



Brent

SUMMONS TO ATTEND COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 8 July 2024 at 6.00 pm

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

Please note that this meeting will be held as a physical meeting with all members of the Council required to attend in person.

To the Mayor and Councillors of the London Borough of Brent and to each and every one of them.

I hereby summon you to attend the MEETING OF THE COUNCIL of this Borough.

KIM WRIGHT
Chief Executive

Dated: 28 June 2024

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

For electronic copies of minutes and agendas please visit:
[Council meetings and decision making | Brent Council](#)

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

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 a Prejudicial Interest (i.e. it affects a financial position or relates to determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission, or registration) then (unless an exception at 14(2) of the Members Code applies), 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 expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of election; including from a trade union.
- (c) **Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between the Councillors or their partner (or a body in which one has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) **Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) **Licences** - Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) **Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which the Councillor or their partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) **Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

****Personal Interests:**

The business relates to or affects:

- (a) Anybody of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management, and:
 - To which you are appointed by the council;
 - which exercises functions of a public nature;
 - which is directed is to charitable purposes;
 - whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy (including a political party of trade union).
- (b) The interests 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, to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral ward affected by the decision, 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 employs or has appointed any of these or in whom they have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000, or any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are a director
- any body of a type described in (a) above

Agenda

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

1 - 14

To confirm as a correct record, the attached minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on Wednesday 22 May 2024.

3 Declarations of Interest

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

4 Mayor's Announcements (including any petitions received)

To receive any announcements from the Mayor.

5 Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies and Appointment of Chairs/Vice Chairs (if any)

To agree any appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies (if any) in accordance with Standing Order 30 (g).

6 Deputations (if any)

To hear any deputations requested by members of the public in accordance with Standing Order 32.

Details will be provided in advance of the meeting of any deputations approved for consideration.

7 Questions from Members of the Public & Brent Youth Parliament

15 - 20

7.1 To receive and consider the question(s) submitted by the public for response by the relevant Cabinet Member, in accordance with Standing Order 33.

Members are asked to note that two public questions have been received, which have been attached to the agenda along with the written responses provided.

7.2 To receive question(s) submitted by the Brent Youth Parliament for response by the relevant Cabinet Member, in accordance with Standing Order 33(c).

Members are asked to note that one question has been received, which has been attached to the agenda along with the written response provided.

8 Petitions (if any)

For Members to consider any petitions with more than 200 signatures on which a debate has been requested, in accordance with the Council's petition rules and Standing Order 68.

Members are asked to note there are no petitions due to be received at this meeting of the Council.

9 Motions

Following the change in procedure for dealing with Motions agreed as part of the changes to the Constitution at the Annual Council Meeting in May 2024, the debate on motions submitted to Full Council, in accordance with Standing Order 30(k) and 41 will now be undertaken at this stage of the meeting.

Members are asked to note:

- The motions submitted will be circulated as part of a republished agenda in advance of the meeting, in accordance with Standing Order 41(c).
- Where a motion concerns an executive function, nothing passed can be actioned until approved by the Executive or an officer with the relevant delegated power.

10 Reports from the Leader and Cabinet 21 - 38

To receive a report from the Leader of the Council in accordance with Standing Order 31 providing an update on any key or significant issues arising from any matter within the responsibility of the Cabinet.

11 Questions from the Opposition and other Non-Cabinet Members 39 - 48

For questions to be put to members of the Cabinet by Opposition and Non-Cabinet Members in accordance with Standing Order 35.

Five advance notice questions have been received under this item, which have been attached along with the written responses provided.

Members are asked to note that this session will also include an opportunity (within the time available) for other Non-Cabinet members

and the Opposition to ask questions of Cabinet Members without the need for advance notice.

12 Report from Chairs of Scrutiny Committees

To receive reports from the Chairs of the Council's Scrutiny Committees in accordance with Standing Order 36. The reports have been attached as follows:

12.1 Community & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 49 - 56

12.2 Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee To Follow

Members are asked to note that this session will include an opportunity (within the time available) for Non-Cabinet Members to ask questions of relevant Scrutiny Chair's in relation to the remit of their Committees.

13 Annual Report from the Chairs of the Audit & Standards Advisory and Audit & Standards Committees 57 - 64

To receive the Annual Report jointly produced by the Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee and Audit and Standards Advisory Committee updating on the work of both Committees, in accordance with Standing Order 37.

14 Non-Cabinet Members' Debate 65 - 66

To enable Non-Cabinet Members to raise an issue of relevance to Brent for debate on which notice has been provided in accordance with Standing Order 34 and to receive updates from Cabinet members, as required, on any issues previously raised.

Members are asked to note that the subject identified for debate at this meeting is as follows:

Declaration of a Housing Emergency

Please note: The motion submitted as the basis for this debate has been attached.

15 Maternity and Paternity Arrangements for Councillors - Allowances, Leave and s85 Local Government Act 1972 67 - 74

To receive a report from the Corporate Director Law & Governance seeking approval to changes in the maternity/paternity policy within the Members Allowances Scheme and that in accordance with s.85 of the Local Government Act 1972 absence on approved maternity leave is

agreed as a reason for non-attendance at any meeting of the Council, Cabinet, Committee or Sub-Committee from 8th July 2024 onwards.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Contact Officer: Debra Norman, Corporate
Director Law & Governance
020 8937 1578
debra.norman@brent.gov.uk

16 Representation of Political Groups on Committees

To Follow

If required following the outcome of the Queens Park ward by-election on 4 July 2024, to receive a report from the Corporate Director of Law & Governance reviewing (under Section 15 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989) the allocation of seats on Council Committees and other relevant bodies.

Ward Affected:
All Wards

Contact Officer: Debra Norman, Corporate
Director Law & Governance
020 8937 1578
debra.norman@brent.gov.uk

17 Urgent Business

At the discretion of the Mayor to consider any urgent business, in accordance with Standing Order 37(s).



Please remember to switch your mobile phone to silent during the meeting.

- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public. Alternatively, it will be possible to follow proceedings via the live webcast [HERE](#)



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

Minutes of the ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
held in the Grand Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Wednesday 22 May 2024 at 6.00 pm

PRESENT:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor Tariq Dar MBE

The Deputy Mayor
Councillor Diana Collymore

COUNCILLORS:

Aden	Afzal
Agha	Ahmadi-Moghaddam
Ahmed	Akram
Bajwa	Begum
Benea	M Butt
S Butt	Chan
Chappell	Chohan
Choudry	Collymore
Conneely	Dixon
Donnelly-Jackson	Ethapemi
Farah	Fraser
Gbajumo	Georgiou
Grahl	Hack
Hirani	Johnson
Kabir	Kansagra
Kelcher	Kennelly
Knight	Long
Lorber	Mahmood
Matin	Maurice
Miller	Mitchell
Moeen	Molloy
Nerva	J.Patel
M Patel	Rajan-Seelan
Rubin	Shah
Ketan Sheth	Krupa Sheth
Southwood	

1. **Welcoming Statement**

Prior to formally opening the meeting, the outgoing Mayor Councillor Hylton took the opportunity to welcome all councillors and guests to the Annual Council meeting. She then invited Kim Wright (as the Council's Chief Executive) to provide a brief outline of the arrangements for the conduct of the meeting and Mayor Making ceremony. Having noted the outline provided, the Mayor then moved on to formally open the meeting.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

The Mayor advised that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Crabb, Mistry, Smith and Tatler.

3. **To elect the Mayor of the Borough for the Municipal Year 2024 - 2025**

Prior to handing over to the Chief Executive for the conduct of the election process, Councillor Hylton began by asking members for nominations to the office of Mayor of the London of Borough of Brent for the 2024 - 2025 Municipal Year.

Councillor Muhammed Butt proceeded to nominate Councillor Tariq Dar MBE. In moving the nomination, he firstly took the opportunity to thank Councillor Hylton for her hard work and dedication whilst serving as Mayor and commitment in seeking to represent local community groups and organisations. The Leader then moved on to advise how pleased he was to be able to nominate Councillor Dar for the position, recognising the important role undertaken by the Mayor in representing and providing strong civic leadership across the borough.

Councillor Mili Patel then seconded the nomination of Councillor Dar for the office of Mayor of the London of Borough of Brent for the 2024 - 2025 Municipal Year.

There were no other nominations and it was therefore **RESOLVED** that Councillor Tariq Dar MBE be elected Mayor of the London Borough of Brent for the 2024 - 2025 Municipal Year.

Councillor Dar then proceeded to sign the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Mayor.

4. **To appoint a Councillor of the Borough to be Deputy Mayor**

Councillor Dar, as newly appointed Mayor, thanked members for his nomination and appointment as Mayor. He then announced the appointment of Councillor Diana Collymore to serve as Deputy Mayor for the 2024 - 2025 Municipal Year.

At this stage in proceedings the Mayors Chain of Office and robes were exchanged between the outgoing and newly appointed Mayor.

Councillor Dar then formally returned thanks for his appointment. Starting by welcoming all guests, he highlighted his pride and personal honour in being nominated as Mayor and thanked all members for their trust, confidence and faith in appointing him to take on the role as first citizen of the borough.

Highlighting the privilege he felt in being appointed as Mayor, Councillor Dar regarded this as the culmination of the work he had undertaken since arriving in the UK in 1965 in seeking to champion residents, for which he was also proud to have been recognised with the award of an MBE in 2019. Having been a local councillor since 2018, Councillor Dar advised he was honoured to currently serve as a representative of Mapesbury ward as well as to have served as Deputy Mayor during 2023-24 and paid specific tribute to his family and fellow councillors for their support during this time. He also took the opportunity to express gratitude to all the elders across the borough, with specific reference to his and other families proud legacy in their service to the UK (including its Armed forces) and in providing a platform for the establishment of various Welfare Associations, Mosques and Community Centres given the support being provided to communities across the borough, which he blessed and hoped would continue for many generations to come.

Having advised how delighted he was to have been joined by so many guests, Councillor Dar then moved on to express his thanks to Councillor Hylton and congratulated her for the success achieved as Mayor, recognising the hard work she had undertaken to support local community groups and events across the borough and to continue promoting Brent so diligently.

The Mayor then moved on to congratulate Councillor Collymore on her appointment as Deputy Mayor and advised how much he was looking forward to working with her over the coming year in order to continue delivering, positives outcomes for the borough.

Referring to teamwork, the Mayor outlined that he intended to continue working closely with fellow members, the Chief Executive, Council Management Team and other officers in order to capitalise on the strengths and experience available in continuing the hard work of the outgoing and previous Mayors in seeking to achieve the best results for the borough focussed around cohesion and trust.

Councillor Dar then outlined the aims for his Mayoralty in terms of continuing to support the Council's overall vision and objectives. In this role he advised that he also intended to support the Pakistan Community Centre as his chosen charitable organisation during his year in office. Referring to their role as a voluntary and charity organisation, the Mayor highlighted the valuable work undertaken by the Community Centre since its establishment in 1965. This had originally involved supporting newly arrived migrants from the subcontinent in addressing employment, housing and other social needs before evolving to their current status as a community based organisation providing support on a wide range of local issues, including participation in projects to assist the homeless and working with churches and other local organisations to provide shelter and food to those most disadvantaged in society. Highlighting the important work undertaken through the Pakistan Community Centre he hoped all members would support him with the fund raising efforts during his year in office.

Reflecting on the level of diversity within communities across Brent, the Mayor ended by taking the opportunity to thank his family, friends and wider community for their support over the coming year and by once again highlighting how proud he was to have been elected as Brent's First Citizen along with his intention to continue using the role to support the work being undertaken to unite communities

and address the uncertain times and challenges being experienced by so many across the borough.

5. Vote of thanks to the outgoing Mayor

The Mayor then invited Councillor Mili Patel, as Deputy Leader, to propose a vote of thanks to all co-opted and other members serving on the Council's committees.

Councillor Mili Patel began by congratulating Councillor Dar on his appointment as Mayor before moving on to highlight the valued work of the Council's co-opted and independent committee members, given the core role they played as critical friends in the Council's democratic process. In passing on her thanks, she advised how their independence and objectivity were seen as integral to the role of the bodies on which they served including Scrutiny, Audit & Standards and the various health and education bodies. Recognising the challenges which local government continued to face, she ended by thanking all of the co-opted and Independent Members for their work in supporting the Council's democratic processes and drive towards continuous improvement.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) to formally propose a vote of thanks for the outgoing Mayor, Councillor Hylton. In doing so, the Leader began by congratulating the new Mayor and Deputy Mayor on their appointment and by highlighting the honour in serving as First Citizen of the Borough and in being able to advocate and serve as a champion for Brent. These were roles he felt Councillor Hylton had worked hard to fulfil during her time as Mayor. Recognising her passion and commitment to the people of Brent and the range of local community organisations and events she had supported, the Leader praised Councillor Hylton for her efforts and for the valued contribution made in representing the borough during her Mayoralty, which he advised had been appreciated by all members.

The Mayor then invited comments from other members in recognition of the role undertaken by the outgoing Mayor.

Councillor Kansagra, as Leader of the Conservative Group, in opening the tributes began by taking the opportunity to congratulate the new Mayor and Deputy Mayor on their appointment, which he hoped they would take full advantage of in seeking to work with the varied communities across the borough. He then moved on to thank Councillor Hylton, as the outgoing Mayor, for the way she had conducted herself in her civic role as well as for the way she had chaired the Council meetings and wished her well on her return to ordinary ward councillor duties.

Following on, Councillor Kabir also took the opportunity to welcome and congratulate the new Mayor and Deputy Mayor on their appointment before moving on to commend Councillor Hylton for the dignity, friendliness dedication and passion she had demonstrated in supporting so many local community events during her time as Mayor, which she felt sure had left a lasting impression on all those involved.

Councillor Mahmood also took the opportunity to thank and commend Councillor Hylton for a successful year in office, recognising the extent of work undertaken to engage with local community organisations across the borough and authority

displayed in fulfilling her role. Recognising the honour in being elected to serve as Mayor, he also congratulated Councillor Dar on his appointment referring to his experience in community engagement and support, which he was confident would continue to be utilised to support residents across the borough and in raising the profile of Brent whilst also respecting the legacy of those elders within the community who had led the way in terms of mentoring and supporting the development of so much community engagement.

