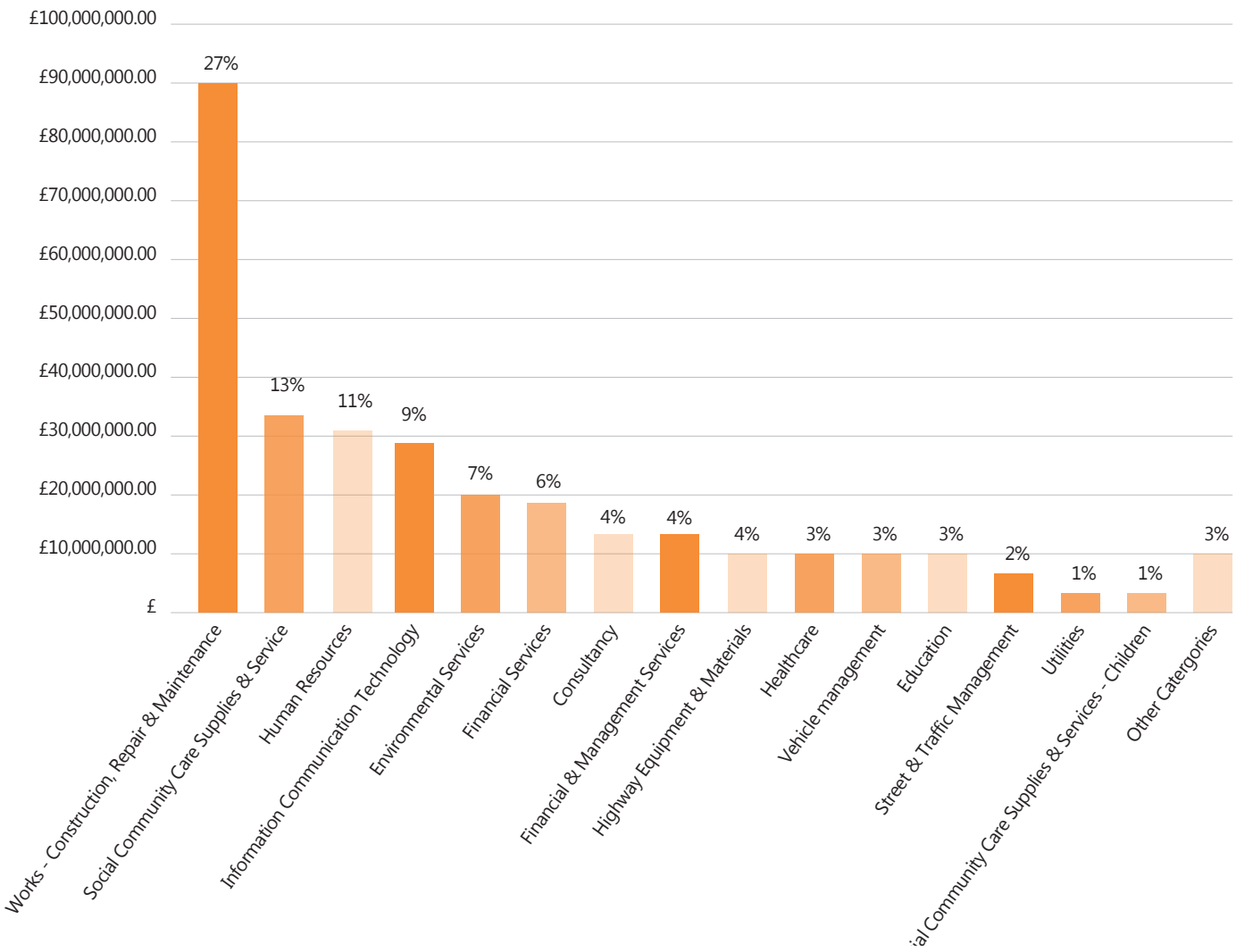
Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Brent Supplier Spend.

Brent council's spend spans across approximately 4,670 suppliers with the top 50 Suppliers this year making up 57% of our spend reaching almost £250m. The chart on the right sets out the most significant categories of spend across the council ranked in order on spend showing Construction, Social Care, HR and Information Technology making up the top four categories of spend.



Top 15 Categories of spend 21-22 (PO Spend)



Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

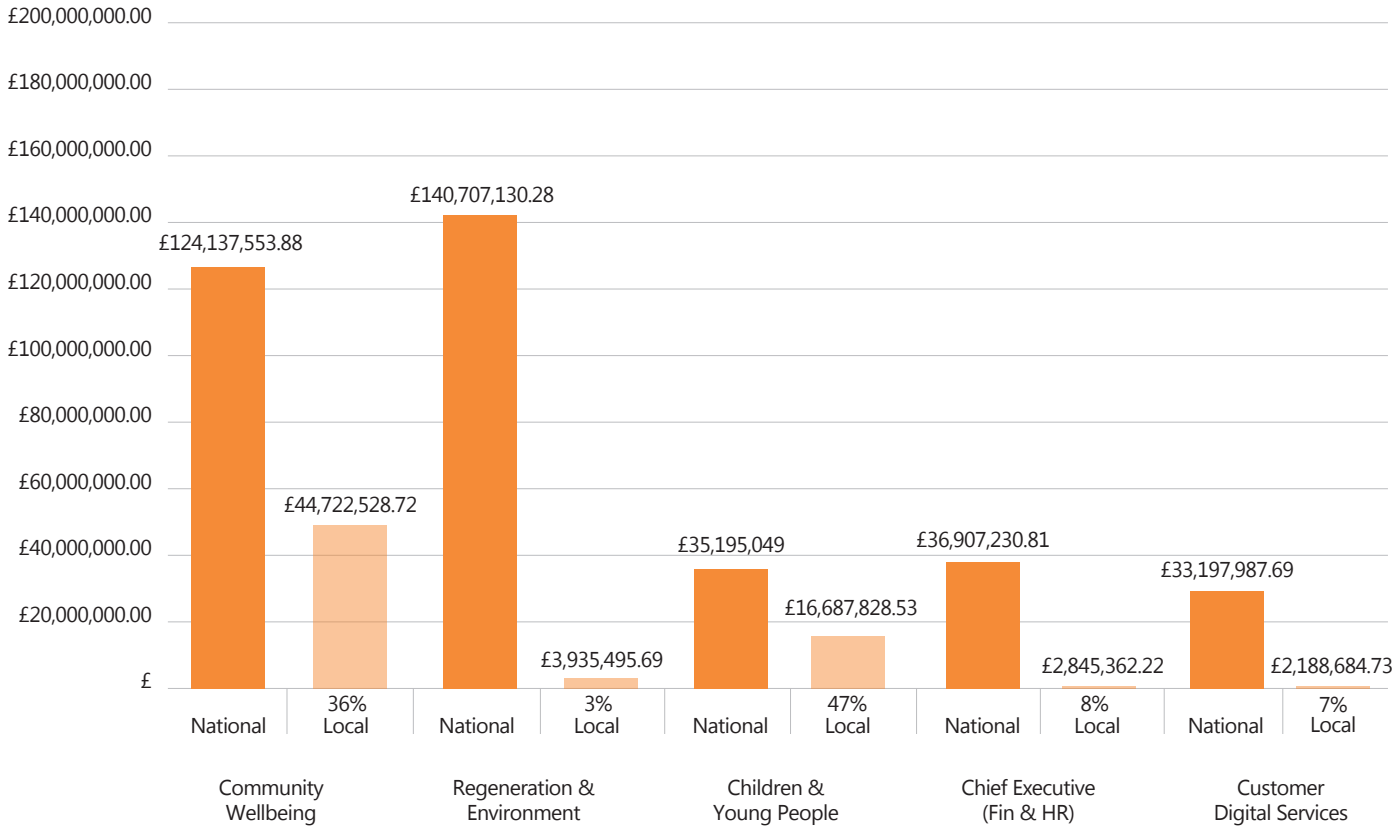
Brent local Supplier Spend.

Spend with our local supplier base is a key focus for Brent and the strategy is looking to increase our spend year on year as we progress the various pillars of the strategy. Currently approximately £70m of our third party spend is conducted with local suppliers registered within a Brent postcode. This is across over 1376 local suppliers with the top 50 local suppliers making up 69% of that spend mostly across social care.

The chart shows the proportion of local supplier spend that makes up the Directorates overall spend with Community Wellbeing having 36% of their overall spend being delivered by the local supplier base and Children and Young People with 47% of their overall spend being delivered by the local supplier base.



Spend Per Directorate vs Local Spend within them (21-22)



Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

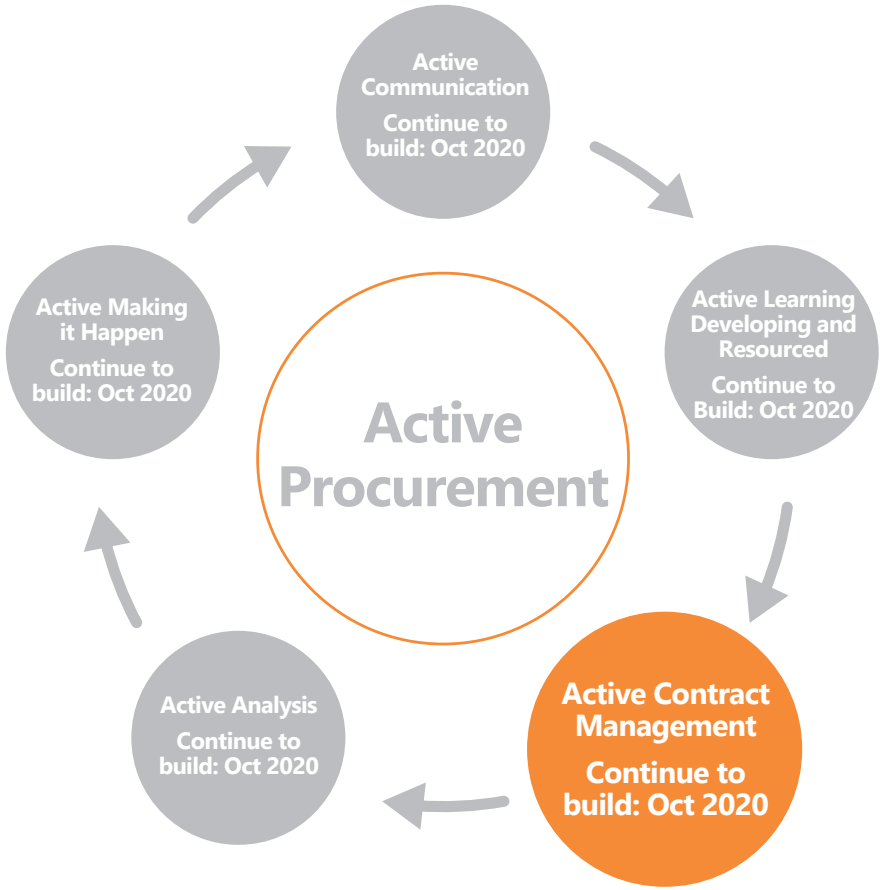
Active Contract Management.

Procurement have been working with Directorates across the Council to create a contracts register of all known contracts and then taking our spend data and aligning actual spend data in year against contracted spend.

Having a good understanding of all our major contracts is important, it enables us to ensure we are focussing our intentions on areas of spend and contract value which have a major impact on the community and businesses of Brent.

Procurement continue to work with stakeholders across the council, building and refining a comprehensive contracts register which currently stands at over 400 contracts. The vast majority of the database is made of contracts that have followed a procurement process conducted by the Procurement team or the team have been involved in an advisory capacity and hence have knowledge of these contract awards.

The work on building and refining the register, is further supplemented with the formal requirement of Contract Purchase Orders (CPA's). Since moving to Oracle Fusion as of October 2021 every commercial supplier that is set up on our system has a spend limit (CPA) placed upon it and when that limit is reached it is highlighted to Procurement to review to determine if further spend against that supplier should be approved. Where spend limits are increased compliant contracts are provided to Procurement which in turn are then added to the contracts register.



Procurement are also continuing to focus on encouraging good contract management across the Council providing a contract management toolkit supplemented by training so contract managers have enough guidance to enable them to, monitor how well the supplier is performing in delivering those key performance indicators and outcomes and what needs to be done in advance of contract end dates or possible extensions to provide assurance that we are Actively Contract Managing and making best use of the resources we have.

These contracts cover approximately 66% of the spend we incurred for the financial year 21/22. Not all of this spend is addressable (which means where we can look to deliver efficiencies) as some of this spend is to support significant capital

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

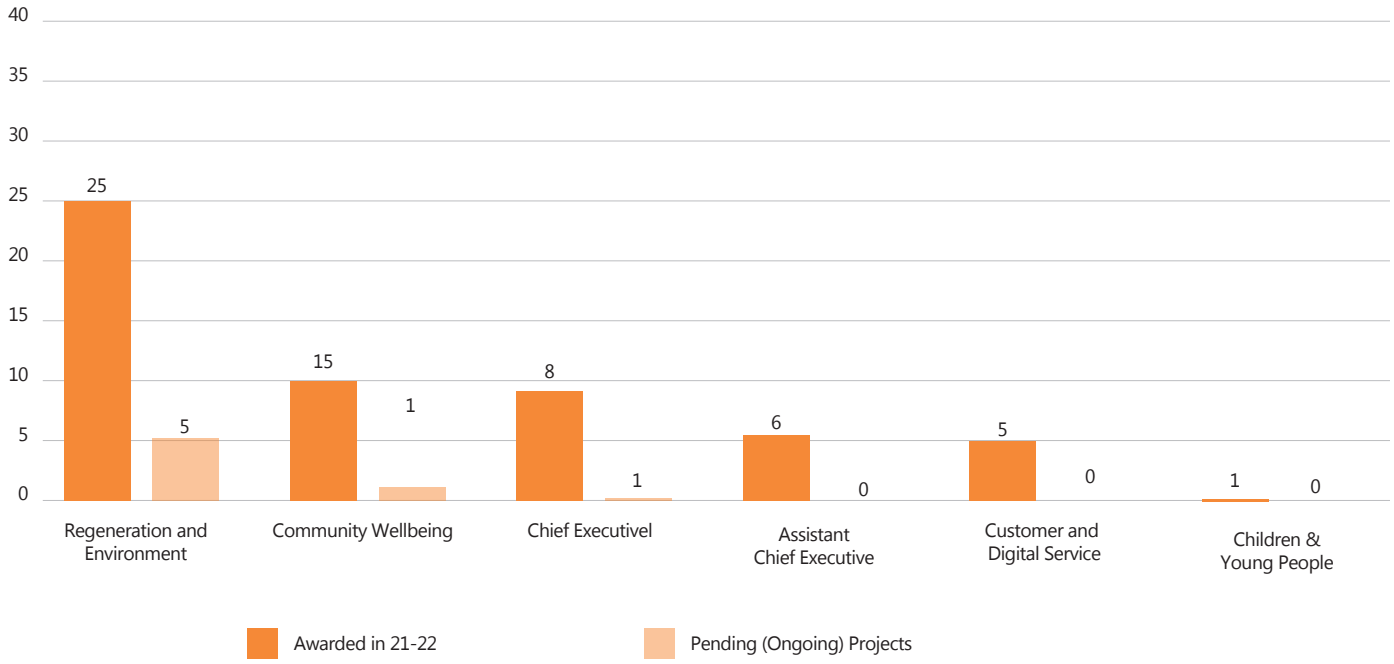
build programmes of work as Brent continues to regenerate and develop the borough for the benefit of its residents and businesses.

The register highlights when contracts are coming to an end, Procurement have completed an exercise identifying all contracts that are due to end by March 2023, working with stakeholders across the Directorates to understand future plans and how best to see if there are opportunities to extract efficiencies. It also helps to decide how best to engage with the market on future procurements to ensure we are supporting the various pillars of the Procurement Strategy.

Contract awards for FY 21-22.

The Procurement team have been engaged on over 68 projects not including frameworks* (framework figures will be included in the overall figures moving forward). During the last financial year, 61 procurement projects were awarded between April 21 and March 22 and the value of those projects awarded amounted to £19m.

Number of Contracts awarded and pending award April 20- March 21



Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Social Value and Ethical Policy

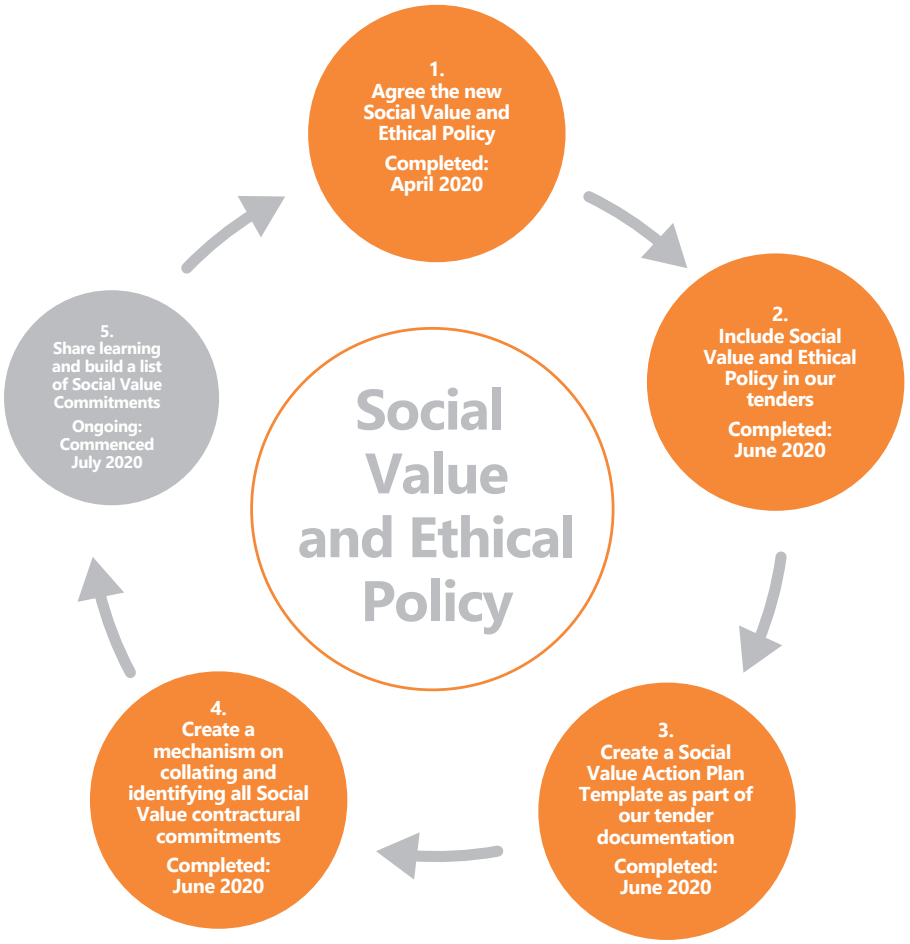
KPI/Outcome Delivery

Local Investment from Brent contracts

Indicators

- Number of Brent organisations who participate in the Council's Supply Chain.
- Supporting innovative delivery models such as co-operatives, community interest companies social enterprises.
- Total amount of social value delivered through Brent Contracts.





Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

The Council wants to ensure Social Value, is integral in all its procurements, benefitting Brent's communities and embraced by all involved.

To recap, the Social Value and Ethical policy has commitments that align to the Council's borough plan strategic priorities. Under each strategic theme the policy provides guidance on the areas we can increase the delivery of social value.

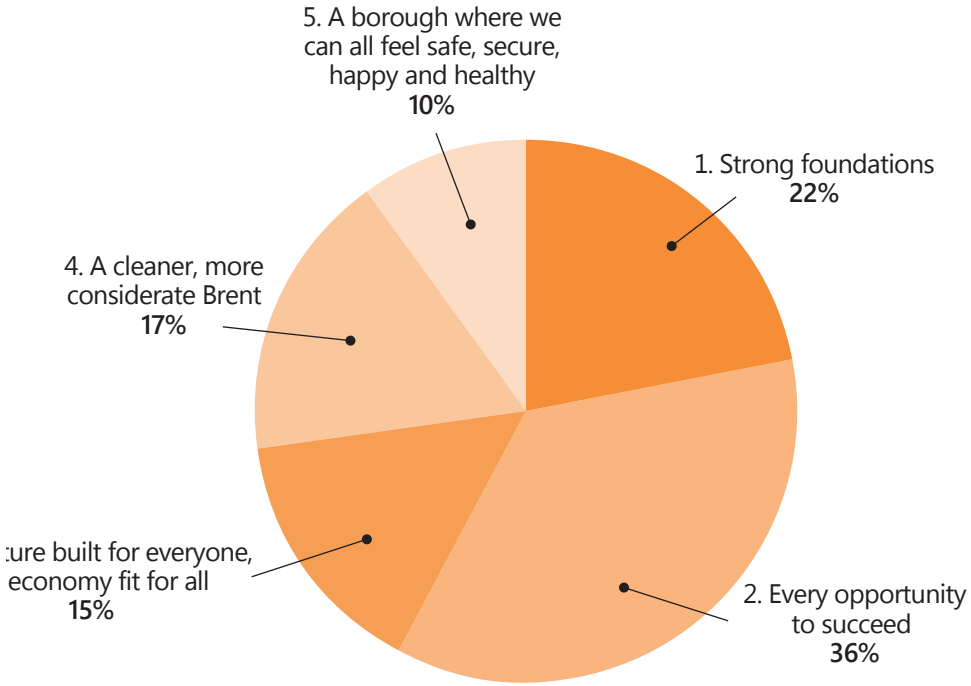
The chart and table to the right sets out how well each of the borough strategic priorities are looking to deliver social value.

Further information on which KPI's are being supported within each of the council's strategic priorities is set out below.

The breakdown confirms that our suppliers are delivering social value across each of the priorities in the borough plan. The suppliers have set out the financial value they are willing to pass back to the council if they do not deliver the Social Value committed as part of the contract.

The total Social Value commitment for FY21-22 equates to £1,284,382.07

Percentage of Borough Priorities supported by Social Value



Breakdown of SV pillar	Total value all years	Percentage
1. Strong foundations	£280,485.47	22%
2. Every opportunity to succeed	£466,647.87	36%
3. A future built for everyone,an economy fit for all	£195,012.22	15%
4. A cleaner, more considerate Brent	£217,321.17	17%
5. A borough where we can all feel safe, secure, happy and healthy	£124,915.53	10%
Total commitment among 21 received files	**£1,284,382.07**	**100%**

The highest performance among all pillars was for **2. Every opportunity to succeed with 36%**

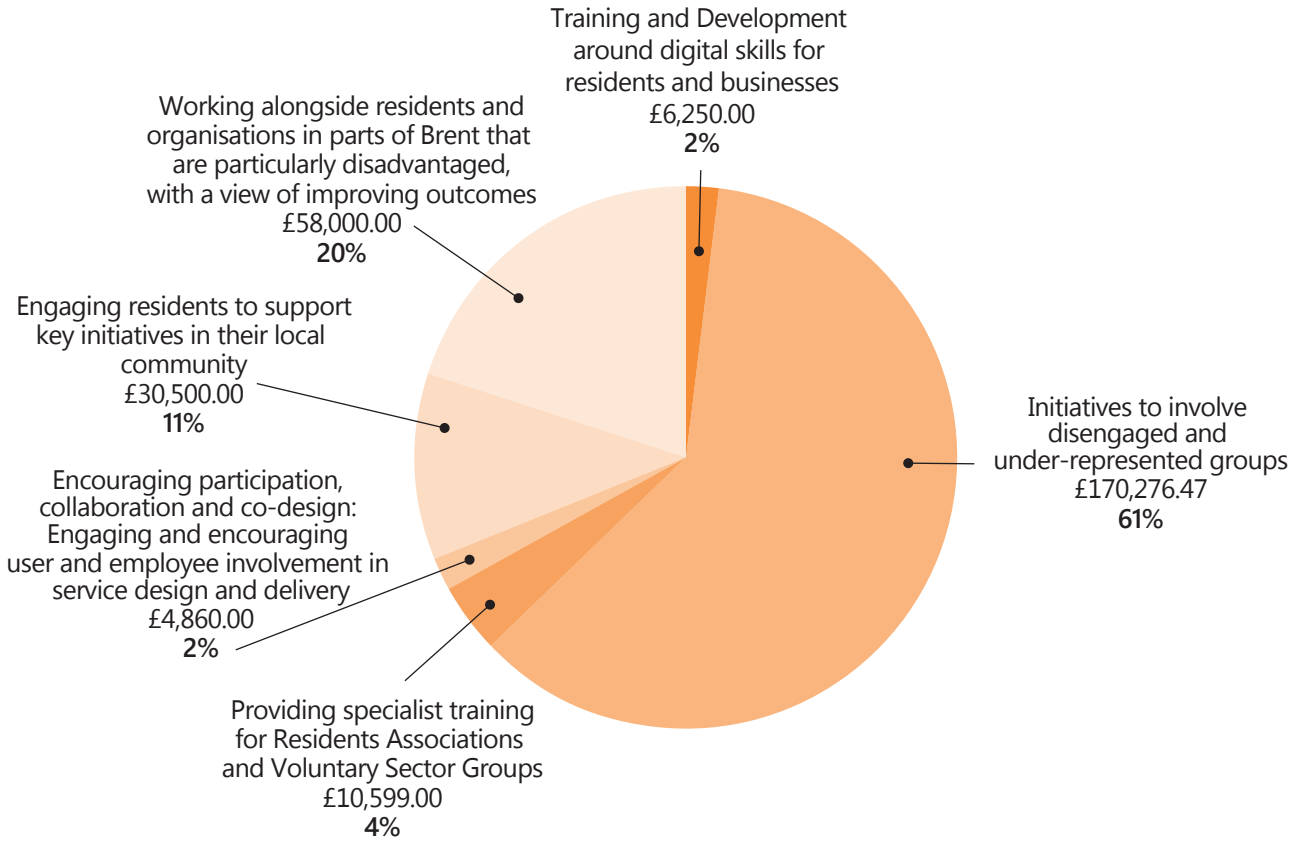
Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

The following charts and tables break out in further detail the various KPI's / Outcomes that suppliers will be delivering and the financial commitments that they have placed against those KPI's / Outcomes that will be given back to the Council if the social value is not delivered.

Strong Foundations

Set out below are the opportunities we are looking to deliver through Social Value.

1. Financial Commitment of Social Value



1. Strong foundations 22%	Total value all years
1.1 Training and Development around digital skills for residents and businesses	£6,250.00
1.2 Initiatives to involve disengaged and under-represented groups	£170,276.47
1.3 Providing specialist training for Residents Associations and Voluntary Sector groups	£10,599.00
1.4 Encouraging participation, collaboration and co-design: Engaging and encouraging user and employee involvement in service design and delivery	£4,860.00
1.5. Engaging residents to support key initiatives in their local community	£30,500.00
1.6 Working alongside residents and organisations in parts of Brent that are particularly disadvantaged, with a view of improving outcomes	£58,000.00
	£280,485.47

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Social Value and Ethical Policy



Delivery of free school taster days to give young children the opportunity to take part in tennis at school with no cost to the individual or school. We would engage a wide number of schools, with particular focus on schools within proximity to a park with tennis courts

Build meaningful peer to peer relationships within the community, coach, and mentor residents to build on existing skills whilst acquiring new ones. Tangible course aims defined in the programme overview document (here) include, learning how to create documents, spreadsheets and presentations. Advancing learner's confidence and ability to carry out basic digital tasks.

Strong Foundations

Social Value Commitment Examples

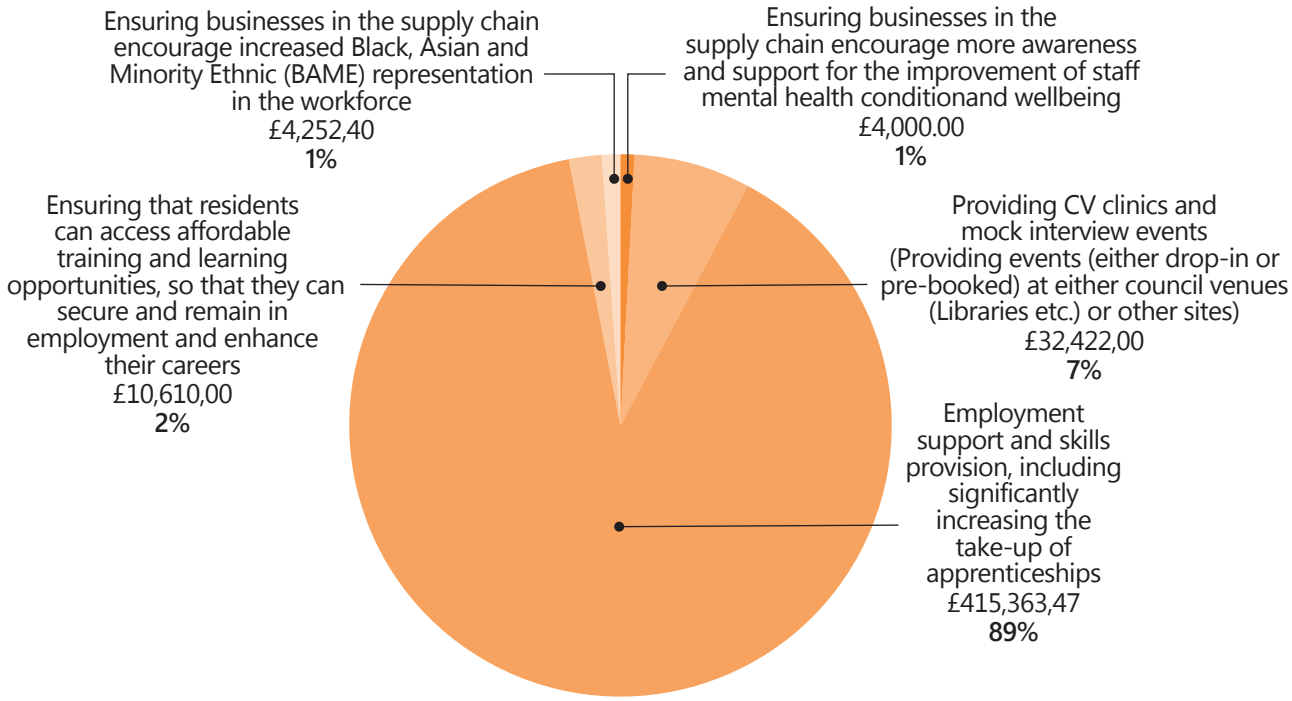
Procurement Strategy – Annual Report FY 20-21.

Every Opportunity to Succeed

Our ambition is to create a borough where everybody has an opportunity to succeed and thrive; a place where they are able to realise aspirations of education, work and family. We will utilise social value initiatives to improve inclusion, equality and representation of groups currently underrepresented in further education and work.

Set out opposite are the opportunities we are looking to deliver through Social Value.

2. Financial Commitment of Social Value



2. Every opportunity to succeed 36%	Total value all years
2.1 Providing CV clinics and mock interview events (Providing events (either drop-in or pre-booked) at either council venues (Libraries etc.) or other sites)	£32,422.00
2.2 Employment support and skills provision, including significantly increasing the take-up of apprenticeships	£415,363.47
2.3 Ensure that residents can access affordable training and learning opportunities, so that they can secure and remain in employment and enhance their careers	£10,610.00
2.4 Ensuring businesses in the supply chain encourage improved gender pay balance	£0.00
2.5 Ensuring businesses in the supply chain encourage increased representation of people with disabilities and mental health conditions in the workforce	£0.00
2.6 Ensuring businesses in the supply chain encourage increased Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) representation in the workforce	£4,252.40
2.7 Ensuring businesses in the supply chain encourage more awareness and support for the improvement of staff mental health and wellbeing.	£4,000.00
	£466,647.87

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Social Value and Ethical Policy



We are offering paid work for at least eight linguists (working a minumum of at leat 16 hours per week) over the life of the contract providing Brent based linguists with the confidence that the Brent offers them the opportunity to succeed.

Creation of new jobs, focusing on disadvantaged groups which otherwise may not have been presented with an opportunity.

Every opportunity to succeed

Social Value Commitment Examples

Procurement Strategy – Annual Report FY 20-21.

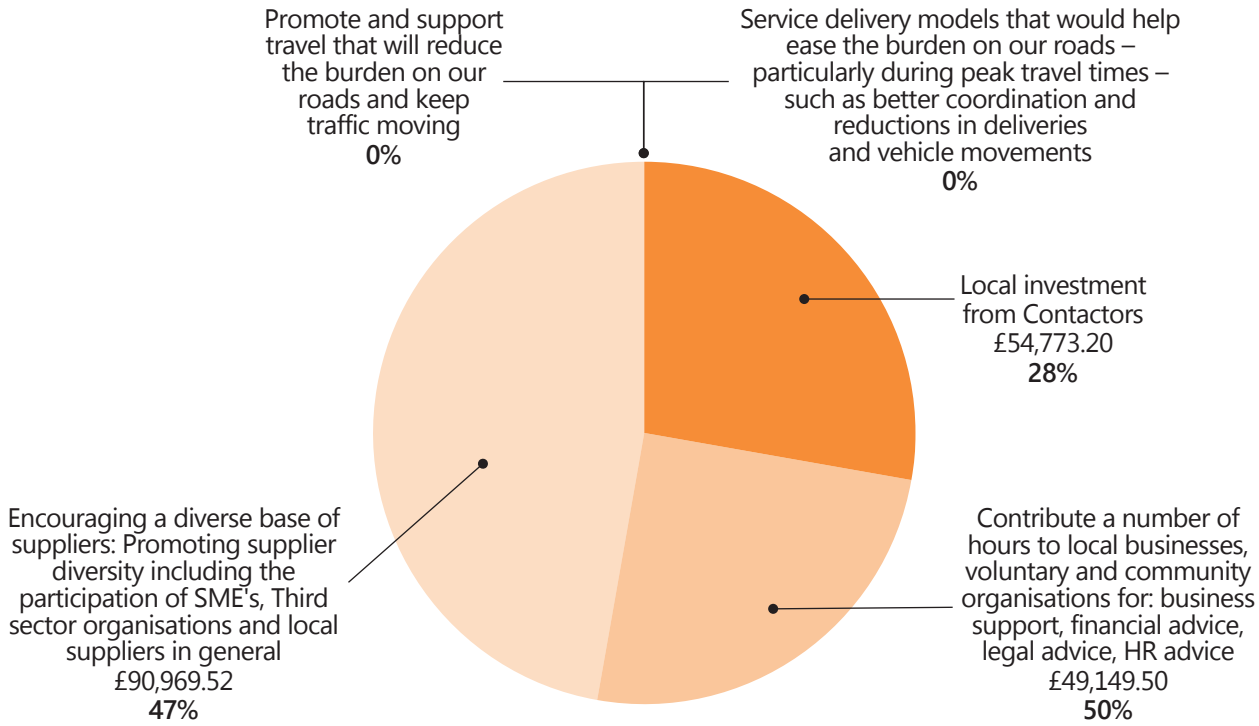
A future built for everyone, an economy fit for all

We have made huge strides in regenerating the borough we must now ensure we continue to build upon the inward investment in Brent, creating an attractive and prosperous place for

Businesses to operate and grow. We will work with SME's to make sure they are best placed to bid for Brent Contracts.

Set out below are the opportunities we are looking to deliver through Social Value.

3. Financial Commitment of Social Value



3. A future built for everyone, an economy fit for all (24%)	Total value all years
3.1 Local investment from Contactors	£54,773.20
3.2 Contribute a number of hours to local businesses, voluntary and community organisations for: business support, financial advice, legal advice, HR advice	£49,149.50
3.3 Encouraging a diverse base of suppliers: Promoting supplier diversity including the participation of SME's, Third sector organisations and local suppliers in general	£90,969.52
3.4 Maximising opportunities for Brent organisations to participate in the council's supply chains and encouraging suppliers to make a social contribution to the local area of Brent	£0.00
3.5 Promote and support travel that will reduce the burden on our roads and keep traffic moving	£0.00
3.6 Service delivery models that would help ease the burden on our roads – particularly during peak travel times – such as better coordination and reductions in deliveries and vehicle movements	£0.00
	£195,012.22

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Social Value and Ethical Policy



* Improvement of the garden areas / Early Years outdoor area
* Contribution to an outdoor / main playground reading area

* Repainting the Year 1 Classrooms
* Repainting / Repairing the damaged areas from previous water ingress

A future built for everyone

Social Value Commitment Examples

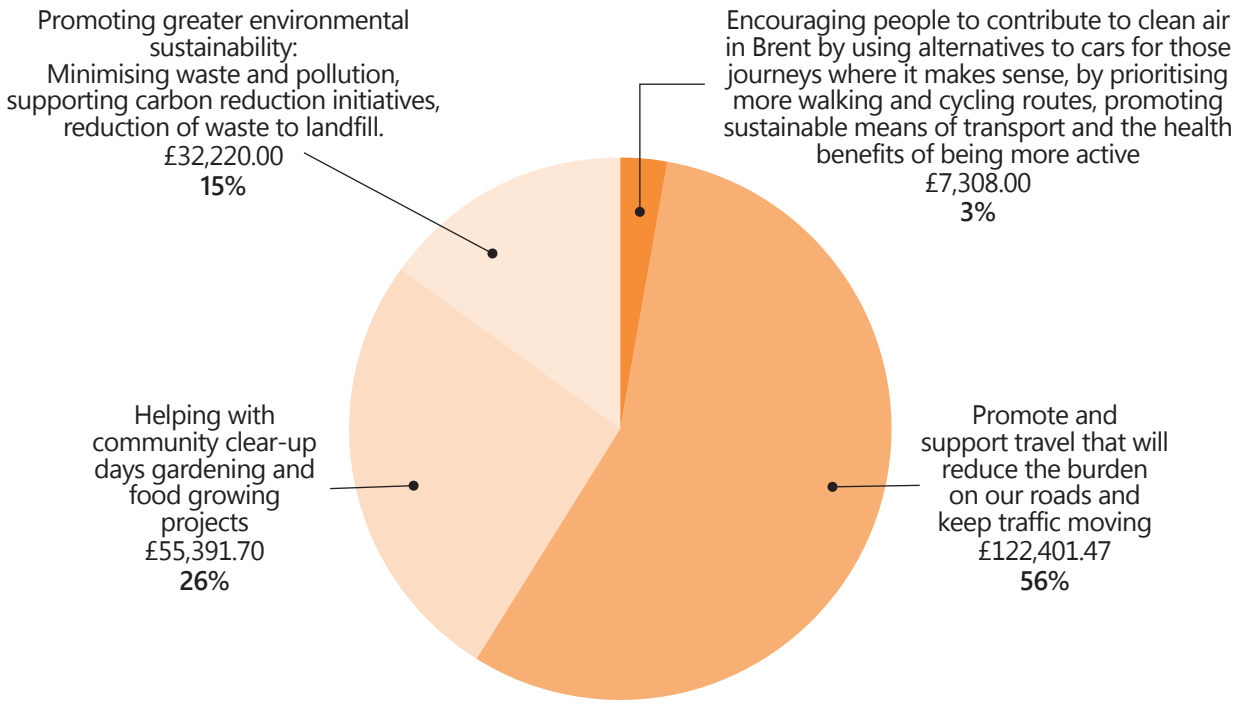
Procurement Strategy – Annual Report FY 20-21.

