



## Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee

**Tuesday 27 February 2024 at 6.00 pm**  
Conference Hall - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,  
Wembley, HA9 0FJ

Please note this will be held as a physical 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 the meeting 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)  
Aden  
Ahmadi Moghaddam  
Akram  
S Butt  
Georgiou  
Miller  
Mitchell  
J Patel  
Shah

#### Substitute Members

Councillors:

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

Councillors:

Kansagra & Maurice  
Lorber & Martin

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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 a 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

Item	Page
<b>1 Apologies for Absence and Clarification of Alternate Members</b>	
<b>2 Declarations of Interests</b>	
Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, the nature and existence of any relevant disclosable pecuniary or personal interests in the items on this agenda and to specify the item(s) to which they relate.	
<b>3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b>	1 - 14
To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 January 2024 as a correct record.	
<b>4 Matters Arising (If Any)</b>	
To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.	
<b>5 Deputations (If Any)</b>	
To hear any deputations received from members of the public in accordance with Standing Order 67.	
Members are asked to note that a request for a deputation has been received from Action for the Climate Emergency (ACE) Brent in relation to Item 7 - Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy Update (Winter 2024).	
<b>6 Draft Property Strategy</b>	15 - 106
This report sets out the vision and objectives of the Property Strategy that officers developed in conjunction with Avison Young - independent consultants, and a range of stakeholders through interviews and interactive workshops.	
<b>7 Climate &amp; Ecological Emergency Strategy Update (Winter 2024)</b>	107 - 158
This report provides the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee with an update on the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Programme.	
<b>8 Scrutiny Progress Update - Recommendations Tracker</b>	159 - 184

This report presents the Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker to the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee.

## **9 Committee Work Programme 2023/24**

185 - 192

To provide an update on any changes to the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee's work programme.

## **10 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

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

Agenda Item 6: Draft Property Strategy (Appendix 1 Annex C Case Studies 1-4 and Appendix 2 - Additional Income and Top Development Opportunities)

These appendices have been classified as exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely: "Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)"

## **11 Any Other Urgent Business**

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

**Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 23 April 2024**



**MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES AND PUBLIC REALM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Wednesday 24 January 2024 at 6.00pm**

PRESENT: Councillor Conneely (Chair), Councillor Long (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Aden, Ahmadi Moghaddam, Akram, S Butt, Georgiou, Molloy, Mitchell and J Patel.

Also Present: Councillor M Butt (Leader of the Council), Councillor Tatler (Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources & Reform and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Growth) and Councillor Ketan Sheth (Chair of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee).

**1. Apologies for Absence and Clarification of Alternate Members**

Apologies were received from Councillor Miller and Councillor Shah, with Councillor Molloy attending as an alternate member on behalf of Councillor Miller.

**2. Declarations of interests**

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

**3. Order of Business**

The Chair agreed to vary the order of business on the agenda to allow the Scrutiny Progress Update – Recommendations Tracker to be considered first. The minutes therefore reflect the order in which the items were dealt with at the meeting.

**4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meetings held on 26 October 2023, Tuesday 7 November 2023 and 18 December 2023 be approved as a correct record.

In referencing the minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2023, Councillor Georgiou sought an update regarding the review of the Barham Park Trust Accounts conducted by the Chief Executive. In response, the Committee was advised that the views of the Chief Executive and the outcome of the review was detailed at the Barham Park Trust Committee meeting held on 24 January 2024, with both the meeting and documents accessible to the public.

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

As this was their last meeting in supporting the Committee, the Chair thanked Natalie Connor for their hard work and the support provided to the Committee, with all members joining the Chair in wishing Natalie the best in their future endeavours.

**6. Scrutiny Progress Update – Recommendations Tracker**

The Chair advised that all responses on the recommendations tracker were up to date, with the Committee expecting further updates from Planning in February and April 2024. Following their introduction, the Chair invited questions and comments from the Committee regarding the recommendations and any responses received, with the subsequent discussion summarised below:

- The Committee highlighted the recently published census data on empty properties in the borough, which recognised a much larger number than the Council's previous estimations, and queried how the Council was intending to use this data to maximise income generation given the financial pressures faced by all local authorities. In response, members noted that a written response would be provided by the Corporate Director of Resident Services prior to the Committee's next meeting, however, the Committee was advised that the Council was contacting landlords regarding the issue.
- In response to a question concerning the support that ward councillors could provide in identifying empty properties, the Committee was informed that ward councillors could contact either the Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters Security or the Corporate Director of Resident Services to report any concerns. Nevertheless, it was emphasised that identifying empty properties was also vital for the purpose of housing residents in addition to maximising the Council's income. Additionally, the Committee heard that the Office for National Statistics (ONS) acknowledged the possibility that data from the most recent census was likely atypical due to being conducted during the coronavirus pandemic, as many residents were absent from the borough.
- Although appreciating the finite resources available within the Council which meant that the recommendation to undertake a cumulative equality impact assessment of the budget decisions since 2018 was not feasible, the Committee expressed disappointment in the manner in which this decision was communicated and welcomed a more collaborative process in the future. Furthermore, as evaluating the impact of budget cuts would inform future work of the Committee, the Chair explained that the recommendation would remain on the tracker and invited alternative proposals for reviewing the impact of budget decisions. In recognising the importance of implementing the Committee's recommendations where possible, Councillor Tatler welcomed proposals for a more collaborative feedback mechanism between Cabinet and the Committee.

## **7. Safer Brent Partnership Annual Report 2022-23**

Will Lexton-Jones (Detective Superintendent, Northwest Borough Command Unit, Metropolitan Police and Chair of the Safer Brent Partnership) introduced the report, which detailed the activities undertaken by the Safer Brent Partnership to support the agreed priorities during 2022-2023. In providing members with further context regarding their role within the Metropolitan Police and as Chair of the Safer Brent Partnership (SBP), Will Lexton-Jones explained that they were the senior officer in charge of Brent following the new structure within the Metropolitan Police introduced to ensure that each borough had a designated responsible officer and had assumed Chairing responsibilities for the SBP in late 2023 on a rolling basis. In focussing on their role as SBP Chair, Will Lexton-Jones outlined that the Chair's

duty was to ensure that the Partnership was held accountable and that the Partnership priorities were delivered. To conclude, the Committee was advised that the new Safer Brent Community Safety Strategy was formed by a public health approach which relied upon early intervention and prevention, and given that they had only assumed the role of SBP Chair relatively recently, praise was given to the work of officers, Councillor Farah (Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection) and Carolyn Downs (former Chief Executive, Brent Council) for their efforts in leading the SBP and developing the new Community Safety Strategy.

In adding to the comments of Will Lexton-Jones, Councillor Farah emphasised the importance of collaborative working with statutory partners, the voluntary and community sector and neighbouring boroughs as it was stated that no single agency could deliver the priorities of the SBP. Furthermore, Councillor Farah commended the work of the SBP over the previous year and reiterated the ambitious goals of the new Community Safety Strategy which was scheduled to be considered at Cabinet in February 2024. In finalising the introduction of the report, Kibibi Octave (Director of Communities, Brent Council) explained that due to the timescales between now and when the previous Annual Report had been considered by the Committee, the 2022-23 Report did not cover a full calendar year. However, the Committee noted that future reporting periods would aim to cover a full calendar year to enable members to review the progress of the Safer Brent Partnership and Community Safety Team more effectively.

During the consideration of the agenda item, the following key points were discussed:

- In response to a query regarding the community engagement undertaken for the new Community Safety Strategy, particularly with impacted communities, the Committee was informed that information was shared via the Police's public platform which allowed residents to view borough and ward crime rates. Moreover, members noted that Safer Neighbourhood Board's held public meetings, in which the Police attended, which enabled public scrutiny regarding the delivery of local priorities. Lastly, it was explained that the Police held encounter panels which reviewed the use of force and stop and search.
- Regarding the issue of increased visibility of Police in hot spot areas, the Committee was advised that resources were limited and therefore if all engagement resources were used to increase the number of officers on patrol, it would not effectively increase public engagement as the probability of having meaningful engagement whilst officers were on patrol was low. Rather, members heard that engagement was better driven by providing a specific time and place in which the public could be guaranteed an opportunity to express their views. However, the Committee's concerns relating to visibility was recognised and members were reassured that work was underway to ensure that officer shifts reflected demand and to get more senior officers into the communities they served.
- In discussing the number of Community Triggers in Brent and the outcomes of these Triggers, members were informed that approximately 20 Community Triggers had occurred within the reporting period, which commenced when residents felt that their case had not been managed by the appropriate agency. Community Triggers were led by the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Team, and it was explained that a review of the case would occur even if the case did not meet the qualifying threshold. The Committee noted that many Community Trigger cases related to individuals in private properties and housing associations, with a working tracker and action plan required for each case to ensure that additional resources were targeted towards ongoing issues and that a positive outcome was achieved. Regarding resident and councillor awareness of Community Triggers, members were advised that further engagement could be undertaken to improve awareness of the process in the borough.

- The Committee sought further information regarding additions to the new Community Safety Strategy as a result of engagement work. In response, members were informed that the overarching Two Year Action Plan was created as a result of community engagement, with engagement including Pupil Referral Units, drug and alcohol abuse support services at Cobbold Road, the College of Northwest London, staff LGBTQ+ networks and Brent's Multi-Faith Forum. Members noted that the Action Plan was agreed at the most recent SBP meeting, with each action being assigned a dedicated responsible delivery group.
- In response to a query relating to the implementation of the public health-led Community Safety Strategy, the Committee noted that the public health approach was spearheaded by early intervention and prevention programmes, in addition to refreshed benchmarks arising from updated monitoring of intervention, prevention and public confidence. To reflect the work of the new Strategy, it was explained that the next Annual Report would include the new monitoring indicators.
- Regarding the allocation and impact of Town Centre Safer Neighbourhood Teams, the Committee was informed that both Willesden and Wembley had a dedicated Town Centre Safer Neighbourhood Team, with no intentions to change the allocation of Town Centre Teams due to current demand. In discussing the impact of Town Centre Safer Neighbourhood Teams, it was detailed that reductions in offences were seen within and nearby town centres as a result of the targeted resources. Whilst exact statistics could be provided in a written response, it was emphasised that the Town Centre Safer Neighbourhood Teams were not the sole resource being dedicated to hot spots, with a dedicated team in Northwest London focussed on proactively reducing crime.
- Concerning the displacement of crime as a result of targeting hot spots, members were provided an explanation of Operation Nightingale which was a Home Office funded programme aimed at reducing serious violence. The data evaluating the impact of Operation Nightingale indicated that, whilst some crime was displaced, the majority of crime was diffused which suggested that targeting hot spots resulted in overall positive outcomes. Nevertheless, it was noted that Operation Nightingale was in its final financial year, with uncertainty around the future of the programme.
- Regarding the Total Notifiable Offences Map included within section 2.6 of the cover report, members were advised that this data was sourced from the



Metropolitan Police open public data at ward level, which resulted in particular hot spots within wards not being visible at the ward-level map. Thus, the map did not effectively reflect hot spots which drove the allocation of Town Centre Safer Neighbourhood Teams. Furthermore, the Committee noted that Town Centre Safer Neighbourhood Teams were designed to mitigate enduring high crime levels which required strategic patience to witness positive results.

- Having highlighted the increase of knife crime in Brent, particularly with victims under 25, the Committee queried what was being done to better understand the drivers of knife crime and to address the issue. In agreeing that more emphasis was required to address the increasing occurrence of knife-related offences, officers detailed that the tri-borough approach split focus and resources and therefore increased the difficulty of reducing offences. Nevertheless, the Committee was informed that there was beginning to be a move away from the gangs matrix in the Metropolitan Police as it was said to hyper-focus officers on whether serious violence was gang-related, which reduced the Police's effectiveness in reducing this category of crime. Furthermore, members heard that the Council was undertaking work to increase understanding regarding the normalisation of knife carrying and to demonstrate and reduce the impact of knife crime through engagement with schools, parents, victims and perpetrators and by installing knife bins and delivering bleed kit training. However, officers recognised that further preventative work could be conducted to reduce knife crime, with the Committee requesting that this was acknowledged in the new Community Safety Strategy given the acute need to tackle the issue.
- The Committee was advised that ethnicity data was not included in the most recent Annual Report as access to Police data systems was revoked and therefore the 2022-23 Report was produced with limited scope. However, members noted that access to a limited dataset had recently been granted which contained information concerning victim and perpetrator ethnicity which could be included in future reporting.
- In response to a query as to why the new priorities did not include a dedicated priority to reduce knife and gang-related crime, it was explained that partners needed to ensure that all serious violence was reduced, not just a specific subset of serious violence. Moreover, the limited resources available to both the Council and partners was reiterated, in addition to the need to explore multiple interventions to address the issue. Consequently, the importance of partnership working and engaging impacted communities was emphasised, which was done through supporting parents, collaborating with the voluntary and community sector, working with victims and accessing opportunities to liaise with housing and resident associations.
- Members noted that the ambition was to implement the first knife bins in March 2024.
- In discussing the importance of targeting resources to support the most impacted communities, the Committee heard that the Council was in the process of establishing a Violence Reduction Steering Group, which would assist with targeting resources and delivering the commitment to co-design an

action plan within 3 days of serious violent incidents to provide reassurance to impacted communities, which was welcomed by members.

- The Committee sought further information concerning the correlation between the reduction of youth provision, such as youth centres, and the substantial increase in knife crime with victims under 25. In response, members noted that there was a close correlation between increases in knife crime and the closure of youth-focussed services. This correlation started to become profound in the mid 2010's, with knife crime steadily increasing since 2015. Although recognising that correlation was not akin to causation, with other factors also contributing such as reductions in Police capacity and young people more likely to be out in the community, it was detailed that more incidents were often seen in school holidays when young people did not have structured activities. It was suggested that the issue could be addressed via greater community outreach in hot spots and earlier interventions during school holidays.
- In recognising the importance of addressing the issue of knife crime despite the financial pressures faced by the Council, members were advised that the voluntary and community sector welcomed further collaboration to maximise the grant funding coming into Brent to improve the borough's safety. However, in response to a query relating to the utilisation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding to aid projects that tackled the issue of knife crime, the Committee noted that CIL funded projects were required to comply with planning and government set regulations which therefore reduced the appropriateness of this funding stream to reduce knife crime. Nevertheless, the opportunity to promote community grants towards organisations that delivered youth intervention and diversion programmes was highlighted.
- Given that the majority of the Community Safety Team were funded by external grants, members sought assurances that available resources would be set aside to apply for external funding to ensure that the capacity of the Council was maintained, and that further funding was secured to deliver early interventive and preventive programmes. In response, it was detailed that both the Council and Police continued to apply for external funding opportunities.
- In referencing the cover report which stated that Brent was in the top 4 boroughs for individuals linked to county lines, members questioned what the main challenges were regarding the issue and whether any improvements could be implemented in the Council to assist in addressing county lines-related activities. In response, it was explained that the Rescue and Response Team was a pan-London team funded through MOPAC. However, MOPAC was altering the model for the Rescue and Response Team to include all exploitation, not just county lines. Therefore, the Council was currently reviewing whether commitments could be made to the new model given the current resource pressures. Furthermore, it was stated that Brent was usually ranked 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> in most crime categories and thus it was not surprising to see Brent's placement in relation to county lines. In discussing interventions, members were advised that individuals and families were supported through the Council's Exploitation, Violence and Vulnerability Panel (EVVP), as many members of the same family were often known to the Council and partners. In finalising, the Committee heard that data regarding referrals to EVVP and

known individuals related to county lines had to be handled with caution, as low numbers may point to individuals being missed by agencies and high numbers suggested that the issue was worse than expected, highlighting the importance of analysing the quality of the data held.

- In response to a query regarding their views on community safety in Brent, Kim Wright (Chief Executive, Brent Council) expressed confidence in the new Community Safety Strategy as the priorities had been shaped by community feedback and informed by data, which would make the most difference in preventing crime and reducing the community impact of crime.
- Although commending the reduction in domestic violence, which was larger than the reduction seen across London, the Committee highlighted that this type of crime was often underreported and therefore sought further information regarding data on the most impacted cohorts and targeted interventions catered towards the LGBTQ+, Irish Traveller and disabled communities. In response, members were advised that the Violence Against Women and Girls Forum informed the Council of underreporting and advocated on behalf of the most impacted communities, with officers recognising the need to undertake further outreach for these communities. In addressing each community identified above, the Committee noted the particular challenges presented when supporting victims in these communities. For example, disabled individuals may struggle with accessing support as they may rely on carer assistance, with the carer sometimes being the abuser. Thus, reviews were necessary to ensure that information was communicated through frontline staff such as GP's, adult social care and nurses. Regarding the LGBTQ+ community, it was detailed that engagement was conducted with service users from this community at Cobbold Road and the charity Galop supported LGBTQ+ individuals and increased awareness of support through discrete advice and information cards. Nevertheless, it was emphasised that further creativity and exploration was required to reach seldom heard communities. Concerning domestic violence data, the Committee noted that approximately 70% of offender data was missing due to complications around fear of reporting and therefore instilling confidence in reporting was deemed crucial for improving datasets. Moreover, it was stated that further work could be undertaken to collect more detailed data on specific communities, and members noted that large scale datasets, such as the British Crime Survey, were important sources of comparative data.
- Regarding the statistics relating to the ADVANCE IDVA and Family Support Services outlined in paragraph 3.39 of the report, members were advised that children's social care often referred to ADVANCE if they were on a Child In Need Plan which was the reason for the 100% satisfaction scores as engagement tended to be very good which resulted in the benefits of the programme being realised. However, officers recognised that improvements could be made to increase engagement for other cohorts via the Council's Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference. In response to a query concerning the forms of communication in which ADVANCE referrals were contacted, members heard that contact was initially made via phone calls which would then lead to face-face interaction. However, it was stated that a detailed breakdown could be provided if necessary.

- In highlighting that impact data for community programmes and initiatives such as the 'She is Summit' and the 'Perpetrator Intervention Programme' was limited or omitted from the report, the Committee requested that future reports contained specific impact evaluations for programmes to provide reassurance to the Committee regarding activities and outcomes.
- Having mentioned the rising number of incidents of violence against women and girls occurring at Wembley Stadium and Wembley Arena events, members sought further information on the preventative approach to reduce these incidents and stakeholder engagement to increase awareness of the issue. In response, members were informed that contact had been made with the FA to raise staff awareness and deliver training to identify situations of concern and intervene accordingly. Furthermore, partners were exploring the implementation of QR codes in venues to report concerns. Moreover, the increase in violence against women and girls was being analysed on a wider scale, with reviews ongoing regarding the night time economy, improvements being made to local CCTV and further training for staff to identify concerning behaviour and intervene prior to a possible incident.
- In response to a query regarding the categorisation of hate crime detailed in paragraph 5.4 of the report, the Committee heard that the categorisations were set by the Police, with the difference between 'racist crime' and 'racist and religious crime' being the perception of the crime from agencies and victims, with incidents being categorised as 'racist and religious crime' if it was uncertain what motivated the substantive offence, whereas 'racist crime' was recorded when the motivation was clearer.
- Regarding the communities most impacted by hate crime, the Committee noted that once further access was provided to Police databases, data on particular demographics could be provided in future reports. Nevertheless, although it was not included in the report due to the differing reporting periods, it was detailed that since the conflict in the Middle East, approximately 17% of hate crime was recorded as antisemitic which represented a 10x increase since the quarter prior to the conflict. Additionally, the Committee noted that there had been an increase in Islamophobic crimes that was not necessarily reflected in official statistics due to underreporting.
- To provide further context to the Committee, it was explained that hate crime had to be related to a substantive offence and therefore it was an aggravating factor, it was not the main type of crime such as assault or abuse. Furthermore, the recording of hate crime relied on the subjective perception of the victim which often resulted in low detection rates.
- The Committee heard that the Police were reviewing every recorded hate crime to ensure that the responses met standards and the victim had been sufficiently supported, with further resources allocated to the issue given the recent increases in hate crime.
- In response to a query on how the public health approach was being implemented to reduce hate crime, members were advised that this was largely done via Prevent funding as the Council did not have a dedicated hate

crime officer. It was explained that the Council's work relied on engagement with schools, the voluntary and community sector and the Multi Faith Forum to increase awareness of hate crime and the changing landscape following the conflict in the Middle East. Concerning the impact of engagement, it was stated that more incidents tended to occur in areas in which engagement offers were not taken up.

- Regarding Council and partner responses to far right extremism, members noted that far right extremism had not been identified as a particular issue during the current reporting period, with an increase in mixed and unclear ideologies instead. Nevertheless, the Committee heard that the Council continued to commission providers to deliver training and engagement on extreme ideologies, although it was recognised that further work could be undertaken with Eastern European communities. On a wider scale, it was explained that ring wing extremism had only recently begun to have strategic resources allocated to it, as a specific ideology had to be defined as the basis for an action prior to allocating further resources to tackle it.
- In highlighting that the number of people reoffending in London continued to increase, members queried whether entering unsuitable accommodation on their release from prison led to instability and consequently reoffending. In response, the issue of housing upon prison release was recognised as a pressing issue, with the Council working to establish an early notification system to the Housing Team prior to release to ensure that suitable accommodation was sourced and ready at the time of release. However, often individuals could not sustain their tenancies which required partnership and multi-agency working to resolve, and the Council was reviewing the placement of ex-offenders as placing a large number of ex-offenders in a single locality was often unhelpful in sustaining tenancies and leading lawful lives. Nevertheless, the challenges regarding sourcing suitable housing were highlighted such as availability, affordability and eligibility, with the Council working with partner organisations and the Probation Service to support ex-offenders to rehabilitate.
- In referencing paragraph 6.8 of the report, which stated that cuckooing persisted to be an issue in Brent, members queried what was being done regarding the issue and whether alternative interventions were being explored. In response, The Committee was informed that cuckooing was a specific focus across Adult Social Care, Public Health, Housing and Community Safety, with work ongoing to further understand cuckooing and how to effectively tackle it. Regarding options explored by the Council and partners, members noted that reviews were underway regarding sensitive letting and sourcing suitable accommodation as many cuckooing victims would benefit from supported housing, rapid panels were being discussed to respond within 24 hours to an incident, referrals were being made to the Community MARAC and partial and full closure orders were being used when deemed necessary to restrict access to properties of concern. However, it was explained that cuckooing would not be included in the wider exploitation programme developed out of the country lines programme funded by MOPAC.
- Regarding the low staff and partner attendance at the Integrated Offender Management Panel meetings, the Committee was advised that this was

caused by resource pressures. However, efforts were ongoing to increase engagement through prioritising when specific partners were required at meetings to better utilise resources. Furthermore, it was suggested to review how meetings were scheduled to minimise the resource burden for all involved.

- Having highlighted the difficulties of taking enforcement action regarding ASB in private properties caused by owner occupiers, members queried what actions could be taken against such individuals. In response, it was detailed that the Council could issue Community Protection notices, Fixed Penalty Notices and closure orders as owner occupiers could be displaced for a maximum of 3 months. However, officers recognised the increased difficulty of dealing with issues arising from the actions of owner occupiers, but it was reiterated that enforcement was still possible, as a closure order was successfully utilised on an owner occupier last year.
- In response to a query regarding obstructions to CCTV cameras, members noted that the responsible contractor was required to undertake checks of CCTV cameras to ensure that obstructions did not occur. Furthermore, the Parks Team trimmed branches where encroaches occurred and reviews were conducted prior to installation to ensure the effectiveness of each camera. Regarding the installation of cameras in parks, it was explained that there was some scope to explore this, but detection was more challenging in parks and therefore cameras would be less effective.
- Given that Brent Housing Management (BHM) CCTV was not aligned to the Council's central control room, the Committee questioned whether there were plans to align the two systems. In response, members were advised that there was encouragement from both BHM and the Council to align CCTV cameras on new build estates, with systems integrated on developments such as Alexandra Court, with the Council exploring further opportunities where possible. Going forward, it was the expectation that new build developments would have their CCTV systems integrated into the main control room, which would be financed by BHM following resident consultation, as residents had to agree to the changes given it would impact service charges.

In closing the discussion, the Chair thanked officers and members for their contributions towards the scrutiny of the item, before summarising the outcomes of the discussion and additional actions, which were **AGREED** as follows:

### **Suggestions for Improvement**

- (1) To share more information and brief Members on the Community Trigger to help them understand how to support their residents to use it.
- (2) To ensure there is a clear priority around Tackling Violent Crime, including Knife Crime in the Community Safety Strategy.
- (3) To have a greater focus on targeting youth violence through grants programmes.

- (4) To collaborate with the Safer Brent Partnership to access funding from the VRU and similar grant funding routes.
- (5) To work with the Police and Safer Brent Partnership to improve the granularity and quality of data and impact assessments, with the aim of presenting the impact of crime and criminality on specific communities. This consists of sharing and reporting more granular data around the key priority areas of the report e.g. domestic violence and violent crime.
- (6) Maintain the current level of resource in the Community Safety Team.

### **Information Requests**

- (1) The timeframe for implementing the response at Wembley Stadium and Wembley Arena to support the victims of sexual violence with reporting.

## **4. Budget Scrutiny Task Group Findings**

As Councillor Conneely was Chair of the Budget Scrutiny Task Group and would present the report, chairing responsibilities for the item were delegated to Councillor Long, Vice Chair of the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee. Following the transfer of chairing responsibilities, Councillor Conneely was then invited to present the report to the Committee.

To begin, Councillor Conneely thanked Councillors Ketan Sheth, Molloy, Smith and Jayanti Patel for their work as part of the Budget Scrutiny Task Group, before detailing that the upcoming financial year would be the most challenging year in terms of financial stability for local authorities across the country as a result of cumulative funding cuts from central government. Consequently, Councillor Conneely outlined that it was difficult for the Task Group to suggest alternative proposals due to the limited resources available to the Council. In emphasising the need for wholesale reforms to the manner in which local authorities were funded, Councillor Conneely reiterated the importance of partnership working and collaboration to achieve shared goals and deliver priorities. To conclude, the Committee was advised that due to the recommendations made by the Task Group, Cabinet had revised their decision to close the New Millenium Day Centre, which would now remain open through a multi-service offer.

Following Councillor Connelly's introduction, contributions, comments and questions were sought from the Committee, with the subsequent discussion summarised below:

- The Committee highlighted the lack of consultation regarding the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and given its importance as a revenue stream for the Council, queried whether engagement and consultation should be held on a more frequent basis, such as via resident and tenant boards. In response, members were advised that engagement and consultation was undertaken yearly with residents and stakeholders regarding the HRA. Furthermore, concerning the budget proposals for the upcoming financial year, members were reassured that partners and stakeholders had been contacted to encourage feedback, meetings had been offered to discuss the proposals and residents had been engaged where possible, with the Council

commencing the consultation in November 2023 to ensure stakeholders had sufficient opportunity to provide feedback, ahead of many councils across the country.

- In response to the recommendation to condense the budget engagement material to improve the accessibility of the documents, members were informed that this would be explored, but it was emphasised that all relevant information needed to be provided to ensure transparency and accountability. Furthermore, the Committee noted that the Council was restricted regarding when engagement could commence due to the current trend of single-year settlements. It was explained that once multi-year settlements had been established engagement could begin earlier.
- In recognising the efforts of officers in preparing the draft budget for consultation at such an early stage in the process, members queried the role that ward councillors could have in spreading awareness of the budget proposals and seeking feedback to further support the engagement efforts of the Council.
- In response to Recommendation 2, to develop clear and concise proposals, the Committee was informed that the budget process was an iterative task which was further complicated by the recent trend of single-year settlements, which introduced uncertainty regarding the Council's future funding position. Thus, given that the Council did not have ample time between receiving their settlement and drafting the budget proposals, it was explained that continuous reviews of the proposals were necessary to ensure the delivery of services.
- The Committee commended Recommendation 3, to align the budget proposals with climate action commitments in Borough Plan 2023-27, as the Recommendation would introduce mainstream climate action commitments which, whilst supporting with the Council's efforts in tackling the impacts of climate change, would also present additional savings opportunities. However, members noted that climate commitments related to the HRA would likely be unattainable due to the increased financial pressures on this area of the Council.

At this stage in proceedings, the Committee agreed to apply the guillotine procedure under Standing Order 62(c) in order to extend the meeting for a period of 15 minutes to enable the remaining business on the agenda to be considered.

- In providing further clarity regarding Recommendation 4, to explore a shared outcomes framework with the voluntary and community sector, it was explained that many voluntary and community sector organisations were concerned that the Council were signposting residents and service users to the third sector, who were already experiencing financial challenges, without consulting the sector beforehand. Thus, it was reiterated that engagement with the voluntary and community sector needed to be collaborative, frequent and iterative, occurring prior to the proposals being published. However, it was also acknowledged that further collaboration with partners and regional



bodies such as the Greater London Authority would also be beneficial to securing additional funding.

- Regarding Recommendation 5, to establish a strategic approach to income generation, members emphasised the importance of implementing an income generation strategy that set out the Council's strategic approach to improving the organisation's income, rather than relying on piece-meal proposals. In particular, the Task Group identified three areas in which the Council could focus on as a starting point to improve income generation: increasing HMO licensing compliance, increasing empty property council tax compliance and reducing business rates evasion.
- In discussing Recommendation 6, renting out Civic Centre meetings rooms to generate additional commercial revenue, the Committee noted that this option would be explored. However, members expressed concerns regarding the suitability of external venues in hosting Council meetings, given the requirements for strong internet connections and AV facilities. Moreover, the Committee pointed to the rationale behind the creation of the Civic Centre, which was to establish a central hub for the Council. Nevertheless, the Committee was advised that, whilst the Civic Centre did bring staff and councillors together, holding meetings in community venues could better connect the organisation to the communities it served.
- In response to a query regarding the possibility of lobbying for changes to the geographical restrictions tied to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA), members were informed that a recommendation was made by the 2023/24 Budget Scrutiny Task Group to lobby for amendments to the limit and structure of the LHA and therefore it was felt unnecessary to repeat the recommendation. Nevertheless, the Committee was reassured that further updates would be sought from Cabinet regarding the progress of previous recommendations.
- Concerning Recommendation 10, Wembley Stadium 'Community Impact' Ticket Levy, members noted that the Wembley National Stadium Trust collected 1% of net revenue which was distributed to relevant parties.
- To provide further context for Recommendation 11, delegation of budgets and decision making to Brent Integrated Care Partnership (ICP), it was detailed that due to decision making being made at the Northwest London regional level, it was felt that it was harder to ensure that programmes were suitably responding to local need and to secure funding for Brent. Therefore, it was perceived that if budgets were set at a local level, authorities would base decisions on clinical need and would co-deliver services where suitable. However, although conversations were occurring regarding the future of health funding, members heard that every borough had need and thus competition remained despite being in a Northwest coalition.

As no further issues were raised the Chair then drew the item to a close and the Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the findings and recommendations made by the Budget Scrutiny Task Group ahead of them being submitted to Cabinet and Full Council as part of the budget setting process.

9. **Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 23/24**

The Committee noted that the 'Draft Property Strategy/Asset Review Findings' item had been moved from the 24 January 2024 meeting to instead be considered at the 27 February 2024 meeting. Furthermore, the 'Regeneration in Brent' item was now scheduled to be considered at the 23 April 2024 meeting rather than the 27 February 2024 meeting.


10. **Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

Date of the next meeting: Tuesday 27 February 2024

The meeting closed at 9.13pm

COUNCILLOR RITA CONNEELY  
Chair

 <b>Brent</b>	<b>Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee</b> 27 February 2024
	<b>Report from the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources</b>
	<b>Councillor Shama Tatler, Deputy Leader, Lead Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform and Lead Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth</b>
<b>Draft Property Strategy</b>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	N/A
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Part Exempt - as it contains the following category of exempt information as specified in Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely: "Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)".
<b>List of Appendices:</b>	4:  Appendix 1 – Draft Property Strategy  Appendix 2 – Additional Income and Top Development Opportunities (Exempt)  Appendix 3 - Policy Framework  Appendix 4 - Equality Analysis
<b>Background Papers:</b>	n/a
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Denish Patel Head of Property Denish.Patel@brent.gov.uk 020 8937 2529  Tanveer Ghani Director of Property & Assets Tanveer.Ghani@brent.gov.uk 020 8937 1722

## **1.0 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Council's property assets ("assets") span across the Council and the diverse geography of Brent. They are fundamental to supporting the delivery of the 2023-27 Borough Plan objectives.
- 1.2 By providing business accommodation and community infrastructure, especially where there is a lack of supply and market failure to meet demand, the Council's assets enable economic and community development in equal measure.
- 1.3 This report sets out the vision and objectives of the property strategy that officers developed in conjunction with Avison Young - independent consultants, and a range of stakeholders through interviews and interactive workshops.
- 1.4 The property strategy establishes guidelines for prioritising and shaping the use of Council-owned assets that align with the Council's objectives, priorities, and community needs. By implementing a strategic and systematic approach to decision-making, the Council can optimise the social, economic, and environmental benefits from our assets in a world of rapid change and uncertainty while ensuring equitable access and efficient use of resources.
- 1.5 Operational effectiveness and strategy are both essential to performance. The first half of this report sets out the findings from the assets review and the proposed new vision, strategic objectives, and themes. The success of the strategy depends on doing many things well, and the second half of the report sets out what we are doing and what we need to do to achieve operational excellence and support the delivery of strategic aims. We must also effectively compete in the property market, and sustainable competitive advantage grows from the entire system of activities. Interlocking activities provide rich and promising possibilities for expanding value in energy efficiency, accessibility, and equality.

## **2.0 Recommendation(s)**

The Committee is asked to note, or comment on:

- 2.1 The content of this report, the findings from the asset review, and the new vision, strategic objectives, and themes.
- 2.2 The property strategy in Appendix 1, as well as the action plan.
- 2.3 The policy framework in Appendix 2, which serves as a foundation and guidelines for decision-making.
- 2.4 The approach to further engagement before the Cabinet is asked to adopt the property strategy.

