



Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 6 September 2022 at 6.00 pm

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

Please note this will be held as an in person meeting which all Committee 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:

Members

Councillors:

Conneely (Chair)
Long (Vice-Chair)
Ahmadi Moghaddam
Akram
S Butt
Bajwa
Georgiou
Miller
Mitchell
J. Patel
Shah

Substitute Members

Councillors:

Afzal, Begum, Collymore, Ethapemi, Fraser, Moeen,
Rajan-Seelan, Ketan Sheth and Smith

Councillors:

Kansagra & Maurice

Lorber & Matin

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Tel: 020 8937 3679 ; Email: Andrew.Phillips@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:

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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 or trade union).

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

or

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

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

Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Item	Page
1 Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members	
2 Declarations of interests	
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 Deputations (if any)	
To hear any deputations received from members of the public in accordance with Standing Order 67.	
4 Minutes of the previous meeting	1 - 8
To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 19 July 2022 as a correct record.	
Members are asked to note that as the July Committee was held online the decisions made will be subject to formal confirmation at this meeting.	
5 Matters arising (if any)	
To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.	
6 Budget Scrutiny Task Group	9 - 12
The purpose of this report is for the Committee to establish a Scrutiny Task Group to consider the Cabinet's budget proposals for 2023-24.	
7 Cost of Living crisis	13 - 28
This report outlines the actions the Council is taking to mitigate the impact of the Cost of Living crisis in Brent and updates members of the Committee on the progress of the Cost of Living themed Outcome Based Review (OBR).	
8 Scrutiny Work Plan 2022/23 update	29 - 34

To consider the scrutiny committee's work plan for 2022/23.

9 Scrutiny Progress Update - Recommendation Tracker

35 - 48

*Agenda republished on 2 September 2022 to include this item

This report updates the committee on the scrutiny recommendations tracker.

10 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 their representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 60.

Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 8 November 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](#)



MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES AND PUBLIC REALM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE **Held as a Virtual Meeting on Tuesday 19 July 2022 at 6.00 pm**

PRESENT (in remote attendance): Councillors Conneely (Chair), Long (Vice-Chair) Ahmadi Moghaddam, Akram, Bajwa, S. Butt, Fraser, Georgiou, Moeen and J. Patel.

Also Present: Councillors Mili Patel and Krupa Sheth.

1. Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Miller and Mitchell, with Councillors Fraser and Moeen attending as alternates.

2. Declarations of interests

None.

3. Deputations (if any)

None.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meetings held on 9 March 2022 and 9 June 2022 be approved as an accurate record

5. Matters arising (if any)

The Committee were updated that prior to the meeting a deputation had been received from a resident, Mr Philip Grant. This was in regards to a presentation which was made to this committee in the previous municipal year, on the Poverty Commission Update at the 9 March 2022 meeting of the Committee. Further information had been received from the Brent Housing Department on this issue which the Committee would be considering in the future, and commenting on any further recommendations at the Committee's September meeting.

6. Medium Term Financial Strategy – Summer Update

This update was presented by Councillor Mili Patel (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources & Reform) and Minesh Patel (Director of Finance, Brent Council). The report highlighted the uncertainties and risks with regard to budget setting, as part of the process of setting the Council's budget for the year 2023/24. There were no new proposals by way of this report, other than the estimate of a budget gap of around £28 million from the budget of 2023/24 to 2024/25. The report also outlined how the medium term financial framework of the Council would aim to provide

investment to longer-term priorities, such as those outlined in the Borough Plan, as well as the response to Covid-19 and the cost of living crisis.

It was acknowledged that the report reflected financial uncertainty in the national economy, owing to factors such as Covid-19, high levels of inflation and the global impact of the war in Ukraine. Together with local changes, this required the need for substantial savings within the Council's budget. Due to the lack of clarity around future levels of funding for local government, the Committee were updated that it was difficult to be precise around future financial targets. When the budget for 2022/23 was initially agreed by the Council in February 2022, it was assumed that a further savings of £12 million were required in the next few years. However, based on the new information since then, the Committee were updated that the current working assumption was that £28 million of savings would need to be made. These estimates would be a major factor in the construction of the Council's budget for 2023/24.

The Committee were then invited to raise questions, which are summarised below:

- Regarding the impact that the rate of inflation would have on contracts and levels of service, it was noted that inflation would be factored in when considering awarding new contracts. A number of contracts organised by the Council did also contain inflationary clauses within them.
- The Committee asked if analysis had been undertaken of the Council's major suppliers financial viability/resilience, especially those services for which the Council is supplier of last resort; it was noted that within the care sector, the Council were cognizant of the need for contractors to be able to continue delivering services. It was not guaranteed that all care providers could be protected in the borough, though within the budget there was a focus on areas and contracts that were experiencing financial difficulties.
- On the issue of Adult Social Care, it was asked whether the pressures to adult social care budgets were likely to lead to a change to any of the thresholds of social care funding; it was noted that eligibility criteria for funding was decided nationally. In relation to charging residents for services, it was explained that this was decided on a means testing basis.
- The Committee questioned what the Council was doing to reduce its reliance on the private rented sector for temporary accommodation and to reduce government funding being paid into the private sector; it was responded that Brent Council had built more affordable housing than any other London Borough in the last few years.
- Raising the issue of Council Tax, it was asked how the financial burden could be reduced for the most vulnerable residents; the Council Tax support scheme provided by the Council was cited as benefitting over 20,000 households in Brent. This was alongside the Residents' Support Fund, as well as other measures adopted by the Council to address the Cost of Living Crisis.
- The Committee asked what the impact of a reduction in Business Rates income would have on the Council, it was noted that Brent were exposed to this risk. With regards to Business Rates, there was a safety net whereby the Government could intervene if levels fell below the agreed rate.
- Regarding raising new forms of income for the Council, the Committee were updated that due to the failures of other local authorities in commercial ventures, this was now made more difficult by the Government to do.

- It was asked what the potential impacts of the Capital build programme would be for the Council; it was highlighted that the report referred to the fact that the Council had not spent as much money in this year as it was intended. The issue of inflation was identified as a major risk going forward, particularly if rent levels did not keep up with the costs of building. This would also potentially have an impact on the levels of affordable housing the Council was able to provide.
- In relation to the financial risks presented by the Council's subsidiary bodies, it was asked what risk these could present to the Council. It was noted that I4B and First Wave Housing were not fully commercial, rather operating against a specific business plan. There was consistent monitoring of these companies against performance indicators to mitigate risks.
- Regarding schools in Brent that ended up in a financial deficit, it was asked if there were any characteristics that these schools shared; it was noted that the consistent thread was in supporting children with SEND, in addition to inflation and associated cost pressures.
- Following on from this, the Committee were updated that EHCP plans were delivered to schools that required them, and the Council utilised DSG funds to provide this.
- Going forward, it was asked if schools would be able to fill the demand of pupils and full time staff with current funding; it was noted that the School Place Planning Strategy 2019-2023 Refresh taken to Cabinet on the 8th of Nov 2021 indicated that there was currently sufficient capacity to meet the need in the Primary and Secondary phase.

The Chair thanked those present for their responses during the discussion, and invited the Committee to make information requests and recommendations.

The Committee made the following information requests:

- i) A fuller response from Housing/CWB on the issue of vulnerable residents of other boroughs being placed in housing within Brent was requested. Focus on the smaller number of vulnerable people (who may require support for their needs) who had taken up an accommodation option in Brent – is there a process and what is the process?
- ii) A breakdown of housing to be provided including data to show shift from private to council provided accommodation.

The following recommendations were made:

- i) Schools deficit area of the financial outlook is effectively scrutinised by the relevant community (CWB). RPR would endorse and support the CWB committee. Cllr Fraser and Cllr Moeen (CWB) attended on 19 July RPR meeting – RPR Chair requested that they make the link with Cllr Sheth and the rest of CWB.

7. **Digital Inclusion Strategy**

Councillor Mili Patel (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources & Reform) introduced the item, presenting the Committee with an update on the Council's Digital Inclusion Strategy. Sadie East (Operational Director, Transformation) and Madeleine Leathley (Digital Workstream Lead).