A cleaner, more considerate Brent

Brent council will strive for carbon neutrality by 2030 after joining more than 260 other councils and the Mayor of London, in declaring a climate and ecological emergency. The council is committed to taking a systematic approach to tackling the climate emergency, focusing on the following environmental issues: carbon emissions reduction, warm homes, local resilience to the impacts of global heating, clean air, a circular economy, greener spaces and water conservation.

Set out below are the opportunities we are looking to deliver through Social Value.

4. Financial Commitment of Social Value



4. A cleaner, more considerate Brent 17%	Total value all years
4.1 Encouraging people to contribute to clean air in Brent by using alternatives to cars for those journeys where it makes sense, by prioritising more walking and cycling routes, promoting sustainable means of transport and the health benefits of being more active	£7,308.00
4.2 Contributing toward increasing the number of trees and biodiverse, bee-friendly and sustainable planting on our streets, in our public spaces, and our award-winning parks	£0.00
4.3 Promote, encourage and actively work to change behaviours around recycling and making sustainable choices	£122,401.47
4.4 Helping with community clear-up days gardening and food growing projects	£55,391.70
4.5 Promoting greater environmental sustainability: Minimising waste and pollution, supporting carbon reduction initiatives, reduction of waste to landfill.	£32,220.00
4.6 Suppliers reviewing how best to deliver energy efficiency products to prevent fuel poverty for local residents.	£0.00
	£217,321.17

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Social Value and Ethical Policy



A reduction in vehicle movements can be made by the following practices:

a) sharing vans to site to reduce number of vehicles and reduce vehicle miles and pollution,

b) working from home where possible to avoid commuting.

The KPI will focus on reducing van fleet use as this is the largest contributor of emissions.

A cleaner more considerate Brent

Social Value Commitment Examples

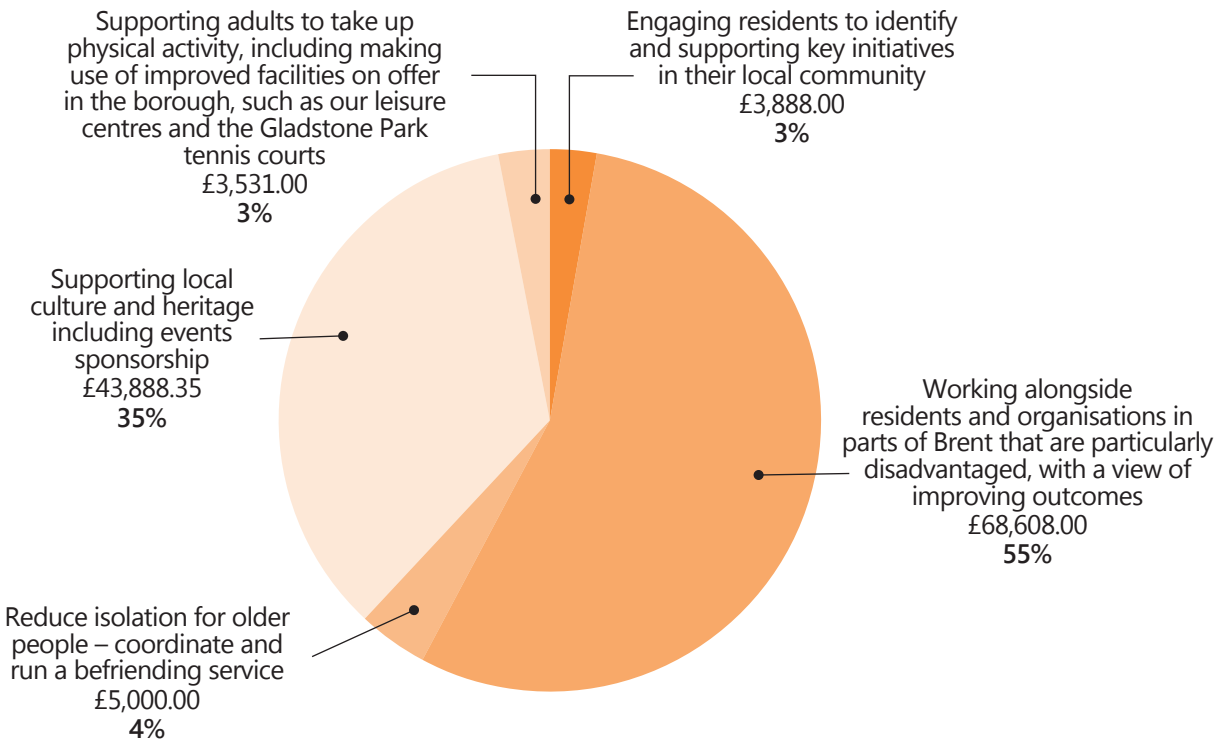
Procurement Strategy – Annual Report FY 20-21.

A borough where we can all feel safe, secure, happy and healthy

It is vital for the council to support our most vulnerable residents -safeguarding children and young people and helping vulnerable adults to be independent at home. Crime is falling in Brent, and residents are clear that safety is what they value most. However, we still have work to do to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as reducing the fear of crime.

Set out below are the opportunities we are looking to deliver through Social Value.

5. Financial Commitment of Social Value



5. A borough where we can all feel safe, secure, happy and healthy 10%	Total value all years
5.1 Engaging residents to identify and supporting key initiatives in their local community	£3,531.00
5.2 Working alongside residents and organisations in parts of Brent that are particularly disadvantaged, with a view of improving outcomes	£68,608.00
5.3 Reduce isolation for older people – coordinate and run a befriending service	£5,000.00
5.4 Supporting local culture and heritage including events sponsorship	£43,888.35
5.5 Get children and young people to be more active and reduce their sugar intake, in partnership with schools, the NHS, and the community	£0.00
5.6 Supporting adults to take up physical activity, including making use of improved facilities on offer in the borough, such as our leisure centres and and the Gladstone Park tennis courts	£3,888.00
5.7 Work with communities and voluntary sector to help tackle anti-social behaviour and serious youth violence.	£0.00
	£124,915.35

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Social Value and Ethical Policy



We will offer the time of a clinician from these services to run at least one wellbeing event for residents, looking at coping mechanisms and ways to support positive mental health. Centres will also display information relating to physical and mental health and wellbeing e.g., mindfulness tips, signposting resources, etc.

Resources to help young people and children to be kind to each other and to be safe in the way they enjoy themselves eg. online and in the parks and what being healthy means.

A borough where we can all feel safe and secure

Social Value Commitment Examples

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

From April 2020 to March 2022 we have delivered several internal training sessions on Social Value and are working closely with stakeholders to ensure measurable and suitable KPI's are included within Social Value Action Plans. Exercises included lessons learned from previous awarded contracts where areas of improvement were identified. External training sessions have also been held to support the supplier market to understand the Council's Social Value priorities. Further sessions will need to be held across the other directorates to ensure as council we are all following a consensus when it comes to setting suitable Social Value KPI's that benefit the local community.

Evidencing Social Value delivery.

Procurement have developed Social Value audit tools where all Social Value committed and to be delivered during the life of the contract is captured. Thereafter at six and twelve monthly cycles Procurement will reach out to the Directorates and gather evidence on supplier's progress in actual delivery of social value.

Set out below and on the next page is an extract of the Social Value Audit template.

How are we monitoring Social Value?

Procurement have worked to produce an Audit Template spreadsheet to enable Contract Managers to easily access the Social Value Action Plans and Method Statements aligned with the designated contract commitments from providers.

The spreadsheet has parameters displaying each contracts Social Value themes that fall in line with the Procurement Strategy i.e. Strong Foundations etc.

Each theme has monetary commitments associated for that Financial Year with a description of what has been committed, whether it has been delivered and what form of evidence has been provided and stored internally.



Example of Social Value Audit Template

Contract name	Contract Value	Total Social Value Price Commitment	SV Priority Committed	Unit of measure	Description of Social Value has been committed	Year of social value Commitment	Financial Value of SV Commitment KPI/ Outcome per year	KPI Delivered	Evidence (Hyperlink)	Provide detail of the SV delivered - note this could be used as part of the Annual Procurement Strategy Report	Action to be taken - following performane review of SV plan	Year of Social Value Commitment
			Strong foundations	Number of people	Number of work experience opportunities provided to pupils (for disadvantaged groups)							2021
			Every opportunity to succeed	Number of clinics	Number of CV clinics provided							2021
			A future built for everyone, an economy fit for all	Number of hours	Number of volunteer hours provided by the supplier to be delivered within Brent							2021
			A cleaner more considerate Brent	Number of miles	Miles of travel or transportation per year converted to zero or low emissions within Brent							2021
			Strong foundations	Number of events	Number of training events provided for community organisations and voluntary groups							2022
			A future built for everyone, an economy fit for all	Number of hours	Number of volunteer hours provided by the supplier to be delivered within Brent							2022

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Social Value and Ethical Policy

Delivery of Social Value commitments

Strong Foundations

Total KPI's Delivered	Monetary Committment Value
15	£167,590.00

Good News Stories

Masefield, Wordsworth and Dickens (MW&D)

Work experience - worked with 'Beyond the Box' to launch a youth social action programme. This worked with young people 16-21 to design social action projects via their 'Young Innovators Fund'. £2,000 went to each innovation idea. Also co-designed a Skills Exchange Programme.



Images designed by Karakusevic Carson Architects

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Social Value and Ethical Policy

Delivery of Social Value commitments

A future built for everyone

Total KPI's Delivered	Monetary Committment Value
13	£311,332.00



Good News Stories

The Jerram Falkus staff delivered an hour's presentation to the 15 first-year Business Administration students on career pathways within the construction industry and the roles that are achievable with a Business Administration qualification. There was also time for a Q&A session, in which the students asked quite a few questions.

Jerram Falkus has agreed to deliver further careers talks to the College of North West London in order to support the students with their academic and career development. The company is committed to offering educational experiences to students that will ultimately give a greater knowledge into pathways to careers in construction.

Thomas Kelly, Associate Construction Director of Jerram Falkus, said "This emerging partnership with the College of North West London demonstrates that Jerram Falkus is committed to supporting local communities and to offering skills through knowledge to students which can be built upon to support their journey into the world of work."

Tommy Allain, Commercial Manager, said "Its an honour to be able to pass on my knowledge and skills to the upcoming cohort of students – I really hope that I have inspired them to consider a career in construction."

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Social Value and Ethical Policy

Delivery of Social Value commitments

A cleaner more considerate Brent

Total KPI's Delivered	Monetary Committment Value
16	£166,120.00







Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Social Value and Ethical Policy

Delivery of Social Value commitments

Every Opportunity to Succeed

Total KPI's Delivered	Monetary Committment Value
13	£311,332.00

Good News Stories

Pathway Works at Keybourne Open Space

6 paid roles funded. 1 x engagement officer (now permanently employed at the South Kilburn Trust), 7 x young innovators, 1 x project assistant, 1348 hours. £14,728







Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Sustainability

KPI/Outcome Delivery

Reduce waste through recycling.

Indicators

How many of our suppliers comply with ISO 14001: 2015 or equivalent and work towards ensuring as many suppliers within our existing supply chain are conforming. Moving forward it forms part of our evaluation criteria for suppliers wishing to work with the Council.

The third pillar of the Procurement Strategy is to ensure we have a Procurement Sustainability Policy to align to our commitment to the Green agenda. The annual direct spend on goods, services and works contracts is approximately £388 million, so the scope to influence is significant and far-reaching. Improving environmental sustainability throughout our supply chain is an essential component of our commitment to reduce our environmental impact and lead by example.

The policy's aim is to stretch across all aspects of sustainability and includes Brent's commitment to support Fairtrade so they can deliver sustainable goods and services within their own organisation and across their supply chains.

This culminated in Brent having its first Sustainable Procurement Policy and has been embedded within our Procurements from April 21.



below are some extracts of KPI's, Officers can use when to support the Sustainability through our procurements.

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Business Category	Sustainability KPI selected	Sustainability commitment
Printed products and printing services	Reduction of waste sent to landfill / reduced packaging and increase in recycling rates.	Reduce amount of waste produced by 5% Increase recycle and reuse by 6%
Design and Construction	Actions to reduce carbon emissions	Carbon emission Action plan. BREEAM Assessment to reduce CO2 emissions by 35%. Reducing fleet emissions by 30% by 2025
Design and Construction	Actions to reduce carbon emissions	Traffic management plan

Sustainable Procurement Policy and has been embedded within our Procurements from April 21. Above are some extracts of KPI's, Officers can use to support Sustainability through our procurements. Sustainable procurement practices are an area that boroughs both sub-regionally in West London and in London as a whole are considering as part of their efforts to tackle the climate and ecological emergency. We are part of a sub-regional working group, working with other West London Alliance Boroughs to create a unified set of policies across the sub-region making it easier for suppliers to understand their requirements for bidding for services in West London, and ensure that West London Alliance boroughs are committed to similar ambitions and aims. The documents and policies developed include:

- Climate Commitment Charter - Suppliers are asked to join us in collectively tackling the climate emergency and to set out the actions they will take to reduce their organisation's carbon emissions.
- West London Carbon Procurement Policy - This sets out the commitment of the West London Alliance
- Tool kit and Guidance - Created to help embed carbon considerations across the procurement and commissioning cycle and is supported by a bank of questions to include in tenders.
- SME Guidance on Low Carbon Procurement



Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Circular Economy

KPI/Outcome Delivery

Reduced use of natural resources by purchasing goods and services using recycled materials and facilitate increased investment with local businesses who operate within the circular economy in Brent.

This will be achieved by:

- Identifying across the variety of forthcoming procurements where we can utilise and embed the circular economy principles.
- Using the intelligence gained from local supplier research and gap analysis to identify opportunities to encourage local suppliers to promote the longevity of resources that we are using.
- Building the opportunities identified into our procurements and contracts through the circular economy principles, along with the ability for the local supplier base to be used in the repair, refurbishment and recycling process.
- Encouraging confidence and uptake across the Council by promoting examples of procurements where circular economy principles were applied and are being delivered.



Indicators

- Percentage of businesses operating within the circular economy.

There are a number of businesses in the borough involved in the circular economy. This list will be refined to assist bidder use local suppliers that are involved in the circular economy.

By the end of this financial year Brent will have a Circular Procurement policy that will provide more detail on how our suppliers are supporting the Circular Economy principles.

Below we have set out some of the measures we will be looking to incorporate and measure.

- What percentage of goods and services used in the supply chain are recycled.

Suppliers that are bidding for tenders will required to explain what happens at the end of the product life. They will need to detail how they will support the circular economy principles to avoid waste by arranging for products to be re-used, recycled or upcycled.

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

- What percentage of good and services are recycled within supplier's organisation?

Suppliers that are bidding for tenders will provide details of what percentage of their goods in their organisation are re-used, recycled or upcycled.

- What percentage of goods and services are recycled using the local supplier base?

Suppliers that are bidding for tenders will be signposted to local supplier base operating within the circular economy. Supplier will provide details of what percentage of their goods in their organisation are re-used, recycled or upcycled using the local supplier base.

The creation of the Procurement Sustainability policy underpins the need for Brent, to move towards a low carbon, circular economy. This will involve a radical shift away from our current linear economy and 'throwaway culture' where products are made used disposed to one in which resources and products are kept in use for as long as possible.

Brent is well placed to enhance its low carbon circular economy over the next 10 years as it is already amongst the top London boroughs with the highest rates of employment in this sector.

We will aspire to continue to build this sector and support this economic model of operation as a key mechanism for tackling the climate and ecological emergency. This will also be at the centre of green economic recovery efforts following the COVID-19 pandemic and aid the transition away from our current linear economy.



By leading by example and championing the importance of a reduction in the environmental impact of our supply chain, it is hoped to have a positive impact within the council and community, and to encourage other organisations to do the same and adopt new sustainability circular economy procurement practices.



Procurement Strategy – Annual Report FY 20-21.

Community Wealth Building

KPI/Outcome Delivery

Increase the number of local suppliers we use within Brent year on year from our current baseline.

Indicators

- Number of contracts awarded to local suppliers.
- Amount spent with the local supply chain.
- Number of local suppliers within the supply chain.
- Number of local suppliers used in our larger contractors supply chains.

Procurement have specific KPI's to help support and develop our links with the local supplier base and ensure all our suppliers based in London pay their staff the London Living Wage.



Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Performance Indicator	Q4 YTD	Target YTD	Good is?	RAG YTD Calculated
Percentage of relevant contracts being procured that meet the London Living Wage standard	99%	99%	Bigger is Better	Green
Percentage of such tenders local businesses were successful in, either outright in being awarded the contract or used within the supply chain of the non-local business	35%	35%	Bigger is Better	Green
Hours contibuted towards supporting/financial commitment for sponsorship of community–led initiatives [SVEPP]	59%	50%	Bigger is Better	Green
Number of local apprenticeships/work exerience opportunities (including focus on disadvantaged groups) [Social Value amd Ethical Procurement policy]	17%	15%	Bigger is Better	Green

Brent Supplier Spend.

Spend with our local supplier base is a key focus for Brent and the strategy is looking to increase our spend year on year as we progress the various pillars of the strategy. Currently approximately £70m of our third party spend is conducted with local suppliers registered within a Brent postcode. This is across over 1376 local suppliers with the top 50 local suppliers making up 69% of that spend mostly across social care.