## **3.0 Detail**

## **Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context**

- 3.1 The Council's property portfolio is a significant and tangible resource owned outright by the Council. It represents a source of revenue income and is a crucial component in the delivery of socio-economic objectives. The portfolio comprises diverse uses, from community centres, retail units, leisure, and office space – and has the potential to contribute to all strands of the Borough Plan.
- 3.2 The Council's varied property assets can contribute to Council priorities in a variety of ways, such as generating tax revenue (non-domestic rates), providing employment opportunities and essential services, supporting town centre regeneration and meanwhile uses, enhancing the quality of life for residents, fostering economic and social development, and enhancing the vibrancy and diversity of communities.
- 3.3 The Council's budget and the Medium-Term Financial Plan for future years depend on rent income from the assets. It is, therefore, vital that the assets generate sufficient income for the maintenance and upgrading of assets, which ensures the successful delivery of Council services from the assets in the long term.
- 3.4 In the face of rapid changes in market conditions, economic uncertainty, evolving regulations, accelerating technological trends, and shifting demands, the Council must adopt an agile and adaptive asset management strategy to respond to the dynamic property landscape. This may involve doing things very differently than they have been done in the past or doing the same things more efficiently and effectively.
- 3.5 The Property and Assets Team has undergone a property management improvement journey over the past two years. In June 2023, we commissioned an independent property review by Avison Young Consultants, who were asked to identify operational and strategic improvements. Their investigations and findings are set out in the property strategy in Appendix 1.
- 3.6 The property strategy seeks to identify assets to manage, hold, invest, and dispose of to meet Borough Plan outcomes and objectives effectively and efficiently. It is proposed that a new Corporate Assets Board will do the decision-making, comprising Lead Member and officer representation, supported by the policy framework in Appendix 2.

## **4.0 Background**

### **External and Organisational Context**

- 4.1 The context in which we live and work is defined by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA). Rare and unpredictable events are becoming more consequential, and the unexpected almost always pushes in a single direction - towards higher costs. This is also the baseline from which we must manage our assets. Doing so requires that corporate asset strategies invest in preparedness (rather than prediction) and be responsive, agile, and

adaptable. The property portfolio's full potential is often not recognised despite its considerable value and impact on organisational finances. This is no longer a time when the property portfolio can merely be viewed as a static resource to be managed as best it can with diminishing means.

### Property Review

- 4.2 The property portfolio is a collection of assets of significant magnitude. An inflow of financial capital and revenue income is required to maintain physical capital (compliance, repairs, refurbishments, and upgrades) and pay for overheads. Income streams from the rent generated support the budget and set the financial constraints within which operations must take place to ensure a balanced budget.

#### Overview of portfolio:

- 4.3 The following table provides a breakdown of the different uses by property and the rent income for each category:

Use	No. of Assets	sq m	Total Passing <sup>1</sup> Rent p/a
Community	54	19,110	£528,081
Leisure	12	10,347	£216,851
Retail	14	3,462	£47,410
Office	12	33,568	£1,448,382
Other	8	2,205	£83,248
Veolia contract	6	1,097	-
<b>Total:</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>69,788</b>	<b>£2,323,972</b>

#### Rent arrears:

- 4.4 The level of arrears is c.£700k as of quarter 3 of the financial year 2023/24. Approximately £418k of arrears have been written off regarding COVID-19 arrears assessed as uncollectable. A tailored approach has been adopted to recover the balance from tenants. This includes reaching out to tenants when rent becomes overdue to understand their situation and discuss potential solutions, such as establishing repayment plans to ensure the arrears are paid off over time. The goal is to find a solution and reach a mutual agreement, but if the tenancy is not viable in the long term, the Council can consider legal options or action.

#### Lease renewals:

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<sup>1</sup> Rent receivable in accordance with the lease(s), which may be different from the market rent.

- 4.5 Thirty-six leases have expired where tenants are holding over. Officers are issuing 'friendly' Section 25 notices to these tenants to formally progress lease renewals under Section 25 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954. A "friendly" notice ends the existing lease but confirms that the Council is prepared to enter a new lease and initiates the process for triggering renewal negotiations (and the ability to charge an interim rent). This is a statutory process and can take between 6 and 12 months from a notice being issued. There are fourteen unregulated tenancies without formal agreements and work has begun on regularising occupancies with the tenants.

Rent reviews:

- 4.6 A rent review is a periodic assessment of the rent paid by the tenant to the landlord and is included in the lease agreement. Rent reviews can occur at specific periods, such as annually or longer intervals, usually determined on open market rent, indexed rent, fixed increase or other agreed-upon factors. We have experienced delays in completing the necessary assessments and negotiations required for the rent reviews. We are actively working to address these issues and expedite the review process. Approximately thirty-one rent reviews are being reviewed for activation by officers.

Health and safety compliance:

- 4.7 A tenant who occupies a property under a Fully Repairing and Insuring lease (FRI) remains wholly responsible for health and safety compliance. Where a tenant occupies a property under an Internal Repairing and Insuring lease (IRI), the Council remains responsible for health and safety compliance regarding communal areas within multi-let buildings. To increase health and safety awareness among tenants, officers have written to all tenants reminding them of their health and safety obligations, raising awareness of health and safety issues and requesting copies of certificates and risk assessments (such as for fire, gas, electric and legionella etc.) that confirm that the property complies with relevant health and safety regulations and standards. To date, fifty-three responses have been received, and officers will continue to gather compliance evidence or identify gaps.

Energy Performance:

- 4.8 Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) are a set of regulations aimed at improving the energy efficiency of properties. Their primary goal is to contribute to the UK's net-zero carbon emissions target by 2050. Under these regulations, a minimum energy efficiency standard must be met before a property can be legally let or sold. Improving the energy efficiency of assets is, therefore, a strategic priority.
- 4.9 Current EPC ratings run from A to G, with buildings rated A considered the most energy efficient and those placed G the least. From 1 April 2023, all existing properties must have an EPC rating of E or above. This means that unless an exemption applies, landlords with properties with existing tenancies must take steps to implement all possible cost-effective energy efficiency improvements

prescribed by MEES. If a property has an EPC of F or G, it will be unlawful to let it out to a tenant (unless exempt).

4.10 Exemptions include vacant properties which do not require an EPC and properties that are not cost-effective to upgrade. The Property and Assets Team has carried out data analysis on the portfolio, which shows the following:

- Thirty-four properties have an EPC rating of E and above.
- Four properties with an EPC rating below E. Further investigations will be conducted to see if the EPC rating can be improved cost-effectively.
- Forty-eight properties without an EPC rating record. These will be carried out as soon as possible.
- Twenty voids are exempt from the EPC rating.

4.11 The MEES regulations make clear that the landlord is responsible for funding and carrying out any improvement works needed to bring a property's EPC rating up to an E or above. However, depending on the lease agreements and service charge arrangements, recovering the work costs from tenants may be possible.

4.12 To ensure compliance with energy standards, officers will take the following steps:

- Instruct a qualified person to carry out an EPC survey on all assets that do not currently have an EPC certificate.
- Following an energy performance review of all assets, the Property and Assets Team will consider whether an individual property's energy performance can be improved cost-effectively. Such improvements can include the following:
  - a) Insulation: Enhancing insulation in walls, roofs, and floors can reduce heat loss, improving energy efficiency.
  - b) Efficient Heating Systems: Upgrading to high-efficiency boilers or heat pumps can significantly reduce energy consumption.
  - c) Renewable Energy: Installing solar panels or other renewable energy sources can generate clean electricity, lowering reliance on grid power.
  - d) Energy-Efficient Appliances: Using energy-efficient appliances and lighting fixtures can reduce electricity consumption.
  - e) Air Tightness: Sealing drafts and improving air tightness prevents heat loss, leading to energy savings.
  - f) Intelligent Controls: Implementing smart thermostats and lighting controls can optimise energy usage based on occupancy and preferences.
  - g) Behavioural Changes: Educating occupants about energy-saving habits, such as switching off lights and appliances when not in use, can contribute to energy efficiency.
  - h) Ventilation: Installing efficient ventilation systems can maintain indoor air quality while minimising energy loss.



- 4.13 The risks of existing assets being identified with an EPC rating of E or lower are low based on the large sample of properties with an existing EPC of E or above in place.
- 4.14 Properties considered exempt per the MEES regulations will be registered on the Government's Private Rented Sector (PRS) Exemptions Register.
- 4.15 However, as owner and landlord, the Council will be required to act on properties that do not meet the current MEES regulations and are not considered exempt. This may have capital funding implications. Where properties need upgrades to improve energy performance to meet MEES regulations, a business case will be prepared for approval of the costs of the upgrade. Implementing energy-efficient upgrades can require significant upfront investment, which may not be feasible, especially if the return on investment is not immediately apparent (limited access to reliable data on energy usage and building performance can hinder efforts to identify areas for improvement and track progress). Older buildings may have outdated or complex systems, making implementing measures without major renovations challenging.

Accessibility of assets:

- 4.16 The primary legislation governing accessibility in property is the Equality Act 2010, which prohibits discrimination against disabled people in various aspects of life, including access to buildings and services, and along with building regulations, provides specific guidelines for accessibility features.
- 4.17 Accessibility in property refers to ensuring that buildings, facilities, and amenities are designed and constructed to allow equal access and usability for people with disabilities. This includes wheelchair ramps, elevators, accessible parking spaces, tactile signage, and restrooms designed for wheelchair users. Compliance with accessibility standards and universal design principles is crucial to ensure assets accommodate all individuals and provide inclusive environments, not only for people with disabilities but also for a broader range of users, including older adults and families with young children.
- 4.18 Data on accessibility standards within our assets let to tenants is lacking. Therefore, improving accessibility will first involve conducting accessibility audits and seeking information from tenants on the current state of accessibility of the assets. This will identify areas that need improvement to comply with regulations and standards and enhance inclusivity. This may include the following enhancements:
- Retrofitting the property with accessibility features such as wheelchair ramps, elevators, automatic doors, parking spaces, tactile signage, and accessible restrooms.
  - Installing clear and easy-to-read signage throughout the property, including directional signs, room numbers, and labels for accessible facilities.

- Implementing accessible communication methods such as Braille signage, large print materials, and auditory signals for individuals with visual or hearing impairments.
- Training property staff on accessibility awareness and best practices for assisting customers or visitors with disabilities.
- Obtaining feedback from individuals with disabilities to identify areas for improvement and ensure that the property meets their needs effectively.
- Incorporating universal design principles into property renovations (e.g. new leases on voids) to create spaces that are usable by people of all ages and abilities.
- Regularly maintaining accessibility features to ensure they remain in good working condition and continue to meet the needs of users with disabilities.

4.19 To promote compliance with regulations and standards and inclusivity, the Property and Assets Team will undertake a proactive campaign with tenants, in the same way that it has recently done with health and safety awareness, to foster a culture of inclusivity within assets by promoting awareness and understanding of accessibility issues among tenants, their employees, and visitors and users.

4.20 Accessible properties often command higher rental rates or sale prices due to their broader appeal. Furthermore, welcoming all individuals, regardless of their abilities, creates a legally compliant, more inclusive, and welcoming environment. Committing to accessibility will enhance the Council's reputation and attract a wider clientele.

4.21 Ensuring accessibility to property is a strategic priority and crucial to responsible business practices and legal compliance. By understanding accessibility requirements, implementing effective compliance strategies, and embracing the benefits of inclusive design, the Council can strive to create accessible spaces that welcome and accommodate everyone.

4.22 There will be many barriers to improving accessibility in properties. These include architectural constraints, lack of awareness or understanding of accessibility requirements, cost considerations, and resistance to change from landlords or tenants. Retrofitting existing buildings to meet or improve accessibility standards can pose logistical challenges and require significant time and resources. Accessibility audits have been prioritised within the action plan to enable proactive steps to ensure legal compliance, followed by exploring possible enhancements over and above minimum legal requirements.

#### Voids

4.23 When a property becomes vacant (void), the options to bring it back into use include 1) marketing the property for lease to attract new tenants, which is the most common option, 2) renovation, refurbishment, redevelopment or repurposing for a different type of use or 3) temporary use such as meanwhile uses and 4) disposal for capital receipt. There are currently twenty vacant properties in the portfolio, and officers are reviewing each property to determine the best course of action based on the specific circumstances.

## Opportunities

4.24 Despite the constraints and challenges, a new landscape provides real opportunities for assets to play a more significant and positive role in supporting the Borough Plan. The property strategy developed by Avison Young and the Property and Assets Team pulls together all aspects of the asset management process - from maintenance, compliance, development, value-creation, disposal, and everything in between to ensure the assets keep pace with change (the rate of change (based on key business indicators such as labour, productivity and spending) affecting organisations has risen steadily since 2019, by 183% over the past four years and by 33% in the past year alone<sup>2</sup>).

4.25 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) states that the starting point for the effective management of public sector assets must be about the following:

*“Delivering the corporate objectives and priorities of the organisation through the management of assets.”*

4.26 While asset management within the context of the Council will always include an element of (often necessary) reactive, officer and political leadership, CIPFA emphasises an appreciation of:

- the resources required to keep public sector assets maintained and safe;
- the impact that assets can have on future financial forecasting;
- the full potential of the organisation’s assets to add value through income generation and the contribution they can make to the delivery of corporate objectives and priorities;
- the knowledge and skills required for delivering new assets and their ongoing maintenance.

4.27 Over the past decade, asset management strategies have often failed to keep pace with rapid and unpredictable change, resulting in deep problems, diffusion of best practices and functional fixedness. The condition of many buildings has gradually, and often imperceptibly, deteriorated, and some of those vacated have become neglected and derelict, resulting in missed or delayed opportunities for generating capital receipts from disposals or revenue income from repurposing of the assets. Building safety can also start to suffer. As asset management resources are reduced or operating reactively, information from condition surveys can lapse, and safety activity by premises-responsible people may become sporadic. This increases the danger to staff and the public from structural defects, legionella, fire and electrical safety, etc. While it is difficult to perform all activities as productively as specialists, what were once believed to be real trade-offs – between defects and costs, for example – have been illusions created by poor operational effectiveness.

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<sup>2</sup> Accenture 2024.

- 4.28 The strategy emphasises the role of asset managers as advocates and champions of proactive strategic asset management. The plan seeks to articulate clearly what can be achieved if asset management activity can be focused on delivering the organisation's corporate objectives. After almost a decade of strategic drift resulting from rapid external change and volatility, the development of the strategy is an opportunity for the organisation to commit and embed leadership and strategic direction into asset management.

### **Vision**

- 4.29 The stakeholder consultation described in paragraph 1.3 has led to the creation of a unifying and galvanising vision for the property portfolio as follows:

*“Our vision is to create a sustainable, compliant and diverse property portfolio which contributes to thriving communities, enhancing the local economy and improving prosperity.”*

- 4.30 The vision will enable the integration of decisions, coordination, information exchange, issue and risk management, and actions - across the Council.
- 4.31 The property strategy has been tailored to the vision, making complementarities more achievable, creating rich possibilities for linking activities, and contributing to sustainability.
- 4.32 The vision fosters improvements in individual activities and fit across activities, allowing the Council to build unique capabilities and skills tailored to the strategy.

### **Strategic Objectives**

- 4.33 The strategy will realign our work with new priorities and the Borough Plan. It offers a formal logic for the Council's property goals and seeks to orient stakeholders around them by seeking to:
- **Manage by robust processes, good data, and insights** – this means working collaboratively across the Council to drive up the quality of decision-making and understanding of broader social needs, establishing appropriate metrics to support decision-making with greater emphasis on condition data, health and safety and compliance, and ensuring the portfolio is accessible and responsive to changing demands.
  - **Create a leaner, compliant, and financially sustainable portfolio** – this means buildings that are legally compliant, functional, and well utilised, generate the required income, and support Council priorities. The portfolio must be right-sized to respond to available budgets to ensure that it is maintained in a good and safe condition, reflecting the highest needs, minimising waste and promoting resource efficiency.

- **Dispose, repurpose, or redevelop properties no longer required** – this means building in flexibility to enable the Council to adapt to changing needs or redevelop surplus land and buildings. The Council will prioritise costly, poor-quality properties for disposal, recycling capital receipts or resource savings to improve the condition and environmental performance of our retained portfolio.

## Strategic Themes

4.34 The essence of strategy is in the activities, and a strategic position is only sustainable if there are trade-offs with other positions. The quest for productivity, quality, and more excellent value to stakeholders has led to developing critical themes as set out below. They enable choosing a different set of activities to deliver a unique mix of value and boost efficiency in specific circumstances:

- **Strategic Hold:** This segment comprises properties vital to enable the delivery of the Council's priorities and are unlikely to be easily replaced.
- **Actively Manage:** Active Management opportunities have the potential to improve performance and secure "Quick Wins" for relatively little investment.
- **Invest and/or Repurpose:** Investment and repurposing opportunities have the potential to unlock significant upsides and meet strategic priorities.
- **Dispose:** Low-value, high-cost properties with poor growth prospects should be disposed of to avoid significant expenditure with subpar returns and raise capital for re-investing in retained assets.

4.35 The proposal is that a new Corporate Assets Board will determine the approach to the above themes in line with the draft policy framework set out in Appendix 2, which will be refined further following consultation and engagement with affected stakeholders.

4.36 Under s123 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council must obtain the best price or terms ("best consideration") when disposing of any interest in land or property. The Council must ensure that it receives fair value for any assets it sells or transfers while considering market conditions and other relevant factors (such as economic or social well-being). The aim is to safeguard the local community's interests and ensure transparency and accountability in the disposal or transfer of public assets. The property strategy ensures that economic and non-economic factors are integral to decision-making.

4.37 The Council has a long history of working in partnership with the voluntary and community sector (VCS), which plays its part in tackling poverty, inequality, climate change, and other socio-economic challenges. VCS fill gaps, complements, replaces or offers an improvement on public sector service

provision. The very diversity of cultures in Brent has given rise to value and mission-based organisations that are dedicated to supporting different sections of the community, many of whom depend on support from the Council (and other mainstream funders and donors) to deliver 'specialist' services to meet the various needs of these diverse communities. Many of these organisations have difficulty accessing property assets to provide their services and depend on leasing opportunities from the Council or the open market. Leasing benefits organisations by allowing the use of a scarce asset for much less than the outright purchase price of the asset.

4.38 Social value creation within the asset portfolio takes place along a value continuum as follows:

- Economic value: Financial return on investment for which there are universally agreed measurement standards. The Council lets properties for market rent, and, in most cases, the tenant maintains the property at their own expense.
- Socio-economic value: This type of value lies in the middle of the continuum and may include activities that generate cost savings for the public system or deliver essential community services, such as park cafés or nurseries.
- Social Value: The value created when resources, inputs and processes are directed to creating social outputs and outcomes to meet a wide range of needs (Social Return on Investment).

4.39 When VCS rent properties from the Council, the Council often offers rent discounts to make leasing affordable and support social value creation. For the property strategy, social value creation is “the mission to bring about change in a specific socially oriented way rather than to provide an economic return on investment”. In the context of the Council, this means leasing properties to VCS that care for our most vulnerable and improve health, quality of learning, equality, activity and well-being, amongst other things (while foregoing full or partial rent). However, the Council does not always understand the social impact (i.e. social return on investment) of these rent discounts because of a lack of social value measurement in this context or the significant challenges in terms of the cost and resources to measure it over time.

4.40 There will always be elements of social value creation that stand beyond measurement and quantification. However, at the very minimum, social value measurement can help the Council organise and systemise its experience of social value creation in the borough, test the value of social programmes, and control and regulate rent discounts to help meet the Council's priorities. While different approaches are likely required for varied programmes and contexts, the overall approach must consider assessing the impact of initiatives, projects, or organisations on society beyond financial metrics. Some ways to measure social value, notwithstanding the complexity and challenges, include:

- Engaging with stakeholders to understand their perspectives, needs, and priorities regarding the social value being created.
- Focusing on outcomes rather than outputs where possible, measuring the actual changes or benefits experienced by individuals or communities due to the initiative.
- Calculating the social return on investment by quantifying the social, environmental, and economic value generated compared to the resources invested.
- Developing specific metrics tailored to the context and objectives of the initiative, considering indicators such as improved health outcomes, increased educational attainment, or enhanced community cohesion.
- Supplementing quantitative data with qualitative insights through ward Member engagement, interviews, surveys, focus groups, and case studies to capture the diverse dimensions of social value.
- Benchmarking performance against similar initiatives or industry standards to contextualise results and identify areas for improvement.
- Considering the long-term implications and sustainability of social value creation, including unintended and intergenerational impacts.
- Communicating findings transparently and holding organisations accountable for their social impact by regularly monitoring and reporting progress and outcomes.

4.41 By adopting a multi-dimensional approach and integrating diverse methods, the Council can better understand, measure, and optimise VCS's contribution to social value.

4.42 In the current environment, with high demand for the limited number of properties available for rent, consideration will need to be given to how we support and encourage better demonstration of the services delivered and the social impact achieved by the VCS.

### **Distinct Sub-Strategies**

4.43 The Property Strategy is supported by several sub-strategies, which provide more detail about the ambition and action planned in these areas. The principles of the overall property strategy will inform each sub-strategy. Still, each has a different emphasis - some more focused on service transformation, others with a greater focus on a smaller, better, sustainable portfolio. These sub-strategies are set out in Appendix 1 and include an emphasis on:

- **Financial strategy** – ensuring we maximise the utilisation of expensive and scarce resources and work within the structural built-in limits. This means ensuring all new tenancies and lease renewals reflect market rents and ensuring rent discounts provided are supported by measurement strategies to prevent under/overvaluation of social value. There will be a focus on income growth through operational and strategic measures to ensure income exceeds or keeps pace with rising costs. A more commercial approach to managing tenancies will help align primary

and support activities and the direct and indirect value-creation activities within these categories.

- **Operational strategy** – ensuring all assets are fully health and safety compliant and tenancies regularised either by lease or licence, with rent reviews and lease renewals carried out promptly. Ensuring standard procedures are followed when dealing with arrears, breaches of leases, and non-compliance to strengthen the correlation between cash inflow and rent billed.
- **Marketing strategy** – ensuring that voids available for letting are advertised on the open market and bids assessed by financial and social value measures to ensure fairness and transparency in the lettings process, thereby minimising the risk of challenge on decisions the Council takes about allocating and charging for buildings leased.
- **Data strategy** – Information is a crucial resource and costly to obtain once lost. The scarcity of information increases the risk to decision-makers. A professional case management system will ensure we can store, retrieve, and maintain property data, look at how well the portfolio works and contributes to what is needed, and examine core components such as financial and social outputs for evidence-based decision-making. High-quality data will provide the perspective to recognise trade-offs and enable us to take advantage of rapidly evolving technology and digital trends to improve stakeholder service.

### **Putting it all together and doing things better**

4.44 An action plan has been developed (page 30 of the property strategy in Appendix 1), which includes commitments to:

- *Finalising the strategy with stakeholders, Scrutiny and Cabinet and reinforcing the desired change through operational design.*
- *Assuring that the organisation is legally and regulatory compliant in managing its assets and that monitoring data is available to meet statutory requirements (in line with CIPFA's Compliance and Monitoring best practice guidance). Officers have recently written to all its tenants to remind them of their health and safety obligations and raise awareness of health and safety issues.*
- *Maximising income and revenue from the assets and effectively balancing this with ensuring the assets support social value creation. The target income collection rate will be set at 96%. Moving all tenants to direct debit with rent payments over time (direct debit with rent payments will be compulsory on all new leases and lease renewals).*
- *Increasing levels of professional accreditation, such as AssocRICS or MRICS, skills, leadership, and talent management to improve expertise, ensure we better reflect the communities we serve and develop the*



*capabilities we need to secure strategic change and improvement. In 2023, two staff members achieved chartered surveyor status through RICS; more will follow in 2024. The property department supports several graduate and apprenticeship schemes and a multi-skilled workforce.*

- Continuing to improve the quality of our property data and how we use it to inform our asset management plans and portfolio strategies. In 2023, officers have taken significant steps to improve portfolio, condition, RAAC and health and safety data. Progress will continue to be made to 100% compliance.*
- Developing greater standardisation, consistency and transparency through consistent use of promising practice approaches and processes, in line with RICS<sup>3</sup> and CIPFA guidance, improves the service's stakeholder experience.*
- Identifying key performance indicators with a clear purpose for each element of the property strategy. The intention is to provide transparency through annual reporting against all of these, with targets developed at the portfolio level for identified metrics.*
- Maximising the capabilities, operational resources and tools to make the strategy happen in practice. This will mean implementing a more rigorous and structured approach to cost reduction, revenue growth and debt management. When appraising options, select the most appropriate option in a robust, transparent and accountable way.*
- Ensure all expired leases are renewed and regulated. Currently, thirty-six leases have expired and are in the process of renewal through the s25 notice procedure. There are a handful of unregulated occupancies, and officers are actively engaged with tenants to regularise occupation via lease or licence arrangements. By statutory timescales, the process to regularise occupancy and renew leases can take up to 12 months but can be sooner if an agreement is reached.*

4.45 Officers have been keen to ensure that the property strategy:

- Reflects the voices of colleagues, senior Leaders and elected Members in the vision, issues and opportunities statements - and makes the compelling case for change.
- Ensures a golden thread runs from the strategy's objectives through the vision and into the recommendations.
- Sets out clear recommendations and an implementable phased programme and action plan.
- Advocates collaborative working and a new Corporate Assets Board to avoid a purely functional view of value and ensure that the organisation's

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<sup>3</sup> Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

whole 'mind' is in action to tackle the significant financial, environmental and social challenges ahead.

- 4.46 The do nothing - maintain the status quo - approach will invariably lead to a deteriorating portfolio, inefficiencies, reduced income, and strategic drift. Alternative strategies considered and discounted comprise overly narrow goals, such as solely focusing on financial return on investment or social value creation or disposal. Ultimately, the Council's portfolio is required to meet diverse social needs while remaining financially sustainable. The proposed strategy ensures that economic and non-economic factors are integrated into decision-making, forging an unbreakable link with Borough Plan priorities.
- 4.47 Strategic choices will necessitate difficult trade-offs as we seek to align the unique bundle of property assets with the Borough Plan. The property strategy is a cohesive response to the challenges and obstacles ahead.

## **5.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

- 5.1 Consultation with internal stakeholders has taken place to gather feedback and input, shaping the property strategy's vision and objectives. The engagement has included one-to-one interviews and workshops with the Senior Leadership Team and the Policy Co-ordination Group. The consultation remains at the centre of the development of the proposal, and further engagement is planned to ensure input from the Council's stakeholders.
- 5.2 Property and Assets Team officers will engage with the Director of Communities to agree on an appropriate action plan/approach for VCS-specific engagement.

## **6.0 Financial Considerations**

- 6.1 If we proceed with the strategy, there will be cost implications that need to be funded by the department or alternative proposals put forward.
- 6.2 Some condition data will be costly and time-consuming, for example, condition and compliance surveys; this could be mitigated through prioritisation based on desk-top surveys and existing condition information.
- 6.3 The strategic options are likely to result in future capital expenditure. These will be subject to a business case through the capital programme governance process. The capital pipeline and forward plan of capital projects include a provision for strategic property and asset management priorities. The property strategy consists of the option to dispose of surplus properties, which would generate capital receipts to fund other aspects of the plan.
- 6.4 Funding would be required for a professional case management system to improve the quality and management of data and will require a business case and procurement exercise to establish the cost.
- 6.5 Funding would be required to ensure compliance, such as for energy performance (EPC), RAAC and electrical safety where risks are identified.

These would be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and the cost of specialist surveys will vary depending on the property type and size. Once we are compliant on specific properties, we may unlock opportunities for further income generation.

## **7.0 Legal Considerations**

- 7.1 Occupation of the portfolio is primarily regulated and governed by the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 and s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (best consideration), amongst other legislation.
- 7.2 The Council has a broad power to dispose of property held in the general fund in any manner it wishes subject to an obligation to do so for the best consideration reasonable obtainable. This obligation is concerned with outcome and not process, and consideration means commercial or monetary payment rather than broader policy benefits.
- 7.3 The Council can also dispose of property held in the general fund for less than market value provided that consent is obtained from the Secretary of State. The Local Government Act 1972 General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 is a wide-reaching consent that allows disposal at an undervalue to promote economic, social or environment wellbeing. The difference between the market value and the consideration must not exceed £2 million, and a "professionally qualified valuer" must give a view as to the likely amount of the undervalue. If open space will be disposed of then there are additional publicity requirements.
- 7.4 The key regulations governing EPC are the EPC Regs 2012, SI 2012/3118, and the Building Regs 2010, SI 2010/2214. An EPC is required when an existing building is sold or rented out. Enforcement of the EPC regime is by the local weights and measures authorities (through trading standards officers). These officers can request that a copy of the EPC recommendation report or inspection report is provided to them within seven days of request. Penalties are set out in EPC Regs 2012, SI 2012/3118, reg 38 and breaches connected to non-dwellings could lead to fines of between £500 and £5,000, depending on the rateable value of the building. In most cases the fine is set at 12.5% of the rateable value of the building, subject to a minimum fine of £500 and a maximum fine of £5,000, with a default penalty of £750 where the formula cannot be applied.
- 7.5 The relationship between landlord and tenant is typically governed by leases, licences or tenancy at will, which set out the rights and obligations of the parties, lease renewal and termination procedures, and health and safety obligations.
- 7.6 The Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 can confer tenants with protection known as security of tenure, which can limit options for the landlord.
- 7.7 The Council can use various legal tools to actively manage the portfolio, such as s25 notice, forfeiture, surrender or tenant's notice to quit.

7.8 The Council's Constitution sets the delegated authority limits for individual property transactions unless waived by the Cabinet. These limits are set out in Part 3 of the Constitution.

## **8.0 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

8.1 Officers have conducted an initial equality impact assessment to investigate whether the property strategy and associated policy framework disproportionately affect people with a protected characteristic under the s149 Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. It is noted that people who share protected characteristics benefit from the services provided by organisations that are Council lessees. EDI considerations are integral to the property strategy's purpose, content, and recommendations.

8.2 The initial assessment concludes that the property strategy has a neutral to positive impact on EDI considerations. This is because it highlights the importance of promoting equality, eliminating discrimination, and fostering inclusivity in managing and utilising Council-owned buildings. By implementing the recommendations outlined in this report and adopting a proactive approach to equality and diversity, the Council can ensure that buildings serve as inclusive and accessible spaces that benefit all community members, regardless of their protected characteristics.

8.3 Further engagement with stakeholders, such as VCS organisations renting properties from the Council, is required to understand the potential impact of the proposed strategies and policies. Officers will develop an action plan in conjunction with the Director of Communities to engage stakeholders and capture their feedback and concerns. By conducting this engagement, officers aim to identify any differential effects or barriers experienced by individuals or groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, and this will lead to an updated equality impact assessment and proactive steps to promote equality and eliminate discrimination.

## **9.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

9.1 The Council is working towards a decarbonisation strategy for Brent's estate, as noted within the 2022-2024 delivery plan. Officers are taking steps to ensure properties in use meet the current minimum EPC 'E' or above rating requirements.

## **10.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)**

10.1 Immediate human resource implications pertain to the requirements for a suitably qualified and multi-skilled workforce to enable change and the delivery of the property strategy, and these are outlined in the main body of this report and property strategy.

## **11.0 Communication Considerations**

11.1 Communication has been a critical component in developing the vision and strategy, and this will continue through the Scrutiny Committee and then formal adoption via Cabinet.

**Report sign-off:**

***Minesh Patel***

Corporate Director of Finance and Resources

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## Property Portfolio Strategy

### **Draft Report version 1**

4 Feb 2024

Draft

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Draft



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Scope and Approach

Avison Young Strategic Advisory have been commissioned by the London Borough of Brent (LBB) to provide Consultancy Services in support of development of a Property Strategy to cover the 'commercial' properties owned by the Council and let to third parties for a range of purposes. This portfolio is summarised in Annex A. The scope of this limited exercise was set out in the Engagement Letter dated 13th July 2023 ('230712AY LBB Engagement Letter').

The aim of the exercise is to provide a strategic framework for investment, divestment and management decisions impacting on financial sustainability, opportunities to deliver social value and maximising rent over the next 5 years. Implementing a step-change in social and financial benefits requires efficient systems, processes and capabilities. This strategy also makes recommendations on the property management arrangements required to implement the strategy.

The approach adopted has consultation at its centre and has sought the views of a representative cross-section of council stakeholders, namely Members, service directorates and central functions. This reflects the role of the property portfolio in realising community, economic development, service delivery and financial benefits. The approach has comprised:

- Structured interviews (August 2023) with:
  - Councillor Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council
  - Minesh Patel, Corporate Director for Finance & Resources
  - Tanveer Ghani, Director – Property and Assets
  - Alice Lester MBE FRTP, Director, Regeneration, Growth & Employment
  - Lorna Hughes, Director - Communities and Strategy
- Workshops:
  - Policy & Coordination Group September 2023
  - Senior Leadership Team (SLT) November 2023

The report uses the output of this engagement and leading practice to identify the Council's challenges and opportunities and to make recommendations for performance improvement. The aim has been to ensure the Council is maximising its returns by way of social value, income and cost recovery.

## 1.2 Objectives of Engagement

The property strategy will enable LBB to develop detailed implementation plans for each property (e.g. including capital maintenance, repairs, improving covenant strength, change of use, disposals).