Councillor Kennelly in congratulating the Mayor and Deputy Mayor on their appointment also spoke to praise and recognise the valuable work undertaken by Councillor Hylton during her time as Mayor not only in representing the borough as a whole but also specifically in support of Preston Community Library and the wider local community and to welcome her back in her role as ward councillor.

Councillor Moeen then spoke and having congratulated and welcomed the newly appointed Mayor & Deputy Mayor, also paid tribute to Councillor Hylton for the work undertaken to support local community groups highlighting the privilege in being able to work so closely with her during her year in office.

Councillor Gbajumo also took the opportunity, having congratulated the new Mayor and Deputy Mayor on their appointment, to pay tribute to Councillor Hylton for the passion, strength and compassion demonstrated in the tireless work undertaken to support events (particularly across her ward) aimed at uniting and supporting local communities.

The comments made in tribute to Councillor Hylton were also echoed by Councillor Hack who took the opportunity (speaking as a friend and close associate) to highlight her strength of character and commitment in seeking to promote the core values of community and society in her role as Mayor and support as many local events and organisations as possible.

In thanking Councillor Hylton for the effort she had made to support so many local community events during her time in office and supporting the comments previously made, Councillor Miller also took the opportunity to welcome and congratulate Councillor Dar on his appointment highlighting the role he had played as an initial mentor to him in seeking to become a local councillor and community representative.

Councillor S. Butt in thanking and commending Councillor Hylton for the way she had conducted herself as Mayor during her time in office also spoke to congratulate Councillor Dar on his appointment, recognising the close link between previous generations of his and the new Mayor's family along with his dedication and commitment to public and community service, which he wished him all the best in continuing during his time in office.

As a further contribution and in reflecting on previous comments made Councillor Nerva, in recognising the commitment displayed to local communities and residents across the borough as a whole, thanked Councillor Hylton for the inclusive nature of the approach she had adopted which he felt had been particularly important during such a challenging time internationally and represented the hallmark of a strong Mayoralty.

Councillor Johnson also took the opportunity to congratulate the new Mayor & Deputy Mayor on their appointment before congratulating Councillor Hylton on her year in office. In commending Councillor Hylton for the wide range of work and engagements undertaken over the course of the year he also felt it was important to recognise how proud her late mother and brother would have been of her achievements, which he had no doubt she would continue to deliver as she stepped back into her role as ward councillor.

Continuing the tributes to Councillor Hylton on her achievements as Mayor, Councillor Choudry also took the opportunity to congratulate Councillor Dar on his appointment recognising his commitment to Brent and also the support provided to him personally as a new councillor.

In concluding the tributes, Councillor Dixon also took the opportunity to thank Councillor Hylton for her hard work as Mayor recognising and supporting the comments already made and in ending also took the opportunity to congratulate Councillor Dar as a colleague and friend on his appointment. Referring to his kindness, knowledge and commitment (particularly in his efforts to support work with young offenders) she was sure these would continue to be demonstrated during his year in office and in seeking to represent local communities across the borough which she advised she looked forward to supporting him on.

The Mayor then invited Councillor Hylton to return thanks and review her time in office.

Councillor Hylton, in returning thanks, began by taking a moment to remember a well known local resident Mr Norman Mitchell, who she advised had sadly passed away recently at the age of 103. In reflecting on his life and contribution to the borough, Councillor Hylton advised that she had personally known Mr Mitchell for many years, recalling the voluntary work he had undertaken supported by other residents, including her late mother, for which he had also been recognised with the award of an MBE. Referring to his continual smile and the legacy he had created, Councillor Hylton took the opportunity, on behalf of the Council, to offer her sincere condolences to Mr Mitchell's family and friends and invited all members to join her in observing a period of silence in memory and honour of Mr Norman Mitchell.

All present at the meeting then stood to join the Mayor in observing a minutes silence.

Moving on to review her time in office, Councillor Hylton began by expressing her pride at having been elected as Mayor and being able to serve the people of Brent during the previous year. Reflecting on the honour in being able to serve the borough, particular thanks were extended to all members for their support along with Kim Wright, as Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council, Fatema Limbada within Democratic Services and Kim Gordan & Brian Kennedy in the Mayor's Office, which had been much valued. The opportunity was also taken to thank Councillor Kennelly for his specific support as fellow Preston ward councillor whilst her attention had been focussed on Mayoral duties over the past year.

Reflecting on her time in office, Councillor Hylton highlighted the vast range of events she had been fortunate to attend (totalling 351) which had involved her

being able to meet so many inspiring, talented and generous local individuals, all of whom, she advised, had made her proud to represent and live in Brent with a specific highlight having been the first joint St Patrick's Day celebration arranged between the Irish and Nigerian communities across the borough. Thanking everyone for the warmth in which she had been welcomed and received, Councillor Hylton then moved on to review her fundraising activities over the year, reminding members of the two charities she had pledged to support and raise the profile of during her time in office. These had been PILAS and Preston Community Library, for which she had been pleased to highlight the important work and support each organisation provided to some of the most vulnerable people in the borough as part of her fundraising activities. Whilst the final sum was still to be confirmed, Councillor Hylton advised she was delighted to be able to inform members that as a result of the support received in her various fundraising activities over £22,000 had been raised during her time as Mayor to support the ongoing work of both charities. All members then joined Councillor Hylton in a round of applause to recognise the work undertaken by each organisation and all those who had supported the fundraising activities.

Highlighting how much she had enjoyed her time as Mayor, Councillor Hylton ended by taking the opportunity to thank all members, council staff, local community groups and residents for their support and to thank Councillor Dar for his support as Deputy Mayor and to wish him and his family, along with Councillor Collymore as his deputy, all the best for the coming year as Mayor.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Hylton for her comments and highlighted how much he had enjoyed working with her during her time as Mayor. He ended by wishing her well for the future and then advised that as this now concluded the ceremonial part of the meeting, he would move on to deal with the remainder of the agenda.

6. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared by Members at the meeting.

7. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 29 February 2024 be approved as a correct record.

8. **Annual Review of Constitution**

The Mayor invited Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) to introduce the report from the Corporate Director of Law & Governance. In presenting the report, Councillor Muhammed Butt advised this detailed a number of proposed changes to the Constitution as a result of its annual review including changes to reflect the recent realignment of senior management functions and changes to Cabinet portfolios. The other changes outlined included amendments to the procedure for dealing with motions to Full Council (Standing Order 41 Part 2 of Constitution) along with changes to the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee Terms of Reference, Local Code of Corporate Governance (Part 5 of Constitution) and Members Allowance Scheme in relation to the Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Sickness Pay Policy (Part 6 of Constitution)

Having introduced the report, the Mayor then invited Councillor Georgiou (as leader of the Liberal Democrats Group) to move an amendment to the report submitted prior to the meeting in relation to the charring arrangements for the Council's scrutiny function.

Councillor Georgiou began by congratulating the Mayor on his appointment and in moving the amendment started by making reference to the importance of scrutiny as a key element in a healthy functioning democracy which, to ensure maximum effectiveness, he felt should be as independent of the Executive as possible. Highlighting the efforts made to support the role of effective scrutiny within the Council reference was made to the use of call-in and scrutiny as a means of seeking to hold the Executive to account but with concerns expressed at the changes introduced to the charring arrangements for each Committee, which he felt had effectively prevented the Opposition Groups from having any meaningful say in the way scrutiny was led. In order to safeguard the effectiveness, democratic accountability and independence of Brent's scrutiny function, Councillor Georgiou advised the Liberal Democrats had therefore proposed an amendment to Standing Order 49(ii) within Part 2 (Procedural Rules) of the Constitution requiring that the Chairs of the existing Scrutiny Committees should be Opposition Group appointments with an alternative also moved, should the initial amendment not be agreed, to require that the Vice-Chairs of the existing Scrutiny Committee become Opposition Group appointments.

The Mayor then opened the debate inviting other members to speak on the report and amendment(s) moved by Councillor Georgiou, with the following contributions made.

As an initial contribution, Councillor Kelcher felt it important to clarify the position regarding the appointment process for members of each scrutiny committee and the Chairs, which he reminded members reflected the overall proportion of seats each political group held on the Council and democratic mandate the current Administration had been provided with following the local election. These were, he pointed out, well-established principles and had not been designed to undermine the independence or important role of the scrutiny function as a critical friend. On this basis he advised he would not be supporting either of the amendments moved.

Councillor Kansagra speaking in support of the proposed changes within the amendment, as Leader of the Conservative Group, highlighted the concerns his Group had also previously raised in relation to impact which removal of the vice-chair roles on scrutiny from the Opposition Groups had had in undermining the independence and democratic accountability of the scrutiny function. As a result, he felt the amendment(s) moved were reasonable, proportionate and would deliver improved scrutiny along with better outcomes for all. He therefore advised the Conservative Group would be supporting the amendment(s).

Councillor Afzal, speaking against the amendment also felt there was a need to recognise the democratic mandate provided to the Administration by residents following the last local election, which he felt also reflected a core principle of an effective and healthy democratic and, in expressing concern at any attempts being made to politicise the scrutiny function, felt this also needed to be taken into account when considering the amendment.

As a final contribution, Councillor Lorber also speaking in support of the proposed amendment advised that whilst not seeking to politicise the scrutiny function the proposal moved by Councillor Georgiou on behalf of the Liberal Democrats had been designed to reflect the original objectives of the Labour Government when establishing the current scrutiny arrangements in local government as part of the introduction of wider Executive decision-making powers. In order to maintain a strong, credible and effective scrutiny function Councillor Lorber felt it was important to ensure that the function was as independent as possible from the Executive, with the amendment he pointed out reflecting this objective and previous practice within the Authority.

As no further members indicated they wished to speak the Mayor then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt to exercise his right of reply in relation to the report and amendment moved at the meeting.

In summing up, Councillor Muhammed Butt began by highlighting what he felt was a need to recognise the clear mandate provided for the current Labour Administration following the most recent local election, which he felt also covered member's participation in scrutiny and the wider democratic process. In commending the work of the existing Scrutiny Chairs and Committees, and opportunities that already existed for the Opposition Groups to fully participate and engage in the way scrutiny was being delivered Councillor Muhammed Butt advised that the Labour Group did not feel any further changes were required and were not therefore minded to support the amendment(s) moved by Councillor Georgiou at the meeting.

As a final contribution, the Mayor then invited Councillor Georgiou to exercise his right of reply in relation to the discussion on the amendment moved at the meeting. In responding Councillor Georgiou expressed concern at the stance taken by the Labour Administration in terms of the appointment of the scrutiny chairs and vice-chairs and impact on the overall independence of the scrutiny function, which he felt undermined its overall effectiveness and democratic accountability. Whilst recognising the work being undertaken by the existing scrutiny chair's the amendments were commended to members as a means of further strengthening the effectiveness of the overall scrutiny process and ability for meaningful engagement by the Opposition Groups.

Having thanked members for their contributions the Mayor then moved on to put the amendment and recommendations within the report to the vote.

On putting the initial amendment relating to the chairing arrangements for scrutiny moved by Councillor Georgiou to the vote this was declared **LOST**.

As a result, the alternative amendment moved by Councillor Georgiou relating to the vice-chair arrangements for scrutiny was then put to the vote, which was also declared **LOST**.

The substantive recommendations, as detailed within the report, were then put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To agree the amendments to the Constitution as set out in Appendix 1 of the report reflecting the corporate realignment of senior managers and directorates and updating the responsibility for functions, Terms of Reference for the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee and Local Code of Corporate Governance as well as the arrangements for Group Motions at Full Council meetings (under Standing Order 41).
- (2) To note that the list of Cabinet Members and Portfolio Holders in Part 1 of the Constitution would be updated to reflect the appointments made and allocation of functions by the Leader.
- (3) To authorise the Corporate Director of Governance to amend the Constitution accordingly, including making any necessary incidental or consequential changes.
- (4) To note that, to the extent the changes agreed under (1) above related to executive functions of the Council, they had been approved by the Leader.

9. **Representation of Political Groups on Committees**

The Mayor then moved on to invite Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) to introduce the report from the Corporate Director of Law and Governance. In introducing the item, Councillor Muhammed Butt advised the report fulfilled the Council's duty to review and determine the representation of different political groups on certain Committees at its annual meeting. It was noted that no changes to the existing allocation of seats had been proposed reflecting the fact that there had been no change in the overall composition of political groups since the previous review.

As no members indicated that they wished to speak on the item the Mayor put the recommendations straight to the vote and they were declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To agree the size of each Committee, as detailed within the report.
- (2) To approve the allocation of seats on Committees to each of the Council's political groups (where the rules of political balance applied) as set out within the report and to make appointments to those committees (under agenda item 9 on the agenda) giving effect to the wishes of the political group allocated the seats.
- (3) To note that the political balance on Council Sub-Committees would be reviewed at the first meeting of the General Purposes Committee and Licensing Committee to be held following the Annual Council Meeting.

10. **Appointment to Committees and Outside Bodies including the appointment of Chairs & Vice-Chairs**

The Mayor then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) to introduce the report from the Corporate Director of Governance. In introducing the item, the Leader advised that the report set out the nominations for appointments to

Committees and Outside Bodies and nomination for Chairs and Vice Chairs as well as co-opted members, where necessary, for the 2024 - 25 Municipal Year, with the nominations having been made (where required) in accordance with the political balance of the Council and requirements in relation to political proportionality.

As no members indicated that they wished to speak on the item the Mayor put the recommendations straight to the vote and they were declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve the appointments of members and substitutes as well as the continuing appointment of co-opted members to Council Committees and Outside Bodies for the 2024-2025 Municipal Year, as detailed within section 3.2.4 and Appendix 1 of the report.
- (2) To approve the appointments of Chairs and Vice Chairs to Council Committees for the 2024-2025 Municipal Year, as detailed within Appendix 1 of the report.
- (3) To note the appointments:
 - (a) of the Cabinet, Cabinet Committees and Joint Executive Committees and their respective Chairs and Vice Chairs for the 2024-2025 Municipal Year, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.
 - (b) to be confirmed by the General Purposes Committee for the 2024-2025 Municipal Year, as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report.
 - (c) to be confirmed by Licensing Committee for the 2024-2025 Municipal Year, as detailed in Appendix 4 of the report.