The next milestone is to understand at a micro level the make up of Brent businesses by ward. Review the type of suppliers we need against what we have and developing opportunities for the existing and new suppliers to be able to bid for future opportunities so we can aim to spend more locally.

Also once the council have more clarity re our local supplier base, the type of suppliers we have, where they are located we can also facilitate network sessions to put these suppliers in touch so they can draw from each other on what requirements they need fullfilled looking to create opportunities amongst themselves.

The aim is to create and maintain a reliable and up to date Brent Local Supplier Directory with details of who they are and their offering in a practical format to the buyers of the Council as well as the wider group i.e. contractors and other businesses to increase local spend and keep wealth within Brent.

Brent recognise that Community Wealth Building is not a quick win and requires a complete holistic approach which requires internal and external collaboration to ensure tangible benefits are achieved for the local suppliers. We have created a step by step plan by liaising with internal departments within the Council to be successful in our goal:

- Conduct a gap analysis to demonstrate what we are looking to procure at a micro level across our programmes of work versus the types of local suppliers (identified in the form of Brent Local Supplier Directory.
- Identify the number of social enterprises, for example, mutuals, co-operatives, community interest companies etc. in the local community.
- Understand what services the above sector can provide and look to conduct reserved contract procurements in line with new legislation.
- Through on going supplier events and by improving our online offer specific to local suppliers, we can enable local suppliers to learn more about the available support, future opportunities and how to register onto the procurement portal.
- Review future opportunities including larger scale and under £25k upcoming procurements within the Council, supply chain analysis to create links for larger suppliers next milestone to use our local supply chain and encourage creation of more social enterprises that will support Community Wealth Building.

- Engage with other anchor institutions who can support the local economy.

By using an evidence based approach to demonstrate the journey, we can report and celebrate success and continue to promote and recognise the benefits of supporting local suppliers for the economy.

Prior Information Notice

It's important wherever possible to let the supplier base know of what opportunities may be arising over the coming year. To help support this, Procurement have let everyone registered onto our portal of the proposed procurements that will be conducted not including frameworks so suppliers can be aware and make plans in preparation of the possible opportunities. This may allow for local suppliers to collaborate with some of the larger suppliers for high value procurements.

Procurement will commit to continue to do this on an annual basis.

Procurement process registration

Procurement want to broaden the understanding of working with council and to support suppliers not accustomed on how to bid for procurement projects we have created a step by step process showing suppliers how to sign up to our procurement portal and how to register for opportunities that they would want to receive notifications.

This has been shared with suppliers who have registered an interest and those who are new to the bidding process.

Supplier registration form

Another avenue Procurement have instigated is working with Employment Skills and Enterprise to develop our understanding of the local supplier base through a Supplier Registration form. This provides for local suppliers the opportunity to complete their details about their organisation, and the type of services they provide. The form was developed and went live early this year and amended slightly in March to understand more specific details about the supplier on their BAME make up.

So far we have had around 300 registered suppliers which has enabled us to target local suppliers and provide capacity building workshops to support in the bidding process.

Capacity building -Supplier events

Procurement in collaboration with the Economic Growth team has delivered a series of business support webinars and training such as:

'Doing business with Brent' webinars provided an open platform for businesses to receive information and ask crucial questions to help them in pursuing upcoming opportunities how to register onto our portal and directing them to the supplier registration form. Three webinars were held in 2021/22 with 83 attendees across the three events.

Fit To Bid workshops supporting businesses on how to write effective bids – several workshops held in Q3 of 2020 to support the voluntary sector.

Feedback from some suppliers who attended the webinars:

"Thank you so much for this and I hope the Brent initiative takes off. As a local employer with employees in Brent we have to work together and shop local"

"Tenders and contracts are so complex. Thanks for making it easy to understand."

"Thank you everyone! This has been incredibly informative and helpful. Also, we really value Brent"

Black Lives Matter – Brent Black Community Action Plan

Procurement in Brent is an active part of the Councils engagement with the voluntary and community sector. Through engagement with Voluntary Sector Forums and the Black Community Action Plan Steering Group, we have clear channels of communication that allow us to improve local understanding of procurement, share opportunities across the sector and involve local businesses. By utilising these existing relationships we have key community leaders available to amplify and distribute our Procurement work and extend our reach directly into communities. The council's aim is also to link up suppliers to the council to local businesses in Brent to network and develop direct relationships resulting in the ability to realise procurement opportunities now and in the long term.

Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Next Steps

Active Procurement Pillar

The deliverables of each part of the pillar remain but during 2022/23 financial year we will continue to focus on building our understanding of our spend data and start to look at focussing on developing relationships with key suppliers.

Active Analysis

Continue to build on developing our knowledge of third party spend.

Work with Oracle Cloud implementation to put mechanisms in place to ensure we are capturing our third party spend in the most effective way allowing Procurement to extract the data to further support intelligence led decision making with particular focus on tail spend.

Target Date March 2023

Active Contract Management.

Continue building and sharing the intelligence gathered from the Contracts Register so the Council can proactively look at using the data where contracts will be expiring by March 24 and agree the appropriate methodology of how any savings will be captured and realised.

Target Date Q3 2022.

Social Value and Ethical Pillar

Building on the work already set out, Procurement will continue to work across each of the Directorates ensuring that we explore every



opportunity to be more innovative and creative in the types of social value we can deliver through our contracts and feeding back on successes and lessons learnt with further training and knowledge share sessions.

Target Date: Q4 2023

Brent's Social Value Commitments.

Develop and share the list of possible opportunities Brent would be looking to extract from our procurements as part of Brent's Social Value Commitments in addition to the suggested indicators already part of the Social Value and Ethical Policy.

Target Date March 2023.



Procurement Strategy – 2nd Annual Report FY 21-22

Sustainability Pillar

Highlight and report on what specific Sustainability criteria is being measured through our procurements.

Target date March 2023

Continue to be part of the wider sub regional group supporting ensuring we are aligned and following best practice.

Target Date: Ongoing

Circular Economy Pillar

Conduct further training and knowledge shares across the Directorates.

Target Date : Ongoing

Identify the types of suppliers that operate within the Circular economy in Brent which could support forthcoming procurements.

Target Date March 2023.

Identify specific procurements that would realise Circular Economy benefits for the borough and report on the progress made on delivering procurements with Circular Economy benefits.

Target Date March 2023

Community Wealth building Pillar

Complete as far as practicable the gap analysis identified. Understand at a micro level the make-up of Brent businesses by ward. Review the type of suppliers we need against what we have.

Target Date March 2023.



Continue on building on the work already taking place and move to reporting specifically on the number of opportunities that have been created for local suppliers within Brent.

Target date – Ongoing.

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	Cabinet 14 November 2022
	Report from the Corporate Director, Governance

Complaints Annual Report 2021 – 2022

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	Two Appendix A Adult Social Care Complaints Appendix B Children's Social Care Complaints
Background Papers:	N/A
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Mariza Barros Complaints and Casework Manager 0208 937 1381 Mariza.Barros@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This annual report sets out complaints performance in Brent Council for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 and focuses on the nature of complaints and the learning they provide to inform Brent's future approach to service improvement.

1.2 Complaints concerning Adult Social Care (ASC) and Children's Social Care are governed by separate statutory complaint procedures and individual summary reports have been provided for these services in **Appendices A and B** respectively.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 Cabinet is asked to note Brent's performance in managing and resolving complaints.

3.0 Summary

3.1 The Council has three different processes for managing complaints:

- a two stage corporate complaints process;
- a two part Adult statutory complaints process; and
- a three stage Children's statutory complaints process.

3.2 The complaints data and information provided in this report is based on information recorded on the Resident Feedback and Complaints (RFC) system.

3.3 Brent Council has a clear, corporate commitment to customer experience. The organisation is committed to a new 'Brent promise' which sets out what Brent residents should expect from staff, including service standards in relation to complaints. The aim is for the organisation to be sensitive to customer needs, prioritise communication and provide clear and current information.

3.4 In this context, the Council prioritises customer complaints to ensure that these are dealt with appropriately and efficiently. The central Complaints team monitors the numbers of complaints received and the quality and timeliness of responses. The team works closely with service areas to ensure that corrective actions are put in place and learning from complaints is built in to service design. There is a strong commitment to improve responses and reduce the number of complaints.

3.5 Nevertheless, the Council faces a number of challenges in dealing with complaints, not least the rising complexity of cases, where responses may need input from multiple departments or partner organisations; and the impact of the pandemic.

3.6 The key headlines from complaints performance in 2021/22 are as follows:

- Housing repairs, housing customer services and Council Tax are the top three concerns for customers.
- The number of Brent Stage 1 complaints (corporate & statutory) have decreased by 13% (down by 229 complaints) (↓).
- The number of Brent Stage 2 complaints (corporate & statutory) have increased by 21% (up by 43 cases) (↑).
- There were 22 Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) cases upheld against Brent in 2021/22, compared with 12 cases in 2020/21 (↑).
- The total number of cases where compensation was awarded has decreased slightly compared to last year, however, the total amount of compensation paid by Brent increased significantly by 66% in 2021/22 compared with the previous year – an increase of c£66k (↑). This continues to be as a result of better compensation reporting at stage 1 and reflects a number of cases which received particularly high compensation awards.

- Statutory and corporate performance across stage 1 complaints has remained consistent compared to 2020/21, with a 1 percentage point drop in corporate complaints and a 4 percentage point rise in statutory complaints responded to on time. Stage 2 complaint timeliness dropped by 25 percentage points for statutory complaints and corporate performance dropped by 7 percentage points (↓).

4.0 Detail

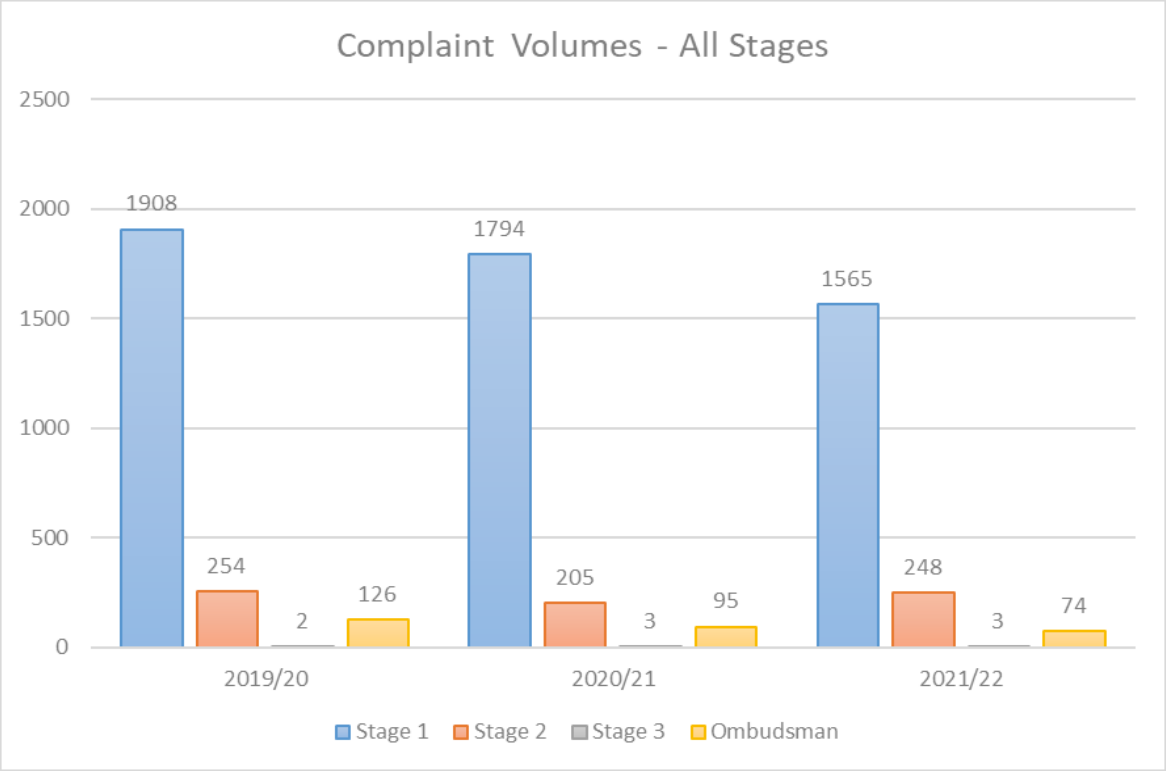
Volume of Complaints received

4.1 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:

- In 2021/22 Brent received 1,565 Stage 1 complaints (corporate and statutory). This is a decrease of 229 complaints compared to the previous year.
- Stage 2 complaints (corporate & statutory) have increased from 205 cases in 2020/21 to 248 cases during 2021/22.
- There were three Stage 3 Review Panels convened during 2021/22, which is the same number as in 2020/21.

4.2 The reduction in the number of Stage 1 complaints received is a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. Residents tended to allow issues to build up and then grouped all their concerns into a single, often complex, complaint. There have however been more escalations to stage 2 with 16% of complaints escalated compared to 11% in 2020/21.

4.3 The majority of complaints for 2021/22 relate to the housing service, which is expected given the nature of the service and the number of properties managed by Brent. Of the 1,565 stage 1 complaints received in 2021/22, 758 related to the Housing department. This is 63 fewer complaints received compared to the previous year 2020/21.



Timeliness of Complaints

4.4 The table below shows the percentage of complaints closed on time. The overall timeliness of complaint responses has dropped, with the exception of stage 1 statutory complaints which increased by 3 percentage points. The dip in performance in relation to stage 2 complaints was due to a restructure that took place in the autumn and an increase in long-term staff sickness. There has also been a shortage of independent investigators available to investigate children's statutory complaints which has meant that the majority of statutory complaints have not been responded to on time. This is a common issue across London boroughs, however the Complaints team is considering using an external company on a spot purchase basis as well as continuing to use the North West London pool to improve performance in this area. The Complaints team is continuing to work with departments to improve complaints performance across the Council.

Year	Brent - % of Cases Closed on Time			
	Stage 1 - Corporate	Stage 1 - Statutory	Stage 2 - Corporate	Stage 2 - Statutory
2019-20	91%	84%	87%	59%
2020-21	89%	67%	75%	50%
2021-22	88%	71%	68%	25%

Complaint Outcomes

4.5 The percentage of cases upheld or partly upheld during the corporate complaints process has decreased by 1 percentage point at stage 1 and 11 percentage points at stage 2. The percentage of complaints that the Council upheld or partly upheld during the statutory complaints process has also decreased at stage 1 (2 percentage points) but increased at stage 2 from 58% to 64% in 2021/22. This shows that the Council is willing to accept when things have gone wrong but more work needs to be done around issues raised through the statutory process and recognising fault at an earlier stage in the process. The CYP department are receiving training in relation to complaints handling and implementing recommendations and service improvements as a result of complaints.

Year	Brent - % of Cases Upheld or Partly Upheld			
	Stage 1 - Corporate	Stage 1 - Statutory	Stage 2 - Corporate	Stage 2 - Statutory
2019-20	44%	47%	51%	59%
2020-21	48%	59%	62%	58%
2021-22	47%	57%	51%	64%

Compensation

4.6 The table below shows the total amount of compensation paid in Brent at all stages of the corporate and statutory process, including Ombudsmen cases. The total number of cases where compensation was awarded increased considerably compared to last year, however the amount of compensation awarded for each case has decreased by £72. And overall, there was a significant increase in the total amount of compensation paid by Brent in 2021/22: this increased significantly by 66% on last year. This is mainly due to improved reporting of compensation by service areas at Stage 1 on the new complaints and casework management system, and a number of cases which had a significantly high compensation award.

4.7 Compensation can be awarded for time and trouble, distress, as goodwill, or in the form of a refund, reimbursement, or the offset/waiving of arrears. The increase in the compensation awarded shows that the Council is proactively offering remedies including compensation where it is warranted. Offering remedies earlier on in the process can prevent the need to offer higher levels of compensation at a later stage. There is no direct correlation between the amount of compensation awarded one year compared to compensation awarded in another as each complaint is unique and compensation is awarded under different circumstances.

4.8 The majority of compensation in 2021/22 was awarded at stage 2 of the Council's complaints process with £88,874 awarded in total. At stage 1, £41,848 was awarded, and £36,778 at the Ombudsman stage which included a pay-out in one case of £27,000. Compensation was awarded in 314 cases,

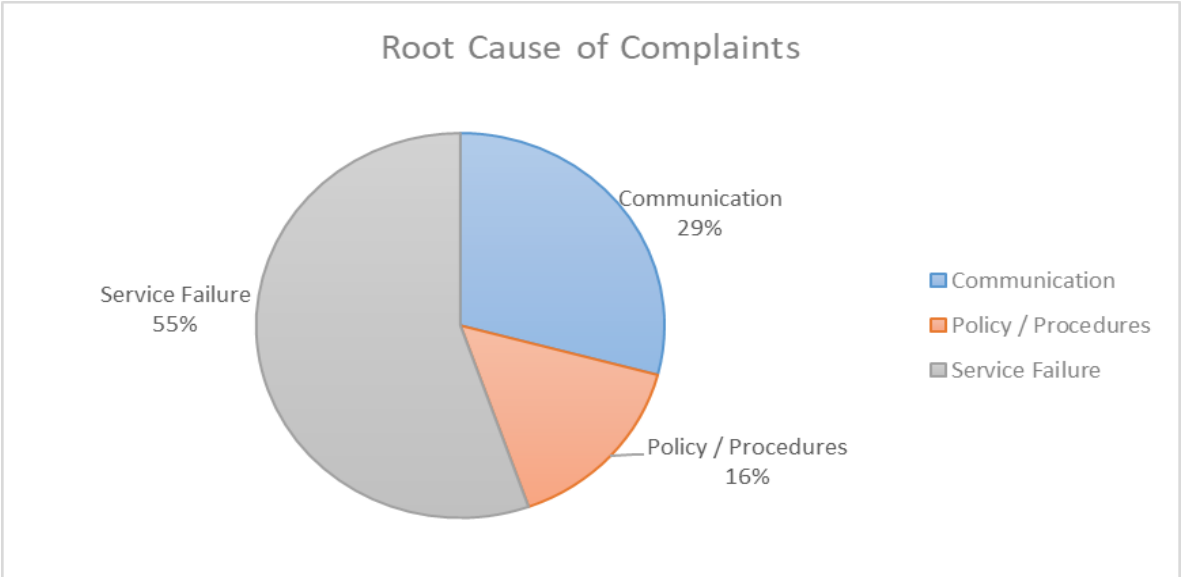
which is 147 cases more than the previous year, but the amount awarded was lower on average per case.

4.9 The Community and Wellbeing directorate accounted for 84% of all the compensation awarded (£142,141), followed by the CYP department with 11% (£16,375) of the overall compensation awarded in 2021/22.