The Committee was then invited to raise questions on the information provided, which focussed on a number of key areas, as highlighted below:

- Regarding residents who were digitally excluded, it was asked what was being done to help them get online; it was answered that additional support had been offered to children and young people in schools, providing 500 devices to young people. In terms of general residents, there was focused targeting of residents to identify areas in the borough where residents required the most support.
- Further to this point, the Committee asked how residents who did not speak English as a first language were supported, as well as refugees and asylum seekers. The Committee were updated that devices had been provided to these groups, as well as digital skills training sessions, in conjunction with language interpreters.
- On the point of digital accessibility, it was asked how difficulties with residents navigating two-factor authentication applying for the residents support fund was being addressed. It was noted that there was support in place through Brent Hubs, as well as through 'digital champions' in the borough. Accessibility formed a significant part of Brent's wider digital strategy.
- It was asked what role the NHS were playing in adding to the digital strategy; it was updated that a new relationship with local NHS trusts had been forged, with information being shared from the NHS with Brent Hubs and digital champions. The NHS also had their own digital champions to advise people on their online activity. There was ongoing work offline with organisations such as Age UK in order to signpost these services to residents.
- It was also updated that funding and support was in place to further the creation of more Digital Champions going forward.

The Committee made the following information requests:

- i) Provide a list of VCS groups the council is working with so members can co-ordinate their own assistance.

The following recommendations were made:

- i) Undertake further consultation with the community and VCS to identify the gaps in the current strategy.
- ii) Involve councillors to identify gaps in the strategy and to assist with championing the strategy provisions (relates to the information request for the breakdown of VCS groups – above)
- iii) Digital champions network – recruit, train and resource champions from marginalised and disenfranchised communities in this area.

- iv) Re-launch the network as a programme/scheme to raise the profile of the network.

8. Wembley Events Review Paper

Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action) introduced the item. The Committee were updated on how the Council and its partners had worked to implement the recommendations of Baroness Casey following the events of the Euro 2020 men's football final.

Moving forward to speak to the report, Chris Whyte (Operational Director) updated the Committee that the summation of the Casey Review had been not to repeat the events which had occurred at Euro 2020, and the Council had been successful in achieving that aim in the last year.

The Committee was then invited to raise questions on the information provided, which focussed on a number of key areas, as highlighted below:

- In relation to the recommendations from Baroness Casey's report, it was asked if there were any plans to have e-ticketing at Wembley and if so, how would phone signal be updated around the stadium. It was updated that this was primarily a question for the stadium staff, though there were plans to increase the phone signal around the stadium area.
- Reflecting that different audiences such as boxing, football and concertgoers presented different challenges, it was asked if this had been addressed in event day planning going forward. The Committee were updated that resources were supplied in a different way, depending on the type of event. This was dependent on the likelihood of antisocial behaviour occurring at an event. Mostly, football events were now treated the same, irrespective of the size of the teams playing at the stadium. This risk was analysed in tandem with being fair to businesses, and allowing them to trade on event days.
- In terms of identifying risks posed by different football teams' fans on event days, it was updated that the Council were heavily reliant on the risk profiles supplied by the Police.
- The issue of dispersal after concerts was raised as an issue at recent concerts, and this was acknowledged of being due to transport and traffic issues.
- Residents in the Wembley area had expressed concern that security coverage had not been equal across the borough, as well as an issue of concert attendees not dispersing as quickly as football fans. It was noted that there were four key partners on event days: the Council, Quintain, the Football Association and the Metropolitan Police. The Council had been working to establish a broader network to address any security gaps which may have occurred.
- It was noted that information and timings around events and concerts should be made more readily available for residents in the area going forward.
- In terms of deterrent around parking, it was asked if fines were large enough to stop people parking illegally. It was noted that the level of parking fines were set by the statutes, which did mean that the Council were unable to alter them. The deployment of Council staff on the ground was funded by Wembley Stadium.

- It was raised that ward Councillors and residents had noticed traffic hotspots building up on event days, it was asked what was being done around signage to notify residents of changes to traffic. It was acknowledged that the competition of event day traffic versus commuter traffic led to high traffic areas in some cases. The Committee were updated that the Stadium were looking to increase digital signage around the area, and modernise the signage used.
- Further to this, it was noted that it would be helpful to receive information on event days from the Football Association regarding road closures and changes, so this could be passed on to residents.
- The Committee acknowledged the improvement in clean up after events, and it was asked what steps were being taken to ensure that this was maintained going forward. The Committee were updated that the Council had ensured after the Casey Review implementation that a well motivated and resourced team would be able to continue this work.
- It was asked if the new event management plan had taken into account the role of delivery drivers providing alcohol around the stadium, and it was noted that this was minimal, though where this did happen the Council did not have legal powers to prevent this from happening.
- In conclusion, it was asked what the future arrangements would be for events at Wembley Stadium. It was updated that reviews of safety and security arrangements would be ongoing with all partners, who would meet on a regular basis. The stadium also hosted a residents and businesses forum, to receive feedback from the local community.

As a result of the discussions, the following Recommendations and Information Requests were made by the Committee, noted below:

Recommendations:

- i) There should be a clear and robust relationship between the council and FA, SSE Arena and Wembley Stadium:
 - to share event information about events in advance to local partners including the council and police.
 - to engage with residents.
 - to look at signage to aid route planning/traffic management
 - to uphold enforcement agreements.
- ii) For the council and any other partners involved to consult with local councillors, residents and key partners to gather information on traffic management arrangements to review how effectively they are responding to congestion hotspots identified by councillors, residents and partners.
- iii) Look at North End Road (identified by a committee member as pinch point) to identify the effects events have in terms of traffic, dispersal of people and anti-social behaviour (please refer to recommendation 2) to amend traffic management arrangements to alleviate the impact in these hotspots.
- iv) All relevant partners (including landowners, housing associations etc) should be brought together to review current security provision in the

Wembley events area including identification of responsibilities and jurisdictions to rectify gaps.

- v) Review the abuse/use of parking permits on event days.

Information requests

- i) Cllr Sheth agreed a procedure for councillors and officers on the ground to escalate anti-social behaviour concerns on event days. Confirm the procedures in place and circulate to the committee.
- ii) Request feedback from FA regarding their engagement with residents. To include data (numbers, frequency, spread/areas, who had been consulted) on engagement levels and headline findings and how feedback had been incorporated into practice and procedures going forward.
- iii) Request list of resident associations, which currently attend the liaison committee. Provide this information to all relevant councillors and include them in the committee's work

Improvement recommendations

- i) For the FA, Wembley Stadium and Arena to promote public transport for events particularly concerts.

9. Committee Work Plan 2022/23

The Committee agreed the work plan set out in the report.

10. Recommendations Tracker

The Committee noted and agreed the contents of the Recommendations Tracker.


11. Any other urgent business

None.

The meeting closed at 9.24 pm

Councillor R. Conneely
Chair

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	Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee 6 September 2022
	Report from the Head of Strategy and Partnerships
Establishment of Scrutiny Task Group on Council Budget Proposals 2023-24	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Jason Sigba, Strategy Lead – Scrutiny, Strategy and Partnerships Jason.Sigba@brent.gov.uk Tom Pickup, Policy Partnerships and Scrutiny Manager, Strategy and Partnerships Tom.Pickup@brent.gov.uk Lorna Hughes, Head of Strategy and Partnerships Lorna.Hughes@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for the Committee to establish a Scrutiny Task Group to consider the Cabinet's budget proposals for 2023-24.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That a Budget Scrutiny Task Group be established with members to be confirmed at the Committee meeting on 6 September 2022.
- 2.2 The terms of reference for the group will be:

1. To consider the Cabinet's budget proposals for 2023-24
2. Receive evidence from Cabinet Members, senior departmental officers, and any other relevant stakeholders
3. Agree a draft report to comment on the budget proposals for submission to the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee for ratification and submission to Cabinet.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The process for developing proposals for the budget and capital programme each year is outlined in the Brent Council Constitution, Part 2, Paragraph 19. This requires the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee to meet (on more than one occasion if necessary) to consider a report from the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources setting out the financial position of the Council, financial forecasts for the following year, and the possible expenditure priorities of the Executive, as well as a report on the draft budget proposals.
- 3.2 The Committee may receive evidence from Cabinet Members, Council officers, and other relevant witnesses.
- 3.3 The Committee should agree a report setting out its view of the budget priorities and any other issues it considers relevant. This report should then be submitted to each Cabinet Member and each Group Leader in order to inform budget proposal discussions and the Committee should submit a note or the report on its deliberations and comments on the proposals to the Cabinet.
- 3.4 At its meeting on 19 July 2022, the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee received a report from the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources, which included the Medium Term Financial Outlook and set out the overall financial position facing the Council, highlighting the significant risks, issues, and uncertainties. It also set out the proposed budget setting strategy for 2022/23 and beyond, in order to maximise the period of consultation with residents, businesses and other key stakeholders. The Committee also reviewed the Council's budget outturn performance for 2021/22.
- 3.5 A report to Cabinet from the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources on the Draft Budget 2023/24 is to be published in the autumn of 2022. This will be considered by the Task Group.
- 3.6 Comments and any draft recommendations from the Task Group are expected to be considered and agreed by the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday 18 January 2023. A report from the Committee would then be presented to Cabinet for consideration in February 2023, alongside the report from the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources on final budget proposals.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications for the purposes of this report.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications for the purposes of this report.