(The full list of appointments can be found as part of the appendices to the main report republished prior to the meeting)

11. **Calendar of Council Meetings for the 2024 -2025 Municipal Year**

The Mayor then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) to introduce the report from the Corporate Director of Law and Governance which the Leader advised detailed the calendar of meeting dates for Full Council and other meetings during the 2024 - 25 Municipal Year.

As no members indicated that they wished to speak on the item the recommendations in the report were put straight to the vote by the Mayor and were unanimously declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve the dates for Full Council and other meetings to take place during the 2024-25 Municipal Year, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.
- (2) That the Deputy Director Democratic Services be authorised to make any alterations deemed necessary to the Municipal Calendar during the course of

the year having consulted with the Leader of the Council, Leaders of the Opposition Group(s) and Chair of the affected meeting.

12. **Review of Arrangements for "Call In" of Executive decisions to Scrutiny Committees**

The Mayor then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Leader of the Council) to introduce the final report on the agenda from the Corporate Director of Law and Governance. In introducing the item, Councillor Muhammed Butt advised that the report presented the outcome of a review undertaken on the current "call-in" arrangements for Executive decisions with members being asked to consider a proposal (developed as an outcome of the review) that would require the submission of any future "call in", whilst still only requiring five individual signatories, to also be supported by members of more than one political group.

Having introduced the report, the Mayor then invited Councillor Lorber (on behalf of the Liberal Democrats Group) to move an amendment to the report submitted prior to the meeting seeking approval to alternative arrangements for the number of members required to submit a valid call-in in response to the review of current arrangements.

In moving the amendment, Councillor Lorber began by highlighting what he felt had been the lack of justification for the change proposed within the report presented by the Leader of the Council on the basis of the review which had been undertaken and expressed concern at the impact this would have at further reducing the ability of non-executive members to hold the Executive to account as part of an effective and democratic scrutiny process. Highlighting the need to maintain a strong and effective scrutiny function along with the need to maintain a meaningful ability for any member or political group to be able to call-in decisions for review as part of the balance provided in the current governance arrangements, Councillor Lorber felt it important to outline the value of recent call-in and scrutiny activity, including a focus on the Altamira Morland Gardens development and changes to the Council's street cleansing and recycling arrangements, as a means of ensuring the decisions made had been based on sound information and advice. Having taken account of the current review on the arrangements for call-in he advised that the amendment being moved on behalf of the Liberal Democrats Group was therefore seeking the following alternative changes to the call-in provisions:

- (1) That any Cabinet decision which had implications for the whole or a large part of the borough could be called in by any three Councillors from one or more political groups.
- (2) That any Cabinet decision which had implications for just one ward within the borough could be called in by any one councillor.

In order to safeguard the objectives of effective democratic scrutiny he therefore urged all members to reject the proposals within the report and support the amendment as moved.

Having moved the amendment, the Mayor then opened the debate inviting other members to speak on the report and amendment, with the following contributions made.

Speaking in support of the amendment, Councillor Kansagra, also felt it was important to recognise the impact which the proposal moved by the Leader would have in restricting the ability of members (including those within the Labour Group) to effectively hold the Executive to account. In support of a need to maintain the objectives of effective democratic scrutiny he therefore advised his Group would be voting against the proposals within the report and in support of the amendment.

Councillor Georgiou, also speaking in opposition to the proposal moved by the Leader and support of the amendment, felt it important to highlight what he felt to be the effective way in which call-in arrangements were currently operating in Brent and expressed concern at the potential impact the requirement for members of more than one political group to support a call-in would have in disenfranchising individual members by restricting their ability to call-in future Executive decisions for review. For these reasons he urged all members to join him in supporting the amendment as moved.

As no further members indicated they wished to speak the Mayor then invited Councillor Muhammed Butt to exercise his right of reply in relation to the report and amendment moved at the meeting.

In summing up, Councillor Muhammed Butt began by reminding members of the opportunities available to hold the Executive to account as well as participate and engage in the way scrutiny was being delivered but also felt it important to once again highlight the clear mandate provided for the current Labour Administration in seeking to implement their programme in support of local residents. As a result, he advised the Labour Group would not be supporting the amendment moved by Councillor Lorber.

As a final contribution, the Mayor then invited Councillor Lorber to exercise his right of reply in relation to the debate on the amendment. In responding Councillor Lorber expressed concern at the stance taken by the Labour Administration in relation to the proposal moved by the Leader, which he felt not only undermined the overall effectiveness of scrutiny and its ability to meaningfully hold the Executive to account but also the mandate provided for all local ward councillors in seeking to support, empower and represent their constituents. On this basis he once again urged all members to support the amendment as moved at the meeting.

Having thanked members for their contributions the Mayor then moved on to put the amendment and recommendations within the report to the vote.

On putting the amendment moved by Councillor Lorber to the vote this was declared **LOST**.

The substantive recommendations, as detailed within the report, were then put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

It was therefore **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve adoption of a change in arrangements for call-in of Executive decisions (requiring the submission of a valid call-in request by five non-

cabinet members) to involve those members representing more than one political group.

- (2) Following on from (1) above, to authorise the Corporate Director of Law & Governance to amend the Constitution accordingly, including making any necessary incidental or consequential changes.

13. **Urgent Business**

As there was no urgent business to be transacted the Mayor declared the Annual Meeting closed and advised that he looked forward to seeing all members at the next Council meeting on Monday 8 July 2024. He then invited all members and guests to join him at his reception.

The meeting closed at 7.42 pm

COUNCILLOR TARIQ DAR MBE
Mayor



Item 7.1: Questions from Members of the Public

Full Council – 8 July 2024

1. **Question from James Walerych to Councillor Muhammed Butt (Leader of the Council)**

Can the Leader advise where the expected revenue to be generated over the next four years from the lease awarded for the advertising panels under the Bobby Moore Bridge (covering over the Wembley murals) will be spent?

Response:

I can confirm that the money raised contributes to the Council's borough plan objectives by supporting the work we do to inform residents about a wide range of council services and deliver communications campaigns in areas from tackling fly-tipping and health inequalities to improving recycling rates and community safety.

2. Question from Daniela Stuppia to Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment & Enforcement)

Living in Wembley Central I would like to ask why do we need so many betting shops on Wembley High Road.

I count more than 10 on one single road, in a country that has serious problems with gambling. How can this be allowed?

Response:

We are doing all we can to prevent such high concentration of gambling outlets, working with the limited powers that we have. When businesses apply for a licence, we have to follow the Gambling Commission's statutory guidance. This stipulates that we have to 'aim to permit the use of premises for gambling' and expressly prohibits comment on whether there is demand for gambling premises. It also states that moral or ethical objections to gambling are not valid reasons to reject an application and an authority's decision cannot be based on dislike of gambling, or a general notion that it is undesirable to all gambling premises in an area. The Act does not enable us to consider the prevention of public nuisance or anti-social behaviour as a specific licensing objective. Nor, as a licensing authority, can we have regard to the expected demand for the facilities in determining whether to grant a premises licence.

Our 'Statement of Gambling Principles' – which has to comply with the Gambling Commission's requirements, is designed to find a balance between safeguarding those who may be vulnerable to the harmful effects of gambling, while also supporting and boosting the resilience of local businesses in Brent.

On the planning side, anyone wishing to change the use of a building to an adult gaming centre, betting shop or bingo establishment needs planning permission in addition to applying for a premise licence. We have planning policies which place restrictions on the concentration of these uses within a shopping centre but could not prevent these types of uses from being already present within our centres. The policy only affects proposals for new premises and cannot control or limit any existing premises.

Our policies restrict the proportion of frontage that can consist of betting shops (maximum of 4 %) and the amount of frontage that can consist of adult gaming centres, pawnbrokers or payday loan shops (3 %). The policy also requires there to be a minimum of 4 units in an alternative use in-between each. These restrictions apply to our town centres, with a separate maximum percentage applicable to neighbourhood parades.

We do not think our powers are strong enough. A letter to the Minister for DCMS was set by Councillor Nerva and Councillor Farah in January 2024 asking them to consider gambling legislation and take into account clustering of gambling establishments and remove the "aim to permit" clause from the Act. No response was received.

The Gambling Policy was thoroughly reviewed last year and changes made to do as much as we can make to make it a difficult environment, but unfortunately the current Act still has clauses that make most objections from residents inadmissible as they are on moral grounds or saturation.



Item 7.2: Questions from Brent Youth Parliament

Full Council – 8 July 2024

1. Question from Brent Youth Parliament to Councillor Farah (Cabinet Member for Public Safety & Partnerships)

Brent Youth Parliament is currently working on launching our local crime and safety campaign; specifically prioritising youth safety so what support could the Council provide in this future campaign?

Response:

Brent Council is committed to supporting young people within our borough and their safety and wellbeing is one of our key priorities. Our aim is to prevent young people from coming into the youth justice system by tackling issues such as early childhood trauma, neglect, school exclusion, poor mental health and health and social care needs. We are working with young people and our local partners to tackle these issues so that we can keep children and young people safe and stop offending behaviour.

The Safer Brent Community Safety Strategy 2024-2026 sets out the key priorities for the Safer Brent partnership and the work that we are doing to keep residents safe. One of these key priorities is tackling violent crime with a specific focus on knife crime. Our plan is to focus on serious violence, prevent reoffending and challenge prolific offenders.

We are keen to support the local crime and safety campaign being developed by the Youth Parliament by identifying key activities which align with our community strategy and ensure we provide more informed feedback on our strategic outcomes for young people.

We are willing to assist with promoting the local crime and safety campaign with commissioned providers, social landlords and other internal and external stakeholders in Brent.

The Safer Brent Partnership and the Youth Justice Management Board will be able to support Brent Youth Parliament's local crime and safety campaign by providing support to the boroughs most vulnerable young people. This will include support for young people in the youth justice system, working with their families to address the issues that have led to their offending behaviour and working with partners to provide services for young people.

One of our key priorities is providing safe spaces for young people in Brent and we will be consulting the Youth Parliament on how we design and increase safe spaces within the borough.


We want to ensure that young peoples voices are heard as we believe that early intervention and prevention are paramount to tackling serious youth violence. We will be establishing a Round Table Project so that we can gain a better understanding of how crime and exploitation is impacting young people. We also want to understand if young people have any fears about their safety in Brent and how we can address their concerns.

We are keen to bring youth services, the police, schools, young people, their families, and the Brent Youth Parliament together to discuss how to further improve the safety of young people in Brent. Through collaborative working with our key partners, we will work to tackle drug abuse, underage drinking, anti-social behaviour, gangs, county lines and knife crime.

Brent continues to work in collaboration with the Raheem Sterling Foundation and Word 4 Weapons, as part of the Knife Amnesty bins initiative. The knife amnesty bins provide an anonymous way for knives to be safely disposed of, with the addition of a QR code signposting young people towards support away from knife crime towards mentoring, education and work opportunities. We would very much like use of the knife bins promoted through youth networks and will be consulting the Youth Parliament on opportunities to install more knife bins, in the Borough.

Through these avenues, we are happy to work with Brent Youth Parliament to support and promote their "Local Crime & Safety Campaign".

This page is intentionally left blank

 Brent	Full Council 8 July 2024
	Report from the Leader of the Council
Update report from the Leader and Cabinet	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Council
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	One Appendix 1: Cabinet Member Update reports
Background Papers:	N/A
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	N/A

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report provides an update on the work being undertaken by the Leader and Cabinet, in accordance with Standing Order 31.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 Council is asked to note this report.

3.0 Detail

3.1 In accordance with Standing Order 31, this report presents an outline by the Leader and Cabinet Members on the key and significant issues identified as arising from their remits and that of the Cabinet, including their contribution to the Borough Plan and other Strategic Priorities.

3.2 Up to 3 minutes is provided at the Council meeting for the Leader, or any other Cabinet Member(s) identified to present the report highlighting any issues felt to be of significance.

3.3 Set out in Appendix One are the written updates provided.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

4.1 The relevant Lead Cabinet members have provided the updates detailed within Appendix 1 of the report.

5.0 Financial Considerations

5.1 As the report is for information purposes there are no direct financial implications.

6.0 Legal Considerations

6.1 As the report is for information purposes there are no direct legal implications.

7.0 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

7.1 As the report is for information purposes there are no direct equality, diversity or inclusion implications.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 As the report is for information purposes there are no direct implications.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

9.1 As the report is for information purposes there are no direct implications.

10.0 Communication Considerations

10.1 As the report is for information purposes there are no direct implications.

Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing – Councillor Muhammed Butt

Top news since my last report:

I am deeply honoured to continue as Leader of Brent Council. It is a labour of love for me, pure and simple. Our borough is a special place – my family, children, and grandchildren all call it home, and I want to continue to give back to Brent so that others enjoy the same chances I have across my lifetime.

I have always believed that no one person is bigger than the mission itself - and with that in mind I am proud to announce another Cabinet of talents drawn from across the council; maintaining our reputation for promoting more women into Cabinet than the lion share of councils in London.

In the pages that follow I have set out a breakdown of responsibilities between each of the Cabinet Members, including those which will be re-distributed, or collectively shared while Councillor Knight is on maternity leave.

We face a historic challenge before us, after 14 years of austerity, residents are crying out for investment in the public services that we all rely on. Over the next 2 years, this council is facing its own perfect storm with demand for emergency housing and for adult social care outpacing our dwindling resources.

We know it won't be an easy path ahead, but there are still reasons to remain radically optimistic. Within this refreshed Cabinet, I have appointed Councillor Jake Rubin as the Cabinet Member for Employment, Innovation and Climate Action.

This role looks forward to a brighter future, promoting digital and green skills so residents can continue to thrive in an ever-changing world.

This new portfolio area combines these ambitions in one and will also be crucial to exploring how we unleash the power of innovation and embrace new technologies to work smarter, while also focusing on how we can do all in this council's power to play our part in tackling climate change.

Productivity in London Councils

Brent Council was written to by the former Minister for Local Government, Simon Hoare to set out our plans to increase productivity.