Year	All Brent		
	Cases	Total Comp.	Avg / Case
2019-20	176	£58,553	£333
2020-21	167	£101,030	£605
2021-22	314	£167,500	£533

Root Cause of complaints

4.10 The Council categorises root causes of complaints as follows: Service failure; Communication; and Policy/procedures. Over 50% of complaints closed in 2021/22 identified service failure as being the root cause of complaint. Communication issues accounted for 29% of complaints and dissatisfaction with policy/ procedure accounted for 16% of all complaints closed.



4.11 Housing repairs, housing customer services and Council Tax are the top three concerns for customers. The Housing Management service carry out on average 36,000 repairs per annum, therefore there will always be a correlation between the number of repairs carried out and the number of complaints received.

4.12 This year a high number of complaints received related to Council Tax, mainly as a result of the increasing pressures of the cost of living and residents

unable to keep up with payments. The Council has also received a higher number of complaints relating to the Children and Young People service and Adult Social Care due to provisions for education and care during Covid. This can be seen from the number of complaints escalated for these services to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) Decisions and Learning Points

4.13 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman provides an Annual Review report every year which focusses on the Council's performance in relation to complaints that have been referred to it.

4.14 In summary:

- The number of referrals made to the Ombudsman for Brent was the same, at 95 referrals, as last year. The borough with the highest number of referrals in 2021/22 was Croydon at 227, and the lowest was City of London with 12.
- The LGSCO decided to do a detailed investigation into a higher number of referred complaints at Brent compared to last year where only thirteen detailed investigations were carried out. In 2021/22, 33 cases were investigated out of the 95 referred.
- Brent's upheld rate at 67% has improved significantly from last year, when the upheld rate was 92% (albeit from a lower base of thirteen cases investigated). Brent was joint 11th with Kensington & Chelsea out of all London boroughs on this performance indicator. Lambeth had the highest upheld rate with 92% of the 37 cases that required a detailed investigation being upheld.
- Of the 33 investigations completed for Brent:
  - eleven complaints were not upheld;
  - sixteen were upheld with further recommendations; and
  - the remaining six were upheld, but the Council had already implemented its own recommendations which had been accepted by the LGSCO as a suitable remedy, or there were no further recommendations made by the Ombudsman.
- Our compliance with the Ombudsman's recommendations is good at 100%.

LGSCO Volumes and Outcomes

4.15 There were 95 enquiries and complaints referred to the Ombudsman in 2021/22 which is consistent with the 95 enquiries made the previous year. However, the LGSCO made decisions on 118 cases during the year, an increase of 41 cases compared to last year. This increase relates to the Ombudsman temporarily stopping casework for 3 months from March 2020 to the end of June 2020. Therefore, creating a backlog which meant more investigations were carried out in 2021/22. In this respect the Council received a larger amount of enquiries from the Ombudsman on top of its normal caseloads. Of the 118 cases decided in 2021/22 only 33 cases required a

detailed investigation, 22 cases of which were upheld and 11 cases not upheld.

4.16 Categories of cases not taken forward for investigation include: 'advice given'; 'referred back for local resolution'; 'incomplete or invalid'; and 'closed after initial enquiries'.

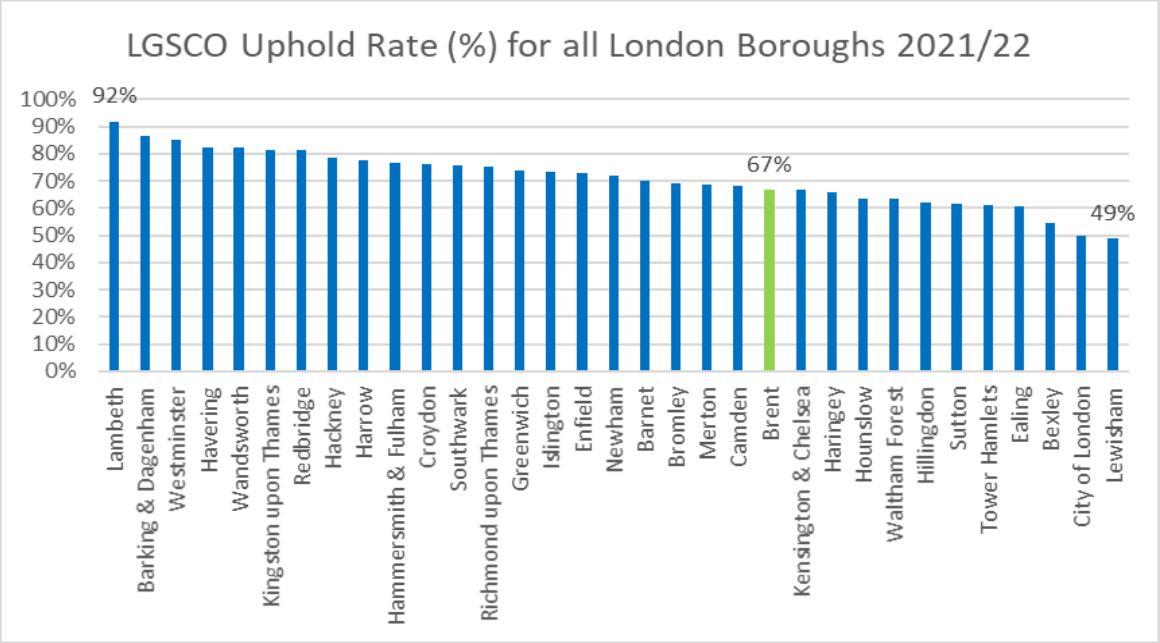
4.17 The pandemic had an impact on the LGSCO's activity over the last three years which makes it difficult to assess trends. However, the number of decisions, detailed investigations and cases upheld in 2021/22 seem to correlate with the number of decisions and outcomes pre Covid. The table below shows a 3-year comparison of LGSCO outcomes of Brent Council cases:

Year	LGSCO Outcomes						
	Not upheld	**Upheld**	**Advice given**	**Referred back for local resolution**	**Invalid or incomplete**	**Closed after initial enquiries**	**Total**
2019- 20	9	**19**	6	55	5	44	**126**
2020- 21	1	**12**	3	35	1	25	**77**
2021- 22	11	**22**	8	39	7	31	**118**

4.18 In comparison with other London boroughs in 2021/22, Brent fares as follows:

- 11th joint highest at providing a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman
- 8th joint highest in number of detailed investigations undertaken
- 11th joint highest in number of LGSCO upheld cases
- 12th joint lowest in number of referrals to the LGSCO
- 11th joint lowest LGSCO uphold rate (67%) in 2021/22.

4.19 The table below shows the Ombudsman upheld rate in 2021/22 compared with all London boroughs. Of the 33 detailed investigations undertaken by the LGSCO, 22 cases were upheld for Brent. This provides a uphold rate of 67% which compares favourably with other London boroughs and puts Brent in joint 11th place.



LGSCO Upheld Cases

4.20 There were 22 cases upheld against Brent in 2021/22 in the following services:

- Education & Children Services – 8
- Adult Care Services – 5
- Benefits and Tax – 3
- Housing - 4
- Highways and Transport – 1
- Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation - 1

4.21 Brent came joint 11th 'place' out of all London councils for upheld cases where a satisfactory remedy had already been provided before the complaint reached the Ombudsman. Of the 22 cases which were upheld during 2021/22, the Council had already offered a satisfactory resolution to the complaint before it reached the Ombudsman on three occasions. This equates to 14% of our total upheld cases and is above the London average of 11%. This suggests that when issues are identified through the complaints process, corrective actions are effectively carried out to rectify issues or compensate where necessary. For these three cases, the Ombudsman confirmed no further action was required.

4.22 The Ombudsman recommended a specific remedy in relation to 16 upheld cases. The Ombudsman was satisfied that the Council had successfully implemented its recommendations to remedy these complaints, achieving a 100% compliance rate.

4.23 This is an encouraging outcome and shows that the Council is complying with remedies set by the Ombudsman.

4.24 A brief summary of the cases upheld by the LGSCO for each area has been provided below.

Adult Care Services

4.25 Five complaints were upheld within this category for 2021/22. Topics covered: Concerns relating to safeguarding; assessment of needs; concerns relating to service providers; delays in service generally and one pandemic related provisions complaint. Apologies and financial redress were issued in each case, however only two cases required service / policy review or training provision for staff.

Housing

4.26 Complaints concerning Housing Management are referred to the Housing Ombudsman. Four complaints relating to other housing services were upheld after being passed to the LGSCO. One of which received service recommendations for improvement. Subject matters included Housing needs; Licencing and enforcement; not issuing a homeless applicant a Personal Housing Plan; and the last concerned a delay in assessing the suitability of accommodation in relation to disability which offered a considerable amount of compensation.

Highways and Transport

4.27 One case was upheld under this category. The complaint related to delays in processing an application for a disabled parking bay. No further injustice was found except for unreasonable delay in processing the application.

Education and Children's

4.28 Eight cases were upheld, three of which were remedied prior to LGSCO review. Three cases were issued with service recommendations including training needs and policy review. Subjects covered included Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and the right of appeal; safeguarding concerns; failure to recognise circumstantial changes; delays in providing specific learning related to specialist support; and a lack of adequate leaving care support. For the remaining cases, these were already remedied during the Council's complaint process or either submitted prematurely and not reviewed by the Ombudsman.

Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation

4.29 One complaint was upheld under this category which related to noise nuisance and antisocial behaviour during lockdown, in connection with building works at a neighbouring property. Actions were taken by the Council to resolve issues and delays were acknowledged in reviewing some information provided.

Benefits and Tax

4.30 Three Benefits and Council Tax complaints were upheld. One related to Council Tax enforcement – another regarding payments to a landlord as a tenant was paid directly but remained in arrears – and lastly a delay in amending Council Tax liability.

LGSCO Compensation

4.31 In 2021/22, the LGSCO asked the Council to pay an additional £35,778 in compensation across fifteen cases. Most of this compensation related to a single Housing Needs case where £27,000 was offered to a disabled resident whose temporary accommodation did not meet his additional needs. The difficulty the Council had in finding this family a suitable place to live reflects the chronic shortage of larger, adaptable properties across London. The remaining compensation, which includes refunds, was spread across cases relating to Housing Needs, Education and Children's Services, Noise Nuisance, Benefits and Tax and Adult Care Services.

Housing Ombudsman (HO) Decision & Learning Points

4.32 The Housing Ombudsman provided its annual report in August 2022. The information provided below has therefore been taken from this report. The figures in the table below include the last two financial years for comparison.

Year	Total Cases Decided	Upheld/Partly Upheld	Not Upheld	Uphold Rate
2019- 20	9	3	6	33%
2020- 21	14	6	8	43%
2021- 22	**8**	**6**	**2**	**75%**

4.33 The Housing Ombudsman decided eight cases in 2021/22. Of these, two cases were not upheld, and six cases were upheld or partially upheld, an uphold rate of 75%. This is an increase of 32 percentage points on 2020/21, however the yearly total of cases decided in 2021/22 has reduced by almost half compared to 2020/21.

4.34 The table below provides a breakdown of the areas of complaints which were received by the Housing Ombudsman in 2021/22.

Complaint Decision	Anti-social behaviour	Charges	Complaint handling	Estate Management	Moving to a new property	Occupancy	Property condition	Payments	staff	Health and Safety	Total
Maladministration			3				1		1		5
No Maladministration					1		2			1	4
Service failure	1						2	1			4
Redress				1			1				2
Outside Jurisdiction	1	1		1	1	1	1				6
TOTAL	**2**	**1**	**3**	**2**	**2**	**1**	**7**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**21**

4.35 The cases related to the following:

- Anti-social Behaviour
- Communication and issues with gaining access to a property
- Costs and charges for communal lighting
- Leak repair, reports of asbestos and communication and complaint handling
- The Council's response to the resident's reports about cracking in the walls at the property.

Compliments

4.36 In 2021/22 there were 69 compliments logged on the system for the Council. This is 46 fewer (40%) than last year. Customers can send feedback to the Complaints team or to service areas directly. Some of these compliments have been provided below:

Housing Needs

"I would like to give you a huge thank you for all your help throughout this process, I've finally had a good night rest after almost 3 years of really bad depression and anxiety I'm finally starting to get back to myself. I honestly have

to thank you I love my new place and I'm already starting to feel at home…… I hope everything works out well for your future plans and I'm eternally grateful for all your time."

Parking and Lighting

"Happy New Year. Hope all is well with you and your family.
I'd like to give a feedback about xxxxxx, in parking division who was extremely polite and kind to me and I can do with some kindness. I'd been issued, totally

incorrectly, with 3 parking tickets which were subsequently cancelled and rightly so but dealing with it was stressful but this lady sorted it out effortlessly."

Parking and Community Safety

"I would like to thank Brent council officers on the behalf of Brent Muslim Community, particularly xxxx and xxxxx for their help and support during the month of Ramadan, they are providing police presence outside and around the Mosques during Ramadan and Eid prayers times and are relaxing parking restrictions for named roads for Eid prayers.
It all happened swiftly when I put my request to them after Mosques management committees expressed their safety concerns to me."

Housing Property Services

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank the work-men who attended my address for the above works in the kitchen earlier this week.
I was a bit apprehensive due to currently being vulnerable and having work men in the flat. They were so very considerate and thoughtful. The work they carried out was impeccable and they worked efficiently and respectfully.
They are a credit to the company and I felt they needed to be acknowledged for how comfortable they made me feel and the fact that they understood the importance of what it meant to be in someone's home who has a medical condition that makes them vulnerable during these Covid times.
Please pass on my thanks and I hope their line managers appreciate the work ethics that they clearly."

Complaints Team

"Many thanks for letting me know the time frame.
Please could you pass on my thanks to the Chief Executive and her team for taking the time in providing a thorough response and resolution, particularly through this busy pandemic time."

Commercial Services

"I would like xxxx's Line Manager to know how impressed I am by xxxx's work. He was extremely thorough and went out of his way to ensure that the work was carried out to a high standard. Please thank him on my behalf."

4.27 Compliments relating to Adult Social Care and Children and Young People can be found in appendices A and B.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 The details provided on compensation payments in sections 3.6 - 3.9 and throughout this report reflect the monetary impact of not getting things right the first time as an organisation and the need to improve the customer experience thus minimising the financial penalties incurred by the Council.

5.2 The total number of cases where compensation was awarded increased significantly by 88% when compared to 2020/21. However the amount of compensation awarded for each case has decreased by £72.

5.3 The total compensation awarded and paid in 2021/22 was £167,500 (314 cases), an increase of 66% when compared to the previous year, which is predominately due to improved Stage 1 reporting and a number of cases with high compensation award. The costs implications and budgetary impacts to the Council are being continuously monitored.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 Complaints concerning Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care fall 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.

6.2 The LGSCO is the final stage in the complaints process, where an individual has complained to the council and remains dissatisfied with the outcome. The LGSCO can investigate allegations of maladministration in connection with the exercise of a local authorities' administrative function, allegations regarding a failure in a service which it is the local authorities function to provide, an allegation or an apparent failure to provide such a service pursuant to the Local Government Act 1974 as amended.

7.0 Equality Implications

7.1 Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a duty when exercising their functions to have 'due regard' to the need:

(a) to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act;
(b) advance equality of opportunity; and
(c) foster good relations between those who share a "protected characteristic" and those who do not.

7.2 This is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The 'protected characteristics' are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

7.3 Although there have been no equality implications identified as a result of this report, the Council is improving the complaints system so that equalities data is captured and data analysis can be used to identify issues that may disproportionally affect different equality groups.

8.0 Any Other Implications (HR, Property, Environmental Sustainability - where necessary)

8.1 None

9.0 Proposed Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

9.1 None

Report sign off:

Debra Norman
Corporate Director Governance

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Complaints Annual Report 2021 – 2022

Appendix A – Adult Social Care Statutory Complaints

1. Summary

1.1 This report provides an overview of complaints made about Brent Adult Social Care (ASC) services during 2021–2022, 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.

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 the Council can make a complaint. This includes anyone affected by decisions the Council makes 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 the Council. External providers are required to have their own complaints procedures and must comply with them. They are also required to share information on complaints and outcomes with the Council.

2.3 There is only one stage in this statutory process, which the Council has interpreted as a provisional response (stage 1) and a final decision (stage 2). All complaints made to the Council are logged and acknowledged on our internal complaints database. The Council will try to resolve the provisional complaint as soon as possible, and within 25 working days. If delays are anticipated, the complainant is consulted and informed appropriately. All responses, regardless of whether a timescale has been agreed with the complainant or not, must be completed within six months of receiving the complaint.

2.4 The Head of Service should sign all provisional complaint responses and if complainants are still unhappy, they will be given the opportunity to have their complaint reviewed by the Corporate Director, Adult Social Care and Health or the Director, Adult Social Care. In some cases, complaints may need to be passed to the Safeguarding leads as appropriate and the complaints process suspended in order to allow the safeguarding process to be completed. In cases where the complaint relates to several organisations, a single 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 the complainant's right to approach the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) should they remain dissatisfied.

3. Headlines

3.1 The Adult Social Care department underwent a restructure in March 2022, which has resulted in a change to the names of some of the service areas. These changes have not yet been reflected on the casework management system and therefore this report makes reference to previous service names.

3.2 The main performance headlines from ASC complaints are as follows:

- 74 complaints received at the initial stage in 2021/22, an increase of 85% on 2020/21.
- Highest volume service areas for first stage complaints – Urgent Care (41%), Complex Care (31%), Commissioning, Contracting and Market Management (22%)
- 53% of provisional responses were upheld or partly upheld
- 55% of stage 2 cases were upheld or partially upheld
- 77% of Stage 1 complaints were responded to on time and 4 out of 9 Stage 2 cases were responded to on time.

4. ASC Service Users

4.1 In order to provide some context in relation to complaints submitted during 2021/2022, ASC received 2,402 submissions from individuals including contact made via Brent Customer Services (BCS) and the Duty Team. ASC assessed 1,145 service users for homecare services and 398 service users were evaluated for residential/nursing services. This is a significant increase compared to last year where figures were at 816 and 103 service users respectively.

5. Complaints Received

5.1 In 2021/2022 ASC received 74 statutory complaints compared to 40 the previous year, showing an increase of 85%. Prior to Covid, an analysis of the data for the previous years' shows the average number of complaints received was 81.