6.0 Equality Implications

6.1 There are no equality implications for the purposes of this report.

7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders


7.1 The Budget Scrutiny Task Group may consider any consultation being undertaken as part of the Council's budget setting process.

Report sign off:

Lorna Hughes

Head of Strategy and Partnerships

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 Brent	Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee 6 September 2022
	Report from the Corporate Director Resident Services
Cost of Living Crisis	

Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt:	Open
No. of Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officers:	Thomas Cattermole Director of Customer Access 020 8937 5446 Thomas.Cattermole@brent.gov.uk Charlotte Moore Senior Transformation Officer 020 8937 4177 Charlotte.Moore@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To outline the actions the Council is taking to mitigate the impact of the Cost of Living crisis in Brent and update members of the Committee on the progress of the Cost of Living themed Outcome Based Review (OBR).

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members of the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee are asked to:
- Note the actions the Council is taking to mitigate the impact of the Cost of Living crisis; and
 - Note the progress of the Cost of Living crisis themed OBR

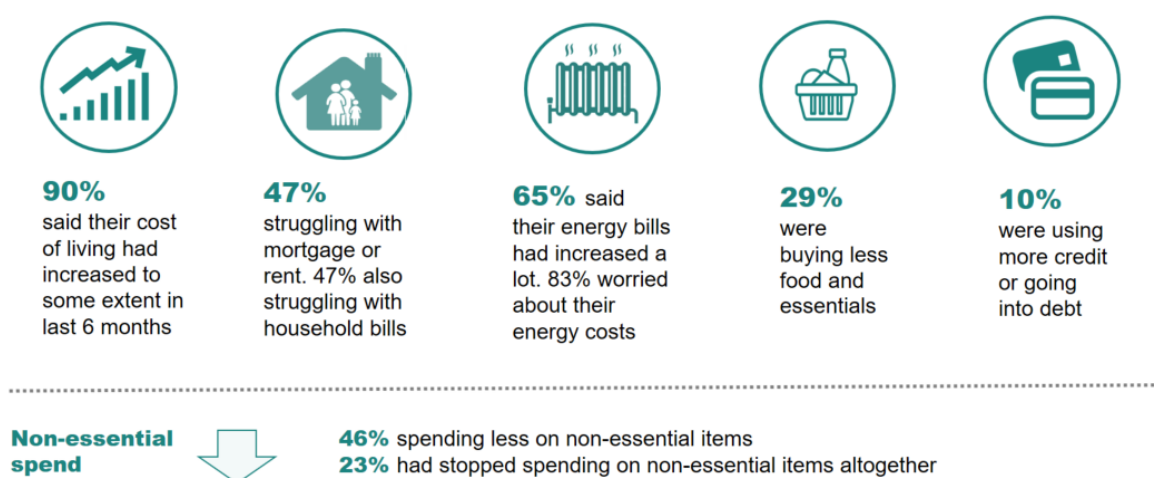
3.0 Detail

- 3.1 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.

- 3.2 In a recent attitudes survey¹, 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. See image 1.

Image 1 Public attitudes about the cost of living. YouGov poll of Londoners (July 2022)

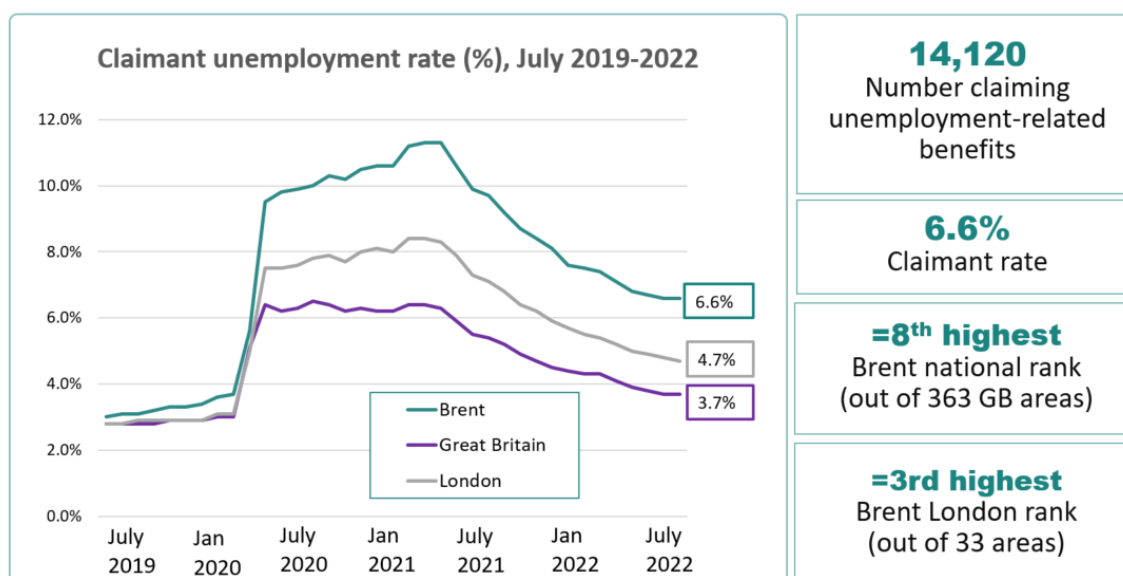


- 3.3 In 2020, Brent saw one of the biggest nationwide increases in unemployment. Although rates have been falling, recovery has been slow. Currently, Brent has one of the highest unemployment claimant rates in the country - the 8th highest out of 363 areas across Great Britain, compared with a ranking of 70th in March 2020². See image 2.

¹ Source: YouGov (for GLA). Sample 1245 adults. Fieldwork 15th-20th July 2022 – carried out online. The figures were weighted to be representative of all London adults (aged 18+). Data available on [GLA datastore](#).

² Source: Office for National Statistics, Claimant unemployment count ([NOMIS](#)). Rates express claimant count as % of population aged 16-64.

Image 2. Unemployment in Brent



- 3.4 The latest Bank of England forecast has inflection peaking at 13.1% in the fourth quarter of 2022. This is largely driven by the 80% energy price cap increase in October 2022³, following the earlier 54% increase in April, and will place further pressures on household budgets.
- 3.5 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:

Financial support

- 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.
 - In June Cabinet approved a further £3 million of Council funds for this financial year (2022/2023).
 - Cabinet also approved the delegation of authority to the Strategic Director of Customer and Digital Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy and Citizen Experience, to amend the eligibility criteria for the fund throughout the lifetime of the scheme. This enables the scheme to respond in a timely manner to emerging trends in applications.

³ BBC, 26 August 2022 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/live/uk-62633742>

- **Council tax Support (CTS):** 27,597 households are supported through CTS of which 18,999 are working age and 8598 are pension age. The below table represents working age residents. 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 £30m per annum. The current caseload is 27,597 compared to the previous year 27,549.

Council tax Support	Household income per week	Average weekly amount
Passported benefit	DWP/HMRC benefits	£23.73
Band 1	£0 to £80	£23.73
Band 2	£81 to £110	£19.80
Band 3	£110 to £150	£13.34
Band 4	£150 to £250	£8.78

- **Housing Benefits (HB):** The housing benefit service supports 20,528 households. The number of cases is decreasing due to residents moving to universal credit. The caseload in the previous year was 23,568. The total support given to households exceeds £230m per annum. The below table shows average HB weekly awards per tenure type.

Housing Benefits	HB cases in each tenure	Average weekly award
Temporary Accommodation and Bed & Breakfast	880	£307.50
Council tenants-HRA	3,198	£117.64
Private tenants and Housing Associations	16,450	£218.34

Food and energy support

- **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 with a total value of £12,400.

The most common needs which residents present with at the Hubs are food and fuel support (23%), council tax and housing benefit (17%), housing and 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 Winter Support Fund and COVID Local Support Funds, which had been in place since December 2020.