### 1.3 Sector guidance

The strategy is prepared in the context of RICS guidance on Strategic Public Sector Property Asset Management (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). It defines strategic asset management as:

*“the activity of aligning property assets with the strategic aims and direction of the organisation and adding both financial and non-financial value to the organisation as a result.”*

This strategy also draws on the Council’s Borough Plan 2023-27 (published February 2023) and the CIPFA guidance Strategic Property Management Framework 2018. This framework lists the benefits of strategic property asset management as:

- Being corporate
- Raising awareness of the importance of property
- Improving service delivery
- Improving financial outcomes and efficiency
- Delivering corporate objectives.

The approach to preparing this strategy (see paragraph 1.1) and its objectives reflect the CIPFA objectives.

## 2. Strategic context

### 2.1 Background

LBB's last Property Strategy was for the period 2015-19. Major changes since include:

- Exit of the UK from the European Union (EU – “EU Exit” / “Brexit”)
- Global Pandemic
- Geopolitical challenges (War in Ukraine and now Middle East), leading to rapid rises in inflation and interest rates globally – “Cost of Living Crisis”
- Continued and worsening budget constraints at national level (rising cost of National Debt)
- Accelerating net immigration into the UK, particularly from non-EU countries.

These factors have manifested themselves in a number of profound and ongoing changes to demographics, ways of working, market practice, portfolio financial performance and the needs of residents.

The Council's Borough Plan 2023-27 sets out 5 five priority areas:

- Prosperity and Stability in Brent
- A Cleaner, Greener Future
- Thriving Communities
- The Best Start in Life
- A Healthier Brent.

The property portfolio seeks to support the Borough Plan, through providing spaces for communities to meet, facilities from which community activities and services are delivered, as well as workplaces, shops and potential land for housing.

### 2.2 The importance of the portfolio

The size and shape of the portfolio is outlined in Section 3 (and **Annex A**). The portfolio of circa 100 properties is considered by consultees to be a key Council asset, providing a mix of social, community, economic and financial benefits including:

- Space for the voluntary and community sector (VCS)<sup>1</sup> including socially-trading organisations to provide services that support community well-being, health, employment, safety, stability and prosperity
- Commercial space to support employment and economic activities
- A source of revenue that helps fund council activities in a time of financial scarcity
- Support to core services such as leisure and parks.
- Properties that are part of the heritage and built environment which define the places in which communities live and work
- Land with potential for housing and regeneration.

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<sup>1</sup> Also commonly referred to as Third Sector Organisations (TSOs)

## 2.3 Vision

A vision for the portfolio and its management has been developed through the stakeholder interviews and tested at the workshop with members and senior officers:

*“Our vision is to create a **sustainable, compliant and diverse** property portfolio which contributes to creating **thriving communities**, enhancing the local economy and improving prosperity.”*

The vision is aligned to the Council’s priority areas, the Borough Plan and reflects the important role provided by the portfolio.

Retention of the portfolio was challenged during the strategic exercise; a strong policy steer was provided that in general the portfolio should be retained, as opposed to disposal and reinvestment in an alternative asset class, due to the social benefits referred to above. However, this does not prevent churn of the portfolio i.e. judicious acquisitions and disposals which better meet the Borough’s needs and Council’s priorities, particularly to align with the Council’s ambition to make *“Brent a carbon neutral area by 2030”*<sup>2</sup>.

## 2.4 Trends and change drivers

The following trends across the property industry have potential impacts on the strategy and management of the Council’s portfolio.

Change driver	Change	LBB Portfolio Impact
<b>Workstyles – hybrid working practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Lower demand for office workspace.</li> <li>– Increased demand for “Grade A” / high spec offices in central locations that offer a mixed work, hospitality, leisure, retail experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The trend is not translating into higher demand for space in satellite locations as commentators once predicted.</li> <li>– Longer letting times and lower rental levels for office properties in the portfolio.</li> <li>– Requirement of tenants for greater rent-free periods at the start of leases, prolonging the impact of new leases.</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental – net zero</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The Council has set an ambition for <i>“to be a carbon neutral council by 2030”</i>, and explicitly to <i>“lead by example by retrofitting and reducing energy usage across our estate and operations”</i><sup>3</sup>.</li> <li>– The Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) make it illegal, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, for a landlord to let (or continue to let) any “substandard” property with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of less than E.</li> <li>– In time it is likely to become illegal to let any properties rated at less than D or C, and by 2030, less than B. See <b>Annex C</b>.</li> <li>– ‘Green’ building are commanding premium returns in the market.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– LBB portfolio will become obsolete if it fails to invest in retrofits, including renewable energy heat and power sources.</li> <li>– Returns on buildings with low environmental performance are likely to soften in the future.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> “Brent is a carbon neutral area by 2030”: [Brent Borough Plan 2023-27](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Brent Borough Plan 2023-27](#)

Change driver	Change	LBB Portfolio Impact
<b>Environmental – circular economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Meeting sustainability objectives is weighting the decision to redevelop or renew towards reconfiguring and repurposing existing assets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– More focus on repurposing and refurbishing existing assets than redevelopment in the future.</li> </ul>
<b>Whole life asset management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The Cabinet Office / Office of Government Property has highlighted the importance of keeping buildings in a good standard of condition and investing in lifecycle replacement. It draws attention to the personal consequences to officers of non-compliance with statutory health and safety regulations, the increased costs of deferring maintenance and the impact on operations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Lifecycle replacement works to the portfolio cannot be deferred indefinitely and under-maintenance creates significant reputational and financial risk.</li> <li>– Moreover, the ability to let a commercial property quickly and achieve best returns depends on condition, statutory compliance and increasingly environmental performance.</li> </ul>
<b>Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Advancements in technology and data analytics such as artificial intelligence, sensor technologies, the Internet of Things (IoT), building information modelling (BIM), Case Management Systems (CMS) and digital twins create new expectations from tenants and opportunities for owners to improve asset management performance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Increasing tenant expectations for digital buildings will erode rental growth and returns from legacy stock for property owners in general. The private sector is realising opportunities for more efficient management of the portfolio e.g. from robotic technologies that read and manage leases, to real-time data on occupancy, incidents and maintenance</li> <li>– At a minimum, the Council will need to prioritise efficient buildings, which are well-maintained and cost effective to run, with strong internet connectivity.</li> </ul>
<b>Retail</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The long-term move to online retail shows signs of abating. Retail rents have declined before, during and since the pandemic, but the scale of the declines has eased over the last 12 months.</li> <li>– There is a trend towards new in-store technology that enhances this customer experience – such as self-service checkouts.</li> <li>– Vacancy rates and rents will continue to be challenged as working from home and online shopping combine.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Retail spaces provide important test beds for local businesses to take their first steps into commercial spaces.</li> <li>– “Meanwhile Uses” continue to be an important cornerstone to any long-term regeneration strategy, and the Council’s approach will continue to be relevant. Where possible, the duration of “meanwhile use” should be limited due to the minimal/ zero rent it brings.</li> <li>– The retail properties held by the Council are unlikely to see significant rental growth in the medium term.</li> </ul>

## 2.5 Problem statement

Given the context of scarce resources, deteriorating condition of some assets (especially long-term voids), environmental obsolescence, market conditions and competing pressures on the Council’s budgets, the Council must better balance:

- Meeting community expectations and creating social benefit;
- Financial return; and
- A well-maintained and environmentally future-proofed portfolio, that is statutorily compliant.

The strategy needs to provide a direction and framework to resolve these tensions, which are products of the strategic context in 2024. Section 5 highlights why changes to the management of the portfolio are imperative and no change is not an option.

### 3. Current portfolio

#### 3.1 Composition of Portfolio

The in-scope portfolio is a complex mix of property types, sizes and tenants. It comprises a significant number of legacy service properties (often former operational buildings). The majority of properties are occupied by VCS organisations, community groups with little income and small local businesses. The portfolio is emotive to many stakeholders and challenging to manage, given the tensions between maximising support for Brent’s communities and the legal and financial realities of managing property assets. It is summarised below and in **Annex A**<sup>4</sup>.



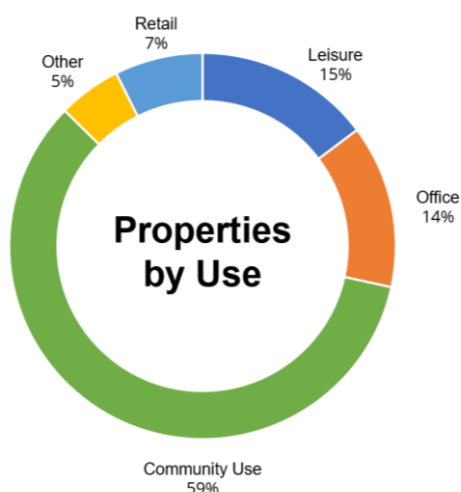
Source: London Borough of Brent (LBB) Property & Assets Team dataset, Avison Young Analysis

The majority (59%) of the properties are defined as ‘community use’, with:

- The next largest asset group is Leisure making up 15%.

<sup>4</sup> The analysis in Annex A is based on data provided in August-September 2023. Subsequent work by the Council’s in-house Property & Assets Team has improved the completeness and accuracy of the data held, and increased the number from 95 to 106

- Offices make up 14% and Retail 7% (excluding Cafés).
- We have classified the remainder of the portfolio (c 5%) as 'Other':
  - Other properties include builders' yards, education, open storage land and others.



Source: London Borough of Brent (LBB) Property & Assets Team dataset, Avison Young Analysis

A more detailed breakdown of floor area, rent and value (for insurance purposes) is set out in the table below. It shows the significance of the 12 office buildings in terms of floor area and finances, and in particular the Civic Centre.

Use	Units	sq m	Total Rent p/a	Insurance (Total) <sup>5</sup>
Community Use	54	19,110	£528,081	£77,887,000
Leisure	12	10,347	£216,851	£34,226,000
Office <sup>6</sup>	12	33,568	£1,448,382	£179,778,000
Retail (incl. Café)	14	3,462	£47,410	£7,991,000
Other	8	2,205	£83,248	£5,127,000
Veolia contract	6	1,097	£-	£4,157,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>69,788</b>	<b>£2,323,972</b>	<b>£309,166,000</b>

Civic Centre	Office	26,336	£992,288	£136,390,000
<b>Total excl. Civic Centre:</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>43,452</b>	<b>£1,331,684</b>	<b>£172,776,000</b>

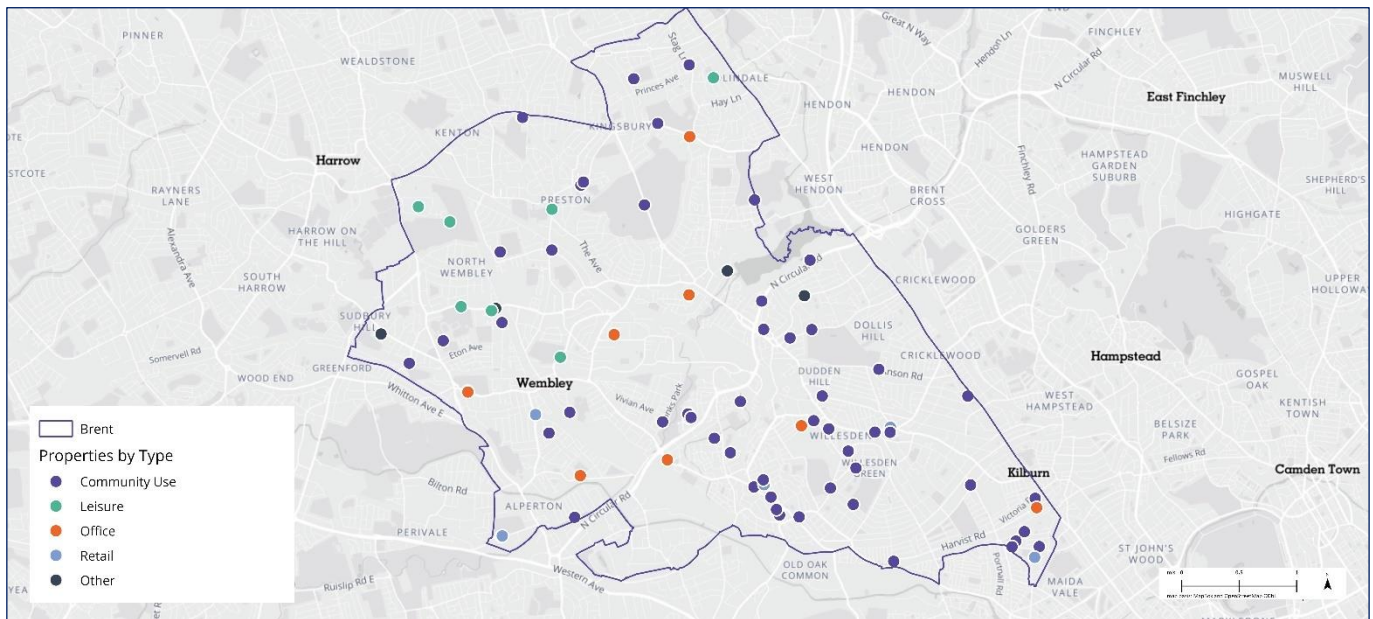
Source: London Borough of Brent (LBB) Property & Assets Team summary, 'Commercial Properties Status - Rental and Insurance (2)', received 19/12/2023

The portfolio is dominated by the Civic Centre in Wembley Park, which comprises almost 40% of the floor space and provides over 60% of the receivable income.

The assets are dispersed around the Borough – future research could explore how well these are aligned to current and future demographics, and market / regeneration opportunities:

<sup>5</sup> NB: Reinstatement Value = estimated Cost of Rebuilding. Open Market Value of the property may be considerably different

<sup>6</sup> Office includes Civic Centre in Wembley Park – see separate row



Source: London Borough of Brent (LBB) Property & Assets Team summary and Avison Young mapping

## 3.2 Data and Issues

Analysis of the portfolio is produced using the existing and available data. In summary:

- The datasets provided reflect information held in multiple legacy sources. There are therefore a number of variations in these datasets, which makes analysis and reporting challenging.
- The variations in dataset highlights one of the most significant issues for the management of the portfolio, which is the lack of a single comprehensive property asset management system or appropriate Case Management System (CMS).
- The Council’s Property & Assets Team has been and is trying to work around this, however it is impossible to ensure consistency of data / analysis without a proper real estate asset management system to:
  - “seamlessly link day-to-day asset management tasks with facilities management, project management of works, space management and associated financial management”, and
  - “manage, among other things, the life cycle of assets and asset management risks”<sup>7</sup>.
- There are apparent gaps in condition and environmental performance data, which would be costly to obtain - for example:
  - Whilst information on individual sites (for example, Energy Performance Certificates – EPCs) can be obtained on a site-by-site basis, it is not possible to record and analyse these on a portfolio level;
  - Whilst quinquennial site visits are undertaken (to inspect condition of occupied properties), and occasional *ad hoc* surveys are undertaken (for example, a desktop RAAC review by an independent Chartered Surveyor has been completed recently), the evidence from such regular and *ad hoc* exercises would be much valuable if recorded on a system and readily accessible; and
  - Whilst it is understood that significant elements of the estate are aged, ageing, in poor condition and need significant improvement to reach the Council’s aspiration “to be a carbon neutral council

<sup>7</sup> Source: [RICS 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Guidance on Strategic Public Sector Property Asset Management](#) – per e.g. ISO 55001 / ISO 55002



by 2030<sup>8</sup>, again evidence on what the issues are and which properties are affected would be more useful if it was stored in such a way it can be easily viewed and analysed.

- Similarly, whilst the Council's Property & Assets Team is managing the portfolio as well as can be expected, better systems, data and processes would enable much easier forecasting, analysis and proactive management of future voids and other material risks & liabilities, such as obsolescence.
  - Buildings are “wasting assets” – they need to be actively managed and maintained if they are to retain value and utility.
  - A lack of investment in the property assets themselves will result in declining rental income and increased risks and liabilities. Some properties have been vacant for considerable periods because they are unlettable in their current condition.
  - Better information, systems and resources would enable the Property & Assets Team to better forecast, model and manage both current and future risks and liabilities, and optimise the portfolio for the benefit of the community.
- The dataset indicates some 20 assets with nil rents, suggesting circa 15,000 sq m or so of void / unrented space, with a potential rental value estimated at up to c £61k to £100k p.a (but subject to investment into remedial works). There are also about 7 unregulated tenancies where no rent is being charged, and these are currently in the process of being regularised and could generate additional income of £26k p.a. once regularised by lease.

In summary, improved systems and resources would enable the Council's Property & Assets Team to better manage these assets, maximise their value, secure additional income streams and contribution to the local community and minimise the risks of exposure to unknown liabilities.

### 3.3 Rental Performance – Wilks Head & Eve estimations

- There is an opportunity within the portfolio to increase the rental income. This could lead to a loss of social benefit, attendant with reducing space occupied by the VCS sector on discounted rents.
- There are likely to be issues around the lettable of individual properties and actual rents achievable.
- Rents can only be increased in line with existing terms (such as CPI uplifts) or at lease renewal which will occur at different times for different leases.

An accurate estimate of the total rental discounts provided to the VCS sector is outside the scope of this exercise but is reflected in the potential to uplift rental income to market rates.

### 3.4 Additional (theoretical) income opportunities and subject to all rents moving to full market rents

*This information is included in 'Appendix 2 - Additional Income and Top Development Opportunities' due to containing the following category of exempt information as specified in Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely:*

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

### 3.5 Top Development Opportunities

*This information is included in 'Appendix 2 - Additional Income and Top Development Opportunities' due to containing the following category of exempt information as specified in Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely:*

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

## 4. Issues and challenges

### 4.1 Voice of the stakeholder

The foundation of this strategy is consultation with the communities, elected members and their senior officers. This collaborative approach to asset strategy has highlighted a diversity of voices and views, in keeping with the multitude of outcomes that the portfolio supports.

A number of themes emerge from the consultation, supported by the property data:

- **Financial sustainability** – the estate in its current shape is unaffordable and needs to be reconfigured to arrest a negative circle of decline. Without being put on a financially sustainable footing, the benefits of the portfolio to residents will diminish and policy ambitions such as “carbon neutral by 2030” will be unachievable.
- **Policy refresh** – policies need to be updated and developed to ensure best value decision-making, and this need to be enabled by a highly performing asset management function that has the systems and resource to provide the requisite data and decision-support.
- **Unremitting focus on residents** – changes to policy, processes and properties need to add value to residents and be transparent and fair.
- **Obligations of tenants** – maximising benefit from the portfolio requires a policy shift that strengthens the obligation on tenants to demonstrate social benefit.

### 4.2 Summary of consultation

Headline phrases are summarised below:



Avison Young and the Property & Assets team have analysed all the inputs and feedback from the structured interviews and workshops, and these have in particular informed the “Issues / Challenges” and “Opportunities” summaries herein, and hence our recommendations:

- A word cloud of feedback from the first workshop summarises some of the keywords raised:



Area	Issue
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Risks around expensive, risky, management-intensive assets in portfolio, which absorb management time and scarce resources but provide little return and high liabilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy and process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Limited processes for allocating space to tenants or granting rental discounts, leading to issues of fairness and potentially disadvantaging some third sector groups.</li> <li>– Ad hoc, inconsistent treatment of VCS tenants.</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting regeneration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Risk of divergence / “missed opportunities” if regeneration strategy and property portfolio strategy are not well integrated, given role of property in catalysing economic development.</li> <li>– Unclear how well assets are offered to / shared with start-up / seed businesses.</li> </ul>
<b>Data &amp; Systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– There is not a single integrated system –clear MI is required.</li> <li>– accuracy/completeness can be improved.</li> <li>– Significant data gaps e.g. condition, energy performance.</li> <li>– Compliance data gaps (e.g. H&amp;S, RAAC).</li> <li>– Inefficient invoicing system - 1 FTE dedicated per month to raising rental invoices each quarter. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Costs an estimated £250 to produce an invoice across Council</i> - so not worth it for small amounts of money.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– No pathway to fund and reach Net Zero</li> <li>– Gaps in EPC and environmental performance data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) make it illegal, with effect from 1st April 2023, for a landlord to let (or continue to let) any “substandard” property with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of less than E, and it is likely to become illegal “in time” to let any properties rated at less than D or C, and by 2030, less than B. See Annex B.</li> <li>• It is an offence for a landlord to fail to provide an EPC to any prospective buyer or tenant – the Council could be fined between £500 and £5,000 based on the Rateable Value of the building.</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Progressively tigher standards are over time likely to lead to a requirement for significant investment to remain compliant, or erode asset value.</li> </ul>

In summary, underinvestment in the Council's 'commercial' property portfolio means that the portfolio is aged, ageing, not well-maintained and increasingly in danger of obsolescence, in particular as regulations around environmental performance of buildings and suppliers continue to tighten.

The challenge is how to fund the changes to the portfolio, governances, policies, processes and systems that are required to achieve the vision to create a sustainable, compliant and diverse property portfolio that helps support communities to thrive and prosper.

## 5. Opportunities and the case for change

### 5.1 Opportunities

The opportunities to address the challenges and issues facing the portfolio have been summarised in the table. They are drawn from the practical ideas expressed at the workshops and interviews with elected members and senior officers, along with published best practice guidance and the Avison Young strategy team's experience of public and private sector asset management strategy.

Area	Opportunity to .....
<b>Financial</b> Portfolio is financially unsustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Increase income and reduce overheads by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collecting arrears and evicting non-paying tenants;</li> <li>• active marketing and leasing under-rented space;</li> <li>• phasing out discounts unless clear benefit; and</li> <li>• selling underperforming assets and reducing the overall size of the portfolio.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Asset Strategy</b> Clear strategy and plans for different asset types to improve value and reduce risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Transition over the medium term to a modernised, multi-use, multi-let, flexible, sustainable property portfolio.</li> <li>– Adopt a segmentation approach that sub-divides the portfolio and follows a defined strategy for each segment that maximises the value of properties within that segment.</li> <li>– Develop and drive Asset Level Plans (ALPs) that set out the future for each asset in terms of investment/ divestment and management, in line with priorities and policies.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy and process</b> Policies that put residents at their heart and balance financial and social aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Improve clarity, fairness and transparency by developing a policy framework that sets out how the Council will allocate and set rental levels to VCS tenants, and how investment/ divestment decisions will be taken.</li> <li>– Develop "Social" lease clauses to oblige VCS tenants to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• equate value of rental discounts to social benefits;</li> <li>• forecast and report actual "Social Value Added"; and</li> <li>• accept mechanisms to enable Council to foreclose if fail to meet KPI targets.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Supporting regeneration</b> Leveraging asset opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Stimulate economic activity and regeneration, through considering space for start-ups / enterprise incubators.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b> Identifying an investment pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Improve environmental performance and compliance with Net Zero Carbon targets:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collate, record and commission EPC surveys; and</li> <li>• develop roadmap for decarbonisation of buildings.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Area	Opportunity to .....
<p><b>Data &amp; Systems</b></p> <p>To support evidenced-back decisions and improve performance through BI monitoring</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Inconsistent, incomplete and inaccurate data about the portfolio reflects a lack of investment in fundamental property asset management systems:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modern asset management systems and asset level planning approaches can be integrated into financial systems for e-invoicing, receipts / payments, budgeting and evaluating risks and liabilities, and release resources from antiquated management-intensive processes.</li> <li>• A case management system, particularly with bespoke AI / machine learning, would assist in marshalling and analysing key documentation around assets and support driving marketing, leasing and sales of surplus assets, to fund further investment in systems and the portfolio.</li> <li>• Commissioning condition surveys would enable the development of the required “comprehensive plan to be a carbon neutral council by 2030” and thereby “lead by example by retrofitting and reducing energy usage across our estate” <sup>10</sup>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Governance</b></p> <p>Improve decision support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Improve collective, evidence-based decision making that balances financial, service, community and regeneration objectives by reconvening a corporate property board to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee the creation and implementation of corporate property strategy.</li> <li>• Make robust recommendations on asset management to Cabinet and elected members.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 5.2 The Case for change

Under a ‘no change’ scenario (medium term) the Council will oversee a degradation in the portfolio that will:

- Reduce total revenue (a real terms decline).
- Reduce the available stock of space as properties are mothballed to avoid unaffordable statutory works and energy performance standards.
- Weaken social benefits as the space available for VCS groups decline and tenancies are awarded without the support of good data and a transparent decision framework.
- Potentially incur reputational damage and financial loss if breaches of statutory compliance occur.

The portfolio is on the verge of entering a spiral of decline, if measures are not taken to improve the condition and energy performance.

Indicative advice about market rental levels suggests that there is significant untapped potential in the portfolio, and seizing this opportunity could secure resources to invest both in the Council’s real estate assets and importantly in the people, processes and systems needed to manage them.

The next section outlines the proposed way forward and recommendations.

<sup>10</sup> As Brent Council has committed to in the [Brent Borough Plan 2023-27](#)

## 6. The Way Forward

### 6.1 Introduction

This Strategy aims to put the Portfolio<sup>11</sup> onto a sustainable financial footing, with a view to:

- Deliver community and social benefits;
- Achieve Net Zero ( / Carbon Neutral by 2030);
- Minimise the risks of property ownership, including statutory and health and safety compliance;
- Support and enable the Council's corporate strategy and, in time, align the portfolio better to demographic and social need.

The overall aim is a smaller, better, greener estate, financially viable and aligned to Council priorities.

### 6.2 Summary recommendations

The strategic aims will be achieved by adopting a **more commercial and leading practice asset management approach** that involves:

- Agreeing a set of clear **policies and procedures** for improved clarity and transparency around property asset management, including the allocation of space to community groups;
- Creating and embedding a consistent **framework for decision-making**, in line with the agreed policies;
- Developing and regularly reviewing structured **Asset Level Plans** that set out an evidenced-based rationale for the future ownership, use, management approach and investment (if retained), including expenditure on improving statutory compliance and decarbonising;
- Deploying a **segmentation approach** that categorises and organises properties with similar attributes into distinct segments, with a tailored plan for each segment to optimise the overall portfolio and allocate resources efficiently in line with overall financial and social aims;
- Developing **social impact agreements** and "Social" lease clauses to help ensure that tenants are incentivised or have an obligation to deliver social benefit that is commensurate with the Council's discounted sub-market rents (either through a lease agreement or management agreement).

We recommend that in time, this approach should be applied to the whole Council real estate portfolio through a strengthened **corporate landlord model**. This should be underpinned by the principle that the Council 'owns' property assets and service departments 'occupy' property assets to support service delivery. Strengthening the corporate landlord model will improve performance and value, by facilitating efficient resource allocation, higher utilisation, management efficiencies, improved compliance and risk management, and better BI to support decision making. It will involve a shift in responsibilities away from service departments to the central intelligent client team.

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<sup>11</sup> "the Portfolio" as summarised in Annex A and Section 3 above.



### 6.3 Enablers - data and resources

This commercial and leading practice asset management approach will need to be **enabled by**:

- Increasing investment in people, processes, systems and property assets, paid for by increased income; and
- Improving MI / BI<sup>12</sup> and releasing resources for higher-value-added tasks by investing in better real estate asset management data / technology systems.

A financial case needs to be developed for the investment in people and data, and it is envisaged that it will be funded over time by **increasing net income**. This will be achieved through a combination of:

- Rental subsidy reductions
- More tenancies at market rents
- Active management of tenants leading to reduced debt
- Disposal of loss making or poorly performing properties
- Leveraging asset value through repurposing and strategic redevelopment
- Acquiring higher net return properties over the medium term (taking into account market trends).

#### Detailed Recommendations

To expand upon these themes, the Council is recommended to:

### 6.4 Agree clear policies and procedures

The core tenets of the policies are:

- The pursuit of best value for money for taxpayers (with a view to leveraging maximum social, community and financial benefit from the property portfolio).
- Compliance – with statutes, Building Regulations and Council policies.
- Clarity, fairness and transparency.
- Financial prudence and stewardship of taxpayers' assets.

Policies should cover the following areas:

- Acquisition
- Disposal
- Investment
- Maintenance and compliance
- Net zero, decarbonisation and climate adaptation
- Allocation of space to VCS sector

<sup>12</sup> "MI / BI" = Management Information / Business Intelligence. MI reports on current performance of the business (in this case, property assets); BI deals with a broader scope, taking into account different aspects of the business by using technology to deliver further analytics and insights.

- Granting of rental subsidies
- Obligations of VCS tenants and the use of social lease clauses
- Measurement of social benefit
- Monitoring tenant performance and rent reviews
- Termination of agreements

The policy statement should include an outline of the policies purpose, objectives, scope, principles, roles and responsibilities, decision processes, compliance and monitoring and review process.

## 6.5 Develop a Decision-Making Framework

The decision framework should align with the vision and agreed policies and will help prioritise resources to ensure compliance.

- It is a mechanism for supporting the Council consistently apply the policies and make decisions on matters of disposal, retention, redevelopment, investment, change of use/ termination of tenancy.
- The framework should be published to meet transparency and fairness objectives.
- The Segmentation strategy (see below) will draw on the framework to sift properties into the correct segments (see below).
- It will help develop and drive Asset Level Plans and support recommendations e.g. for refurbishment and investment.
- The effectiveness of the decision-making framework is dependent upon the quality of data, including statutory compliance, environmental performance, market valuations, tenancies, financial.

## 6.6 Implement Asset Level Planning

The purpose of Asset Level Plans (ALPs) is to reach a decision on the future ownership, use, management regime and investment plan for each asset, in line with strategic priorities and agreed policies. The recommendation in the ALP will be based on the formal integration of perspectives from across relevant departments and stakeholders in Council, alongside the professional property and financial view.

The outputs of the ALPs should be consolidated to inform the annual plans, for example:

- Disposal (and potential acquisition) plan.
- Capital plan – including major and minor works.
- Annual revenue forecasts.
- Property management plan.
- Decarbonisation plan.

Key characteristics of the process include annual reviews to refresh and refine plans for:

- All larger / higher value properties
- All those with lease events in next 3 financial years
- 20% of the remainder.

A key output will be the categorisation of each property in terms of its future status (aligned to the segmentation approach); for example: "Hold"; "Invest" "Actively Manage", 'Dispose'. As well as informing financial and asset management planning, it will:

- Support regeneration objectives by identifying strategic “hold” and “invest” properties
- Avoid risk of “missed opportunities”, for e.g. start-up / seed businesses
- Stimulate economic activity and regeneration, through considering space for start-ups / enterprise incubators.

## 6.7 Adopt Social Impact Agreements and Leases

Adopt “Social” lease clauses, with express covenants to require, explicitly, VCS tenants to measure, record and report on actual social benefits delivered. This is to help ensure that VCS tenants are obliged to deliver social benefit commensurate with any discounted rents. To implement, the Council should:

- Develop and agree a corporate assessment methodology for quantifying social, economic and environmental benefit. This will include a combination of ‘input’ metrics such as utilisation, hours open, number of cases processed; and ‘output’ metrics such as changes to employment, reoffending rates and health outcomes, etc.
- Agree the approach to encouraging social benefit through discounted rents:
  - **Option 1:** Move tenants over time to a “market rent” and at the end of the year provide a refund of up to a capped level of the market rent, depending on their performance measured against a number of KPIs, reflecting the specific areas the Council wants to improve. This approach incentivises tenants to maximise social benefit.
  - **Option 2:** Negotiate a social impact agreement and discount the market rent in line with the expected social benefit. Actively manage the relationship, terminating the lease or reducing the discount, should the expected social benefit not materialise. This approach could be viewed as penal.
  - **Option 3:** Flexible revenue share agreements, where the rent charge is proportional to the revenue of the VCS sector, up to an agreed ceiling.

The preferred option should be based on a balance of multiple criteria such as acceptability, deliverability (e.g. legal) and resource costs. (See Section 7.2 Action Plan for timetable for selecting a preferred option.)

## 6.8 Segmentation Approach

Deploy a segmentation approach that categorises and organises properties with similar attributes into distinct segments, with a tailored plan for each segment to optimise the overall portfolio and allocate resources efficiently in line with overall financial and social aims.

Implementing a segmentation approach involves sifting holdings into the following 4 recommended segments:

1. Dispose	Low prospects of social value or financial return	High management costs; future liabilities high; long term vacant; low prospect rental or capital growth
2. Manage	Active Management Opportunities	Tenant non-compliance with obligations; regearing opportunity; high prospect of improved social or financial return for low capital spend
3. Invest	Investment opportunities, including repurpose	Longer prospects for rental and capital or social value growth but requires significant investment e.g. repurpose, retrofit, redevelop
4. Hold	Strategic	Important to control for longer term place shaping/ economic benefits

For each segment, a strategy should be devised to maximise value for money (see Section 7.2 Action Plan):

**Dispose:** Low value, high-cost properties with poor growth prospects should be disposed, in order to avoid significant expenditure with poor returns and to raise capital for re-investing in retained assets.

This covers properties with low prospects of social value or financial return and / or low return on investment (i.e. weak net yield) given e.g.:

- High future liabilities (for example, to modernise, maintain, achieve better environmental performance or to bring up to minimum statutory compliance;
- Unduly high management costs (due to time involved in managing secondary tenants);
- Weak links to regeneration / place shaping agenda; and / or
- Long term vacant.

**Manage:** Active Management Opportunities have the potential to improve performance and secure "Quick Wins", for relatively little investment. They comprise properties that hold the prospect for improved social or financial returns which involve minimal or relatively low capital spend, but they do require professional resource to realise the benefits. Examples of properties:

- Tenant non-compliance with obligations;
- Leasing / sales or lease re-gearing opportunity;
- Planned maintenance regime;
- Repossession for re-marketing; etc.

**Invest:** Investment Opportunities have the potential to unlock significant upside and meet strategic priorities:

- Longer-term prospects for good rental and capital or social value growth but requires significant investment;
- May require significant investment e.g. developing planning briefs, land assembly, decontamination, refurbishment/ redevelopment due to economic end of life or higher value alternative use;
- May allow Council to acquire sites with potential for significant value uplift due to population growth/ regeneration.