5.2 Statutory complaints largely related to a service users' care needs assessment or the provision of social care needs through either homecare services or residential care. Anyone can approach the Council and is entitled to receive a care needs assessment. The three main areas where ASC received complaints were Complex Care, Urgent Care and Commissioning, Contracting and Market Management. The figures across these areas have been broke down as follows:

- ***Complex Care:*** received 31% of all statutory complaints made to ASC, a decrease on last year (40% in 2020/2021). This team handles the more complex support cases as well as annual reviews and Occupational Therapy assessments. They have to manage service users' and families' expectations about the package of care they are entitled to. The 23 complaints received for the year is the average amount of cases received prior to Covid. This compares to an active case load of approximately 600 cases. The complaints that are received by the team relate to disagreements with the decisions around care packages / assessments, delays in

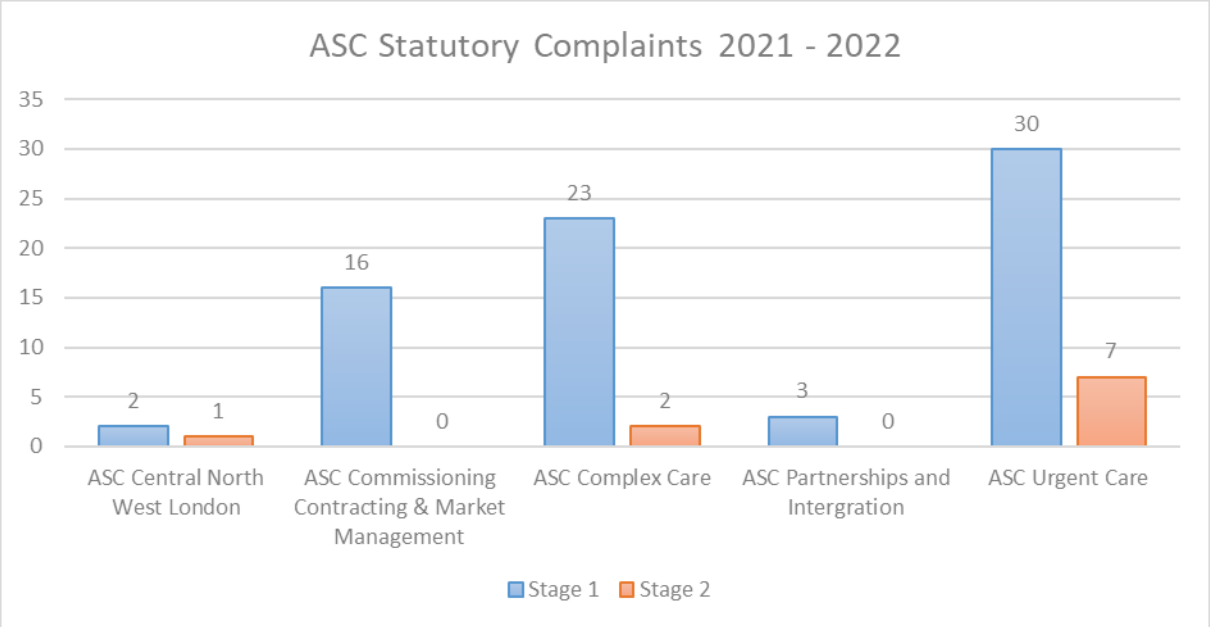
receiving an assessment or Occupational Therapy assessments and complaints concerning communication from social workers. The service users and their families will often have a higher expectation of the services they should receive than the Council can provide. The Council has to consider value for money, as well as the needs of the service user when providing services. These are complex and often sensitive matters and can lead to understandable disputes between the parties involved. There has been a concerted effort to improve case and complaint handling throughout the service and develop a more robust working relationship with the Complaint Service team in order to help reduce the number of complaints.

- ***Commissioning Contracting and Market Management:*** this team manages the services/contracts for residential nursing homes, homecare providers direct payments and supported living. Complaints relating to these services accounted for 22% of all complaints received by ASC, which is slightly higher than pre-Covid levels. Overall, 16 complaints were received for this service area in 2021/22, double the previous year's figures. There is an erroneous perception that the Council receives a high level of complaints about its home care providers. However, this is not borne out in the data. The pressures on care homes during Covid – with stretched resources, including reduced staffing numbers – did result in a rise in complaints Nevertheless, the majority were resolved at the first point of contact. The Council worked closely with its home care providers to resolve problems at this early stage. Concerns can be raised directly with the commissioning team who will resolve such matters directly with the provider, but service users are also made aware of the Council's complaints process if they wish for their concerns to be investigated by the Council. There has been an increase in complaints concerning placements in supported living accommodation.

- ***Urgent Care:*** includes the Duty team, Hospital Discharge team and Adult Safeguarding and accounted for 41% of all complaints received by ASC. This is an increase in share of 8% on the preceding year 2020/21. These complaints related to communication / feedback, disagreement / delays in packages of care being put in place (home care) as well as delays in being assessed for discharge to return home or placement in a residential setting, and co-ordination with the NHS.

5.3 When complaints are received, they are directed to the Complaint Service team for triaging. The team will receive complaints by email, self- service on line, telephone and by letter. Brent Customer Services will also pass on complainants to the Complaint Service team. The ASC complaint legislation is explicit that the Council must receive complaints by any means, and in discussions with various disability groups, they have highlighted that access to the ASC complaints process should be easy for all and that not everyone has or is capable of accessing the complaint form on the website. The team have provided a telephone number on the website especially for ASC clients. Staff within the Complaints Service team will assist complainants as necessary, and if required will assist them in obtaining an advocate.

5.4 The chart below shows the number of ASC statutory complaints received in 2021/22. Of the 74 statutory complaints received, 10 were escalated to the final review stage.



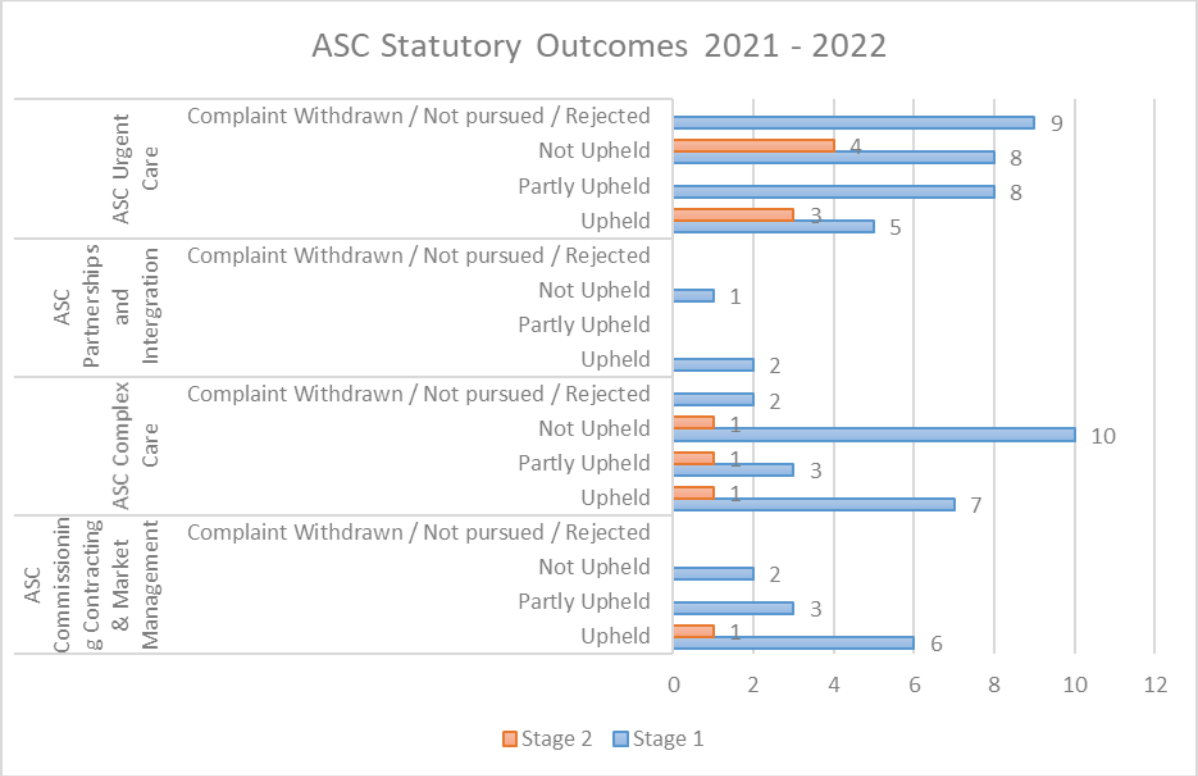
5.5 The escalation rate for statutory complaints is 13.5% compared to 12.5% in 2020/21. This is an increase of 1% percentage points and reflects the work being carried out to resolve concerns at the provisional stage (given the increase in complaints post-Covid). Outcomes from these cases are discussed later in the report. ASC actively tries to resolve problems and concerns. Despite this, the more complex cases do escalate, hence why the majority of the stage 2 requests were received from the Urgent Care and Complex Care teams. The Complaints Team continues to work with the ASC Operational Director and their management team to ensure complaints are proactively dealt with. The Complaints Service team held quarterly complaint training sessions for ASC managers and staff throughout the year and also attended DMT meetings to explain the complaint process and present complaint data and feedback. This has strengthened the working relationship between the service areas and led to an increase in officers requesting advice from the Complaints Team on the quality of their responses. Due to staff turnover, we have run these sessions more frequently to ensure responses remain of a good standard and are circulated in a timely manner.

6. Nature / Reasons for Complaints

6.1 We record root causes of complaints at stage 1. Root cause of complaints about communication accounted for 41% of those complaints. The other main area was service failure accounting for 58% whilst the remaining 1% of cases related to policy or procedure.

7. Complaint Outcomes

7.1 The chart below shows the outcome of statutory complaints at stage 1 and final review stage:



7.2 Complaints received at the provisional stage shows that some fault (upheld or partly upheld) by the Council was found in 53% of cases - this compares to 55% in 2020/21. The Council welcomes complaints from service users, and outcomes from complaints feed into service improvements and the resulting transformation.

7.3 At the final review stage, some fault was found in 55% of cases, the same as in 2020/21. However, the number of final review complaints rose from 9 in 2020/21 to 11 in 2021/22.

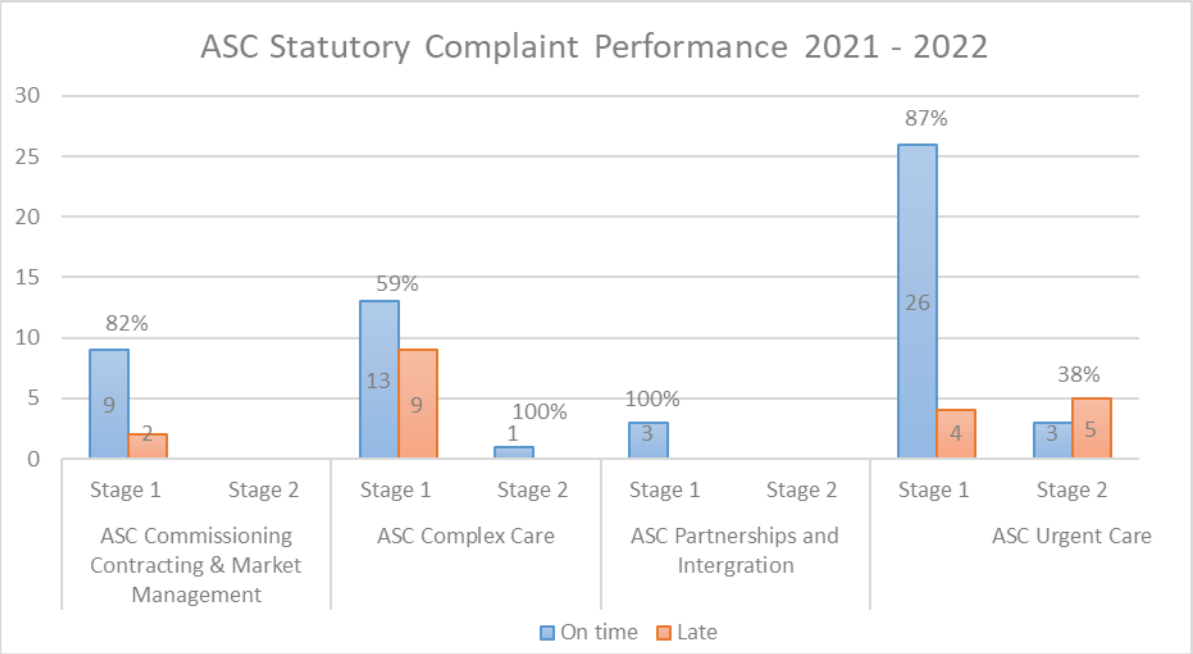
7.4 Complaints of a complex nature and which involve a number of teams more often than not are typically escalated to the final review stage. The Complaint Service team continues to work with ASC to review the accuracy and quality of stage 1 responses (where they have moved up to the final stage), and will be reporting the findings to the ASC management team in order to implement strategies to reduce the number of escalations.

7.5 The Complaints team continues to work with managers in ASC to ensure the quality of complaint investigations and responses provided to the complainant address all issues raised. The Complaints Service team are also working to ensure that the different departments within ASC are better coordinated when dealing with complaints about services that crossover the various teams by providing advice and regular complaints training. The very nature of some of the complaints are complex and service users and their families will take their complaint through to the final stage.

7.6 Some service improvements identified at the final review stage have been included in point 14 - Learning from Complaints.

8. Timeliness of Responses

8.1 The chart below shows Stage 1 complaint response times across the various ASC service areas in 2021/22:



8.2 ASC responded to 77% of all stage 1 complaints within timescales, a decrease of 4 percentage points on the same period for the preceding year. Conversely, there was a considerable increase in the number of complaints responded to when compared to figures for the preceding year. Of the 66 complaints replied to, 15 were slightly overdue. The increase from 31 complaints due last year to 66 due this year correlates to some of the cases being put on hold due to the pandemic and then reinstated with new response due dates but also a lot of issues being raised after the pandemic rather than during the pandemic. Response times were impacted by the complexity of cases under investigation, with some requiring consultation with the Council's external partners, i.e. the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), and homecare companies.

9. Compensation

ASC	Amount
Stage 1 / Provisional	£100
Stage 2 / Final	£5,050
Ombudsman	£0
Total	£5,150

9.1 ASC paid a total of £5,150 in compensation for the year 2021/22, which comprised of five cases, £4,100 higher than the preceding year. In four of the cases, compensation was paid at stage 2 of the complaints process and in one case, compensation was paid at stage 1. ASC has not been instructed to pay any compensation by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO).

The compensation at stage 1 was awarded in recognition of the negative experience of care staff from a particular care agency. At stage two, the highest amount paid was £1,950 for the contribution towards care costs and to compensate for the time and trouble in pursuing the complaint and delay in responding to it.

9.2 All compensation is awarded in accordance with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, Remedies Guidance.

10. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Decisions in 2021/22

10.1 The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) Received 11 complaints and enquiries regarding Adult Social Care. This is a decrease of one compared to 2020/21. In total, 118 decisions were made by the LGSCO in 2021/22 of which 12 related to ASC, comparable to the previous year where 11 decisions related to ASC. The LGSCO's decisions included referring four cases back to the Council for local resolution as the Council's complaints process had not been completed. One case was closed by the Ombudsman as the complaint had not been made within the stipulated 12 month timeframe from when the issue first arose. Detailed investigations were carried out in 7 cases. Of those, 5 were upheld (four more than in 2020-21 and 2 were not upheld.

10.2 The uphold rate to the LGSCO for ASC cases is 71%, which is less than the previous year at 100%, however this was due to only one ASC complaint being investigated and upheld.

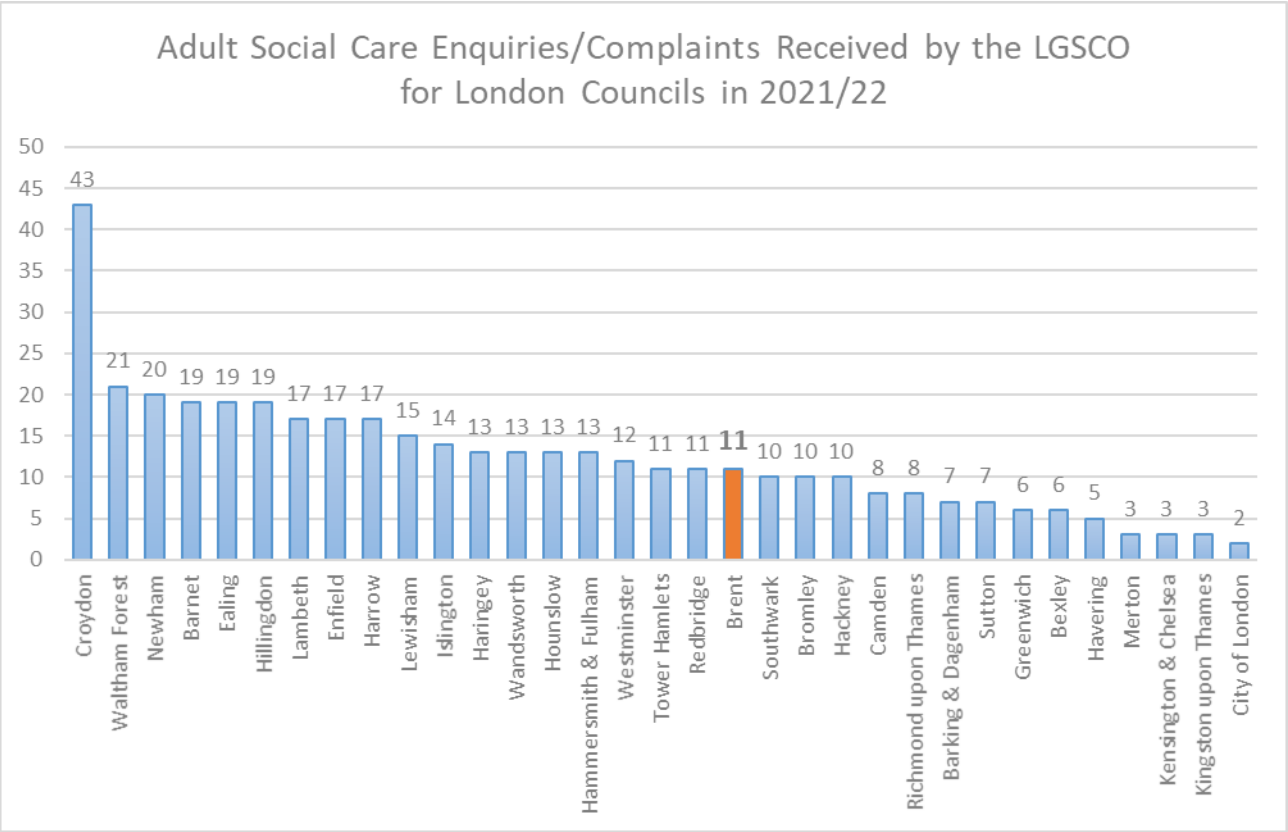
10.3 A summary of the complaints upheld by the LGSCO is provided below:

- The LGSCO received a complaint relating to both CNWL and Brent (integrated service at the time) for failing to safeguard the complainant's brother. The LGSCO reviewed without Council complaint's process given the severity of the complaint. The Council agreed to all recommendations made and a final decision was issued.
- Another case related to long-standing issues regarding a DFG and OT assessment. The LGSCO recommended a reassessment for OT and compensation for lack of support in removing her possessions and time and trouble in pursing the complaint.
- Complaint regarding services provided by a care home: At stage 2 the Council apologised for not listening to the concerns raised by the complainant and offered £1350 (50% of his contribution charges for his care) and an additional £600 for delays and time and trouble making the complaint. The LGSCO agreed with all of our stage 2 recommendations and also asked that we issue a letter of apology.
- Another complaint was in relation to how the Council calculated the complainants care cost contributions. The LGSCO found the Council was not at fault in the way it calculated the contribution, rather how it dealt with the complaint itself. No further action was recommended.
- The LGSCO received a complaint about the quality of food parcels the Council had been providing to vulnerable residents at the start of the pandemic. The LGSCO recommended the Council issue an apology and pay £200 in compensation.