Between December 2020 and March 2022, the Council distributed £5.5m through these grants to Brent residents. This has included:

- Supporting the families / carers of approximately 12,000 eligible children and young people with supermarket vouchers during each of the school holidays since December 2020. This includes approximately 20,339 vouchers that were sent out from the Council to support families with children aged 0-4 years old who are not attending school. The most recent vouchers to the value of £60 per eligible child were issued to cover the duration of the 2022 summer holidays.
- A one-off payment of £50 in February 2021 was made to families with eligible children to contribute towards the cost of gas and electricity bills.
- £125k in 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.
- Work is underway to develop an **advisory service to support those affected by fuel poverty**. This will provide impartial energy advice to help residents stay warm, save money and live greener, and will include referral pathways to organisations such as independent advisory agencies. It involves working with front line services (especially those who go into homes) to help identify and refer residents who are in hardship and to develop a central referral point through Brent Hubs. Financial assistance with heating or fuel costs will be contingent on a visit by this team.
- Consideration is being given to the development of a **community shop** model within Brent, which would sell low-cost food and household essentials to families on low/no income. This model is one that has been adapted by other London boroughs as a way to utilise surplus food and household items otherwise being wasted.

Employment, skills and inclusion

- The Employment, Skills and Enterprise service help to **upskill residents to support them moving into work**. This includes 4,831 qualifications via Brent Start (ESOL, English, Maths & Digital Skills) from September 2021 to date, digital equipment loans, and financial support toward childcare. In the financial year 2021-22 Brent Works job brokerage service exceeded all targets:
 - Placed 136 residents into full time employment
 - 71% sustained for 26 weeks or more
 - 80% at London Living Wage or above
 - 50 residents into apprenticeships and
 - 100 young people placed into paid Kickstart opportunities

- The delivery of a number of Borough Plan funded **Financial Inclusion projects**. This includes a financial capability upskilling programme targeting community leaders, training to upskill Brent Hubs staff and residents in debt management, as well as the delivery of a financial inclusion learning programme for residents. Up to 340 residents and community leaders, have been supported through this programme with further work ongoing.
- To improve **digital skills** the council has committed to having 500 digital champions by 2025. As of July 2022, there are 108 Digital Champions in Brent and we are on track to meet our target. This includes having trained digital champions within Brent Hubs, libraries, customer services, and the voluntary sector and within housing partners. All Digital Champions are given access to the Digital Unite platform where they must complete essential training as well as explore more specific training that relates to the services they provide. The champions are also supported through the Digital Champions Network, which provides space to share experiences and feedback on the training programme.
- **Digital Inclusion** support for over 900 households, including the provision of access to digital devices for 478 Brent pupils, and digital skills training for 100 businesses has been delivered. We also continue to engage with internet providers to improve access to fibre through social tariffs.
- Work is currently being undertaken to develop an approach that will enable organisations to interact on behalf of residents, who are less able to access services via the **Brent Customer Portal**. This will enable recognised VCS groups and advocates to transact on behalf of individuals less able to engage with online services. An internal team has been identified to pilot this approach so that a policy can be developed which can be applied to trusted voluntary and community sector organisations.

Awareness raising

- In March 2022 a **Financial Support leaflet** outlining the support available was developed and delivered to all households in Brent to help increase awareness of the schemes and mechanisms available to those who are struggling with the cost of living.
- A comprehensive cost of living **communications plan** is being developed to begin in September. The plan will bring together and promote the evolving range of support available to residents, including how best to access it. A wide range of tactics and channels will be used including: digital advertising, a dedicated webpage, trusted community voices and a prominent feature in the autumn edition of Your Brent Magazine, delivered to every household in the borough. Learning from ongoing community engagement work as part of the OBR will feed into and shape the plan; ensuring communications are designed to resonate with different groups of residents identified throughout the research.

Knowledge sharing

- A **Fuel Poverty Toolkit** has been developed and promoted internally. It 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. Thirteen stakeholder briefings sessions promoting the toolkit were also delivered, helping raise awareness of the options that are available to residents to help with rising energy costs. These included briefing sessions for elected Members, as well as services including Housing, Public Health, Adult Social Care and Family Wellbeing Centres and Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) partners.
- Five **all-staff sessions** took place in May and June and were attended by 1,155 council officers. These workshop-style events were themed around the Cost of Living crisis and included videos from staff sharing their experiences of its impact on their service users, presentations and a group activity based on case studies of households affected by the crisis; where staff collaborated in discussing how best to support them. Outputs have been collated and will feed into ongoing development of the work outlined in this report.
- The council has developed an operational **practitioners' network**, bringing together key staff from across the council to provide a space to share learning, collectively review what is working well and to consider how we can improve access to existing support mechanisms, whilst also seeking opportunities to develop new provision where required. The first session took place on 16 August. 27 officers were in attendance with representatives from Housing, Brent Front door, Public Health, ASC, Brent Start and Brent Hubs. These sessions will be held every six-weeks and will be developed to include external organisations and partners.
- Following on from the success of five Brent Health Matters briefing sessions held in May and June, with over 230 participants in total, a new programme of **themed stakeholder briefing sessions** has been developed to take place twice a year. These sessions will serve as a forum for key partners and voluntary community sector organisations to continue to share information about their services, increase their knowledge of the provisions to better support residents during this Cost of Living crisis, as well as encourage networking and greater collaborative working among colleagues. The next set of sessions will take place in September and October 2022 and will include briefings from Council services and key partners including: Brent Gateway, Brent Food Banks (Trussell Trust), Age UK, CAMHS, WDP New Beginnings, Advice4Renters, Citizens Advice, SUFRA NW London, Job Centre Plus.

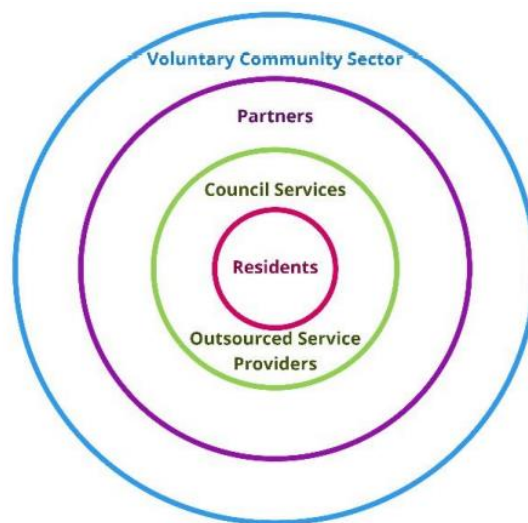
Measuring impact

- 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 was presented to the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee on 1 August and the dashboard's functionality was demonstrated, including the ability for 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.
- Members were also presented with a ward level breakdown of each statistic, which allows senior staff to identify discrepancies between wards and highlight areas for targeted action. 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.
- To show further possible developments a Proof of Concept '**Single View**' **dashboard** was demonstrated. This view would encompass more data and build a better picture of residents at a more granular level. The presentation of a 'mock profile' revealed the ability to gain greater clarity on an individual's situation and advise accordingly using the data provided.
- **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. These indicators will include:
 - Free School Meals
 - ASC Debt
 - Sundry Debt
 - Council Tax Arrears
 - Brent Hubs
 - Business rates arrears
 - Resident Support Fund
 - Council Tax Support
 - Rent Arrears
- Key impact indicators will be extracted from external sources to enable relative comparisons to be made at borough level. These will help to identify potential priority areas where resources could be focused and enables us to track our relative position in comparison to other boroughs who may not have similar interventions in place. These indicators will include:

- Employment and unemployment rates by place of residence
- Average earnings by place of residence
- Universal Credit claimant count
- UK Business counts
- The proportion of households in each Brent LSOA that are fuel poor
- Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Number of adults in Brent who have used the internet in the last 3 months
- Live tables on homelessness
- Free School Meals (also comparable at borough wide level)
- Crime data including anti-social behaviour, burglary and theft

Local framework

- 3.6 The above initiatives are in addition to other work being carried out across Council departments and by partner organisations aimed at supporting residents in hardship. They are part of an overarching local framework aimed at improving alignment and collaboration, recognising Council's pivotal role at the centre of the system. This includes health and the DWP, providers of commissioned services and the Voluntary & Community Sector. The system approach works both at operational and strategic levels to build awareness and relationships within the system and to help improve access and deployment of support. This approach continues to develop and will be further shaped by learning from the OBR.



National Support

- 3.7 In addition to work outlined above, national support is being rolled-out. On 26 May 2022, the then Chancellor announced a Cost of Living support package worth £15 billion. The Government has targeted this support towards 8 million of the most vulnerable households, pensioners and disabled people.
- 3.8 As part of this support, package households on low incomes have and will be supported in the following ways:

- 8 million households on means tested benefits will receive a one-off Cost of Living Payment of £650. The DWP will make this payment in two lump sums, the first of which was paid to recipients in July and the second in autumn.
- 8 million pensioner households who receive winter fuel support will get a one-off payment of £300. The Government will make these payments directly to pensioner households in the autumn.
- Households in Council tax bands A-D will be entitled to a £150 energy bills rebate, paid either through their council tax bill or to a bank account of their choice. Brent has approximately 92,000 eligible households, which will all have been paid by the 30 September 2022 deadline. In addition, we have a discretionary fund of £1.2M to assist those in council tax bands E-H that meet certain criteria for this award. The deadline for the discretionary award is 30 November 2022.