**Strategic Hold:** This segment comprises properties vital to enable delivery of the Council's priorities and unlikely to be easily replaced:

- Important to control for longer-term place shaping / economic benefits / regeneration;
- Currently delivers or likely to deliver economic and/ or social benefits that would not be provided by market.

It is recommended that there is an initial sift of properties into the segments using a high-level assessment framework. Over time the allocation of properties to segments will be informed by the outputs of the Asset Level Plans (ALPs).

KPIs should be identified for each segment and periodically monitored and reported to Property Board.

## 6.9 Enabling Data

Improve data, MI and release resources for higher-value-added tasks by investing in better real estate asset management systems, etc., to:

- Obtain, record, update, analyse and report key data / MI on performance / issues / risks;

- Digitise / automate / integrate routine functions;
- Improve ability to invoice and collect income; and
- Enable proactive asset management.

Enhance and improve community / social value impact of portfolio and better integrate with Planning, Development & Regeneration across Borough by mapping and overlaying demographic data against current distribution of property assets, including forecast / modelled future figures for e.g.:

- Population demographics (gender, age, ethnicity, disability);
- Socioeconomic metrics of relative income, wealth;
- Indices for crime, education, social deprivation;
- Other Council and related Public Sector assets such as schools, healthcare, other “frontline” Council and Public Sector delivery outlets.

Implementation starts with a business case for investment in data systems and data management, which should include a systems architecture review of vendor and in-house options.

## 6.10 Corporate Landlord Model

In time, the above recommendations should be applied as a corporate approach across the Council's property portfolio, including operational properties such as education, leisure, social care and administrative buildings. The benefits of a corporate landlord model are improved allocation and utilisation of all Council property assets by identifying under-used and under-exploited opportunities for increased shared utilisation by VCS groups.

In the medium term the Council should move to a modernised, multi-use, multi-let, flexible, inter-operable and sustainable property portfolio, through applying the segmentation approach.

## 6.11 Financial Case

Implementing these recommendations will require investment in systems, processes and people. A robust investment case should be developed to place the portfolio on a financially sustainable footing. This is based on the opportunity to more than double net income (current rental income is c £2.5M) and cut overheads by driving active management, marketing and lettings / sales of under-used and under-rented or void spaces within portfolio. For example, by focussing and strengthening the team to:

- Collect arrears (i.e. significant uncollected rent @ c £600k) and evict non-paying tenants;
- Phase out discounts unless clear, reportable and trackable social benefit; and
- Actively pursue rental / sales opportunities.

This will generate:

- More income from underutilised and vacant assets by:
  - (a) leasing more space at full Open Market Rental Value, plus;
  - (b) sharing more space and creating more flexible and interoperable buildings, and
- Potentially one-off capital receipts by selling underperforming assets (if any).

## 7. Implementation and Next Steps

### 7.1 Change programme

A change programme should be established to implement the strategy. There are 3 broad phases:

1. Establish the programme objectives, resourcing, funding and governance. It is recommended that a programme scoping document is developed that quantifies the expected benefits, the resource costs, who is responsible, who is accountable and details of the oversight board. Furthermore, the possibility of programme funding through 'quick wins' from asset disposals or rental increases should be identified with the aim that its implementation is cost neutral.
2. Having set up the programme, the next phase is to develop the policies, decision frameworks and plans that are described in the recommendation section above.
3. The implementation phase refers to the delivery of the plans, which will involve disposing of some assets, undertaking prioritised capital works including statutory compliance and energy efficiency improvements, and major investment in selected assets e.g. repurposing. In parallel there will be active management of the core long-term hold assets to improve financial return and social benefit.



Creating the benefits case to justify the appropriate resourcing levels is an essential first steps. As is setting up the governance to oversee and monitor the programme. Quick win financial benefits should be sought to fund the resourcing required to set up the programme and design the changes.

### 7.2 Action plan

Recommendation	Actions	By When
<b>Develop and approve draft property strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Obtain approval of property strategy and adoption by Cabinet</li> <li>– Set up programme</li> </ul>	May 2024  July 2024
<b>Quick Wins to maximise rent and regularise tenancies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Identify opportunity for regularising occupation, rent reviews and lease renewals and initiate legal notice or lease negotiations (timeline may be constrained by statutory notice periods).</li> </ul>	Current – March 2025
<b>Corporate property board</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Develop terms of reference and agree membership of a new corporate property board to support cross-department collective decision making on property acquisitions, disposals, capital investment, change of use and management.</li> <li>– The board should be responsible for implementing this strategy, including developing new policies and</li> </ul>	September 2024

Recommendation	Actions	By When
	processes. This will involve overseeing the activities below.	
<b>Policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Confirm policy areas.</li> <li>– Draft policies and framework.</li> </ul>	<p>October 2024</p> <p>Actioned (see Appendix 2)</p>
<b>Asset Management Plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Design a process for asset management planning, including objectives, outputs, standardised templates or workbooks, responsibilities, dependencies and roll-out programme.</li> <li>– Run a pilot, learn lessons.</li> <li>– Roll-out across the portfolio in tranches (the speed will depend on resource capacity).</li> </ul>	<p>December 2024</p> <p>January 2025 – October 2025</p>
<b>Decision-making framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Agree objectives, scope and outputs.</li> <li>– Design and build the framework.</li> <li>– Pilot and refine.</li> <li>– Go Live.</li> </ul>	<p>May - July 2024</p> <p>July - November 2024</p> <p>January 2025</p>
<b>Corporate Social Benefits Assessment Methodology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Agree objectives, scope and outputs.</li> <li>– Agree priorities to measure.</li> <li>– Identify KPIs and data sources.</li> <li>– Pilot.</li> <li>– Go live.</li> </ul>	<p>November 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>July 2025</p>
<b>Social Impact Agreement Leases and Rent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Agree approach to encouraging social impact through discounted rents (undertake an options appraisal) and take to Council for a decision.</li> <li>– Create model social impact lease clauses.</li> <li>– Communicate and provide training to socially trading organisations and VCS groups.</li> <li>– Roll-out new agreements.</li> </ul>	<p>May – September 2024</p> <p>Autumn 2024</p> <p>January -June 2025</p> <p>January 2025</p>
<b>Implement Segmentation approach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Undertake Initial Sift.</li> <li>– Agree strategy for each segment.</li> <li>– Develop a plan per segment for 2024/25 quick win and priority initiatives.</li> <li>– Progress reports to Corporate Property Board.</li> <li>– Prepare 2025/26 plan based on asset level plans.</li> </ul>	<p>May- Nov 2024</p> <p>December 2024</p> <p>January 2025</p> <p>August 2025</p>

Recommendation	Actions	By When
<b>Data and processes</b>	– Identify data gaps and improve quality and analysis of property data.	Current – April 2024
	– Carry out health and safety checks and prepare risks assessments for all assets managed.	Current – April 2024
	– Specify high level information management and reporting requirement (KPIs).	Current – October 2024
	– Review current system against requirements and market options and develop a business case for upgrading data and systems in collaboration with Finance and IT.	
	– Develop a business case for data and systems.	Sept-Dec 2024
	– Lease renewals	Current – March 2025
	– Rent reviews	
	– Health and safety compliance (high priority)	-“-
	– EPC	-“-
	– Accessibility audit (high priority)	-“-

### 7.3 Seed funding

The change programme can be seed funded by realising quick win opportunities to increase rental income and reduce rental arrears in 2024.

This will require an additional commercial property consultant team reporting to the Head of Property for 9 months with the target to deliver £0.36M of additional revenue and £0.7M of one-off capital receipts, in 2024/25.

The table shows that a resource investment of approx. £0.25M could generate £2.6M of revenue over 2 years:

FY	24/25	25/26	Total
<b>Additional revenue</b>	£366,000	£732,000	£1,098,000
<b>Additional capital</b>	£700,000	£1,050,000	£1,750,000
<b>Consultant costs</b>	(£129,600)	(£115,200)	(£244,800)
<b>Net income</b>	<b>£936,400</b>	<b>£1,666,800</b>	<b>£2,603,200</b>

The underpinning high-level assumptions for the figures above, are as follows:



- For all 'lease expired properties', a conservative assumption that 50% of the uplift (£0.2m) between the current total rent passing and the 'minimum' market rental that may be achieved (refer to Section 3.4), can be realised in 2024/24. It is assumed 100% (£0.4m) of this uplift may be cumulatively realised in 2025/26.
- For the 'void' properties, where current total rent passing is zero, and the 'minimum' market rental is £0.7m, a conservative assumption that 12.5% of this amount (£0.1m) may be realised in 2024/25 and 25% of this amount (£0.2m) in 2025/26.
- For the remaining (non-expired and non-voided) properties, total rent passing is currently £1.0m, while the 'minimum' market rent' is £2.4m; a conservative assumption is that 5% (£0.1m of this uplift may be realised in 2024/25 and 10% (£0.2m) in 2025/26.
- Total capital receipts of £1.75m may be achieved; comprising of £0.7m in 2024/25 and £1.05m in 2025/26. This is based of the 'minimum' rental value of the 'void' properties (£0.7m) with an applied net investment yield of 20%; and a further conservative assumption that half (50%) of this figure may be realised over the next two years.

## 7.4 Enablers of strategy implementation

The recommended enablers to support implementation of the programme are summarised below:

- **Data** – accurate data on the portfolio, and expected costs and benefits.
- **Leadership** – strong and consistent leadership to ensure recommendations are delivered.
- **Governance** – effective cross-service working and strong programme management through a Corporate Property Board.
- **Integration** – closely integrated asset management decision-making and action across the entire portfolio, including with Finance, Communities.
- **Strategies and policies** – a framework for decision-making encompassing social benefit.
- **Rules** – clear protocols on, for example, the allocation of space at discounted rents, lease agreements, KPI, and the responsibilities of tenants as occupiers of space.
- **Challenge** – a robust process whereby the retention of all assets is subject to review and challenge.
- **Communication** – a strategy to effectively communicate the action plan to implement the programme, its costs and benefits, and the roles of stakeholders in shaping and contributing to the success of the programme.

## 7.5 Skills required to implement the strategy

The following skills will be required to implement the recommendations and rebalance the portfolio:

- **Asset management strategies** – to prepare a commercial segmentation approach and to lead the preparation of asset level plans.
- **Market knowledge** – to identify optimum assets for acquisition and disposal and deliver the investment strategy.
- **Conveyancing/legal support** – to assist with delivery of the strategy and support acquisition and disposal processes.
- **Management consultancy (real estate)** – to design and implement policies, processes, governance and to develop a business case for investment in systems and data.

- **Programme management** – to ensure the change programme hits milestones, meets budgets and delivers a high performing portfolio supported by a high performing management model.

Many of these skills are available within the current team, however, a skills audit is required to identify gaps

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## Annex A: Scope – Summary of Portfolio Considered

The portfolio in scope comprises primarily the non-owner occupied “commercial” property portfolio owned by the Council, i.e. income generating or potential income generating:

Description	Approximate Numbers <sup>13</sup>
Community Use	54
Leisure	12
Retail (incl. Café)	14
Office	12
Other <sup>14</sup>	14
<b>Grand Total</b> <i>Excluding individual units in multi-let buildings</i>	<b>106</b>

### Rent per annum:

<b>Total Properties:</b>	95
Total Rent:	£2.3M
Ground Rent (HRA):	£0.5M
<b>Total rental income</b>	<b>£2.7M</b>

### Reinstatement value:

<sup>13</sup> Analysis per dataset provided by LBB’s Property & Assets team (P&AT) in August 2023 and analysed by Avison Young September-October 2023. Ongoing work by LBB’s P&AT continues to develop and refine the understanding relating to this portfolio, with an expanded list of now 106 property assets.

<sup>14</sup> “Other”= Builders Yards/portacabins; Education (within scope); Open storage land; WC; other (blank or pending).

<b>Insurance Valuation (FIV):</b>		
Reinstatement Value: <sup>15</sup>	£309.2M	<i>See Footnote</i>
Total Area shown:	69,800	sq m GIA

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<sup>15</sup> NB: Reinstatement Value = estimated Cost of Rebuilding.  
Open Market Value of the property may be considerably different.

## Annex B: Implications of Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

These are excerpts from Private Investors' Paper, re: implications of Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES), published 19th June 23.

As set out in HMG's regulations, in general a landlord must provide an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) if:

- Renting out or selling the premises; or
- Finishing a building under construction; or
- Making changes to the number of parts used for separate occupation, which involve providing or extending fixed heating, air conditioning or mechanical ventilation systems.

As solicitors Addleshaw Goddard have set out:

*"landlords can no longer ignore the impact of the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 (MEES Regulations). From 1 April 2023 it is now unlawful for landlords to **continue to let** a commercial property with an F or G EPC rating (known as "sub-standard" properties under the MEES Regulations), even if the lease was granted prior to the MEES Regulations coming into force in 2018 (subject to certain exemptions). See here for the implications and commercial considerations.*

*"In 2022, the government estimated that around 18% of commercial properties in the UK were F or G rated. Some of these may have been brought up to standard to meet the 1 April 2023 deadline. However, it does seem likely that there will still be a large number of properties out there where there will be tensions between landlords and tenants as each party grapples with being green in their own way and determine where the risk and compliance with MEES should sit in commercial leases."*

Regulations setting out Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) are making it increasingly unlawful to rent properties that do not meet the minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) requirements, bar some exemptions, with landlords facing serious sanctions for non-compliance. This means lenders will also have to navigate the changing regulatory landscape and consider ESG criteria when deploying capital.

Currently, non-domestic buildings in England and Wales need an EPC rating of E or higher to be viable for lease. From April 2030 rented property will be required to have at least a B rating. This poses a significant challenge for the real estate sector given that the vast majority of existing commercial stock in England and Wales – around 64% – falls below the B threshold for energy performance<sup>5</sup>. In real terms, over half a million individual assets need to be compliant with MEES within the next seven years<sup>6</sup>.

[Note that] lenders may consider excluding inefficient real estate assets as defined by the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation – such as those with an EPC of C or below if built before 31 December 2020 – where proceeds of the loan are used to improve energy efficiency and the asset is expected to meet the relevant criteria upon completion of the renovations funded by the loan, then these assets will no longer be deemed inefficient. Once the relevant works are complete, they may even qualify as "green buildings" should they meet specific eligibility criteria.

When funding existing buildings that do not currently meet energy requirements, lenders can hold borrowers accountable by ensuring loan documentation includes specific clauses on energy performance obligations. This will typically require the borrower to improve overall energy efficiency and/or aggregate green building certification as well as meet specific thresholds such as EPC B or above, LEED Gold or above or BREEAM "Excellent or above".

<sup>3</sup> European Parliament, "Energy performance of buildings: climate neutrality by 2050", (europarl.europa.eu), 9 February 2023.

<sup>4</sup> UK Government, "Rigorous new targets for green building revolution", (gov.uk), 19 January 2021.

<sup>5</sup> UK Government, "Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates Statistical Release: January to March 2023 England and Wales", (gov.uk), 27 April 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Gerald Eve, "Energy Performance in Non-Domestic Buildings", (geraldeve.com), July 2021.

***“The value of investments will fluctuate, which will cause prices to fall as well as rise and investors may not get back the original amount they invested. Past performance is not a guide to future performance. The views expressed in this document should not be taken as a recommendation, advice or forecast.”***

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## **Annex C: Case Studies from 2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop**

Case Studies from 2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023

*This information is included in 'Appendix 1 Annex C - Case Studies 1-4' due to containing the following category of exempt information as specified in Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely:*

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

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# Contact details

## Enquiries

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**Visit us online**  
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## Appendix 3

### Policy Framework for Strategic Themes

#### Strategic Hold

Introduction: The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines and criteria for the retention of Council-owned buildings. The policy emphasises the importance of preserving and maximising the value of our assets to support community development, economic growth, and social value creation. By adopting a strategic approach to retention, we aim to safeguard valuable resources and promote long-term sustainability.

Policy statement: The Council shall adhere to the following principles and procedures for the retention of buildings:

1. Strategic alignment: Retention decisions shall be guided by the Council's strategic objectives in the Borough Plan. Buildings shall be retained when they align with the Council's vision, mission, and values and contribute positively to economic development, prosperity, and stability.
2. Community benefit: Retention decisions shall prioritise the public interest and welfare, considering the needs and preferences of the VCS, residents, businesses, and stakeholders affected by the retention of buildings. Buildings shall be retained when they provide essential goods or services to the community, support local businesses, e.g. meanwhile uses, or enhance the quality of life for residents.
3. Economic viability: Retained buildings must be financially sustainable and contribute to the economic vitality and resilience of the Council's budget. Buildings shall be retained when they generate revenue for the Council, are cost-effective to maintain, create jobs, stimulate economic activity, or attract investment.
4. Environmental sustainability: Retention decisions shall consider the environmental impact of buildings, including their energy efficiency, ecological footprint, and potential for adaptive reuse or sustainable redevelopment. Buildings shall be retained when they incorporate sustainable practices and contribute to environmental stewardship and climate resilience.

5. Social value: Retention decisions shall promote social value and inclusivity, ensuring that buildings serve our communities' diverse needs and interests. Buildings shall be retained when they provide accessible, affordable, culturally relevant goods or services to underserved populations or marginalised groups.
6. Meanwhile uses can help revitalise vacant properties, support temporary community initiatives, and foster innovation and creativity by entrepreneurs and start-ups. They can also be invaluable in supporting Council initiatives, such as the Black Community Action Plan. The criteria for meanwhile use will include factors like vacancy duration and redevelopment timescales, ownership status, location and potential community impact. A transparent and accessible application process for individuals or organisations interested in utilising meanwhile-use properties will be used, along with standard licence agreements that clarify the terms and conditions of meanwhile-use, including duration, responsibilities, insurance, and any fees or rent. If managed and monitored effectively, meanwhile use can facilitate the temporary activation of vacant spaces, promote community engagement and empowerment, and contribute to the revitalisation and vibrancy of town centres.

### **Actively Manage**

Introduction: This policy aims to ensure that the management and operation of the Council's buildings fulfil the legislation requirements and represent responsible use of scarce resources.

Policy statement: The Council's buildings shall be managed and operated in a manner that aligns with the following objectives and priorities:

1. Financial viability: Optimise the financial performance of buildings through effective leasing and pricing strategies, rent collection, tenancy management and cost management. Seek opportunities for revenue generation through innovative leasing models or partnerships with the public sector, which can provide multiple benefits. Regularly review and assess the financial performance of buildings and tenancies to identify areas for improvement, investment, or divestment. Rental discounts are to be determined on a case-by-case basis, and a strong correlation is expected between the level of rent discount given and the social value created.
2. Community benefit: Prioritise leasing or utilising building spaces to businesses or VCS organisations that provide goods or services that meet the local community's needs and gaps in the market. Support

initiatives that promote social inclusion, diversity, and accessibility within buildings. Consider implementing social impact agreements and lease clauses once the Council's social value review has been completed.

3. Economic benefit: Foster economic growth and job creation by providing opportunities for meanwhile uses of vacant buildings awaiting redevelopment to attract businesses and provide employment opportunities.
4. Environmental sustainability: Implement energy-efficient practices and technologies, where the energy efficiency measures meet the financial payback test, to reduce the ecological footprint of buildings. Encourage tenants and businesses to adopt sustainable practices by raising awareness and enforcing compliance.

### **Invest and/or Repurpose**

This policy provides guidelines and procedures for repurposing Council-owned land and buildings. The policy emphasises the importance of adaptive reuse, revitalisation, and innovation to maximise the value and use of these assets. By adopting a strategic approach to investment and redevelopment, we can aim to unlock the potential of underutilised or vacant buildings, promote creative solutions to emerging challenges, and advance our broader objectives and priorities.

Policy statement: The Council shall adhere to the following principles and procedures for investing in and repurposing buildings:

1. Strategic alignment: Land and buildings shall be redeveloped when their existing use is no longer viable or aligned with our goals and where alternative forms of spaces and uses offer more excellent value or benefit to the community.
2. Adaptive reuse: Investment and repurposing decisions shall prioritise adaptive reuse strategies that retain and enhance buildings' historic, architectural, and cultural significance. Preference shall be given to repurposing solutions that respect the integrity and character of buildings while adapting them to meet evolving needs and demands.
3. Economic viability: Investment and repurposing decisions shall consider the potential for generating revenue, improving building condition or use, creating jobs, stimulating economic activity, and attracting investment to the area through innovative uses and partnerships.

4. Environmental sustainability: Investment and repurposing decisions shall promote ecological sustainability and resilience, incorporating green building practices and energy efficiency measures.
5. Socio-economic benefit: Investment and repurposing decisions shall prioritise uses and activities that provide tangible social benefits to the community, including affordable housing, community services, cultural amenities, and public spaces. Repurposed buildings shall enhance social value, inclusivity, and accessibility, addressing residents' and stakeholders' diverse needs and interests.
6. There will be a requirement to conduct comprehensive assessments of buildings identified for repurposing, including market analysis, feasibility studies, planning advice, community needs assessments, and environmental impact assessments, to inform decision-making and identify opportunities for innovation and collaboration.

## **Dispose**

This policy aims to provide guidelines and procedures for disposing of surplus Council-owned buildings to maximise the value of assets on sale.

Policy statement: The Council shall adhere to the following principles and procedures for the disposal of buildings:

1. Strategic alignment: Disposal decisions shall be guided by legislation and the Council's strategic objectives, priorities, and long-term plans for capital or revenue generation and the need for reinvestment in the retained assets. Consideration shall be given to the potential impact of disposal on the surrounding community, local economy, and environment, including any loss of social, economic, or environmental benefits associated with the transaction.
2. Financial viability: Disposal transactions shall be conducted to maximise the financial return to the Council. Before disposal, buildings shall be assessed for their current condition, market value, potential for redevelopment, and any outstanding liabilities or obligations that may affect their value or suitability for sale.
3. Public interest: Local community needs, and the needs and preferences of residents, businesses, and stakeholders affected by the transaction will be identified via equality impact assessments. Transparency and accountability shall be maintained throughout the disposal process, with opportunities for public input, consultation, and feedback to inform decision-making where appropriate.

4. **Fairness and Equity:** Disposal opportunities shall be open and accessible to all qualified buyers, developers, and stakeholders without discrimination or favouritism. Disposal processes shall be conducted by applicable laws, regulations, and ethical standards, ensuring fairness, integrity, and impartiality in decision-making.

### **Prioritisation policy**

This policy aims to establish guidelines for prioritising the above Themes. By implementing a systematic approach to utilisation, the Council can optimise the portfolio's social, economic, and environmental benefits while ensuring equitable access and efficient use of resources.

Officers will have regard for all relevant legislation when making decisions, such as s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Equality Act 2010.

Policy statement: To develop and regularly review structured asset-level plans that set out an evidenced-based rationale for the future ownership, use, management approach and investment and redevelopment (if retained), including expenditure on improving statutory compliance and decarbonisation. The Council shall prioritise the use or disposal of buildings based on the following criteria and hierarchy:

1. Incorporate equality and diversity considerations into decision-making processes, including procurement, leasing, and property management, to promote fair and equitable access to buildings and opportunities for all.
2. **Need:** Priority shall be given to activities that address pressing public needs, emergencies, or crises, including healthcare facilities, emergency shelters, and disaster response services. Consideration shall be given to activities that serve vulnerable residents, such as food banks and support services.
3. **Economic development:** Priority shall be given to activities that foster revenue generation for the Council, economic growth, job creation, and business development within the local economy. This activity has a high priority because of the importance and necessity of achieving financial sustainability and supporting prosperity and stability.
4. **Community benefit:** Preference shall be given to activities and initiatives that contribute to thriving communities, cultural enrichment, and civic engagement, such as community centres, arts and cultural organisations, and social service providers.

5. Environmental sustainability: Preference shall be given to properties and activities representing ecological sustainability and responsible resource management for a cleaner and greener future. Decisions will be informed by building conditions and an evaluation of the financial viability (payback test) of investing in energy efficiency measures or technologies to bring to compliance.



## EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

<b>POLICY/PROPOSAL:</b>	<b>Property Strategy</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	<b>Property and Assets</b>
<b>TEAM:</b>	<b>Commercial Property</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Denish Patel</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> February 2024</b>

*NB: Please ensure you have read the accompanying EA guidance and instructions in full.*

### SECTION A – INITIAL SCREENING

1. Please provide a description of the policy, proposal, change or initiative, and a summary its objectives and the intended results.

The proposal aims to ensure that the Council-owned commercial property assets meet the strategic aims of the Borough Plan. This includes generating revenue for the delivery of services and meeting the most pressing of social needs.

The proposal aims to strengthen safeguards for individuals with protected characteristics by ensuring Council-owned commercial buildings are safe spaces that serve as inclusive and accessible spaces that benefit all members of the community.

2. Who may be affected by this policy or proposal?

All persons who use, or benefit from, the commercial properties owned and let by the Council. This can include tenants, employees, visitors and those receiving services by businesses and the VCS.

3. Is there relevance to equality and the council's public sector equality duty? Please explain why. If your answer is no, you must still provide an explanation.

Yes there is a strong relevance to the Council's public sector equality duty. Many of the Council's commercial property are let to voluntary and community sector organisations that provide services to the community, including those residents with protected characteristics. The proposal aims to ensure that Council-owned commercial buildings are accessible to all. The proposed strategy and framework for commercial property and asset related activities will guide and shape services in accordance with priority needs, thereby having an overall positive impact on equality and diversity. Individual decisions will determine how scarce assets are utilised and operated on a day-to-day basis to meet legislative and specific service needs. There will be communities or residents that will be disadvantaged by strategic and operational decisions, as is the case now.

4. Please indicate with an "X" the potential impact of the policy or proposal on groups with each protected characteristic. Carefully consider if the proposal will impact on people in different ways as a result of their characteristics.

Characteristic	Impact Positive	Impact Neutral/None	Impact Negative
Age	X	X	
Sex		X	
Race	X	X	
Disability *	X	X	
Sexual orientation		X	
Gender reassignment		X	
Religion or belief	X	X	
Pregnancy or maternity	X	X	
Marriage		X	

5. Please complete **each row** of the checklist with an "X".

### **Screening Checklist**

	YES	NO
Have you established that the policy or proposal <i>is</i> relevant to the council's public sector equality duty?	Yes	
Does the policy or proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?	Yes	
Would the policy or proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?	Yes	

Has the potential for negative or positive equality impacts been identified with this policy or proposal?		<b>No</b>
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**If you have answered YES to ANY of the above, then proceed to section B.**

**If you have answered NO to ALL of the above, then proceed straight to section D.**

## SECTION B – IMPACTS ANALYSIS

1. Outline what information and evidence have you gathered and considered for this analysis. If there is little, then explain your judgements in detail and your plans to validate them with evidence. If you have monitoring information available, include it here.

Data and direct evidence on equality impact in respect of individual Council-owned commercial buildings is lacking. The analysis is based on the fact that the proposal is an over-arching framework for ensuring the portfolio remains financially sustainable and available for use by communities in the long-term. The proposal does not affect individual decisions on buildings but instead sets out a framework within which effective decisions can be made, and equality and inclusivity is a vital consideration within the proposed framework policies. Further evidence is required which can only be obtained by direct engagement with the VCS organisations and tenants who rent from the Council. The Property and Assets Team will work closely with the Community and Partnerships Team and the VCS to seek additional evidence wherever possible to validate or refine the proposal and ensure stakeholders support and continue informing policy direction.

2. For each “protected characteristic” provide details of all the potential or known impacts identified, both positive and negative, and explain how you have reached these conclusions based on the information and evidence listed above. Where appropriate state “not applicable”.

### **AGE**

<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	Not known as these would only be known on a case by case basis.
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### **DISABILITY**

<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	Not known as these would only be known on a case by case basis.
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### **RACE**

<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	Not known as these would only be known on a case by case basis.
--------------------------------------	---

**SEX**

<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	Not known as these would only be known on a case by case basis.
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**SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	Not known as these would only be known on a case by case basis.
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**PREGANCY AND MATERNITY**

<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	Not known as these would only be known on a case by case basis.
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**RELIGION OR BELIEF**

<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	Not known as these would only be known on a case by case basis.
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**GENDER REASSIGNMENT**

<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	Not known as these would only be known on a case by case basis.
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**MARRIAGE & CIVIL PARTNERSHIP**

<b>Details of impacts identified</b>	Not known as these would only be known on a case by case basis.
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3. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?

No

4. Were the participants in any engagement initiatives representative of the people who will be affected by your proposal and is further engagement required?

Yes further engagement is required. Participants in engagement initiatives may be representative of the people who will be affected by the proposals.

5. Please detail any areas identified as requiring further data or detailed analysis.

6. If, following your action plan, negative impacts will or may remain, please explain how these can be justified?

Managing and utilising finite and scarce property resources will inevitably involve making difficult choices, which cannot be avoided. The purpose of the proposal is to ensure that decisions made are in line with the Borough Plan priorities thereby minimising any negative impact on those most in need.

7. Outline how you will monitor the actual, ongoing impact of the policy or proposal?

The Property and Assets Team will need to work closely with internal and external stakeholders to gather evidence and monitor impact of the proposals and interventions.

### SECTION C - CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis above, please detail your overall conclusions. State if any mitigating actions are required to alleviate negative impacts, what these are and what the desired outcomes will be. If positive equality impacts have been identified, consider what actions you can take to enhance them. If you have decided to justify and continue with the policy despite negative equality impacts, provide your justification. If you are to stop the policy, explain why.

Mitigating actions are not required at this stage. Negative impacts can only be known when individual property decisions are made. No individual decisions on properties are being made by this proposal. The desired outcome of the proposal is to create and enhance positive impacts and minimise negative impacts by ensuring that assets are managed in a way that supports the long term use of commercial assets for the benefit of the community. The proposal also seeks to ensure that the decision-making process involves relevant stakeholders.

### SECTION D – RESULT

*Please select one of the following options. Mark with an "X".*

<b>A</b>	<b>CONTINUE WITH THE POLICY/PROPOSAL UNCHANGED</b>	
<b>B</b>	<b>JUSTIFY AND CONTINUE THE POLICY/PROPOSAL</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>CHANGE / ADJUST THE POLICY/PROPOSAL</b>	

<b>D</b>	<b>STOP OR ABANDON THE POLICY/PROPOSAL</b>	
----------	--	--

### SECTION E - ACTION PLAN

This will help you monitor the steps you have identified to reduce the negative impacts (or increase the positive); monitor actual or ongoing impacts; plan reviews and any further engagement or analysis required.

Action	Expected outcome	Officer	Completion Date
Engage with internal stakeholders and with the VCS throughout the process of refining and developing the proposal prior to seeking Cabinet approval.	To understand the concerns of the VCS and other stakeholders and incorporate their feedback into the proposal.	Denish Patel	May/June 2024

### SECTION F – SIGN OFF

Please ensure this section is signed and dated.

<b>OFFICER:</b>	Denish Patel
<b>REVIEWING OFFICER:</b>	Angela Chaudhry
<b>HEAD OF SERVICE / Operational Director:</b>	Tanveer Ghani, Director of Property and Assets

 <p><b>Brent</b></p>	<p><b>Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee</b> 27 February 2024</p>
	<p><b>Report from the Corporate Director, Resident Services</b></p>
	<p><b>Councillor Krupa Sheth, Lead Member for Environment, Infrastructure, and Climate Action</b></p>
<p><b>Climate &amp; Ecological Emergency Strategy Update (Winter 2024)</b></p>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	N/A
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b>	Open
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	3: Appendix A – Draft Data Dashboard Appendix B – 2022-24 Progress Update (Table) Appendix C – 2022-24 Progress Update (Pictures)
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Tom Welsh Climate Emergency Strategy Manager tom.welsh@brent.gov.uk 020 8937 6607  Oliver Myers Head of Environmental Strategy, Waste, and Climate Action oliver.myers@brent.gov.uk 020 8937 5323

## 1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee with an update on the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Programme. This includes an update on both the borough-wide 2022-24 Delivery Plan and specific Green Neighbourhoods action plans which were agreed by Cabinet in January 2023. The report also includes a high-level timeline for the next phase of the programme.

1.2 Also attached as Appendix A is a new proposed draft data dashboard which sets the framework for quantitatively tracking progress against several key 'proxy' datasets, which provide an additional indication of the direction of travel of climate action within the London Borough of Brent.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the content of this report.

## **3.0 Contribution to the Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context**

3.1 The Climate and Ecological Emergency programme is a strategic and corporate priority for the council. It has links to each of the Borough Plan themes but is most directly reflected in the Borough Plan theme 'A Cleaner, Greener Future'. This theme outlines Brent's ambition to '*ensure sustainability is central to the growth of our borough and local economy*' through working to ensure that our borough is cleaner, healthier plus more climate-friendly and environmentally sustainable.

3.2 Linked to the borough plan, the council adopted a [Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy \(2021-2030\)](#) ('the Strategy') in April 2021 which provides the overarching framework and route map to delivering on the council's climate ambitions.

## **4.0 Background**

4.1 The declaration of a climate and ecological emergency by the council in 2019 was an acknowledgement of the threat facing all of us from a changing climate. It committed us to do all reasonable in our gift to tackle the climate and ecological emergency as urgently as possible. In the past three years since adopting our strategy, we have had several major instances of flooding relating to severe downpours which has resulted in an emergency response, and this had a detrimental impact on residents/households across 16 roads in Brent. This can only be expected to increase in the coming years. We also experienced the hottest heatwave the UK has ever experienced, with the BBC singling out Brent in an article as being one of [Britain's Hottest Neighbourhoods](#).

4.2 However, as well as reducing the risks to Brent's local community from global heating, it must be emphasised that there are considerable opportunities from a continued focus on this agenda beyond just reducing carbon emissions. For example, improved public health outcomes, tackling the cost-of-living crisis and boosting the local economy.