11. Benchmarking Data

11.1 Brent Council belongs to the North West London Social Care Complaint Managers Group. Unfortunately, many Councils have not yet completed their Complaints Annual Report or are reluctant to share their data. The graph below shows data provided by the LGSCO in regards to the number of Adult Social Care complaints/enquiries received for each London borough. This includes corporate as well as statutory complaints.

11.3 In terms of complaints/enquiries received by the Ombudsman in relation to ASC, Brent have had a relatively low number compared with other Councils.



12. Customer Feedback and Engagement

12.1 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. Through this initial contact, the team, in conjunction with ASC managers, has been able to resolve a number of complaints at an early stage of contact e.g. delayed OT assessments / care assessments, identifying resolutions to invoicing / billing queries that could have progressed to formal complaints.

13. Compliments

13.1 Customers and their representatives are encouraged to tell the Council if they are satisfied with their care or to highlight good service. People are able to send feedback to the Complaints Service team or ASC directly. In 2021/22, ASC and the Complaints Service team received 16 compliments about ASC. The Complaints Service team is working with ASC to ensure they capture all compliments directly received by the service. Below are examples of compliments that staff in ASC have received:

- *Commissioning Team*

  "Please can I take this time to thank you for all of your help so far with this complex investigation, you have been so helpful and forthcoming with information, and your efforts have really helped us in progressing this matter further – so please accept a genuine heartfelt thank you from us for all of your help.
  Wishing you all the best for the future."

- *Learning Disabilities and Mental Health Services*

  Thank You So Much!!!!!!!
  Thank you so much for coming to meet and speak with our trainees on the LXP training. You were amazing and your visit had such a positive impact on the group, we can't thank you enough.
  Meeting you in the flesh, listening to you and your journey was a bit like meeting a unicorn for the group…..it really challenged their beliefs and experiences of people working in this sector, especially in Brent. The group feedback about the training has been extraordinarily positive, especially in having the opportunity to meet you and hearing you speak so thoughtfully about your role.
  You were awesome and a massive hit with the group.
  I am so grateful for your generous contribution!

- *Reablement and Home First Team*

  "Would really like to say thank you for everything, all your help, you have been a great blessing to myself and my mum. It was great to see you and have your support for the past few months."

- *Complex Care Team*

  "I can't thank you enough for all your hard work, You have worked tirelessly to help me, as soon as you took my case on. You took the time to read my medical notes, learn my name and who I am as a person. I wasn't just another patient x...
  I'm finally seeing a light at the end of a very dark tunnel. I personally called Brent and put in a formal acknowledgement of all your hard work. You managed to sort my case out in less than a week and I had been waiting since last year. I saw this quote and
  it is the definition of you. A person who has made my life worth living again. Brent has an incredible caring social worker!
  "Social workers are there to make life worth living.

They provide hope in the midst of loss, find resources for those who have none.”.”

- *Commissioning Team*

  “I wanted to thank you for raising safeguarding concerns re my mother-in-law. xxxx, xxxx and i all really appreciated the opportunity to discuss our concerns regarding xxxx’s care in a moderated forum where the participants’ primary concern was the quality of her care.”

14. Learning from Complaints

14.1 Learning from complaints provides a welcome opportunity for services to be improved and shaped by customer experience.

14.2 Teams across Adult Social Care regularly receive comments and feedback from residents and / or carers and generally these issues tend to be resolved directly by frontline operational staff.

14.3 Learning from the lived-experience of residents using services can help identify where services, policies and procedures can be improved, helps to ensure that senior managers are informed of issues that are important to residents, improve communication and strengthen relationships.

14.4 As part of Adult Social Care commitment through the Skills Academy, is to support staff to receive training to develop skills on ensuring that information provided to residents is clear and feedback is timely. This compliments the Council’s Customer Promise regarding expectations regarding customer care to continue to communicate timely, being polite and respectful. We have planned learning events that will be held six monthly, in which themes and outcomes from complaints are shared with teams and reflections of the learning is discussed at a team level. This learning will also contribute to training plans and development of best practice and quality in Adult Social Care.

14.5 Professional standards, such as the quality of the processes and procedures around social work activity, and delays in service are also the subject of complaints. When raised, managers have taken the opportunity to look for ways to improve services, which has been reinforced by the department’s refresh of its Operational Guidance. The Operational Guidance sets a clear commitment to always aim to assess residents in a timely manner including the need to review care & support plans and clarify whether the current service can continue to meet those needs on an annual basis.

14.6 Adult Social Care have developed processes for learning from complaints, and these continue to develop within the department to support best practice and improved resident experience. The information and themes captured from these processes are used in a number of ways, such as dissemination of themes to managers, to improve systems and procedures and to inform measurement of performance, quality control and quality improvements.

14.7 Some of the service improvements that have been implemented by ASC as a result of complaint outcomes include:

- All teams are undertaking random monthly audit of files to ensure better record keeping. The Monthly Case File Audit report is shared with the Principal Social Worker so that identified strengths and learning are incorporated into training.

- Through the New Ways of working project, the service have identified the need to strengthen communications sent via emails. Generic email addresses are created for each team. This will facilitate swift communication and prompt responses.

- A schedule of training has been provided to all ASC staff via monthly newsletters which included complaints handling, report writing and MCA and DoLs training.

- Quarterly commissioning meetings have been set up with all service managers and their teams to provide more robust site monitoring by the commissioning team.

- Statutory Complaints Manager attends regular DMTs to ensure themes and emerging issues are addressed.

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Complaints Annual Report 2021 – 2022

Appendix B – Children's Social Care Statutory Complaints

1. Purpose of report

1.1 This report provides an overview of statutory complaints made about Brent Council Children's Social Care Services during 2021-2022 as required under The Children Act 1989 Representation Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.

This report provides information about all statutory complaints made during the twelve months between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 under the complaints and representations procedures.

2. Statutory Complaints Process

2.1 The purpose of the Children's Act 1989 and Representation Procedure (England) Regulations 2006 is to ensure local authorities have a formal complaints handling procedure in place for children and young people who wish to make a representation or complaint about social care.

2.2 It is helpful to be clear on what constitutes a complaint. 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. It 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.'***

2.3 ***Who Can Make a Complaint?***

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 their parent or someone who has parental responsibility for them) 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 to 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 considers has sufficient interest in the child or young person's welfare to warrant his representations being considered by them .

2.4 The Council will accept complaints in any format, through contact with the Complaint Service Team, phone, email, online complaint form, by post or in person.

2.5 The regulations set out three stages:

- ***Stage 1: Local Resolution*** – this is the most important stage of the complaint procedure. The department and external contractors provide services on behalf of the Council and are expected to resolve as many complaints as possible at this initial stage. The statutory social care complaints procedure requires complaints to be responded to within 10 working days. However, heads of service can apply to the Complaint Service Team for an extension of a further 10 working days where a complaint is considered complex or there is a need for a number of external organisations to be consulted.

- ***Stage 2: Independent Investigation*** – this stage is triggered when the complainant is dissatisfied with the findings at Stage 1. As a first step, the Complaint Service Team will consider mediation to resolve ongoing concerns at the end of the Stage 1 process, and before commencing the Stage 2 process. If a complaint does progress to Stage 2, this requires an investigation by an "Independent Officer", a person external to the service and usually independent of the Council. In addition, the Council is also required to appoint an "Independent Person" who is independent of the Council and not related to any members or officers of the Council. The purpose of the 'Independent Person' is to represent the complainant in the process. The Stage 2 investigation report is then considered by the Operational Director, and an adjudication letter is provided to the complainant to confirm whether they agree with the report and the steps to be taken to address any recommendations. Stage 2 complaints which fall within the statutory process must be dealt with in 25 working days. Where it is not possible to complete the investigation within this timeframe, an extension can be applied up to a maximum of 65 working days.

- ***Stage 3: Review Panel*** – where complainants are unsatisfied with the result of a Stage 2 investigation and wish to continue with their complaint about statutory social service 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; The Chair is appointed by the Complaint Service Team and is also separate from the Council. The Chair consults with the Complaint Service Team on the selection of the other two panel members. The Panel undertakes an investigation and makes recommendations through via a panel report. This will then be adjudicated by the Corporate Director for Children and Young People (CYP) who makes the final decision on the complaint.

3. Headlines

3.1 The main performance headlines from Children's Social Care are as follows:

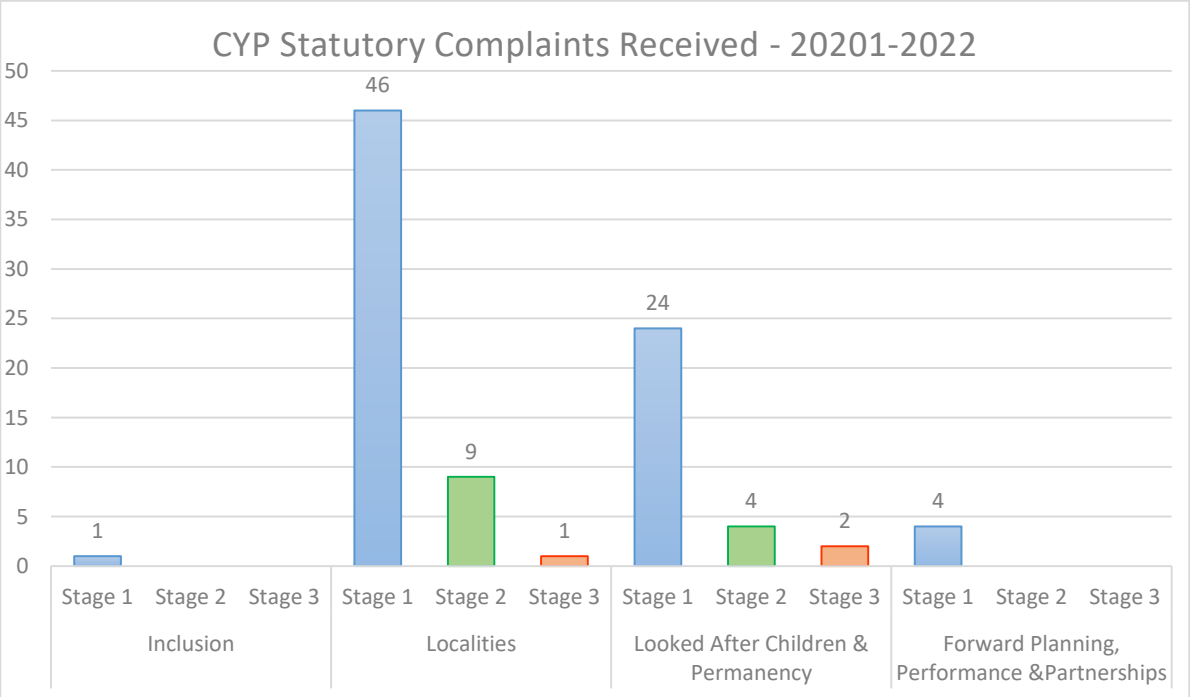
- Stage 1 statutory complaint numbers increased by 32% in 2021/22
- The service received 75 statutory stage 1 complaints in 2021/22
- There was a 17% escalation rate to stage 2 for statutory complaints - 5% higher than for previous years
- 63% of stage 1 statutory complaints were responded to within target in 2021/22 (compared with 60% in 2020/21)
- £700 was paid in compensation for the period 2021/22 on five cases, down from £9,050 paid in the previous year.

4. Children's Social Care Service Users

To put some context to the volume of complaints received in 2021/2022, Children's Social Care received a total of 4,669 referrals and completed 3,644 Child & Family Assessments. As of 31 March 2022, the Council had 3,002 open Children in Need cases and 374 children were the subject of a Child Protection Plan. There were 341 Looked After Children and the Council had 430 care leavers aged 18-25 in receipt of services.

5. Complaints Received

5.1 Brent Council CYP received a total of 75 stage 1 statutory complaints in 2021/22, an increase of 32% from last year (57 complaints). There were 13 stage 2 requests received and two stage 3 panels convened.



5.2 The number of complaints received at stage 1 for Looked After Children and Permanency increased by 33% (6 complaints) from 2020/21, and there was also an increase of 21% (8 complaints) received for Localities. Forward Planning, Performance and Partnerships received four complaints whereas last year they received none. Inclusion received one complaint in 2021/22.

5.3 The Localities service accounted for 46 complaints, 61% of the total number of stage 1 complaints received. These are split between East Localities, West Localities, Children with Disabilities and Mash/Family Front door/NRPF. These complaints concerned the communication and attitude of social workers, reports and records, and information contained within assessments. The amount of complaints received for East Localities was 17 and West Localities 12. These teams are involved with public law child protection cases as well as dealing with families going through private law proceedings where there is often parental conflict and one parent can be unhappy with decisions made by social workers. The Children with Disabilities team received 14 complaints in 2021/22. These cases commonly related to communication and information contained within records and reports.

5.4 Looked after Children accounted for 24 complaints, 32% of the total number of stage 1 complaints received. This is a notable increase compared to 2020/21 where 18 stage 1 complaints were recorded. The complaints received are spilt between Care Planning, Young People in Care, Fostering and Adoption and Kinship. The majority of complaints concerned children leaving care and were made by the young person themselves. In these cases, the Complaint Service Team will offer and provide an advocate to the complainant, should this be required. Awareness of the complaint process amongst service users has got better so this does need to be taken into consideration when looking at the increased levels of complaints. Additionally, there has been improved communication with care leavers about their rights and entitlements which has led to some carers complaining about these rights and entitlements.

5.5 The Council received one stage 1 complaint in relation to Inclusion during 2020/21, however this case was rejected as the complaint was logged anonymously.

5.6 The Council received 13 Stage 2 requests in 2021/22, compared to 7 in 2020/21. This is an increase of 86% on the previous year.

5.7 Under the children's statutory procedure, a complainant has a right for their complaint to be heard by an Independent Review Panel at Stage 3. In 2021/22 the Council received three requests for Stage 3 panels, and two panels were held during the year. A summary of the complaints that resulted in a Stage 3 Panel has been provided at point 10.3.

6. Profile of complainants and method of contact

6.1 When complaints are received they are directed to the Complaint Service Team for triaging. Of all the statutory children's stage 1 complaints received, the team received 76% by email, 18% by self-service online, and 1% by telephone. There has been a noteworthy shift from last year whereby 60% of complaints were made via the online portal, 35% by email and 5% by telephone. The CYP complaint legislation explicitly states that the Council must receive complaints by any means.

6.2 The varied methods of contact demonstrates that this is happening. Whilst the team has provided a telephone number on the web site especially for children's social care complaints, email appears to be the preferred mode of delivery for complainants. There are three options to log complaints online through the customer portal: anonymously, unregistered or registered. The portal allows complainants to log and monitor the progress of their complaints all in one place.

6.3 The Council has limited information about the ages of complainants. The majority of complaints received in relation to Localities are raised by parents regarding their children, however the majority of complaints received by the Looked after Children service are raised by the young person themselves. Although the new system currently does not record equalities information, work is being done to ensure it can capture this data going forward. The Complaints Team will continue to record equalities information where available.

7. Nature / Reasons for Complaints

7.1 The main reason for complaints received in 2021/22 related to communication which remains a familiar theme from last year. Complainants felt that they were not kept informed/updated on matters or decisions. The majority of complaints where comminication was identified as a root cause were "upheld" or "partially upheld". This demonstrates the need for further improvement when engaging with parents and young people to ensure good relationships are established and they are updated with pertinent updates as necessary.

7.2 A number of complaints also related to social workers and their behaviour or attitude. Children's Social Care has a statutory duty to support and intervene in the best interests of the child, however families will not always agree with the action that the Council has taken. As a result, they may choose to complain, and this is typically focused on individual social workers who often need to navigate a challenging path between parents in dispute. The most common reasons for complaints against staff members are therefore where one parent disagrees with a decision that has been made, and subsequently blames the social worker for colluding with the other parent.

7.3 Complaints concerning parents who are in a conflict situation in regards to access and care of their children are on the rise. Usually this has been where the partners disagree about the care the child or children are receiving from the other parent. Some feel that the Child and Family Assessment or court reports are not completed in an impartial way and that the social worker failed to communicate with them at an early enough stage in proceedings. This has been a problem for social workers trying to find a balanced approach through these relationships.

7.4 The majority of complaints where communication has been classified as a root cause have been upheld. Many of the Stage 1 complaints reflect the unhappiness of parents and carers in relation to some of the decisions made by staff including a perceived bias in the reports which favour their partners. This also relates to changes in social worker disrupting the communication with the families.

7.5 Complaints handling training will be delivered to all relevant staff members within CYP departments. The training will also include trends analysis from previous complaints and key learning points and improvements.