3.9 Universal support from the Government to help with energy bills has been increased from £200 to £400; there is now no requirement for individuals to re-pay this. Energy suppliers will deliver this support to households with a domestic electricity meter over six months from October 2022.

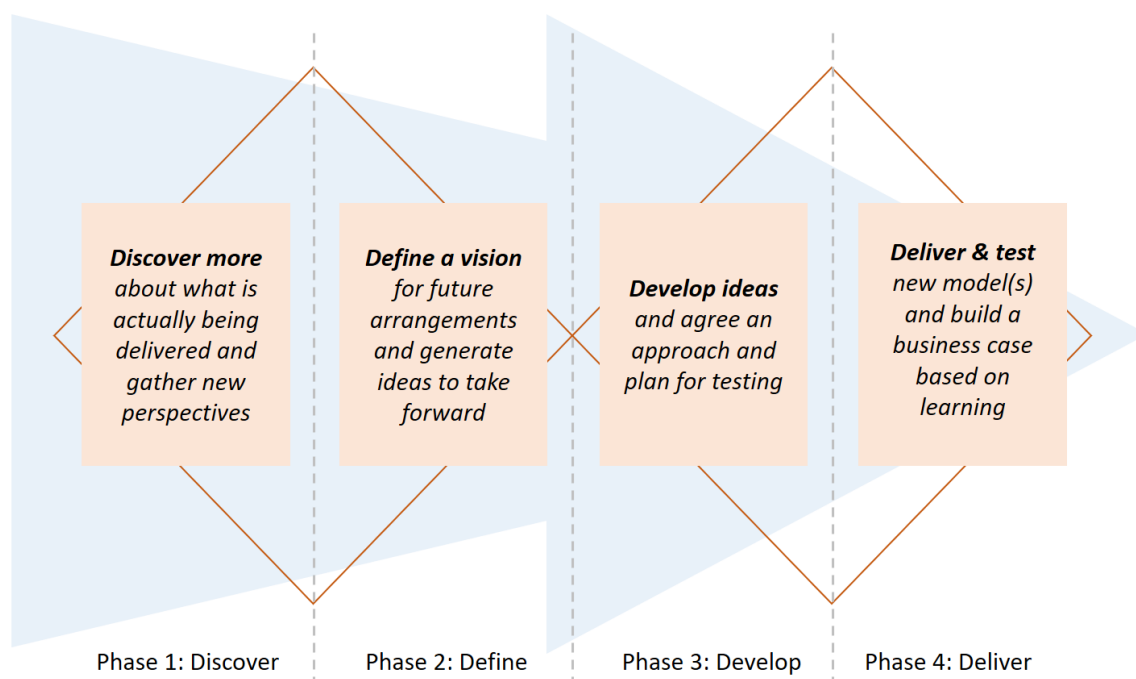
3.10 It was also announced that the Household Support Fund (HSF) will be extended from October 2022 to March 2023. The Government will issue additional guidance to Local Authorities in the future to ensure that those not eligible for the £650 Cost of Living Payment are supported. Local Authorities will determine the eligibility criteria and delivery of the HSF that will be confirmed in the coming months.

4.0 Outcome Based Review (OBR)

4.1 Considering the challenging national political context and the forecast of further increases in inflation and household bills, Brent's Cabinet, on 20 June, endorsed an Outcome Based Review (OBR) approach to tackling the complex Cost of Living issue and mitigating its impact on residents.

4.2 The OBR approach places the voice of local people at the centre of our response to cost of living challenges by bringing together diverse groups of stakeholders – including residents and partners - to collaborate using design-led methodologies across four phases: Discover, Define, Develop and Deliver.

Outcome Based Review (OBR)



- 4.3 The OBR discovery phase began in July and is still in progress – it will culminate at the end of September with a large-scale collaboration event. The discovery phase consists of four work streams:

1. **Community Research & Engagement:** This is a comprehensive programme including engagement of partners, providers, front-line staff and current and potential service users. Approaches, including ethnographic interviews (i.e. in-depth, 1-2 hour conversations with residents to understand their history, circumstances, experiences and related emotions) and focus groups to help gather insights and new perspectives on the issue are being used.

This work stream launched with a kick-off session for Members on 18 July. This included briefings, presentations, and opportunities for Members to share experiences to help shape the community engagement approach. Members provided feedback of what they had seen locally and suggested engaging with specific cohorts of residents and the voluntary and community sector organisations that support them.

To date the OBR has engaged with a wide range of stakeholders/groups including residents, charities, community groups, food banks and schools; with further sessions scheduled for September.

Emerging themes from the engagement include:

- There is a vast array of formal/informal support mechanisms in place for residents who are experiencing financial difficulty; however, these are

not collated in a coherent system. There is an opportunity to have a greater impact on resident outcomes through a more consolidated system/approach.

Example feedback from engagement work:

“There needs to be better networking structure across organisations for improved joined up working. And better signposting - to be aware of what’s out there/where to send people and get it right the first time.” (VCS partner)

- Some residents experience barriers when accessing support through the system. This could be for a number of reasons – lack of awareness/motivation, perceived stigma, digital exclusion, less able to seek support, disproportionately affected by the crisis.

Example feedback from engagement work:

“There are issues with accessing services when faced with a language barrier or little / no knowledge of what you are eligible for.” (School)

- A number of residents are experiencing financial crisis for the first time.

Example feedback from engagement work:

“There has been a real increase with a slight delay effect, we saw more people in June, and have received new referrals with people who have not accessed the food bank before.”(VCS partner)

“The Hubs are seeing an increase in the newly in need.”(Council officer)

- There may be a significant negative impact on mental health and wellbeing.

Example feedback from engagement work:

“I’m working very hard. Not being able to support my family doesn’t make me feel good” (Local resident)

- There may also be gaps in the system.

Example feedback from engagement work:

“Residents in temporary accommodation or with no recourse to public funds tend to fall between gaps.” (VCS organisation)

2. **Data Analysis:** This includes developing insights from sources including: the London attitude survey, staff survey, resident profiles, resident attitude survey, service data and national data sets. Key indicators are being identified and mapped, including to LSOA area where possible, to provide a geographic visual representation of the effects of the Cost of Living crisis on residents. A range of indicators will be used to understand the impacts of the Cost of Living crisis on different groups, providing insights that will help with modelling and forecasting for the future.

3. **Horizon Scanning:** This includes desktop research into work by other local authorities, published research, participation at London-wide forums, as well as using the Cost of Living LGA Hub⁴ to inform the wider context. Examples include:
- **Islington Council** - providing a £150 payment to meet the costs of school uniform for children who are eligible for Free School Meals and moving from year 6 to secondary school.
 - **Lewisham Council** – Evelyn Community Shop, 70 households pay a £3.50 membership fee per week for food they can collect from the shop for the week.
 - **Lambeth** – created an easy use portal with social start up Lightning Reach, which allows residents to create a single profile to find and apply for a personalised range of grants and other support across multiple providers.
4. **Service Mapping:** This work stream is building a picture of local and neighbourhood offers, including those not already captured by the Community Directory e.g. school uniform swap shops, one-off community initiatives / events. It is linking with engagement of residents and partners to utilise their local knowledge and will help to identify best practice and gaps in provision.
- 4.4 The four discovery phase work streams above will continue to progress throughout September, during which the key findings outputs from all work will be synthesised and further developed.
- 4.5 A large-scale stakeholder event, called a ‘visioning day’, is scheduled for 29 September. At this event, the products of the discovery work will be played-back and presented to attendees - including partners, members, residents and Brent leads. Facilitation will encourage attendees to generate ideas for new solutions and approaches that respond to the key issues and recurring themes identified in the discovery work and jointly developed at the visioning day.
- 4.6 The consensus of the best and most viable ideas – for example, proposals for new solutions, services and ways of collaborative working – will be agreed at the visioning day. These ideas will then be tested and evaluated from October 2022 onwards and, where successful, developed further with partners and other key stakeholders into full pilots / permanent models.
- 4.7 Over the coming weeks, and ahead of the visioning day on 29 September, work across all four work streams of the discovery phase will continue. Further ethnographies, presentations at forums and focus groups will take place. Targeted work will take place to ensure the OBR engages with further cohorts of residents and partners to ensure the voice and needs of all local people is captured in the products for the visioning day.