### Brent's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy (2021-2030)

4.3 The council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy (2021-2030) was adopted by Cabinet in April 2021, alongside a first-year delivery plan for 2021-2022. We reported on progress of the [council's 2021-22 delivery plan in June 2022](#).

4.4 The development of our Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy considered three main factors in its creation: the evidence base of the greenhouse gas emissions picture in Brent; the priorities set by the Brent Climate Assembly; and the



new London-wide climate workstreams which were borne out of the [climate change declaration](#) made jointly by the London Environment Directors/London Councils Transport and Environment Committee.

- 4.5 The strategy also addresses climate adaptation and as part of our first-year delivery plan, we developed a bespoke [Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan](#) for Brent. We also have a statutory Flood Risk Management Strategy and adaptation is further addressed through the council's new Sustainable Environment and Development Supplementary Planning Document.

#### Refreshing Delivery Plan timelines and shift to a locality-based Green Neighbourhoods model

- 4.6 At its meeting in June 2022, it was agreed by Cabinet to move to two-yearly delivery plans, with a delivery plan for 2022-24 agreed. The new plan was split into two parts (Part A and Part B). The substantive actions set out in Part A were centred around three new areas of focus which would shape and accelerate the council's activity on tackling the climate and ecological emergency for the next two years. These were:

- A placed-based approach, through a) piloting up to three Green Neighbourhoods b) a focus on ensuring the St Raphael's Estate development is as green as possible and c) a review of Brent Local Plan Growth Areas to ensure that sustainability opportunities are maximised.
- Community wealth building, through climate action that supports local economic growth and helps reduce the cost of business for local businesses and other organisations.
- Supporting households with the rising cost of living, through specific climate action that aims to boost household income.

- 4.7 Part B of the delivery plan included other environmental initiatives that did not necessarily fit into the three new areas of focus but built on activity in the 2021-22 Delivery Plan. The goal of the Green Neighbourhoods pilots is to focus our resources in these smaller areas to test how they can become as environmentally sustainable as possible, thereby informing in practice how the whole borough could be carbon neutral and more biodiverse by 2030. The pilots selected were Church End & Roundwood; and Kingsbury (neighbourhood-led); and St Raphael's Estate and South Kilburn (development-led).

- 4.8 The council is taking a phased approach to the delivery of these pilots and thereby the initial focus has been on the Kingsbury and Church End & Roundwood pilot areas.

#### Monitoring, benchmarking, and target setting

- 4.9 The UK government (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero [DESNZ]) produces an annual breakdown of carbon dioxide emissions by Local Authority area as a subset of its annual inventory of greenhouse gas emissions. The complexity of carbon accounting means that this dataset is made available with an 18-month timelag. The most recent dataset below is for the 2021 calendar year. This dataset is the core overarching measure that progress will be measured against over the coming years. These do not include indirect consumption emissions (offshored

emissions from the production of goods consumed in Brent) which are estimated to be four times as high as these.

<b>CARBON EMISSIONS</b>	<b>% of carbon emissions in Brent</b>	<b>Overall tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e</b>
Domestic (Homes)	41%	387,200
Transport	24%	229,500
Industry	14%	127,600
Public Sector	13%	125,600
Commercial	8%	73,800
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>943,700</b>

4.10 Demonstrating progress in reducing local authority emissions is a huge challenge for all councils. This is partly down to the time lag of the national statistics for carbon emissions for local authority areas, as mentioned above.

4.11 The time lag and lack of granularity to the government’s dataset means that all local authorities are reliant on developing ‘proxy’ datasets to give an indication of progress locally. This is also challenging, partly because a climate benchmarking framework for local authorities does not exist, and secondly, because the level of resources at local authorities’ disposal is way below the level of investment required to achieve local carbon neutral/net zero targets. Moreover, because we are dependent on external funding for many of our programmes, setting realistic targets for our projects and programmes is challenging.

4.12 Nevertheless, the council has now developed a new data dashboard for its Climate Strategy which is summarised in section five below. Brent is also working closely with neighbouring boroughs as part of the West London Climate Emergency group and with London Councils in the ongoing delivery and development of the pan-London climate action programme.

## **5.0 Feedback on Scrutiny recommendations from April 2023 meeting**

5.1 The last Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy Update was provided to the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee on 25 April 2023. The committee provided four key suggestions for improvement, which have been incorporated into the council’s climate programme where possible.

### Development of a new data dashboard

5.2 Officers have now developed a data dashboard for Brent’s Strategy as a largely quantitative means of tracking progress of climate and ecological action in the London Borough of Brent. A draft of the document is provided as Appendix A.

5.3 The dashboard provides benchmarking information against neighbouring boroughs who work together as part of the West London Climate Emergency Officers Group; whilst also providing a comparison to Outer London Authorities and Inner London Authorities where it is possible to do so. The creation of the dashboard follows a desktop review of all other London local authorities and substantial research to identify the most relevant and up to date proxy datasets at the current time.

- 5.4 It also sets out a projected target for action against each data measure over the next 12 months and by 2030. It is important to emphasise that developing a tracking tool of this nature and setting realistic targets given the ongoing challenges facing the council and its climate programme (as outlined in section six) remains extremely difficult, and there are some measures where it is not possible to do so. The rationale for these metrics is identified and explained in the commentary column of the document. The dashboard and its metrics/datasets will remain under review and will be treated as live document.
- 5.5 Going forward, it is envisaged that the data dashboard will be re-created as an interactive tool via Microsoft Power BI, and a link to the dashboard will be provided on the council's website, with signposting via the council's climate emergency web pages.

#### Introduction of 'climate implications' into all Cabinet reports

- 5.6 This suggestion was taken forward and there has been a 'Climate Change and Environmental Considerations' section inserted into the report template for all Cabinet reports since its meeting in September 2023.

#### Exploring opportunities to use Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (SCIL)

- 5.7 The most identifiable potential opportunity at the present time relates to the Green Corridors project as part of the Church End and Roundwood Green Neighbourhood Action Plan. The first phase of the project, undertaking a feasibility study, is due to complete imminently. Following the receipt of this, officers will meet to understand what elements could be eligible for SCIL. This will also be looked at in conjunction with the Active Travel Plans to ensure they can work in tandem where possible.

#### Engaging with Brent Friends of the Earth and other community partners

- 5.8 The council continues to engage with Brent Friends of the Earth and other community groups. Active engagement with key stakeholders across different sectors of Brent's communities forms an integral part of Brent's Climate Strategy and is part of the overarching delivery of Brent's 2022-24 Delivery Plan and Green Neighbourhoods Action Plans. Recent examples of this include:
- 71 community climate action projects being funded by the Together Towards Zero grant fund
  - Development of a Faith Climate Action Group and subsequent creation of the Faith Climate Action Plan
  - The development of a 'Climate Ambassadors' group of local community leaders
  - The Faces of Climate Change video and photography project
  - The 2023 Climate Showcase which sought to shine a spotlight on local individuals who are leading the way on tackling climate change

- Working with the schools on climate-related projects in the Green Neighbourhood areas and revamping our support offer to all schools in Brent via the Brent School Climate Champions Network
- Engagement with businesses
- A summit with Registered Providers in September 2023 with the aim of working more closely together on climate-related projects and green space utilisation
- Working with Brent CVS to establish a partnership approach to expanding the programme into the community and voluntary sector

## 6.0 2022-24 progress to date

### Overall progress on our combined delivery/action plans

- 6.1 Our delivery and action plans are treated as ‘live’ documents and when considering the total number actions across the three existing delivery/action plans, there are **103** specific actions to deliver across the whole programme.
- 6.2 Progress is monitored internally through the Corporate Sustainability Board (CSB) and the internal cross-cutting climate action workstreams which sit underneath this Board. The actions in the three delivery/action plans are monitored and provided with a ‘RAG’ (Red, Amber, or Green) rating. At the current time, we have also included two additional ratings which include ‘Inactive’ or ‘Unlikely to complete’. A breakdown of the descriptions of each of these ratings is set out below.

<b>Progress Rating</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Complete (G)</b>	The action may either be completed and closed in totality, or that the core aspects are up and running and ongoing.
<b>In Progress (A)</b>	Work on completing the core aspects and actions to the action is underway, with the expectation that the action is on track to complete within the expected timescale.
<b>Minimal Action (R)</b>	Substantive work on completing the action has not yet commenced (this may be deliberate depending on timescales and to manage officer capacity) but as it stands, the action is still expected to complete within the expected timescale.
<b>Inactive</b>	The action is not possible to complete at this stage due to reasons out of the council’s control.
<b>Unlikely to complete</b>	Rationale has been provided from the Lead service area as to why the action is not expected to complete within the original expected timescale. This is likely to be due to challenges unforeseen at the time of adoption of the delivery/action plan.

6.3 The current picture of progress across the entire programme currently as of February 2024 is as follows:

<b>Progress Rating</b>	<b>No. of actions</b>	<b>% of actions</b>
Complete (G)	34	33%
In Progress (A)	61	59%
Minimal Action (R)	2	2%
Inactive	2	2%
Unlikely to complete	4	4%

6.4 A breakdown indication of some of the headline initiatives either completed or making good progress is outline under the specific borough-wide delivery plan and green neighbourhood action plan sections below. A full table of actions with short qualitative updates and outcomes where possible at this stage is provided as Appendix B.

#### Progress on the 2022-24 Delivery Plan

6.5 The current picture of progress for the 2022-24 Borough-wide Delivery Plan as of February 2024 is as follows:

<b>Progress Rating</b>	<b>No. of actions</b>	<b>% of actions</b>
Complete (G)	23	56%
In Progress (A)	18	44%
Minimal Action (R)	0	0%
Inactive	0	0%
Unlikely to complete	0	0%

#### **Headline updates (since June 2022)**

- Developed and launched bespoke action plans for Church End & Roundwood; and Kingsbury Green Neighbourhoods
- Launched a new Library of Things at Willesden Green Library
- Implemented 36 permanent school street schemes
- Installed 30 new bike hangars
- Installed 304 new Electric Vehicle Charge Points
- Worked with Brent schools to achieve an increased accreditation of either Gold, Silver or Bronze as part of the TfL STARS School Travel Plan scheme
- Launched the Brent's Bike for Businesses e-cargo bike scheme
- Installed the borough's first Living Wall on Willesden Green Library
- Installed the first Ground Source Heat Pump on a council building at Northwick Park pavilion
- Delivered the BEE Colourful Community Planting and Engagement Scheme
- Provided targeted support to businesses through energy efficiency grants

- Provided targeted support to businesses through a new carbon footprinting tool
- Provided targeted support to businesses through a new climate charter
- Improve the Brent Environmental Network to make the network more action focused and community-led
- Launched the Faith Climate Action Plan
- Adopted a new Sustainable Environment and Development Supplementary Planning Document
- Completed a new rain garden as part of Kensal Corridor scheme
- Worked with partners to create a new mini forest in King Edwards Park
- Launched the new Green Skills Centre in Willesden
- Launched a new sector-based pathways scheme for unemployed people to take up 'green' jobs
- Launched the Brent Well and Warm Affordable Energy advice service, targeting the most vulnerable households in Brent
- Undertook a Net Zero Schools Retrofit and Engagement Project with at least five local schools
- Developed and continuing to run new sustainability communications campaigns (Junk Kouture sustainable fashion Project; Faces of Climate Change Photography Competition; Eco-Peace Event; Brent Environmental Network Newsletters/Events etc)
- Delivered two rounds of the Together Towards Zero Small Grants Scheme, providing funding to local community projects that contribute to reducing emissions and/or making Brent greener and more biodiverse
- Refreshing the Brent School Climate Champions Network
- Successfully secured £8.1m in external grant funding since June 2022

### Progress on Community-led Green Neighbourhoods Pilots

- 6.6 Following the selection of the first two neighbourhood-led Green Neighbourhood pilots (Church End & Roundwood; and Kingsbury) officers undertook a period of community engagement in both areas and liaison with officers to put together bespoke action plans. This helped crystallise the distinct emerging visions in the pilot areas.
- 6.7 For example, in the Church End and Roundwood area there is significant potential for developing an area-wide focus on 'Green Corridors' to promote the healthy streets agenda, enhancing and linking green and active infrastructure which we are currently working on with Sustrans (an active travel/green infrastructure consultancy).
- 6.8 In Kingsbury, a key factor for the area is the importance of the Kingsbury and Kenton schools cluster who are passionate about environmental sustainability and tackling climate change. There are approximately 16 schools in and around the Kingsbury Green Neighbourhood boundary – which provides a substantial potential for

reaching into the heart of local communities on this agenda and encouraging local action.

6.9 Our aim is to utilise this school grouping as a catalyst for engaging the wider community and reaching numbers of people that the council cannot usually reach on its own via the extended school community.

6.10 The current picture of progress for the Green Neighbourhoods action plans as of February 2024 is as follows:

*Church End & Roundwood Green Neighbourhood*

<b>Progress Rating</b>	<b>No. of actions</b>	<b>% of actions</b>
Complete (G)	6	18%
In Progress (A)	24	71%
Minimal Action (R)	2	6%
Inactive	1	2.9%
Unlikely to complete	1	2.9%

<b>Headline updates (since January 2023)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New permanent School Street Schemes at John Keble, Leopold and St Mary's CofE Primary Schools</li> <li>• New Trees planted on Church Road High Street</li> <li>• Two re-use and repair pop-up events in community settings</li> <li>• New Library of Things at Willesden Green Library (linked to project, estimated 20 min walk from Church End &amp; Roundwood Green Neighbourhood)</li> <li>• Delivery of BEE Colourful community planting project on Craven Park Road</li> <li>• Bespoke STARS School Travel Plan Engagement work and cycle training sessions with schools in the area</li> <li>• Undertaken the first phase of 'Green Corridors' project working with Sustrans and engaging with the local community on potential improvements to active travel routes and green infrastructure in the area</li> <li>• Two new Bike Hangars on Franklyn Road and Essex Road</li> <li>• Two new Electric Vehicle Charge Points on Roundwood Road and Essex Road</li> <li>• Summit held with Registered Providers which explored working together on Environmental Sustainability initiatives in the area</li> <li>• Development of a local Climate Community Action Group</li> <li>• New Green Neighbourhood signage encouraging local residents to take part</li> </ul>

### Kingsbury Green Neighbourhood

Progress Rating	No. of actions	% of actions
Complete (G)	5	18%
In Progress (A)	19	68%
Minimal Action (R)	0	0%
Inactive	1	4%
Unlikely to complete	3	11%

#### Headline updates (since January 2023)

- Working closely with the Kingsbury and Kenton Schools cluster on embedding the ‘whole school’ approach to Environmental Sustainability in the area. Activities so far have included:
  - 12 school visits undertaken, informal environmental audit undertaken through discussions with school staff/sustainability leads
  - ‘Love Your World’ assemblies with guest speakers
  - Masterclass webinar on setting up a student-led eco-committee
  - School involvement in Climate Showcase 2023
  - Training being delivered by Earth Warriors on embedding climate education into the curriculum
  - Sustainable Fashion workshops with Junk Kouture
- New permanent School Street Schemes at
- New green infrastructure improvements to Leybourne Open Space
- Delivery of the first re-use and repair pop-up event in Kingsbury which took place at the Kingsbury Temple in July 2023
- Bespoke STARS School Travel Plan Engagement work and cycle training sessions with schools in the area
- Development of a local Climate Community Action Group
- New Green Neighbourhood signage encouraging local residents to take part

#### Progress with the ‘Development-led’ Green Neighbourhoods for South Kilburn and St Raphael’s Estate

- 6.11 It is the intention for the South Kilburn and St Raphael’s Estate programmes to be delivered on a timeline up to the end of the 2025-26 financial year. Officers have begun to define the scope of these schemes and how they could complement the council’s existing plans for both areas. The scale and scope of the action plans for these areas will be dependent on the availability of funding and officer capacity.

### 7.0 Ongoing Challenges/Risks/Lessons Learned

- 7.1 The key identifiable challenges which remain in the delivery of this strategy are **funding, supporting data** and **enacting long-term behaviour change**.

#### Funding:

- 7.2 Retrofitting homes – retrofitting remains prohibitively expensive at scale. Whilst we have secured some funding (£1.3m) from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, our best estimate for retrofitting council housing stock up to an average is EPC B is that it would cost £60m, and it is likely with current inflationary pressures



that this figure would be even higher. We are continuing to monitor an approach Hounslow are looking at which centres on institutional investment in retrofitting to unlock capital over a 20–30-year period, and are linked into London Councils' work with 3Ci, the Cities Commission for Climate Investment. 3Ci is a partnership aimed at unlocking investment in local areas at the scale necessary for financing net zero in the long-term and to create robust business cases and investment models that address issues of scale, longevity and confidence. There is also the issue of green skills and having enough individuals and providers operating with the relevant expertise in this area if/when funding does become available. We are proactively seeking to address this through the creation of the Green Skills Centre at the College of North West London in Willesden.

- 7.3 Retrofitting non-domestic premises – Similarly, there is an increasing demand from businesses to improve their carbon footprint, much of which comes down to improving energy efficiency on premises, however there is very little central funding for this, and businesses often look to local authorities for financial incentives to undertake this work. Whilst we have been able to provide some support via the Brent for Business Energy Efficiency Scheme, again, it is not at the scale required. Similarly, whilst we have made good progress on energy efficiency improvements to our corporate estate, bringing the schools, which we have responsibility for, up to a gold standard (PassivHaus) for energy efficiency would cost an estimated £100m.
- 7.4 Active travel planning/car usage – Whilst we are making good progress on the number of electric vehicle charge points in the borough, the council is also committed to improving active travel in the borough and encouraging more people to transition away from cars where possible. This is not only beneficial for air quality, reduces carbon emissions but is also positive for public health and the council's wider aims to reduce road traffic collisions. However, the council is very dependent on funding from Transport for London (TfL) for active travel infrastructure improvements that would have a genuinely transformative effect. Enhanced strategic links to other West London boroughs on active travel infrastructure between boroughs and understanding of collective routes and plans would be beneficial. The resident reaction to the planned implementation of Healthy Neighbourhoods in 2020 also resulted in four out of five schemes being removed. However, there are new Healthy Neighbourhood schemes under consideration as part of the Green Corridors scheme in Church End & Roundwood, Queens Park and Kilburn.
- 7.5 Green (Natural) Infrastructure – similarly, whilst a Green Infrastructure Vision and associated high level long-term action plan has been drafted, the associated potential capital costs to deliver potential schemes could be between £5-10m and we would be heavily reliant on external grant funding to be able to implement this. Environmental sustainability improvements will be made wherever possible within the council's new Grounds Maintenance contract.

Supporting data:

- 7.6 The existing challenges with monitoring and supporting data are set out in paragraphs 4.9 - 4.11 above.

## Enacting long-term behaviour change

- 7.7 Achieving net zero will require all of Brent's communities to act within their day-to-day lives to support the goal. For example, Brent's recycling rate like most other authorities has plateaued and contamination levels here are very high. These are deep-rooted behaviours that are likely to take time to address, although it is hoped that the recent changes to Brent's waste and recycling services and a food waste caddy roll-out next year will lead to improvements.
- 7.8 Significant behaviour change is also required for modal shift from polluting vehicles, adopting energy efficient behaviours in homes and buildings, and protecting the natural environment through a reduction in littering and fly tipping. The presence of flytipping and litter has created a damaging perception of the council and the local area more widely when trying to engage with residents on climate/environmental issues.
- 7.9 We have not yet reached a point where widespread community climate action is self-sustaining without the council's input. There are positive signs, and pockets of activity, with a number of individuals and groups doing fantastic work (as outlined in paragraph 5.8 above) but, as it stands, the significance of the council's leadership and coordination role remains unchanged as achieving a significant 'reach' into the community remains an ongoing challenge. We also acknowledge that there are some sectors that require further engagement with from a council perspective, such as other public sector bodies (for instance the NHS) and registered providers of social housing.

## **8.0 Looking Forward**

- 8.1 The delivery plan for 2022-24 will run until the end of the 2024 calendar year. Key milestones for 2024 include:

<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Delivering and completing actions within Green Neighbourhoods Action Plan	Present-End of 2024
Delivering and completing actions within 2022-24 Delivery Plan	Present-End of 2024
Reviewing and developing plans for South Kilburn and St Raphael's Estate	Present-April 2026
Review of current Green Neighbourhoods Programme	Spring2024
Development of the next Delivery Plan (2024-2026)	Spring/Summer 2024

## **9.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

- 9.1 Ward members in the Green Neighbourhood areas are always invited to any sustainability-related events taking place within the Green Neighbourhoods and are regularly communicated on project developments or additions to the programme.

9.2 We have also held several Member Learning and Development sessions and provided factsheets for ward councillors in relation to the climate and ecological emergency.

9.3 Engagement with stakeholders within the wider Brent Community takes place under the umbrella of the Brent Environmental Network.

## **10.0 Financial Considerations**

10.1 Detailed financial implications are provided as part of the June 2022 and January 2023 Cabinet reports, when the 2022-2024 Delivery Plan and the Green Neighbourhoods Action Plans were approved respectively.

10.2 The climate emergency team has an annual revenue budget in 2023/24 of approximately £920k, comprising £370k core revenue budget, £350k funding from the borough-plan fund and £200k from reserves earmarked for the climate emergency team.

## **11.0 Legal Considerations**

11.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 (the Act) is the statutory basis for the UK's approach to tackling and responding to climate change. The Act places a legal duty on central government to set legally binding targets to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050.

11.2 The data provided from those who sign up to the Brent Environmental Network is managed in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other relevant Data Protection legislation.

11.3 In delivering the Brent Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy, the Council continues to have regard to internal governance procedures and the Public Contract Regulations 2015 in respect of any procurement.

## **12.0 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

12.1 The council, as a public authority exercising public functions, is subject to a public sector equality duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (EqA). A full Equalities Impact Assessment was provided upon the adoption of the Climate and Ecological Strategy in 2021 and has been published on the council's website. This EIA forms the basis of the development of the action plans as part of this project.

## **13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

13.1 Climate change and environmental considerations are integral to the purpose, content and recommendations in this report.

## **14.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)**

14.1 There are no HR implications arising from this report.

14.2 Property wise, the council is working towards a decarbonisation strategy for Brent's estate as noted within the 2022-2024 delivery plan.

## 15.0 Communication Considerations

15.1 Communications and engagement are integral to the Council's climate emergency programme. We utilise the council's corporate communication channels with most of our communications and engagement being via the Brent Environmental Network and its various bespoke segments.

**Report sign off:**

***Peter Gadsdon***

Corporate Director of Resident Services



**Brent  
Together**  
Towards Zero

## BRENT CLIMATE ACTION DATA DASHBOARD

### Contents:

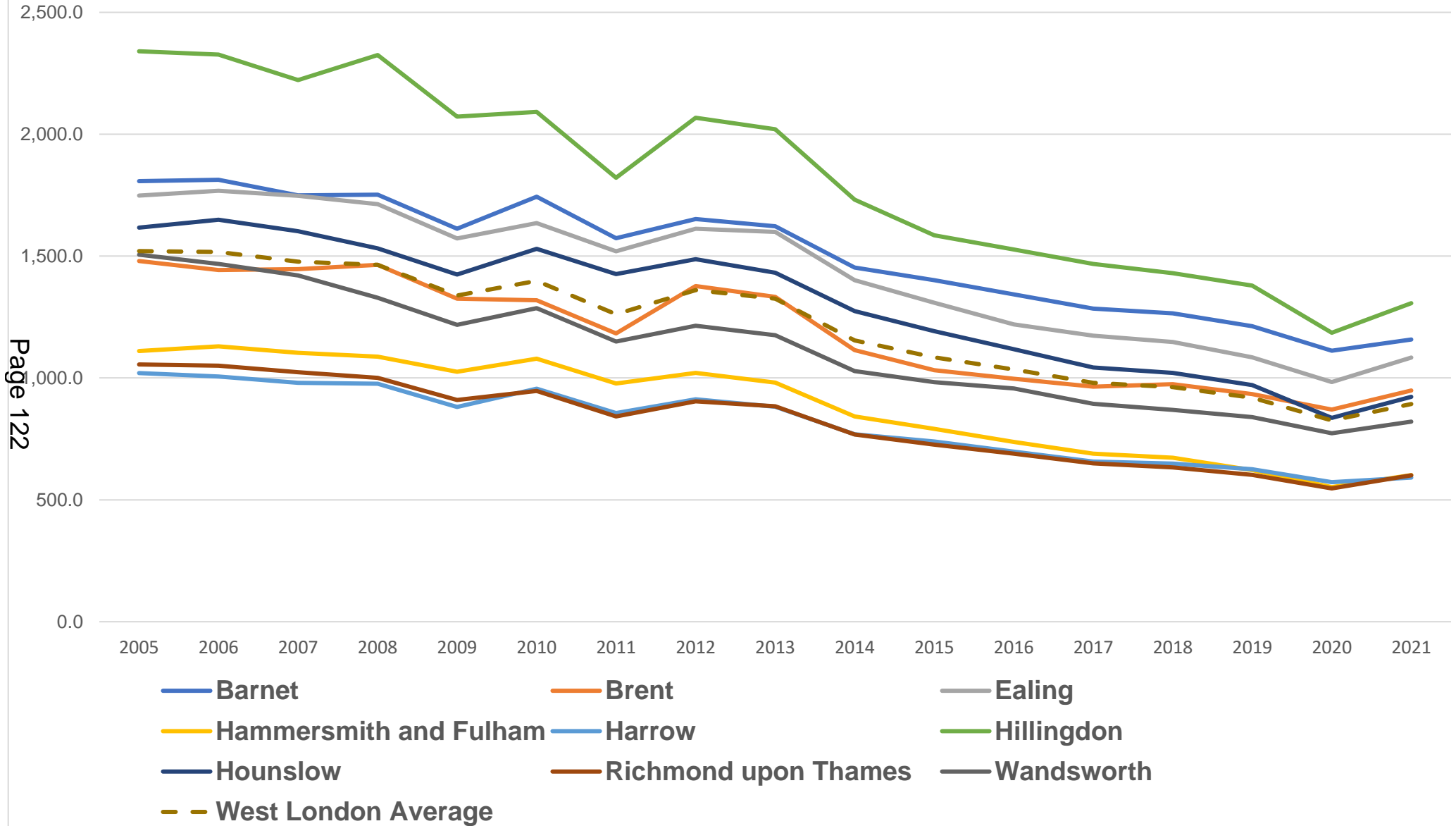
- **Grand total CO2 emissions – Boroughs in West London Climate Emergency Group**
- **Theoretical Territorial Emissions Reduction Trajectory**
- **Theoretical Consumption Emissions Reduction Trajectory**
- **Theme 1 – Consumption, Resources, and Waste**
- **Theme 2 – Sustainable Travel**
- **Theme 3 – Homes, Buildings, and the Built Environment**
- **Theme 4 – Nature and Green Space**
- **Theme 5 – Supporting Communities**

**\*Counted as boroughs in West London Climate Emergency Group =** *Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Richmond, Wandsworth*

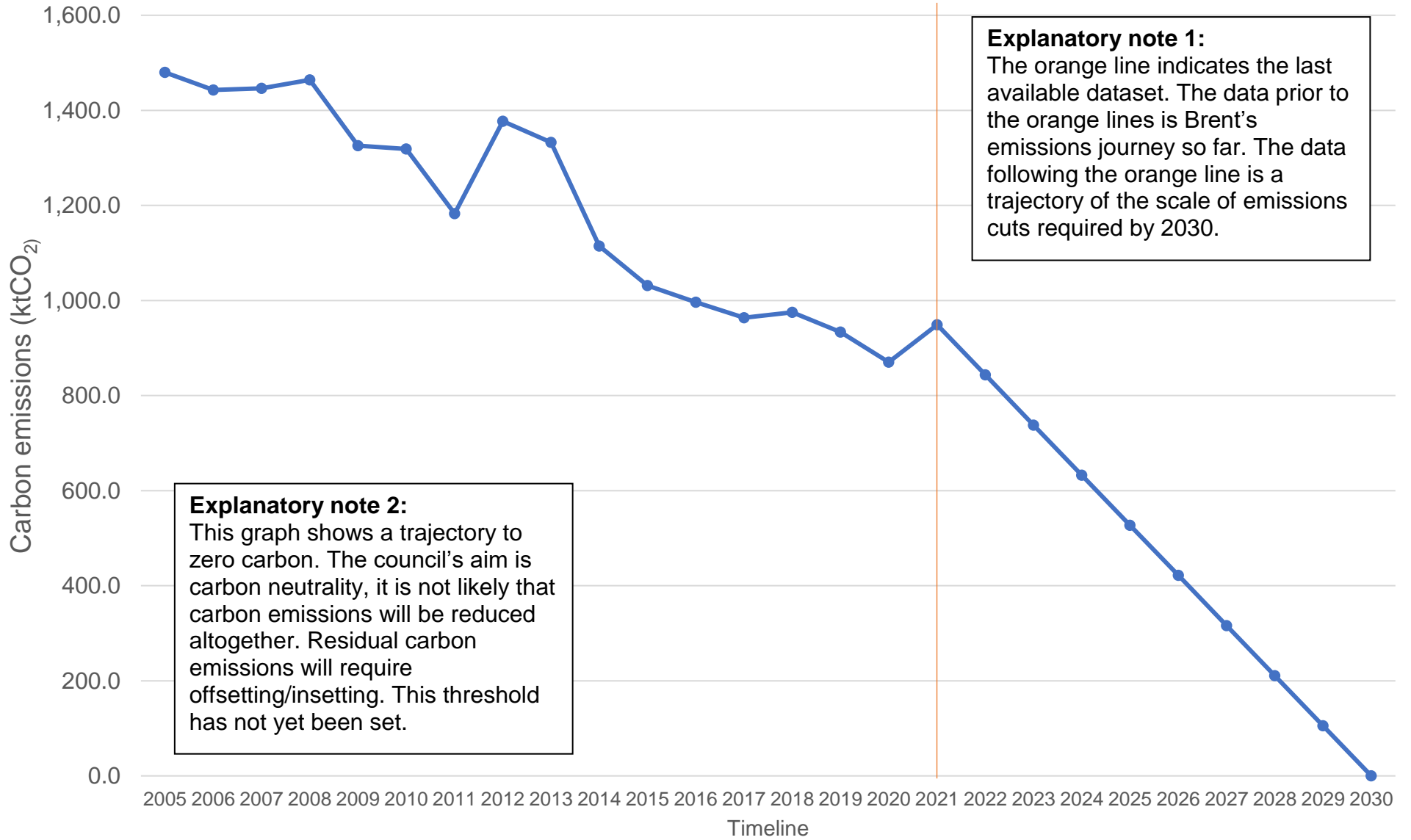
**\*\*Counted as Inner London Authorities =** *Camden, City of London, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Lambeth, Lewisham, Newham, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth and Westminster*

**\*\*\*Counted as Outer London authorities =** *Barking and Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Brent, Bromley, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Haringey, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kingston upon Thames, Merton, Redbridge, Richmond upon Thames, Sutton, Waltham Forest*

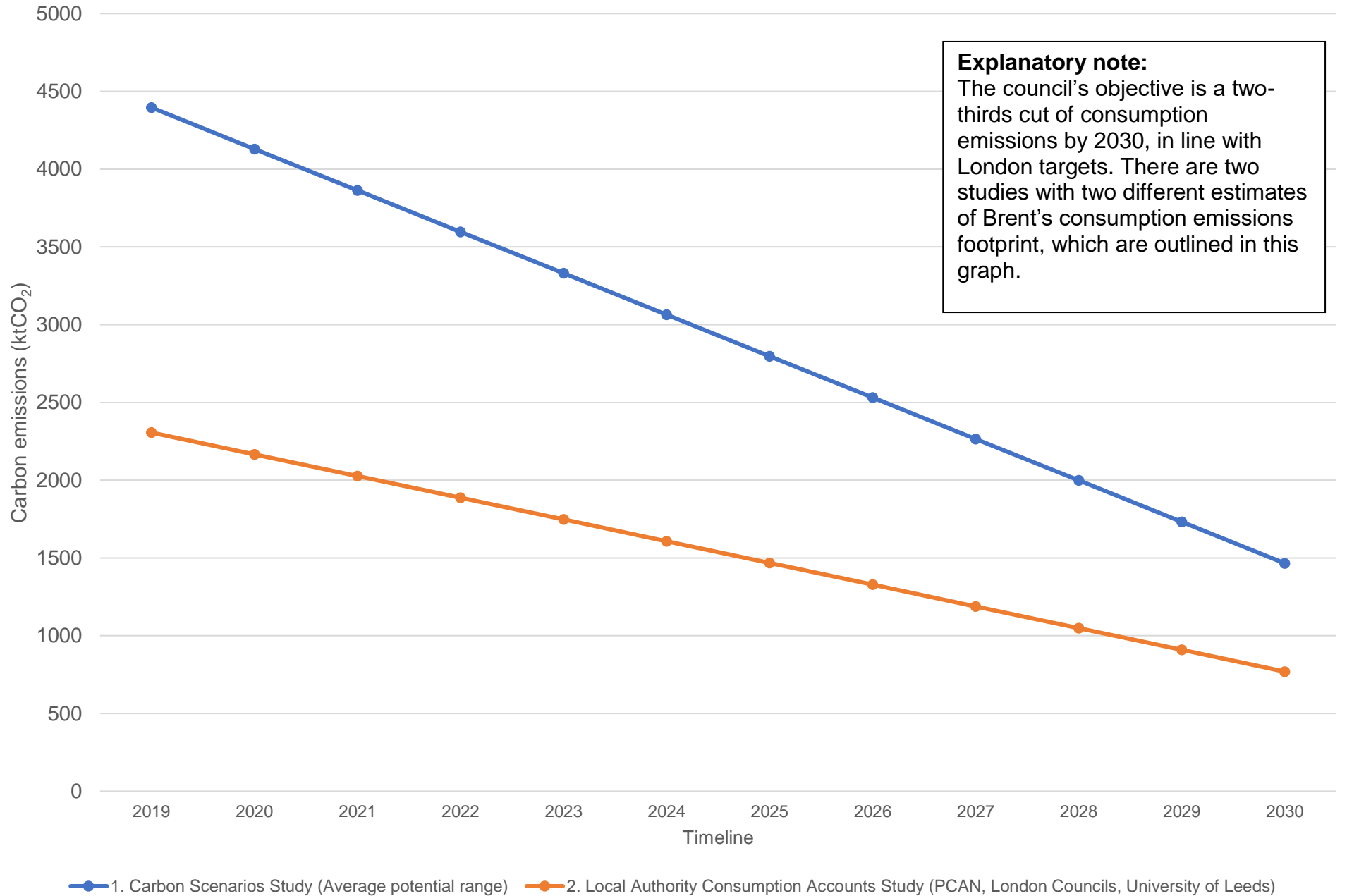
# Grand Total CO<sub>2</sub> (kt) Emissions - Boroughs in West London Climate Emergency Group, 2010-2021 (DESNZ)