London boroughs have had to become more productive and more efficient over the past 14 years since the period of austerity began. London Councils have estimated that since 2010-11, London boroughs' Core Spending Power has reduced by £2.2bn (20%) in real terms from £11.1bn to £8.8bn in 2024-25.

Over the same period, London's population has grown by 884,000 (11%) – larger than the entire population of Leeds - with significant associated increases in demand for services. This means Core Spending Power per capita is now 28% lower than it was in 2010-11.

London boroughs have also taken on new duties and responsibilities without sufficient or sustained funding. Some examples include: the localisation of council tax support in 2013; the transfer of public health duties in 2013; duties resulting from the Homeless Reduction Act 2017; duties resulting from the 2014 Children & Families Act; changes to Youth Justice and Health policy that impact children's social care.

In total, it is estimated that new duties and responsibilities along with other new or underfunded burdens have added over £1bn of additional funding pressures.

London boroughs have also had to reduce employee numbers significantly as a result of these funding reductions. They now employ around 54,000 (29%) fewer Full Time Equivalent staff (FTE) than in 2010.

In Brent this means:

- Our core spending power in real terms has reduced by £74.3m (18%) from £410.9m in 2010/11 to £336.6m in 2024/25, whilst our population has increased by 13% in that time. This is a 27% real terms reduction per head of the population of Brent.
- Our FTE headcount number has reduced by 2774 (52%) since 2010/11 to 2612 in 2023/24.

To unlock greater productivity in the public sector, the fundamental relationship between local government and Whitehall needs to change; with a day-one requirement to put councils on a pathway to sustainable funding, alongside long-term investment into our public services.

The list below illustrates the scale of the challenge for both London Borough's and the incoming government to address:

- London's productivity has stalled in recent years and is lagging behind leading global counterparts, such as New York, Paris and Stockholm.
- There is significant persistent deprivation and inequality across London including concentrations of child poverty, fuel poverty and unemployment.
- London is the epicentre of homelessness in the UK, with an estimated 1 in 50 households living in temporary accommodation, including 1 in 23 children. Councils in London are spending £90m per month on temporary accommodation for homeless people - up almost 40% on last year.
- Fragmentation of funding and delivery means that we are retrofitting less than 1% of our housing stock every year and would not reach our net zero target until the 22nd century.
- It is estimated that it would cost around £49 billion to bring all of London's home to EPC "B" standard by 2030.
- 1.1 million Londoners are diagnosed with high blood pressure and 120,000 are economically inactive due to a heart, blood or circulatory disorder.
- Local Government finance is broken; funding no longer accurately reflects local need; annual funding settlements engender uncertainty; and both the council tax and business rates system are in dire need of reform.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.
Contact: Cllr.Muhammed.Butt@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Porfolios

Councillor Muhammed Butt – Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing

Cross-cutting

- Communications
- Borough Plan 23-27
- Strategic change programme
- London Councils and partnerships
- Brent Black Community Action Plan
-

Housing Services (Maternity Cover from June 17th)*

- Corporate landlord performance
- Housing Services
-

Housing Needs and Support (Maternity Cover from June 17th)*

- Homelessness and Rough-Sleeping Strategy
- Private Rented Sector and Strategy
- Liaison with Housing Associations

Councillor Mili Patel - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Finance & Resources

- Capital Investment
- Pensions
- Shared IT Service with London Boroughs
-

Organisational assurance and resilience

- Health and Safety
- Emergency Planning
- Counter-Fraud and Investigation

Governance and Legal Services

- Democratic Services
- Legal Services
- Complaints

Human Resources

- Workforce and Equalities
- Organisational Development
- Diversity Ambassador

Property

- Property and assets Strategy
- Income generation
- Facilities Management

Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson - Cabinet Member for Resident Support and Culture

Residents Services

- Customer accessibility

- Customer services
- Citizenship and Registration
- Welfare support
- Debt support
- Council Tax and Business Rates
- Brent Community Hubs
- Brent Libraries
- Heritage and Culture Services
- Mortuaries, Bereavement services and Cemeteries

Councillor Harbi Farah - Cabinet Member for Public Safety and Partnerships

Public Protection

- Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Liaison with Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)
- Prevent
- Noise Nuisance
- Violence against Women and Girls

Communities and Partnerships

- Community Engagement
- Community Grants
- Voluntary sector
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (external)

Councillor Gwen Grahl - Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools

Early Help & Social Care

- Early Years Learning
- Family Wellbeing Centres
- Children's Safeguarding
- Children's Social Care
- Looked after Children and Corporate Parenting

Education, Partnerships and Strategy

- Youth offending
- Brent Youth Strategy
- Brent Youth Parliament
- Pupil referral units
- SEND provision and Strategy
- Brent Family of Schools
- School Admissions and school place planning
- Schools Forum and schools' improvement

Councillor Neil Nerva - Cabinet Member for Community Health and Wellbeing

Adult Social Care

- Safeguarding
- Supported living
- Adaptation and support
- End of life care
- Carers support
- Dementia

Public Health

- Brent Health Matters
- Mental Health
- Substance Misuse
- Healthy Start
- Vaccination campaign
- Food justice
- Sport, physical activity and leisure facilities

Integrated Care Partnership

- Liaison with health partners
- Health and Wellbeing Board

Councillor Jake Rubin - Cabinet Member for Employment, Innovation and Climate Action

Insight, Innovation and Priorities

- Transformation, digital, IT, data, and innovation
- Corporate performance
- Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy

Strategic Commissioning and Capacity Building

- Community Wealth Building and Inward Investment
- Procurement strategy
- Social value

Employment and Skills

- Brent Starts and Brent Works
- Economic Development
- Good work standard and London Living Wage
- Apprenticeships

Councillor Krupa Sheth - Cabinet Member for Environment and Enforcement

Public Realm

- Trees and Ecology
- Parks and green spaces
- Clean Air

Transport planning, strategy and operations

- Roads and pavements
- Waste and recycling
- Street cleaning
- Waste enforcement
- West London Waste Authority
- Parking, Street Lighting

Regulatory Enforcement

- Building Control
- Regulatory Services and Trading Standards
- Pest Control
- Planning Enforcement

Councillor Shama Tatler - Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth

Inclusive, Regeneration and Planning

- Estate Regeneration
- Planning
- Local Plan
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
- High streets and town centre improvement
- Strategic growth
- Affordable workplaces
- West London Economic Prosperity Board

Strategic Housing (Maternity cover from June 17th)

- New Council Housing Programme
- I4B/First Wave Housing

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources – Councillor Mili Patel

Top news since my last report:

- **New Council Homes Programme:** Despite affordability issues and rising build costs impacting the Council, there are currently 986 affordable homes being built by Brent across 12 sites. There are 263 affordable homes with planning permission across 14 sites; and a further 195 affordable homes within the St Raphael's Estate that have been submitted for planning.
- In line with our corporate restructure, a vacancy was advertised for a new Director for Strategic Commissioning and Capacity Building. I am pleased that an individual has been appointed, subject to pre-employment checks, and will be starting with us later this year. This new colleague will work with the Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet to build greater capacity and resilience within the public and third sector, leading the Council's social value and community wealth building strategies while encompassing the specific needs and ambitions of the Borough.
- **Elections:** The Elections team and the wider Democratic Services department are in full swing preparing for the General Election on the 4th of July 2024, coming straight off the back of the Greater London Assembly and Mayoral elections in May, and with an additional by-election in Queens Park ward.

Other news:

- Brent Council has successfully renewed its status as a Disability Confident Leader, as well as adopting UNISON's Anti-Racism Charter earlier this year. Our HR team are also working hard to achieve Fairer Hours Accreditation.
- The draft Property Strategy was presented to our Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee on the 27th February 24, and it will be coming to Cabinet later this year for final approval. As we work hard to use every penny we have, driving more income generation through existing assets becomes an even more crucial part of this role.
- In May, the Council introduced new Carer's Leave and Miscarriage Support Policies. According to the 2021 Census, there are 2.5 million unpaid carers in employment in England and Wales. In April, new legislation entitled employees to 5 days' carer's leave to arrange or provide care for a dependent with a long-term need. The Council enhanced this entitlement to provide 5 days' paid leave.
- Under UK law, there is no obligation for employers to give someone bereavement leave if they or their partner loses a baby before the 24th week of pregnancy. Our new Miscarriage Support policy will look to support Council employees and councillors who experience miscarriage in the first 24 weeks of pregnancy.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.
Contact: Cllr.Mili.Patel@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Resident Support and Culture - Councillor Fleur Donnelly-Jackson

Top news since my last report:

- Summer What's ON is out now and available at all libraries and a copy can be downloaded from: <https://www.brent.gov.uk/libraries-arts-and-heritage/libraries>
- During the closure of Wembley Library, we have been working with the Public Health Team on supporting refugees at the Hotel in Wembley. Library staff have been providing arts and craft activities for the refugees as well as essential signposting to other council services and departments such as The Brent Hubs and the digital hub in Wembley central and our own inhouse IT classes and ESOL classes. In May, colleagues interacted with 113 refugees (34 adults and 26 children) over four sessions.

Other news:

- An evening with Paul Merson - Former Arsenal and England midfielder, and pundit, returned to his roots in Harlesden, where his journey in the beautiful game began. On Wednesday, May 22nd, Harlesden Library hosted an evening with Paul Merson as part of the legend's series of the Inspire 2 Achieve Heritage Exhibition, organised by the Jason Roberts Foundation.
- Becoming Brent: The first project Board meeting took place on 3rd June. This served as an opportunity to agree the Board's purpose and operating procedures for the future. A draft Terms of Reference was shared, and Board members were asked to review and comment on this after the meeting. Positive feedback was received from board members following the meeting, thanking officers for running it so efficiently and confirming they felt encouraged by the proposals which were presented.
- World African Heritage Day display in Kingsbury Library. The display ran from 3rd May- 3rd June and featured items from Brent Museum's collections relating to our African communities.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.
Contact: Cllr.Fleur.Donnelly-Jackson@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Public Safety and Partnerships - Councillor Harbi Farah

Top news since my last report:

- The Community Safety Team have been successful in securing £200,000 over two years from the Mayor of London's Violence Reduction Unit, to work on a robbery reduction project.
- The Nuisance Control Team recently led two successful prosecutions relying solely on noise app evidence - a first in the country.
- In relation to delivering our new Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) as well as our Anti-Racism ambitions, our focus is on establishing a suite of key performance indicators that can measure progress and feature within a new EDI performance monitoring dashboard. The new dashboard will be considered by the new Corporate EDI Board for sign off in September.

Other news:

- A refreshed model for the Brent Connects meetings is being considered in readiness for a re-launch in the autumn.
- All three User forums are continuing their work. This includes the Disability, Multi-Faith and Pensioners Forums. We have seen an increase in attendance and participation across all three forums. Residents are particularly satisfied with the revised models of the Disability and Pensioners Forum and the collaborative approach taken with them to achieve this.
- Community Outreach continues to capture the voices of as many residents as possible. I am currently working closely with the Communications and Electoral Services Team to help promote engagement in readiness for the forthcoming General Election in July.
- A Grant Agreement for 2024-2025 has been finalised and confirmed with the Home Office. This enables the Prevent team and project partners to commence full delivery of funded projects to help mitigate against radicalisation and provide a counter narrative to extremism in the borough.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.
Contact: Cllr.Harbi.Farah@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools - Councillor Gwen Grahl

Top news since my last report:

- **Launch of 'MyEnds 2.0' Funding Initiative from GLA** - We are pleased to announce that Brent's bid for youth funding from the £96m pot offered by the Mayor of London was successful, with six local youth centres involved in the bid. This programme aims to support young people in areas of Brent most at risk of being drawn into serious youth violence with mentoring, training and recreational activities.
This is an excellent opportunity for investment in valuable and innovative youth initiatives by grassroots organisations in our borough. A launch event for professionals and stakeholders was also held at the Civic Centre on 20th May to ensure the programme is effective in its aims for youth engagement and violence reduction.
- **Transport Assistance Policy approved by Cabinet** - Our refreshed Transport Assistance Policy, outlined our plans for supporting children and young people with SEND with transport to school, has now been approved by cabinet. The policy is designed to reflect changes in the cohort of its users, empowering some of our young people to use active travel and equip them with the skills for independent living that they need for the future. It also reflects the council's renewed commitment to active travel and tackling the climate crisis.
- **Brent's Family Wellbeing Centres continuing to provide outstanding services to local families** - The most recent data showed over 15,000 contacts were made at Family Wellbeing Centres in the last 12 months, smashing our target of 10,767. We have continued to offer a range of children's services at these relaunched family hubs, despite nearly two in five council-run children's centres having closed nationally since 2010 according to a FoI request by Unison. Our Best Start in Life programme includes a comprehensive Early Help programme, delivered in eight Family Wellbeing Centres across the borough. We also signpost families to other local services including NHS and Citizen's advice.

Other news:

- **Children's Residential Centre** - An engagement meeting was held at Chalkhill Community Centre on 23rd May with local residents. Renovations are currently taking place and the centre is due to open in 2024.
- **Brent Food Strategy** - Coproduction of the Brent Food Strategy with local schools is currently taking place, and a survey has been sent to all schools in the borough to gather ideas and suggestions on eliminating food poverty, reducing waste and tackling the climate crisis.
- **Household Support Fund** - Cabinet approved the allocation of funding from the Household Support Fund towards supporting children with meal vouchers in the holidays on 28th May 2024. This will be for those on free school meals as well as under 5s from eligible families and will support some of the most vulnerable children in our borough.
- **Fostering Offer Launch** - An event at the Civic Centre on Thursday 23rd May celebrated our boosted offer for foster carers. Our carers work hard to care for

Looked After Children and we have improved the reward we can offer them to ensure this hard work is recognised. The new offer includes an uplift in the weekly rate, a free laptop for administrative duties and other benefits.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.
Contact: Cllr.Gwen.Grahl@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Community Health and Wellbeing - Councillor Neil Nerva

Top news since my last report:

- **CQC inspection complete** - The CQC inspection took place during the middle of May 2024, and we are now awaiting feedback. The format will be akin to the CQC feedback which has thus far been provided to other local authorities: [Local authority assessment reports - Care Quality Commission \(cqc.org.uk\)](#)

Other news:

- **Opening of new GP surgery** - The recent move of the Wembley Park Medical Centre into brand new and modern premises at 2 Humphrey Repton Lane, Wembley Park marks completes many years of hard work, by both the surgery team and the development team at Quintain.