7.6 Examples of the types of root causes of complaints that arise are listed below: -

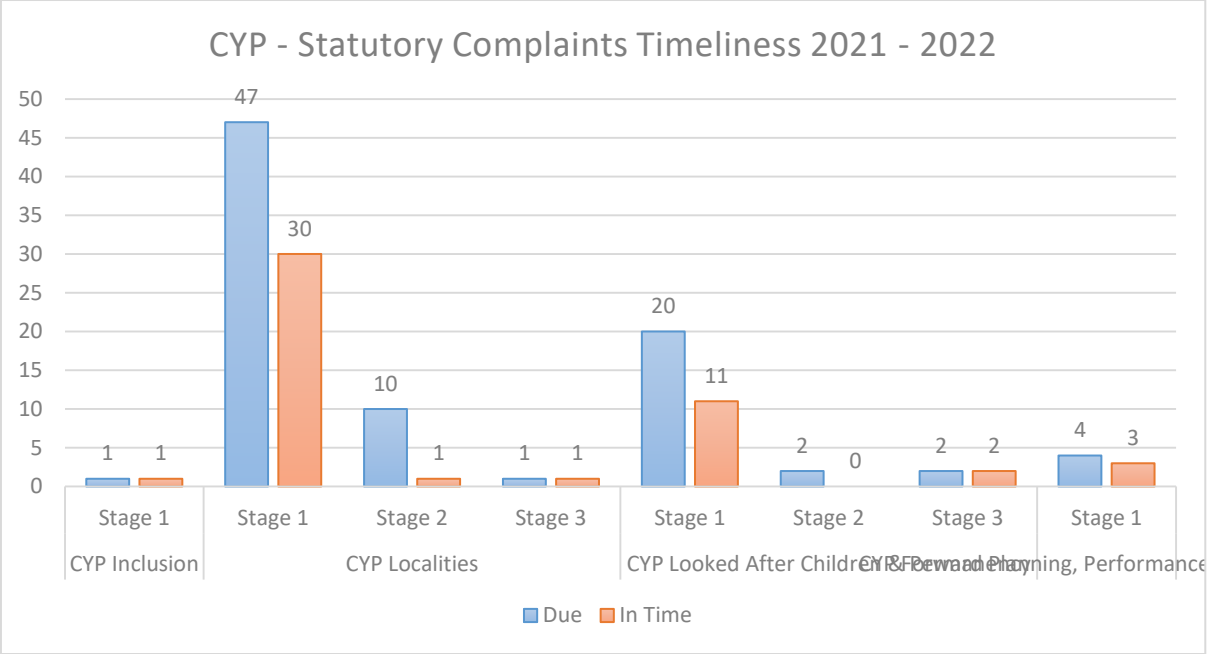
- ***Alleged poor staff attitude*** - much of the work of Localities staff involves them taking actions in connection with highly sensitive child protection or child in need issues, which parents or carers may often disagree with. There have been a number of comments about social workers where the family member perceives a bias, leading to complaints about the alleged impartiality of assessments.

- ***Poor communication*** - on completion of a Child and Family Assessment, or reports to the ICPC, social workers had not kept all the interested parties updated with the completed assessment and reports.

- ***Care Leavers*** - the main area of complaints related to leaving care and in particular care leavers' entitlements and the support they had requested which may not have been up to standard. This suggests growing awareness of care leavers knowing what they are eligible for and entitled to, as well as having a greater willingness to challenge decisions.

8. Timeliness of Responses

8.1 The Council responded to 56% of all children's statutory complaints within the appropriate timescales. This is a fall of 5 percentage points compared to the previous year, and is below the Council's target of 100%.

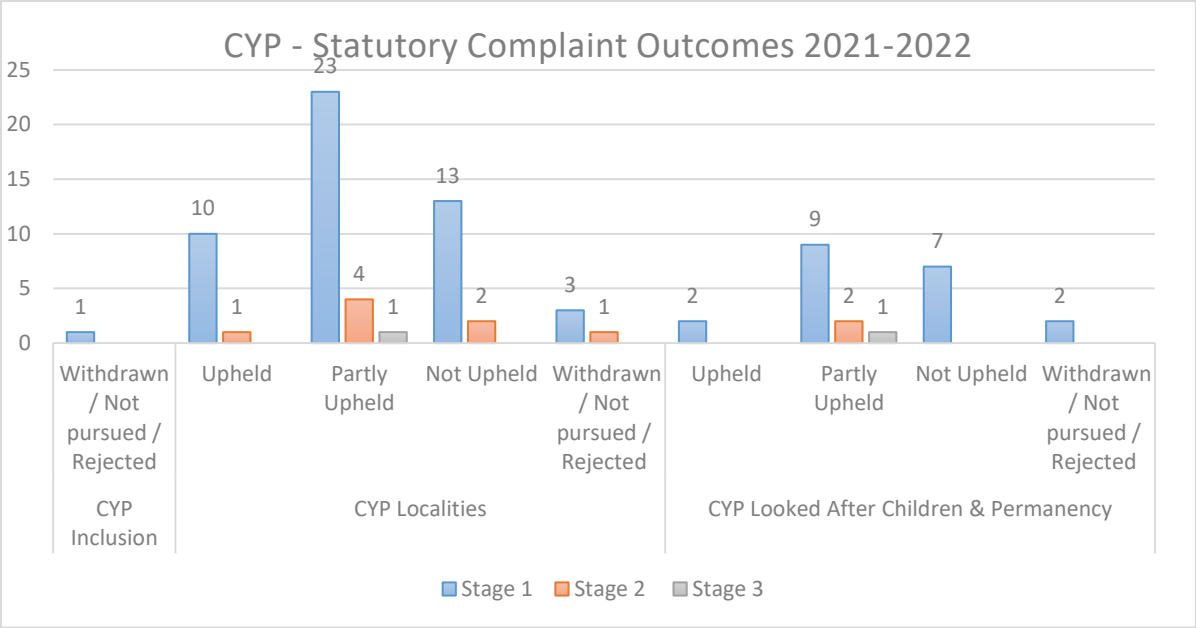


8.2 It is important to note that the statutory children's complaint legislation allows the Complaint Service Team to extend the target deadline by 10 working days in complex cases.

8.3 The performance rate at stage 1 was 63%, with 45 out of 72 complaints responded to on time, whereas the performance rate for stage 2 complaints dropped significantly due to a peak in the amount of complaints received; an increase of 10 cases compared to last year. Of the 13 cases received at stage 2, only 1 was completed on time.

9. Complaint Outcomes

9.1 There are four possible outcomes for complaints: withdrawn/resolved/Outside jurisdiction, not upheld, partly upheld and upheld. The chart below shows the outcomes of statutory complaints at Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 in 2021/22 as recorded on the Council's case management system.



9.2 The key findings are:

- Of the 70 cases closed at stage 1 during 2021/22, the Council found some merit in 63% of complaints, with 40 complaints either upheld or partly upheld. This is consistent with the previous year. A 'Not Upheld' outcome was decided in 20 cases at stage 1 and 6 cases were either withdrawn, not pursued or rejected. Service areas continue to show a willingness to admit errors or mistakes and to remedy concerns raised.

- The Council closed 13 stage 2 statutory complaints during 2021/22. One complaint was resolved at this stage and therefore closed as 'not pursued'. Two complaints were not upheld, which accounted for 15% of the overall complaints closed in 2021/22.The majority of complaints at stage 2 were upheld or partly upheld (78% of complaints). This is comparable with the amount of complaints upheld or partly upheld at stage 2 last year.

- In 2021/22 two stage 3 panels were completed, both were partly upheld. The upheld cases at all stages account for 65% of all cases closed during this period.

10. Analysis and Learning from Complaints

10.1 Lessons learnt from complaints can help shape and improve services and the customer experience. There is a commitment within CYP for managers and staff to use this learning to improve outcomes for service users.

10.2 Detailed below is a summary of the cases escalated to stage 2 and where a detailed investigation was undertaken. Learning points and service improvements identified have been summarised at point 14 – Learning from complaints. The Council wishes to learn from its complaints and improve the service it provides.

- Localities had 5 stage 2 investigations, one of which was withdrawn. The general theme around these complaints concerned interactions with social workers and concerns around poor documentation and timeliness. The recommendations that resulted from these complaints included:
  - Better signposting to how processes are followed
  - Clear information provided in a timely manner

- Children with Disabilities (CWD) – One of the cases concerned a family interacting with social workers in the CWD team and a failure on the part of officers to properly support their child. There were 7 complaints in total, and in the majority of the complaints some fault was found. The issues in the complaint related to the complaints process and quality of practice. Recommendations included:
  - Staff and managers within CYP should ensure that information relating to parents' invitations to Children in Need meetings is clearly held within the case records so that an audit trail can be provided which clearly demonstrates invitations were sent to parents and other key members of the network.
  - CYP to put in place a protocol which guarantees that staff and managers ensure parents are informed in a timely manner, both verbally and in writing, when there is a change in worker.

- Looked after Children and Permanency had two stage 2 investigations – These cases concerned children who were in foster care or placement. Recommendations included:
  - The Council to come to a view as to how they address the issue of covert audio recordings which may contain information in regard to the safety of a child. This has been a reoccurring issue and Children Services has sought legal advice and implemented an appropriate policy.
  - Social worker's to ensure that they make thorough and detailed recordings of significant events within the case records and escalate such matters, as required.
  - Clear notes regarding actions and due date as well as ensuring details of changes in payments are shared in writing.

10.3 There were two stage 3 review panel adjudications during the year:

- Case 1: This was in relation to a Child Arrangement Order; there were reported concerns for the welfare of the complainant's child. However, Children Services found no safeguarding concerns and the case was subsequently closed. The complainant was unhappy with the social worker tasked with completing the Section 37 report and raised a number of concerns. In total, there were 8 complaints considered as part of the investigation. The Panel amended two of the decisions from not upheld to upheld and no finding. An apology was offered to the complainant at this stage and recommendations were thereafter implemented.

- Case 2: This concerned a Looked After Child who felt they were not supported during their time in care. As part of this investigation, 11 complaints were considered. The Panel amended 5 of the outcomes; 3 to partly upheld and 2 to no finding. An apology was offered and no further recommendations.

10.4 The CYP leadership team is committed to learning from complaints and this learning is tracked through the Practice Improvement Plan. Practice improvement initiatives based on learning from complaints have included drafting and implementing a Digital Recording Policy and guidance on working with families with children who are subject to Supervision Orders. The CYP Learning and Development Team integrated learning regarding working with interpreters into our training offer and developed a learning tool on the impact on children who interpret for their parents. The CYP Learning and Development Team has also developed workshops on preparing for Child Protection Conferences with a focus on improved communication and engagement with families. The impact of the actions are reviewed through audit activity and practice observations to ensure the service users are benefiting from the lessons learned.

11. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) Decisions in 2021/22

11.1 There were fourteen corporate and statutory Education & Children's Services complaints escalated in 2021/22, and eighteen decisions made by the LGSCO during the year. Three cases were referred back to the Council to process through our own complaint process and five cases closed after initial enquiries were made. Eight cases were "Upheld" and two cases were not "Not Upheld."

11.2 There were three Children's statutory complaints upheld in 2021/22. One of these cases had not yet gone through the entirety of the statutory stage 2 process so the Ombudsman referred the case back to the Council and asked that we compensate the complainant for that delay.

11.3 In another case, the Ombudsman deemed the outcome of the stage 2 investigation as satisfactory with £2000 compensation having already been awarded at this stage. The Ombudsman found no other fault on the Council's part and was satisfied by the remedies already implemented.

11.4 The third case relates to the lack of support to maintain direct payments for the care of the complainant's disabled child. The Ombudsman found that the complaint should have been reviewed under the statutory process and instructed the Council to carry out a stage 2 investigation and pay £200 for the delay in undertaking the investigation.

12. Compensation

12.1 Children's Social Care paid out £900 in compensation in 2021/22 on six cases. This is a significant decrease of £8,150 from 2020/21. This breaks down as follows:

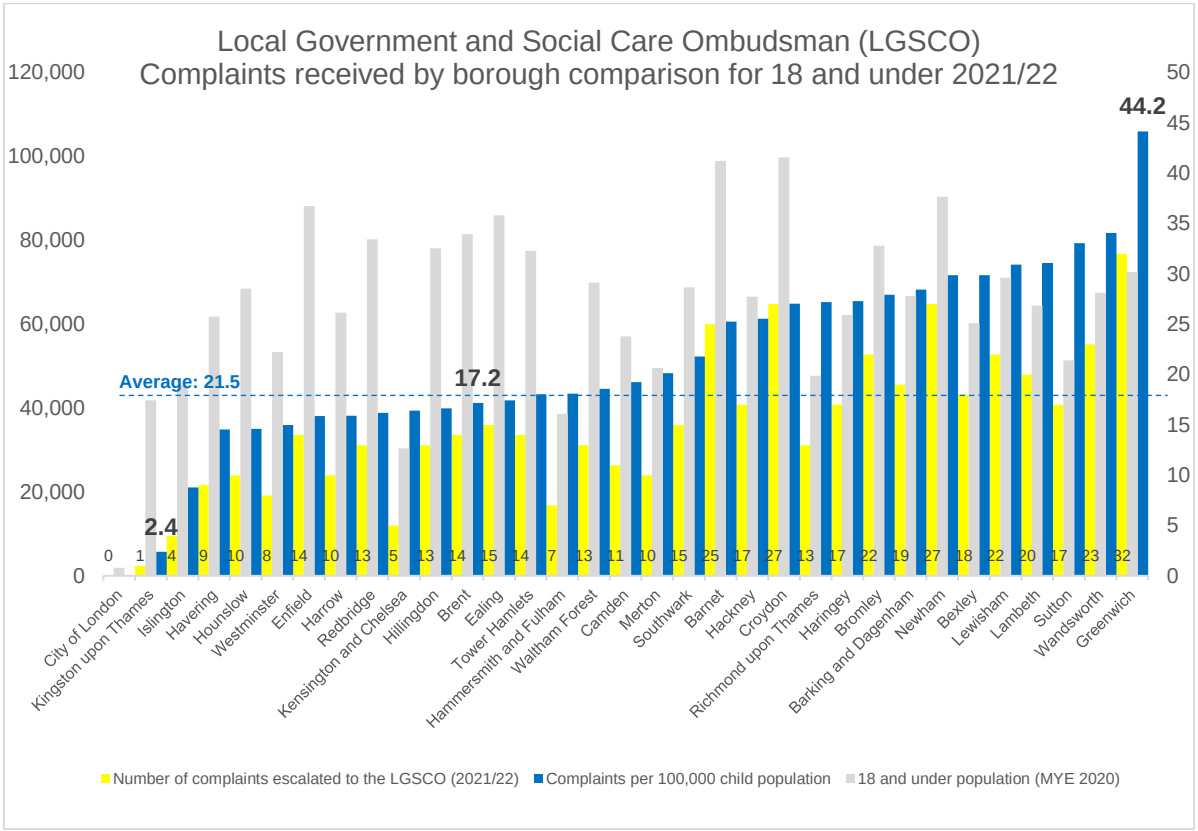
- £100 was offered in one case at stage 1 of the statutory complaint procedure. This was to cover paint costs to redecorate a young child's room.
- A total of £600 was paid out at Stage 2 across four cases. In three of these cases, £100 each was offered due to the delay in the stage 2 investigation. In the remaining case £300 was offered due to service failure and distress this caused.
- Compensation was not awarded at stage 3 of the statutory complaints process.
- The Ombudsman instructed the Council to pay £200 compensation for the delay in undertaking an investigation.

Children's Social Care	Amount
Stage 1	£100
Stage 2	£600
Stage 3	£0
Ombudsman	£200
Total	£900

13. Benchmarking

13.1 Brent Council belongs to the North West London Social Care Complaint Managers Group. The majority of London Councils have confirmed that the number of children's statutory complaints received have increased since the pandemic. Comparative data has been provided below on those cases that were received by the LGSCO during 2021/22 in relation to Children and Young People. The Office of National Statistics also provided data to illustrate the number of complaints received relative to size of population of children within each borough. The average for all London Councils is 21.5 per 100,000 population whereas Brent is 17.2.

13,2 This means that Brent Council is performing slightly better than average for complaints received by the LGSCO when compared to its projected population in 2020 of children 18 and under. There were 14 complaints escalated to the LGSCO in relation to Education and Children's Services in 2021/22 which is the consistent with the number of complaints referred in 2020/21. The estimated population for children 18 and under within Brent for mid-year 2020 was 81,501. When factoring complaints received per 100,000 children population this is relatively good and consistent with the previous year.



14. Compliments

14.1 The service learns from both complaints and positive feedback. Children's Social Care logged 31 compliments on the Council's complaints and compliments database. This is consistent with the amount of compliments logged last year. Managers are encouraged to log all compliments they receive. Below are examples of some of the compliments received in 2021/22.

- ***Looked After Children and Permanency***

  "I am contacting you in order to express the thanks and appreciation of xxxxxx and xxxxxx NHS Trust for the diligence and professionalism of two of your Officers in facilitating an appropriate Transfer of Care for Ms xxx from this hospital yesterday. As you can see from the letters below, my professional qualification was obtained in a different age but this means that I am well placed to recognise 'Good Old Fashioned Social Work' and that is exactly what your SW, xxxx has exhibited throughout this Young Person's care episode at xxxx.
  The hard work, tenacity and pragmatism of xxxx in your Placements team was also telling in achieving the right result in this case.
  Both xxxx and xxxx are a credit to the London Borough of Brent and have certainly gone the extra mile on behalf of the Authority as a Corporate Parent whilst maintaining excellent lines of communication with clinicians and managers at this hospital."

- ***Localities – Children with disabilities***

  “xxxx from day one when she first visited took time to understand and get to know xxxx who is non verbal and has severe learning and physical disabilities and looked at her needs and us as a family.
  I found her to be very empathetic and caring, had good communication with us, and engaging with xxxx where possible. She was very efficient and always very friendly. She will be a loss to the team at Brent and we wish her all the best in her new job.”

- ***Localities***

  “Thank you very much for your excellent service within short time. I am so pleased with all the help and support you have provided me in the last two days.”

- ***Inclusion – SEND Specialist services***

  “I took the liberty of asking xxxx for her contact, as I have long felt the spontaneous urge to praise her work.
  My name is xxxxx and I am the mother of a child with autism and I am in a great fight for the right to a place in a special school for my son. xxxxx has been an angel in our lives.
  Besides being extremely kind and polite, she is very professional, ethical and committed to the function she exercises.
  She has treated us with immense respect and cordiality, always making herself available to help us, advising us and showing us the way so that we can achieve this goal.
  I couldn't just keep thanking her anymore, without being able to bring this to your attention, so that you know you have a good-hearted person on your team and that this is a jewel that must be preserved.
  I thank you all for the assistance you have given us and wish that xxxxx will soon become even greater in her profession, for the undeniable recognition of her wonderful work. Thank you for the opportunity to say this.”

- ***Inclusion – SEND Specialist service***

  “I just wanted to make you aware of the great service I received this morning from xxxxx, SEND Case Officer. This gentlemen went above and beyond the remit of his role.
  I was making enquiries about my son xxx, who currently has an EHCP, the information was not readily available, but with his persistence he tried all options, to make sure there was a satisfactory outcome. Hopefully making things more achievable to get on an Apprenticeship programme that he would like.
  I have never spoken to this man before but:
  He gave me is details, confirming this via email just in case of any misspelling. He confirmed my details provided contact details of the team dealing with my son. He also engaged with me, checked on my wellbeing, held on the phone while I was looking for information. His colleagues he sourced help from responded almost immediately (great team work).The information required was directed to the relevant parties. His attention and attitude given to me as a service unit, is something your team should be very proud of.”

- ***Localities – Family Front Door***

  “I hope this email finds you well and you are having a good week.
  I wanted to reach out to share some positive feedback in relation to xxxx and xxxx. Please do pass this email on if you are not the correct contact.
  I have worked with them both for several months now and I've been thoroughly impressed with their professionalism. xxxx has always come across as incredibly polite, efficient and isn't shy of going above and beyond for our children and young people. I was in a meeting with xxxx yesterday and was impressed with his ideas and the way he articulated his views in a way that was firm, fair and constructive. Both are a real breath of fresh air and I look forward to working with both in the future.
  Many thanks for your time & have a lovely day.”

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