# Theoretical territorial emission reduction trajectory - Brent



# Theoretical consumptions emissions trajectory - Brent





## Theme 1 – Consumption, Resources and Waste

No.	Measure	Current Brent Data (Data source)	Brent July 2019 baseline (Data source)	Current average for boroughs in West London Climate Group* (Mean)	Current Inner-London average** (Mean)	Current Outer-London average*** (Mean)	Target for end of 2024-25 / next annual dataset	Projected Target by 2030 (unless otherwise stated)	Council role/influence in achieving target	Commentary / Notes
1.	<p><b>Annual household recycling rate</b></p> <p><i>A higher percentage indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>37.8%</b></p> <p><a href="#">Defra, Waste Data Flow (LA)</a> (2021-22)</p>	<p>34.2%</p> <p><a href="#">Defra, Waste Data Flow (LA)</a> (2021-22)</p>	<p>35%</p> <p><a href="#">Defra, Waste Data Flow (LA)</a> (2021-22)</p>	<p>27.6%</p> <p><a href="#">Defra, Waste Data Flow (LA)</a> (2021-22)</p>	<p>38%</p> <p><a href="#">Defra, Waste Data Flow (LA)</a> (2021-22)</p>	41%	N/A	<p><b>Indirect Medium Influence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council has recently entered a new long-term waste contract with Veolia.</li> <li>The council has limited direct influence over resident's recycling behaviours but will continue to undertake education initiatives and innovate wherever possible.</li> <li>It is not possible to set a projected target for 2030 before the new waste contract and services are embedded.</li> </ul>	
2.	<p><b>Annual household waste per head</b></p> <p><i>A lower rate of kilograms indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>264.7kg</b></p> <p><a href="#">Defra, Waste Data Flow (LA)</a> (2021-22)</p>	<p>288.7kg</p> <p><a href="#">Defra, Waste Data Flow (LA)</a> (2021-22)</p>	<p>322.8kg</p> <p><a href="#">Defra, Waste Data Flow (LA)</a> (2021-22)</p>	<p>316.5kg</p> <p><a href="#">Defra, Waste Data Flow (LA)</a> (2021-22)</p>	<p>345 kg</p> <p><a href="#">Defra, Waste Data Flow (LA)</a> (2021-22)</p>	288kg	N/A	<p><b>Indirect Medium Influence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At present, Brent is achieving its annual target for 2024-25.</li> <li>See comments in row above for further context.</li> </ul>	

## Theme 2 – Sustainable Travel

No.	Measure	Current Brent Data (Data source)	Brent July 2019 baseline (Data source)	Current average for boroughs in West London Climate Group* (Mean)	Current Inner-London average** (Mean)	Current Outer-London average*** (Mean)	Target for next 12 months / next annual dataset	Projected Target by 2030 (unless otherwise stated)	Council role/influence in achieving target	Commentary / Notes
3.	<p><b>% of average daily trips made by active travel measures</b></p> <p><i>A higher percentage indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>39%</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p> <p><i>^This dataset is sent to the council directly from TfL</i></p>	<p><b>33%</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (Dec 20)</p>	<p><b>41%</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>52%</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>37%</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>40%</b></p>	<p><b>42%</b></p>	<p><b>Indirect Medium Influence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council has limited direct influence over Brent residents' daily travel choices but will continue to support the shift to more active travel trips by pulling the levers at its disposal.</li> <li>The <a href="#">Active Travel Implementation Plan</a>, once finalised, is the focal point for the action that the council be pursuing.</li> <li>Much of this work remains dependent on available funding. Brent's allocation of funding from TfL for its Local Implementation Plan has been halved since 2020 which makes both the scope of what is possible and pace at which it is able to implement it extremely challenging.</li> <li>Inner London's active travel infrastructure is significantly more advanced than in Outer London, which is in part set by TfL funding and priority roll-out of schemes.</li> </ul>
4.	<p><b>% of average daily trips made by public transport</b></p> <p><i>A higher percentage indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>29%</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>36%</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (Dec 20)</p>	<p><b>25%</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>27%</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>22%</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>29%</b></p>	<p><b>31%</b></p>	<p><b>Indirect Low Influence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of people using public transport is thought to have reduced significantly in years following COVID-19.</li> <li>We work with closely with TfL to ensure the smooth running of the public transport system within the borough to enable residents to view this as a positive option of getting around.</li> </ul>

5.	<p><b>Overall sustainable modeshare</b> <i>(Levels of travel by sustainable modes: public transport, walking, cycling)</i></p> <p><i>A higher percentage indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>68%</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>69%</p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (Dec 20)</p>	<p>65%</p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>79%</p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>58%</p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>69%</p>	<p>73%</p> <p><b>80%</b> By 2041 (Long Term Transport Strategy)</p>	<p><b>Indirect Low-Medium Influence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This data measure reflects a combination of the two metrics above.</li> <li>Brent's overall average is higher than average for West London and Outer London more generally.</li> </ul>
6.	<p><b>% of residents doing at least two x 10 minutes of active travel a day</b></p> <p><i>A higher percentage indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>30%</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>31%</p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>33%</p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>42%</p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>31%</p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>32%</p>	<p>48%</p> <p><b>70%</b> By 2041 (Long Term Transport Strategy)</p>	<p><b>Indirect Low Influence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brent's figures are marginally lower than average and the previous position from 2019.</li> <li>There is also a public health aspect to this metric, and beyond sustainable travel strategies, also links to initiatives being pursued as part of the Borough Plan and joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.</li> <li>Improved promotion of existing activities which already exist across Brent's Environment and Leisure and Public Health directorates is currently being discussed.</li> </ul>
7.	<p><b>% of population within 400m of a strategic cycle network</b></p> <p><i>A higher percentage indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>14%</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>6%</p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>13%</p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>47%</p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>12%</p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p>18%</p>	<p>43%</p> <p><b>80%</b> By 2041 (Long Term Transport Strategy)</p>	<p><b>Mixed Medium Influence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inner London's strategic cycle network is significantly more advanced than in Outer London, which is in part set by TfL funding and priority roll-out of schemes.</li> <li>The Long-term transport strategy sets out the aspirational cycling links, alongside the existing cycle network in the borough and proposed future routes.</li> <li>The immediate proposals for improving the cycle network in Brent are the development of a TfL scheme that would make it easier for local people to walk and cycle between Wembley and Willesden Junction.</li> </ul>

										<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are also finalising the feasibility study setting out proposed 'Green Corridors' for active travel improvements as part of the Church End &amp; Roundwood Green Neighbourhoods scheme.</li> </ul>
8.	<p><b>Annual vehicle kilometres travelled (millions)</b></p> <p><i>A lower number of miles indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>962</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>1024</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>1163</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>628</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>1154</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>954</b></p>	<p><b>901</b></p> <p><b>824</b> By 2041 (Long Term Transport Strategy)</p>	<p><b>Indirect Low Influence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brent's residents are driving less annually than both the West London and outer London average, but more than inner London.</li> <li>Whilst Brent's targets aim for a reduction in annual vehicle kilometres travelled, the shift away from petrol and diesel vehicles does not necessarily mean a shift away from the car altogether.</li> <li>Promoting the use of zero emission (at source) vehicles (electric or hydrogen) across the borough will be important, as will working with TfL on the strategic infrastructure to support this.</li> </ul>
9.	<p><b>No. of cars owned</b></p> <p><i>A lower number of cars owned indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>92,878</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>97,348</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>98,063</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>49,733</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>102,232</b></p> <p>Mayor's Transport Strategy Outcome Indicators (2022-23)</p>	<p><b>91,774</b></p>	<p><b>84,048</b></p> <p><b>73,011</b> By 2041 (Long Term Transport Strategy)</p>	<p><b>Indirect Low Influence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are less cars owned in the borough than the West London and Outer London average, but more than inner London.</li> <li>See comments in row above for further context.</li> </ul>
10.	<p><b>Average NO<sub>2</sub> annual mean concentration</b> <i>(measured by micrograms per cubic metre)</i></p> <p><i>A lower number of particulates measured indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>34.15</b> (Ave of 4 automatic monitoring sites)</p> <p><a href="#">Brent JSNA Dashboard</a></p>	<p><b>44.75</b> (Ave of 4 automatic monitoring sites)</p> <p><a href="#">Brent JSNA Dashboard</a></p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p><b>31.13</b></p>	<p><b>10</b> (WHO guidelines)</p>	<p><b>Indirect Medium Influence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council has recently adopted a new <a href="#">Air Quality Action Plan</a> which has extended the Air Quality Management Area Order for the whole borough and sets out plans overarching plans to tackle and further improve air quality in the borough over the coming years.</li> <li>It is not possible to compare this data to other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>
11.	<p><b>Average PM<sub>2.5</sub> annual mean concentration</b></p>	<p><b>10.45</b> (Ave of 2 automatic monitoring sites)</p>	<p><b>19.8</b> (Ave of 2 automatic monitoring sites)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p><b>9.77</b></p>	<p><b>5</b> (WHO guidelines)</p>	<p><b>Indirect Medium Influence</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See comments in row above for further context.</li> </ul>

	(measured by micrograms per cubic metre)  A lower number of particulates measured indicates better performance.	<a href="#">Brent JSNA Dashboard</a>	<a href="#">Brent JSNA Dashboard</a>							
12.	<b>Average PM<sub>10</sub> annual mean concentration</b> (measured by micrograms per cubic metre)  A lower number of particulates measured indicates better performance.	<b>20.55</b> (Ave of 4 automatic monitoring sites)  <a href="#">Brent JSNA Dashboard</a>	<b>23.25</b> (Ave of 4 automatic monitoring sites)  <a href="#">Brent JSNA Dashboard</a>	N/A	N/A	N/A	19.86	15 (WHO guidelines)	<b>Indirect Medium Influence</b>	See comments in row above for further context.
13.	<b>% of borough covered by Healthy Neighbourhood (Low-Traffic) Schemes</b>  A higher percentage indicates better performance.	<b>12%</b>  <a href="#">Healthy Streets Scorecard (2023)</a>	<b>9%</b> (estimate)  <a href="#">Healthy Streets Scorecard (2023)</a>	<b>19%</b>  <a href="#">Healthy Streets Scorecard (2023)</a>	<b>33%</b>  <a href="#">Healthy Streets Scorecard (2023)</a>	<b>21%</b>  <a href="#">Healthy Streets Scorecard (2023)</a>	N/A	N/A	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brent's number is lower than all other comparable London datasets.</li> <li>Several proposed schemes were either removed or have not yet been trialled due to resident concerns which were raised during the consultation process. As a result, the council has changed its approach with a focus on community engagement and co-design prior to formal public consultation. Several new schemes are currently being actively considered alongside engagement with residents.</li> </ul>
14.	<b>Proportion of borough schools with</b>	<b>33%</b>  <a href="#">Healthy Streets</a>	<b>0%</b> Internal (2024)	<b>15%</b>  <a href="#">Healthy Streets</a>	<b>23%</b>  <a href="#">Healthy Streets</a>	<b>18%</b>  <a href="#">Healthy Streets</a>	<b>36%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brent has a significantly higher proportion of School Street Schemes when compared to West, Inner and Outer London averages.</li> </ul>

	<b>school streets scheme</b> (& no. of School Streets)  <i>A higher percentage indicates better performance.</i>	<a href="#">Scorecard</a> (2023)		<a href="#">Scorecard</a> (2023)	<a href="#">Scorecard</a> (2023)	<a href="#">Scorecard</a> (2023)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36 schemes are currently in operation that have at least one camera enforcing them, with a few schemes expanding to having a few cameras enforcing on nearby roads.</li> <li>• The schemes have helped towards a 14% increase in active travel since last year 2021-22, meaning more pupils are getting to school by walking, cycling, or scooting.</li> </ul>
15.	<b>No. of Bike Hangars in Brent</b>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>	<b>144</b>  Internal (2024)	<b>59</b> (estimate)  Internal (2024)	N/A	N/A	N/A	154	204	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brent has more than doubled its number of bike hangars since 2019.</li> <li>• It is not possible to easily compare data with other London Boroughs on this metric, however <a href="#">a recent piece of work by Steer and Clean Cities</a> indicates that the highest performing boroughs are currently: Hackney, Islington, Lambeth, Southwark, and Waltham Forest (all Inner London).</li> <li>• Demand for bike hangars significantly outweighs supply and whilst the council is doing all that it can to deliver an increased number of hangars in the borough, this is dependent on available funding. There are also ongoing issues with hangars being broken into or damaged.</li> </ul>
16.	<b>Overall no. of bike hangar spaces allocated</b>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>	<b>864</b>  Internal (2024)	354	N/A	N/A	N/A	924	1224	<b>Indirect Medium Influence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brent has more than doubled its number of bike hangar spaces since 2019.</li> <li>• See comments in row above for further context.</li> </ul>
17.	<b>% of Schools with a gold, silver or bronze accredited Sustainable</b>	48%  Internal (2024)	47%  Internal (2024)	N/A	N/A	N/A	52%	75%	<b>Indirect Medium-High Influence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whilst the council continues to provide support, advice and encouragement to schools on developing and submitting a travel plan, the responsibility to participate in this scheme ultimately lies with schools.</li> <li>• We know from feedback that this can be difficult for some schools due to capacity issues and we</li> </ul>

	<b>School Travel Plan</b>  <i>A higher percentage indicates better performance.</i>									<p>continue to seek ways that this can be collaboratively alleviated. For example, we are developing a Schools Climate Action Plan guide for all Brent schools which will provide additional guidance on this topic and will be facilitating schools to learn best practice from others who are 'Gold' accredited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is not possible to compare this data to other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>
18.	<b>No. of Electric Vehicle Charge Points in Brent</b>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>	<b>941</b>  <a href="#">Department for Transport</a> (Oct 2023)	<b>207</b>  <a href="#">Department for Transport</a> (Oct 2023)	<b>705</b>  <a href="#">Department for Transport</a> (Oct 2023)	<b>791</b>  <a href="#">Department for Transport</a> (Oct 2023)	<b>309</b>  <a href="#">Department for Transport</a> (Oct 2023)	N/A	<b>Between 2194-1784</b>  Target is dependent on a 'high residential or 'high opportunity' strategy being chosen	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brent's record of electric vehicle charge point installation is higher than the West London average and inner London average whilst also being considerably higher than the outer London average.</li> <li>We know what is likely to be required by 2030 and are continuing to work with partners and our contractors to increase this number and are continuously horizon scanning for new sources of funding.</li> </ul>

## Theme 3 – Homes, Buildings, and the Built Environment

No.	Measure	Current Brent Data (Data source)	Brent July 2019 baseline (Data source)	Current average for boroughs in West London Climate Group* (Mean)	Current Inner London average** (Mean)	Current Outer London average*** (Mean)	Target for next 12 months / next annual dataset	Projected Target by 2030 (unless otherwise stated)	Council role/influence in achieving target	Commentary / Notes
19.	<p><b>No. of energy efficiency retrofit improvement projects undertaken on council buildings (non-domestic) since 2019<sup>1</sup></b></p> <p><i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>78</b></p> <p>Internal (2024)</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brent's figure of 78 projects is since obtaining £3.2m of Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding in 2020 to provide energy efficiency improvement works to 16 council owned buildings.</li> <li>Energy efficiency work is highly dependent on substantial capital investment. There is currently no available council funding for any further future work. It is therefore not possible to predict when further work of this kind may take place, or project a target to 2030, but we will continue to seek external funding opportunities.</li> <li>It is not possible to compare data with other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>
20.	<p><b>No. energy efficiency retrofit improvement projects undertaken</b></p>	<p><b>40</b></p> <p>Internal (2024)</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	41	N/A	<b>Direct (Primary)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We do not have comparable data since 2019 and it is not possible to compare data with other London Boroughs.</li> <li>There are 37 council-maintained community schools across 39 sites</li> <li>Energy efficiency work on schools is also highly dependent on substantial capital investment to be</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Types of work listed for consideration included: LED Lighting Replacement, Lighting Controls, BMS Upgrade/Optimisation, Air Source Heat Pump, Ground Source Heat Pump, Cavity Wall Insulation, External Wall Insulation, Skylight replacement, Double glazing with metal or plastic frames, Loft insulation, Hot water – point of use heaters, Solar Photovoltaic, De-stratification Fan, Dishwasher, Combi-oven



	<p><b>on Council maintained schools (primary) since 2019<sup>2</sup></b></p> <p><i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i></p>									<p>able to undertake. The council has submitted a bid for the most recent Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme round which was earmarked specifically for schools. A successful bid would enable a further four council-maintained schools to be retrofitted.</p>
21.	<p><b>% Reduction in emissions from council own estate and operations emissions 2010-11 baseline</b></p> <p><i>A higher percentage indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>67.9%</b></p> <p>Internal (2021-22)</p>	<p>56%</p> <p>Internal (2021-22)</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	71.9%	100%	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council reports on carbon emissions reduction across its estate and operations on a yearly basis.</li> <li>• The reporting considers the council's carbon footprint against its buildings, fleet and streetlights as its main direct organisational sources of energy.</li> <li>• Our corporate emissions only make up a very small proportion of total borough-wide emissions.</li> <li>• We are seeking external funding opportunities to fund development of a feasibility study on how we can achieve net zero by 2030.</li> <li>• It is not possible to compare this data to other London boroughs.</li> </ul>
22.	<p><b>No. of council housing stock (domestic) retrofitted with at least one energy efficiency</b></p>	<p><b>1,073</b></p> <p>Internal (2024)</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	650	N/A	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since 2019, we have undertaken three retrofit pilots on void street properties.</li> <li>• We were successful in securing £1.3m of funding from the government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF).</li> <li>• The aim for this funding is to undertake retrofit work on 127 of the most energy inefficient properties within the council's own stock.</li> <li>• Retrofitting on domestic properties is also prohibitively expensive at scale. Brent has 10,000 properties of which 32% are EPC D or lower.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Types of work listed for consideration included: Solar Photovoltaic, Cavity wall insulation, Loft insulation, Window/Door replacement, Roof replacement, LED lighting replacement, Boiler replacement

	<b>measure since 2019<sup>3</sup></b> <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>									<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our best estimate for retrofitting council housing stock up to an average is EPC B is that it would cost £60m, and it is likely with current inflationary pressures that this figure would be even higher.</li> <li>• It is not possible to compare this data to other London boroughs.</li> </ul>
23.	<b>% of council housing stock rated EPC C or above</b> <i>(estimated based on current surveys)</i>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>	<b>57%</b>  Internal (2024)	<b>35%</b>  Stock condition survey (2019)	N/A	N/A	N/A	57.5%	N/A	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council has improved its asset management software to provide better project 'EPC' data and is gathering more intelligence over time from stock condition surveys.</li> <li>• A combination of SHDF work, retrofit work on a number of council Tower Blocks, and all new council homes being as energy efficient as is feasible means that we would anticipate seeing this figure and the number of properties rated EPC A/B improve over time.</li> <li>• As stated, substantive further capital investment is still required to achieve Brent's EPC B average target.</li> <li>• It is not possible to compare this data to other London boroughs.</li> </ul>
24.	<b>% of council housing stock rated EPC B or above</b> <i>(estimated based on current surveys)</i>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>	<b>5%</b>  Internal (2024)	<b>0%</b>  Stock condition survey (2019)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See comments in row above for further context.</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Types of work listed for consideration included: LED Lighting Replacement, Lighting Controls, BMS Upgrade/Optimisation, Air Source Heat Pump, Ground Source Heat Pump, Cavity Wall Insulation, External Wall Insulation, Skylight replacement, Double Glazing with metal or plastic frames, Loft insulation, Hot water, Solar Photovoltaic, Destratification Fan, Dishwasher, Combi-Oven

25.	<p><b>Amount of total retrofit external grant funding secured for domestic and non-domestic, since 2019</b></p> <p><i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>£8.1m</b></p> <p>Internal (2024)</p>	£0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since 2019, we have significantly enhanced our ability to horizon scan and develop funding bids to support our ambitions.</li> <li>• The £8.1 figure comprises: £3.2m PSDS, £3.5m Green Homes Grant/Home Upgrade Grant, £1.3m SHDF.</li> <li>• This does not include £4.1m s106 Brent Carbon Offset Funding which has been secured to date.</li> <li>• It is not possible to compare across London, nor is it possible to set targets for this metric due to the uncertainty of what schemes will be available to bid for up until 2030 and the highly competitive nature of such schemes.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
26.	<p><b>% of fuel poor households in Brent (&amp; no. of households)</b></p> <p><i>A lower percentage indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>14.8%</b> (18,570)</p> <p><a href="#">DESNZ - Government Statistics</a> (2021)</p>	<p><b>17.3%</b> (20,322)</p> <p><a href="#">DESNZ - Government Statistics</a> (2021)</p>	<p><b>11.9%</b> (13,495)</p> <p><a href="#">DESNZ - Government Statistics</a> (2021)</p>	<p><b>11%</b> (12,162)</p> <p><a href="#">DESNZ - Government Statistics</a> (2021)</p>	<p><b>12.3%</b> (13,741)</p> <p><a href="#">DESNZ - Government Statistics</a> (2021)</p>	N/A	N/A	<b>Indirect Low Influence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The overall number of Brent households in fuel poverty is one of the highest in London.</li> <li>• Brent has no direct influence over levels of fuel poverty, the contributing factors are typically low income, energy inefficient homes and high energy costs.</li> <li>• Brent is seeking to retrofit the most energy inefficient homes within its own stock wherever possible and we will continue to bid for funding as it arises.</li> <li>• For other tenure types we have also set up the Brent Well and Warm Advice service which provides free energy advice and support to fuel poor, vulnerable residents.</li> </ul>
27.	<p><b>No. of private properties that have received at least one energy efficiency measure via Green Homes Grant / Home</b></p>	<p><b>36</b></p> <p>Internal (2024)</p>	0	62	N/A	N/A	71	N/A	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Green Homes Grant/Home Upgrade Grant scheme was administered by the London Borough of Ealing, on the consortium's behalf with the delivery partner Warmworks. The scheme has now closed.</li> <li>• The Brent CO2GO scheme which utilises a tranche of Carbon Offset is continuing and we would expect 35 projects to complete over the next year (meaning an overall total of 71 when the two projects are combined).</li> </ul>

	<b>Upgrade Grant/Carbon Offset Fund</b>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>									
28.	<b>% of annual major developments that include renewable energy sources</b>  <i>A higher percentage indicates better performance.</i>	<b>61%</b>  Planning Authority Monitoring Report (2021-22)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The council's overarching environmental sustainability aspirations are guided by both policies in the adopted Local Plan and the London Plan.</li> <li>The council has also adopted an 'Environment &amp; Sustainable Development' Supplementary Planning Document which provides details of how the council will address the environmental impacts of development through the planning process.</li> <li>This document supports discussions between the council and developers at the pre-application planning application stage to ensure that developers are incorporating sustainable measures into development proposals as early as possible.</li> <li>It is not possible to compare this data to other London boroughs.</li> </ul>
29.	<b>% of annual major developments that were air quality neutral or positive</b>  <i>A higher percentage indicates better performance.</i>	<b>69%</b>  Planning Authority Monitoring Report (2021-22)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See comments in row above for further context.</li> </ul>

## Theme 4 – Nature and Green Space

No.	Measure	Current Brent Data (Data source)	Brent July 2019 baseline (Data source)	Current average for boroughs in West London Climate Group* (Mean)	Current Inner London average** (Mean)	Current Outer London average*** (Mean)	Target for next 12 months / next annual dataset	Projected Target by 2030 (unless otherwise stated)	Council role/influence in achieving target	Commentary / Notes
30.	<b>No. of trees planted annually in public areas</b>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>	<b>844</b>  Planning Authority Monitoring Report (2021-22)	800	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tree planting is dependent on funding not just for the planting but for subsequent maintenance.</li> <li>There is no specific annual target for tree planting at the present time.</li> <li>A new Tree Strategy for the borough is being developed.</li> <li>It is not possible to compare this data to other London boroughs.</li> </ul>
31.	<b>Tree Equity Score</b>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>	<b>81</b>  <a href="https://treeequityscore.org">Map (treeequityscore.org)</a> (2024)	N/A	87	89	87	N/A	N/A	<b>Indirect Low Influence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Tree Equity Map is a relatively new tool which provides local authorities with an overall tree equity score based on demographics and number of trees planted.</li> <li>As the tool is new it is not possible to provide a baseline from 2019.</li> </ul>
32.	<b>% tree canopy cover in Brent</b>  <i>A higher percentage indicates better performance.</i>	<b>14%</b>  (From canopy cover survey 2020)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>Indirect Low Influence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brent commissioned a study on borough-wide canopy cover from iTree in 2020.</li> <li>Brent's score is lower than the estimated London-wide canopy cover of 21%.</li> </ul>

33.	<p><b>Square metres of wildflower meadows created and planted</b></p> <p><i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i></p>	792,727 Internal (2024)	792,727 Internal (2024)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brent's planting of wildflower meadows and bee corridors took place in and around when we declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019.</li> <li>It is not possible to compare planting of this kind to other boroughs in London.</li> <li>No substantive work has been undertaken since that point, in part because of the recent changes to Brent's long-term Grounds Maintenance Contract.</li> <li>Now that a new contractor is in place, they have now been tasked by the council to review increasing wildflower meadow sowing, looking at grass verges in the borough rather than parks.</li> </ul>
34.	<p><b>Number of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) sites in active positive management</b></p> <p><i>A higher number indicates better performance</i></p>	62 Internal (2024)	62 Internal (2024)	N/A	N/A	N/A	62	62	<b>Indirect</b> Low-medium influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINCs), known nationally as Local Wildlife Sites, are locally designated areas which are recognised as being of particular importance to wildlife and biodiversity.</li> <li>Brent has retained 62 SINC sites since 2019 and there are no plans at present to improve on this number, with the current focus being maintenance on the existing sites.</li> <li>It is not possible to compare data with other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>
35.	<p><b>No. of green spaces with known community gardens / orchards</b></p> <p><i>A higher number indicates better performance</i></p>	4 Internal (2024)	2 Internal (2024)	N/A	N/A	N/A	7	9	<b>Mixed</b> Medium influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were two community gardens in 2019 at Chalkhill Open Space (St Davids Close and Harlesden Town Gardens), Two additional community gardens/orchards have since been opened at Leybourne Open Space and Northwick Park.</li> <li>It is not possible to compare data with other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>

36.	<b>No. of green flag schemes implemented in parks</b>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance</i>	<b>0</b>  Internal (2024)	<b>0</b>  Internal (2024)	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	4	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new Grounds Maintenance Contract includes a commitment to apply for 1 Green Flag per financial year.</li> <li>• It has not been possible to compare data with other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>
37.	<b>No. of London in Bloom awards</b>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance</i>	<b>9</b>  Internal (2024)	<b>0</b>  Internal (2024)	N/A	N/A	N/A	10	12	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has not been possible to compare data with other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>

## Theme 5 – Supporting Communities

No.	Measure	Current Brent Data (Data source)	Brent July 2019 baseline (Data source)	Current average for boroughs in West London Climate Group* (Mean)	Current Inner London average** (Mean)	Current Outer London average*** (Mean)	Target for next 12 months / next annual dataset	Projected Target by 2030 (unless otherwise stated)	Council role/influence in achieving target	Commentary / Notes
38.	<p><b>No. of community projects awarded grant funding by Brent Together Towards Zero Grant scheme</b></p> <p><i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>71</b></p> <p>Internal (2024)</p>	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	85	N/A	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The scheme went live in 2022 therefore there is no baseline for 2019.</li> <li>After two rounds, the scheme is currently closed pending further funding to support a re-launch.</li> <li>Should this money be secured, we would anticipate a minimum of 14 projects being funded over the next 12 months.</li> <li>Funding for the scheme is issued on a one-off yearly basis, so it is not possible to set a target up until 2030 without funding certainty.</li> <li>It is not possible to compare data with other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>
39.	<p><b>No. of Brent Environment Network Members</b></p> <p><i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i></p>	<p><b>3403</b></p> <p>Internal (2024)</p>	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	4000	10,000	<b>Indirect High Influence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Since launching in 2021, there are 3403 members of the network.</li> <li>It is not possible to compare data with other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>



40.	<b>No. of business signed up to Brent Business Climate Charter or Camden/Brent Business Challenge</b>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>	<b>6</b> Internal (2024)	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	40	N/A	<b>Indirect</b> Medium Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We launched the Brent Climate Charter at an event at Wembley Stadium in November 2023. It is not possible to compare this data to other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>
41.	<b>No. of Brent businesses provided with funding to undertake energy efficiency retrofit projects from the Brent for Business Energy Efficiency Scheme</b>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>	<b>15</b> Internal (2024)	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	25	N/A	<b>Direct</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A total of 90 SMEs submitted an EOI, out of which 54 received free energy audits and a further 15 received a free energy audit and grant towards the cost of one or more energy efficiency measures.</li> <li>We are expecting an additional £94k in grant funding from April 2024-25 which will be linked to businesses taking part in the Brent Climate Charter or Camden/Brent Business Challenge.</li> <li>After this there is no further money allocated until 2030 and therefore it is not possible to set a longer-term target.</li> <li>It is not possible to compare this data to other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>
42.	<b>No. of faith-based</b>	<b>3</b>	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	10	100	<b>Indirect</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Brent Faith Climate Action plan was developed as a joint initiative with the Brent Faith</li> </ul>

	<b>organisations actively utilising Brent Faith Climate Action Plan</b>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>	Internal (2024)							Medium Influence	Climate Action Group launched at the Wembley Sephardi Synagogue in July 2023. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is not possible to compare this data to other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>
43.	<b>No. of annual hits on the Climate Emergency Website Landing Page</b>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>	<b>518</b> (July 23-current)  Internal (2024)	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	1200	2000	Indirect Low influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The climate emergency web pages were developed in response to the council developing a climate emergency in 2019. The council has since updated its website and operating system and there is no historical data of hits since 2019.</li> <li>The new website provides data from July 2023 and will serve as the baseline for this metric going forward.</li> <li>The climate emergency landing page has recently been updated to provide clearer information and more information to residents on activity against each of the five key strategy themes.</li> <li>It is not possible to compare this data to other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>
44.	<b>Annual no. of students engaged with courses at Brent's Green Skills Centre</b>  <i>A higher number indicates better performance.</i>	<b>1621</b>  Internal (2024)	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Indirect Medium Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brent opened its Green Skills Centre in November 2022 at the College of North West London.</li> <li>The initiative is a partnership between the College and the Council and seeks to address the skills gap in retrofitting and electric vehicle charge point installation.</li> <li>This is one of the only sites of its kind in London.</li> <li>It is not possible to compare data with other London Boroughs.</li> </ul>

## Appendix B – 2022-24 Delivery Plan and Green Neighbourhoods Action Plan progress update

(Actions to date since adoption of last delivery plan: June 2022 – February 2024)

### OVERALL DASHBOARD: COMBINED DELIVERY AND ACTION PLANS

Progress Rating	No. of actions	% of actions
Complete (G)	34	33%
In Progress (A)	61	59%
Minimal Action (R)	2	2%
Inactive	2	2%
Unlikely to complete	4	4%

0

1

### 2022-24 Delivery Plan

Actions marked as complete

Ref	Action	Status	Commentary
<b>Theme 1 – Consumption, Resources and Waste</b>			
CRW001	<b>Launched a new Library of Things at Willesden Green Library</b>	G	The Library of Things kiosk opened at the Willesden Green Library at the end of July 2023. Since opening there have been 330 borrows of items and 310 borrowers. 930 residents are signed up to the local Willesden Green LoT mailing list.
CRW004 C3 K3	<b>Delivered 3 x free re-use and repair cafes for residents</b>	G	We have delivered each of the events in the Green Neighbourhoods. We estimate that around 650 people have attended and engaged with the events in total.
<b>Theme 2 – Sustainable Travel</b>			
TP002 C5 K5	<b>Implemented 36 permanent school street schemes</b>	G	The schemes have helped towards a 14% increase in active travel since last year 2021-22, meaning more pupils are getting to school by walking, cycling, or scooting.