The opening ceremony took place on Friday 31 May 2024. This new state-of-the-art facility is not simply a GP practice; it's a blueprint for the future of NHS general care, already garnering positive media attention. They aspire to create a space where cutting-edge technology seamlessly blends with compassionate care, empowering patients with agency and access to essential services. Wembley Park Medical Centre reflects many of the values that NHS North West London champion.

The Centre embodies a future where integrated care, proactive health, and patient empowerment are at the heart of our NHS. The opening was a great opportunity to meet with key partners and staff, understand how the facility will deliver for residents, and ask key questions.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.
Contact: Cllr.Neil.Nerva@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Employment, Innovation and Climate Action - Councillor Jake Rubin

Top news:

- Camden & Brent Business Climate Challenge (CBBCC) will be allocating 40 Brent businesses with £6,000 worth of support each to help them understand where energy is being used and how this can be reduced to achieve cost and carbon savings of at least 10%. Since Expressions of Interest to the programme went live in January, we have **had 79 businesses register**. We are now in the process of supporting those eligible businesses to apply in full. Early applicants will have the chance of applying for grant funding to carry out recommendations within their audit report.
- Secured additional Grant Funding from the GLA to continue delivery for the Mayor of London Skills Bootcamps for Brent residents to deliver Level 3 Gas Engineering course in partnership with Qualified 4 Life.
- The Employment and Skills team has commissioned a specialised employment service focused on the Somali economically inactive population. Service will be delivered by Step Up Hub for a year thanks to Mayor of London, People and Skills funding.
- Jobs Fair 2024: 16th July 2024 Brent Works will host our annual Jobs Fair, planned to be the biggest ever. Expecting over 8,000 attendees.

Other news:

- Brent Starts: 17/06/24 - currently 6,559 enrolments for 2023/24 academic year, which represents 2,187 unique learners.
- Harlesden Hairdressing Academy – we have acquired a unit at 16 Craven Park Road to establish a hairdressing academy for residents to train with a view to starting their own business.
- Brent Council's Supported Internship team has successfully completed the SIQAF (Supported Internship Quality Assurance Framework). The Framework assists providers to determine the quality and success of their Supported Internship programme. Excellent feedback was received from the assessors who interviewed interns, family members, managers and the team and look at the different policies and procedures in place.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.
Contact: Cllr.Jake.Rubin@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Environment and Enforcement - Councillor Krupa Sheth

Top news since my last report:

- 331 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued for waste offences in May 2024, by the in-house enforcement team.
- We have brought in an additional 4 enforcement officers who will be deployed in target areas to issue, FPNs for littering and PSPO offences.

Other news:

- The Leader of the Council and I have written to Lime, setting out our concerns around the levels of service and are in discussion with their teams to ensure rapid improvements are felt across the borough. We are in discussions with other London Boroughs on how to move forward as a city on regulating and creating a common standard across the services of providers.
- Funding has been secured from TfL's LIP to install an additional 6 Bike Hangars this financial year. These provide secure cycle parking for up to 6 bikes with residents paying a subscription of £50 per year. We now have 134 Bike Hangars in the borough and demand is increasing where residents have limited space.
- Following our Expression of Interest (EOI) for Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding via London Councils for funding in 2024/25 (joint EOI with Haringey, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hammersmith & Fulham and Ealing) we have been informed that this application is successful and £7.544m has been awarded. It has been agreed that Brent will receive circa £1.25m and we are developing detailed information to submit to the DfT for a programme for new EVCPs in 2025/26, by the end of June 2024.
- An event for Clean Air Day is being arranged for Saturday 20th July between 10am and 3pm in Roundwood Park. This will include: a bike market, scooter repairs, family focussed clean air workshops and other activities. This will be advertised in early July via our website, social media platforms, and on-street posters.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.
Contact: Cllr.Krupa.Sheth@brent.gov.uk

Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Growth - Councillor Shama Tatler

Top news since my last report:

- **Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy projects:** three community-focused projects received a £4.1 million boost in funding from the council's Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy earlier this year. Members approved the release of funds to support development at Preston Library (12 affordable homes and a new community space), the spine road at Northwick Park (more community facilities and homes, with a view to promoting active and sustainable travel), and a nursery project at Grove Park Pavilion. All three projects are designed to create long-lasting, positive change to local areas for the benefit of the communities that live there.
- **Biodiversity Net Gain:** the legal requirements for development proposals to achieve a 10% gain in biodiversity came into effect for Major planning applications on 12 February and for minor applications on 2 April. Small developments are excluded from this requirement, including extensions to houses and small sites with less than 25 sqm of non-priority habitat. The net gain should normally be provided on site but can be provided in an off-site location or through the purchase of Biodiversity Credits by the developer. The latter is considered to be the least favourable option as credits can be used to deliver biodiversity improvements anywhere in the country with no local benefit. Work is due to be undertaken to identify suitable locations for biodiversity improvement schemes within the borough which could be used for the provision of off-site biodiversity gain. This could include biodiversity planting in our parks funded through the development proposals.
- **The Falcon:** Last month, the Council purchased The Falcon Pub in Kilburn, paving the way for new homes to be built at the site. The plans will deliver even more affordable homes in Brent as the housing crisis continues to bite.

Other news:

- **Heritage:** A six-week public consultation on Brent's conservation areas was held earlier this year to seek the views of residents, landowners and other interested stakeholders on proposed revisions to Brent's conservation area boundaries with changes subsequently approved by Cabinet on 28 May 2024.
- **Staples Corner:** The consultation window is now open until Tuesday the 16th of July for residents to share their feedback on the draft Staples Corner Growth Area Masterplan and Design Code SPD. As well as supporting our Local Plan, the draft SPD will secure physical, social and economic regeneration for the benefit of the whole community.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact by the email address below.
Contact: Cllr.Shama.Tatler@brent.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank



Questions from the Opposition and Other Non-Cabinet Members

Full Council – 8 July 2024

1. Question from Councillor Kelcher to Councillor Nerva (Cabinet Member for Community Health & Wellbeing)

Age UK London reported last year that just 13% of Londoners over 60 think the city values older people.

Becoming an age-friendly community consists of eight key themes: 1) Outdoor spaces and buildings; 2) Transport; 3) Housing; 4) Social participation; 5) Respect and social inclusion; 6) Civic participation and employment; 7) Communication and information; & 8) Community and health services.

Our colleagues in the GLA and in London Councils have committed to making London an age-friendly city, with work on community, borough, and city-wide levels. Londoners aged 60 and over make up the fastest growing demographic in the capital, and we know that the cost-of-living crisis is having a disproportionate impact on older Londoners.

Will the Cabinet Member for Community Health and Wellbeing set out some of the measures this council is taking to ensure that Brent can play its part in becoming an age-friendly borough?

Response:

The Council is committed to being an inclusive Borough where everyone feels able to live their best life, including our older communities. As the question points out, the Mayor has committed London to becoming an age-friendly city and Brent is playing an active role in developing our own response to ensure we are an age-friendly Borough, working closely with the Centre for Ageing Better, Greater London Forum for Older People and Age UK London who have all been very supportive and will be a great ongoing resource. Our aim is to secure age-friendly status against the WHO Framework and join the UK Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

Whilst the Council will have an important part to play, it's vital that this work is co-produced with residents and that older people and the organisations that represent them feel able to shape the approach. Below outlines progress to date and the approach planned over the next few months:

- A planning group chaired by Dr Tony Burch is in place and meeting regularly, with support from the Community Engagement Team. The

steering group is currently made up of representatives from Elders Voice; CEO Age UK Hillingdon, Harrow and Brent; Greater London Forum for Older People; Brent Pensioners Forum members; and Councillors plus the Corporate Director for Community Health and Wellbeing, Director of Public Health, and representatives from Community Engagement.

- Brent Pensioners Forum have agreed to host the Age-friendly Brent campaign and are exploring finances and fundraising separately.
- The Community Engagement team will this month launch the Age-Friendly questionnaire, designed around the eight themes to aid in understanding the specific issues from Brent residents. This will be shared far and wide to ensure representative views from across the Brent Community.
- Supported by public health, 10 Brent organisations will be leading on an engagement exercise to gain insight from residents, delivering meetings/focus groups with their members with an aim to introduce the concept of an age-friendly borough and encourage discussion of ideas to support the development of the strategy.
- Findings from focus groups, meetings and surveys will be brought together and presented at a 'Coming Together' meeting in early October (date to be confirmed) where all the inputs and community will come together to adopt a strategy, moving towards a plan of action.

We understand the importance of building communities and giving older people a voice so they can contribute to life in the borough and will continue to support this work where possible and I encourage any councillors with a particular interest in this work to get involved. I have invited the planning group to present to the Health and Wellbeing Board in the Autumn to help bring other public sector partners into the discussion and suggest we commit to an annual review on our progress.

2. Question from Councillor Begum to Councillor Muhammed Butt (Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Housing):

Councils in London are now spending £90m per month on temporary accommodation for homeless people - up by almost 40% on last year's numbers. New figures suggest that one in 50 people in the capital are homeless, and more and more councils are on the brink of declaring effective bankruptcy without additional government support.

Brent has a strong track record of protecting our most vulnerable residents, despite cuts, but just one individual sleeping rough on the streets of Brent is too many and sadly numbers are on the rise.

Will the Leader & Cabinet Member for Housing set out what work is underway to address the surge in homelessness applications; and detail how we are working with partners on our "Built for Zero" programme to address rough sleeping in Brent?

Response:

The Housing Needs Service in Brent has seen a 12% increase in the number of homelessness presentations received and the total number of households in temporary accommodation (TA) in Brent has increased by 8% over the same period, with the number of families in emergency temporary accommodation having increased by 36%. As at the end of May 2024, the total number of homeless households living in emergency type accommodation has risen to 922, with the service placing an average of 30 households every week.

London Councils share some analysis and benchmarking of peers that help to gauge a position across London. They revealed that Housing pressures are increasing rapidly compared to budgeted levels and that Councils' net deficit on homelessness service spending was projected to be £104.9m (54.2%) higher in 2023/24 than it was in 2022/23. Brent has seen a 259% increase in the deficit between 2022/23 and 2023/24. The gross total monthly TA spend was £65.2m in January 2024 up 28.1% on a year earlier. Across London, the total number of households in temporary accommodation has increased by 8.4% and the total number of families living in B&B accommodation rose by 70% when compared to the previous year. Homelessness, therefore, is the most significant pressure area facing Brent Council with rising demand for emergency temporary accommodation, which has been worsened by the cost-of-living crisis. In 2023/24, the Housing service overspent by £13.3m as a result of this pressure and at Q1 2024/25, the service has reported a projected overspend of £10m by the end of the financial year.

In response, the Council has developed a programme of work to focus on containing the projected overspend. Several workstreams covering affordability of Temporary Accommodation and new and alternative supply have been set up. Officers are actively looking to renegotiate prices and identify alternative arrangements that would allow the Council to move some of the most expensive cases with the aim of reducing costs for the Housing Needs service. Officers also

continue to carefully consider and assess the needs of homelessness applications. In 2023/24, 49% of approaches were successfully prevented or relieved.

In 2024/25 i4B is continuing its street property acquisition programme with a target to acquire 25 homes. i4B is a housing company wholly owned by Brent Council set up to acquire, let, and manage a portfolio of affordable, good quality private rented sector (PRS) properties. Properties are let to homeless families at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels. This enables the Council to either prevent or discharge its homelessness duty and therefore reduce temporary accommodation costs whilst also ensuring families have a secure and responsible landlord.

In addition, the council is set to launch a new communications campaign which aims to raise awareness of the deepening homelessness emergency in Brent and the practical realities and life changing consequences this has for homeless households. The *Find a place you can afford* campaign will seek to break the perceived link between homelessness and social housing. For the overwhelming majority of people, becoming homeless does not mean they have a better chance of securing a council home. For most homeless households the most likely sustainable solution to their homelessness will be to find a place they can afford in the private rented sector in a more affordable part of the UK. The council's communications will seek to encourage the growing number of homeless households to realise more quickly that, for the vast majority, their future housing options are all in the private rented sector in an area they can afford.

The council will work with existing homeless families in Brent already living temporary accommodation as well as Brent residents presenting as homeless, and residents facing or threatened with homeless to explain the realities of the homelessness emergency. Despite building the second highest number of new homes in London over the past decade, there are simply not enough available properties in Brent. The council will work closely with a broad range of stakeholders across Brent to ensure that the homeless crisis is more fully understood.

Finally, given it is clear that the system is fundamentally broken, the council will seek to work with and influence policy makers, including appropriate ministers in the new Government, to seek action on a nationwide level to start moving to address some of the longstanding structural policy and funding issues that have created the current homelessness.

Built for zero

The Berkeley Foundation has funded Crisis Skylight Brent to develop place-based work in preventing homelessness in the borough since 2019. Place-based work is 'a long-term approach to identifying, understanding, and addressing social issues rooted in the experiences, expertise and relationships that exist within a recognised geographic area'.

In Brent, this work has been developed in partnership with the Council and the Brent Homelessness Forum and has focused on the borough's rough sleeper population and is an approach designed to eradicate homelessness which has been developed in the USA known as 'Built for Zero.'

Built for Zero is an initiative providing local communities with a proven strategy to measurably end homelessness through data-driven collaborations. The approach works to know each person experiencing homelessness "By Name" based on specific populations. The first phase of the programme has been to develop the data on Brent rough sleeper population. This stage has now been completed and the programme has achieved data quality status. The next phase is to work with rough sleepers and the wider community supporting homelessness in Brent to find sustainable solutions to resolve their homelessness.

3. Question from Councillor Kabir to Councillor Krupa Sheth (Cabinet Member for Environment & Enforcement)

Fly-tipping is a criminal activity and a blight on our borough. Sadly, a select few individuals continue to dump their rubbish on our streets, accounting for fines simply as the cost of doing business.