⁴ Local Government Association, Cost of living hub: <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/safer-and-more-sustainable-communities/cost-living-hub>

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 In 2021/22 £3m was allocated to the RSF. A further £3m has been allowed for 2022/23 and will be funded from corporate reserves. The fund will be closely monitored during the year as part of the quarterly budget monitoring arrangements. Any further funding to the RSF beyond this allocation will need to form part of the budget setting process in 2023/24.

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Council's Resident Support Fund is a discretionary fund that is funded by the Council. The Resident Support Fund replaced the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme after that latter scheme was no longer funded by central government. The Council has received funding from central Government under a number of schemes that were created during the pandemic, including the Household Support Fund (HSF), which has been extended to March 2023. Some of the funding from the HSF has been used to top up the Resident Support Fund.
- 6.2 The Council's Council Tax Support Scheme (also known as the Council Tax reduction scheme) was approved by Full Council on 25 November 2019 and came into effect in April 2020. The said scheme was slightly amended by Full Council on 24 February 2022 for the 2022/23 financial year to take into account decisions made by central government regarding the implementation of the energy grant payment for the 2022/23 financial year.
- 6.3 The General Power of Competence was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and in simple terms, it gives local authorities the power to do anything an individual can do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation.
- 6.4 Legal advice will be provided in relation to individual projects as and when necessary and appropriate, in particular in the event that the Government may provide additional financial assistance to residents and businesses which are likely to be administered by local authorities and the provision of any further statutory guidance that is provided by the Government.

7.0 Equality Implications

- 7.1 Equality implications will be considered for individual projects at the appropriate time.

8.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

- 8.1 Consultation on specific projects will be carried out when and where appropriate. The Lead Member with responsibility for the work of this service area will be kept informed about this plan and its delivery.


Related Document:
Cabinet Report Cost of Living Crisis June 2022

Report sign off:

Peter Gadsdon

Corporate Director of Resident Services

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	Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee 6 September 2022
	Report from the Head of Strategy and Partnerships
Update to the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme 2022-23	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	1
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Jason Sigba, Strategy Lead – Scrutiny, Strategy and Partnerships Jason.Sigba@brent.gov.uk Tom Pickup, Policy Partnerships and Scrutiny Manager, Strategy and Partnerships Tom.Pickup@brent.gov.uk Lorna Hughes, Head of Strategy and Partnerships Lorna.Hughes@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide an update on the changes to the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee's work programme.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That Committee members note the report and the changes to the work programme within.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The work programme sets out the items which the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee will consider during the municipal year.

- 3.2 The work programme of a scrutiny committee is intended to be a flexible, living document that can adapt and change according to the needs of a committee. The changes set out are reflective of this.
- 3.3 The agenda of the 6 September 2022 meeting has been updated to reflect the addition of an item concerning a Budget Scrutiny Task Group scoping paper. The agenda of the 6 September 2022 meeting has also been updated with the removal of two items: Budget Oversight and the Annual complaints and members' inquiries report.
- 3.4 The agenda of the 24 January 2023 has been changed on the work programme to include an additional item on Spaces for Community Use, originally scheduled for the 22 February 2023 committee meeting.
- 3.5 The agenda of the 22 February 2023 committee meeting has been changed on the work programme. The agenda item on Spaces for Community Use has been removed and moved to the 24 January 2023 meeting. The agenda now includes another item on the Annual complaints and members' inquiries report, which was originally scheduled for the 6 September meeting.
- 3.6 The updated work programme also contains amendments to the titles of senior officers following a senior management restructure that comes into effect on 1 September 2022.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. However, budget and financial issues are addressed in the 'Financial Implications' section of any reports to committee, requested as part of its work programme.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. However, legal implications are addressed in the 'Legal Implications' section of any reports to committee, requested as part of its work programme.

6.0 Equality Implications

- 6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

- 7.1 Ward members are regularly informed about the Committee's work plan in the Chair's report to Full Council. There is ongoing consultation with other relevant stakeholders.

Report sign off:

Lorna Hughes

Head of Strategy and Partnerships

Appendix 1

Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2022-2023

19 July 2022

Agenda Item	Leader/Deputy Leader/Cabinet Members	Chief Executive/Strategic Directors	External Organisations
Committee Work Programme 2022/23 – formal agreement	<p>Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform</p> <p>Cllr Shama Tatler, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning</p> <p>Cllr Krupa Sheth, Lead Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action</p> <p>Cllr Harbi Farah, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection</p> <p>Cllr Ellie Southwood, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy and Citizen Experience</p> <p>Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Culture</p>	Shazia Hussain, Assistant Chief Executive	
Digital inclusion strategy	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform	Peter Gadsdon, Strategic Director, Customer and Digital Services	
Wembley Events Review paper	<p>Cllr Krupa Sheth, Lead Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action (?)</p> <p>Cllr Harbi Farah, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection</p>	Alan Lunt, Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment	Football Association, Metropolitan Police
Medium Term Financial Strategy – summer update	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform	Minesh Patel, Director of Finance	

6 September 2022

Agenda Item	Leader/Deputy Leader/Cabinet Members	Chief Executive/Corporate Directors	External Organisations
Budget Scrutiny Task Group	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director of Finance and Resources	
Cost of living crisis	Cllr Ellie Southwood, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Economy and Citizen Experience	Peter Gadsdon, Corporate Director, Resident Services	

8 November 2022

Agenda Item	Leader/Deputy Leader/Cabinet Members/Non-executive Member	Chief Executive/Corporate Directors	External Organisations
Safer Brent Partnership Annual Report	Cllr Harbi Farah, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection	Carolyn Downs, Chief Executive	Metropolitan Police Representatives of community organisations
Police Liaison	Cllr Harbi Farah, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection	Carolyn Downs, Chief Executive	Metropolitan Police
Budget Oversight <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarter 2 Financial Report 2022/23 	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director of Finance and Resources	
An update on Brent Council grants programmes	Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Equalities and Culture	Lorna Hughes, Head of Strategy and Partnerships	

24 January 2023

Agenda Item	Leader/Deputy Leader/Cabinet Members/Non-Executive Member	Chief Executive/Corporate Directors/ Director of Public Health	External Organisations
Budget Scrutiny	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director of Finance and Resources	
Climate change	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Lead Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action	tbc	
Spaces for Community Use	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director of Finance and Resources	


22 February 2023

Agenda Item	Leader/Deputy Leader/Cabinet Members	Chief Executive/Corporate Directors/ Director of Public Health	External Organisations
Multi-Agency Flood Planning	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action	tbc	Thames Water Environment Agency
Migration scheme	tbc	tbc	tbc
Annual complaints and members' inquiries report	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform	tbc	

25 April 2023

Agenda Item	Leader/Deputy Leader/Cabinet Members	Chief Executive/Corporate Directors	External Organisations
Budget Oversight <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarter 3 Financial Report 2022/23 	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director of Finance and Resources	

<i>Spare slot</i>			
<i>Spare slot</i>			

	Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee 6 September 2022
	Report from the Head of Strategy and Partnerships
Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	1
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Jason Sigba, Strategy Lead – Scrutiny, Strategy and Partnerships Jason.Sigba@brent.gov.uk Tom Pickup, Policy Partnerships and Scrutiny Manager, Strategy and Partnerships Tom.Pickup@brent.gov.uk Lorna Hughes, Head of Strategy and Partnerships Lorna.Hughes@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker to the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the progress of the previous recommendations, suggestions, and information requests of the Committee be noted (Appendix 1).

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The Recommendations Tracker tabled at for the 6 September meeting relates to the forthcoming 2022 – 2023 municipal year. It contains one update from the

previous municipal year from the 9 February 2022 meeting on the item relating to flooding.

- 3.2 In accordance with Part 4 of the Brent Council Constitution (Standing Orders of Committees), Brent Council scrutiny committees may make recommendations to the Full Council or the Cabinet with respect to any functions which are the responsibility of the Executive, or of any functions which are not the responsibility of the Executive, or on matters which affect the borough or its inhabitants.
- 3.3 The Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee may not make executive decisions. Scrutiny recommendations therefore require consideration and decision by the appropriate decision maker; the Cabinet or Full Council for policy and budgetary decisions.
- 3.4 The Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker (attached in Appendix 1) provides a summary of scrutiny recommendations made during the municipal year, in order to track executive decisions and any implementation progress. It also includes suggestions of improvement and information requests, as captured in the minutes of the committee meetings.
- 3.5 Recommendations are removed from the tracker when they have been rejected or when implemented successfully and the review date has passed. This is the same for suggestions of improvement and information requests.