TP005	<b>Installed 30 new bike hangars</b>	G	Bike hangars typically allow space for six bikes, so the additional 30 installed across the timeframe has supported 180 people. We are continuously looking for ways to fund more bike hangars (cost around £5-6k to install) as resident demand significantly outweighs current supply, however the finances make this challenging.
TP004	<b>Installed 304 new Electric Vehicle Charge Points</b>	G	283 lamp column chargers installed, and 22 Source London dual chargers. We are also close to rolling out new Uber charge points and continuously on the look out for new funding streams.
C12 K12	<b>Worked with Brent schools to achieve an accreditation of either Gold, Silver or Bronze as part of the TfL STARS School Travel Plan scheme</b>	G	We now have 30 gold accredited schools (+2 from last year), 7 silver accredited schools (+2 from last year) and 4 bronze accredited schools (-9 from last year, some schools now have a higher ranking so this is not necessarily a negative measure). The overall total of accredited schools for 2023 is 41 (-1 from last year).
TP006	<b>Launched the Brent's Bike for Businesses e-cargo bike scheme</b>	G	<p>Launched in July 2023 with 24 cargo bikes cycling as a convoy through the borough from Kilburn to Wembley Stadium. The scheme offers local businesses the chance to swap polluting vehicles for a cargo bike by offering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Free advice</li> <li>o One-off subsidies to help the, switch</li> <li>o Up to £1,000 towards the purchase of their own.</li> </ul> <p>Since launching in July 2023 we have engaged with 146 businesses (target 280), of which 8 businesses have either switched to e-cargo bikes or undertaken a trial, with 9 more businesses lined up. Our target is 30 and the scheme will run until April 2024.</p>
<b>Theme 3 – Homes, Buildings, and the Built Environment</b>			
HBBE003	<b>Adopted a new Sustainable Environment and Development Supplementary Planning Document</b>	G	Adopted in June 2023. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) expand on our 'adopted' and 'saved' planning policies to provide more information than can be contained in the policies themselves. They should be considered by anyone making a planning application and are now a material consideration in determining planning applications. The SPD provides details of how the council will address the environmental impacts of development through 7 key environmental chapters.
<b>Theme 4 – Nature and Green Space</b>			
HBBE002	<b>Installed the borough's first Living Wall on Willesden Green Library</b>	G	The Living Wall is installed at the back entrance of Willesden Green Library. It will likely take several years to grow to its full capacity.
C27	<b>Delivered the BEE Colourful Community Planting and Engagement Scheme</b>	G	42 households and at least 100 people engaged within on the project. Estimated 800 plants given out to residents for free. Each resident received an information booklet leaflet on how to plant/upkeep what they received, and the importance of connecting to nature and biodiversity in urban spaces. Project ran on Craven Park which is one of the greyest, most urban roads in Brent with minimal greenery or street trees. Anecdotal feedback on the day very positive.
K24	<b>Delivered new green infrastructure improvements to Leybourne Open Space</b>	G	Positive progress in work which has been spearheaded by residents who border the green space. New Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUD), new trees, new benches, new wildlife-based wood carvings. Anecdotal increase in biodiversity on the site – ducks, red kites etc.

NGS003	<b>Completed a new rain garden as part of Kensal Corridor scheme</b>	G	Delivered public realm improvements in Kensal Rise to make it easier and more pleasant to get around by foot, as well as reducing traffic congestion on the main roads through Kensal Rise into central London (known as the 'Kensal Corridor'). New planting and rain garden elements to the scheme now completed – one of Brent's first rain garden schemes, providing an exemplar as part of other schemes in the borough and informing a new Green Infrastructure Design and Maintenance Guide that we are developing.
NGS005	<b>Worked with partners to create a new mini forest in King Edwards Park</b>	G	650 trees planted in one day (1 December 2022). Project sees the creation of Brent's first Miyawaki Forest. Partnership between Brent, Network Homes, Wates and the Conservation Volunteers. Planting supported by residents and students at Park Lane Primary School.
<b>Theme 5 – Supporting Communities</b>			
SC001	<b>Developed and launched bespoke action plans for Church End &amp; Roundwood; and Kingsbury Green Neighbourhoods</b>	G	Bespoke action plans were launched in February 2023 following a substantial period of public engagement in the areas. There are 62 actions in both action plans, with 18% current completed in each area. The plans will run until the end of the 2022-24 calendar year.
SC001 (1)	<b>Provided targeted support to businesses through energy efficiency grants</b>	G	17 SMEs offered a grant; 15 SMEs followed through with energy efficiency installations to reduce their carbon footprint and claimed the grant. £148,417 provided, no more money allocated in this financial year.
SC002 (2)	<b>Provided targeted support to businesses through carbon footprinting</b>	G	The Council has commissioned Climax Community for use of their carbon calculator tool. As well as helping businesses directly with reducing their carbon emissions, the carbon calculator will provide Brent with an understanding of local business' carbon emissions and allow us to track their carbon reduction progress. The project initially includes access for 100 SMEs to the calculator for 6 months to give them the time to input their information, understand where the most impactful changes will be, and map their reduction pledge timeline. 16 businesses are currently signed up and utilising the tool.
SC003 (3)	<b>Provided targeted support to businesses through a new climate charter</b>	G	Launched in July 2023. The Brent Business Climate Charter is a way for local businesses to make a public pledge to doing their bit to tackle the climate and ecological emergency, whilst being supported through access to resources from the council to help businesses to achieve this. When signing up to the Charter, businesses need to pick a minimum of 3 environmental pledge areas to work on in order to sign Brent's Business Climate Charter. Businesses commit to improving their organisation's carbon footprint in those areas over the next year. In return, they are supported with resources from the council, access to a free carbon footprinting tool, networking opportunities, and in time, potential access to grant funding via some funding that the council secured alongside LB Camden to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Since launching, 5 businesses have signed the charter, with a wider launch event taking place at Wembley Stadium in November
SC003	<b>Launched the new Green Skills Centre in Willesden</b>	G	Council Partnership with College of North West London in Willesden. Named 'Green Skills Centre of Excellence' by the college. Offering both accredited and non-accredited skills in areas of known demand to support climate agenda. Courses include: Energy Efficient Heating Systems (Installation and Maintenance); and Awards in the Requirements for the Installation of Electric Vehicle Charge Points. Courses are suitable for those looking to adapt their current practice, add as a bolt-on, or up-skill. We will explore providing work experience opportunities to those qualifying on the course as part

			of council-led retrofit programmes. The centre has been open since November 2022 and has engaged with 1500+ students in that period.
SC004	<b>Launched a new sector-based pathways scheme for unemployed people to take up 'green' jobs</b>	G	Funded by Brent, run by Forward Trust. Free, six week pathway into the Green Sector. Includes qualifications, careers advice, work experience, guaranteed green job or apprenticeship interviews with employers, tailored coaching, mentoring, peer networking. Eligibility: aged 18 or older, unemployed, live in Brent.
SC008 C33 K28 K26	<b>Improve the Brent Environmental Network to make the network more action focused and community-led</b>	G	The BEN currently has 3403 sign ups. We have configured its operation to move away from having a central adviser group to more localised bespoke sub-groups of passionate individuals. This includes: community climate action groups in both Church End and Roundwood and Kingsbury; working closely with the Kingsbury and Kenton Schools Cluster; Community Climate Ambassadors; and the Faith Climate Action Group. All of who meet regularly to further climate action on the ground in Brent.
SC010	<b>Launched the Faith Climate Action Plan</b>	G	Launched at the Wembley Sephardi Synagogue in July 2023. The practical document has been designed to support faith communities at a local level to embrace sustainable behaviours. The document focuses on key areas where faith organisations and places of worship can make long-term environmental improvements in their local area, as well as save money, for example on energy bills, and promote a healthier lifestyle for their congregations.
SC005	<b>Launched the Brent Well and Warm Affordable Energy advice service, targeting the most vulnerable households in Brent</b>	G	We have launched a new affordable energy advice service, <b>Brent Well and Warm</b> to provide energy efficiency support and signposting to our most vulnerable households. At present, 249 consultations have taken place, with a further push expected this winter. We are imminently planning to extend the contract until April 2025.
SC006	<b>Undertook a Net Zero Schools Retrofit and Engagement Project with at least five local schools</b>	G	The council worked with Energy Conscious Design (ECD) Architects to undertake a study of 13 buildings across 5 schools in Brent with a view of establishing common approaches to building archetypes to be applied across rest of the schools' estate. In addition to the feasibility retrofit assessment, ECD ran a series of hands-on sustainability community engagement workshops within the schools to teach Year 5 students about sustainability, looking specifically at building fabric, air leakage and the impact that humans have on buildings. The children were also asked to come up with ideas to make their buildings more efficient using the concepts they have been taught about. The schools included were Anson Primary School, Byron Primary School, Mora Primary School, Northview Primary School, and Roe Green Infant and Junior School.
SC007	<b>Developed and continue to run a new sustainability communications campaigns</b> (Junk Kouture sustainable fashion Project; Faces of Climate Change Photography Competition; Eco-Peace Event; Brent Environmental Network Newsletters/Events etc)	G	We continue to look for innovative ways to engage with our residents on sustainability. This has included a sustainable fashion event with Junk Kouture where young people showed clothing that had been designed and made from recycled materials at an event in the Civic Centre Atrium, and also forged a partnership with JK for workshops in a number of Brent Schools. We have also been running the Faces of Climate Change Photography competition which has highlighted the individuals and organisations who are leading on tackling the climate and ecological emergency out in our communities in Brent. We organised a community event with Eco-Peace, an organisation which operates across borders between Palestine, Israel and Jordan to promote peace via sustainability projects. We have also continued to send Brent Environmental Network

			newsletters and link all other events such as re-use and repair cafes, Library of Things, Green Corridors engagement events under this environmental umbrella network.
SC008	<b>Delivered two rounds of the Together Towards Zero Small Grants Scheme, providing funding to local community projects that contribute to reducing emissions and/or making Brent greener and more biodiverse</b>	G	71 new community projects have been provided with funding since the scheme launched in June 2022. Majority greening, repair or educational projects. Phase 1 of scheme enabled grants of up to £1,000, Phase 2 has been expanded to allow applications for grants of up to £5,000. We have now closed applications until more funding becomes available for an anticipated re-launch in the next financial year.

Actions not yet marked as complete

Ref.	Action	Status
CRW003	<b>Offer a free internal food caddy to every resident living in a flat (rolled over from 2021-22 delivery plan)</b>	A
CRW004	<b>Develop and pilot a new re-use and repair hub in a locality area, with support from the West London Waste Authority and third sector partners (now delivering free re-use and repair cafes)</b>	A
CRW002	<b>Deliver improved sustainability outcomes following the procurement of the new Redefining Local Services contracts renewals</b>	A
TP003	<b>Work together with residents to design and implement new Healthy Neighbourhood Schemes</b>	A
TP008	<b>Adopt and implement an new updated Corporate Travel Plan for council operations</b>	A
HBBE004	<b>Begin retrofit work to at least 3 Tower Blocks (rolled over from 2021-22 delivery plan)</b>	A
HBBE006	<b>Deliver further retrofitting projects via the council's Carbon Offset Fund</b>	A
HBBE007	<b>Develop and implement employer requirements for energy efficiency standards within all new council housing</b>	A
HBBE008	<b>We will ensure that all general needs homes built as part of the 572 homes agreed with the GLA, will be net zero (Previously: We will explore and identify an opportunity for an exemplar net zero new build within New Council Homes Programme pipeline)</b>	A
HBBE009	<b>Review developments within our New Council Homes Programme pipeline to ensure that all aspects of sustainability are holistically addressed, with a special focus on the proposed development plans for St Raphael's Estate</b>	A
HBBE005	<b>Explore funding for a dedicated energy efficiency works programme within the Housing Asset Management Strategy</b>	A
HBBE011	<b>Finalise our plans for the council to achieve net zero carbon emissions from the council's own estate and operations by 2030</b>	A
NGS001	<b>Continue the borough's existing tree planting programme – aimed at areas of low canopy cover, poor air quality and deprivation</b>	A
NGS002	<b>Finalise completion of a new rain garden in Silver Jubilee Park</b>	A
NGS004	<b>Implement new biodiversity information boards in Brent parks</b>	A
NGS006	<b>Install new Bee and Bug Hotels in Brent parks</b>	A
NGS008	<b>Establish a wildflower area along the length of the river Brent feeder that runs through Northwick Park</b>	A
SC009	<b>Improve and expand the Brent School Climate Champions Network</b>	A

# Church End & Roundwood Green Neighbourhoods Action Plan

Actions marked as complete

Ref	Action	Status	Commentary
<b>Theme 1 – Consumption, Resources and Waste</b>			
C5	<b>Deliver permanent School Streets at John Keble, Leopold, and St Mary's Cof E Primary Schools</b>	G	The schemes have helped towards an overall 14% increase in active travel across the borough since last year 2021-22, meaning more pupils are getting to school by walking, cycling, or scooting. The School Street Scheme at Leopold also links to the plans for enhanced greening infrastructure improvements along Leopold Road.
<b>Theme 2 – Sustainable Travel</b>			
C8	<b>Deliver at least 2 new Bike Hangars in Church End &amp; Roundwood (Essex Road; Franklyn Road)</b>	G	Bike hangars typically allow space for six bikes, so the additional 2 installed across the timeframe has supported 12 people. One of the hangars is placed on Franklyn Road in close proximity to the cemetery and Franklyn Road Open Space which are both key elements to the Green Corridors scheme planned for the area. We are continuously looking for ways to fund more bike hangars (cost around £5-6k to install) as resident demand significantly outweighs current supply, however the finances make this challenging.
<b>Theme 3 – Homes, Buildings, and the Built Environment</b>			
C12	<b>Undertake dedicated School Travel Plan engagement work for all 11 schools in Church End &amp; Roundwood GN boundary of close by - in particular with Capital City Academy, Curzon Crescent Nursery School, Leopold Primary School, Newfield Primary School, Newman Catholic College as these schools are yet to develop a School Travel Plan</b>	G	The current School Travel Plan accreditations for the Green Neighbourhood Schools are: 4 Gold, 1 Silver, 0 bronze. Further progress is required with the schools which are yet to develop a School Travel Plan.
<b>Theme 4 – Nature and Green Space</b>			
C27	<b>Launch an comms/engagement initiative akin to 'Greening Grey Britain' initiative to encourage residents to request/purchase a small tree, plants, seeds for their homes/gardens - with a focus on residents/community groups in CE&amp;RW</b>	G	42 households and at least 100 people engaged within on the project. Estimated 800 plants given out to residents for free. Each resident received an information booklet leaflet on how to plant/upkeep what they received, and the importance of connecting to nature and biodiversity in urban spaces. Project ran on Craven Park which is one of the greyest, most urban roads in Brent with minimal greenery or street trees. Anecdotal feedback on the day very positive.



Theme 5 – Supporting Communities			
C33	<b>Develop a localised Brent Environmental Network Community Action Group for Church End &amp; Roundwood</b>	<b>G</b>	The council coordinates and meets regularly with a local group of residents who are passionate about climate action in their local area. Meetings are a mixture of in person and online and tend to meet on average every quarter.
C31	<b>Develop a dedicated School Climate Network with the Harlesden Schools Cluster</b>	<b>G</b>	A number of school visits have taken place and the council has presented to the Harlesden School Cluster meeting on proposals to develop a School Climate Network in the area. The first meeting of the School Climate Network is due to happen over the coming weeks.

### Actions not yet marked as complete

Ref.	Action	Status
C11	<b>Deliver at least 11 new Electric Vehicle Charge Points in Church End &amp; Roundwood</b>	<b>A</b>
C9	<b>Seek funding to deliver at least 6 more new bike hangars in Church End and Roundwood</b>	<b>A</b>
C10	<b>Undertake bespoke promotion the council's existing cycling offer to residents in CE&amp;RW, such as: cycle training at Willesden Sports Centre and the Peddle My Wheels Scheme</b>	<b>A</b>
C11	<b>Engage with local businesses in CE&amp;RW on undertaking an expanded cargo bike trial scheme</b>	<b>A</b>
C13	<b>Commission a piece of work to examine existing active travel and green infrastructure in CE&amp;RW and with aim to develop holistic 'Green Corridors' in CE&amp;RW linking active travel routes and green spaces in the area</b>	<b>A</b>
C14	<b>Assess the potential interventions for reducing the flow of HGVs through Harlesden and into the Green Neighbourhood area (full implementation of measures unlikely to be affordable, but smaller scaler interventions will be the aim)</b>	<b>A</b>
C15	<b>Roll-out virtual docking bays for Lime Bikes around Roundwood Park and other appropriate locations in CE&amp;RW</b>	<b>A</b>
C16	<b>Assess the energy efficiency performance of council owned stock in the CE&amp;RW area and deliver retrofit works on the worst performing council properties in the area (subject to the council's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund bid being successful)</b>	<b>A</b>
C17	<b>Use existing links with Housing Association presence in CE&amp;RW and work with them to agree a specific standard of improvements for social housing (with a focus on energy efficiency) in that area regardless of landlord where reasonable</b>	<b>A</b>
C18	<b>Map out the known Private Rented Sector landlords in CE&amp;RW and aim to engage with them via existing forums or new means, providing signposting to available grant funding and best practice for energy efficiency works</b>	<b>A</b>
C19	<b>Engage with council tenants/leaseholders in CE&amp;RW – with drop-ins and other engagement activity and information sharing about keeping homes warm in a sustainable wa</b>	<b>A</b>
C21	<b>Undertake new street planting at selected locations within Church End &amp; Roundwood, plus deliver a tree planting programme as part of Green and Healthy Streets Programme</b>	<b>A</b>
C22	<b>Implement new biodiversity infrastructure (park noticeboards, bee and bug infrastructure etc) in, at least, Roundwood Park and the open space outside St Mary's Church</b>	<b>A</b>
C23	<b>Develop and implement new biodiversity opportunities in Willesden Cemetery</b>	<b>A</b>
C24	<b>Review the potential for new verge greening schemes and rain gardens in CE&amp;RW</b>	<b>A</b>
C25	<b>Work with communities (such as mutual aid groups, tenant associations, faith groups and schools) in CE&amp;RW to develop potential for new community growing schemes on appropriate green spaces within the area – to alleviate the demand on council allotment waiting list</b>	<b>A</b>
C26	<b>Deliver enhanced green infrastructure (new street trees, flowerbeds and rain gardens along walking routes to schools) around John Keble Primary School, Maple Walk School, St Claudine's and Leopold Primary School as part of the Green and Healthy Streets Programme</b>	<b>A</b>

C28	Promote the work of the council's public health teams in running activities in outdoor spaces in CE&RW to help residents to feel safer and encourage usage of our green open spaces	A
C29	Review further environmental sustainability opportunities at Roundwood Park (including usage of the Bowling Green)	A
C30	Run an engagement campaign with CE&RW businesses to promote council's climate offer: energy savings grant scheme, cargo bikes scheme, climate charter, carbon footprinting tools, green business guides etc	A
C32	Develop a new stimulating comms and engagement campaign the importance of the transition to Electric Vehicles, with elements tailored to CE&RW	A
C6	Review the feasibility of 5 new permanent school streets at Curzon Crescent Nursery School, Newfield Primary, Newman Catholic College, Capital City Academy and Donnington Primary School	R
C34	Engage with NHS settings in CE&RW (Willesden Centre for Health and Care and Church End Medical Centre) on awareness raising campaign on active travel, air quality and climate change	R
C20	Undertake a much more prominent local campaign to advertise and promote the next phase of the Solar Together scheme – targeting the narrative at those who are most able to pay	Inactive
C4	Launch a community-based 'Environmental Street Champion' scheme in CE&RW - working with local communities on taking greater responsibility for keeping streets clean and guarding against flytipping	Unlikely to complete

## Kingsbury Green Neighbourhoods Action Plan

Actions marked as complete

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Ref	Action	Status	Commentary
<b>Theme 1 – Consumption, Resources and Waste</b>			
K5	We will deliver 6 permanent School Streets at Claremont High School, Kingsbury Green Primary School, Mount Stewart Infant School, Mount Stewart Junior School, St Robert Southwell RC Primary School, Uxendon Manor Primary School		The schemes have helped towards an overall 14% increase in active travel across the borough since last year 2021-22, meaning more pupils are getting to school by walking, cycling, or scooting.
<b>Theme 2 – Sustainable Travel</b>			
	We will undertake dedicated School Travel Plan engagement work for all 16 schools in Kingsbury Green Neighbourhood boundary or close by - in particular with Claremount Primary, Fryent Primary, JFS, Kingsbury High, Sinai Jewish Primary School, St Gregory's, The Village School, Southover, Bnos Beis as these schools are yet to deliver a School Travel Plan		The current School Travel Plan accreditations for the Green Neighbourhood Schools are: 6 Gold, 1 Silver, 1 bronze. Further progress is required with the schools which are yet to develop a School Travel Plan.

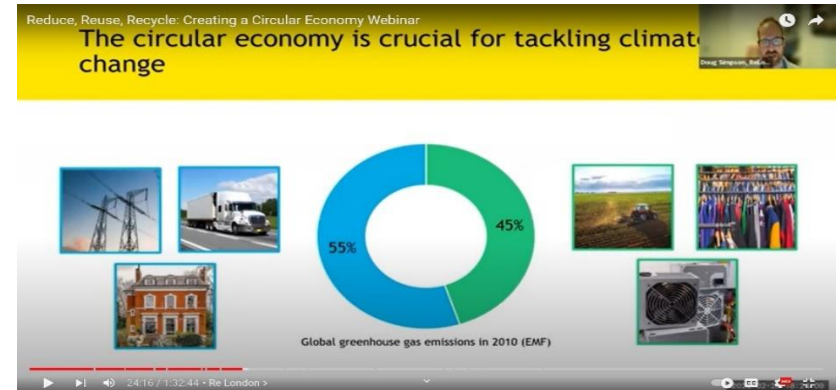
Theme 3 – Homes, Buildings, and the Built Environment			
No actions for this theme are currently listed as complete.			
Theme 4 – Nature and Green Space			
	<b>We will work with residents to make green infrastructure improvements to Leybourne Open Space</b>		Positive progress in work which has been spearheaded by residents who border the green space. New Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUD), new trees, new benches, new wildlife-based wood carvings. Anecdotal increase in biodiversity on the site – ducks, red kites etc.
Theme 5 – Supporting Communities			
	<b>We will develop a localised Brent Environmental Network Community Action Group for Kingsbury</b>		The council coordinates and meets regularly with a local group of residents who are passionate about climate action in their local area. Meetings are a mixture of in person and online and tend to meet on average every six months.
Page 151	<b>We will develop a dedicated School Climate Network with the Kingsbury (&amp; Kenton) Schools Cluster</b>		The schools in the Kingsbury and Kenton Schools Cluster are considered to be the most passionate and active schools grouping on environmental sustainability in the borough. Meetings with sustainability leads/Head Teachers are convened every couple of months by the council. To date, several initiatives have delivered including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 school visits undertaken, informal environmental audit undertaken through discussions with school staff/sustainability leads</li> <li>• ‘Love Your World’ assemblies with guest speakers</li> <li>• Masterclass webinar on setting up a student-led eco-committee</li> <li>• School involvement in Climate Showcase 2023</li> <li>• Training being delivered by Earth Warriors on embedding climate education into the curriculum</li> <li>• Sustainable Fashion workshops with Junk Kouture</li> </ul>

### Actions not yet marked as complete

Ref.	Action	Status
K1	Deliver new free internal food caddies to the eligible identified flats in Kingsbury	A
K2	Deliver 3 re-use and repair pop-up events at community locations in Kingsbury	A
K3	Work with the Eco-Team to develop further specific projects/campaigns around re-use, repair and recycling in Kingsbury	A
K6	Review the feasibility of delivering a further 10 permanent school streets at Brent River College, Roe Green Infant School, Roe Green Junior School, Kingsbury High School, The Village School, Fryent Primary School, JFS, Oliver Goldsmith Primary School, Sinai Jewish Primary School, St Gregory’s Catholic Science College	A
K7	Deliver at least 4 new Electric Vehicle Charge Points in Kingsbury	A
K8	Undertake bespoke promotion the council's existing cycling offer to residents in Kingsbury, such as: cycle training at Willesden Sports Centre and the Peddle My Wheels Scheme	A
K9	Engage with local businesses in Kingsbury on undertaking an expanded cargo bike trial scheme	A
K11	Review existing active travel and green infrastructure in Kingsbury and aim to develop holistic ‘Green Corridors’ in Kingsbury, linking active travel routes and green spaces in the areas	A

K12	Assess the energy efficiency performance of council owned stock in the Kingsbury area and deliver retrofit works on the worst performing council properties in the area (subject to the council's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund bid being successful)	A
K14	Use existing links with Housing Association presence in Kingsbury and work with them to agree a specific standard of improvements for social housing (with a focus on energy efficiency) in that area regardless of landlord where reasonable	A
K15	Map out the known Private Rented Sector landlords in Kingsbury and aim to engage with them via existing forums or new means, providing signposting to available grant funding and best practice for energy efficiency works, raising awareness about Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards and Energy Performance Certificate legislation changes due in 2025	A
K16	Engage with council tenants/leaseholders etc in Kingsbury – with drop-ins and other engagement activity and information sharing about keeping homes warm in a sustainable way	A
K18	Review the potential for new tree planting opportunities in Kingsbury	A
K19	Implement new biodiversity infrastructure (park noticeboards, bee and bug infrastructure) in Roe Green Park and consider other potential locations in liaison with local schools	A
K20	Review potential for new verge greening schemes and rain gardens in Kingsbury	A
K22	Launch an comms/engagement initiative akin to 'Greening Grey Britain' to encourage residents to request/purchase a small tree, plants, seeds for their homes/gardens - with a focus on residents/community groups in Kingsbury	A
K23	Promote the work of the council's public health teams in running activities in outdoor spaces in CE&RW to help residents to feel safer and encourage usage of our green open spaces	A
K25	Run an engagement campaign with Kingsbury businesses to promote council's climate offer: energy savings grant scheme, cargo bikes scheme, climate charter, carbon footprinting tools, green business guides etc	A
K27	Develop a new stimulating comms and engagement campaign the importance of the transition to Electric Vehicles, with elements tailored to Kingsbury	A
K17	Undertake a prominent local campaign to advertise and promote the next phase of the Greater London Authority's Solar Together scheme (subject to the scheme going ahead)	Inactive
K14	Launch a community-based 'Environmental Street Champion' scheme in Kingsbury – working with local communities on taking greater responsibility for keeping streets clean and guarding against fly-tipping	Unlikely to complete Unlikely to complete Unlikely to complete
K13	Seek to utilise an upcoming development at Sutherland Court as part of the New Council Homes Programme for an exemplar net zero new build	
K21	Work with communities (such as mutual aid groups, tenant associations, faith groups and schools) in Kingsbury to develop potential for new community growing schemes and growing boxes on appropriate green spaces within the area – to alleviate the demand on council allotment waiting list	

**APPENDIX C**  
**Theme 1 – Consumption Resources and Waste**



## Theme 2 – Sustainable Travel



# Theme 3 – Homes, Buildings, and the Built Environment



## Sustainable Environment & Development

**Supplementary Planning Document**  
June 2023



**JOJUSOLAR** The New Millennium Day Centre

### Solar Power Generation

Current Power: **28.20 kW**

Total Generation: **55.79 kWh**

Total CO<sub>2</sub> saving: **10 kg**

Theme 4 – Nature and Green Space



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London Borough of Brent

# Green Infrastructure Vision





# Theme 5 – Supporting Communities



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## FAITH CLIMATE ACTION PLAN


Brent's Faith Climate Action Group are a group of faith leaders who are passionate about taking climate action and working with their congregations and the wider community to reduce carbon emissions and show kindness and compassion to the planet.

This Faith Climate Action Plan has been produced as a template for other places of worship in Brent to use and help promote greener behaviours and sustainable ways of living. This plan gives suggested ideas for others to implement, but it also recognises that each faith community starts from its own unique position and needs to create a plan that accords with its theology, context and capacity.

This plan focuses on key areas where the faith organisations and places of worship can have a long-term environmental impact at a local level in Brent, as well as save money (e.g. on energy bills) and promote a healthier lifestyle for their congregations.



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 <b>Brent</b>	<b>Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee</b> 27 February 2024
	<b>Report from the Director of Communities</b>
<b>Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker</b>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Non-Key Decision
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
<b>List of Appendices:</b>	4:  Appendix A – Recommendations Scrutiny Tracker  Appendix A(i) – Revised Planning Complaint Acknowledgment Letter  Appendix A(ii) - Empty Homes - 2021 Census vs. The Council Tax Base Measure  Appendix A(iii) - Exempt and Empty Properties by Ward
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Jason Sigba, Strategy Lead – Scrutiny, Strategy and Partnerships <a href="mailto:Jason.Sigba@brent.gov.uk">Jason.Sigba@brent.gov.uk</a> 020 8937 2036  Janet Latinwo, Head of Strategy & Partnerships <a href="mailto:Janet.Latinwo@brent.gov.uk">Janet.Latinwo@brent.gov.uk</a> 020 8937 4104  Kibibi Octave, Director of Communities <a href="mailto:Kibibi.Octave@brent.gov.uk">Kibibi.Octave@brent.gov.uk</a> 020 8937 4225

## **1.0 Executive Summary**

- 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(s)**

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

## **3.0 Detail**

### **3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context**

- 3.1.1 Borough Plan 2023-2027 – all strategic priorities.

### **3.2 Background**

- 3.2.1 The Recommendations Tracker tabled at the 27 February 2024 meeting relates to the current 2023 – 2024 municipal year.

- 3.2.2 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.

- 3.2.3 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.

- 3.2.4 The Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker provides a summary of any scrutiny recommendations made in order to track executive decisions and implementation progress. It also includes suggestions for improvement and information requests, as captured in the minutes of the committee meetings.

- 3.2.5 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 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

- 5.1 None for the purposes of this report.

## **6.0 Financial Considerations**

- 6.1 There are no financial considerations for the purposes of this report.

## **7.0 Legal Considerations**

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 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.

## **8.0 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

- 8.1 There are no Equality, Diversity & Inclusion considerations for the purposes of this report.

## **9.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

9.1 There are no climate change and environmental considerations for the purposes of this report.

## **10.0 Communication Considerations**

10.1 There are no communication considerations for the purposes of this report.

**Report sign off:**

***Kibibi Octave***

Director of Communities

## Appendix A

### Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee (RPRSC) Scrutiny Tracker 2023-24

These tables are to track the progress of scrutiny recommendations to Cabinet, suggestions for improvement, and information requests 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 for improvement and information requests it has made, alongside the related decisions made and implementation status. The tracker lists the recommendations, suggestions for improvement 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 made to Cabinet, 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 the 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 Corporate 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).



**Recommendations to Cabinet from RPRSC**



None.