We also know that rogue fly-tippers are exploiting residents, charging them huge sums of money to dispose of their waste and then dumping it illegally. Fly-tipping and littering can be a health hazard, not to mention an eyesore for our residents and costs the council time and precious resource to put right.

While we know that most residents do their best to get rid of waste properly, there is no doubt that we must redouble our mission to keep Brent clean and green.

Will the Cabinet Member for Environment and Enforcement set out the measures the council is taking to educate residents on how to correctly dispose of waste; and highlight what additional deterrents will be introduced to enforce against illegally dumped waste?

Response:

The Council has an environmental enforcement team that is dedicated to enforcing against waste crimes.

This work is bolstered by the Neighbourhood Managers, the Neighbourhood Patrol Teams, our CCTV function, the daily input from Veolia, and the work of our Waste Education Team.

As always, the task is to blend enforcement with education.

Fly-tipping is a criminal offence. When we find usable evidence, we can issue fixed penalty notices. The courts can also impose:

- fines of up to £75,000 for individuals.
- fines of up to £95,000 for businesses.
- prison sentences of up to five years.
- the seizure of vehicles used to commit fly-tipping offences.

We ask residents to support this work in reporting instances of fly-tipping. They can provide us with

- the time, date and location.
- registration or description of vehicle(s) involved.
- description of people involved.
- the type and amount of waste dumped.

We will always:

- clear fly-tipping on public land within 48 hours.

- search for anything to identify who is responsible so we can take action against them.

The long-established 'Wanted' Campaign has successfully sought to generate community interest in the issue at hot spot locations. It encourages residents to report offenders on the back of images advertised by the Council.

The council will soon be launching a new campaign "Don't Mess with Brent" and as part of this campaign there will be enhanced targeted communications to residents and businesses educating them on their responsibilities in relation to waste management.

In addition, fines for fly-tipping have been increased and additional patrol officers have been deployed.

4. Question from Councillor Maurice to Councillor Muhammed Butt (Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Housing):

As we know the Private Sector Landlord Selective Licensing scheme has been expanded to cover the whole of the Brent with the exception of Wembley Park Ward.

Can the Cabinet Member for Housing explain exactly why Wembley Park Ward has been excluded from the scheme.

Response:

Currently, under the Housing Act 2004, local authorities have powers to introduce selective licensing of privately rented homes in order to tackle problems in their areas, or any part or parts of them, caused by:

- low housing demand (or is likely to become such an area) and/or;
- a significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour;
- poor housing conditions;
- high levels of migration;
- high level of deprivation;
- high levels of crime.

As part of our consideration for the introduction of Selective Licensing in Brent, extensive research was undertaken looking at the Private Rented Sector (PRS).

In essence the only two factors that could be attributed to areas in Brent were poor housing conditions and a significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour.

In the wards of Dollis Hill, Harlesden & Kensal Green and Willesden Green there was found to be grounds for the introduction of Selective Licensing on the grounds of poor housing conditions and a significant and persistent problem caused by anti-social behaviour and in the remaining wards (excluding Wembley Park), there was found to be grounds for the introduction of Selective Licensing on the grounds of poor housing conditions only.

For the ward of Wembley Park there were no grounds found for the introduction of selective licensing and therefore this ward was excluded from any designation.

5. Question from Councillor Georgiou to Councillor Tatler (Cabinet Member for Regeneration Planning & Growth):

Large scale events at Wembley Stadium, especially when held on three successive days, have a major impact on the ability of thousands of Brent residents to go about their everyday activities.

In 1999, planning permission was granted allowing the Stadium to hold 37 'Large' events, which has subsequently been increased to 46 'Large' events. Now the stadium wants this increased again to 54.

Can the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Growth advise:

1. Will Brent Council hold consultation meetings to hear first hand the impact the ever increasing number of Large-scale events have on the lives of local people?
2. Has Brent Council carried out a detailed impact assessment of how Large Event days affect the lives of local people?
3. Will due regard in the planning officers assessment be given to social impacts on lives of local people and not simply financial benefits for the Stadium?
4. What direct compensation or benefits can local people expect if the changes proposed were to be approved?

Response:

The Stadium has applied to vary a condition on their planning consent to allow them to hold up to 8 additional stadium events each year. They are also applying to increase the threshold above which the event cap applies from 51,000 to 60,000 people and to change the distinction between sporting and non-sporting events.


Events at the stadium been an important feature of Brent life for over 100 years bringing both benefits and impacts to our residents and businesses. There were no restrictions on the number of events at the previous stadium but an "event cap" was introduced for the new stadium. As you are aware, this started at 37 events and is now at 46 events following previous applications to increase the cap.

The Stadium have submitted supporting information with their application which examines the implications and potential impacts of the proposal, and this is available on our website. We are currently consulting on this application, with letters sent to over 50,000 properties in the Wembley Event Day Zone and site notices put up around the stadium. Over 100 comments have already been received and these will all be considered. We are not intending to hold a public meeting prior to the Planning Committee meeting for the application and it's important that comments on the planning application are provided in writing.

Impacts to local residents and businesses are being carefully considered. We do not consider profits for individual organisations such as the stadium, but we do take the wider benefits that a proposal may bring to the local economy into account.

We secure measures and obligations that are required to mitigate impacts of a proposal but are not able to secure compensation for local businesses or residents. We must also look at the difference between what can happen now and what could happen if the application is approved.

We encourage residents and local businesses to let us know what they think about the Stadium's proposal. We are still out to consultation, and it is likely that the application will be considered by the Planning Committee in August.

 Brent	Full Council 8 July 2024
Report from the Corporate Director of Law and Governance	
Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Chair's Report	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Council
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
List of Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Chatan Popat Strategy Lead – Scrutiny, Democratic Services 020 8937 5068 chatan.popat@brent.gov.uk
	Amira Nassr Deputy Director Democratic Services 020 8937 4595 Amira.nassr@brent.gov.uk
	James Kinsella Governance & Scrutiny Manager 020 8937 2063 james.kinsella@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 To update Full Council on the meetings and activities of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and North West London Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee since the last meeting of Full Council on 20 November 2023.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

That Full Council

2.1 Note the report and the updates provided for both the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and North West London Joint Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee (NWL JHOSC).

2.2 Note that the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee's updated 2024/25 work programme will be provided as part of the next update report to Full Council once completed following the final planning session on 16 July 2024.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

3.1.1 The work of the committee contributes to the delivery of all of the strategic priorities within the Borough Plan as it seeks to support, advise and enhance the Council's activity. The recent activity outlined in this report contributes most specifically to the "A Healthier Brent," "The Best Start in Life," "Prosperity and Stability in Brent" strategic priorities within the plan.

3.2 Background

3.2.1 Brent Council has two scrutiny committees: the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee. The council also participates as a full voting member in the North West London Joint Health Overview Scrutiny (NWL JHOSC). Councillor Ketan Sheth was re-elected as chair of the Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee at the Annual Council Meeting on 22 May 2024 and pending his re-election as chair of NWL JHOSC at its first meeting of the 2024-25 municipal year also continues to serve as chair of that body.

3.2.2 A scrutiny committee can review anything which affects the borough or its inhabitants, subject to its remit. The remit of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee is set out in the Council Constitution under the Terms of Reference for Scrutiny Committees which includes:

Adult social care; Safeguarding; Children's services; Cultural services; Education; Health; Housing; Public Health and Wellbeing.

3.2.3 As part of its remit set out in the constitution, and its role to review the provision and operation of health services within the borough, the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee can scrutinise, and make recommendations to NHS organisations or relevant health service providers.

3.2.4 The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee's 2024/25 work programme will be finalised on 16 July 2024. The work programming exercise for the committee has been delayed this year due to the announcement of the General Election. Once agreed, it will outline the policy areas and council decisions the committee plan to review during the 2024/25 municipal year. Statutory guidance on overview and scrutiny recommends that for scrutiny to be effective, scrutiny committees focus on conducting fewer in-depth reviews of highly significant topics¹.

¹ *Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities* (Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government), p21

- 3.2.5 In terms of work undertaken since the previous update, the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee met for its third meeting of the 2023/24 municipal year on 22 November 2023. The meeting focused on three items relating to Housing. The first of these was Brent Housing Management's (BHM) readiness for tenancy satisfaction measures; these set out the standards that social housing landlords must adhere to. The committee focused on what the measures are, the implications of the new Social Housing (regulations) Act and how the Grenfell disaster had impacted on the movement of these regulations. The committee also received a detailed summary on the current performance of BHM as a whole. Overall, it was agreed that the department were well prepared for the new satisfaction measures and the current performance of BHM had improved throughout the year.
- 3.2.6 The second item was the new Single Homeless Service (SHPS). Last summer Brent refocused its partnership working to The Turning Point in Harlesden with the Committee reviewing the move to Harlesden from Wembley and the impact on the service and residents since the move. The Committee also received an update on the challenges surrounding homelessness and prevention and the current financial and social pressures faced by Brent's Temporary Accommodation service. As the new service had only been live for three months, the committee agreed to seek a further update once more fully established. The third item concentrated on the new Landlord Selective Licensing scheme which came into force on 1 August 2023. The committee's discussions were centred around the details of the new scheme, what lessons had been learnt so far and plans for expanding the scheme.
- 3.2.7 The committee's fourth meeting of the municipal year held in January 2024 focused on three items. The first of these was a report on the Brent Youth Strategy and Provision. The report not only focussed on delivery of performance, outcomes and opportunities identified since the implementation of the Brent Youth Strategy 2021-23, but also provided detail on the notable work conducted by the department with partners such as the NHS, the voluntary sector and the Brent Young Foundation ensuring effective delivery on current youth provisions. The committee also examined the work Children & Young People (CYP) were conducting in identifying and tackling local youth issues such as gang involvement, knife crime, anti-social behaviour and other similar issues around youth crime and disorder. A highlight was hearing from some of the young people about their use of the Roundwood Youth Centre, concerns they have and how things could be improved for them. Additionally, representatives of the Brent Youth Parliament were also present to question officers and the Lead Member. Youth engagement is continually promoted within the Community & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and members of the BYP regularly attend meetings providing interesting insights and questioning.
- 3.2.8 The second item was an external item from NHS North Central London ICB who addressed the Committee about their consultation on proposed changes to maternity, neonatal, and children's surgical services. Their report set out the options being consulted on and the impact these proposals will have on Brent residents, especially if the maternity and neonatal services at the Royal

Free Hospital cease to be provided. They outlined the approach to consultation and how residents, staff and stakeholders can give their feedback on the proposals. Changes to the current setup will have an impact on residents, especially in the south of the borough so it was imperative the committee scrutinised the initial proposals and any decisions that are made following the consultation. The committee agreed to monitor the outcome of the consultation. Councillor Ketan Sheth also attended a North Central London JHOSC meeting on 30 November 2023 to discuss these proposals and will attend another of their meetings on 25 July 2024 to learn about the initial findings of the consultation and gain further insight on the impact to Brent residents.

- 3.2.9 The third item was an update from the Adult Social Care directorate on the Council's preparations for inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The committee heard from officers about the process in preparing for an inspection, and the continued work to integrate CQC preparation work, improvement actions and transformation work within the directorate. An informative discussion took place whereby the committee were assured that the department would be prepared for the inspection and that there was an expectancy on a positive result based on evidence gathered, benchmarked data and five recent inspections that had taken place across England.
- 3.2.10 In February, the committee held a call-in meeting addressing concerns raised by five Councillors on proposals approved at Cabinet for the acquisition of a property in the Barn Hill area as part of the Brent Residential Children Care Home Project. During the meeting the committee were able to address the issues raised by the members who had called-in the decision and local residents in support of the call-in regarding the proposal. Having considered the response provided, the committee decided to uphold rather than refer back the decision originally made by Cabinet to allow the acquisition to proceed.
- 3.2.11 In March the committee dealt with a number of items all related to the Community Health and Wellbeing directorate. The first of these was a report on Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery. The report not only focussed on delivery of the treatment service and the work conducted by the department with partners such as B3 and the NHS but also the impact substance misuse has on individuals, families and the borough in general. There was also a discussion on substance misuse within the homeless community and links to other addictions such as gambling and how the Council could tackle the rising numbers. The committee heard from users of the treatment and recovery service and the positive impact that has had on their lives. The committee were pleased to hear from residents whose lives had been positively impacted by the service.
- 3.2.12 The second item was an update on the Brent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Public Health Team provided a detailed update of progress made against key commitments set out in the current strategy. A constructive discussion took place around various aspects of the strategy including healthy eating, oral health, use of green spaces, the use of Family Wellbeing Centres and patient access to GPs. The committee also heard about the Health and Wellbeing Board's reaffirmed support for the five themes of the Strategy. The committee acknowledged that not all commitments have been delivered and

that some will require additional resources or will require continued efforts. However, it was apparent that considerable progress had been made by collaborating with partners and that joint working with Council departments, by primary, community, secondary and mental health services and by the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) have been successful.