4.0 Procedure for Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees

- 4.1 Where scrutiny committees make recommendations to the Cabinet, these will be referred to the Cabinet requesting an Executive Response and the issue will be published on the Council's Forward Plan. This will instigate the preparation of a report to Cabinet and the necessary consideration of the response.
- 4.2 Where scrutiny committees develop reports or recommendations to Full Council (e.g. in the case of policy and budgetary decisions), the same process will be followed, with a report to Cabinet to agree an Executive Response, and thereafter, a report to Full Council for consideration of the scrutiny report and recommendations along with the Cabinet's response.
- 4.3 Where scrutiny committees have powers under their terms of reference to make reports or recommendations to external decision makers (e.g. NHS bodies), the relevant external decision maker shall be notified in writing, providing them with a copy of the Committee's report and recommendations, and requesting a response.
- 4.4 Once the Executive Response has been agreed, the scrutiny committee shall receive a report to receive the response and the Committee may review implementation of the Executive's decisions after such a period as these may reasonably be implemented (review date).

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications for the purposes of this report.

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1 Section 9F, Part 1A of the Local Government Act 2000, *Overview and scrutiny committees: functions*, requires that Executive arrangements by a local authority must ensure that its overview and scrutiny committees have the power to make reports or recommendations to the authority or the executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are or are not the responsibility of the executive, or on matters which affect the Authority's area or the inhabitants of that area.
- 6.2 Section 9FE, *Duty of authority or executive to respond to overview and scrutiny committee*, requires that the authority or executive;-
- (a) consider the report or recommendations,
 - (b) respond to the overview and scrutiny committee indicating what (if any) action the authority, or the executive, proposes to take,
 - (c) if the overview and scrutiny committee has published the report or recommendations, publish the response, within two months beginning with the date on which the authority or executive received the report or recommendations.

7.0 Equality Implications

- 7.1 There are no equality implications for the purposes of this report.

8.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

- 8.1 None for the purposes of this report.

Report sign off:

Lorna Hughes

Head of Strategy and Partnerships

Appendix 1

Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee Scrutiny Tracker 2022-23

These tables are to track the progress of scrutiny recommendations and suggestions for improvement made by the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee, with details provided by the relevant lead departments. It is a standing item on the Committee's agendas, so that the Committee can keep track of the recommendations, suggestions and requests it has made, and the related the decisions made and implementation status. The tracker lists the recommendations, suggestions and information requests made by the committee throughout a municipal year and any recommendations not fully implemented from previous years.

The tracker documents the scrutiny recommendations to Cabinet made, the dates when they were made, the decision maker who can make each decision in respect of the recommendations, the date the decision was made and the actual decision taken. The executive decision taken may be the same as the scrutiny recommendation (e.g. the recommendation was "agreed") or it may be a different decision, which should be clarified here. The tracker also asks if the respective executive decisions have been implemented and this should be updated accordingly throughout the year.

Scrutiny Task Group report recommendations should be included here but referenced collectively (e.g. the name of the scrutiny inquiry and date of the agreement of the scrutiny report and recommendations by the scrutiny committee, along with the respective dates when the decision maker(s) considered and responded to the report and recommendations. The Committee should generally review the implementation of scrutiny task group report recommendations separately with stand-alone agenda items at relevant junctures – e.g. the Executive Response to a scrutiny report and after six months or a year, or upon expected implementation of the agreed recommendation of report. The "Expected Implementation Date" should provide an indication of a suitable time for review.

Key:

Date of scrutiny committee meeting - For each table, the date of scrutiny committee meeting when the recommendation was made is provided in the subtitle header.

Subject – this is the item title on the committee's agenda; the subject being considered.

Scrutiny Recommendation – This is the text of the scrutiny recommendation as it appears on the minutes – **in bold**.

Decision Maker – the decision maker for the recommendation, (**in bold**), e.g. the Cabinet (for Council executive decisions), full Council (for Council policy and budgetary decisions), or an NHS executive body for recommendations to the NHS. In brackets, (date), the date on which the Executive Response was made.

Executive Response – The response of the decision maker (e.g. Cabinet decision) for the recommendation. This should be the executive decision as recorded in the minutes. The Executive Response should provide details of what, if anything, the executive will do in response to the scrutiny recommendation. Ideally, the Executive Response will include a decision to either agree/reject/or amend the scrutiny recommendation and where the scrutiny recommendation is rejected, provide an explanation of why. In brackets, provide the date of Cabinet/executive meeting that considered the scrutiny recommendation and made the decision.

Department – the Council directorate (and/or external agencies) that are responsible for implementation of the agreed executive decision/response. Also provided, for reference only, the relevant Cabinet Member and strategic director.


Implementation Status – This is the progress of any implementation of the agreed Executive Response against key milestones. This may cross reference to any specific actions and deadlines that may be provided in the Executive Response. This should be as specific and quantifiable as possible. This should also provide, as far as possible, any evidenced outcomes or improvements resulting from implementation.

Review Date - This is the expected date when the agreed Executive Response should be fully implemented and when the scrutiny committee may usefully review the implementation and any evidenced outcomes (e.g. service improvements). (Note: this is the implementation of the agreed Executive Response, which may not be the same as the scrutiny recommendation).

Recorded Recommendations to Cabinet from RPRS, Thursday, 19 July 2022

Subject	Scrutiny Recommendation	Decision Maker & Executive Response	Cabinet Member, Lead Officer, and Department	Implementation Status	Review date
Wembley Events Management	That Cabinet review the abuse/use of parking permits on event days at Wembley Park.	To follow.	<p>Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action</p> <p>Peter Gadsdon, Corporate Director, Resident Services</p>	To follow.	tbc

Recorded suggestions for improvement from RPRSC to Council departments/partners

Meeting date and agenda item	Suggestions for improvement	Council Department/External Partner	Responses / Status
19 July 2022 – Digital Inclusion	Undertake further consultation with the community and VCS to identify the gaps there in the current strategy.	Resident Services	As part of the development of the Digital Strategy 2022-26, both community and voluntary organisations were consulted on priority areas and opportunities to develop the digital skills and connectivity of the borough. Part of this consultation was completed with the Digital Inclusion network where both internal and external stakeholders meet on a quarterly basis. We will continue to work with the network to identify and fill any gaps.
	Involve councillors to identify gaps in the strategy and to assist with championing the strategy provisions	Resident Services	 <p>Organisation list for Digital Inclusion</p> <p>Attached is a list of all community and voluntary sector partners who have been consulted for the Digital Strategy and specific Digital Inclusion research. We are open to engaging with other members of the community and voluntary</p>

			organisations. If members would like to share any suggested partners please send any details to madeleine.leathley@brent.gov.uk
	Digital Champions Network – recruit, train and resource champions from marginalised and disenfranchised communities in this area.	Resident Services	To support the digital inclusion work, we also continue to promote the rollout of digital champions across the borough. For the next stages of the project we are promoting this opportunity to additional council frontline services, e.g. customer services, housing providers and key voluntary partners. As we continue to develop the programme we will expand the offer to community groups and residents who would like to become digital champions outside of an existing voluntary organisation, including those from marginalised communities.
	Re-launch the network as a programme/scheme to raise the profile of the network.	Resident Services	We continue to regularly meet with community and voluntary organisations to share digital inclusion opportunities, challenges and areas that require further support through the Digital Inclusion network. We also continue to promote the network via CVS Brent, MyHealthMatters forums and through other streams of stakeholder engagement and will be participating in the cost of living information session in September to promote the network and upcoming opportunities. We welcome opportunities to promote the Digital Inclusion programme and network to other relevant partners.
19 July 2022 – Wembley Events Management	All relevant partners (including landowners, housing associations etc.) should be brought together to review current security provision in the Wembley events area including identification of responsibilities and jurisdictions to rectify gaps.	Resident Services	The Football Association (FA) conducts a quarterly liaison meeting with local residents groups and businesses. The purpose of these is to impart information with respect to upcoming events, to seek reflections on past events, to receive and respond to any issues, and to make arrangements for these issues to be accounted for in terms of any operational change that might be needed. These are facilitated and organised by the Stadium, and the Council has no role other than being an attendee.
	For the FA, Wembley Stadium and Arena to promote public transport for events particularly concerts.	Resident Services/FA	Resident Services: These agencies regularly promote their venues as public transport venues, and this information is provided on ticket booking sites and on issued tickets, etc. The vast majority of visitors to these venues use underground services to Wembley Park Station.