**Suggestions for improvement from RPRSC to Council departments/partners**

Meeting date and agenda item	Suggestions for improvement	Council Department/External Partner	Response / Status
6 Sept 2023– <b>Planning Enforcement</b>	To avoid unnecessary back and forth dialogue between officers and residents, improve communications around the standard of evidence required to proceed with planning breach complaints. This should include public education, and improvements to the planning enforcement webpage including the reporting mechanism.	Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Communities & Regeneration	<p><b>Initial response received on 24/10/23:</b></p> <p>Yes we will look into this, and report back to the Committee by February 2024. However the evidence required will depend on the nature of the particular case that is under investigation. We can standardise it as much as we can – our existing acknowledgment letter goes some way in addressing this issue. An example copy is attached as Appendix A(i).</p> <div data-bbox="1182 724 1229 783" style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">CompAcknLetter - revised temp.pdf</p> <p><b>Updated response received on 16/02/24:</b></p> <p>The process has been reviewed and the internet page re-written. This is now with the web team and a completion date of 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024 has been set.</p>
	Review the effectiveness of the Planning Enforcement Investigation Guide to better manage residents' expectations of the planning enforcement process (e.g. providing clarity on planning enforcement timescales).	Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Communities & Regeneration	<p><b>Updated response received on 16/02/24:</b></p> <p>The enforcement investigation guide has been re-written to take on board the requirements of the Committee. This has been circulated to the Committee by email, and will be available on the Council website by 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024.</p>

	<p>Undertake an audit to determine the wards with the highest amount of planning breach complaints, and the wards with the highest amount of enforcement activity. This intelligence should be used to develop a targeted strategy to prevent planning breaches e.g. targeted planning education and/or communications campaigns etc. The Audit should also categorise the types of breaches receiving enforcement notices.</p>	<p>Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Communities &amp; Regeneration</p>	<p><b>Response received on 24/10/23:</b></p> <p>We will look to do this but are currently waiting for our new software to be introduced. Currently scheduled for April 2024.</p>
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<p>7 Nov 2023 – <b>Quarter 2</b> <b>2023/24</b> <b>Financial</b> <b>Report</b></p>	<p>Liaise with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to explore whether further census data could be provided to the Council on the specific properties in the borough identified as 'unoccupied dwellings'.</p>	<p>Peter Gadsdon – Corporate Director, Resident Services</p>	<p><b>Initial response received on 10/01/24:</b></p> <p>The 2021 Census provides an estimate of the number of unoccupied homes in Brent as at March 2021 (7.4% of dwellings - 9,425 in number). This data is not available for specific dwellings but has been published down to MSOA/LSOA level by the ONS. This information has been analysed by the Council's Data &amp; Insight team. A summary paper is available on request.</p> <p>The census figure is more than three times higher than the administrative count of empty homes sourced from the Council Tax Base. The census took place when lockdown restrictions were still in place and the pandemic timing is known to have impacted on the census count, with some residents being temporarily away (e.g. some private renters). The ONS acknowledges that this would have had a significant impact on the number of unoccupied homes at that time, providing an atypical count.</p> <p><b>Additional response received on 07/02/24:</b></p> <p>To further explain the discrepancy between the census and administrative figures - the main reason the census figure is so much higher is likely to be due to the pandemic timing. The census count of the number of unoccupied homes will count many privately rented homes that were empty temporarily in March 2021. This is something ONS has acknowledged. In other words – the census provides a very atypical count of unoccupied dwellings (and is already three years out of date). If the census was carried out now, it is highly likely the census measure would be much lower and closer to the council tax measure. Appendix A(ii) describes this in further detail.</p> <p>Having liaised with the ONS they have confirmed that no additional data can be provided on 'unoccupied dwellings'. The ONS response was as follows: <i>"It is not possible to provide data at the level of individual dwellings, this is covered by the Census Act 1920. This Act contained provisions prohibiting the release of personal census information and set out penalties for unlawful disclosure. Parts of the Census Act 1920 have now been replaced by the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007. The Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 makes it an offence to disclose any census information relating to an identified or named person while it remains in the custody of the UK Statistics Authority, of which the Office for National Statistics is the executive office. Current</i></p>
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			<p><i>Government policy is that the UK Statistics Authority should retain all census returns from the 1921 Census onwards, for 100 years.”</i></p> <p>Councillors are able to report empty properties or any property related issue to <a href="mailto:revsinspectors@brent.gov.uk">revsinspectors@brent.gov.uk</a> and to <a href="mailto:meena.patel3@brent.gov.uk">meena.patel3@brent.gov.uk</a> for both domestic and commercial property.</p> <p>In regard to how information on empty properties is used to generate more income and housing stock - the department is carrying out a review of empty properties plus those exempt awaiting probate and those exempt receiving care elsewhere to make sure the data held for billing is as accurate as possible. This review includes contact with owners encouraging them to engage with the Council to put the property back into use.</p> <p>Attached as Appendix A(iii) is the report showing all exempt and empty properties by ward. The report contains no information that could release personal data or provide a way to do so. It will be made available through the council’s open data site on a regular basis.</p> <p> 23-12-07 Empty homes_CTax vs. Cens1</p> <p> Council Tax Exemption Discount</p>
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<p>24 Jan 2024 – Safer Brent Partnership Annual report 2022-23</p>	<p>Share more information and brief Members on the Community Trigger to help them understand how to support their residents to use it.</p>	<p>Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Communities and Regeneration</p>	<p><b>Response received on 15/02/24:</b></p> <p>We will share more information on the Community Trigger with committee members via members briefings and the members bulletin.</p> <p>For information, the Community Trigger is a process which allows members of the community to ask the Community Safety Partnership to review their responses to complaints of anti-social behaviour (ASB) where they feel insufficient action has been taken. The Trigger is open to all Brent residents of all ages and is not tenure specific. You can request to activate the trigger whether you own your home, privately rent your home or live in a social housing property. The Trigger is designed to ensure that Brent Council and its partners work together to try and resolve any complaints about anti-social behaviour, which have not been adequately dealt with. We will do this by talking about the problem, sharing information and using our resources to try and reach an agreeable outcome.</p> <p>The Trigger should be used if you believe your complaint has not been dealt with. The Trigger cannot be used to report general acts of crime, including hate crime.</p> <p>The Trigger does not replace the complaints procedures of individual organisations, or your opportunity to complain to the Local Government Ombudsman or Independent Police Complaints Commission.</p> <p><u>When can I use the Trigger?</u></p> <p>The Community Trigger can be used in the following situation: If there have been three complaints regarding ASB made to the Council, Police or a Registered Housing Provider (social landlord) in the last six months and you consider insufficient action has been taken. For the purposes of the community trigger, ASB is defined as “behaviour causing harassment, alarm or distress to members or any member of the public”.</p> <p>The complaint of ASB must have been made within one month of the ASB taking place and the request to activate the trigger must be made within six months from when the original complaint was made.</p>
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			<p>Anonymous reports do not meet the Community Trigger threshold as in order for the trigger to be effective the panel must review the given details of each time a person has reported the ASB (i.e. the organisation it was reported to with the name of the employee that was spoken, incident reference number(s) and information about the incidents reported).</p> <p>Exempting anonymous reports also prevents fraudulent or malicious use of the trigger process. Vexatious or persistent and unreasonable complaints will be referred to our Corporate Complaints Team and dealt with under the Dealing with Vexatious Complaints Policy.</p> <p><u>How do I use the Trigger?</u></p> <p>To use the Community Trigger you can either complete an online form, telephone 020 8937 1058 or write a letter to:          Community Trigger,          Community Safety Team,          5th Floor Brent Civic Centre,          Engineers Way          Wembley          HA9 0FJ.</p>
	<p>Ensure there is a clear priority around Tackling Violent Crime, including Knife Crime in the Community Safety Strategy.</p>	<p>Alice Lester –          Corporate Director,          Communities and          Regeneration</p>	<p><b>Response received on 15/02/24:</b></p> <p>A recommendation was made at scrutiny to have a strategic priority with tackles knife crime. It was agreed following member feedback and consultation with the chair of Safer Brent to reword the priority in the Community Safety Strategy 2024-2026 to read “tackling violent crime with a specific focus of knife crime” and ensure this work stream is delivered and measured through the action plan.</p>

	Have a greater focus on targeting youth violence through our grants programmes.	Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Communities and Regeneration	<p><b>Response received on 15/02/24:</b></p> <p>£400,000 worth of funding has been secured by the Community Safety Team from the Mayor’s Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) to work on youth targeted interventions for years 23-25. The fundamental goal of the grant is responding to exploitation and risky behaviours to target intervention towards victims of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and vulnerable young adults who require the most intensive mentoring and support to help them recover and reduce the risks of further exploitation. There will be two elements to the project focusing on those who have been identified as a victim, at risk of CSE, CCE, wider exploitation, have a national referral mechanism or additional risk factors. The programme will offer mentoring support and diversion interventions to aid a reduction in exploitation and to increase access to mainstream services. The second element of the service will target local schools and educational establishments to raise awareness of exploitation risk, negative behaviours, healthy relationships, (including challenging misogyny), creating cultures that challenge gender-based harassment, bullying, violence and promoting positive peer support.</p>
	Collaborate with Safer Brent Partnership to access funding from the VRU and similar grant funding routes.	Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Communities and Regeneration	<p><b>Response received on 15/02/24:</b></p> <p>Applications for VRU grant funding will be done in conjunction with safer brent partnership core partners. Use of VRU grant funding will align with priorities under the Safer Brent Strategic action plan which will be managed by the delivery groups which sit under the Safer Brent Partnership.</p>

	<p>Work with the Police and Safer Brent Partnership to improve the granularity and quality of data and impact assessments, with the aim of presenting the impact of crime and criminality on specific communities. This consists of sharing and reporting more granular data around the key priority areas of the report e.g. domestic violence and violent crime.</p>	<p>Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Communities and Regeneration</p>	<p><b>Response received on 15/02/24:</b></p> <p>Access to police data by the Council’s community safety analyst has been improved to obtain victim and offender profiles around priority crimes. There are also ongoing discussions with the police senior leadership team to improve 3rd party access and data quality recorded on SafeStats. For information, SafeStats is a unique and secure data platform hosting a variety of London’s crime and community safety datasets from key organisations in one place. These include the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metropolitan Police Service (all offences)</li> <li>London Ambulance Service (all dispatches)</li> <li>British Transport Police (all offences - Underground/Overground)</li> <li>London Fire Brigade (all dispatches)</li> <li>Transport for London (all bus incidents)</li> <li>Hospital Emergency Departments (all walk-in victims of violence)</li> <li>Royal National Lifeboat Association (all launches to incidents along the Thames)</li> </ul> <p>Partnership data required from Community Safety Partnership (CSP) partners to inform impact assessments will be facilitated through delivery and operational groups under the Safer Brent Partnership.</p>
	<p>Maintain the current level of resource in the Community Safety team</p>	<p>Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Communities and Regeneration</p>	<p><b>Response received on 15/02/24:</b></p> <p>The Community Safety Team is predominantly grant funded with only 3 permanent positions. Brent CST cannot guarantee grant funding to be maintained at the same level but have put in a growth bid see if the revenue budget can be increased.</p>



**Information requests from RPRSC to Council departments/partners**

Meeting date and agenda item	Information requests	Council Department/External Partner	Responses / Status
19 July 2023– <b>Shared Service Performance &amp; Cyber Security</b>	Provide further detail on how the Council is ensuring third party suppliers are adhering to Brent's cyber security strategy and requirements. This should be inclusive of the findings from the third-party supplier survey currently underway.	Minesh Patel – Corporate Director, Finance & Resources	<p><del>Initial response received on 24/08/23: We have developed a third party assurance framework and security board who will oversee deployment and actions coming out of the framework, an assessment report will be shared with the Committee in six months' time.</del></p> <p><b>Updated response received on 15/01/24:</b></p> <p>A data gathering and analysis for 3rd party supplier assurance is underway. This activity includes all suppliers receiving a Data Protection Impact assessment to review and complete. Information Governance then evaluates the response in collaboration with Shared Technology Services to assess and agree cyber resilience.</p> <p>As part of phase 1 of this programme we have prioritised 44 of the tier 1 and 2 applications that are hosted outside of Brent Network and/or are a hybrid solution. The reason for this is that any applications hosted by us (around 83 applications) is covered by Brent's cyber security framework and measures. Out of the 44 suppliers a detailed assessment has been completed for 20. There were no risks identified for them and a few of the suppliers require the processing agreement to be reviewed by legal. This is now underway.</p> <p>We have also contacted 63 tier 3 suppliers to complete the assessment framework. This activity is due to be concluded by Jan/Feb and a final report with the outcome and next steps will be shared by March 24.</p>
6 Sept 2023– <b>Planning Enforcement</b>	Provide a breakdown of: 1. Planning breach complaints by ward and; 2. Types of breaches that have received enforcement notices by ward	Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Communities & Regeneration	<p><b>Response received on 24/10/23:</b></p> <p>Need to await for new software to be installed. This is scheduled for April 2024.</p>

	Provide planning enforcement timescales.	Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Communities & Regeneration	<p><b>Response received on 24/10/23:</b></p> <p>We will need to review this and find away of recording it on our new database. We shall aim to close cases within 8 weeks if no evidence of breach. If evidence of breach, direction will be made on where we are going with the case.</p> <p>A site visit if one is required, is to take place within one month.</p>
24 Jan 2024 – <b>Safer Brent Partnership Annual report 2022-23</b>	The timeframe for implementing the response at Wembley Stadium and Wembley Arena to support the victims of sexual violence.	Alice Lester – Corporate Director, Communities & Regeneration	<p><b>Response received on 15/02/24:</b></p> <p>A meeting was held with the Football Association (FA), the Police and the Community Safety Team in November 23 to discuss better supporting victims of sexual violence. One of the key initiatives was to train Wembley Stadium stewards to better understand the behaviours associated with sexual violence.</p> <p>The department is awaiting a follow up meeting from the FA to develop the initiatives and timeline for completion (likely to be June 2024).</p>



Planning and Development  
Brent Civic Centre  
Engineers Way  
Wembley  
Middlesex HA9 0FJ

Tel: 020 8937

Email: [@brent.gov.uk](mailto:@brent.gov.uk)

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

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Owner/Occupier of  
Address

Our Ref: E/XX/XXXX  
Contact: Case Officer  
Date

Dear Sir/Madam

**Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)**

Thank you for your complaint received , regarding:

**Property address in question**

I can confirm that it has been registered and given the reference number **E/XX/XXXX** . This case and it has been allocated to me for review and follow up an with an investigation, if it is warranted.

In the meantime in order to help me with my review and/or investigation/review, it would be helpful if you could provide me with the following information by email, if you have not already done so:

- **photographs of the issue of concern**
- **further details of the activities you are complaining about**
- **when they first commenced and**
- **what impact they have on you.**

**Unfortunately due to the number of complaints the Council receive, it is necessary to prioritise cases.** Therefore the cases which cause the greatest problems will be dealt with first. Other cases where limited or no harm has been identified will go to the back of the queue. Therefore it is important to provide the information requested above to allow a prioritisation proccess to take place.

If, from the evidence you have provided, there does NOT appear to be a harmful breach of planning control, I will close the case and take no further action on the matter.

If, from the evidence you have provided, it indicates that there IS a breach of planning control, then I will investigate the matter.

Please find printed on the back of this letter our standard leaflet – *"Planning Enforcement Investigation Guide"* with this letter which gives further information about the enforcement process and the service we can provide. This may answer any questions you have.

If you have any other queries, you may email or telephone me using the contact details at the top of this letter. Due to the volume of complaints received, you may be asked to leave a message and I will call you back. I will not automatically update you except at the stages identified on the attached Guide.

Please quote the enforcement reference number **E/XX/XXXX** in all correspondence.

If you would like more information on the Council's Enforcement Policy it can be viewed on the Brent Council web-site at [www.brent.gov.uk](http://www.brent.gov.uk).

Yours faithfully,

Case Officer's name/surname  
Principal Planning Enforcement Officer  
COMMUNITIES AND REGENERATION



# Planning Enforcement Investigation Guide

The construction of buildings without planning permission or unauthorised changes in the use of buildings or land can have a damaging effect on the local area.

Brent Council's planning enforcement team works to protect the local environment and quality of life for people living in the borough by taking action to enforce planning rules where development which is taking place without permission and is causing harm to an area or to people.

This leaflet is an easy to use guide to how the service works. It tells you what the Council will do when a complaint is made that planning rules have not been followed.

Planning enforcement is a very complex area of law and we have tried to make it as easy to understand as possible. This guide gives a brief summary of planning enforcement and what you can expect from the Planning Service. For more detail please refer to the Council's Planning Enforcement Policy. This is available on the Planning section of the Council's website at [www.brent.gov.uk](http://www.brent.gov.uk).

## What is a breach of planning control?

- **A breach of planning control** is when building works or use/activities are carried out without the necessary planning permission being obtained in advance. This could be the construction of a building without planning permission, a change in the use of land or a building or the display of an unlawful advertisement.
- **A breach of planning control** is not a criminal offence.
- **Planning permission** can be applied for after development has taken place –The Council may encourage this where it may help the issues to be examined.
- **No enforcement action** can be taken against works which have been largely completed more than 4 years ago (or 10 years in the case of changes of use or breaches of planning conditions).
- **Not all building works or uses** need planning permission. These are known as 'permitted development' and allow quite large alterations and extensions to be made to buildings as well as outbuildings under certain conditions. There are also other things which are **NOT** breaches of planning control. These include:
  - Internal works to most buildings unless they are listed (of high architectural or historic value).
  - Obstruction of a highway or public right of way.
  - Parking commercial vehicles on the highway in residential areas or on grass verges
  - Parking a caravan within the residential boundary of a property, provided that it is not lived in or used as part of the home.
  - Clearing land of vegetation, unless it is subject to planning protection.
  - Operating a business from home if the residential use remains the main use.
  - Boundary disputes.
  - High hedge disputes.
  - Deeds and covenants.
  - Trespassing on land
  - Health and safety issues

## Priorities

The Council will focus its resources on the breaches which in their view cause the most serious planning harm. Not all breaches of planning control will be pursued. We will however, always tell you if we do not intend to follow up a breach. If we decide to take action, we will continue with that action until the situation is resolved or there is no longer a reasonable prospect of success.

## What can I do if I think someone is breaching planning control?

The planning enforcement service is concerned with resolving serious breaches of planning control. It does not deal with neighbour or business disputes or a change to the environment that an individual or group of residents may not like. There must be **significant harm** to public amenity, safety or the environment for enforcement action to be justified.

As a first step, consider if the potential breach is something you could resolve yourself by speaking with your neighbour or the person who you feel is causing the harm. It is far better to resolve things by agreement if you can, than formerly involve the Council. Indeed in some instances, the Planning Service will be unable to help



you either because it does not require planning permission or it is not serious enough to warrant formal enforcement action.

If you feel unable to speak to your neighbour and you consider that significant harm is being caused, you can contact us by phone, letter, email or fax. We regret that we are unable to accept telephone complaints unless there is a good reason why you are unable to put your complaint in writing. We will not deal with anonymous complaints. Therefore we are not able to register or start to deal with your complaint unless we have your name and contact details, as well as the following information:

- *The site address or location*
- *What the development or activity is that is causing the harm, when it began and as much information as you can give about it and who you consider is responsible for it*
- *Details of the way in which the development or activity is having a harmful impact on you*

Details of how to contact us are at the end of this leaflet.

#### **Will my details be made public?**

- No, unless the Council need to release the information for the legal purposes.
- We may ask for your permission to make your details public if a case is pursued and your evidence is an essential part of the Council's case.

If you are worried about giving your details to the Council, you could contact your local ward councillor, who may make the complaint on your behalf.

#### **If I am told action will be taken in respect of my complaint what form will it take?**

This can vary but will normally take the form of an enforcement notice requiring action to remedy the breach/undo the development. You will be notified within 3 working days of any action taken or notices served by the Council in respect of your complaint.

#### **How long will it take?**

Planning enforcement is not a quick process. The initial investigation can take several weeks to complete and attempts will be made to resolve the situation without formal enforcement action first, sometimes through the submission of a retrospective planning application. If an enforcement notice is served, there are rights of appeal which can delay the matter even further. In some circumstances it may take one to 12 months to resolve.

#### **How will I be kept informed of progress on dealing with my complaint?**

The Council will aim to contact you by letter at the following stages of their investigation:

- To acknowledge your complaint within 7 working days of receiving it.
- To notify you whether we consider there has been a breach of planning control.
- Within 3 working days of the issue of any formal notice by the Council in respect of the breach.
- To notify you if an appeal has been made against an enforcement notice.
- To notify you of an enforcement appeal decision.
- To notify you of if the Council decide to prosecute or to carry out direct action to remedy the breach.

We will **NOT** routinely contact you other than at these stages in the process but you may contact the case officer to obtain an update on progress.

How to contact the planning enforcement team:

**Telephone:** 020 8937 5280 or **Email:** [planningenforcement@brent.gov.uk](mailto:planningenforcement@brent.gov.uk)

**Post:** Planning Enforcement Team, Planning and Regeneration, 7th Floor, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, HA9 0FJ



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## Empty homes: 2021 Census vs. the Council Tax Base measure

7 December 2023 | Data & Insight team

### Overview

The recent 2021 census report on [Housing in Brent](#) included the finding that 7.4% of dwellings in Brent were 'unoccupied' at the time of the census – 9,425 in number. This figure is more than three times higher than the administrative count of empty homes sourced from the council tax base (CTB). This note explains what each measure captures and discusses why the figures are different.

### Data used for comparison purposes

For analytical purposes, the CTB measure of empty homes used here relates to the [vacant homes measure](#) published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. This counts those homes classed as vacant for council tax purposes, including those with empty home premium or discount flags, as well as those receiving a council tax exemption due the home being unoccupied. Census data relates to March 2021, while the CTB data relates to October 2021.

*Please note: the CTB measure used here for comparison purposes may differ to other empty homes CTB measures reported elsewhere in the council (e.g. measures that exclude exemptions).*

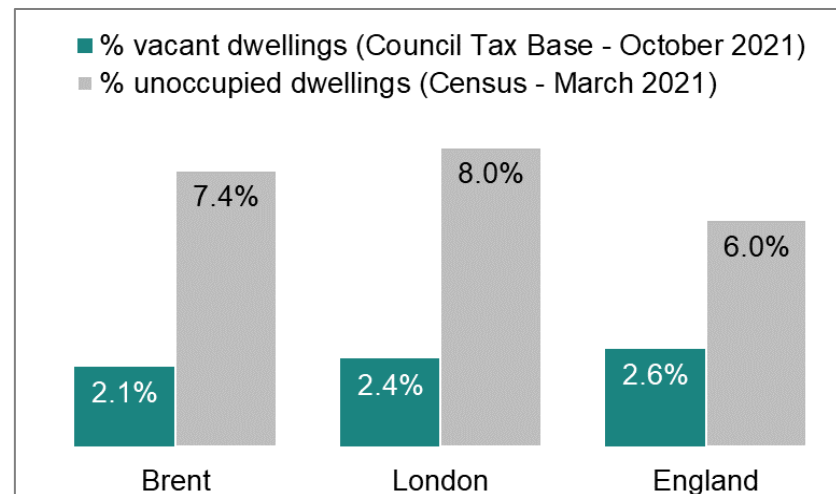
### The data

The census found that 9,425 dwellings in Brent were unoccupied in March 2021, 7.4% of all dwellings. In contrast, CTB data for 2021 provided a much lower estimate of 2,734 vacant homes - 2.1% of dwellings (as at October 2021). The comparable CTB figure for the previous year was lower still (2,297 as at October 2020).

Figure 1 shows the difference in census and CTB rates for Brent, London and England. The differential observed in Brent was similar to the difference across London (2.4% vs. 8.0%), and a bit more pronounced than the gap observed nationally (England: 2.6% vs. 6.0%).

**Figure 1: Empty homes – Census and CTB indicators compared for 2021**

	Brent	London	England
Numbers:			
CTB measure	2,734	87,731	653,025
Census measure	9,425	297,095	1,507,100
Difference (Census-CTB)	6,691	209,364	854,075
% difference (Census-CTB)	245%	239%	131%
Rates (as % of all dwellings)			
CTB measure	2.1%	2.4%	2.6%
Census measure	7.4%	8.0%	6.0%



#### Sources:

- Office for National Statistics, 2021 Census
- DLUC, Council taxbase statistics local authority level [data](#)
- DLUC, Live [tables](#) on dwelling stock including vacants (T615)

## Why so different?

Table 1 provides an overview of the key features of both measures which are quite different in terms of definition and coverage. The CTB measure provides a regular administrative-based count of the number of empty homes in Brent, identified as such for the purposes of council tax, while the census is a survey-based snapshot of homes that were unoccupied in March 2021, regardless of whether or not they were known to council tax.

The CTB measure will not provide a complete count of empty homes in the borough - only those flagged as such on the council taxbase. This CTB measure is sensitive to rules around council tax exemptions, premiums and discounts relating to empty homes. Importantly, where councils do not typically award discounts to empty properties (as in Brent's case), there is less incentive for owners to report properties as empty, leading to potential under-reporting<sup>1</sup>.

The census took place when lockdown restrictions were still in place. The pandemic timing is known to have impacted on the census count, with some residents being temporarily away – this would have had a significant impact on the number of unoccupied homes at that time. This was acknowledged by the ONS in their housing report<sup>2</sup>: *'As Census 2021 was carried out during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, some people, for example overseas students or those privately renting, may have moved back in with family members leaving more unoccupied dwellings'*. Consequently, the census provides a very atypical snapshot of the number of unoccupied homes, counting many that may have been empty for a short time (e.g. private rented homes that were temporarily unoccupied during lockdown).

Another limitation of the census measure is that very little detail is available from ONS about these unoccupied dwellings. The primary aim of the census is to profile the population and most census housing data relates to occupied households only. In contrast, CTB data held by the council offers significant detail about empty homes captured for CTB purposes (e.g. precise location; reason for exemption, which empty homes have been empty long-term etc).

While neither measure is perfect, for most purposes, the CTB administrative data is likely to be more useful than census for policy planning purposes, given its detail and timeliness.

## More information

- CTB data: The latest CTB vacant homes [data](#) for English local authorities was published last month and provides a count of 2,813 vacant homes in Brent as at October 2023. For a breakdown of CTB data by premium/discount and exemption class, see the council taxbase statistics local authority level [data](#).
- 2021 Census: For information about census data on housing topics see the team's recent 2021 census report on [Housing in Brent](#).

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<sup>1</sup> House of Commons Library Research Briefing, [Empty housing \(England\) - October 2023](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Housing in England and Wales - ONS](#)



**Table 1: Comparison: 2021 Census vs. CTB (Council Tax Base) empty homes measures**

	<b>2021 Census</b>	<b>CTB (Council Tax Base) administrative data</b>
Statistic	<b>9,425</b> unoccupied dwellings (March 2021)	<b>2,734</b> vacant dwellings (4 <sup>th</sup> October 2021)
Definition	An estimate of dwellings unoccupied at the time of the census. A dwelling is defined as a self-contained unit of accommodation. In the census, unoccupied dwellings are properties that had no 'usual' residents <sup>3</sup> living in them as at March 2021. These mainly comprised vacant homes but can also include those occupied by short-term residents or visitors as second homes – though in Brent's case, this was thought to be very small proportion of the total (2.3% - 215 in number) <sup>4</sup> .	Defined as empty properties as classified for council tax purposes. Figures relate to residential dwellings (i.e. self-contained unit of accommodation used as a home). The CTB measure used here (for comparison purposes) is the 'vacant dwellings' statistic. This counts those homes classed as vacant for council tax purposes, including those with empty home premium or discount flags, as well as those receiving a council tax exemption due the home being unoccupied (e.g. deceased estate). This measure does not include dwellings classed as second homes on the council tax base.
Measure type	Census measure - survey-based estimate.	Administrative count.
Timeliness	Limited to a snapshot in time: captured every 10 years. Figures already over two years old.	Regular data. Summary data for all LAs published annually by DLUC for October each year & live local data held by the council.
Coverage	Fairly wide measure which captures homes not occupied at that point in time. This will include empty homes not known to the council via council tax (e.g. privately rented property temporarily unoccupied).	CTB figures will only count those empty dwellings known to council tax and regarded as empty or unoccupied for council tax purposes. This will not be a complete count of all empty homes.
Detail available	The census focuses on the characteristics of occupied households and the population living in them. Consequently, very little census information is published about unoccupied dwellings, with the exception of numbers by small area and accommodation type.	CTB data provides detailed information about the type of empty property (e.g. location, reason for exemption, length of time property has been empty). This intelligence is more detailed and more up to date than the census.
Area comparisons	Provides like for like comparison between LA areas in England & Wales at a point time.	Regular, LA level, comparative data available but differences between areas are sensitive to differences in how council tax schema are applied locally (e.g. premiums, discounts).
Issues with interpreting these data	The March 2021 census snapshot is atypical due to pandemic timing (lockdown restrictions were still in place at this time). Highly likely that a significant number of unoccupied dwellings captured on the census were temporarily empty.	Figures will not capture all empty homes.  Trend data will be impacted by policy changes to council tax premiums, discounts and exemptions regarding empty homes.
Source:	<a href="#">Dwellings by housing characteristics E_W - ONS</a> (Table 1a)	<a href="#">Live tables on dwelling stock including vacants - gov.uk</a> (Table 615)

<sup>3</sup> A 'usual' resident includes anyone who, on census day, was a) in the UK and had stayed, or intended to stay, in the UK for 12 months or more, or b) someone who had a permanent UK address and was outside the UK but intended to be outside the UK for less than 12 months.

<sup>4</sup> [Number of vacant and second homes, England and Wales: Census 2021 - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)


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The below data provides the number of empty properties in Brent receiving a Council Tax exemption, discount or premium by ward as at 31st January 2024.

Ward	CLASS B	CLASS D	CLASS E	CLASS F	CLASS F6	CLASS G	CLASS H	CLASS I	CLASS J	CLASS K	CLASS L	CLASS U	CLASS W	PCLB2HOME	PCLCEMTY	PREM100%	PREM200%	PREM300%	Grand Total
Alperton	2	1	4	19	1							5			4	157	11		204
Barnhill	2		3	11							2	5			4	26	4	1	58
Brondesbury Park	4	1	7	28	2		1				2	13		23	63	10	4		158
Cricklewood & Mapesbury	5			35		1	1					10		11	64	10	1		138
Dollis Hill	4	1	7	49							3	15	1	6	97	9	4		196
Harlesden & Kensal Green	18	1	2	35			1					12		6	64	22	3		164
Kenton	2		6	40	1							17		5	61	3	1		136
Kilburn	9		1	30		165						20		6	57	33	3		324
Kingsbury	2		3	23	1				1			7		5	30	1	1		74
Northwick Park	2		5	33	2							12		24	21	1			100
Preston	1		1	27				1				12		5	30	5	5		87
Queens Park	5		5	43	1		1	1				11		13	78	21	3		182
Queensbury	1		6	40	2			1				3		9	73	6	3		144
Roundwood	10	2	3	44								16		8	32	3	1		119
Stonebridge	10	1	1	30	1			1				8		5	101	36	2		196
Sudbury	1		7	26	1				1		1	12		5	28	1	3		86
Tokyngton	3		2	24	1			1				4		1	82				118
Welsh Harp	2		9	43			1	1			3	11		1	28	4	1		104
Wembley Central	4	1	6	29			1					12		10	47	6	4		120
Wembley Hill	2	2	7	32	1						1	9		14	45	9	3		125
Wembley Park	2			4						1	1	1		9	136	13	1		168
Willesden Green	6	4	4	36	1	1			1		1	14		13	146	11	2		240
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>1466</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>3271</b>

## Key to Exemptions & Premiums

Exemption Class	Description	Charge	Surcharges/Premiums	Description	Charge
B	Unoccupied Charity Property	Zero	PCLB2HOME	2nd Home, Furnished/Unoccupied	100% od standard charge
D	Person in Detention	Zero	PCLCEMTY	Empty & Unfurnished	100% od standard charge
E	Person in Hospital or Home	Zero	PREM100%	Long Term Empty (2yrs)	Standard charge plus 100%
F	Awaiting Probate to be Granted	Zero	PREM200%	Long Term Empty (5yrs)	Standard charge plus 200%
F6	Probate Granted (6 months limit)	Zero	PREM300%	Long Term Empty (10yrs)	Standard charge plus 300%
G	CLASS G Occupation Prohibited by Law	Zero			
H	Vacant Awaiting Minister	Zero			
I	Receiving Care Elsewhere	Zero			
J	Providing care Elsewhere	Zero			
K	Last Occupied by Student	Zero			
L	Mortgagee in Possession	Zero			
U	Occupant(s) SMI	Zero			
V	Class V - Occupant(S) Diplomatic Status	Zero			
W	Granny Annexe	Zero			

 <p><b>Brent</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee</b> 27 February 2024</p>
	<p align="center"><b>Report from the Director of Communities</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023/24</b></p>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	All
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
<b>List of Appendices:</b>	1: Appendix A – Committee Work Programme 2023/24
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	<p>Jason Sigba, Strategy Lead – Scrutiny, Strategy and Partnerships <a href="mailto:Jason.Sigba@brent.gov.uk">Jason.Sigba@brent.gov.uk</a> 020 8937 2036</p> <p>Janet Latinwo, Head of Strategy &amp; Partnerships <a href="mailto:Janet.Latinwo@brent.gov.uk">Janet.Latinwo@brent.gov.uk</a> 020 8937 4104</p> <p>Kibibi Octave, Director of Communities <a href="mailto:Kibibi.Octave@brent.gov.uk">Kibibi.Octave@brent.gov.uk</a> 020 8937 4225</p>

## 1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 To provide an update and to confirm that there are no changes to the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee’s work programme.

## 2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 That committee members note the contents of this report.

### **3.0 Detail**

#### **3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context**

3.1.1 Borough Plan 2023-2027 – all strategic priorities

#### **3.2 Background**

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

3.2.2 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.

#### **4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement**

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

#### **5.0 Financial Considerations**

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

#### **6.0 Legal Considerations**

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

#### **7.0 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

7.1 There are no Equality, Diversity & Inclusion considerations for the purposes of this report.

#### **8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

8.1 There are no climate change and environmental considerations for the purposes of this report.

#### **9.0 Communication Considerations**

9.1 There are no communication considerations for the purposes of this report.

**Report sign off:**

***Kibibi Octave***

Director of Communities

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## Appendix A

### Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023-2024

#### 19 July 2023

Agenda Item	Cabinet Member/Non-Executive Member	Chief Executive/Corporate Director	External Organisations
Committee Work Programme 2023/24	Cllr Muhammed Butt, Leader of the Council	Kim Wright, Chief Executive Zahur Khan, Corporate Director – Communities and Regeneration	
Budget 2023/24 Update	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources	
IT Shared Services and Cyber Security	Cllr Mili Patel, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources	

#### 6 September 2023

Agenda Item	Cabinet Member/Non-Executive Member	Chief Executive/Corporate Director	External Organisations
Establishment of Budget Scrutiny Task Group	Cllr Rita Conneely, Chair of Resources and Public Realm Committee	Zahur Khan, Corporate Director – Communities and Regeneration	
Planning Enforcement	Cllr Harbi Farah, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection	Zahur Khan, Corporate Director – Communities and Regeneration	
Community Engagement Framework	Cllr Fleur Donnelly-Jackson, Cabinet Member for Customers, Communities, and Culture	Zahur Khan, Corporate Director – Communities and Regeneration	

**7 November 2023**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Cabinet Member/Non-Executive Member</b>	<b>Chief Executive/Corporate Director</b>	<b>External Organisations</b>
Complaints Annual Report 2022/23	Cllr Shama Tatler, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth	Debra Norman, Corporate Director – Governance	
Budget 2023/24 Update: Q2 Financial Report	Cllr Shama Tatler, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources	

**24 January 2024**

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Cabinet Member/Non-Executive Member</b>	<b>Chief Executive/Corporate Director</b>	<b>External Organisations</b>
Budget Scrutiny Task Group Findings	Cllr Rita Conneely, Chair of Resources and Public Realm Committee	Alice Lester, Corporate Director – Communities and Regeneration	
Safer Brent Partnership Annual Report 2022-23	Cllr Harbi Farah, Cabinet Member for Safer Communities and Public Protection	Alice Lester, Corporate Director – Communities and Regeneration	Will Lexton-Jones, Detective Superintendent - Brent Neighbourhoods, Metropolitan Police

27 February 2024

Agenda Item	Cabinet Member/Non-Executive Member	Chief Executive/Corporate Director	External Organisations
Draft Property Strategy	Cllr Shama Tatler, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources	
Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy Update	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action	Peter Gadsdon, Corporate Director – Resident Services	

23 April 2024

Agenda Item	Cabinet Member/Non-Executive Member	Chief Executive/Corporate Director	External Organisations
Contracts Mobilisation	Cllr Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Action	Peter Gadsdon, Corporate Director – Resident Services	
Budget 2023/24 Update	Cllr Shama Tatler, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources	
Regeneration in Brent	Cllr Shama Tatler, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Reform and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth	Alice Lester, Corporate Director – Communities and Regeneration	

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