- 3.2.13 The final item was a one-year update on the committee's very own Social Prescribing Task Group. The committee acknowledged the positive impact Social Prescribing has had recently and how working alongside the NHS and VCS partners has strengthened the offer. However, there were also concerns from the VCS that the development of social prescribing will simply mean more signposting from statutory services to the VCS without any additional funding. The committee have agreed to continue monitoring the work around social prescribing and will ask for a further update this municipal year.
- 3.2.14 In April, the committee had its final meeting of the municipal year. The first item was the Annual School Standards and Achievement report for the academic year 2022-23. Also in attendance were two Brent Headteachers representing primary and secondary school provisions in Brent. The report outlined current school performance across a number of educational settings, ranging from early years to Key Stage 5 with the performance across the borough remaining good with high levels of attainment across most groups. Members were particularly keen to understand progress made in improving the attainment of Black British boys of Caribbean heritage and other groups suffering from socio-economic deprivation and the specific pieces of work undertaken to improve outcomes for these groups. The committee sought assurances that CYP will continue to collaborate closely with schools to tangibly improve the attainment of these groups. There was also a detailed discussion focussed around the outcome of a recent Ofsted inspection, involving a local Primary School and the impact of a subsequent Academisation Order which had been imposed as a result. The committee will continue to monitor the situation and have requested a further update in the new year.
- 3.2.15 The second item on the agenda was the implementation of the Brent Carer's Strategy 2024-27. The committee heard detailed information on the numerous parameters of the strategy and also heard from the Chief Executive of the Brent Carer Centre and a full-time carer. The committee were pleased to hear how partners were collaborating with the Council in developing the new strategy in order to provide a more focussed approach for the thousands of carers both adult and youth, paid and unpaid across the borough.
- 3.2.16 The final item was an update on the Brent Reablement Service. Reablement is a fundamental part of patient recovery and regaining independence and the item was well received by the committee. Detailed responses were given to member questions regarding the procurement of new contracts, how they will be managed and what outcomes are to be expected over the next few years. The discussion also clearly laid out Brent's approach not only as a local authority but also on how the Council will work with partner agencies to improve its offer whilst also finding a solution that is dependable and cost-effective. The committee acknowledged that it was premature to evaluate the

successes of the new provider contracts, as they had only gone live in February 2024. A report will therefore be requested to be brought back to the committee later this year with some analysis of the benefits of the new approach to reablement and the impact that the new lead providers have had on peoples' care and support.

- 3.2.17 Since the last report to Full Council, the North West London Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee (NWL JHOSC) has met twice; at Hounslow in December and then at Brent in March. December's meeting led to informative discussions around the topics of Winter Resilience, performance of the Ambulance Service, the ICS workforce strategy and the newly formed North West London Elective Orthopaedic Centre based at Central Middlesex Hospital. In March, Brent hosted the final meeting of the municipal year. The committee scrutinised the NHS and partners on Obesity and Preventative Services, the NW London Commissioning Arrangements for Community Pharmacy and Dental Services. However, the focal point of the meeting surrounded the item of Primary Care Access namely the new Same Day Access Model that had been announced for launch. The Committee expressed a number of concerns about the approach taken by the NWL NHS to launch the model, given what was felt to be a lack of suitable communication or consultation. A large number of residents from across NW London also attended the meeting and made their case for opposing the model. A decision has since been made by the NHS to suspend the launch of the scheme until next year.
- 3.2.18 The work programming meeting for NWL JHOSC has also been rescheduled and will now be held after the General Election. The first meeting of the year will now take place in September.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 Members of the Committee continue to be fully engaged in the development and delivery of the scrutiny work programme.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.0 Legal Considerations

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

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 7.1 There are no equity, diversity or inclusion implications arising from this report.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 There are no climate change or environmental implications arising from this report.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

9.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

10.0 Communication Considerations


10.1 There are no communication implications arising from this report.

Report sign off:

Debra Norman

Corporate Director, Law and Governance

This page is intentionally left blank

	<p align="center">Full Council 8 July 2024</p>
	<p align="center">Report from the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources</p>
<p align="center">Annual Report of the Chairs of the Audit and Standards Committee and Audit and Standards Advisory Committee</p>	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Council
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
List of Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Minesh Patel, Corporate Director of Finance and Resources Tel: 020 8937 4043 Email: minesh.patel@brent.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This is the second annual report of the Audit and Standards (A&S), and the Audit and Standards Advisory (A&SA) Committees.
- 1.2 This report seeks to meet the requirements and principles as set out within CIPFA's Position Statement regarding Audit Committees ('Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police').
- 1.3 This report covers the work of the two Committees for the municipal year 2023-24. It has been prepared independently by the Chairs' of the A&S and A&SA Committees.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Council is asked to note the contents of the report.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

3.1.1 The Council's Audit and Standards Advisory Committee (ASAC) and the Audit and Standards Committee (ASC) play an important role in ensuring the good governance of the Council. The committees are a key component of the Council's governance framework. They contribute to the overall success of the Council by providing an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of governance, risk and control arrangements to provide assurance and confidence to those charged with governance.

3.1.2 The ASAC is responsible for considering and advising the relevant council bodies on various governance matters relating to audit activity, the council's regulatory framework, and members' standards of conduct. The ASC is responsible for various governance matters including reviewing and approving the Annual Statement of Accounts, adopting the council's Annual Governance Statement and promoting high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members.

3.2 Introduction

3.2.1 The Audit and Standards Advisory Committee met seven times within the municipal year, and the Audit and Standards Committee meet three times. During the year the Committees covered a large amount of work, often with very short notice. Much of the work of the Committees has highlighted the high and increasing – if often well-managed – level of risk being faced by the Council, in common with most other authorities.

3.2.2 As we stated last year the importance of the work of the Committees continues to grow. The pressures on local authority finances, and details of the failures of governance and financial control at other authorities have become even clearer.

3.3 Overview

3.3.1 2023-24 continued to be a very active and interesting year, and one which is difficult to summarise; however, the key points that have come through from the matters consider by the Committees are as follows:

- a. Brent is still in a good position with regard to financial sustainability, with a relatively good level of reserves, but for the first time in some years did not bring in expenditure within the budget. Brent was, however, one of the very few authorities to have the external audit of its accounts signed off before the deadline.
- b. Further a number of arising issues which may lead to future problems for the Council:
 - i. Due to the pressures on Council services the level of expenditure has and is likely to continue to rise above the base line; and

- ii. As pointed out in the Auditor's annual report, the level of external debt and hence the interest payments are due to the level of capital expenditure rising, which may be becoming an issue with higher interest rates looking like they will remain for some time.
- c. In terms of Governance, Brent also has sound arrangements in place, as confirmed by both the External Auditor's Value for Money report for 2022-23 and Head of internal Auditor's report and opinion issued in June 2023. However, there are a number of areas requiring attention particularly:
 - i. The continuing need to address the 'second line' of defence (i.e. the monitoring and reporting of information and data, by management, in respect of the effectiveness of the 'first line' of defence);
 - ii. The need to address the fact that policies and procedures are sometimes absent or outdated, and as such, roles and responsibilities are not always clearly defined and outlined;
 - iii. The need to review procedures where staff reductions may have weakened existing procedures or controls;
 - iv. The need to keep under review the governance arrangements for subsidiary companies;
 - v. The continuing need to strengthen the oversight of contract management; and
 - vi. The need for the committee to continue to review and improve its own performance, and work with officers and other member bodies, particularly the Scrutiny Function, to further improve the Council's risk management and allocation of work between the different bodies.

3.4 Standards Matters

3.4.1 Although as we stated last year, though Standards matters are not covered by the CIPFA Statement, this is one of the Committees' key roles, and one which is taken very seriously, particularly in view of the experience of some other authorities.

3.4.2 During the year the Committees considered a number Standards issues including Complaints against Members (though there were none upheld in 2023-24), oversight of Gifts and Hospitality, as well as Member Training and attendance.

3.5 Audit Matters

3.5.1 The Audit and Standards Advisory Committee has continued to be well served by the Internal Audit and Investigation staff and have received regular updates on the progress of the 32 risk-based audits planned being undertaken during

2023-24, with 10 audits brought forward from 2022-23 (plus 6 audit added and 8 cancelled). This is addition to work on investigation of frauds and irregular activities being undertaken by Investigation team. The Committees also considered the following:

- In June, the Head of Internal Audit's Annual Report for 2022-23 which concluded that:

"The adequacy and effectiveness of the overall arrangements for the Council's systems of internal control, risk management and governance are adequate, with some improvement required".

However, in addition the following observations were noted:

- i. Second line gaps in control. Where gaps in control were identified by Internal Audit, these were generally found to be in relation to the Council's 'second line' (of defence). In brief, the 'first line' is the provision of services and the application of an internal control framework to manage associated risks; and 'second line' responsibilities include the monitoring, reporting and challenge of the effectiveness of 'first line' functions. The 'third line' is the independent and objective assurance provided by Internal Audit.
- ii. Implementation of audit recommendations/actions. A positive rate of implementation of high risk actions was noted. Whilst this is pleasing, it was found that only 69 of the 104 (66%) medium risk actions had been implemented. This suggests that further effort is required to implement all actions within agreed timescales to ensure that the risks identified during the original audit are appropriately mitigated.
- iii. Policies and procedures. Whilst relatively insignificant in terms of risk, Internal Audit again noted that policies and procedures were often absent or outdated, and as such, roles and responsibilities were not always clearly defined/outlined.

In summary, the Head of Internal Audit was satisfied that the work undertaken by Internal Audit during 2022-23, as well as wider governance arrangements, has enabled an opinion to be formed on the Council's control framework, risk management and governance arrangements as set out above.

Since drafting this section we have had sight of the Head of Internal Audit's report for 2023/24 and are pleased to note that the Head of Internal Audit has again been able to give a Reasonable Assurance rating, and that progress has been made with regard to a number of areas for improvement. This report is being presented to the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee on 12th June 2024.

- A report covering the Draft Internal Audit Strategic for 2024/27 and Plan for 2024/25, the key details of which are set out below.

The report introduced a new procedure for planning the use of internal audit resources, partly designed to implement the new Global Internal Audit Standards due to come into force from January 2025.

The proposed audits for 2024/25, includes the following, all of which are risk based and linked to the Council's risks and priorities:

- Five key financial systems audits (with proposals for all key systems to be audited in three years);
- A cyber security audit;
- Six core audits to be carried out in the first half year;
- Followed by 20 proposed audits to be prioritised on an agile risk basis.

The plan also makes provision for advisory work and follow up activities on previous recommendations.

The Annual Counter Fraud Plan for 2024/25 was delayed to the June 2024 meeting.

- The Audit and Standards Advisory Committee continued to receive updates on the work of the Council's external auditors Grant Thornton, (the audit of the 2022-23 accounts is considered in the Accounts section below). The key item considered was the Annual Value for Money report, which gave an independent review of the state of the Council's governance. The report was also considered at the Full Council meeting in February 2024.

The report was positive, with the overall finding being for all three areas (Financial Sustainability, Governance and Improving the three "e") reviewed being: "No significant weaknesses in arrangements identified, but improvement recommendation made."

However, it should be noted that the direction of travel recorded was downwards in the case of Financial Sustainability and the same as for 2021-22 for the other two. The report also contained a number of recommendations which require to be implemented.

- 2023-24 is the first year of the new contract period for external audit appointment by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA). Grant Thornton have remained the Council's auditors, but the audit lead has changed in 2023-24 and a separate lead has been appointed for the Pension Fund. The fee for the 2023-24 audit is about 150% higher than for 2022-23. This has been set by the PSAA

3.6 Regulatory Framework

3.6.1 The Committees continued to oversee a number of areas concerning the regulatory framework, including reviewing the use of RIPA powers by the Council.

3.6.2 The Audit and Standards Advisory Committee has continued to be deeply involved in the work of improving the Council's risk management structure, and the strategic Risk Management process. There have been major improvements in the strategic process which is now clearly linked to the Council's priorities, and considers a wider range of risks. However, concerns still remain over the risk management at departmental level, and the Chairs have continued liaising with the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees over how to improve oversight of this area where there is overlap in roles.

3.6.3 The Committees also reviews the Annual Governance Statement, which is an important document as it set out the views of the Council's leadership and senior management on the state of the Council's governance. Although concluding that no significant governance issues have been identified, the covering report included the following areas identified for improvement:

- Implementation of the ASAC effectiveness action plan.
- Further work to embed succession planning and leadership development.
- Putting in place a new MTFs and long term planning process which will cover the whole period of an administration's Borough Plan and beyond.
- Improving the monitoring, reporting and challenge over 'first line' controls.
- Increasing the rate of implementation of 'medium risk' audit recommendations.

3.6.4 An area which has taken up a lot of the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee's time was the oversight of i4B and First Wave Housing. This is very important work, but it is again one where there is an overlap of responsibilities between the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee and the Scrutiny Committees. This has now been at least partially resolved with the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee now concentrating on the council's overview, supervision and overall governance of Companies, and the Scrutiny Committees on the performance of the Companies.

3.6.5 The Audit and Standards Advisory Committee also considered a number of reports most of which were also considered by Full Council on the Council's Treasury Management. The very detailed reports show the clear and careful planning and execution of the Council's Capital and Treasurer Management.

However, the Committee did raise concerns about the level of borrowing being planned by the Council, particularly in view of the higher level of interest rates,

at least compared with the last 20 years. Although there is nothing to suggest this will be a problem in the short term, it is something the Council should keep under review.

3.7 Statement of Accounts

- 3.7.1 The oversight of the Council's accounts is one of the key functions of both Committees. Brent has a proud record of having its accounts fully audited and signed off by the statutory publication date, which for the 2022-23 account was 30 September 2023. However, although the accounts were ready and the audit almost complete by that date, a number of minor issues resulted in the audit not being signed off until 23 October 2023. This, however, still put the Council in a better position than most authorities, with the PSAA reporting that only 5 of the 467 audits were signed off by the due date.
- 3.7.2 Members will be aware of the serious issue of the major problems concerning local authority audit, with nearly 1,000 audits of other authorities outstanding, and a resultant number of consultations on proposals to address this. However, with the Council's audit being up to date this will not affect the Council.

3.8 Review of the effectiveness of the Committees

- 3.8.1 The Committees are well placed, with the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee independently chaired, and both Committees now having the support of two independent, Standards-focused members, both of whom bring considerable experience. The Audit and Standards Advisory Committee has also received very valuable support from a recently departed Independent Advisor. The appointment of her replacement will be a key issue.
- 3.8.2 The two Committees have again been required to consider a large number of issues over the last year. This has resulted with some agendas being packed, and some members feeling they are overloaded. Furthermore, the need for additional training for members has been identified, and is being planned.
- 3.8.3 To help overcome this and generally improve the performance of the work of the Committees, a self-assessment was undertaken in 2022-23, with improved training for members planned.