			<p>FA: Wembley Stadium considers itself to be a public transport stadium, where public transport forms on average 85% of total spectator mode share at the stadium; a world-class example and statistic to promote sustainability at the stadium. Maintaining this average has recently been a discernible challenge in light of recent RMT and ASLEF strike action, however, public transport still forms the largest mode share of travel at the stadium irrespective of recent disruption to the rail network.</p> <p>We have collected the concert mode shares randomly for Harry Styles on Saturday 19th June 2022 and Ed Sheeran on Thursday 30th June 2022 for information and public transport formed 78% and 88% of total spectator movements respectively.</p>
	The recommendations for this item go beyond the Casey Review. Subsequent updates will focus on overall partnership management of events around Wembley.	Resident Services	That is accepted and agreed.
	Making better use of resources including ward councillors' local knowledge and information gathering role. They can provide community feedback on local issues.	Resident Services	Ward Councillors are to be invited to the quarterly Wembley Stadium Residents and Businesses Liaison meeting, the formal forum for stakeholder discussion and feedback.
	That the FA community factsheet with travel diversions, road closures and other useful information is shared widely. Please include councillors on dissemination lists in addition to partners and residents.	FA	<p>This request has been noted, and the FA will ensure that councillors are added to the distribution list as requested. The most recent community factsheet can be found below:</p> <div data-bbox="1182 1157 1236 1216" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>FA Community Factsheet.pdf</p>


	<p>There should be a clear and robust relationship between the council and FA, SSE Arena and Wembley Stadium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to share event information about events in advance to local partners including the council and police. • to engage with residents. • to look at signage to aid route planning/traffic management • to uphold enforcement agreements. 	Resident Services	<p>The Wembley Stadium Safety Advisory Group (WSAG) is the principal forum for bringing together relevant agencies to plan for upcoming events at Wembley Stadium. These matters are routinely discussed and acted upon by all WSAG partners. This forum is supported by sub-groups such as the, Wembley Stadium Transport Planning Group, the External Operations Coordination Group and the Wembley Stadium Security Partners Group.</p>
	<p>For the council and any other partners involved to consult with local councillors, residents and key partners to gather information on traffic management arrangements to review how effectively they are responding to congestion hotspots identified by councillors, residents and partners.</p>	Resident Services	<p>Ward Councillors are invited to attend the quarterly Wembley Stadium Residents and Businesses Liaison meeting, where such matters are routinely consulted upon and discussed by all partners and stakeholders. Any issues can be flagged outside these meetings to the Council's Highways Management Service.</p>
	<p>Look at North End Road (identified by a committee member as pinch point) to identify the effects events have in terms of traffic, dispersal of people and anti-social behaviour to amend traffic management arrangements to alleviate the impact in these hotspots.</p>	Resident Services	<p>North End Road can become busy after events as people make their way to areas north of the Stadium and also by people who may seek to circumnavigate the formal queuing system that leads to the underground station.</p> <p>The location is routinely monitored by the Stadium Control and by teams on the ground. The Police, Stadium stewards and Council enforcement teams can be deployed to deal with any issues as soon as they become known.</p>

			The event traffic management arrangements are organised by Wembley Stadium and we will make them aware of specific traffic concerns relating to this location. Residents are advised to attend the liaison meeting so this matter can also be raised directly. The Stadium will, be interested in specific details so they can review and revise current traffic management deployment.
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Information requests from RPRSC to Council departments/partners

Meeting date and agenda item	Information requests	Council Department/External Partner	Responses / Status
9 February 2022 – Flooding	To receive a copy of the independent review into the events of and response to the floods experienced across London in July when published and Thames Water's response to the review	Thames Water	<p>Information has been requested and will be provided later in the calendar year. Ahead of the publication of the full report a series of interim reports will be published covering aspects of the flooding and the first one is due imminently. More details about the review can be found here.</p> <p>Stage 1 report can be found here: https://londonfloodreview.co.uk/stage-1-report/ Stage 2 report can be found here: https://londonfloodreview.co.uk/stage-2-report/ Stage 3 report can be found here: https://londonfloodreview.co.uk/stage-3-report/</p>
19 July 2022 - Medium Term Financial Outlook	<p><i>Councillors raised concerns about vulnerable residents of other boroughs being placed in housing within Brent. How does the council protect itself against taking on the care and support costs of residents who were the responsibility of other local authorities?</i></p> <p>A fuller response from Housing/Resident Services on this</p>	Finance and Resources	<p>There is nothing stopping other local authorities using accommodation in Brent. However it is more complex as it depends on the intension of the placement. For instance, if it is a temporary placement, the placing borough holds the responsibility of ensuring the person receives the correct support.</p> <p>Housing do not have any involvement with a household who have been placed in our borough by another local authority. If this placement has been made to discharge a duty under homelessness legislation, then the placing borough should notify us in writing, giving details of the property, and the household placed, and confirming which duty they have discharged by making the placement.</p>

	question has been requested. Is there a process and what is it?		If a person is placed in a residential or nursing placement we will get involved if there is a safeguarding issue in that home.															
	A breakdown of housing to be provided including data to show shift from private to council provided accommodation.	Finance and Resources	<p>The Council has recently built 2 emergency accommodation schemes in Harlesden, to reduce our use of Temporary Accommodation in the private sector. One scheme is exclusively used for families and the second for single homeless households. A site has been acquired on the Edgware Road to develop a third emergency accommodation scheme, which will be used to accommodate homeless families.</p> <p>Due to the gulf between the supply and demand for social housing in Brent, the council uses Private Rented Sector (PRS) accommodation to end the main homelessness duty. The table below shows the number of allocations of PRS properties made each year to end the main homeless duty, and the number of social housing allocations made via the Housing Register.</p> <table><tr><th>Year</th><th>number of PRS allocations</th><th>number of social housing allocations</th></tr><tr><td>2021/22</td><td>198</td><td>738</td></tr><tr><td>2020/21</td><td>208</td><td>761</td></tr><tr><td>2019/20</td><td>128</td><td>512</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>534</td><td>2011</td></tr></table>	Year	number of PRS allocations	number of social housing allocations	2021/22	198	738	2020/21	208	761	2019/20	128	512	Total	534	2011
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19 July 2022 – Digital Inclusion	Provide a list of VCS groups the council is working with so members can co-ordinate their own assistance.	Resident Services	 Organisation list for Digital Inclusion															
19 July 2022 – Wembley Events Management	Request list of resident associations, which currently attend the liaison committee. Provide this information to all relevant councillors and include them in the committee's work.	FA	<p>Please refer to the meeting minutes of the previous quarterly Resident & Businesses Liaison meeting:</p>  FA meeting minutes.pdf															

	<p>Request feedback from FA on what their engagement with residents has been. Data (numbers, frequency, spread/areas, who has been consulted) on engagement levels and headline findings and how feedback has been incorporated into practice and procedures going forward.</p>	FA	<p>Resident and business engagement and feedback is important to the FA to minimise local impact of stadium events as reasonably possible. We hold quarterly Resident & Businesses meetings which provide a forum to raise any local issues or questions. The meeting minutes of the previous meeting this year can be found below:</p> <p> FA meeting minutes.pdf</p> <p>Within the latest meeting, an opportunity was shared for local residents to apply for the CSR Apprenticeship role.</p> <p>The residents have also been offered a community ticket allocation for events at the stadium when there has been capacity to do so. As per the latest meeting minutes, we have been fortunate to invite residents to over 50% of events held at the stadium this year.</p> <p>The next Residents & Businesses meeting will be held on Wednesday 7th September at 18:00 at Wembley Stadium, all Councillors have been sent an invitation to attend.</p> <p>It is not within our capacity to share the list of residents engaged with due to GDPR, however, the following Resident Associations have been in contact with the FA for reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archery Court; • Marathon House; • Raglan Court; • Barn Hill; • Park Lane; • Hillcroft Crescent; • Wembley Park; • Wembley Central and Alpertons; • Dollis Hill; • Sudbury Town; • Mapesbury; • Quintain Living;
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danes and Empire Neighbourhood Group; • Kensal Triangle; • Sudbury Court; • Cairnfield; and • Cromwell and Burns.
	Cllr Sheth agreed a procedure for councillors and officers on the ground to escalate anti-social behaviour concerns on event days. Confirm the procedure in place if there is one.	Resident Services	Operational Control of event day arrangements is orchestrated through the Stadium Control Room, with the Match Commander as lead. As such, there is well-established and clearly-defined process of control and escalation in place. All Brent officers are linked via telecommunications so matters can be reported and shared with colleagues and partners instantly.

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