3.9 Conclusion

- 3.9.1 We should like to thank the members of the two Committees, the former Independent Advisor, and the former and current Independent Co-opted Members (Standards-focused) and Independent Persons for all their support and assistance.
- 3.9.2 We should also like to express our gratitude to all the Council officers who have so diligently supported the Committees. These include particularly the Governance Officers who have supported us, the Head of Audit and Investigation and staff of that department, and the officers from the Finance and Legal Services.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

4.1 None.

5.0 Financial Considerations

5.1 The report is for noting and so there are no direct financial implications

6.0 Legal Considerations

6.1 The report is for noting and there are no direct legal implications.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

7.1 None.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 None.

9.0 Communication Considerations

9.1 None.

Report sign off:

Minesh Patel

Corporate Director Finance and Resources



Full Council – 8 July 2024

Motion for Non-Cabinet Member debate

Declaration of a Housing Emergency

This Council notes:

- London is the epicentre of the country's housing crisis, with a quarter of Londoners living in poverty after paying for their homes.
- In one of the wealthiest cities in the world, more than one child in every classroom is homeless and living in temporary accommodation, while rough sleeping is up 50% over this decade.
- Councils in London are spending £90m per month on temporary accommodation for homeless people - up almost 40% on last year.
- The dream of homeownership is out of reach for young people. The government have failed to act despite the housing crisis acting as one of the country's biggest barriers to growth.
- The government has spent billions of pounds on housing benefit every year, which goes into the pockets of private landlords without creating any new assets.
- Without intervention, the number of new affordable homes built will fall sharply in coming years thanks to high interest rates and runaway construction cost inflation.

This Council further notes:

- The Housing Needs Service in Brent has seen a 12% increase in homelessness approaches in 2023/-24 (7,300) compared to 2022/-23 (6,529). The total number of homeless families living in B&B and Annexe accommodation has risen to 485.
- Many Councils are being forced to book rooms in commercial hotels to meet statutory duties. In Brent this has driven a £13.4m overspend. These issues are not unique to Brent and have impacted the whole of the country – but especially London.

- There are 5,688 households in A-C banding on the waiting list. At Band C, the average waiting time for a 2-bed home is 8 years, with a 4-bed home rising to 24 years.
- GLA grant funding per unit of affordable housing is approx. £195k, with typical build costs per average unit in the region of £450k. Brent Council has planning permission ready or has submitted applications for 423 more affordable units, but many face a significant funding gap, and will not be viable without an increase in available subsidy.

This Council welcomes:


Pledges made during the current election campaign:

- To update the National Policy Planning Framework, including restoring mandatory housing targets.
- To get Britain building again, creating jobs across England with 1.5 million new homes over the next parliament.
- To work with local authorities to reform Local Plans and strengthen the planning presumption in favour of sustainable development, supported by additional planning officers.

This Council resolves to:

- (1) Work with other local authorities in London that have declared a housing emergency to calling on the incoming government to unlock the funding needed to deliver the affordable homes Brent desperately needs.
- (2) Write to the Secretary of State to recommend the following steps:
 - The suspension of the right-to-buy discount.
 - A new Housing Revenue Account funding settlement to increase the supply of housing, improve standards and support retrofitting.
 - Financial support to immediately purchase more homes from private landlords.
 - To review the Local Housing Allowance available for Temporary Accommodation.

Cllr Liz Dixon
Dollis Hill Ward

 Brent	Full council 8 July 2024
	Report from the Corporate Director of Law & Governance
Maternity and Paternity Arrangements for Councillors – Allowances, Leave and s85 Local Government Act 1972.	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Council
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
List of Appendices:	One Appendix 1: Draft Changes to Constitution Part 6, Members' Allowance Scheme
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Debra Norman Corporate Director of Law & Governance 020 8937 1578 Debra.norman@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 This report proposes that the maternity/paternity policy in the Members Allowances Scheme be updated following feedback from Members who have returned from paternity and maternity leave. The proposed changes include:

- A requirement to inform the Deputy Director, Democratic Services if a Member is due to become a parent as soon as reasonably practical.
- A requirement to inform the Deputy Director, Democratic Services, in writing, of the expected start day or date of the period of leave and its duration.
- A note on leave if a Member has a baby who dies shortly after birth.
- A note on miscarriages
- Confirming the approach to 'Keeping in Touch' (KIT) Days for Party Leaders and Cabinet
- A general approval of absence from formal council member meetings while on approved maternity leave.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 In accordance with s.85 of the Local Government Act 1972, to agree (in relation to each and every relevant member) absence on approved maternity leave as a reason for non-attendance at any meeting of the Council, Cabinet, Committee or Sub-Committee from 8th July 2024 onwards.
- 2.2 To decide whether to adopt the changes contained in the appendix to this report.
- 2.3 To authorise the Corporate Director of Law & Governance to amend the Constitution accordingly if required, including making any necessary incidental or consequential changes.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Contribution to the Borough Plan and Strategic Priorities

- 3.1.1 Reviewing provisions contained in the Constitution is supportive of good governance and the particular proposals in the report ensure that councillors are not unduly disadvantaged where they need to take maternity or paternity leave during their tenure.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 A review of the maternity and paternity provisions in the Members Allowances Scheme has been undertaken based on feedback from Members who have undertaken maternity or paternity leave, as well as benchmarking across the London boroughs.
- 3.2.2 The Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Sickness Pay policy (which is included in the Council's Constitution at Part 6 and is published on the Council's website) currently provides that a Councillor entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) shall continue to receive their SRA during any period of maternity, paternity, adoption and sickness leave "in the same way that the Council's employees enjoy such benefits".

3.3 The Review

- 3.3.1 Over the period of May 2023 to date, two female Members have taken and returned from maternity leave, one female member is currently on maternity leave, and one male member has taken paternity leave. Two more male members who were eligible did not take paternity leave. One of these members was unaware of the policy and suggested paternity leave should be promoted in the Members Bulletin and elsewhere for general Member awareness.
- 3.3.2 Benchmarking with a number of other London councils has been carried out to be able to draw comparisons to inform decision making. Councils were asked if (a) If a backbencher or a Cabinet Member went on parental leave,

would casework/inbox support be provided, and (b) was formal time off offered for members who had miscarriages.

- 3.3.3 Of the sample of eight councils, Westminster and Waltham Forest support their Members with casework via their Support Officers whilst they are on maternity or paternity leave, whereas the rest of the councils would expect their fellow Ward members to pick up casework in their absence. The latter is the case in Brent. Cover for responsibilities as a Cabinet Member is a matter for the Leader (subject to the statutory limit on the number of Cabinet members that can be appointed) and cover for roles on Council Committees would be a matter for Full Council. It is not proposed that any changes be made in respect of these arrangements.
- 3.3.4 Of the sample of eight councils, the vast majority do not have a formal policy on miscarriage, but if the issue arose, they felt this would be covered under current bereavement and sickness policies and would be tailored to that individual Member. Only Greenwich has specific miscarriage policies, and since 2022, their policy is “In all cases of miscarriage, Members are advised to liaise with the Whips who will have the discretion to agree leave”.
- 3.3.5 The review has also considered the recommendations from the London Remuneration Panel, to which the council is required to have due regard in setting its allowances scheme. The recommendations include the following:

councils should make arrangements in their members’ allowances schemes to allow the continuance of special responsibility allowances in the case of sickness, maternity and paternity leave in the same terms that the council’s employees enjoy such benefits (that is to say, they follow the same policies).

It is proposed that the provisions currently in the council’s scheme be amended to reflect this wording for any periods of relevant leave commencing after the changes are approved.

- 3.3.6 The council’s current policies for employees provide the following in respect of maternity pay:
- *the first 6 weeks: 90% of their average weekly earnings (AWE) before tax in the eight weeks preceding the end of the 15th week before the expected week of confinement. This is inclusive of statutory maternity pay (SMP) where employees are eligible; (or 90% SMP, whichever is higher)*
 - *the next 12 weeks: half contractual pay plus SMP where eligible, except where combined pay and SMP exceeds full pay*
 - *from week 19 to 39: Lower rate SMP (£184.03 or 90% of average weekly earnings, whichever is lower) or 90% of AWE (whichever is lower), up to a maximum of 39 weeks or whenever the employee decides to return to work.*

- 3.3.7 The council's current policies for employees provide the following in respect of paternity pay:

£184.03, or 90% of average weekly earnings (whichever is lower)

- 3.3.8 Another issue raised in the review is the application of s85 of the Local Government Act 1072. This provision requires a member of a Local Authority to attend at least one meeting of that Authority within a 6 month consecutive period in order to avoid being disqualified as a Councillor.

- 3.3.9 This requirement can be waived if any failure to attend was due to a reason approved by the Authority in advance of the 6 month period expiring.

- 3.3.10 It is proposed that the Council be asked to approve as a reason for failure by a member to attend for a 6 month period a meeting of the Council, Cabinet or any committee or sub-committee of the Council during any period they are on approved maternity leave. This will include the councillor who is currently on maternity leave.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 Members of the Council's Constitutional Working Group have been consulted about the changes proposed in this report. Members recently affected by the paternity and maternity provisions in the council's Members Allowances scheme were consulted in the course of the review.

5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 New parents who go on maternity or paternity leave will be entitled to receive their current full Basic Allowance and the relevant portion of their SRA (if entitled to one). If another Councillor is appointed to cover the period of absence, the replacement will be entitled to receive the full SRA allowance for the role. In accordance with paragraph 3.3 of the scheme, no Councillor shall receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance.

- 5.2 The current budget for members' allowances is £1.16m. It is expected that there is scope within the existing budget to absorb the cost of maternity cover SRAs for the number of such SRAs it might reasonably be expected could be required in a year.

6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 The recommendations to which the Council is required to have due regard are set out in the body of the report.

- 6.2 There is at present no legal right to parental leave of any kind for people in elected public office; this applies to MPs as well as Councillors. This policy can, therefore, only currently be implemented on a voluntary basis.

6.3 Councillors have a duty under section 85 Local Government Act 1972 to attend a meeting of the Council within a six month period unless the Council agrees to an extended leave of absence prior to the expiration of that six month period, failing which they automatically cease to be councillors. The proposed changes to the policy would mean that any Councillor on approved maternity leave would, for the period of that leave, be regarded as absent from council meetings for a reason which has been approved by full Council prior to the absence.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

7.1. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the council has a duty when exercising its functions to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not. This is the public sector equality duty. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

7.2 “Due regard” is the regard that is appropriate in all the circumstances. The weight to be attached to the effect is a matter for the council. As long as the council is properly aware of the effects and has taken them into account, the duty is discharged. Depending on the circumstances, regard should be had to the following:

- the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic. In other words, the indirect discriminatory effects of a proposed decision;
- the need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- the need to take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes taking account of disabled persons’ disabilities. There can be a positive duty to take action to help a disabled person. What matters is how they are affected, whatever proportion of the relevant group of people they might be;
- the need to encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life (or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low); and
- the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

7.3 This report outlines arrangements for the payment of allowances for members on paternity or maternity leave. Basic allowances are the same for all Members in these circumstances, irrespective of their background. The arrangements in respect of Special Responsibility Allowances are linked to those in place for paternity and maternity leave for employees.

7.4 The approval of the reason for non-attendance set out in this report will protect councillors on maternity leave from being disqualified where this leads to their non-attendance at relevant meetings.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 None

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

9.1 None

10.0 Communication Considerations

11.1 None

Report sign off:

Debra Norman

Corporate Director of Law & Governance

Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Sickness Pay

13. (1) A Councillor shall continue to receive in full a basic allowance as set out in Schedule 1 of this Scheme during any period of maternity, paternity, adoption and sickness leave.
- (2) Councillors giving birth are entitled to up to six months maternity leave with the option to extend up to 52 weeks with the approval of the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Chief Whip, where applicable. Maternity leave can begin:
 - (a) When the councillor chooses but no earlier than 11 weeks before the expected week of childbirth, or
 - (b) from the day following childbirth if the baby is born earlier
- (3) A Councillor entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance shall continue to receive their allowance during any period of maternity, paternity, adoption and sickness following the same policies as the Council's employees.
- (4) If another Councillor is appointed to cover the period of absence, the replacement will be entitled to receive the Special Responsibility Allowance for the role. In accordance with paragraph 3.3 of this scheme, no Councillor shall receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance.
- (5) Councillors shall inform the **Deputy Director, Democratic Services of their pregnancy or a relevant adoption, as soon as is reasonably practicable and at least 15 weeks before the week the baby is due or the adoption is due to take place.**
- (6) Councillors shall be entitled to take up to 2 weeks paternity leave if they are the biological father or nominated carer of their partner/spouse following the birth or adoption of their child(ren). **This must be agreed ahead of time with Deputy Director, Democratic Services**
- (7) Councillors wanting to take paternity leave must offer a declaration in writing that specifies the start day or date of the period of leave and its duration. If the child(ren) is born/adopted on a different date, the Council must be given notice of the changed period of paternity leave as soon as possible.
- (8) Paternity leave can be taken as either:
 - (a) a single period of leave of either one week or two weeks, or
 - (b) two non-consecutive periods of leave of a week each
- (9) Councillors can take their paternity leave any time in the 52 weeks after the birth or adoption of their child(ren).
- (10) A Councillor who has made Shared Parental Leave arrangements is requested to advise the Council of these at the earliest possible opportunity. Every effort will be made to replicate the Council's staff policy in terms of leave as far as practicable with the approval of the Chief Executive following consultation with the Chief Whip, where applicable.
- (11) Where both parents are Councillors, leave may be shared up to a maximum of

24 weeks for the first six months and 26 weeks for any leave agreed thereafter, up to a maximum of 50 weeks. Special and exceptional arrangements may be made in cases of prematurity with the approval of the Chief Executive following consultation with the Chief Whip, where applicable.

- (12) In line with the provisions for employees, if a Councillor's baby survives only for a short period following 24 weeks' gestation this will be treated as a live birth, and maternity and paternity leave as specified previously would continue to apply.
- (13) If a Councillor suffers a miscarriage up to and including 24 weeks gestation, time off can be agreed after discussion with the Party Whip and the Deputy Director, Democratic Services.
- (14) If an election is held during the Member's maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave and they are not re-elected, or decide not to stand for re-election, their basic allowance and SRA if appropriate will cease from the Monday after the election date when they would technically leave office.
- 15) Non-attendance at meetings during maternity leave
On the [] full Council agreed to recognise absence on approved maternity leave as an approved reason for absence from meetings for the purposes of s85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

*Where adoption has taken place through an approved (domestic or overseas) adoption agency.